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FOURTH Edition

NEIL SCHLAGER AND
JAYNE WEISBLATT, EDITORS
ORLANDO J. PÉREZ, CONSULTING EDITOR



WORLD ENCYCLOPEDIA OF POLITICAL SYSTEMS AND PARTIES

Fourth Edition



Neil Schlager and Jayne Weisblatt, Editors
Orlando J. Pérez, Consulting Editor

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Preface to the Fourth Edition



The world has witnessed major changes in the seven years since the publication of the third edition of this encyclopedia. While democratic political systems and parties have continued to consolidate in places such as Latin America and some countries of Asia and Eastern Europe, they are weaker in Russia and barely existent in most of the Middle East. The terrorist attacks in the United States on September 11, 2001, precipitated a chain of events that fundamentally altered the political systems of Afghanistan and Iraq. The former has held presidential elections for the first time in its history, and the latter is struggling to develop a viable and stable political system. The resulting "Global War on Terror" has tended to weaken legal and civil rights protections around the world as nations seek ways of fighting terrorism. Nevertheless, the development of democratic political systems and the emergence of viable political parties continue to dominate the political processes of most countries around the world. Even in many authoritarian or semi-democratic systems, political parties continue to play important roles as mechanisms of mobilization. This fourth edition of the *World Encyclopedia of Political Systems and Parties* updates the political structures of countries around the world in light of the global changes of the past seven years.

The varying success of democracy and parties is seen clearly when examining different regions around the world. In Latin America, where arguably the "Third Wave" of democracy began in the late 1970s, with the exception of Haiti and Cuba, most countries have continued, albeit with varying degrees of success, to consolidate democratic governance despite deep economic and social problems. Many of the democratic trends presented in the third edition of this encyclopedia have continued. For example, in Mexico the dominant political party, the PRI, lost the presidency for the first time since 1929 in the elections of 2000. Chile's move toward democracy continued unabated. Argentina's democratic system survived a major political and economic crisis, albeit resulting in the virtual disintegration of one of the historically strong parties, the Unión Cívica Radical. In Central America, democracy was further consolidated despite economic and social problems. While democracy was maintained in the Andean region, many countries in that area teetered on the verge of collapse and in some, such as Venezuela, the consolidation of power in the hands of the executive threatened to undermine the democratic political structures. For example, in the case of Ecuador and Bolivia violent demonstrations, aided by the military, toppled elected presidents, and political party systems fragmented further weakening or eliminating many of the traditional political parties.

The trend in Western Europe toward the demise of conservative parties, expressed in the third edition, has waned somewhat. In countries such as Great Britain this trend still persists, as the Labour Party continues

to dominate British politics. However, in some nations of Scandinavia, such as Denmark and Norway, center-right coalitions displaced Socialist parties in power. In Germany, a close election between the SPD and the conservative CDU/CSU alliance resulted in the country's first female chancellor. A disturbing trend in the last few years has been the emergence of xenophobic nationalist parties such as Le Pen's National Front in France, the BNP in Great Britain, and Pim Fortuyn List in the Netherlands, whose main platform centers around opposition to increased immigration.

Perhaps the most remarkable transformation from authoritarian to democratic political systems continues to happen in Eastern Europe and some of the former Soviet Republics. In the last several years nations such as Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, and the Baltic republics continued to consolidate, albeit with economic and social difficulties, their democratic political systems. In 2004 these countries along with Slovenia joined the European Union. Bulgaria, Romania and Croatia are currently candidates for inclusion. Unfortunately, Russia's progress toward democracy seems to have stalled, as President Vladimir Putin has consolidated power in the hands of the executive. In the last parliamentary elections many of the liberal and reform minded parties all but disappeared. Putin's party, United Russia, received about 50 percent of the seats in the State Duma, and together with other parties the president controls over two-thirds of the seats. For the first time since the collapse of the USSR, the Freedom House ranking has placed Russia in the category of countries "not free." In addition, after more than 15 years of independence, the process of democracy building seems to have stagnated in the South Caucasus. Despite regular elections and space for political opposition (very limited in Azerbaijan), lingering authoritarianism, high levels of corruption, and uncertain rule of law persist. In other former Soviet republics the situation is improving. In Georgia, President Edward Shevardnadze was forced from office after fraudulent legislative elections in 2003 spurred nationwide protests. Mikhail Saakashvili was later elected president in polling in January 2004 that international observers asserted was honest and professionally conducted. In Ukraine, a surge in civic activism and a major improvement in press freedom emerged during that country's presidential campaign and the protest movement that ignited in the wake of widespread ballot fraud. As a result new elections were held, resulting in the victory of the opposition.

In sub-Saharan Africa gains have been made in the Central African Republic, where political rights and party activity improved in preparation for democratic elections in 2005. In Guinea-Bissau political rights were strengthened by legislative elections that international observers pronounced as largely free and fair. South Africa continued to consolidate its democratic system, albeit with some concern over the continued dominance of the ANC in party politics. Other countries where progress toward democratic politics has been made include Ghana, Senegal, and even Nigeria. However, the situation in most of the continent remains rather bleak. This perspective is reinforced by the resurgence of inter-tribal violence on a genocidal scale, the assertion by some political leaders and incumbent political parties to lifelong tenure in the face of constitutional prohibitions, the eruption of violent chauvinism, the widespread and often blatant evidence of corruption, the assertion of a right to political intervention by the military, the deliberate destruction of judicial independence and the rule of law by intransigent executives, and the continued exclusion from political and economic life of women and ethnic groups. It is also clear that leadership in Africa is not solely in the hands of convinced or convincing democrats.

Within the Arab World, there seems to be a growing consensus, internal and external, to increase the pace of democratization, although concerns for security and stability tend still to take priority over political liberalization. Political parties exist in most parts of the Middle East, but often within strong constraints regarding their scope for maneuver, their independence of thought and action, and their resources and effectiveness. For example, Egypt allows for a multiparty system, but parties must gain the state's legal permission to exist. In Jordan, the political system in which parties operate marginalizes their meaningful role as vehicles for the expression of civil society's choices. Yemen has strict legislation forbidding parties to organize along specified divisive lines. Parties are very weak or nonexistent in the oil-rich states of the Gulf region. As stated above, Iraq has perhaps endured the greatest changes in the region with the destruction of the Ancien regime by a U.S. military invasion and, in 2005, new democratic elections.

In Asia, the BJP lost power in India to the Congress Party, despite an improving economy. In China, the CCP maintained a tight grip on power although it made significant internal reforms that elevated younger members of the party to positions of power. The rule of the LDP has been challenged in Japan, but it continues to rule. South Korea's political rights improved after the strengthening of the democratic

process in free and fair elections, following a highly politicized presidential impeachment process. The pace of democratization in Indonesia has slowed, affected by many problems ranging from widespread ethnic and religious conflict to the re-emergence of the military, from the lack of capacity in the public administration to the dominance of unaccountable elites. It remains to be seen how the 2004 tsunami natural disaster, which killed more than 200,000 people in six nations bordering the Indian Ocean, will affect the political and party systems.

Since the publication of the third edition of this encyclopedia, the world has witnessed some major crises and significant changes in the political and party systems of many nations. Democracy remains the ideal to which most countries aspire to, and political parties remain the most important vehicle for the expression of representative institutions within democratic political structures. However, in many regions of the world ethnic conflicts, poverty, income inequality, repressive military and security forces, widespread corruption, and xenophobic nationalism continue to jeopardize the emergence and consolidation of democracy. In addition, we find that in many regions where parties have traditionally been strong, many of these same social and political forces create conditions in which party systems are fragmented and traditionally strong parties are either weakened or destroyed. Therefore, while the hope for democracy remains strong around the world, unfortunately for many its achievement seems more elusive than ever.

This encyclopedia is intended as a guide to the institutions that form the basis of the world's political and party systems. For most countries in the world the entries focus on the political parties and their relation to the structures of government. For those countries in which parties are secondary or nonexistent, the encyclopedia emphasizes the power relations within the authoritarian state. We hope that through our efforts readers gain a better understanding of who governs in each country, and thus a fuller comprehension of the nature of politics in our increasingly interdependent world.

Thanks are due to several individuals. At Schlager Group, Neil Schlager and Jayne Weisblatt oversaw the compilation of the fourth edition. In addition, several contributors offered their regional expertise during the course of this new edition: Robert Griffiths for Africa; Jeffrey K. Hass for Central Asia, Eastern Europe, and the former USSR; David K. Jesuit for Western Europe; Rima Habasch for the Middle East; and Charles Amjad-Ali and Cris Toffolo for South Asia. (I offered regional advice for Latin America.) Finally, Claudia Schaab at Facts On File provided valuable assistance throughout the project.

—Orlando J. Pérez

Introduction to the First Edition



The study of politics is a study of conflict. Whenever a few people gather to decide on common aims and means, some degree of conflict appears. Individual ambitions, more or less incompatible social and economic interests, and ideals that are often mutually exclusive compete for the resources of the group. When confined to a small institution—a church, a fraternal order, a business—the means by which such conflict can be pursued are limited and the potential gains and losses are relatively small. When the conduct of a sovereign state is at issue, however, the potential gains in wealth, prestige, and economic and physical power can be immense and the potential losses proportionately severe. Furthermore, the full resources of the state and society can be brought to bear on the conflict—money, people, institutions, and if necessary, weapons. National politics is a serious business, often deadly serious.

The business of politics is conducted within a system of interacting elements that include the state and its government with executive, legislative, and judicial functions and customary and/or written rules of procedure; a variety of social and economic interests that may or may not express themselves through political parties; and processes through which political parties or interests bring their influence to bear on the government. This encyclopedia describes these elements of the political systems of 170 sovereign nations and eight dependent territories in a relatively narrow cross section of time, roughly the summer and fall of 1985.

The standard format of an article begins with an introductory section that provides a basic description of the institutions of government along with the historical background necessary to understand the present political arrangement in the country. This section looks first at the executive functions, the formal locus of policy- and decision-making power in the country. It then outlines the structure and powers of the legislature or any similar body that purports to represent at least some of the population and that discusses, debates, and approves new laws. The judiciary is examined with particular concern for its independence from political pressures or control and its relative power vis-à-vis the other branches of government. Finally, this section briefly describes regional and local structures of government and tries to assess the degree of local autonomy and political-party activity.

The next section takes up the electoral system. It notes the extent of suffrage, registration and balloting procedures, whether voting is compulsory, and the level of voter turnout for elections. It describes how the country is geographically organized for elections and usually assesses the relative fairness and honesty of elections. Most importantly, this section describes the way in which election winners are determined in the state under consideration; this is important, for there are several systems, which differ markedly from one another.

Proportional representation systems, which are used in many countries, require a special explanation.

The simple plurality system now used in most English-speaking countries met with serious objections on the European continent when the suffrage was expanded to include the vast mass of working people who tended to vote socialist. The traditional parties were faced with the possibility that socialist parties could consistently win large parliamentary majorities, even if they did not win a majority of the votes nationwide. It was also noted that a small party that represented an important but scattered minority in the country could be closed out of the legislative process altogether.

To overcome these objections, proportional representation (PR) systems were introduced, beginning with Denmark in 1855. After considerable debate over what constituted a fair system, Victor d'Hondt in 1878 devised a method that is still in common use, although with many variations. At its simplest, the d'Hondt method works as follows. Assume that three parties are competing for nine legislative seats in a multimember district. Voters, who in PR systems usually vote for party lists of candidates rather than for individuals, give Party A 10,000 votes; Party B, 7,000; and Party C, 3,000. The first seat goes to Party A, and its vote is divided by 2. Each time Party A wins another seat, its total vote is divided by the next-highest number—2, 3, 4, and so on. In some countries the process ends there, but in others leftover votes (1,750 for Party B, for example) are pooled at the national level and additional seats are distributed by the same process.

The d'Hondt system tends to favor larger parties at the expense of small ones and can still elect a government that is not supported by a plurality of the voters. To overcome these problems, a variation called the Sainte-Laguë method (developed in 1910) was introduced. The essential difference between the systems is that the Sainte-Laguë method divides the party's total vote by 3, 5, 7, and so on. This makes it progressively harder for a large party to win each successive seat and reduces the advantage of electoral alliances, which in turn discourages the formation of very small parties. The three Scandinavian countries adopted the Sainte-Laguë method, with variations, in the early 1950s.

Another PR system, used in some English-speaking countries, is called the single transferable vote (STV). The STV method requires the setting of a quota—the number of votes needed to win a seat in multimember district. Sometimes the simple formula—votes divided by number of seats—is used to determine the quota. Most STV systems, however, use "Droop's quota," devised in 1868, which employs the formula $(V \div [S + 1]) + 1$, where V is the total vote and S the number of seats to be distributed. If, for example, the total vote was 10,000 in a race for four seats, a candidate would need 2,001 votes to win a seat. If a candidate gets 5,000 votes, the STV method distributes all the second-preference votes on those ballots to their respective recipients on the basis of the following formula: $(V - Q) \div V$, where V is the total vote for the winning candidate and Q is the quota. [In the example: $(5{,}000 - 2{,}001) \div 5{,}000 = 60\%$.] If a candidate got 1,000 second-preference votes on the winning candidate's ballots, for example, 600 votes would be added to his or her first-preference votes. The advantage of this system is that it allows the voters to vote for individuals and makes nearly every vote count. A variation on the STV system counts second-preference votes only if the voter's first preference fails to get enough votes to get elected.

Articles on countries with multiparty systems turn next to a general description of the system—when and how the parties originated, how they are supported or restricted by law, and their common elements of organization or lack of it. This section then briefly describes the general tone and methods of election campaigns in the country; it ends, where appropriate, with a look at the issue of voter loyalty to or independence of parties.

Each major party is then described in terms of its history, organization, policy, membership and electoral support, financing, leadership, and prospects for remaining in government or gaining power. The major parties in some of the smaller countries are not treated in quite this detail, not only because of lack of space but also because reliable information was simply not to be found. Even for major and thoroughly studied countries, there is often little or no information on either the sources of funds or the expenditures of political parties. Over most of the world, party financing, the life's blood of politics, is as much of a mystery to political scientists as the circulatory system was to the medical profession in the 16th century.

Reasonably reliable membership figures are also unavailable in many cases. Where such numbers are thought to indicate its basic strength, a party will often inflate them or keep them secret. In other countries, while some or all parties purport to have formal memberships, the rules of enrollment and dues paying are laxly enforced and no accurate counts of members are made. In most one-party states, membership means little or nothing politically; it is simply a means of career advancement.

Following the description of the party in a one-party state, the next section of the article is found only where significant opposition is known to exist either in the country or in exile. Opposition here does not refer to scattered individuals or small groups of like-minded acquaintances—that phenomenon is better labeled dissent. Opposition, in this context, refers to more or less formally organized groups bent either on resisting the power of the one-party state and/or on radically altering the form of government or its leadership.

In many countries, major political roles are played by institutions or social groups that are not primarily political but that have considerable influence in the political system. Chief among these *other political forces* are the armed forces, which dominate the political process in many countries. Other such political forces are organized labor, religious institutions, ethnic groups, students, and occasionally foreign governments, international organizations, and even individuals. Each of these groups, where appropriate, is identified, and some indication of their role is provided.

Finally, each article briefly summarizes the nation's prospects for continuing or attaining political stability. These opinions must necessarily be speculative and can only extrapolate from known political facts. The sudden death of a commanding political figure, the rapid rise of a hitherto-little-recognized political group, and unforeseen catastrophe—economic, physical, military—can play no role in such predictions.

The length of the articles is determined more by the importance of the country than by the complexity of its political system. If the complex roles of all elements in a country's political system were clearly understood, two volumes of this size would scarcely suffice to deal with it fully.

Because of this complexity and our incomplete understanding, the classification of systems as authoritarian, democratic, multiparty, etc., while useful, must always be regarded critically. The reader is advised to study an article thoroughly before accepting a classification as anything other than a rough indicator of political appearances. A nation with parties and elections is not necessarily a democracy (e.g., Paraguay), nor is a country without those institutions necessarily a dictatorship (e.g., Somalia, Jordan).

Nevertheless, after examining these articles, I have concluded that there are four broad categories in which political systems might be placed more or less accurately. These categories refer not to the political systems themselves but to the common attitudes and expectations—the political ethos—in which these systems function. The four categories can be called "no losers," "winner-take-all," "winner-took-all," and "single arbiter."

Perhaps a third of the world's countries have a "no losers" political ethos. Political conflict is channeled into more or less open and effective policy debates and relatively fair electoral processes. Every interested group can bring some degree of influence to bear on

		Party A		Party B		Party C
Seat 1		10,000 (50%)		7,000 (35%)		3,000 (15%)
Seat 2	÷ 2	5,000		7,000		3,000
Seat 3		5,000	÷ 2	3,500		3,000
Seat 4	÷ 3	3,333		3,500		3,000
Seat 5		3,333	÷ 3	2,330		3,000
Seat 6	÷ 4	2,500		2,333		3,000
Seat 7		2,500		2,333	÷ 2	1,500
Seat 8	÷ 5	2,000		2,333		1,500
Seat 9		2,000	÷ 4	1,750		1,500
		5 seats (55%)		*3 seats (33%)*		*1 seat*

the government. Political actors find that it is in their own best interests to pursue moderate aims and to avoid any abuse of power that would seriously threaten the opposition. No single group seeks massive gains, and none faces massive losses. Generally, there is a widespread and deep respect for civil and human rights and for the rule of law. A key element in maintaining a "no losers" ethos is an economic prosperity—or its promise—sufficient to satisfy popular expectations, which can vary from pathetically low to unreasonably high.

The "winner-take-all" political ethos is more common than "no losers." It is found largely, but not exclusively, in countries numbered among the less economically developed. In this ethos, each contending political force more or less reasonably sees any loss of political or economic power as a threat to its continued existence. Conversely, any gain may be used to further limit or destroy the power of opposing forces. Such systems face the continuing possibility of severe civil strife between ethnic groups (Northern Ireland, South Africa, Lebanon), or classes (El Salvador, Iran), or ideologies (Poland, Chile), or between urban and rural interests (Philippines, Afghanistan). Usually, more than one of these divisive elements are factors in the conflict. Often such conflicts are made virtually unresolvable by religious or ideological dogmas that make the destruction of the opposition a virtuous act. A commonplace solution to the threat of civil strife is the imposition of some form of dictatorial rule by the military, a preeminent political leader, an elite, or even by an outside force. Many states that appear to have developed a "winner-took-all" ethos (some of the "Marxist" states in Africa, for example) are in reality relatively superficial impositions of military or elite power on a political ethos in which the contending forces would otherwise destroy the country.

About 10% of the world's nations seem to fit the "winner-took-all" category, in which there are no apparent bases for major civil conflict, because potential opposition has been destroyed in an earlier "winner-take-all" struggle. Stable, post-revolutionary regimes—the Soviet Union, Cuba, Vietnam—are clear examples.

Finally, the "single arbiter" ethos refers to those societies which accept the more or less benign rule of a traditional authority—a king or an emir—who is the final arbiter of any social conflict. The ruler usually seeks a balance between competing economic and social forces, few of which are threatened with political extinction. Some societies with apparently more "modern" regimes—Egypt, for example—might be seen as continuing the "single arbiter" ethos in a new guise.

When reading about the political system of any country, the reader should keep in mind that the political ethos in which the system functions may not be supportive of that system. Over much of the world, European government and party systems, both democratic and communistic, are often fragile and nearly irrelevant overlays on patterns of social power that are seldom clearly understood even by the participants. A professedly democratic system with regular and apparently open processes of political debate and resolution of conflict can be and often is an oligarchic system in which members of the elite only superficially represent the interests of the otherwise politically impotent groups. On the other hand, a system in which the "winner-took-all" can still retain or develop processes by which social interests effectively compete for influence (Hungary might be an example).

The contributors have demonstrated great commitment to the ideal of knowledge for its own sake. All showed a deep concern to make clear to the general reader the essential political elements operating in each country. Many submitted far more information and expended much greater time and energy on the project than the editor asked for. The editor thanks them heartily for their support, understanding, and patience.

Carol Simon, Muriel Bennet, Tina and A. La Russo, and the editorial staff of Facts On File, Inc., have also contributed to the success of this project.

—George E. Delury
January 1983

List of Acronyms and Abbreviations



AAFU–see Anti-Communist and Anti-Imperialist Front of Ukraine
AAPO–see All-Amhara People's Organization (Ethiopia)
ABVP–see All-India Students Organization
AC–see Action for Change (Mauritania)
ACDP–see African Christian Democratic Party (South Africa)
ACLM–see Antigua Caribbean Liberation Movement (Antigua and Barbuda)
AD–see Alleanza Democratica (Italy)
AD–see Democratic Action (Venezuela)
AD–see Democratic Alliance (Guatemala)
ADA–see Democratic Alliance of Angola
ADEMA–see Alliance for Democracy in Mali-The African Party for Solidarity and Justice
ADERE–see Democratic and Republican Alliance (Gabon)
ADFL–see Alliance of Democratic Forces for Liberation of Congo/Zaire (D. Rep. Congo)
ADIK–see Fighting Democratic Movement (Cyprus)
ADM-19–see M-19 Democratic Alliance (Colombia)
ADP–see Alliance for Democracy and Progress (Benin)
ADP–see Alliance for Democracy and Progress (Central African Republic)
ADP–see Alliance for Democracy and Progress (Central African Republic)
ADP–see Arab Democratic Party (Israel)
ADP–see Assembly of People's Deputies (Burkina Faso)
ADR–see Action Committee for Democracy and Pension Justice (Luxembourg)
ADS–see Alternative for Democracy and Socialism (France)
ADSR–see Alliance of Democrats of the Slovak Republic
AEEM–see Association of Pupils and Students of Mali
AEPA–see All-Ethiopian Peasants Association
AETU–see All-Ethiopian Trade Union
AFC–see Alliance of Forces of Change (Niger)
AFD–see Alliance For Democracy (Nigeria)
AFD–see Alliance of Free Democrats (Hungary)
AFKM–see Congress Party for the Independence of Madagascar
AFKM-Renewal–see Congress Party for Madagascar Independence-Renewal Party
AFL–see Armed Forces of Liberia
AFL-CIO–see American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations (U.S.A.)
AFORD–see Alliance for Democracy (Malawi)
AFPF–see Armed Forces Pension Fund (Turkey)
AFPFL–see Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League (Myanmar)
AFRC–see Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (Sierra Leone)
Agaleu–see Ecologist Parties (Belgium)
AGP–see Assam Peoples Council (India)

AIADMK–see All-India Anna-Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam
AICC–see All-India Congress Committee
AICP–see All-India Communist Party
AID–see Agency for International Development (U.S.A.)
AKAR–see People's Justice Movement (Malaysia)
AKEL–see Progressive Party of the Working People (Cyprus)
AKPML–see Workers' Communist Party Marxist-Leninist (Norway)
AL–see Awami League (Bangladesh)
AL–see Awami League (Pakistan)
AL–see Liberal Alliance (Nicaragua)
ALEBA–see Luxembourg Association of Bank Staffs
ALF–see Arab Liberation Front (Palestinian Authority)
ALN–see National Liberation Army (Algeria)
ALO–see Austrian Alternative List
ALP–see Antigua Labour Party (Antigua and Barbuda)
ALP–see Australian Labor Party
AMAL–see Detachments of the Lebanese Resistance
AMP–see Association for Muslim Professionals (Singapore)
AMS–see Islamic Salvation Army (Algeria)
AMU–see African Mineworker's Union (Zambia)
AMU–see Arab Maghreb Union (Libya)
ANAGAN–see National Association of Ranchers (Panama)
ANAPO–see National Popular Alliance (Colombia)
AN–see Alleanza Nationale (Italy)
ANC–see African National Congress (South Africa)
ANC–see Conservative National Action (Nicaragua)
AND–see National Democratic Group (Andorra)
AND–see Nationalist Democratic Action (Bolivia)
ANDDS-Zaman Lahiya–see Nigerian Alliance for Democracy and Social Progress-Zaman Lahiya (Niger)
ANDI–see National Association of Industrialists (Colombia)
ANDM–see Amhara National Democratic Movement (Ethiopia)
ANL–see National Liberating Alliance (Brazil)
ANM–see Armenian National Movement
ANO–see Alliance of a New Citizen (Slovakia)
ANP–see Alliance for New Politics (Philippines)
ANPP–see All Nigeria People's Party
AOV and UNIE 55+–see General Union of the Elderly (Netherlands)
AP–see Popular Action (Peru)
AP–see Popular Alliance (Spain)
AP5–see Popular Alliance 5 (Guatemala)
APAI–see Israel Workers Party
APC–see All People's Congress (Sierra Leone)
APC–see Popular Conservative Alliance (Nicaragua)
APED–see Alliance for Ecology and Democracy (France)
APEDE–see Panamanian Association of Business Executives
APGA–see All Progressive Grand Alliance (Nigeria)
APK–see Worker Party Communists (Sweden)
APMU–see All-Popular Movement of Ukraine
APNI or AP–see Alliance Party of Northern Ireland
APP–see All People's Party (Nigeria)
APRA–see American Popular Revolutionary Alliance (Peru)
APRC–see Alliance for Patriotic Reorientation and Construction (Gambia)
APRE–see Ecuadorian Popular Revolutionary Action
APU–see United Peoples Alliance (Portugal)
ARD–see Alliance for the Restoration of Democracy (Pakistan)
ARD–see Democratic Resistance Alliance (D. Rep. Congo)
AREMA–see Vanguard of the Malagasy Revolution (Madagascar)
ARENA–see National Renovating Alliance (Brazil)
ARENA–see Nationalist Republican Alliance (El Salvador)
AREV–see Red and Green Alternative (France)
ARF–see Armenian Revolutionary Federation
ARLN–see Revolutionary Army of Liberation of Northern Niger
ARMM–see Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (Philippines)
ARP–see Anti-Revolutionary Party (Netherlands)
ASD–see Dominican Social Alliance Party
ASDT–see Timorese Social-Democratic Association (Timor Leste)
ASEAN–see Association of Southeast Asian Nations
ASI–see Federation of Labor (Iceland)
ASIS–see Alliance of Small Island States (Maldives)
ASP–see Afro-Shirazi Party (Tanzania)
ASU–see Arab Socialist Union (Egypt)
ASU–see Arab Socialist Union (Libya)
ATC–see Association of Rural Workers (Nicaragua)
ATLU–see Antigua Trades Labour Union (Antigua and Barbuda)
AV/MRDN–see And Jeff: Revolutionary Movement for the New Democracy (Senegal)
AWARE–see Association of Women for Action and Research (Singapore)
AWS–see Solidarity Electoral Action (Poland)
AYD–see Alliance of Young Democrats (Hungary)
AZADHO–see Zairian Association for the Defense of Human Rights (D. Rep. Congo)

BAKSAL–see Bangladesh Krishak Sramik Awami League
BAM–see Botswana Alliance Movement
BAMCEF–see All-India Backward and Minority Communities Employees Federation
BBB–see Bulgarian Business Bloc
BCP–see Basotho Congress Party (Lesotho)
BCP–see Botswana Congress Party
BDF–see Botswana Defense Force
BDG–see Gabonese Democratic Group
BDH–see Peace and Democracy Movement (Cyprus)
BDP–see Bahamian Democratic Party
BDP–see Botswana Democratic Party
BDS–see Senegalese Democratic Bloc
BE–see Left Bloc (Portugal)
BIP–see Citizen's Initiative Parliament (Austria)
BIS–see Social Democratic Institutional Block (Dominican Rep.)
BITU–see Bustamante Industrial Trade Union (Jamaica)
BJP–see Bhanatiya Jawata Party (India)
BKU–see Bhanasiya Kisan Union, Punjab (India)
BKU–see Bhanatiya Kisan Union, Uttar Pradesh (India)
BLDP–see Buddhist Liberal Democratic Party (Cambodia)
BLP–see Barbados Labour Party
BLP–see Botswana Labour Party
BN–see National Front (Malaysia)
BNA Act–see British North America Act (Canada)
BNF–see Botswana National Front
BNG–see Galician Nationalist Bloc (Spain)
BNP–see Bangladesh National Party
BNP–see Basotho National Party (Lesotho)
BNP–see British National Party (UK of Great Britain)
BPC–see Basic People's Congress (Libya)
BPF–see Belarusian Popular Front "Adrazennie"
BPP–see Bechuanaland People's Party (Botswana)
BPP–see Botswana Peoples Party
BPU–see Botswana Progressive Union
BQ–see Bloc Quebecois (Canada)
BRA–see Bougainville Revolutionary Army (Papua New Guinea)
BSB–see Burkina Socialist Bloc
BSP–see Bhutan Samas Party (Party of Society's Maturity) (India)
BSP–see Bulgarian Socialist Party
BSPP–see Burma Socialist Program Party (Myanmar)
BWF–see Botswana Workers Front
C–see Center Party (Sweden)
C90–see Change 90 (Peru)
CA–see Canadian Alliance
CAC–see Argentine Chamber of Commerce
CACIF–see Coordinating Committee of Commercial, Industrial, and Financial Associations (Guatemala)
CADE–see Annual Conference of Business Executives (Panama)
CAFPDE–see Council of Alternative Forces for Peace and Democracy (Ethiopia)
CAFTA–see Central American Free Trade Agreement
CAN–see Authentic Nationalist Central (Guatemala)
CAP–see Convention for a Progressive Alternative (France)
CASC–see Autonomous Confederation of Christian Syndicates (Dominican Rep.)
CAUS–see Council for Union Action and Unity (Nicaragua)
CC–see Canarian Coalition (Spain)
CC–see Christian Way (Nicaragua)
CCD–see Christian Democratic Center (Italy)
CCD–see Democratic Constituent Congress (Peru)
CCE–see Central Elections Council (El Salvador)
CCF–see Co-operative Commonwealth Federation (Canada)
CCM–see Concerned Citizens Movement (Saint Kitts)
CCM–see Revolutionary Party (Tanzania)
CCOOs–see Worker's Commissions (Spain)
CCP–see Chinese Communist Party
CD–see Center Democrats (Denmark)
CD–see Center Democrats (Netherlands)
CD–see Democratic Change (Panama)
CD–see Democratic Coordination (Nicaragua)
CDA–see Christian Democratic Appeal (Netherlands)
CdIA–see Camp des Iles Autonomous (Comoros)
CDJ–see Congress for Democracy and Justice (Gabon)
CDP–see Congress for Democracy and Progress (Burkina Faso)
CDP–see Convention of Democrats and Patriots (Senegal)
CDPA–see Democratic Convention of African People (Togo)
CDPP–see Christian Democratic People's Party (Hungary)
CDRs–see Committees for the Defense of the Revolution (Ghana)
CDRs–see Committees of the Defense of the Revolution (Burkina Faso)
CDS–see Center of Social Democrats (France)
CDS–see Party of the Social Democratic Center (Portugal)
CDS–see Social Democratic Center (Angola)

CDS–see Social Democratic Center (Spain)
CDS–see Social Democratic Center Party (Portugal)
CDS-Rahama–see Democratic and Social ConventionRahama (Niger)
CDT–see Democratic Labor Confederation (Morocco)
CDU–see Unified Democratic Coalition (Portugal)
CDU–see Union of Christian Democrats (Italy)
CDU–see United Democratic Center (El Salvador)
CDU–see United Democratic Coalition (Portugal)
CDU/CSU–see Christian Democrats (Germany)
CEA –see Argentine Episcopal Conference
CEC–see Central Executive Committee (Singapore)
CEFTA–see Central European Free Trade Agreement
CEMAC–see Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa (Central African Republic)
CEMC–see Central Election Management Committee (South Korea)
CEN–see National Executive Committee (Mexico)
CEN–see National Executive Committee (Venezuela)
CES–see Convergence Ecology Solidarity (France)
CETU–see Confederation of Ethiopian Trade Unions
CFD–see Coordination of Democratic Forces (Burkina Faso)
CFN–see Coordination of New Forces (Togo)
CFP–see Concentration of Popular Forces (Ecuador)
CG–see Galician Centrist (Spain)
CGEM–see General Economic Confederation of Morocco
CGT–see General Confederation of Labor (Argentina)
CGT–see General Confederation of Labor (France)
CGT–see General Confederation of Workers (Nicaragua)
CGTI–see Independent General Workers Confederation (Nicaragua)
CGTP–see General Central of Workers of Panama
CGUP–see Guatemalan Committee of Patriotic Unity
CHAUSTA–see Movement for Justice and Prosperity (Tanzania)
CHU–see Christian-Historical Union (Netherlands)
CIA–see U.S. Central Intelligence Agency
CIDOB–see Indigenous Confederation of the East, Chaco, and Amazonia of Bolivia
CIPRODEH–see Center for the Investigation and Promotion of Human Rights (Honduras)
CIS–see Commonwealth of Independent States
CiU–see Convergence and Union (Spain)
CLA–see Caprivi Liberation Army (Namibia)
CLC–see Canadian Labor Congress
CLR–see Convention of Reformist Liberals (Gabon)
CLSTP–see Liberation Committee of Sao Tome and Principe
CM–see Council of Ministers (Cuba)
CMC–see Central Military Commission (China)
CMEA or COMECON–see Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (Vietnam)
CMLN–see Military Committee of National Liberation (Mali)
CMRPN–see Military Committee of Redressment for National Progress (Burkina Faso)
CMS–see Supreme Military Council (Niger)
CMSS–see Czech-Moravian Party of the Center (Czech Rep.)
CN–see National Convention (CAR)
CNC–see National Peasant Confederation (Mexico)
CND–see National Development Council (Rwanda)
CNDF–see Congress of National Democratic Forces (Ukraine)
CNE–see National Electoral Council (Venezuela)
CNI–see National Center of Independents and Peasants (France)
CNID–see National Congress of Democratic Initiative (Mali)
CNIR–see Inter-Regional National Council (France)
CNJ–see National Council of the Judiciary (El Salvador)
CNOP–see National Federation of Popular Organizations (Mexico)
CNR–see National Council of Revolution (Burkina Faso)
CNRM–see National Council of Maubere Resistance (Timor Leste)
CNS–see National Unity Commission (Rwanda)
CNS–see Sovereign National Council (Chad)
CNT–see National Workers Federation (Mexico)
CNTP–see National Worker's Central of Panama
CNU–see Cameroon National Union
COAS–see Chief of Army Staff (Pakistan)
COB–see Confederation of Bolivian Workers
COD–see Coalition of Democratic Opposition (Togo)
CoD–see Congress of Democrats (Namibia)
CODE–see Democratic Coordinator (Peru)
CODEH–see Committee for the Defense of Human Rights in Honduras
COFADEH–see Committee of the Families of the Detained and Disappeared in Honduras
COMELEC–see Commission on Elections (Philippines)
CONAIE–see Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador
CONAPRODEH–see National Commission for the Protection of Human Rights (Honduras)
CONCAMIN–see Confederation of Industrial Chambers (Mexico)
CONCANACO–see Confederation of National Chambers of Commerce (Mexico)

CONCLAT–see National Coordination of the Working Class (Brazil)
CONDEPA–see Conscience of the Fatherland (Bolivia)
CONEP–see National Council of Private Enterprise (Panama)
CONFENIAE–see Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of the Amazon (Ecuador)
COPCON–see Continental Operations Command (Portugal)
COPE–see Committee on Political Education (U.S.A.)
COPEI–see Christian Social Party (Venezuela)
COSATU–see Congress of South African Trade Unions
COSEP–see Superior Council of Private Enterprise (Nicaragua)
COSU–see Coordination of the United Senegalese Opposition
COTU–see Central Organization of Trade Unions (Kenya)
CP–see Popular Coalition (Spain)
CPBM–see Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia (Czech Rep.)
CPC–see Central People's Committee (North Korea)
CPC–see Conservative Party of Canada
CPCC–see Chinese People's Consultative Conference
CPD–see Citizens for Democracy (Guatemala)
CPDM–see Cameroon People's Democratic Movement
CPI–see Communist Party of India
CPIB–see Coordinator of the Indigenous Peoples of Beni (Bolivia)
CPM–see Communist Party of India (Marxist)
CPM–see Communist Party of Moldavia (Moldova)
CPML–see Communist Party of India
CPN–see Communist Party of the Netherlands
CPP–see Cambodian People's Party
CPP–see Communist Party of the Philippines
CPP–see Convention People's Party (Ghana)
CPRF–see Communist Party of the Russian Federation
CPSA–see Conservative Party (South Africa)
CPSU–see Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Tajikistan)
CPSU–see Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Turkmenistan)
CPT–see Communist Party of Tajikistan
CPT–see Communist Party of Turkmenistan
CPT–see Permanent Congress of Workers (Nicaragua)
CPU–see Communist Party of Ukraine
CPUz–see Communist Party of Uzbekistan
CRA–see Argentine Rural Confederations
CRA–see Coordination of Armed Resistance (Niger)
CRC–see Convention for the Renewal of the Comoros
CRM–see Citizens Rights Movement (Israel)
CRN–see Council of National Reconciliation (Mali)
CROC–see Revolutionary Federation of Workers and Peasants (Mexico)
CRP–see Circle for Renewal and Progress (Gabon)
CS–see Council of State (Cuba)
CSE–see Supreme Electoral Council (Nicaragua)
CSL–see Czech People's Party
CSN–see Council of National Health (Niger)
CSP–see Council of Health of the People (Burkina Faso)
CSR–see Congress for the Second Republic (Malawi)
CSS–see Czech Socialist Party
CSSD–see Czech Social Democratic Party
CST–see Higher Transitional Council (Chad)
CST–see Sandinista Workers Confederation (Nicaragua)
CSTC–see Trade Union Confederation of Colombian Workers
CSU–see Christian Social Union (Germany)
CSUTCB–see United Syndical Confederation of Bolivian Peasant Workers
CSV–see Christian Social People's Party (Luxembourg)
CTC–see Confederation of Colombian Workers
CTM–see Confederation of Mexican Workers
CTN–see Social-Christian Nicaraguan Worker's Confederation
CTP–see Republican Turkish Party (Cyprus)
CTRP–see Confederation of Workers of the Republic of Panama
CTSP–see Transition Committee for the Health of the People (Mali)
CTV–see Confederation of Venezuelan Workers
CU–see Center Democrats (Netherlands)
CUAS–see Chief of Army Staff (Pakistan)
CUE–see Civic United Front (Tanzania)
CUG–see Citizen's Union of Georgia
CUS–see Confederation of Labor Unification (Nicaragua)
CUT–see Central Union of Workers (Brazil)
CVP–see Christian Democratic Parties (Belgium)
CVP–see Christian Democratic People's Party of Switzerland
CVP–see Civic United Front (Tanzania)
CWC–see Ceylon Workers Congress (Sri Lanka)
CWC–see Congress Working Committee (India)
CYL–see Congress Youth League (South Africa)

D66–see Democrats 66 (Netherlands)
DA–see Democratic Alliance (South Africa)
DA–see Democratic Alternative (Macedonia)
DAC–see Democratic Action Congress (Trinidad & Tobago)
DAP–see Democratic Action Party (Malaysia)
DC–see Christian Democracy (Spain)
DC–see Christian Democratic Party (Italy)
DC–see Democratic Arrangement (Dominican Rep.)
DC–see Democratic Center (Croatia)
DC–see Democratic Convergence (Guatemala)
DC–see Deputy Commissioner (Pakistan)
DCG–see Christian Democrats (Guatemala)
DDCs–see District Development Councils (Sri Lanka)
DDLP–see Dominican Democratic Labor Party (Dominica)
DEMOS–see Democratic Opposition of Slovenia
DEMYC–see Democratic Youth Community of Europe
DEPOS–see Democratic Movement of Serbia
DF–see Danish People's Party
DFLP–see Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine
DFP–see Democratic Freedom Party (Dominica)
DFPE–see Democratic Front for Peace and Equality (Israel)
DIKKI–see Democratic Social Movement (Greece)
DIKO–see Democratic Party (Cyprus)
DISK–see Confederation of Revolutionary Workers' Unions (Turkey)
DISY–see Democratic Rally (Cyprus)
DJAMA–see Masses (Guinea)
DJP–see Democratic Justice Party (South Korea)
DL–see Liberal Democracy (France)
DLBM–see Democratic League of Bosniaks in Macedonia
DLECG–see Democratic List for a European Montenegro (Serbia and Montenegro)
DLF–see Liberal People's Party (Norway)
DLP–see Democratic Labour Party (Barbados)
DLP–see Democratic Left Party (Turkey)
DLP–see Democratic Liberal Party (South Korea)
DLP–see Dominican Labour Party (Dominica)
DM–see District Minister (Sri Lanka)
DMC–see Democratic Movement for Change (Israel)
DMK–see Dravidian Progressive Federation-Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (India)
DMLP–see Democratic Movement for the Liberation of Eritrea
DMOs–see Democratic Mass Organizations (Tanzania)
DN–see National Directorate (Nicaragua)
DNA–see Labor Party (Norway)
DOLA–see Department of Local Administration (Thailand)
DOP–see Declaration of Principles (Israel)
DP–see Democratic Party (Cyprus)
DP–see Democratic Party (Kenya)
DP–see Democratic Party (Luxembourg)
DP–see Democratic Party (Seychelles)
DP–see Democratic Party (Tanzania)
DP–see Democratic Party (Turkey)
DP–see Democratic Party (Uganda)
DP–see Democratic Party (Zimbabwe)
DP–see Popular Democracy (Ecuador)
DPA–see Albanian Democratic Party (Macedonia)
DPJ–see Democratic Party of Japan
DPP–see Democratic People's Party (Turkey)
DPP–see Democratic Progressive Party (Taiwan)
DPS–see Movement for Rights and Freedoms (Bulgaria)
DPSCG–see Democratic Party of Socialists of Montenegro (Serbia & Montenegro)
DPSM–see Democratic Party of Serbs in Macedonia
DPT–see Democratic Party of Tajikistan
DPT–see Democratic Party of Turkey
DPT–see Democratic Party of Turkmenistan
DPTM–see Democratic Party of Turks in Macedonia
DPU–see Democratic Party of Ukraine
DRC–see Democratic Republic of Congo
DRP–see Democratic Republican Party (South Korea)
DRY–see Democratic Republic of Yemen
DS–see Democratic Party (Serbia & Montenegro)
DS–see Democratic Party (Slovakia)
DS–see Socialist Democracy (Spain)
DSS–see Democratic Party of Serbia
DTA–see Democratic Turnhalle Alliance (Namibia)
DUI–see Democratic Union for Integration (Macedonia)
DUP–see Democratic Unionist Party (Northern Ireland)
DUP–see Democratic Unionist Party (Sudan)
DUS–see Democratic Union of Slovakia
DVU–see German People's Union (Germany)
DZJ–see Pensions for Secure Living (Czech Rep.)
DZMH–see Democratic Union of Magyars in Croatia
EA–see Basque Solidarity (Spain)
Ecolo–see Ecologist Parties (Belgium)
ECOMOG–see Economic Community of West African States Cease-Fire Monitoring Group
ECOWAS–see Economic Community of West African States
ECZ–see Church of Christ in Zaire (D. Rep. Congo)

EDI–see United Democrats (Cyprus)
EDP–see Erk "Will" Democratic Party (Uzbekistan)
EDU–see European Democratic Union
EE–see Basque Left (Spain)
EEA–see European Economic Agreement
EEC–see European Economic Community
EGLE–see Every Ghanian Living Everywhere
EGP–see Guerrilla Army of the Poor (Guatemala)
EL–see Euroleft Coalition (Bulgaria)
ELF–see Eritrean Liberation Front
EMU–see Economic and Monetary Union
ENIP–see Estonian National Independence Party
EOP–see Executive Office of the President (U.S.A.)
EP–see European Parliament
EPDP–see Eelam People's Democratic Party (Sri Lanka)
EPLF–see Eritrean People's Liberation Front
EPP–see Evangelical People's Party (Netherlands)
EPRDF–see Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Democratic Front
EPRLF–see Eelam Peoples' Revolutionary Liberation Front (Sri Lanka)
EPS–see Sandinista Popular Army (Nicaragua)
ERC–see Catalonian Republican Left (Spain)
ERTU–see Egyptian Radio and Television Union
ESNS–see Coexistence (Slovakia)
ET–see Ethics and Transparency (Nicaragua)
ETA–see Basque Nation and Liberty (Spain)
ETDF–see East Timor Defence Force
ETP–see Enlightened Turkey Party
EU–see European Union
EVP–see Protestant People's Party (Switzerland)
FAA–see Angolan Armed Forces
FACA–see Armed Forces of the Central African Republic
FALINTIL–see National Armed Liberation Forces of East Timor (Timor Leste)
FAR–see African Forum for Reconstruction (Gabon)
FAR–see Front of Associations for Renewal (Togo)
FAR–see Rebel Armed Forces (Guatemala)
FAR–see Republic Action Federation (Chad)
FAR–see Royal Armed Forces (Morocco)
FARC–see Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia
FARD–see Action Front for Renewal and Development (Benin)
FATAs–see Federally Administered Tribal Areas (Pakistan)
FAZ–see Armed Forces of Zaire (D. Rep. Congo)
FBP–see Progressive Citizen's Party (Liechtenstein)
FC–see Civic Forum (CAR)
FC–see Federal Capital (Pakistan)
FCC–see Federal Communications Commission (U.S.A.)
FCD–see Civic Democratic Front (Guatemala)
FD–see Democratic Force (France)
FDA–see Angolan Democratic Forum
FDCs–see Forces Defence Committees (Ghana)
FDF–see French-Speaking Democratic Front (Belgium)
FDIC–see Front for the Defense of Constitutional Institutions (Morocco)
FDN–see National Democratic Front (Mexico)
FDNG–see New Guatemalan Democratic Front
FDN-Mountounchi–see Nigerian Democratic Front-Mountounchi (Niger)
FDP–see Democratic and Patriotic Forces (Rep. of Congo)
FDP–see Free Democratic Party (Germany)
FDP–see Radical Democratic Party of Switzerland
FDR–see Democratic Front of Renewal (Niger)
FDU–see United Democratic Forces (Rep. of Congo)
FEDECAFE–see National Federation of Coffee Growers (Colombia)
FEDECAMAS–see Federation of Chambers of Commerce (Venezuela)
FEDEMU–see Federal Democratic Movement of Uganda
FENALCO–see National Federation of Merchants (Colombia)
FESE–see Federation of Secondary Students of Ecuador
FEUE–see Federation of University Students of Ecuador
FEUU–see Federation of Uruguayan University Students
FF–see Front of Democratic Forces (Djibouti)
FFD–see Front of the Democratic Forces (Morocco)
FFS–see Socialist Forces Front (Algeria)
FI–see Forward Italy
FIDA–see Palestinian Democratic Union Party
FIM–see Independent Clean Government Front (Peru)
FIS–see Islamic Salvation Front (Algeria)
FL–see Free List Party (Liechtenstein)
FLAA–see Liberation Front of Air and Azaouad (Niger)
FLAM–see African Liberation Forces of Mauritania
FLC–see Congolese Liberation Front (Central African Republic)
FLEC–see Front for the Liberation of the Cabinda Enclave (Angola)
FLING–see Front for the Liberation and Independence of Guinea
FLN–see National Liberation Front (Algeria)
FLOSY–see Front for the Liberation of Occupied South Yemen
FLQ–see Quebec Liberation Front (Canada)
FLT–see Liberation Front of Tamoust (Niger)
FMG–see Federal Military Government (Nigeria)
FMLN–see Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (El Salvador)

FN–see National Front (Belgium)
FN–see National Front (France)
FN–see National Front (Spain)
FNC–see Federal National Council (United Arab Emirates)
FNDR–see National Front for the Defense of the Revolution (Madagascar)
FNJ–see National Front for Justice (Comoros)
FNLA–see National Front for the Liberation of Angola
FNM–see Free National Movement (Bahamas)
FNP–see National Progressive Force (Dominican Rep.)
FNR–see National Reconstruction Front (Ecuador)
FNT–see National Worker's Front (Nicaragua)
FNTC–see National Front of Workers and Peasants (Peru)
FO–see Worker's Force (France)
FODEM–Democratic Forum for Modernity (Central African Republic)
FORD–see Forum for Restoration of Democracy (Tanzania)
FORD–see Forum for Restoration of Democracy-Kenya-Asili
FP–see Federal Party (Sri Lanka)
FP–see Felicity Party (Turkey)
FP–see Liberal Party (Sweden)
FP–see National Solidarity (Madagascar)
FP–see Patriotic Front (D. Rep. Congo)
FP–see Popular Front (Burkina Faso)
FP–see Progress Party (Denmark)
FP–see Progressive Federation (Spain)
FPD–see Free Democrats (Germany)
FPD–see Front for Democracy (Angola)
FPI–see Ivorian Popular Front (Ivory Coast)
FPLS–see Patriotic Front of Liberation of the Sahara (Niger)
FPO–see Freedom Party (of Austria) or Freedomites
FPP–see Patriotic Front for Progress (Central African Republic)
FPR–see Rwanda Patriotic Front
FPT–see Ivorian Popular Front (Ivory Coast)
FRA–see Afarist Radical Front (Ecuador)
FRAP–see Popular Action Front (Chile)
FRD–see Forum for the Restoration of Democracy (Comoros)
FRDD–see Front for the Restoration and Defense of Democracy (Niger)
FRDE–see Front for the Restoration of Right and Equality (Djibouti)
Frelimo–see Front for the Liberation of Mozambique
FREPAP–see Popular Agrarian Front of Peru
Frepaso–see Front for a Country in Solidarity (Argentina)
FRETILIN–see Revolutionary Front for an Independent East Timor (Timor Leste)
FRG–see Guatemalan Republican Front
FRN–see Front for National Reconstruction (Haiti)
FRODEBU–see Burundi Democratic Front
FROLINAT–see Chad National Liberation Front
FRP–see Free Republic Party (Turkey)
FRUD–see Front for the Restoration of Unity and Democracy (Djibouti)
FSB–see Bolivian Socialist Falange
FSB–see Federal Security Council (Russia)
FSLN–see Sandinista National Liberation Front (Nicaragua)
FSN–see National Salvation Front (Romania)
FSTMB–see Bolivian Mineworkers Syndical Federation
FSTSE–see Federation of Unions of Workers in the Service of the State (Mexico)
FTC–see Federal Trade Commission (U.S.A.)
FUDR–see United Front for Democracy and the Republic (Burkina Faso)
FULRO–see United Front for the Struggle of Oppressed Races (Vietnam)
FUN–see National Unity Front (Guatemala)
FUNCINPEC–see National United Front for an Independent, Neutral, Peaceful and Cooperative Cambodia
FUR–see United Revolutionary Front (Guatemala)
FUSA–see United Front for the Salvation of Angola
FUT–see Unitary Workers Front (Ecuador)
GA–see Green Alternatives (Austria)
GAD–see Action Group for Democracy (Dominican Rep.)
GAD–see Grand Alliance for Democracy (Philippines)
GANA–see Grand National Alliance (Guatemala)
GAO–see General Accounting Office (U.S.A.)
GAP–see Guyana Action Party
GAWU–see Guyana Agricultural Workers Union
GCP–see Great Consolidated People's Party (Ghana)
GDF–see Guyanese Defense Force
GDK Azat–see Freedom Civil Movement of Kazakhstan "Azat"
GDP–see Guyana Democratic Party
GE–see Ecological Generation (France)
GGG–see Good and Green Georgetown (Guyana)
GIA–see Armed Islamic Group (Algeria)
GL–see Green Left (Netherlands)
GMMLU–see Grenada Manual and Mental Labourer's Union
GN–see National Guard (Nicaragua)

GNP–see Gross National Product
GPA–see General Peace Agreement (Mozambique)
GPC–see General People's Congress (Libya)
GPC–see General People's Congress (Yemen)
GPRA–see Provisional Government of the Republic of Algeria
GPS–see Green Party of Switzerland
GPV–see Reformed Political Association (Netherlands)
GRCs–see Group Representation Constituencies (Singapore)
GST–see Goods and Service Tax
GULP–see Grenada United Labour Party
GUP–see Grand Unity Party (Turkey)
GURN–see Government of Unity and National Reconciliation (Angola)
GURN–see Government of Unity and National Reconciliation (Palestinian Authority)
GWU–see General Workers' Union (Malta)
GYLA–see Georgian Young Lawyer's Association
HAMAS–see Movement for an Islamic Society (Algeria)
HB–see United People (Spain)
HBP–see People's Unity Party (Uzbekistan)
HCR–see High Council of the Republic (Togo)
HCR-PT–see High Council of the Republic-Transitional Parliament (D. Rep. Congo)
HD–see Grand National Party (South Korea)
HDF–see Hungarian Democratic Forum
HDP–see People's Democratic Party (Uzbekistan)
HDSS–see Croatian Democratic Peasants Party
HDZ–see Croatian Democratic Union
HDZ–see Croatian Democratic Union (Bosnia and Hercegovina)
HDZ–see Movement for Democracy (Slovakia)
HFP/PFH–see Humanist Feminist Party (Belgium)
HNS–see Croatian People's Party
HOS–see Croatian Defense Forces
HSD-SMS–see Movement for Autonomous Democracy of Moravia and Silesia (Czech Rep.)
HSLS–see Croatian Social Liberal Party
HSP–see Croatian Party of Rights
HSP–see Hungarian Socialist Party
HSS–see Croatian Peasant Party
HSU–see Croatian Party of Pensioners
HZ–see Farmer's Movement (Slovakia)
HZDS–see Movement for a Democratic Slovakia
I–see India National Congress
IAC–see Industrial Arbitration Court (Singapore)
IAF–see Islamic Action Front (Jordan)
ICJ–see International Court of Justice
ICP–see Indochinese Communist Party (Vietnam)
ICRDGE–see International Center for the Reformation and Development of the Georgian Economy
ICV–see Catalonia Green Initiative (Spain)
ID–see Democratic Left Party (Ecuador)
ID–see Independent Democrats (South Africa)
IDF–see Israeli Defense Force
IDH-RH–see Institute for Research, Documentation and Human Rights (Dominican Rep.)
IDN–see National Democratic Initiative (Andorra)
IDS–see Istrian Democratic Assembly (Croatia)
IEC–see Independent Electoral Commission (South Africa)
IEPES–see Institute of Political, Economic and Social Studies (Mexico)
IFE–see Federal Electoral Institute (Mexico)
IFES–see International Foundation for Election Systems
IFLB–see Islamic Front for the Liberation of Bahrain
IFLRY–see International Federation of Liberal & Radical Youth
IFP–see Independence Freedom Party (Botswana)
IFP–see Inkatha Freedom Party (South Africa)
IGNU–see Interim Government of National Unity (Liberia)
IKL–see People's Patriotic League (Finland)
ILO–see International Labor Organization
IMF–see International Monetary Fund
IMRO-DPMNU–see Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization-Democratic Party of Macedonian National Unity
INCRA–see National Institute for Colonization and Agrarian Reform (Brazil)
INF–see National Front of Iran
INLA–see Irish National Liberation Party (Northern Ireland)
INM–see Imbokodvo National Movement (Swaziland)
INPFL–see Independent National Patriotic Front of Liberia
INTU–see Indian National Trade Union Congress
IP–see Independence Party (Iceland)
IP–see Independence Party (Morocco)
IPD–see Impulse to Progress and Democracy (Benin)
IRA–see Provincial Irish Republican Army (Northern Ireland)
IRP–see Islamic Renaissance Party (Uzbekistan)
IRPT–see Islamic Renaissance Party of Tajikistan
IRSP–see Irish Republican Socialist Party (Northern Ireland)
ISP–see Independent Smallholders' Party (Hungary)
ITFY–see International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro)

IU–see United Left (Bolivia)
IU–see United Left (Peru)
IU–see United Left (Spain)
IWSG–see Industry Will Save Georgia
IZG–see Independent Zimbabwe Group
JADP–see Jordanian Arab Democratic Party
JAPBP–see Jordanian Arab Progressive Ba'th Party
JASBP–see Jordanian Arab Socialist Ba'th Party
JCP–see Japan Communist Party
JCP–see Jordanian Communist Party
JD–see People's Party (India)
JDP–see Justice and Development Party (Turkey)
JDPUP–see Jordanian Democratic Popular Unity Party
JHU–see Sinhala National Heritage (Sri Lanka)
JI–see Islamic Assembly (Bangladesh)
JI–see Islamic Assembly (Pakistan)
JJSO–see Juvenile Justice System Ordinance (Pakistan)
JLP–see Jamaica Labour Party
JNE–see National Board of Elections (Peru)
JP–see Jatiya Party (Bangladesh)
JP–see Justice Party (Turkey)
JRM–see Society of Combatant Clergy (Iran)
JRV–see Polling Places (Nicaragua)
JRV–see Vote Receiving Commitees (Ecuador)
JSC–see Judicial Service Commission (Sri Lanka)
JSDS–see Jewish State, Democratic State (Israel)
JTI–see Islamic Assembly (Student Wing) (Pakistan)
JUDP–see Jordanian United Democratic Party
JUI–see Conference of ULEMA of Islam (Pakistan)
JUP–see Conference of ULEMA of Pakistan
JUP-N–see Conference of Ulema of Pakistan
JVP–see People's Liberation Front (Sri Lanka)
KADU–see Kenya African Democratic Union
KAMPI–see Supporters of the Free Philippines
KANU–see Kenya African National Union
KAU–see Kenyan African Union
KBL–see New Society Movement (Philippines)
KCIA–see Korean Central Intelligence Agency (South Korea)
KD–see Christian Democrats (Sweden)
KDH–see Christian Democratic Movement (Slovakia)
KDS–see Christian Democratic Party (Czech Rep.)
KDU–see Christian Democratic Union (Czech Rep.)
KF–see Conservative People's Party (Denmark)
KF–see Cooperative Movement (Sweden)
KFDC–see Kurdish Freedom and Democracy Congress (Turkey)
KISOS–see Movement of Social Democrats (Cyprus)
KKE–see Communist Party of Greece
KMT–see Nationalist Party (Taiwan)
KNDP–see Kamerun National Democratic Party (Cameroon)
KNUT–see Kenya National Union of Teachers
KOP–see Movement of Ecologists and Environmentalists (Cyprus)
KPA–see Korean People's Army (North Korea)
KPB–see Party of Communists of Belarus
KPC–see Kurdistan People's Congress (Turkey)
KPD–see Communists (Germany)
KPK–see Communist Party of Kazakhstan
KPL–see Communist Party of Luxembourg
KPO–see Communist Party (Austria)
KPRP–see Kampuchean People's Revolutionary Party (Cambodia)
KPU–see Kenya People's Union
KRF–see Christian People's Party (Denmark)
KrF–see Christian People's Party (Norway)
KRO–see Congress of Russian Communities
KRRS–see Karnataka State Farmers' Association (India)
KSCM–see Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia-Left Bloc (Czech Rep.)
KSOOR–see "Republic" Coordinating Council of Public Associations (Kazakhstan)
KSP–see Farmer's and Worker's Party (Bangladesh)
KSS–see Communist Party of Slovakia
KTPI–see Indonesian Party of High Ideals (Suriname)
KUP–see Catholic People's Party (Netherlands)
KWP–see Korean Workers' Party (North Korea)
KWP–see Kurdistan Workers' Party (Turkey)
LA–see Leftist Alliance (Finland)
LAA–see Local Administration Bill (Zambia)
LABAN–see People's Force (Philippines)
LAKAS–see People's Power-National Christian Muslim Democrats (Philippines)
LAMMP–see Fight of the Free Filipino Masses Party
LAOS–see Populist Orthodox Rally (Greece)
LAP–see Liberian Action Party (Liberia)
LCD–see Lesotho Congress for Democracy
LCP–see Lebanese Communist Party
LCR–see Revolutionary Communist League (France)
LCR–see The Radical-Cause (Venezuela)
LCS–see League of Communists of Yugoslavia (Slovenia)
LCs–see Local Councils (Uganda)
LD/MPT–see Democratic League/Popular Labor Movement (Senegal)
LDLP–see Lithuanian Democratic Labor Party
LDP–see Democratic Filipino Struggle
LDP–see Liberal Democratic Party (Japan)
LDP–see Liberal Democratic Party (Macedonia)
LDP–see Liberal Democratic Party (Malaysia)

LDPR–see Liberal Democratic Party of Russia
LDS–see Liberal Democracy of Slovenia
LdU–see Alliance of Independents (Switzerland)
LF–see Liberal Forum (Austria)
LFO–see Legal Framework Order (Pakistan)
LG–see Latvia's Way
LIBRE–see Liberal Republican Party (Panama)
LIPAD–see Patriotic League for Development (Burkina Faso)
LIPE–see Guinean League for the Protection of the Environment
LKDS–see Farmer's Union/Christian Democratic Union/Latgale/Democratic Party Coalition (Latvia)
LLA–see Lesotho Liberation Army
LMI–see Liberation Movement of Iran
LN–see Liveable Netherlands
LN–see Northern League (Italy)
LNNK–see Latvian National Conservative Party and Green Party
LNTG–see Liberian National Transitional Government
LO–see Norwegian Trades Union Federation
LO–see Swedish Confederation of Trade Unions
LOPPE–see Law of Political Organizations and Electoral Processes (Mexico)
LP–see Labor Party (Saint Kitts)
LP–see Liberal Party (Philippines)
LPAI–see African People's League for Independence (Djibouti)
LPF–see List Pim Fortuyn (Netherlands)
LPP–see Law of Popular Participation (Bolivia)
LPP–see Liberia People's Party
LPR–see League of Polish Families
LPRP–see Lao People's Revolutionary Party (Laos)
LRF–see National Farmer's Association (Sweden)
LS–see Liberal Party of Croatia
LSAP–see Socialist Workers' Party (Luxembourg)
LSP–see Latvian Socialist Party
LSP–see Liberal Socialist Party (Egypt)
LSSP–see Ceylon Equal Society Party (Sri Lanka)
LSSP–see Lanka Sama Samajaya Party (Sri Lanka)
LSU–see Liberal Social Union (Czech Rep.)
LTTE–see Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (Sri Lanka)
LU–see Liberal Union (Andorra)
LUP–see Liberian Unification Party
M–see Moderate Party (Sweden)
MA–see Melanesian Alliance (Papua New Guinea)
MAC–see Christian Authentic Movement (El Salvador)
MAFREMO–see Malawi Freedom Movement
MAG–see Monitor Action Group (Namibia)
MAKI–see Israel Communist Party
MAKINA–see Movement for Dignified Democracy (Tanzania)
MAPAM–see United Workers Party (Israel)
MAS–see Movement toward Socialism (Venezuela)
MAS–see Movement toward Socialism-People's Political Instrument for Sovereignty (Bolivia)
MAS–see Solidarity Action Movement (Guatemala)
MAUDR–see Angolan Democratic Unity Movement for Reconstruction
MBL–see Movement for a Free Bolivia
MBPM–see Maurice Bishop Patriotic Movement (Grenada)
MBR-200–see Revolutionary Bolivarian Movement (Venezuela)
MCA–see Malayan Chinese Association
MCDDI–see Congolese Movement for Democracy and Comprehensive Development (Rep. of Congo)
MCP–see Malawi Congress Party
MCPC–see Central African People's Liberation Movement
MCs–see Municipal Councils (Sri Lanka)
MDA–see Movement for Democracy in Algeria
MDB–see Brazilian Democratic Movement
MDC–see Citizen's Movement (France)
MDC–see Malawi Development Corporation
MDD–see Movement for Democracy and Development (Central African Republic)
MDJT–see Movement for Democracy and Justice in Chad
MDN–see National Democratic Movement (Guatemala)
MDP–see Democratic Popular Movement (Senegal)
MDP–see Malawi Democratic Party
MDP–see Maldivian Democratic Party
MDP–see Movement for Democracy and Progress (Cameroon)
MDP–see Movement for the Defense of the Republic (Cameroon)
MDP–see Portuguese Democratic Movement
MDR–see Democratic Republican Movement (Rwanda)
MDREC–see Movement for Democracy, Renaissance and Revolution in Central Africa
MDS–see Democratic and Social Movement (Morocco)
MDS–see Movement of Social Democrats (Tunisia)
MDU–see Malawi Democratic Union
MEA–see Malta Employers' Association
MEI–see Independent Ecology Movement (France)

MEIMAD–see Jewish State, Democratic State (Israel)
MELS–see Marxist-Engels Leninist Stalinist Movement of Botswana
MEP–see People's Electoral Movement (Venezuela)
MESAN–see Movement of Social Evolution in Black Africa (Central African Rep.)
MFA–see Armed Forces Movement (Portugal)
MFDC–see Movement of Democratic Forces of Casamance (Senegal)
MFP–see Marematlou Freedom Party (Lesotho)
MGR–see M.G. Ramachaudran (India)
MHRA–see Mauritanian Human Rights Association
MIC–see Malayan Indian Congress
MILF–see Moro Islamic Liberation Front (Philippines)
MINUGUA–see UN Verification Mission (Guatemala)
MIP–see Pachakutik Indigenous Movement (Bolivia)
MIR–see Movement of the Revolutionary Left (Bolivia)
MIRT–see Movement for the Islamic Revival of Tajikistan
MISK–see Confederation of Nationalist Labor Unions (Turkey)
MJP–see Movement for Justice and Peace (Ivory Coast)
MK–see Member of Knesset (Israel)
MKDH–see Hungarian Christian Democratic Movement (Slovakia)
ML–see Liberty Movement (Peru)
ML–see Muslim League (Pakistan)
MLA–see Martial Law Administrator (Pakistan)
MLN–see National Liberation Movement (Guatemala)
MLN–see National Liberation Movement (Uruguay)
MLP–see Mauritian Labor Party
MLPC–see Central African People's Liberation Movement
MLSTP–see Liberation Movement of Sao Tome and Principe
MMA–see United Council of Action (Pakistan)
MMD–see Movement for Multiparty Democracy (Zambia)
MMM–see Mauritanian Militant Movement
MMP–see Mixed-Member Proportion (New Zealand)
MNDP–see Malawi National Democratic Party
MNLF–see Moro National Liberation Front (Philippines)
MNPP–see New Country Movement (Ecuador)
MNR–see Mozambique National Resistance
MNR–see National Movement of Revolution (Republic of Congo)
MNR–see National Revolutionary Movement (El Salvador)
MNR–see Nationalist Revolutionary Movement (Bolivia)
MNR/Renamo–see Mozambique National Resistance
MNSD–see National Movement for Solidarity and Democracy (Cameroon)
MNSD-Nassara–see National Movement for a Society of Development-Nassara (Niger)
MNU–see Movement for National Unity (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines)
Modin–see Movement for Dignity and National Independence (Argentina)
MOJA–see Movement for Justice in Africa (Liberia)
MOLIRENA–see Liberal National Republican Movement (Panama)
MOPOCO–see Colorado Popular Movement (Paraguay)
MORENA–see National Renovation Movement (Panama)
MORENA-B–see Movement for National Regeneration-Woodcutters (Gabon)
MOTION–see Movement for Social Transformation (Trinidad & Tobago)
MOVERS–see Movement for Responsible Public Service (Philippines)
MP–see Green Ecology Party (Sweden)
MP–see Member of Parliament
MP–see Millat Party (Pakistan)
MP–see Motherland Party (Turkey)
MP–see Popular Movement (Morocco)
MPCI–see Ivory Coast Patriotic Movement
MPD–see Democratic Popular Movement (Ecuador)
MpD–see Movement for Democracy (Cape Verde)
MPE–see Papa Egoró Movement (Panama)
MPF–see Movement for France
MPIGO–see Ivorian Popular Movement of the Great West
MPLA-PT–see Popular Liberation Movement of Angola–Labor Party
MPQ–see Movement for the Beloved Fatherland (Paraguay)
MPR–see Patriotic Movement for Renewal (Mali)
MPR–see Popular Movement of the Revolution (D. Rep. Congo)
MPRP–see Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party
MPs–see Members of Parliament
MPS–see Patriotic Salvation Movement (Chad)
MQM–see United National Movement (Pakistan)
MQM-A–see Mutahida Qaumi Movement (Altaf) (Pakistan)

MQM–H–see Mutahida Qaumi Movement (Haqiqi) (Pakistan)
MR–see Reform Movement (Guatemala)
MRD–see Movement for the Restoration of Democracy (Pakistan)
MRG–see Left Radical Movement (France)
MRM–see Assembly of Combatant Clerics (Iran)
MRND–see National Revolutionary Movement for Development (Rwanda)
MRNDD–see National Republican Movement for Democracy and Development (Rwanda)
MRP–see Popular Republican Movement (France)
MRS–see Sandinista Renovation Movement (Nicaragua)
MRS–see Senegalese Republican Movement
MRTA–see Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement (Peru)
MRTKL–see Tupak Katari Revolutionary Liberation Movement (Bolivia)
MSC–see Social Christian Movement (Ecuador)
MSI–see Italian Social Movement
MSL–see Liberal Salvation Movement (Nicaragua)
MSM–see Mauritian Socialist Movement
MSN–see National Salvation Movement (Colombia)
MSP–see Movement for a Peaceful Society (Algeria)
MST–see Landless Peoples' Movement (Brazil)
MTD–see Togolese Movement for Democracy
MTDP–see National Revival Democratic Party (Uzbekistan)
MTI–see Islamic Tendency Movement (Tunisia)
MUN–see Mission of National Unity (Panama)
MUZ–see Mine Workers Union of Zambia
MVR–see Fifth Republic Movement (Venezuela)
MYP–see Malawi Young Pioneers
NA–see National Alliance Party (Pakistan)
NA–see New Alliance (Slovakia)
NABR–see National Alliance for Belizean Rights
NAF–see Norwegian Employers' Association
NAFTA–see North American Free Trade Agreement
NAP–see National Awami Party (Bangladesh)
NAP–see Nationalist Action Party (Turkey)
NAP–see New Aspiration Party (Thailand)
NAPP–see National Awami Party Pakistan
NAR–see National Alliance for Reconstruction (Trinidad and Tobago)
NATO–see North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NBM–see New Beginnings Movement (Jamaica)
NCC–see Our Common Cause (Benin)
NCCR–see National Convention for Constitutional Reform (Tanzania)
NCF–see Nordic Youth Center Association
NCGUB–see National Coalition Government Union of Burma (Myanmar)
NCMPs–see Non-Constituency Members of Parliament (Singapore)
NCNC–see National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons (Nigeria)
NCNP–see National Council for New Politics (South Korea)
NCP–see National Conservative Party (Finland)
NCP–see National Constitutional Party (Jordan)
NCP–see National Convention Party (Ghana)
NCP–see Nepalese Congress Party
ND–see New Democracy (Andorra)
ND–see New Democracy (Greece)
NDA–see National Democratic Aliance (Sudan)
NDA–see National Democratic Assembly (Israel)
NDC–see National Defense Commission (North Korea)
NDC–see National Democratic Congress (Grenada)
NDC–see National Democratic Convention (Ghana)
NDF–see Namibian Defense Force
NDF–see New Democratic Front (Botswana)
NDM–see National Democratic Movement (Jamaica)
NDP–see National Democratic Party (Antigua and Barbuda)
NDP–see National Democratic Party (Barbados)
NDP–see National Democratic Party (Egypt)
NDP–see National Democratic Party (Georgia)
NDP–see National Democratic Party (Macedonia)
NDP–see National Democratic Party (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines)
NDP–see National Development Party (Trinidad and Tobago)
NDP–see Nationalist Democracy Party (Turkey)
NDP–see New Democratic Party (Canada)
NDP–see New Democratic Party (South Korea)
NDP–see New Democratic Party (Suriname)
NDP–see New Development Policy (Malaysia)
NDP Zheltoksan–see December National Democratic Party (Kazakhstan)
NDPL–see National Democratic Party of Liberia
NDRP–see New Democratic Republican Party (South Korea)
NDS–see National Democratic Party (Slovakia)
NDS–see People's Democratic Party (Serbia and Montenegro)
NDU–see National Democratic Union (Argentina)
NEC–see National Election Commission (Nigeria)
NEO–see New Horizons (Cyprus)
NEP–see New Economic Policy (Malaysia)
NERP–see New Economic Recovery Program (Zambia)

NESC–see National Economic and Social Council (Ireland)
NFD–see New Democratic Force (Colombia)
NFP–see New Frontier Party (Japan)
NFR–see New Republican Force (Bolivia)
NFSL–see National Front for the Salvation of Libya
NGOs–see Non-Governmental Organizations
NHI–see New Croat Initiative (Bosnia and Herzegovina)
NIF–see National Islamic Front (Sudan)
NIO–see Northern Ireland Office
NIUP–see Northern Ireland Unionist Party
NJAC–see National Joint Action Committee (Trinidad and Tobago)
NJM–see New Jewel Movement (Grenada)
NKK–see People's Congress of Kazakhstan
NKP–see Communist Party of Norway
NKP–see New Korea Party (South Korea)
NLC–see National Labour Congress (Nigeria)
NLD–see National League for Democracy (Myanmar)
NLD–see National League for Democracy (Tanzania)
NLF–see National Liberation Front (Yemen)
NLM–see National Labour Movement (Saint Lucia)
NLP–see Nationalist Labor Party (Turkey)
NM–see New Majority (Peru)
NMPs–see Nominated Members of Parliament (Singapore)
NNDP–see Nigerian National Democratic Party
NNLC–see Ngwane National Liberatory Congress (Swaziland)
NNP–see New National Party (Grenada)
NORAID–see Irish Northern Aid Committee (Northern Ireland)
NP–see National Party (South Africa)
NPA–see New People's Army (Philippines)
NPC–see National People's Coalition (Philippines)
NPC–see National People's Congress (China)
NPC–see Northern People's Congress (Nigeria)
NPD–see National Democratic Party (Germany)
NPF–see National Policy Forum (UK of Great Britain)
NPFL–see National Patriotic Front of Liberia
NPH–see New Party Harbinger (Japan)
NPP–see National Patriotic Party (Liberia)
NPP–see National People's Party (Pakistan)
NPP–see New Patriotic Party (Ghana)
NPS–see Suriname National Party
NPUP–see National Progressive Unionist Party (Egypt)
NRA–see National Reconstruction Alliance (Tanzania)
NRA–see National Resistance Army (Uganda)
NRB–see National Reconstruction Bureau (Pakistan)
NRC–see National Republican Convention (Nigeria)
NRC–see National Resistance Council (Uganda)
NRC–see Nuclear Regulatory Commission (U.S.A.)
NRM–see National Resistance Movement (D. Rep. Congo)
NRM–see National Resistance Movement (Uganda)
NRP–see National Reconciliation Party (Gambia)
NRP–see National Reform Party (Ghana)
NRP–see National Religious Party (Israel)
NRP–see Nevis Reform Party (Saint Kitts)
NRP–see Nevis Reformation Party (Saint Kitts)
NSC–see National Security Council (Tunisia)
NSC–see National Security Council (U.S.A.)
NSP–see National Salvation Party (Turkey)
NSP–see National Solidarity Party (Singapore)
NSS–see Nature Society of Singapore
NTC–see National Transition Council (Algeria)
NTC–see National Transitional Council (Central African Republic)
NTP–see New Turkey Party
NU–see Rise of Islamic Scholars (Indonesia)
NUCD–see National Union for Christian Democrats (Philippines)
NUP–see National Union Party (Sudan)
NUP–see National Unity Party (Myanmar)
NUPRG–see New Ulster Political Research Group (Northern Ireland)
NVU–see Dutch People's Union (Netherlands)
NWFP–see Northwest Frontier Province (Pakistan)
NWU–see National Workers' Union (Jamaica)
NYM–see Nigerian Youth Movement
NZLP–see New Zealand Labour Party
OAAB–see Austrian Association of Workers and Employees
OAPEC–see Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries
OAS–see Organization of American States
OAU–see Organization of African Unity
OBB–see Austrian Farmer's Association
OBCs–see Backward Castes (India)
ODA–see Civic Democratic Alliance (Czech Rep.)
ODP/MT–see Organization for Popular Democracy/ Labor Movement (Burkina Faso)
ODS–see Civic Democratic Party (Czech Rep.)
ODU–see Civic Democratic Union (Slovakia)
OECD–see Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
OEK–see Palau National Congress
OHR–see Our Home Is Russia
OIRA–see Official Irish Republican Army (Northern Ireland)

OLF–see Oromo (Ethiopia)
OMB–see Office of Management and Budget (U.S.A.)
OMUG–see Organizations for the Exploitation of the Gambia River (Guinea-Bissau)
OMUS–see Organizations for the Exploitation of the Senegal River (Guinea-Bissau)
ONA-JPU–see Uruguayan National Organization of Retirees' and Pensioners' Associations
ONM–see National Organization of Veterans (Algeria)
ONR–see Organization for National Reconstruction (Trinidad and Tobago)
ONUSAL–see United Nations Observer Mission in El Salvador
OPC–see Ovambolamo People's Congress (Namibia)
OPDO–see Oromo People's Democratic Organization (Ethiopia)
OPEC–see Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries
OPG–see Official Parliamentary Group (Pakistan)
OPL–see Lavalas Political Organization (Haiti)
OPL–see Organization of the Struggling People (Haiti)
OPP–see Organ of People's Power (Cuba)
OPRM–see United Party of Romas in Macedonia
ORA–see Organization of Armed Resistance (Niger)
ORPA–see Armed People's Organization (Guatemala)
OSCE–see Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
OUP–see Official Unionist Party (Northern Ireland)
OW–see Austrian People's Party
OWB–see Austrian Economic Association
OYAK–see Army Mutual Assistance Foundation (Turkey)
PA–see Arnulfista Party (Panama)
PA–see Palestinian Authority
PA–see People's Alliance (Iceland)
PA–see People's Alliance (Sri Lanka)
PAC–see Civilian Self-Defense Patrol (Guatemala)
PACIA–see Angolan Party of African Identity Conservative
PACs–see Political Action Committees (U.S.A.)
PAGS–see Socialist Vanguard Party (Algeria)
PAI–see African Independence Party (Senegal)
PAI–see Angolan Independent Party
PAICV–see African Party for the Independence of Cape Verde
PAIGC–see African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde (Guinea-Bissau)
PAIS–see Open Politics for the Social Country (Argentina)
PAJOCA–see Party of the Alliance of Youth, Workers, and Farmers of Angola
PAL–see Angolan Liberal Party
PAL–see Progressive Alliance of Liberia
PALA–see Labor Party (Panama)
PALI–see Neo-Liberal Party (Nicaragua)
PALIPEHUTU–see Party for the Liberation of the Hutu People (Burundi)
PALU–see United Lumumbist Party (D. Rep. Congo)
PAM–see Peoples Action Movement (Saint Kitts)
PAMSCAD–see Program of Action to Mitigate the Costs of Adjustment (Ghana)
PAMUC–see United Coastal Movement Party (Nicaragua)
PAN–see National Action Party (Mexico)
PAN–see National Advancement Party (Guatemala)
PAN–see National Mandate Party (Indonesia)
PAP–see People's Action Party (Papua New Guinea)
PAP–see People's Action Party (Sierra Leone)
PARENA–see Party for National Renewal (Mali)
PARM–see Authentic Party of the Mexican Revolution
PAS–see Pan-Malaysian Islamic Party
PASOC–see Socialist Action Party (Spain)
PASOK–see Pan-Hellenic Socialist Movement (Greece)
PAT–see Pakistani Awami Tehreek
PATAs–see Provincially Administered Tribal Areas (Pakistan)
PAV–see Public Against Violence (Slovakia)
PAVN–see People's Army of Vietnam
PBB–see Crescent Star Party (Indonesia)
PBDS–see Sarawak Dayak People's Party (Malaysia)
PBR–see Reform Star Party (Indonesia)
PBS–see United Sabah Party (Malaysia)
PC–see Carlist Party (Spain)
PC–see Center Alliance Party (Poland)
PC–see Conservative Party (Ecuador)
PC–see Conservative Party (Nicaragua)
PC–see Progressive Conservative Party of Canada
PCB–see Belgian Communist Party
PCB–see Bolivian Communist Party
PCB–see Brazilian Communist Party
PCB–see Communist Party of Benin
PCC–see Colombian Communist Party
PCC–see Cuban Communist Party
PCD–see Democratic Conservative Party (Nicaragua)
PCD–see Liberal Democratic Party (Angola)
PCD–see Party for the Democratic Convergence (Cape Verde)
PcdeN–see Nicaraguan Communist Party
PcdoB–see Communist Party of Brazil

PCE–see Spanish Communist Party
PCF–see French Communist Party
PCI–see Italian Communist Party
PCL–see Plenary of Legislative Commissions (Ecuador)
PCM–see Communist Party of Mexico
PCML–see Maoist Marxist-Leninist Communist Party (Ecuador)
PCMR–see Presidential Council for Minority Rights (Singapore)
PCN–see Conservative Party of Nicaragua
PCN–see Party of National Reconciliation (El Salvador)
PCO–see provisional constitution order (Pakistan)
PCP–see Communist Party (Paraguay)
PCP–see Palestine Communist Party
PCP/PEV–see Portuguese Communist Party/Green Ecologist Party
PCS–see San Marino Communist Party
PCT–see Congolese Workers' Party (Republic of Congo)
PCT–see Tunisian Communist Party
PCV–see Venezuelan Communist Party
PD–see Democrat Party (Indonesia)
PD–see Democratic Party (Ecuador)
PD–see Democratic Party (Romania)
PD–see Democratic Party (Timor Leste)
PDA–see Angolan Democratic Party
PdA–see Swiss Labor Party
PDB–see Democratic Bolivian Party
PDB–see Party of German-Speaking Belgians
PDC–see Christian Democrat Party (Argentina)
PDC–see Christian Democrat Party (Honduras)
PDC–see Christian Democratic Party (Brazil)
PDC–see Christian Democratic Party (Burundi)
PDC–see Christian Democratic Party (Chile)
PDC–see Christian Democratic Party (El Salvador)
PDC–see Christian Democratic Party (Panama)
PDC–see Christian Democratic Party (Paraguay)
PDC–see Christian Democratic Party (Rwanda)
PDC–see Peace and Development Council (Myanmar)
PDCI–see Democratic Party of Ivory Coast
PDCN–see Democratic Party of National Cooperation (Guatemala)
PDCS–see Christian Democratic Party (San Marino)
PDCs–see People's Defence Committees (Ghana)
PDGE–see Democratic Party of Equatorial Guinea
PDG–see Gabonese Democratic Party
PDG-RDA–see Democratic Party of Guinea-African Democratic Assembly
PDI–see Democratic Independence Party (Morocco)
PDI–see Institutional Democratic Party (Dominican Rep.)
PDI-P–see Indonesian Democracy Party–Struggle
PDI-P–see Indonesian Democracy Party–Struggle
PDL–see Liberal Democratic Party (Spain)
PDLA–see Angolan Democratic Liberal Party
PDM–see Mexican Democrat Party
PDM–see People's Democratic Movement (Papua New Guinea)
PDOIS–see People's Democratic Organization for Independence and Socialism (Gambia)
PDP–see Filipino Democratic Party
PDP–see Moral Force Party (Thailand)
PDP–see Pakistan Democratic Party
PDP–see Party for Democracy and Progress (Burkina Faso)
PDP–see Party for Democracy and Progress (Tanzania)
PDP–see Party for Democratic Progress (Bosnia and Herzegovina)
PDP–see Party for Democratic Progress (Bosnia and Herzegovina)
PDP–see Party for Democratic Prosperity (Macedonia)
PDP–see People's Democracy Party (Turkey)
PDP–see People's Democratic Party (Nigeria)
PDP–see People's Democratic Party (Sudan)
PDP–see Popular Democratic Party (Spain)
PDP–see Progressive Democratic Party (Argentina)
PDP-ANA–see Democratic Party for Progress-Angolan National Alliance
PDPA–see Angolan Democratic Party for Peace
PDPAM–see Party for Democratic Prosperity of Albanians in Macedonia
PDRU–see Party of Democratic Rebirth of Ukraine
PDRY–see People's Democratic Republic of Yemen
PDS–see Democratic Party of the Left (Italy)
PDS–see Democratic Social Party (Brazil)
PDS–see Party of Democratic Socialism (Germany)
PDS–see Prosperous Peace Party (Indonesia)
PDS–see Senegalese Democratic Party
PDSH–see Democratic Party of Albania
PDSR–see Social Democratic Party of Romania
PDT–see Democratic Labor Party (Brazil)
PDT–see Democratic Worker's Party (Brazil)
PdvA–see Party of Labor (Belgium)
PEC–see Provisional Electoral Council (Haiti)
PEN–see National Encounter Party (Paraguay)
PeP–see Peace Party (Turkey)
PEV–see Green Ecologist Party (Portugal)
PF–see Patriotic Front (Zimbabwe)
PFB–see Popular Front in Bahrain

PFDJ–see Popular Front for Democracy and Justice (Eritrea)
PFE–see Spanish Feminist Party
PFL–see Party of the Liberal Front (Brazil)
PFLOAG–see Popular Front for the Liberation of Oman and the Arab Gulf (Bahrain)
PFLOAG–see Popular Front for the Liberation of Oman and the Arab Gulf (United Arab Emirates)
PFLP–see Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine
PGP–see Gabonese Progress Party
PGP–see Guinea Progress Party (Guinea)
PGS–see Alliance of Primorje-Gorski Kotar (Croatia)
PGT-LN–see Guatemalan Labour Party-National Leadership Nucleus
PH–see Humanist Party (Spain)
PID–see Democratic Institutionalist Party (Guatemala)
PIL–see Public Interest Litigation (India)
PIM–see Multiethnic Indigenous Party (Nicaragua)
PINU–see Party of Innovation and Unity (Honduras)
PIP–see Puerto Rican Independence Party
PiS–see Law and Justice (Poland)
PIT–see Independence and Labor Party (Senegal)
PIT–see Ivorian Workers Party (Ivory Coast)
PIT-CNT–see Interunion Workers' Assembly-National Workers Convention (Uruguay)
PJ–see First Justice (Venezuela)
PJD–see Justice and Development Party (Morocco)
PKB–see National Awakening Party (Indonesia)
PKMAP–see National Peoples' Pathan Brotherhood Party (Pakistan)
PKMS–see Singapore National Malay Organization
PKPB–see Concern for the Nation Functional Party (Indonesia)
PKPI–see Justice and Unity Party of Indonesia
PKS–see Prosperous Justice Party (Indonesia)
PL–see Liberal Party (Brazil)
PL–see Liberal Party (Panama)
PL–see Liberal Party (Paraguay)
PL–see Liberal Party (Rwanda)
PL–see Liberal Party (Spain)
PL–see Liberty Party (Ecuador)
PLA–see Authentic Liberal Party (Panama)
PLA–see People's Liberation Army (China)
PLAN–see People's Liberation Army of Namibia
PLB–see Communist Party (Belgium)
PLC–see Liberal Constitutionalist Party (Nicaragua)
PLD–see Dominican Liberation Party (Dominican Rep.)
PLD–see Liberal Democratic Party (Central African Republic)
PLE–see "The Structure" Liberal Party (Dominican Rep.)
PLH–see Honduras Liberal Party
PLI–see Independent Liberal Party (Nicaragua)
PLIUN–see Liberal Party of National Unity (Nicaragua)
PLJ–see Liberty and Justice Party (Bolivia)
PLM–see Progressive Labour Movement (Antigua and Barbuda)
PLN–see Liberal Nationalist Party (Nicaragua)
PLN–see National Liberal Party (Panama)
PLN–see National Liberation Party (Costa Rica)
PLO–see Palestine Liberation Organization
PLO–see Palestine Liberation Organization (Israel)
PLOTE–see People's Liberation Party of Tamil Eelam (Sri Lanka)
PLP–see Peace and Liberation Party (Sierra Leone)
PLP–see People's Labor Party (Turkey)
PLP–see People's Liberation Party (Senegal)
PLP–see Progressive Labour Party (Saint Lucia)
PLP–see Progressive Liberal Party (Bahamas)
PLP–see Progressive List for Peace (Israel)
PLR–see Liberal Radical Party (Paraguay)
PLRA–see Liberal Radical Authentic Party (Paraguay)
PLRE–see Radical Liberal Party (Ecuador)
PLS–see Liberal Party (Switzerland)
PLT–see Liberal Teete Party (Paraguay)
PMAC–see Ethiopian Provisional Military Administrative Council (Eritrea)
PMC–see Military-Peasant Pact (Bolivia)
PMDB–see Party of the Brazilian Democratic Movement
PML–see Pakistan Muslim League
PML-N–see Pakistan Muslim League-N (Pakistan)
PML-Q–see Pakistan Muslim League Quaid-e-Azam Group
PMP–see Party of the Filipino Masses
PMT–see Mexican Workers' Party
PMXD–see Mauritian Party of Xavier Duval
PN–see National Project (Nicaragua)
PNA–see Pakistan National Alliance (Pakistan)
PNBK–see Freedom Bull National Party (Indonesia)
PNC–see National Conservative Party (Nicaragua)
PNC–see Palestinian National Council
PNC–see People's National Congress (Guyana)
PNC–see People's National Convention Party (Ghana)
PND–see National Democratic Party (Djibouti)
PND–see National Democratic Party (Morocco)
PNDA–see Angolan National Democratic Party
PNDC–see Provisional National Defense Council (Ghana)
PNDS-Tarayya–see Nigerian Party for Democracy and Social Progress-Tarayya (Niger)

PNEA–see Angolan National Geological Party
PNEK–see Party of People's Unity of Kazakhstan
PNH–see National Party of Honduras
PNIM–see Indonesian National Party Marhaenisme
PNL–see National Liberty Party (Romania)
PNM–see People's National Movement (Trinidad and Tobago)
PNP–see New Progressive Party (Puerto Rico)
PNP–see Pakistan National Party
PNP–see Peoples National Party (Jamaica)
PNR–see National Renewal Party (Guatemala)
PNR–see National Revolutionary Party (Mexico)
PNU–see Basque Nationalist Party (Spain)
PNV–see No Sellout Platform (Guatemala)
PNV–see Platform Ninety (Guatemala)
PNVC–see National Party of Veterans and Civilians (Dominican Rep.)
POC–see Joint Opposition Party (Eq. Guinea)
POEs–see Party-Owned Enterprises (Taiwan)
POLA–see Political Spring (Greece)
PoP–see Populist Party (Turkey)
PP–see Patriotic Party (Guatemala)
PP–see People's Party (Portugal)
PP–see Pioneers' Party (Indonesia)
PP–see Popular Party (Brazil)
PP–see Popular Party (Spain)
PP–see Progressive Party (Brazil)
PP–see Progressive Party (Iceland)
PP–see Prosperity Party (Turkey)
PPA–see Public Prosecutions Administration (South Korea)
PPB–see Brazilian Progressive Party
PPB–see Progressive Reform Party (Brazil)
PPBB–see United Traditional Bumiputra Party (Malaysia)
PPC–see Christian People's Party (Dominican Rep.)
PPC–see Popular Christian Party (Peru)
PPD–see Djibouti People's Party
PPD–see Doctrinaire Panamenista Party
PPD–see Party for Democracy (Chile)
PPD–see Popular Democratic Party (Puerto Rico)
PPDF–see Popular Party for French Democracy
PPDI–see Indonesian Democratic Vanguard Party
PPDK–see United Democratic Nationhood Party (Indonesia)
PPE–see Papa Egoro Party (Panama)
PPI–see Italian People's Party
PPM–see Party of the People of Mauritania
PPN–see Niger Progressive Party
PPN-RDA–see Niger Progressive Party-African Democratic Rally
PPOs–see Primary Party Organizations (Kazakhstan)
PPP–see Pakistan People's Party
PPP–see Palestine People's Party
PPP–see People's Political Party (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines)
PPP–see People's Power Party (Philippines)
PPP–see People's Progress Party (Papua New Guinea)
PPP–see People's Progressive Party (Gambia)
PPP–see People's Progressive Party (Guyana)
PPP–see People's Progressive Party (Saint Lucia)
PPP–see People's Progressive Party of Malaysia
PPP–see United Development Party (Indonesia)
PPPP–see Pakistan People's Party Parliamentarians
PPR–see Progressive Republican Party (Brazil)
PPS–see Popular Socialist Party (Brazil)
PPS–see Popular Socialist Party (Mexico)
PPS–see Progress and Socialist Party (Morocco)
PPSC–see Popular Social Christian Party (Nicaragua)
PPT–see Country for All (Venezuela)
PPT–see Fatherland for Everyone (Venezuela)
PPT–see People's Party of Tajikistan
PQ–see Democratic Quisqueyan Party (Dominican Rep.)
PQ–see Parti Quebecois (Canada)
PR–see Proportional Representation
PR–see Revolutionary Party (Guatemala)
PRB–see Party of the Rebirth of Benin
PRC–see Central African Republican Party
PRC–see Civic Renewal Party (Panama)
PRC–see Communist Refoundation Party (Italy)
PRC–see Cuban Revolutionary Party
PRD–see Democratic Reformist Party (Spain)
PRD–see Democratic Renewal Party (Angola)
PRD–see Democratic Renewal Party (Benin)
PRD–see Dominican Revolutionary Party (Dominican Rep.)
PRD–see Party of Democratic Renewal (Djibouti)
PRD–see Party of the Democratic Revolution (Mexico)
PRD–see Revolutionary Democratic Party (Panama)
PRDS–see Social and Democratic Republican Party (Mauritania)
PRE–see Roldosista Party of Ecuador
Pref–see Reformist Party (Dominican Rep.)
PRF–see Revolutionary Febrerist Party (Paraguay)
PRI–see Independent Revolutionary Party (Dominican Rep.)
PRI–see Institutional Revolutionary Party (Mexico)
PRI–see Italian Republican Party
PRIAN–see National Action Institutional Renewal party (Ecuador)
PRL–see Liberal Parties (Belgium)

PRLPN-Nakowa–see Republican Party for the Liberty and Progress of Niger-Nakowa
PRM–see Party of Greater Romania
PRN–see National Republican Party (Costa Rica)
PRN–see Nicaraguan Resistance Party
PRN–see Party of National Reconstruction (Brazil)
PRP–see Party of Renewal and Progress (Morocco)
PRP–see Party of Renovation and Progress (Guinea)
PRP–see Popular Revolutionary Party (D. Rep. Congo)
PRP–see Progressive Republican Party (Turkey)
PRPB–see Popular Revolutionary Party of Benin
PRS–see Radical Socialist Party (France)
PRS–see Social Renewal Party (Angola)
PRS–see Social Renovation Party (Guinea-Bissau)
PRSC–see Reformist Social Christian Party (Dominican Rep.)
PRSD–see Social Democratic Radical Party (Chile)
PRT–see Revolutionary Party of the Workers (Mexico)
PS–see Brazilian Socialist Party
PS–see Portuguese Socialist Party
PS–see Socialist Parties (Belgium)
PS–see Socialist Party (Bolivia)
PS–see Socialist Party (Chile)
PS–see Socialist Party (France)
PS–see Socialist Party (Senegal)
PS–see Solidarity Party (Ecuador)
PS–see Solidarity Party (Panama)
PSB–see Burkina Socialist Party
PSC–see Christian Democratic Parties (Belgium)
PSC–see Social Christian Party (Ecuador)
PSC–see Social Christian Party (Guatemala)
PSC–see Socialist Party of Catalonia (Spain)
PSCN–see Social Christian Party (Nicaragua)
PSD–see Democratic Socialist Party (Central African Rep.)
PSD–see Democratic Socialist Party (Central African Republic)
PSD–see Social Democratic Party (Angola)
PSD–see Social Democratic Party (Benin)
PSD–see Social Democratic Party (Brazil)
PSD–see Social Democratic Party (France)
PSD–see Social Democratic Party (Guatemala)
PSD–see Social Democratic Party (Guinea-Bissau)
PSD–see Social Democratic Party (Portugal)
PSD–see Social Democratic Party (Rwanda)
PSD–see Social-Democratic Party (Timor Leste)
PSDA–see Angolan Social Democratic Party
PSDB–see Brazilian Social Democratic Party
PSDN-Alheri–see Niger Social-Democratic Party-Alheri
PSDR–see Social Democratic Party of Romania
PSE–see Basque Socialist Party (Spain)
PSI–see Italian Socialist Party
PSL–see Polish People's Party
PSM–see Monegasque Socialist Party (Monaco)
PSN–see Nicaraguan Socialist Party
PSN–see Party of National Solidarity (Guatemala)
PSNI–see Police Service of Northern Ireland
PSOC–see Social Conservatism Party (Nicaragua)
PSOE–see Spanish Socialist Workers' Party
PSP–see Pacifist Socialist Party (Netherlands)
PSP–see Patriotic Society Party (Ecuador)
PSP–see Popular Socialist Party (Cuba)
PSP–see Progressive Socialist Party (Lebanon)
PSs–see Regional Councils (Sri Lanka)
PSS–see San Marino Socialist Party
PSSH–see Socialist Party of Albania
PSUM–see Unified Socialist Party of Mexico
PT–see Workers' Party (Brazil)
PTA–see Angolan Labor Party
PTB–see Brazilian Labor Party
PTB–see Brazilian Worker's Party
PTD–see Dominican Worker's Party
PTP–see Togolese Progressive Party
PU–see Unionist Party (Guatemala)
PUD–see Democratic Unification Party (Honduras)
PUDEMO–see People's United Democratic Movement (Swaziland)
PUN–see National Unity Party (Central African Republic)
PUND-Salama–see Party for National Unity and Development-Salama (Niger)
PUNR–see Romanian National Unity Party
PUNT–see National Workers' Party (Eq. Guinea)
PUP–see Party of Unity and Progress (Guinea)
PUP–see People's United Party (Belize)
PUP–see Popular Unity Party (Tunisia)
PUP–see Progressive Unionist Party (Northern Ireland)
PUR–see Republican Union (Ecuador)
PUSC–see Social Christian Unity (Costa Rica)
PUU–see Party of Liberty and Progress (Belgium)
PvdA–see Labor Party (Netherlands)
PVE–see Spanish Green Party
PW–see Walloon Party (Belgium)
PWP–see Peasants and Workers Party (India)
PYO–see Progressive Youth Organization (Guyana)
RAAN–see Northern Atlantic Autonomous Region (Nicaragua)
RAAS–see Southern Atlantic Autonomous Region (Nicaragua)
RAKAH–see New Communist List (Israel)

RATZ–see Citizens Right Movement (Israel)
RC–see Communist Refoundation (Italy)
RCC–see Revolutionary Command Council (Ecuador)
RCC–see Revolutionary Command Council (Iran)
RCC–see Revolutionary Command Council (Libya)
RCD–see Congolese Rally for Democracy (D. Rep. Congo)
RCD–see Rally for Culture and Democracy (Algeria)
RCs–see Resistance Committees (Uganda)
RDA–see African Democratic Assembly (Burkina Faso)
RDA–see African Democratic Rally (Ivory Coast)
RDC–see Central African Democratic Assembly (Central African Republic)
RDL–see Rally of Liberal Democrats (Benin)
RDP–see Rally for Democracy and Progress (Chad)
RDP–see Rally for Democracy and Progress (Gabon)
RDP–see Reformist Democracy Party (Turkey)
RDP–see Reunification and Democracy Party (South Korea)
RDR–see Rally of Republicans (Ivory Coast)
Renamo–see Mozambique National Resistance
RF–see Republican Front (Ivory Coast)
RGB-MB–see Guinea-Bissau Resistance-Bah Fatah Movement
RMC–see Revolutionary Military Council (Grenada)
RN–see National Renovation (Chile)
RNB–see National Woodcutters Rally (Gabon)
RND–see National Democratic Assembly (Senegal)
RND–see National Democratic Rally (Algeria)
RND–see National Rally for Development (Comoros)
RNDP–see National Assembly for Democracy and Progress (Chad)
RNI–see National Assembly of Independents (Morocco)
ROAD–see Citizens' Movement for Democratic Action (Poland)
ROAR–see Rise, Organize, and Rebuild (Guyana)
RP–see Republic Party (Trinidad and Tobago)
RP–see Republican People's Party (Turkey)
RPF–see Rally for the French People
RPF–see Rwandan Patriotic Front
RPF-SEE–see Reformational Political Federation (Netherlands)
RPG–see Assembly of the Guinean People
RPI–see Republican Party of India
RPM–see Rally for Mali
RPO–see Constitutional Offensive Party (Germany)
RPP–see Popular Rally for Progress (Djibouti)
RPP–see Radical Political Party (Netherlands)
RPP–see Republican People's Party (Turkey)
RPR–see Rally for the French Republic
RPSD–see Rally for Social Democracy (Madagascar)
RPT–see Rally of Togolese People
RSF–see Rhodesian Security Forces
RSFSR–see Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic
RSP–see Socialist Progressive Rally (Tunisia)
RSS–see Agrarian Party of Slovakia
RSS–see National Volunteer Organization (India)
RUC–see Royal Ulster Constabulary (Northern Ireland)
RUF–see Revolutionary Front (Sierra Leone)
RV–see Radical Liberals (Denmark)
RV–see Red Electoral Alliance (Norway)
S–see Janata Dal (India)
S–see Self-Defense of the Polish Republic
S/SAP–see Social Democratic Party (Sweden)
SAC–see Cabinet of the State Administration Council (North Korea)
SACP–see South Africa Communist Party
SAD–see Shiromani Akali Party (India)
SADC–see Southern African Development Council (Zimbabwe)
SADCC–see South African Development Coordination Conference (Malawi)
SADF–see South African Defense Force
SAP–see Social Action Party (Thailand)
SAP–see Structural Adjustment Program
SAPP–see Sabah Development Party (Malaysia)
SAR–see Special Administrative Region (China)
SBIH–see Party for Bosnia-Herzegovina
SBPF–see Sind-Baluch Pakhtoun Front (Pakistan)
SD–see Social Democrats (Denmark)
SDA–see Party of Democratic Action (Bosnia and Hercegovina)
SDA–see Sindh National Alliance (Pakistan)
SDA–see Singapore Democratic Alliance
SDA–see Social Democratic Alliance (Iceland)
SDF–see Social Democratic Front (Cameroon)
SDK–see Slovak Democratic Coalition
SDKU–see Slovak Democratic Coalition and Christian Union
SDL–see Party of the Democratic Left (Slovakia)
SDLP–see Social Democratic and Labour Party (Northern Ireland)
SDP–see Singapore Democratic Party
SDP–see Social Democracy Party (Turkey)
SDP–see Social Democratic Party (Bahamas)
SDP–see Social Democratic Party (Bosnia and Herzegovina)
SDP–see Social Democratic Party (Botswana)
SDP–see Social Democratic Party (Finland)
SDP–see Social Democratic Party (Iceland)

SDP–see Social Democratic Party (Japan)
SDP–see Social Democratic Party (Nigeria)
SDP–see Social Democratic Party (United Kingdom)
SDP–see Social Democratic Party of Croatia
SDPP–see Social Democrat Populist Party (Turkey)
SdRP–see Social-Democratic Party of Poland
SDS–see Serb Democratic Party (Bosnia and Hercegovina)
SDS–see Union of Democratic Forces (Bulgaria)
SDSS–see Independent Democratic Serbian Party (Croatia)
SDSS–see Social Democrat Party of Slovakia
SDSS–see Social Democratic Party of Slovenia
SDU–see Social Democratic Union (Bosnia and Herzegovina)
SDUM–see Social Democratic Union of Macedonia
SEC–see Securities and Exchange Commission (U.S.A.)
SED–see Socialist Unity Party of Germany
SEPDF–see Southern Ethiopian Peoples' Democratic Front
SF–see Sinn Fein (Northern Ireland)
SF–see Socialist People's Party (Denmark)
SFRY–see Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia
SGP–see State Reform Party (Netherlands)
SHAS–see Sephardi Torah Guardians (Israel)
SIP–see Industrial Union of Panama
SJKH–see National Council for New Politics (South Korea)
SJP–see Samajwadi Janata Party (India)
SKD–see Slovenian Christian Democrats
SKDL–see Finnish People's Democratic League
SKNLP–see St. Kilts & Nevis Labour Party
SKOI–see Standing Conference of the Civic Institute (Slovakia)
SKP–see Finnish Communist Party
SLD–see Democratic Left Alliance (Poland)
SLFP–see Sri Lanka Freedom Party
SLP–see Socialist Labor Party (Egypt)
SLP–see St. Lucia Labour Party
SLPP–see Sierra Leone People's Party
SLS–see Serbian Liberal Party
SLS–see Slovene People's Party
SMC–see Single Member Constituencies (Singapore)
SMK–see Hungarian Coalition (Slovakia)
SMP–see Sipah-I-Muhamund (Pakistan)
SMS–see Great Council of Sinhalese (Sri Lanka)
SNAP–see Sarawak National Action Party (Malaysia)
SNC–see Supreme National Council (Cambodia)
SNE–see National Education Union (Morocco)
SNF–see Sindh National Front (Pakistan)
SNP–see Scottish National Party (UK of Great Britain)
SNP–see Seychelles National Party
SNS–see Slovak National Party
SNSD–see Party of Independent Social Democrats (Bosnia and Herzegovina)
SNTVs–see Single Nontransferable Votes (Taiwan)
SODEP–see Social Democracy Party (Turkey)
SOP–see Party of Civic Understanding (Slovakia)
SP–see Center Party (Norway)
SP–see Samajwadi (Socialist) Party (India)
SP–see Samata Party (India)
SP–see Socialist Parties (Belgium)
SP–see Socialist Party (Netherlands)
SPA–see Supreme People's Assembly (North Korea)
SPD–see Social Democrats (Germany)
SPDC–see State Peace and Development Council (Myanmar)
SPK–see Socialist Party of Kazakhstan
SPLM–see Sudan People's Liberation Movement
SPO–see Serbian Renewal Movement
SPO–see Social Democratic Party (Austria)
SPP–see Singapore People's Party
SPPF–see Seychelles People's Progressive Front
SPRS–see Socialist Party of Republika Sprska (Bosnia and Herzegovina)
SPS–see Social-Democratic Party of Switzerland
SPS–see Socialist Party of Serbia
SPU–see Socialist Party of Ukraine
SPZ–see Slovak Party of Entrepreneurs and Traders
SRA–see Argentine Rural Society
SRP–see Serb Radical Party (Bosnia and Herzegovina)
SRS–see Serbian Radical Party
SRV–see Socialist Republic of Vietnam
SSIM–see Southern Sudan Independence Movement
SSP–see Sipah-i-Sahaba (Pakistan)
SSR–see Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic
SSU–see Sudan Socialist Union
STV–see Single Transferable Vote (Ireland)
SUPP–see Sarawak United People's Party (Malaysia)
SV–see Socialist Left Party (Norway)
SVLP–see St. Vincent Labour Party
SVP–see Swiss People's Party/Democratic Center Union
SWAPO–see South West Africa People's Organization of Namibia
SWAPO–see Southwest Africa People's Organization
SWATF–see South West Africa Territorial Force (Namibia)
SYN–See Coalition of the Left of Movements and Ecology (Greece)
SZ–see Green Party (Czech Rep.)
SZS–see Green Party in Slovakia

TADEA–see Tanzania Democratic Alliance Party
TAIP–see Taiwan Independence Party
TAMI–see Movement for Jewish Tradition (Israel)
TANU–see Tanganyikan African National Union
TAWU–see Grenada Technical and Allied Workers Union
TB–see Fatherland and Freedom (Latvia)
TC–see Tamil Congress (Sri Lanka)
TDP–see Telegu Desam Party (India)
TELO–see Tamil Eelam Liberation Organization (Sri Lanka)
TEU–see Maastricht Treaty of European Union
TGC–see Constitutional Tribunal (Ecuador)
TGNA–see Turkish Grand National Assembly
THM–see Tapia House Movement (Trinidad and Tobago)
TI–see Struggle Movement (Pakistan)
TIM–see I Love Madagascar
TKP–see Communal Liberation Party (Cyprus)
TLP–see Tanzania Labour Party
TMC–see Tamil Maanila Congress (India)
TPEs–see Provisional Electoral Tribunals (Ecuador)
TPLF–see Tigray People's Liberation Front (Ethiopia)
TPP–see True Path Party (Turkey)
TPSL–see Social Democratic League of Workers and Small Farmers (Finland)
TRT–see Thais Love Thais (Thailand)
TSE–see Supreme Electoral Tribunal (Ecuador)
TSE–see Supreme Electoral Tribunal (El Salvador)
TSP–see National Harmony Party (Latvia)
TTPI–see United Nations Trust Territory of the Pacific (Marshall I.)
TTS–see Toamasina Tonga Saina (Madagascar)
TUC–see Trade Union Congress (Bahamas)
TUC–see Trade Union Congress (Zambia)
TUC–see Trade Unions Congress (Guyana)
TULF–see Tamil United Liberation Front (Sri Lanka)
TUSIAD–see Turkish Industrialists and Businessmen's Association
TVS–see Tamil Nadu Agriculturalists' Association (India)
TWP–see True Whig Party (Liberia)
UAL–see United Arab List (Israel)
UAP–see United Action Party (Botswana)
UBC–see Unified Buddhist Church (Vietnam)
UBP–see Party of National Unity (Cyprus)
UC–see Constitutional Union (Morocco)
UC–see Union Council (Pakistan)
UCC–see Center-Center Union (Chile)
UCD–see Union of the Democratic Center (Spain)
Ucede–see Union of the Democratic Center (Argentina)
UCN–see National Center Union (Guatemala)
UCN–see National Civic Union (Dominican Rep.)
UCR–see Radical Civic Union (Argentina)
UCRP–see Ukrainian Conservative Republican Party
UCS–see Civic Solidarity Union (Bolivia)
UCs–see Urban Councils (Sri Lanka)
UD–see Democratic Union (Guatemala)
UD–see Democratic Union (Morocco)
UD–see Democratic Union (Poland)
UD–see Democratic Unity Party (Dominican Rep.)
UDA–see Ulster Defense Association (Northern Ireland)
UDC–see Cameroon Democratic Union
UDD–see Djibouti Democratic Union
Udemo–see Democratic Union of Mozambique
UDF–see Union for French Democracy
UDF–see United Democratic Front (Botswana)
UDF–see United Democratic Front (Malawi)
UDF–see United Democratic Front (Namibia)
UDI–see Independent Democratic Union (Chile)
UDI–see Independent Democratic Union (Panama)
UDI–see Unilateral Declaration of Independence (Zimbabwe)
UDJED–see Democratic Union for Justice and Equality in Djibouti
UDLP–see United Dominica Labor Party (Dominica)
UDM–see United Democratic Movement (South Africa)
UDMR–see Democratic Union of Hungarians in Romania
UDN–see National Democratic Union (Brazil)
UDN–see National Democratic Union (El Salvador)
UDP–see Popular Unity Coalition (Bolivia)
UDP–see Ulster Democratic Party (Northern Ireland)
UDP–see United Democratic Party (Belize)
UDP–see United Democratic Party (Gambia)
UDP–see United Democratic Party (Tanzania)
UDP–see United Democratic Party (Zambia)
UDP-Amici–see Union for Democracy and Progress-Amici (Niger)
UDPD–see United People's Democratic Party (Tanzania)
UDPE–see Union of the Spanish People
UDPM–see Democratic Union of Malian People
UDPS–see Democratic Republic of Congo
UDPS–see Union for Democracy and Social Progress (D. Rep. Congo)
UDPS-Amana–see Union for Democracy and Social Progress-Amana (Niger)
UDR–see Ulster Defense Regiment (Northern Ireland)
UDS-R–see Senegalese Democratic Union

UDSG–see Gabonese Democratic and Social Union
UDT–see Timorese Democratic Union
UDU–see Unionist Democratic Union (Tunisia)
UDV–see Volta Democratic Union (Burkina Faso)
UF–see United Force (Guyana)
UFA–see United Farmers of Alberta (Canada)
UFC–see Union of Forces of Change (Togo)
UFD–see Union of Democratic Forces (Mauritania)
UFF–see Ulster Freedom Fighters (Northern Ireland)
UFM–see Uganda Freedom Movement
UFMD–see United Front for Multi-Party Democracy (Malawi)
UFPDP-Sawaba–see Union of Popular Forces for Democracy and Progress-Sawaba (Niger)
UFRI–see Union of Federalists and Independent Republicans (Democratic Republic of Congo)
UGEMA–see General Union of Algerian Muslim Students
UGM–see United Ghana Movement
UGT–see General Union of Workers (Spain)
UGTA–see General Union of Algerian Workers
UGTT–see General Union of Tunisian Workers
UIA–see Argentine Industrial Union
UIRP–see Uganda Islamic Revolutionary Party
UJD–see Union for Justice and Democracy (Togo)
UKIP–see United Kingdom Independence Party (UK of Great Britain)
UKUP–see United Kingdom Unionist Party (Northern Ireland)
ULCR–see Union of Reconstructed Communists (Burkina Faso)
ULD–see United Liberal Democrats (South Korea)
ULF–see United Labour Front (Trinidad and Tobago)
ULI–see Union of Independent Liberals (Togo)
ULIMO–see United Liberia Movement for Democracy
ULP–see United Labour Party (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines)
UM–see Union for Change Coalition (Guinea-Bissau)
UMA–see Union of the Arab Maghrib (North Africa)
UMD–see Union for Multiparty Democracy (Tanzania)
UML–see Nepal-Unified Marxist Leninists
UMNO–see United Malays National Organization
UMOA–see West African Monetary Union
UMT–see Moroccan Union of Labor
UNA–see Ukrainian National Assembly
UNACE–see National Union of Ethical Citizens (Paraguay)
UNAG–see National Farmer's and Cattleman's Association (Nicaragua)
UNAMO–see Mozambican National Union
UNAVEM–see UN Angola Verification Mission
UNC–see Uganda National Congress
UNC–see United National Congress (Trinidad and Tobago)
UND–see National Democratic Union (Monaco)
UNDC–see National Union for Democracy (Comoros)
UNDD–see National Union for Development and Democracy (Madagascar)
UNDD–see National Union for the Defense of Democracy (Burkina Faso)
UNDP–see National Union for Democracy and Progress (Cameroon)
UNDP–see United National Democratic Party (Antigua and Barbuda)
UNDR–see National Union for Democracy and Renewal (Chad)
UNE–see National Unity of Hope (Guatemala)
UNEC–see National Union of Education and Culture (Mali)
UNEEM–see National Union of Students and Pupils of Mali
UNFA–see National Union of Algerian Women
UNFP–see National Union of Popular Forces (Morocco)
UNFP–see United National Federal Party (Zimbabwe)
UNIDO–see United Democratic Opposition (Philippines)
UNIP–see United National Independence Party (Zambia)
UNITA–see National Union for the Total Independence of Angola
UNLDDA–see National Union for the Light of Democracy and Development in Angola
UNMIL–see United Nations Mission in Liberia
UNO–see Nicaraguan Opposition Union
UNOMOZ–see UN Operation Mozambique
UNP–see National Union for Prosperity (Guinea)
UNP–see United National Party (Sri Lanka)
UNPA–see National Union of Algerian Peasants
UNPP–see National People's Party (Sierra Leone)
UNPP–see United Nigeria People's Party
UNR–see Union for the New Republic (Guinea)
UNS–see Sinarquista National Union (Mexico)
UNSO–see United Sabah National Organization (Malaysia)
UNTAC–see United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia
UNTAET–see United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (Timor Leste)
UNTM–see National Union of Malian Workers
UNZA–see University of Zambia
UP–see Patriotic Union (Colombia)

UP–see Union of Labor (Poland)
UP–see Unity Party (Liberia)
UPADS–see Pan-African Union for Social Democracy (Republic of Congo)
UPC–see Ugandan People's Congress
UPC–see Union of Cameroon Populations
UPDM–see Uganda People's Democratic Movement
UPDP–see Ukrainian Peasant Democratic Party
UPDP-Shamuwa–see Union of Democratic and Progressive Patriots-Shamuwa (Niger)
UPFA–see United Peoples Freedom Alliance (Sri Lanka)
UPG–see Gabonese Peoples Union
UPG–see Union for the Progress of Guinea
UPKO–see United Pasokmomogun Kadazandusun Murut Organisation (Malaysia)
UPM–see Ugandan Patriotic Movement
UPM–see United Peoples Movement (Antigua and Barbuda)
UPN–see Navarrese Peoples' Union (Spain)
UPO–see Union of the People of Ordino (Andorra)
UPP–see Union for Peru
UPP–see Union for the Progress of Chile
UPP–see United Peoples Party (Liberia)
UPP–see United Progressive Party (Antigua and Barbuda)
UPR–see People's Union for the Republic (Central African Republic)
UPRONA–see Union for National Progress (Burundi)
UPT–see Unity Party of Turkey
UPV–see Volta Progressive Union (Burkina Faso)
URD–see Union for Democratic Renewal (Republic of Congo)
URD–see Union for Renewal and Democracy (Chad)
URNG–see Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unity
URP–see Ukrainian Republican Party
URS–see Social Reformist Union (Guatemala)
US-RDA–see Marxist Sudanese Union (Mali)
USC–see Cameroon Social Union
USC–see Ulster Special Constabulary (Northern Ireland)
USC–see Union for Gabonese Socialism
USDA–see Union Solidarity Development Association (Myanmar)
USFP–see Socialist Union of Popular Forces (Monaco)
USP–see United Socialist Party (Botswana)
USTC–see Central African Trade Union
UT–see United Togolese Committee
UTC–see Union of Colombian Workers
UTD–see Togolese Union for Democracy
UTJ–see United Torah Judaism (Israel)
UTM–see Mauritanian Workers' Union
UTO–see United Tajik Opposition
UUP–see Ulster Unionist Party (Northern Ireland)
UUUC–see United Ulster Unionist Council (Northern Ireland)
UVDB–see Union of Greens for the Development of Burkina
UVF–see Ulster Volunteer Force (Northern Ireland)
UW–see Freedom Union (Poland)
UWP–see United Workers Party (Dominica)
UWP–see United Workers' Party (Saint Lucia)
V–see Danish Liberal Party
V–see Left Party (Sweden)
VA–see Voter's Association (Finland)
VBC–see Vietnam Buddhist Church
VCP–see Vietnam Communist Party
VGO–see United Green Party of Austria
VHP–see Progressive Reform Party (Suriname)
VLD–see Liberal Parties (Belgium)
VP–see Virtue Party (Turkey)
VRD–see Democratic Republican Union (Venezuela)
VSI–see Federation of Employees (Iceland)
VU–see Fatherland Union (Liechtenstein)
VU–see People's Union (Belgium)
VVD–see People's Party for Freedom and Democracy (Netherlands)
WCPDM–see Women's Organization of Cameroon People's Democratic Movement
WDCs–see Worker's Defense Committees (Ghana)
WP–see Worker's Party (Singapore)
WP–see Worker's Party (Turkey)
WPA–see Working People's Alliance (Guyana)
WPO–see Women's Progressive Organization (Guyana)
WTO–World Trade Organization
WTP–see Progress of the Fatherland Party (Uzbekistan)
YAR–see Yemen Arab Republic
YATAMA–see Miskito Opposition Group (Nicaragua)
YB–see Flemish Bloc (Belgium)
YCPDM–see Youth Organization of Cameroon People's Democratic Movement
YSP–see Yemeni Socialist Party
ZANC–see Zambian African National Congress
ZANLA–see Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army
ZANU–see Zimbabwe African Nationalist Union
ZANU-N–see Zimbabwe African National Union-Ndongo
ZANU-PF–see Zimbabwe African National Patriotic Front

ZAPU–see Zimbabwe African People's Union
ZCTU–see Zambia Congress of Trade Unions
ZDC–see Zambia Democratic Congress
ZDP–see Zimbabwe Democratic Party
ZIPRA–see Zimbabwe People's Revolutionary Army
ZLA–see Zimbabwe Liberation Army
ZLSD–see United List of Social Democrats of Slovenia
ZNF–see Zimbabwe National Front
ZP–see Montenegrin Together for Changes Party (Serbia and Montenegro)
ZPA–see Zimbabwe People's Army
ZRC–see Zanzibar Revolutionary Council (Tanzania)
ZRS–see Worker's Association of Slovakia
ZS–see Agrarian Party (Czech Rep.)
ZUM–see Zimbabwe Unity Movement
ZUPO–see Zimbabwe United Peoples Organization

ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF AFGHANISTAN

(Jamhuri-ye Eslani-ye Afghanestan)

By Soeren Kern



Afghanistan is a country of 647,500 square kilometers in southern Asia. It borders Iran, China, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. Its ethnic groups include Pashtuns, Tajiks, Uzbeks, Hazaras, and a number of others.

Afghanistan has a population of more than 29.9 million. More than 4 million Afghans live outside the country, mainly in Pakistan and Iran, although over 2.5 million have returned since the removal of the Taliban in late 2001.

Afghanistan identifies itself as an "Islamic republic." A new national constitution adopted on January 4, 2004, paved the way for nationwide presidential and parliamentary elections. Presidential elections were held in October 2004. Parliamentary elections were held in September 2005.

Afghanistan has had a turbulent history. The consequences of the seizure of power by Afghan Marxists in 1978 followed by the Soviet invasion to maintain them in power were devastating. More than 10 percent of the population was killed or maimed and more than half was uprooted, becoming internal or external refugees in the 14 years of liberation war and civil war that ensued. The small modern industrial and commercial sectors were decimated, and agricultural output was cut to less than half through depopulation of the countryside and destruction of irrigation systems. The ruling elite and the monarchical institutions it created to govern disappeared.

The Marxist regime managed to fend off the opposition of the mujahideen (Islamic warriors) for three years after Soviet troops were withdrawn in 1989. The collapse of the Soviet system in 1991 doomed the Kabul Marxists. When Mohammad Najibullah, the president of the Kabul government, announced in March 1992 that he was willing to facilitate a political settlement, his government lost civil and military control. No defense of the capital was attempted. The mujahideen won the civil war by default, and a peaceful transfer of power ensued.

However, when the victorious mujahideen entered Kabul to assume control over the city and the central government, a new round of internecine fighting began between the various militias, which had coexisted only uneasily during the Soviet occupation. With the demise of their common enemy, the ethnic, clan, religious, and personality differences of the militias surfaced, and the civil war continued. By late 1994 Afghanistan's internal conflict reached a stalemate. All sides constantly maneuvered for advantage, and alliances shifted constantly, but no coalition achieved dominance. Afghanistan's political and military standoff appeared to be endless.

This situation dramatically changed with the emergence of the Taliban, or Islamic students' movement. It would fill the political vacuum as the feckless mujahideen groups had failed to do. The Taliban promised peace, security, and religious leadership based on stringent application of Islamic values.

The discipline and piety established by these students appeared to offer a means for ending Afghanistan's chaos. After a tentative start the movement

became increasingly politicized. Political success quickly became closely related to the religious vision taught and then imposed by the Taliban's elders. They identified Afghanistan's troubles with religious failure. Peace and order were to be achieved by a literal application of Islamic law, the sharia, which was to govern all aspects of Muslim life. The Taliban asserted their moral right to defeat all opponents in order to unite the country under their rule, and by the end of 1998 more than 90 percent of Afghanistan had been brought under their control. Their regime was quickly recognized as one of the most oppressive in the world.

From the mid-1990s the Taliban provided sanctuary to Osama bin Laden, a Saudi national who had fought with them against the Soviets, and provided a base for his terrorist organization, al-Qaeda. The United Nations Security Council repeatedly sanctioned the Taliban for these activities. In contrast to so-called state-sponsored terrorism, in Afghanistan it was bin Laden who provided both financial and political support to the Taliban, not the reverse. From its base in Afghanistan, bin Laden's al-Qaeda network launched numerous terrorist strikes around the world, culminating in the September 11, 2001, attacks in the United States.

Following the 2001 attacks, the Taliban refused to expel bin Laden and his group from the country. In response, the United States began a military campaign against the Afghan government on October 7, 2001, targeting terrorist facilities and various Taliban military and political assets within Afghanistan. Under pressure from U.S. air power and anti-Taliban ground forces, the Taliban disintegrated rapidly, and Kabul fell on November 13, 2001.

Representatives of several different anti-Taliban factions and political groups signed the Bonn Agreement on December 5, 2001. It established a roadmap and time table for establishing peace and security, reconstructing the country, reestablishing some key institutions, and protecting human rights. The agreement contained provisions addressing military demobilization and integration, international peacekeeping, and human-rights monitoring. Under this agreement, an Afghan Interim Authority was formed and took office in Kabul on December 22, 2001, with Hamid Karzai as chairman. A Constitutional Loya Jirga (Grand Assembly) ratified a new constitution on January 4, 2004. Karzai subsequently won the presidential election held on October 9, 2004. He was inaugurated for a five-year term on December 7, 2004.

The System of Government

The new constitution, ratified on January 4, 2004, set up a new organization for government in Afghanistan. The branch system proposed in the constitution calls for a division of power between three distinct sectors of government.

EXECUTIVE

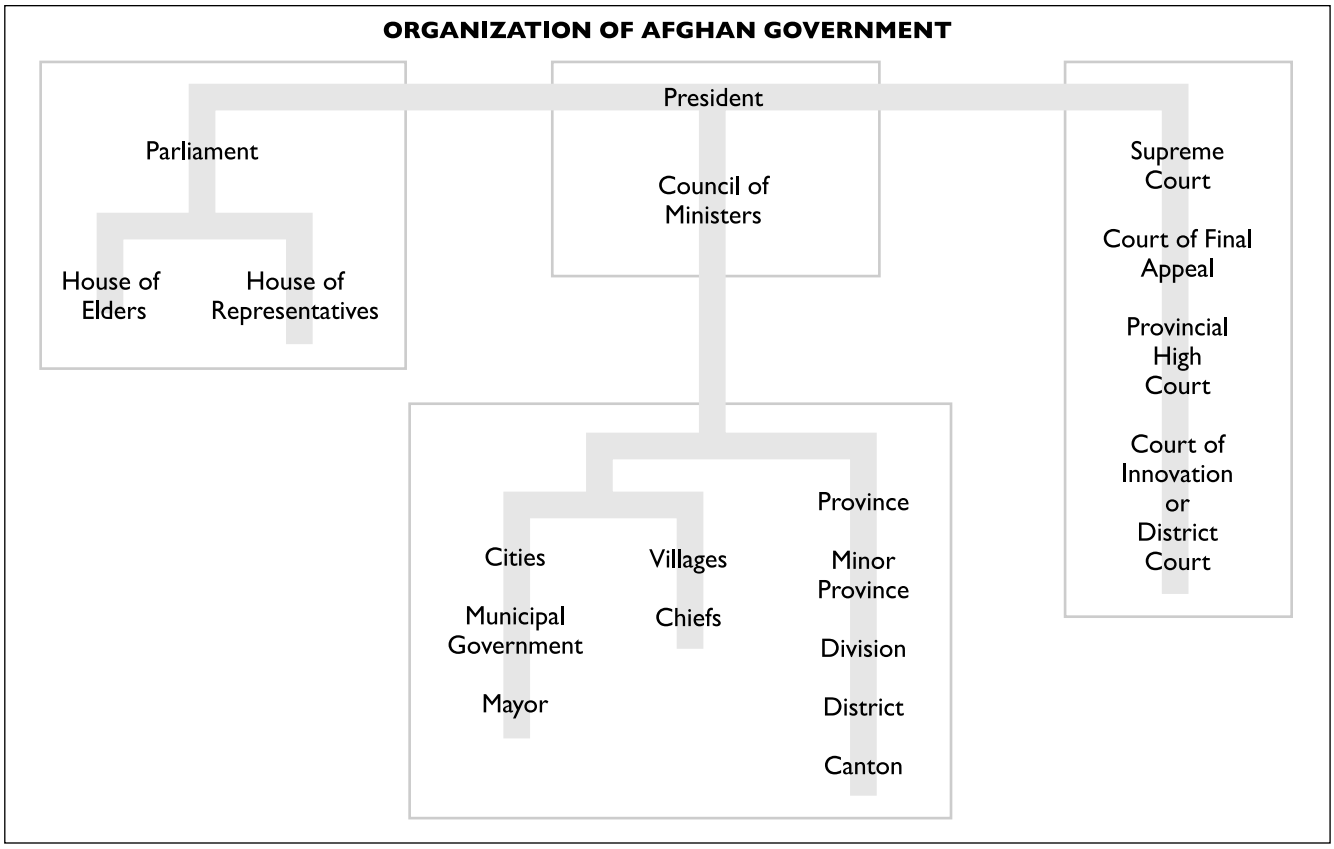
The new constitution establishes the president as the head of state, elected by direct majority vote. He/she will serve for a period of five years with two vice-presidents and is subject to a two-term limit. The president is the commander in chief of the armed forces, and he appoints ministers, the attorney general, the head of the national security directorate, and members of the Supreme Court, but only with the approval of the parliament. While the president is granted strong executive powers, his authority is checked and balanced through oversight by other branches. The constitution provides for a clear impeachment process.

LEGISLATURE

The Afghan parliament has two houses: The House of Representatives (Wolesi Jirga) and the House of Elders (Meshrano Jirga). The Wolesi Jirga is elected directly by the people and comprises 249 seats allocated to representatives from all provinces of Afghanistan. Seats are allocated in proportion to the population for each province. Each province must be represented by at least two female delegates. Candidates to the Wolesi Jirga must be at least 25 years old at the date of their candidacy. Some of the members of the Meshrano Jirga are elected; others are appointed. The president appoints members from traditionally underrepresented groups, such as the disabled and impaired, the Kochis (nomadic tribesmen), and females. Those appointed serve five-year terms. Each provincial council elects one person for four years, and each district council elects one person for three years. The minimum age of a member of the Meshrano Jirga is 35 years.

JUDICIARY

The judiciary is an independent organ of the state of Afghanistan. It consists of the Supreme Court (Stera Mahkama), high courts, and appeals courts. The Supreme Court has nine members, who are appointed



by the president for a 10-year term. A head of the Supreme Court is appointed by the president from the nine members. The Supreme Court is the highest level of legal authority in the state. Matters of law with no provision in the constitution or other standing laws are judged by Hanafi jurisprudence, a school of religious law within Sunni Islam. Courts apply the Shiite school of law in cases dealing with personal matters of those who are of the Shiite sect, where applicable.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Afghanistan is made up of 34 provinces (*velayat*). Local communities, especially at the provincial level, maintain considerable autonomy from the central government. This is especially true of the Pashtun tribes clustered in southern and eastern Afghanistan. To a lesser degree it also applies to minority communities of Tajiks, Uzbeks, Turkmen, Hazaras, Nuristanis, Baluch, and others. Local notables—who are often religious figures in the minority regions—have traditionally mediated between their followers and government officials.

The Electoral System

The Electoral Law was approved by the Council of Ministers on May 12, 2004. All Afghans 18 years of age and older are eligible to vote. The Joint Electoral Management Board, a UN-Afghan electoral body, registered nearly 11.5 million voters in the country ahead of the October 9, 2004, presidential election. Of these registered voters, 8,128,942 participated in the polls, with 40 percent female and 60 percent male turnout at 24,035 polling stations.

Hamid Karzai won the majority of votes in this October election, becoming Afghanistan's first popularly elected president. He won convincingly with 55.4 percent of the vote, well ahead of his closest rival, former interior minister Younus Qanuni (16.3 percent). With some exceptions, however, voting was largely along ethnic and regional lines. Karzai received the vast bulk of votes in the Pashtun east and south and a comfortable majority in the multiethnic west and multiethnic urban centers, including Kabul. Qanuni received 95 percent of the votes in his native Panjshir province but picked up less of the Tajik vote from other provinces than expected. The other leading candidates, Abdul Rashid Dostum and

Haji Mohammad Mohaqqeq, received the bulk of the Uzbek and Hazara vote respectively. The remaining 14 candidates shared less than 8 percent.

This clearly reflects Afghanistan's deep ethnic polarization and the continuing undue influence of warlords in the political process. Karzai has committed himself to removing the warlords, whom he described as probably the greatest danger facing the country. Yet, he also faces the daunting task of forming a strong central government in provinces where a majority voted either for militia leaders, including Dostum and Mohaqqeq, or individuals dependent on militia support, such as Qanuni.

The Party System

Afghanistan's new constitution recognizes the right to form political parties, and many prominent players have done so. More than 70 parties have applied for accreditation.

Major Political Parties

AFGHAN SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY

(Afghan Mellat)

Also known as Afghan Nation, this is a powerful Pashtun nationalist party. The party backed Hamid Karzai's presidential bid. The party leader is Anwar Ahady, who in 2005 was head of Afghanistan's central bank.

ISLAMIC PARTY

(Hizbi Islami-Gulbuddin)

This party was founded in 1976 and for many years was led by radical Islamist and former prime minister Gulbuddin Hekmatyar. The party promoted militant Islam and had extensive ties to the radical Egypt-based Muslim Brotherhood. Hekmatyar and his party were among the leading mujahideen groups that battled Soviet occupation with U.S. and Pakistani assistance, along with Burhannudin Rabbani's Islamic Society of Afghanistan, with which it has vacillated between a state of all-out war and attempts at reconciliation.

ISLAMIC SOCIETY OF AFGHANISTAN

(Jami'at-e Islami-ye Afghanistan)

Headed since 1971 by Burhannudin Rabbani, this Islamist party favors the creation of an Islamic state. It was a major mujahideen force after 1978, with its base in Peshawar. Some of the best-known mujahideen commanders were affiliated with Jami'at-e Islami-ye Afghanistan, including Ahmad Shah Masood and Mohammad Ismail Khan. Its membership comprises largely non-Pashtuns.

NATIONAL ISLAMIC MOVEMENT OF AFGHANISTAN

(Junbish-i Mily-i Islami Afghanistan)

This party was formed in 1992 by General Abdul Rashid Dostum. Dostum ran as an independent candidate in the 2004 elections. The party effectively controlled a number of northern provinces before the Taliban came to power.

NATIONAL MOVEMENT OF AFGHANISTAN

(Nizat-i-Milli)

This party was created by Younus Qanuni, the powerful former interior minister. Joined by Wali Massoud, the brother of assassinated leader Ahmad Shah Massoud, the party established cultural and educational centers, printing propaganda and recruiting. These leaders have inherited part of the party apparatus of Jamiat-i-Islami, once headed by former president Burhanuddin Rabbani, which had one of the most extensive structures among mujahideen groups. Qanuni ran against Karzai in the 2004 presidential elections.

NATIONAL SOLIDARITY MOVEMENT OF AFGHANISTAN

(Nahzat-e Hambastagi-ye Melli-ye Afghanistan)

Party leader Sayyed Ishaq Gailani was the movement's official candidate for president until withdrawing from the race on October 6, 2004. Gailani said that his withdrawal was the result of an agreement with Karzai, suggesting a deal might have been reached to assure the party of influential posts in national or local govern-

ment. Gailani urged his supporters to back Karzai in the presidential vote.

Minor Political Parties

PEOPLE'S ISLAMIC UNITY PARTY OF AFGHANISTAN
(Hizb-e-Wahdat-e Islami Mardum-e Afghanistan)

Formerly known as the Islamic Unity Party of Afghanistan (Hizb-e-Wahdat-e Islami Afghanistan), the party is led by Ustad Haji Mohammad Mohaqiq, who ran against Hamid Karzai in the October 2004 presidential elections. The party was a key member of the United Front forces of Afghanistan in the fight against the Pakistani- and Saudi-supported Taliban and al-Qaeda forces in Afghanistan. Mohaqiq also fought against the Soviets. Another prominent party member, Mohammad Sarwar Danish, left the party in December 2004 after he was named minister of justice in Karzai's new cabinet. Karzai has called for all cabinet members to abandon their ties to political parties as a means to avoid partisanship in the new government.

ISLAMIC MOVEMENT OF AFGHANISTAN
(Harakat-e Islami-ye Afghanistan)

Led by Ayatollah Mohammad Asef Mohseni, this is the only Afghan Shiite party with a predominantly Pashtun membership.

PEACE MOVEMENT
(Da Afghanistan Da Solay Ghorzang Gond)

The party's name is in Pashto. Party chairman Shahnawaz Tanai is a former minister of defense under the Soviet-backed Communist regime of Najibullah.

FREEDOM PARTY OF AFGHANISTAN
(Hizb-e Azadi-ye Afghanistan)

The party leader, Abdul Malik, was a confidant and senior foreign policy adviser to Abdul Rashid Dostum before turning against Dostum and inviting the Taliban into northern Afghanistan. Malik later fiercely opposed the Taliban.

Other Political Forces

MILITIA

Afghanistan continues to be plagued by regional warlords who run fiefs financed by an opium economy that brought in $2.3 billion in 2004. Opium production was expected to increase by 50 to 100 percent in 2005. Although many militia members have been incorporated into the new Afghan army, and others returned to civilian life, only 10,000 of the estimated 60,000 Afghan militia members have turned in their weapons. Warlords intimidated voters and candidates ahead of the October 2004 presidential election and are believed to be responsible for the attempted assassination of President Hamid Karzai in August 2004 on his first campaign trip outside Kabul. Although Karzai has challenged the warlords, his control outside of the capital remains tenuous in some places and nonexistent in others.

TALIBAN

Despite their removal from power in 2001, the Taliban stepped up recruiting and intensified strikes against newly trained Afghan soldiers and police officers, as well as foreign aid workers. They had the most impact in rural areas of southern and eastern Afghanistan, where the Afghan government was still struggling to establish its authority nearly three years after the Taliban fell. That part of the country has been a traditional Taliban stronghold. Reconstruction in some areas came to a near standstill, and local people remained hostile to the Afghan government. A Taliban campaign to derail a voter registration drive for the Afghan presidential election in October 2004 largely failed, however.

National Prospects

Although Afghanistan now has an elected president, its political transition still faces many obstacles. The Karzai government was successful in holding parliamentary elections in September 2005, despite Taliban pledges to disrupt the voting. Karzai still faces the equally daunting challenge of purging his administration of corrupt individuals, improving security, cutting

down the power of warlords, and attacking the spreading influence of the drugs trade.

The most prominent feature of the Afghan state is the weakness of its authority throughout the countryside. The government's authority beyond the capital, Kabul, is slowly growing, although its ability to deliver necessary social services remains largely dependent on funds from the international donor community. At an international donor conference in Berlin, Germany, in April 2004, donors pledged $8.2 billion for Afghanistan through 2008.

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REPUBLIC OF ALBANIA

(Republika e Shqiperise)

By Stephen C. Markovich, Ph.D.
Revised by Dora Ioveva



The Republic of Albania is a small country located in southeastern Europe. Bordered by the Adriatic and Ionian Seas on the west, Greece on the south, Macedonia on the east, and Serbia and Montenegro on the north, it is inhabited by 3.5 million people (2005 estimate). Over 95 percent of them are Albanian, less than 3 percent are Greek, and the remaining 2 percent includes several nationalities. While the number of Greeks is only about 70,000, they are concentrated in the south, and their presence does create some difficulties in the country and in Albania's relations with Greece. The overwhelming number of Albanians suggests a highly homogenous nation, but this apparent homogeneity is qualified by the fact that the Albanians themselves are divided into two subgroups, the Gegs and Tosks, who speak different dialects, reside in different areas, and have different political attitudes. Generally, the Gegs live in the northern mountainous regions and are more clannish in their political relations, while the Tosks live in the south and are more inclined toward political centralization. As distinct as their differences were and still are, they should not be exaggerated; nearly a century of authoritarian rule, under a prewar monarch and the postwar Communists, has tended to mute their traditional distinctions. Religious differences, which exist among the population as a whole rather than between Gegs and Tosks, have also been muted for the most part; despite a mixture of 70 percent Muslim, 20 percent Eastern Orthodox, and 10 percent Roman Catholic, this mixture has not played the usual divisive role in Albania, primarily because the people have a history of religious tolerance.

Unfortunately for the Albanian people, they also have a history of poverty and of living in the poorest country in Europe. Their extreme poverty has made it difficult for them to escape their primitive conditions and progress into the modern world. In many ways their present efforts to change are still handicapped by the effects of five centuries of Ottoman occupation, twentieth-century pressures by their Slavic, Greek, and Italian neighbors, and, most of all, nearly half a century of rigid Communist rule. When the Communist Enver Hoxha assumed control in 1944, he governed with an iron hand until his death in 1985. His successor, Ramiz Alia, tried to ease this rule and introduce some political-economic reforms; while his reforms were limited in scope and modest in achievement, they did set the stage for a gradual collapse of Communism. Compared with the violence and war that accompanied the demise of Communism in neighboring Yugoslavia, Communism in Albania fell with a relative whimper over a year or two. Student riots started the fall in December 1990, and a defeat at the polls ended it in March 1992. Between these dates the Communists had conceded the registration of opposition parties and the establishment of a presidential-parliamentary system. Albania's emerging democratic system was further cemented with the adoption of a constitution by popular referendum in November 1998.

The System of Government

Albania is an emerging, multiparty democracy with a strong executive and a unicameral parliament. The country's constitution was adopted by a national referendum in 1998.

EXECUTIVE

The Albanian executive consists of a president, premier, and cabinet. Interestingly none of them is elected directly by the people. The president is elected by secret ballot by two-thirds of the members of parliament, and the premier and the premier's cabinet ministers are appointed by the president and confirmed by parliament. Once the president has been elected for a five-year term, he or she can be removed by parliament only for treasonable violations or physical incapacitation and not simply for political reasons, although the first holder of the office was pressured to resign by a combination of party defeat and financial scandal. The premier and the cabinet, following standard parliamentary practice, can be forced to resign through a no-confidence vote by the legislature.

Constitutionally the president is head of state, and the premier is head of government, but practically the president has been a powerful figure in the post-Communist years. In addition to appointing the premier and other ministers, the president also, if he or she chooses, sets the agenda and presides over cabinet meetings, convenes and dissolves parliament, requires parliament to reconsider bills it has passed, appoints and receives ambassadors, and acts as commander in chief.

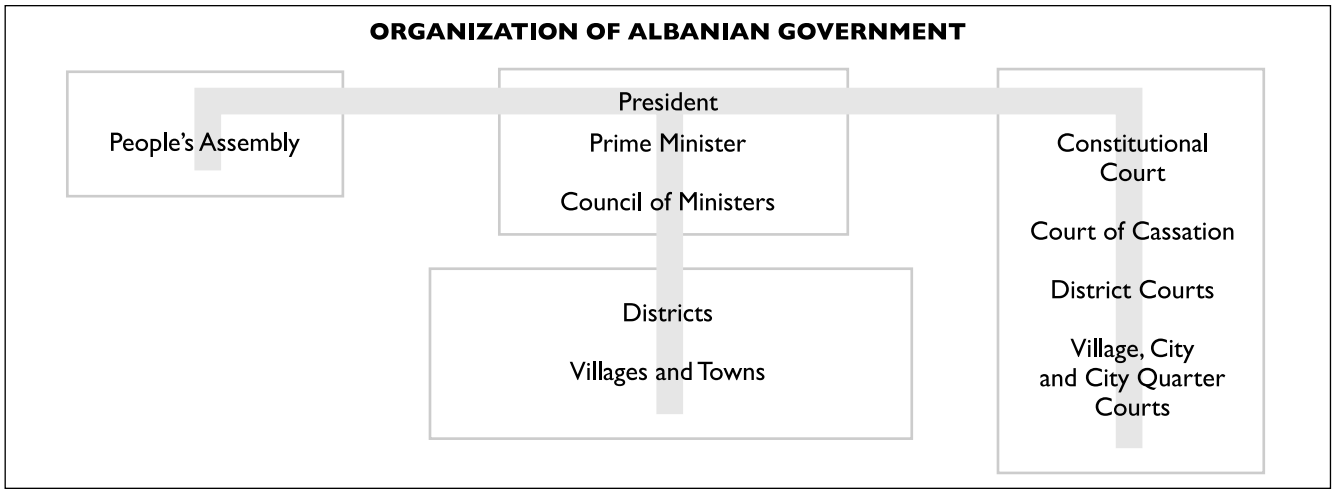
These powers made Sali Berisha, the first post-Communist president, elected to the office in 1992, a formidable leader in the country. Early in his term he began governing democratically but then became increasingly authoritarian in his rule. By 1996 he orchestrated an overwhelming parliamentary victory for his Democratic Party and a year later, in March 1997, convinced a controlled parliament to elect him to a second term by a vote of 113 to 1. Four months later, however, beset by domestic problems and foreign pressures, Berisha resigned from the presidency. Internally, riots throughout the country, precipitated by a pyramid investment scam that bilked thousands of Albanians of their savings, resulted in Berisha's losing physical control over much of the land. Externally there was constant criticism from foreign leaders of Berisha's manipulation of the 1996 parliamentary elections. As a result Berisha called for new parliamentary elections in the summer of 1997, which his party lost; when this loss was overlapped by riots, Berisha decided to resign. His successor, Rexhep Mejdani, elected in July 1997, was less aggressive in governing style and shared the executive role with the premier.

Constitutionally the premier and the cabinet, formally the Council of Ministers, are responsible for implementing domestic and foreign policies, drafting public budgets and economic programs, reaching international agreements, and generally administering the government. During the initial post-Communist years the various premiers have definitely had a secondary role in the executive, especially under Berisha as president, but this role seems to have changed following the opposition's victory in 1997. Once the Socialists gained power and made Fatos Nano premier and elected Mejdani president, the role of the premier seemed to strengthen. Nano did project the image of a person in charge, but he ran into political and economic difficulties and in the fall of 1998 was forced to resign. He was replaced by 30-year-old Pandeli Majko as party leader and Albanian premier. Further short-lived governments marked the period between 1998 and 2002, at which point the Socialist Party again won elections, and Fatos Nano became prime minister. In general elections held in July 2005, the Socialist Party and Nano appeared to be defeated by the Democratic Party, led by Berisha. However, Nano and the Socialists refused to concede, charging that the vote was marred by election fraud, a charge supported by some international observers.

LEGISLATURE

The unicameral legislature, called the People's Assembly (Kuvend Popullore), has 140 members elected directly by the people for four-year terms. Of this total, 100 are elected in majoritarian single-member constituencies and 40 through proportional representation.

The constitution states that the People's Assembly exercises sovereignty on behalf of the people and is the highest organ of state power. As the highest organ, it has the power to enact laws, amend the constitution, adopt public budgets and economic programs, ratify treaties and agreements, elect the president, confirm and discharge the premier and other ministers, appoint judges to the Supreme Court, and generally oversee the government and hold it responsible. As soon as the Communists were removed from power, the People's Assembly became an active legislature in wielding these



powers in the political system. Usually the ruling government could get its way, but the opposition could at times block bills that did not appeal to them; thus, the opposition played an important part in defeating the government's constitutional draft in 1994 and persevered against Berisha's authoritarianism long enough to oust him from office. In elections held in July 2005, the Democratic Party won 55 seats, while the Socialist Party garnered 40.

JUDICIARY

Albania uses a system of code law that is applied by a judicial branch consisting of a constitutional court, a court of cassation, an appellate court, and courts on the first level. The constitutional court has nine justices, who serve single 12-year terms on a staggered rotation; four of them are appointed by the president, and five are elected by the People's Assembly. This court, deemed the highest constitutional authority in the land, interprets the constitution, decides on the constitutionality of laws, and adjudicates disputes between the branches of government and between the central government and local governments.

When a constitutional issue is not at stake, the highest judicial authority is then the court of cassation, a bench whose chair and vice-chair are appointed by the president and confirmed by the legislature and whose brethren are directly elected by the legislature, all for seven-year terms with eligibility for second terms. Judges on the appellate and first-level courts are appointed for unspecified terms by a special authority called the Supreme Court of Justice, a body of prestigious officials headed by the president of the republic. All of the judges are guaranteed independence according to the constitution, but this independence has been difficult to sustain in practice. During Berisha's rule in the 1990s it was not unusual for his government to pressure judges and, in one instance, even succeed in engineering the removal of a Supreme Court justice. His successors appeared to be just as severe; Nano's government attempted to remove a host of judges, all Berisha appointments, on the grounds that they were unqualified.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

There are 27 districts, 43 municipalities, and 310 communes that have mayors and councils directly elected by the people for four-year terms. These governments are responsible for raising their own finances and drafting their own budgets in order to cover matters relating to housing, utilities, education, culture, and other community needs.

The Electoral System

Albania's electoral system is a combination of the two-ballot principle and proportional representation. Of the 140 members elected to the People's Assembly—the only national officials directly elected by the people—100 are elected in single-member constituencies through the two-ballot system and 40 are elected through proportional representation. Under the two-ballot system, a candidate needs a majority of the votes in order to claim the seat; if no candidate wins a majority on the first ballot, then the top two candidates vie for the seat in a second election

held one week later. Under proportional representation, the percentage of seats that each party earns is a direct reflection of the percentage of the total vote the party received. Since the major parties seem to have accepted this system, it most likely will remain in place for future elections.

The Party System

Toward the end of 1990, riots by university students mushroomed into a broader revolt that ultimately forced the Communist government to make some concessions to the people, one of which was the legalization of opposition parties. Within a short time there were over 20 parties that registered and began to compete with the ruling Communists. However, due to the advantages the Communists had in organization and financing, all but one of these parties had a difficult time mounting effective challenges. The one exception, the Democratic Party, rapidly made inroads on Communist support and made a respectable showing in the 1991 elections. A year later in the 1992 elections it was more than respectable as the Democrats defeated the Communists, now called the Socialists, and formed the government. However, after five years in power, the Democrats in turn were defeated by the Socialists and once again forced into opposition. By this time, despite the fact that a dozen or so parties were competing in the various elections, it was clear that there were only two major parties in Albania—the leftist Socialist Party and the rightist Democratic Party. Essentially Albania began to operate as a two-party system from the outset, an unusual phenomenon in aspiring democracies. This system continued to hold into 2005, with the two parties together winning 95 of the 140 parliamentary seats in the July 2005 elections.

Major Political Parties

SOCIALIST PARTY OF ALBANIA
(Partia Socialiste e Shqiperise; PSSH)

The Socialist Party is the successor to the long-ruling Communist party, which was actually called the Albanian Party of Labor. At the tenth congress of the Party of Labor, held in June 1991, the party changed its name to the Socialist Party, replaced its leadership, restructured its organization, and passed a reform program. The man placed in charge was Fatos Nano, a former premier and minister for economic relations, who had a reputation as a reformer within the old party. He immediately created an executive committee and a steering committee to supplant the politburo and central committee and promoted democratic principles and market economics to move the party toward a social democratic philosophy. As premier following the March 1991 elections, he had actually initiated some political and economic changes before the June party congress, but these neither quelled the unrest that was rising among the people nor slowed the deterioration of the economy. In June, no longer able to govern effectively, Nano resigned from office in order to allow his party to form a coalition "Government of National Stability" with four other parties, one of which was the rival Democratic Party.

While this coalition had some success in improving international ties and procuring Western assistance, it made little progress in resolving domestic difficulties, and the coalition began to fragment. By the end of 1991 the Democrats left the coalition, and in the spring elections they defeated the Socialists. Thus, after 48 years of Communist rule, the Communists or ex-Communists were no longer in power. Five years later, however, as a revamped party with a claimed membership of 100,000, the Socialists regained power and, again under Nano's leadership, resumed their drive toward the establishment of a social democracy. Nano had to resign in September 1998, and Majko assumed leadership of the party, but by 2002 Nano was back in charge of the party and became prime minister. However, Nano and the Socialists once again appeared headed toward defeat following the July 2005 elections.

DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF ALBANIA
(Partia Demokratike te Shqiperise; PDSH)

The Democratic Party of Albania was founded in December 1990 by a group of conservatives led by Sali Berisha and became the first party to register and gain legal recognition as an opposition party. It quickly developed a national organization and recruited a membership of some 60,000, which enabled it to become a viable rival to the Socialists. Though the party came in second in the 1991 elections, it was a respectable second, a showing that gave party leaders and members some confidence and momentum in the political competition. Thus, when the Socialist government weakened in June 1991 and asked the Democrats to join the coalition government, the Government of National Stability, they willingly accepted. By the end of the year, however, disillusioned with the coalition

and with an eye on the 1992 elections, they left the coalition and assumed a role as vociferous opposition. This move enabled them to defeat the Socialists and form a coalition government of their own in 1992, and it also allowed them to elect their leader, Sali Berisha, as president.

Once in power Berisha and his Democrats set out to accelerate the transformation of Albania into a genuine democracy and market economy. They began by stressing the importance of pluralism and human rights, promoted privatization in business and agriculture, and encouraged foreign investment and international ties. All of this added up to a good start, to be sure, but the Democrats could not seem to manage power moderately and soon began to abuse it excessively. They harassed the opposition, held a fraudulent election in 1996, corrupted the economy, and permitted the investment scandal that precipitated a national crisis. By 1997, with rebellious groups taking physical control of some key cities, the country was on the verge of anarchy. At the same time the Democratic Party itself was also fragmenting; as the party progressively became reactionary and shifted right, the moderate leaders and members were pushed aside. Collectively these problems and pressures forced the Democrats to call new elections in 1997—elections in which they were defeated and replaced by the Socialists in the government and presidency. The 2001 legislative elections saw the Democratic Party again run second to the Socialists, but the Democrats turned the tide in the 2005 elections, apparently winning a majority in a bitterly contested election that was marked by charges of fraud.

Minor Political Parties

There are numerous minor political parties in Albania, but none of them approach the two major parties in strength or representation in the People's Assembly. Among the minor parties are the Agrarian Environmentalist Party, the Christian Democratic Party, the Communist Party of Albania, the Democratic Alliance Party, the New Democratic Party, the Party of National Unity, the Republican Party, the Social Democratic Party, the Socialist Movement for Integration, and the Union for Human Rights party. In the July 2005 elections the Republican Party, Social Democratic Party, and the Socialist Movement for Integration each won a handful of seats.

Other Political Forces

Albania has an active and prominent military force, but it has generally stayed out of political affairs since the downfall of Communism. In 2003 the European Union agreed to begin discussions with Albania for a Stabilization and Association Agreement, the first step in what Albania hopes will eventually be full EU membership. Albania also hopes to one day join the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. The ongoing efforts to gain membership to the EU and NATO are likely to play prominent roles in the political process in years to come.

National Prospects

Following the gradual collapse of Communism and the election of the conservative Democrats in 1992 Albania seemed to be in a position to transform itself smoothly and rapidly from the old Communism to a new democracy. After all, when the Socialists lost the election, they willingly surrendered power and turned the government over to the Democrats; this is a critical test for a democracy, and the Albanians met the test on the first electoral defeat. But the Democrats fumbled their opportunity. Rather than lead the country down a progressive political and economic road, they nearly undermined the fledgling democracy and made a shambles of the economy.

Ironically it was the ex-Communists or Socialists who, having regained power in 1997, had to manage the task of getting the political-economic system back on a democratic and free-market track. This was a formidable task. Nano and his Socialist Party had to regain the confidence of the people, resolve a financial mess, right the economy, restore law and order, and draft an acceptable constitution. Surprisingly, Nano did reasonably well in the early months of his administration. The country did seem to be stabilizing, the economy—with some critical foreign assistance—was slowly turning round, and trust in the Socialists and their government did appear to be growing. However, after these initial successes, and confronted with endless problems, Nano and his Socialists reverted to their old ways of governing. They conducted wide-scale purges of bureaucrats and judges, became involved in corrupt practices, failed to control rampaging crime waves, and watched helplessly as the economy again began to flounder and inflation began to soar.

In addition to all of this, the Socialists' rivalry with the Democrats shifted from politics to violence; toward the end of 1997 a Socialist member of parliament shot a Democratic member during a political debate, and in September 1998 the Democrats retaliated by assassinating a top Socialist official. By this time the two parties were at war and the country was virtually run by two governments, by Berisha and his Democrats in the north and by Nano and his Socialists in the south. In the midst of this chaos Nano resigned as prime minister and was replaced by Pandeli Majko. After several years of chaotic government the situation stabilized in 2001, when Nano again became prime minister. Substantial reforms in the electoral process, in economic affairs, and in efforts to cement the rule of law followed. Albania's relationships with its European neighbors and with the United States also improved in the early 2000s. The 2005 elections again highlighted the bitter divisions between the two rival parties, however, with Nano refusing to concede defeat to Berisha and the Socialists charging that the elections were fraudulently administered. With the split between the two parties showing no signs of softening, further reforms and the assistance of the European Union and the United States will be important if Albania is to continue to strengthen its democratic institutions and develop its economy.

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DEMOCRATIC AND POPULAR REPUBLIC OF ALGERIA

(Al-Jumhuriya al-Jaza'iriya al-Dimuqratiya al-Sha'biya)

By Kenneth J. Perkins, Ph.D.
Revised by Dora Ioveva



Algeria, a nation of some 32 million people (July 2005 estimate), has been an independent republic since July 5, 1962, following a violent and protracted war of independence with France. In 1965, after a bloodless coup d'état by Colonel Houari Boumédienne, Algeria's fledgling constitution was suspended and its National Assembly dissolved. A National Charter was approved by 91 percent of the nation's resident voters in 1976. It affirmed "Islamic Socialism" as the guiding principle of the state and paved the way for a referendum on a new constitution, which 99.2 percent of the electorate (93 percent of registered voters) approved later in the same year.

This constitution, which remained in force for the next 13 years, provided for a single-party Socialist state with Islam as the state religion and Arabic as the official language. Political ideology was the province of the National Liberation Front (FLN), which the constitution called "a vanguard force, guiding and organizing the people for the building of Socialism." The fundamental law also outlined the organization and responsibilities of the National People's Assembly, the executive branch of government, and the judiciary. In reality, however, the 1976 constitution simply legitimized the military government that had been ruling Algeria by decree since the 1965 coup. Under the constitution Boumédienne became secretary general of the FLN and the head of a powerful executive branch that dominated the National People's Assembly.

In late 1985 the FLN proposed a revised National Charter more in line with the thinking of Chadli Benjedid, who had become Algeria's head of state on Boumédienne's death in 1978. The new document moved the country away from the dogmatic and austere Socialism of the Boumédienne era, while keeping intact such longstanding national policies as state control of key sectors of the economy and the one-party system. Almost 96 percent of all eligible voters participated in a referendum on the charter in January 1986, with just over 98 percent casting affirmative votes.

When deteriorating social and economic conditions sparked riots throughout the country in October 1988, FLN reformers drafted constitutional amendments that represented an extraordinary break with the past. For the first time in independent Algeria's history, the state and the FLN were separated; the formation of other political organizations was authorized; the commitment to Socialism was abandoned; the role of the army was circumscribed; and individual rights were emphasized. Just under three-quarters of the 79 percent of the electorate who participated in the referendum on the new document in February 1989 approved it.

The initial round of the country's first multiparty legislative elections, held in December 1991, threatened to break the monopoly of political power the FLN had enjoyed for almost three decades. Faced with this challenge, a coalition of high-ranking military officers forced Benjedid to resign, halted the electoral process, and suspended the National People's Assembly, initiating a period of intense political unrest. In 1996, with an eye toward ending what had degenerated into civil war, the newly elected president, Lamine Zeroual, con-

vened a conference attended by the leaders of some, although not all, of Algeria's legal political parties and the representatives of trade unions, civil associations, and similar national organizations.

The "Declaration of National Understanding" produced at this meeting identified Islam, Arabic, and Tamazight (the Berber language) as the three pillars of Algerian identity and forbade their exploitation for political purposes. A national referendum held in November 1996 sought approval for the inclusion of this conviction in the preamble of the constitution and for significant amendments in other facets of the fundamental law pertaining to all three branches of the government. Some 85 percent of the approximately 13 million voters who took part in the referendum endorsed the changes, although several important opposition groups accused the authorities of manipulation and fraud in the balloting. Similar accusations followed the June 1997 multiparty legislative elections, in which 66 percent of all eligible voters participated. In September 1998, amid continuing political violence, President Zeroual announced his intention to resign from office in February 1999, a year and a half prior to the end of his term. In the presidential elections of April 1999 all of the candidates except Abdelaziz Bouteflika of the FLN pulled out of the election, charging electoral fraud. Bouteflika was thus elected overwhelmingly. He launched several reform efforts during his first term. The 2004 elections were judged to be the fairest in Algeria's history, although Bouteflika was still re-elected with nearly 85 percent of the vote.

The System of Government

Algeria is a Socialist Islamic republic based on a 1976 constitution, revised in 1988, 1989, and 1996. As revised the constitution calls for competitive multiparty elections, a military subordinate to the government, and individual rights, and it outlines the organization and responsibilities of the National People's Assembly, the executive branch of government, and the judiciary. Its preamble identifies Islam, Arabic, and Tamazight as the three pillars of Algerian identity and forbids their exploitation for political purposes.

EXECUTIVE

The constitution, as amended in 1996, mandates the election of the president by universal, secret, direct suffrage every five years. The chief executive may serve no more than two consecutive terms, must be at least 40 years of age, Algerian by birth, and Muslim. If born prior to 1942, he or she must have participated in the revolution against the French, but if born after that year, his immediate family must not have engaged in antirevolutionary activity. He is the head of state and the head of the armed forces and is also responsible for national defense. He presides over the Council of Ministers, appoints the prime minister, conducts foreign policy, and may, under certain circumstances, dissolve the parliament and call early elections. When the legislature is not in session, the president may rule by decree, although laws issued under such circumstances must subsequently receive parliamentary confirmation.

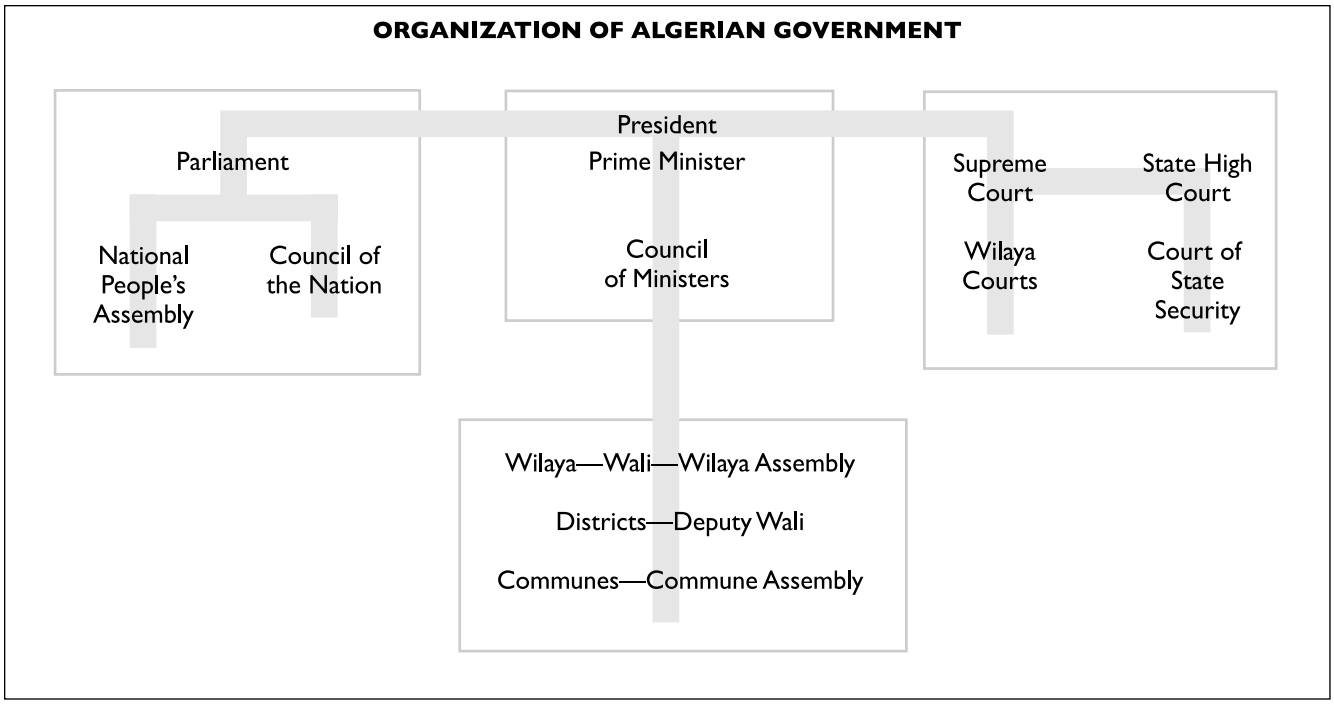
LEGISLATURE

Under the 1996 amended constitution, the legislature consists of two chambers, the directly elected 389-seat National People's Assembly (Assemblée Populaire Nationale) and the Council of the Nation (Conseil de la Nation), which is half the size of the Assembly. Two-thirds of the council's members are chosen by local government assemblies from among their own numbers, while one-third are appointed by the president. Members of the National People's Assembly serve five-year terms; members of the Council of the Nation serve terms of six years. The legislature meets in three-month sessions no more than twice a year. To carry out its prerogative to initiate legislation, which it shares with the head of government, the Assembly convenes permanent committees dealing with various affairs of state.

In the December 2003 elections the FLN won 199 of the 389 seats in the National People's Assembly. The National Democratic Rally won 48 seats; the Movement for National Reform, 43; and the Movement for a Peaceful Society, 38, with the remainder split among smaller parties and independents.

JUDICIARY

At the apex of Algeria's judicial system are the Supreme Court (Cour Suprême) and the Council of State (Conseil d'État). The latter was created by an amendment to the constitution in 1996 and is charged with protecting citizens from abuses of public power and offering advice to the government on legislation it plans to introduce. The amended constitution also established a Tribunal of Conflicts (Tribunal des Conflits) to determine which of these two bodies has competence in specific cases. The



1996 amendments also inaugurated a State High Court (Haute Cour de l'Etat) empowered to try the president and the head of state in cases of treason or other high crimes. A Supreme Council of the Magistrature (Conseil Suprême de la Magistrature), whose president is the president of the republic and whose vice president is the minister of justice, appoints all judges.

Under the Supreme Court are district courts in each of the country's *wilayas* and more than 180 courts of first instance. Special courts, created by the Ministry of Justice in 1966, hear cases involving economic crimes against the state. Defendants in these courts have no right of appeal. The Court of State Security (Cour de Sûreté de l'État), made up of judicial and military figures, tries cases related to state security. In response to the escalation of political violence, special courts to try suspected terrorists were established in 1993 but were abolished two years later.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Algeria is divided into 48 administrative districts (*wilayas*), which are further divided into subdistricts (*da'iras*) and more than 1,500 communes. Communal popular assemblies (with 10 to 80 members) and *wilaya* assemblies (with around 30 members each) have functioned since the 1960s. Until the constitutional reforms of 1989, however, electors' choices were limited to slates of FLN candidates. The minister of the interior appoints local administrators, but the president names the governor (*wali*) of each administrative district.

The Electoral System

Prior to the promulgation of the 1989 constitution, the selection of candidates to run for the National People's Assembly fell completely within the purview of the FLN. To accommodate the political pluralism guaranteed in 1989, a new electoral law was adopted in April 1991 and amended in October 1991. It retained both the practice of electing members of the Assembly by a direct, secret vote of all Algerians 18 years of age and over and the five-year terms of office for Assembly members, but it lowered the minimum age for candidates from 35 to 28 and facilitated independent candidates' access to the ballot. In another new provision, the law also mandated a second round of voting in constituencies in which no candidate received more than 50 percent of the first-round votes.

The Party System

For more than a quarter of a century after independence in 1962, the FLN enjoyed constitutional status as Algeria's sole legal political organization. Only in

1989 did a new constitution sanction the "creation of associations of a political nature." In the course of the next two years some 50 parties came into existence. Multiparty elections for communal popular assemblies and *wilaya* assemblies were held in June 1990 and for the National People's Assembly in December 1991, but the experiment in pluralism was short-lived. Following the victory of the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) in the first round of the parliamentary elections, hard-line military officers seized control of the government in January 1992 and thwarted the second round of voting. Both the High Committee of State, which acted as a collective presidency for the next two years, and Lamine Zeroual, the army officer whom the High Security Council named as president of the republic in January 1994, held out the prospect of new parliamentary elections. The government's focus on quelling the violence that had erupted in the wake of the aborted elections polarized the political culture, but Zeroual interpreted his 1995 election to the presidency in a multicandidate race as a mandate to hold parliamentary elections in 1997, albeit under an amended constitution that outlawed parties based on religion, language, ethnicity, gender, or region.

Because a multiparty political culture has existed in Algeria only since 1989 and has failed to function effectively even during much of that time, few parties have had the opportunity to articulate detailed campaign procedures or develop sophisticated institutions. Party financing has, for the most part, come from individual members, although the government did provide financial assistance to fledgling parties in 1989 to enable them to organize themselves and prepare for the first elections. During each day of the 1991 campaign the government made limited broadcast time on state-run radio and television available to candidates. The larger parties publicized their platforms through partisan newspapers established when press restrictions were relaxed in 1989. Political rallies also served to draw attention to party policies.

Major Political Parties

NATIONAL LIBERATION FRONT
(Front de Libération Nationale; FLN)

HISTORY

Ahmed Messali Hadj headed a succession of political parties (the Etoile Nord-Africain, the Parti du Peuple Algérien, and the Mouvement pour le Triomphe des Libertés Démocratiques) in Algeria between 1926 and 1962, all of which demanded the country's independence. At the same time French-educated Algerian moderates such as Farhat Abbas organized parties (the Amis du Manifeste et de la Liberté and the Union Démocratique du Manifeste Algérien) that sought guarantees of Algerian rights but not necessarily a complete break with France.

By the post–World War II years the lack of success of these older, established Algerian political leaders prompted younger men to press for more militant solutions to Algerian grievances against France. In 1954 a breakaway group of Messalists formed the FLN. The front assumed responsibility for the political direction of a revolution, which was carried out by guerrilla forces inside Algeria and by the Armée de Libération Nationale (ALN), an FLN component based on territory adjacent to Algeria. Within a few years of the opening of the liberation struggle competing organizations were either coopted by the FLN or had ceased to be significant factors. In 1958 FLN leaders formed a provisional government—the Gouvernement Provisoire de la République Algérienne (GPRA). Farhat Abbas was appointed the first premier of the GPRA, which based its government-in-exile in Tunis.

Under pressure from the United Nations General Assembly and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, French President Charles de Gaulle accepted the principle of national self-determination for Algeria in September 1959. In March 1962 the French and the FLN finally agreed to an immediate cease-fire, and France recognized the FLN as the sole legal representative of the Algerian people.

When independence formally came in July 1962 a power struggle within the FLN pitted Ben Youssef Ben Khedda, who had succeeded Abbas as head of the GPRA the previous year, against Ahmed Ben Bella, a more radical leader recently released from a French prison. To avert civil war Ben Khedda struck a deal acknowledging Ben Bella's primacy, only to find himself, along with other FLN figures who differed with the new leader, excluded from the party's list of candidates for the Constituent Assembly. Algeria's first constitution, passed by the National Assembly in September 1963, enshrined the FLN as the nation's sole political party.

In June 1965 Colonel Houari Boumédienne, whose ALN forces had supported Ben Bella in his struggle with Ben Khedda, deposed his former ally in a military coup. Boumédienne then proceeded to consolidate power in his own hands and those of a few close associates, essentially eclipsing the FLN. Although it remained the only legal party during the 13 years of Boumédienne's

rule, it became a tool of the government rather than its guiding force.

Under the leadership of President Benjedid the party experienced a revival, although during the 1980s a serious split developed between the FLN's old guard and its reformist wing. The former clung to the authoritarian and Socialist principles that had characterized the party from the outset, despite their increasingly apparent ineffectiveness in addressing Algeria's socioeconomic woes. The latter viewed liberalization and democratization as essential to the future well-being of the country. In a series of measures taken at party congresses in 1988 and 1989, and then embodied in the 1989 constitution, the reformers, with Benjedid's support, appeared to have achieved their goal of moving Algeria toward political pluralism and a liberal economy. But the poor showing of the FLN in Algeria's first multiparty elections—for the communal and *wilaya* assemblies in 1990 and the first round of voting for the National People's Assembly in 1991—revealed the magnitude of popular discontent with its 30 years of unchallenged rule. Their political and economic interests threatened by the impending cessation of the party's dominance, hard-liners, especially within the military, pressured Benjedid to resign and canceled the second stage of the National People's Assembly elections in January 1992. In 1995 the FLN joined with other opposition groups to propose ways in which to end the country's political violence and restore a more genuine multiparty system, and in 1996 it stood almost alone in endorsing the proposed constitutional amendments in the November 1996 referendum. The following year the FLN split into two parts, with the main section aligning itself with President Zeroual and eventually joining the governing coalition. In the 2002 elections the FLN again won a majority of seats in the parliament and remained part of the ruling coalition.

ORGANIZATION

From independence until the outbreak of political strife in the 1990s the chief executive and the military dominated the FLN. The principal party organs are a Congress, which convenes every five years; a Central Committee of 272 members; and a 14-member Political Bureau, whose importance was greatly reduced during Benjedid's presidency. At the local level party federations operate in the *wilayas, da'iras*, and communes.

During its years of uncontested power the FLN established or took over already existing mass associations, including the General Union of Algerian Workers (Union Générale des Travailleurs Algériens; UGTA), the General Union of Algerian Muslim Students (Union Générale des Etudiants Musulmans Algériens; UGEMA), the National Union of Algerian Women (Union Nationale des Femmes Algériennes; UNFA), the National Union of Algerian Peasants (Union Nationale des Paysans Algériens; UNPA), and the National Organization of Veterans (Organisation Nationale des Mujahidin; ONM). The organizations increased token popular participation in FLN policymaking. More importantly they provided the party with mechanisms for reducing and managing domestic discontent, although their ability to do so declined as Algeria's socioeconomic situation deteriorated in the 1980s.

POLICY

From its founding until the late 1980s, the central ideology of the FLN was Islamic Socialism. Under Boumédienne especially this translated into state capitalism, with most Algerian industries owned and managed by appropriate ministries. By the Benjedid era, however, the deficiencies in this system were looming large. Party congresses criticized previous economic policy for creating trade deficits, shortages, and corruption. In 1985 the FLN began distancing itself from exclusively Socialist policies and opening the door for increased private investment and development. The 1989 constitution, which reflected the outlook of party reformers, dropped its predecessors' explicit commitment to the Socialist path.

LEADERSHIP

With each change in regime, the type of leaders who filled elite positions within the FLN changed. During the Ben Bella government, intellectuals and revolutionaries made up the core of the FLN elite. Boumédienne's tenure saw many positions filled by members of the military. Benjedid was selected as secretary-general of the FLN in a political compromise between a pragmatic faction of the party that wished to liberalize Algeria's politics and economy and more radical hard-liners, many of them military officers, who supported an unaltered continuation of the policies of the Boumédienne government. Benjedid engineered dramatic political and economic reforms, including the formal separation of the party and the government through his resignation as FLN secretary-general (an office previously coterminous with the presidency of the republic) in 1988. He was succeeded in that post by Abdelhamid Mehri, a party militant since the revolution.

Following Benjedid's ouster and the suspension of the National People's Assembly in 1992 Mehri, like the leaders of other parties, unsuccessfully demanded the restoration of a pluralist political system. Although the

FLN engaged in periodic episodes of dialogue with the government and joined with other major opposition groups meeting in Italy in 1995 to issue a program aimed at ending the violence and restoring a genuinely plural political culture (the Sant' Egidio Pact), it refused to participate in the 1995 presidential elections unless the FIS was also permitted to do so. The FLN was virtually alone among the major political parties in endorsing the amendments to the constitution presented in the November 1996 referendum. Shortly before the 1997 legislative elections the FLN split into two camps, the mainstream of the party aligning itself with the policies of President Zeroual but a splinter group remaining critical of the government. Holding 64 parliamentary seats after the 1997 elections, the FLN joined the RND and the MSP in forming a coalition government. In the 2002 elections the FLN again won a majority with 199 seats in the Assembly, but the FLN's splinter groups mushroomed, and parties critical of the government gained seats in the Assembly. The FLN led a coalition government composed of six parties.

ISLAMIC SALVATION FRONT
(Front Islamique du Salut; FIS)

The FIS was founded in Algiers in February 1989. Its most prominent leaders were Abbasi Madani, an education professor at the University of Algiers who became the party president, and Ali Ben Hadj (Belhadj), one of the most charismatic preachers in the city. Both had participated in a wave of Islamist activity that had met with vigorous government repression in the early 1980s, although Madani had once been an FLN member of the Algiers regional assembly and had studied for his doctorate in London under government auspices. The party was managed by an executive bureau and a consultative council of some 40 members.

The political program of the FIS attacked the inefficient state-run economy with its bloated bureaucracy and advocated an emphasis on private-sector development. It demanded that all laws conform to the precepts of the sharia (Islamic law) and specifically called for the segregation of the sexes in public life, a ban on the consumption of alcohol, and the promotion of Arabic as the national language. Acknowledging the current pluralist environment, the program envisaged FIS cooperation with other reformist forces. Support for the party came from small businesspeople (who supplied considerable financial aid); from university students, especially in scientific and technical fields; and, most extensively, from the heavily unemployed and increasingly marginalized and frustrated population of young people born since independence.

After the FIS secured 55 percent of all votes cast in the communal and regional assembly elections of 1990 and won majorities in 31 of the *wilaya* assemblies and in 856 communal popular assemblies, it pressed for elections to the National People's Assembly, in which it hoped to repeat its triumph. In April 1991 the government introduced changes in the electoral law that the FIS regarded as inimical to its interests. The party reacted by organizing mass antigovernment protests that resulted in the cancellation of the elections and the arrests of Madani, Ben Hadj, and hundreds of FIS members. Leadership of the party devolved on Abdelkader Hachani, a moderate figure who accepted the terms of a revised electoral law and led the FIS into the December 1991 parliamentary elections, in which it ran candidates in every constituency.

The results of the first round of balloting made a FIS-controlled parliament a virtual certainty, prompting the Algerian army to seize power and cancel the remainder of the electoral process. Many of the thousands of FIS members who were arrested along with Hachani were sent to detention centers in the Sahara. In March 1992 the government dissolved the party and many of the local assemblies that the FIS had run since 1990. Attempts by FIS leaders in exile in Europe, headed by Rabah Kabir, to reconstruct the shattered party began in 1993. By then, however, a spiral of violence pitted FIS supporters, some of whom had taken up arms as the Islamic Salvation Army (Armée Islamique du Salut; AIS), against the government forces. The ensuing violence spawned extremist groups over which the essentially leaderless FIS had no real control.

FIS representatives joined the FLN and other Algerian opposition parties in proposing a program early in 1995 that was intended to serve as a point of departure for a negotiated settlement of the conflict and a restoration of political pluralism, but President Zeroual steadfastly refused to engage the FIS in dialogue. Thus, the party was banned from presenting a candidate in the 1995 presidential elections and encouraged its supporters to boycott the 1996 constitutional amendment referendum. The ongoing inability of the FIS to find a political solution to Algeria's problems incited increased activity on the part of other extremist groups from whom the party's leadership sought to distance itself. Following the 1997 parliamentary elections both Madani and Hachani were released from prison, although Madani remained free for only a short time before being placed under house arrest. The AIS

declared a cease-fire in October 1997, but the other extremist factions refused to participate and the violence went on unabated.

In 1999 the newly elected government of President Bouteflika declared a general amnesty for several thousand members of the AIS; the AIS disbanded in 2000. The FIS remained banned as of 2005 but was an important political force nonetheless. Its leaders continued to oppose the government and continued to be targeted by it; Ben Hadj, for example, was arrested again in July 2005 after he praised insurgents fighting the U.S.-led government in Iraq.

MOVEMENT FOR A PEACEFUL SOCIETY
(Mouvement de la Société pour la Paix; MSP)

Founded in 1991 as the Movement for an Islamic Society, the party was commonly referred to by its Arabic acronym, HAMAS. It was linked to the Egyptian-based Muslim Brotherhood, and although it advocated the creation of an Islamic state in Algeria, it eschewed the extremist philosophy and tactics adopted by such organizations as the Armed Islamic Group (GIA). The party's moderation facilitated a dialogue between its founder and leader, Shaikh Mahmoud Nahnah, and the government, even at times when other opposition parties broke off their contacts with the authorities. HAMAS, for example, was the only major political party to hold seats in the National Transition Council (NTC) created in 1994 to serve as an interim legislature. Of the NTC's 200 members, five represented HAMAS. Later in the same year, HAMAS participated in the initial opposition efforts to devise a common policy to end the civil strife but withdrew before the formulation of the Sant' Egidio Pact. In the 1995 presidential elections, Shaikh Nahnah garnered a quarter of the vote, placing second behind President Zeroual. HAMAS did not enjoin its followers from participating in the referendum on amending the constitution in November 1996, but the party did criticize the outcome of the vote, claiming that the results had been exaggerated and inaccurately reported. In April 1997, in order to comply with the amendments outlawing parties based on religion, HAMAS changed its name to the Movement for a Peaceful Society. The MSP won 69 seats in the 1997 parliamentary elections and joined the RND and the FLN in the governing coalition. The MSP won 38 seats in the 2002 elections, again joining the ruling coalition.

RALLY FOR CULTURE AND DEMOCRACY
(Rassemblement pour la Culture et la Démocratie; RCD)

The RCD was one of the first parties to appear after the liberalization of the political system in 1989. A strongly secular party, it has vigorously opposed the growing strength of Algeria's Islamists. Its base of support in Kabylia and other predominantly Berber-speaking areas, along with its demand for the recognition of Tamazight (the language of most of Algeria's Berbers) as a national language, have led to its identification with this ethnolinguistic minority.

Under the leadership of Said Saádi, the RCD shared the government's desire to minimize Islamist involvement in the political process. The party's particularism, however, set it on a collision course with the authorities and, unlike the other major opposition parties, the RCD generally avoided the episodes of political dialogue that took place in 1994 and 1995. Saádi was one of three political leaders amassing enough signatures to allow them to challenge Lamine Zeroual for the presidency in 1995. The RCD refused to participate in both the conference that resulted in the "Declaration of National Understanding" in 1996 and the referendum on amending the constitution later in the same year. On the latter occasion, the party flexed its muscles by orchestrating a general strike in Berber regions. The RCD joined the ruling coalition after the 2002 elections.

SOCIALIST FORCES FRONT
(Front des Forces Socialistes; FFS)

Hocine Ait Ahmed, a Berber hero of the Algerian Revolution, founded the FFS in 1963 as a vehicle for challenging the authority of Ahmed Ben Bella. Unsuccessful in that pursuit, Ait Ahmed fled to Europe in 1966 but remained in contact with the clandestine FFS. The party legally reconstituted itself after the political reforms of the late 1980s, and Ait Ahmed returned to Algeria in 1989. FFS demands for regional autonomy, official recognition of the Berber language, and the promotion of a mixed economy reflect its support in Kabylia, Algeria's Berber heartland. The party boycotted the 1990 municipal and regional assembly elections but ran candidates in 322 circumscriptions in the 1991 parliamentary elections. It garnered 15 percent of the total vote, securing 25 seats in the first round of the balloting.

Following the suspension of the National People's Assembly after the aborted 1991 elections, the FFS showed an interest in negotiating with the authorities with an eye toward establishing a transitional regime. By 1993, however, Ait Ahmed had concluded that the talks were futile and withdrew the FFS from them. Only in late 1994, in response to Zeroual's call for presidential elections in the next year, did the party resume an activist role, joining with other opposition forces to formulate a program intended to produce a negotiated settlement of Algeria's political crisis (the Sant' Egidio Pact). Although a brief series of talks with Zeroual took place in 1995, the FFS ultimately declined to put forward a presidential candidate and encouraged its supporters to boycott the elections because the government would not allow the FIS to take part in them. Similarly, the party boycotted the conference that resulted in the 1996 "Declaration of National Understanding," which, in turn, served as the impetus for amending the constitution. Ait Ahmed urged party members to vote against the alterations presented in the November 1996 referendum. In the 2002 elections the FFS again boycotted the contest.

NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC RALLY (Rassemblement National Démocratique; RND)

The RND was established in 1997 under the leadership of Abdelkader Bensalah. The RND gave its unqualified support to President Liamine Zeroual. In its first electoral battle the RND won 155 seats in the 1997 legislative elections—more than twice the number secured by any other party—and became the senior partner (with the FLN and the MPS) in the ruling parliamentary coalition. Although the RND won only 47 seats in the 2002 elections, it nonetheless joined the ruling coalition.

Minor Political Parties

There are numerous minor political parties in Algeria. Two parties that joined the ruling coalition after the 2002 elections were the Islamic Renaissance Movement (MRI) and the National Republican Alliance (ANR). Smaller parties not affiliated with the government included the Workers' Party (PT), the Algerian National Front (FNA), the Party of Algerian Renewal (PRA), and the Movement of National Understanding (MEN), all of which won seats in the Assembly.

Other Political Forces

MILITARY

Every president of Algeria has come from within the military. In the early days of independence factions crystallizing around several former guerrilla leaders competed with one another, and with professional officers, for influence in the FLN and the government. After a coup attempt against Boumédienne in 1967 the guerrillas were purged and the army unified. The gradual retirement of officers who had participated in the revolution and the struggles for power that came in its wake also lessened divisions within the military establishment.

President Boumédienne's top-level political associates and the leaders of many of the state corporations that flourished in his administration came from military backgrounds. Under Benjedid, the pattern of professional soldiers engaging heavily in FLN and government activities persisted, although many of the president's former comrades-in-arms did not share his willingness to countenance the liberalization of the economy and the political system. Thus, it was hard-line officers who forced Benjedid to resign in January 1992 in the wake of the FIS electoral victory. These same officers were the driving force behind the High Security Council and the High Committee of State it appointed following Benjedid's ouster. The High Security Council also chose a former military officer and minister of defense, Lamine Zeroual, as president when it disbanded the High Committee of State in 1994. Although Zeroual relied less overtly on his links to the army after his success in the presidential balloting in 1995, many of his advisers came from the ranks of the military, which, as an institution, continues to exercise considerable influence within the country. Army officers have consistently been among the most adamant critics of the Islamist political organizations and the most outspoken proponents of dealing aggressively with militant opposition groups.

TERRORISM

Domestic terrorism remains a significant challenge in Algeria, although the government's efforts to eradicate it have showed results. In the 1990s the Armed Islamic Group (GIA) was a prime instigator of the violence—not only in Algeria but also in France—but by the early 2000s it had been displaced by the Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat.

National Prospects

Since Abdelaziz Bouteflika was first elected president in 1999, the security situation in Algeria has improved in noticeable ways. Nonetheless, terrorism has not been completely eradicated, especially in the country's remote southern region. The government signed an association agreement with the European Union in 2001, and it has worked hard to restore its reputation in the international arena. In addition, the Bouteflika government has taken steps to modernize and privatize the country's economy. Alleviating Algeria's longstanding poverty and navigating the country's fractious political climate remain major challenges in the years ahead.

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PRINCIPALITY OF ANDORRA

(Principat d'Andorra)

By Robert S. Kadel
Revised by Diego Muro, Ph.D.



The Principality of Andorra is a mini-state of 70,000 inhabitants occupying 468 square kilometers (180 square miles) of the Pyrenees Mountains between France and Spain. The official language is Catalan, the dominant religion is Roman Catholicism, and the capital is Andorra la Vella.

The System of Government

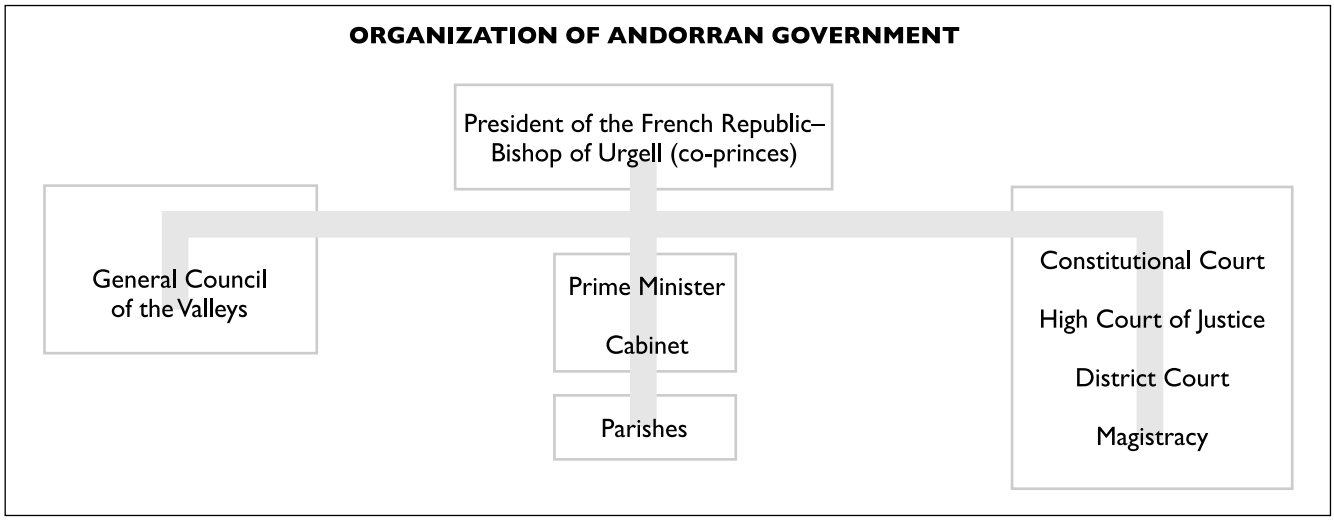
Andorra is a parliamentary co-principality that retains as its chiefs of state the president of the French republic and the bishop of the Seu d'Urgell in Spain. The co-princes call the general elections, give accreditation to diplomatic representatives, sanction and promulgate the laws, and give consent for the country to bind itself by means of international treaties, in the conditions fixed by the constitution. On March 14, 1993, Andorra voted to become a sovereign nation and adopted its own constitution. Today, although the co-principality remains nominally so, Andorra is actually a parliamentary democracy. Andorra became the 184th member of the United Nations in July 1993.

EXECUTIVE

Until Andorra's first constitution was written in 1993, the two princes mentioned above ruled the principality jointly. The current system comes from an agreement known as the Pariatges (1288), an act in which the bishop of Urgell and the French count of Foix sanctioned the territory. Following that tradition, the new constitution established an executive, made up of the prime minister (*cap de govern*) and the ministers, to conduct the national and international policy of Andorra. It also directs the administration of the state and exercises the power of regulation. The head of government is appointed by the co-princes but must first be elected by the people to the parliament and then elected by the parliament to this office. The prime minister's cabinet is also elected by the parliament and consists of the ministers of agriculture, education, finance, foreign affairs, management of the territory, and social issues and culture. The prime minister countersigns any act sanctioned by the co-princes. The power of veto lies in the prime minister's office, though prior to the constitution, the co-princes held such power.

LEGISLATURE

Legislative power rests with the unicameral General Council of the Valleys (Consell General de les Valles), a body elected every four years by direct popular vote. Only one-half of the members are elected in national elections: 14 from a single national constituency and 14 to represent each of the seven parishes (parroquies): Andorra la Vella, Canillo, Encamp, La Massana, Escaldes-Engordany, Ordino, and Sant Julia de Loria. The council represents the Andorran people,



exercises the legislative function, approves the state budgets, and promotes and controls the government's political actions. The council also appoints the prime minister, who, in turn, chooses the members of the cabinet. The laws approved by the council are published in the Official Journal of the Principality of Andorra.

JUDICIARY

The judicial system in Andorra consists of four separate groups. The Magistracy hears civil, criminal, and administrative cases with the exception of major criminal offenses, which are handled by the District Court. Appeals are heard by the Tribunal Superior de Justicia d'Andorra (High Court of Justice). Finally, the Tribunal Constitucional (Constitutional Court), whose four members are appointed to eight-year terms, is responsible for interpreting constitutional matters. The legal system is based on Catalan, French, and Spanish civil codes with no judicial review of legislative acts.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

For the purpose of local administration, Andorra is divided into seven parishes (*parròquies*), each governed by a parish council (*comú*). Each *comú* represents the interests of the *parròquies*, approves and carries out the communal budget, fixes and develops public policies within the bounds of the territory, and manages and administers all parish property, whether in the communal, public, patrimonial, or private domain. The members of each *comú* are elected by universal suffrage.

The Electoral System

One of the peculiarities of the Andorran electoral system is that only 15,000 of the total of 70,000 who reside in the country have Andorran citizenship and are allowed to vote. Only about one-third of the population are Andorran nationals. The rest are mainly Spanish (43 percent), French (7 percent), and Portuguese (11 percent).

The 1993 constitution establishes that the bishop of Urgell and the president of the French republic are responsible for calling general elections for the parliament. The legislature is elected by universal suffrage for a four-year term, 14 in two-seat constituencies (parishes) and 14 by proportional representation. In the elections held on April 24, 2005, Andorran voters distributed the 28 seats as follows:

Parties	Seats
Partit Liberal d'Andorra (PLA)	14
Partit Socialdemòcrata (PSD)	11
Centre Demòcrata Andorrà-segle 21 (CDA-S21)	2
Renovació Democràtica (RD)	1

Source: Government of Andorra (www.eleccions.ad)

The Party System

Modern party organizations date from 1992. The political parties were sanctioned the following year when the constitution was approved.

The Liberal Party of Andorra won an absolute majority in the parliamentary elections of 2001, taking 15 of the 28 seats. The PLA lost its absolute majority in the 2005 elections but retained an overall majority, taking 14 of the 28 seats. Prime Minister Marc Forné Molné, who served as prime minister for two consecutive terms (1994–2005), was succeeded in that office by Albert Pintat Santolària, who had been foreign minister under Forné's government. The Liberal Party of Andorra was founded in 1992 and was formerly known as Unió Liberal (UL). The Social-Democratic Party was founded in 2000 and is the main opposition to the PLA. Finally, the Democratic Party was founded in 2000 and was formerly part of the National Democratic Group or AND.

Major Political Parties

LIBERAL PARTY OF ANDORRA

(Partit Liberal d'Andorra; PLA)

The PLA has been the dominant party in Andorran politics virtually since its founding by Marc Forné Molné in 1992. In the 2005 elections, however, it lost significant ground to other parties, although it was still able to form a government. Forné served as prime minister from 1994 until 2005, when term limits ended his tenure. The new prime minister is Albert Pintat Santolària, while Forné remains as head of the party.

SOCIAL-DEMOCRATIC PARTY

(Partit Socialdemòcrata; PSD)

The PSD strengthened its position with its showing in the 2005 elections, when it won 38 percent of the vote and 11 seats, up from six seats in the 2001 elections. It remained the primary opposition party to the PLA. The PSD is led by Jaume Bartumeu Cassany.

Minor Political Parties

The minor parties that hold seats in the parliament include the Andorran Democratic Center (Centre Demòcrata Andorrà) and Century 21 (Segle 21), which formed a coalition and won two seats in the 2005 elections. The Democratic Renovation (Renovació Democràtica) won one seat. The other minor party of note is the Greens of Andorra (Els Verds d'Andorra).

Other Political forces

Andorra is treated as a European Union member for trade in manufactured goods (no tariffs) and as a non-EU member for agricultural products. Since the country has no national currency, it has adopted the euro. As in the case of other European mini-states, Andorra has already introduced European legislation (*acquis communitaure*) in preparation for full accession into the EU.

National Prospects

Andorra's economy is based on being a tourist destination for Spanish and French citizens. An estimated 9 million tourists visit annually, attracted by Andorra's duty-free status and by its summer and winter resorts. Overall, tourism accounts for roughly 80 percent of gross domestic product.

The status of tax haven also attracts visitors to Andorra. The unregulated Andorran banking system is said to be among the safest in the world, and several banks offer numbered accounts where a number replaces the holder's name on all documents in connection with the account. In 2002 the country was put on the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) blacklist because of its unwillingness to cooperate against fiscal evasion.

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REPUBLIC OF ANGOLA

(República de Angola)

By Robert J. Griffiths, Ph.D.



The Republic of Angola encompasses 481,351 square miles and lies on the southwest coast of Africa. In 2005 its population was estimated at 11,190,786. Like most African countries, Angola's ethnic makeup is diverse. Approximately 37 percent of the population is Ovimbundu; 25 percent, Kimbundu; 13 percent, Bakongo; and the remaining 25 percent is composed of various other ethnic groups. Some 47 percent of the country's citizens adhere to traditional indigenous religions, 38 percent are Roman Catholic, and 15 percent are Protestant.

Angola is a wealthy country, but it was brought to the brink of ruin by bitter struggles, first against Portuguese colonialism and then in the bloody 27-year civil war between the Movement of Angola Labor Party (MPLA) and the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) for control of the country. Angola's current political circumstances are the result of these struggles.

DECOLONIZATION AND CIVIL WAR

Angola was colonized by the Portuguese in the late fifteenth century, but the country's borders were drawn at the Berlin Conference in 1884–85. In 1951 the territory became an overseas province of Portugal. Armed resistance to Portuguese rule began in 1961 and was carried out by three rebel groups: the MPLA, UNITA, and the National Front for the Liberation of Angola (FNLA). Although the Portuguese were determined to maintain control of the colony and waged a brutal counterinsurgency campaign, Portugal's 1974 revolution led to decolonization.

Attempts to form a transitional government were unsuccessful, however. First fighting broke out between the MPLA and the FNLA, and the FNLA was driven out of the capital, Luanda. UNITA was drawn into the conflict on the side of the FNLA, and in October 1975 South African forces entered Angola in support of the UNITA/FNLA alliance. In November 1975 Cuban troops arrived in Angola to help the MPLA, which had received backing from the USSR and the Eastern bloc during the struggle for independence. On November 11, 1975, the MPLA, in control of the capital, proclaimed the establishment of the People's Republic of Angola under the leadership of Dr. Agostinho Neto. The loose alliance between the FNLA and UNITA countered with the establishment of the Democratic People's Republic of Angola, centered in Huambo in the central highlands. In 1976 the MPLA defeated the FNLA, and South African forces withdrew. In February 1976 the MPLA forced UNITA out of Huambo, and the Organization of African Unity recognized the People's Republic of Angola as a member state.

The FNLA and UNITA continued to offer resistance to the MPLA, but by 1979, despite the announcement of a joint FNLA/UNITA military force, the FNLA essentially ceased to function. From this point on, the struggle for power was between the MPLA and UNITA.

Angola's civil war became increasingly internationalized in the context of both the cold war and regional politics. The MPLA declared itself a Marxist-Leninist

party in 1977 and continued to be backed by the USSR and Cuba. The United States, which had supported the FNLA and UNITA, was prevented from providing the rebels further aid by the passage of the Clark Amendment in 1976. However, South Africa, which had intervened on the side of the FNLA/UNITA in 1975 and then withdrew, once again became heavily involved in Angola, both to combat Communist influence in the region and to preserve its control of what was then Southwest Africa, now Namibia.

Beginning in 1978, South Africa made periodic forays into Angola in pursuit of guerrillas from the Southwest Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) who were fighting for Namibia's independence. These military operations were increasingly directed against Angolan targets in conjunction with South African aid to UNITA and Pretoria's strategy to destabilize its regional neighbors and discourage support of anti-apartheid rebels.

South Africa appeared to change its policy in 1984, when it signed an agreement with the Angolan government. The agreement provided for South Africa's withdrawal from Angola in return for Luanda's restraint of SWAPO forces using Angolan territory as a base of operations. The agreement was also contingent on South Africa's moving toward granting independence to Namibia in accordance with UN Security Council Resolution 435. While South Africa officially withdrew its troops in April 1985, a South African unit was caught trying to sabotage an Angolan oil facility in Cabinda only a month later. South Africa resumed its incursions soon after that, and these continued until the agreement on Namibia's independence in 1988.

After the 1980 elections in the United States the Reagan administration, as part of its aggressive strategy against Communist regimes, secured the repeal of the Clark Amendment in 1985. This permitted the resumption of U.S. economic and military aid to UNITA.

Fighting escalated in 1987 and 1988 with South Africa becoming more deeply involved, eventually engaging Cuban forces directly. Talks concerning a settlement in Angola and independence for Namibia took place on and off during 1987 and early 1988 but failed to produce an agreement. The situation changed significantly in 1988, when South African forces suffered a major defeat at the hands of a combined Angolan-Cuban force that effectively used Soviet antiaircraft weapons to negate South Africa's air superiority. Following this setback South Africa entered exploratory talks with Cuba and Angola in May 1988, with the United States serving as mediator. Subsequent talks between the major actors in the conflict led to an agreement in December 1988 that stipulated a timetable for Namibian independence, the withdrawal of Cuban troops from Angola, an end to South African aid to UNITA, and the departure of African National Congress personnel from Angola. In conjunction with the agreements, the UN Security Council authorized the creation of the UN Angola Verification Mission (UNAVEM) to monitor the withdrawal of Cuban troops.

ELECTIONS AND RENEWED CIVIL WAR

The 1988 agreements did not, however, resolve the domestic struggle for political power. A June 1989 cease-fire between the MPLA government and UNITA broke down quickly, as did attempts to negotiate another cease-fire, and fighting continued. Finally, in 1990, both sides made considerable concessions. UNITA announced it would recognize President Jose Eduardo dos Santos as head of state and accept the MPLA as an interim government, pending elections. The MPLA's central committee agreed to the emergence of a multiparty political system and announced other reforms including a shift from Marxism-Leninism to democratic Socialism, the introduction of a market economy, legalization of political parties, constitutional revision, and multiparty elections by 1994.

In April 1990 a peace agreement signed in Estoril, Portugal, produced a cease-fire, a plan for the formation of a new army composed of equal numbers of MPLA and UNITA soldiers, and an agreement to hold democratic elections by the end of 1992.

The run-up to the presidential and legislative elections was characterized by continued tension and periodic fighting that threatened to derail the peace process, but the elections took place as scheduled on September 29–30, 1992. There were 12 presidential candidates, and 220 seats in the National Assembly were contested. Participation levels were high, and international observers judged the elections to be free and fair. When it became apparent that the MPLA would win the elections, UNITA leader Jonas Savimbi rejected the results, saying the vote was fraudulent and demanding an investigation. UNITA subsequently withdrew from the newly established army, and war between the MPLA and UNITA resumed with a vengeance.

Throughout 1993 the war continued, as did efforts to end the fighting. UNITA was largely held responsible for the resumption of the fighting, and in September 1993 the UN Security Council imposed sanctions against UNITA, prohibiting shipments

of oil and arms. Further sanctions were promised unless UNITA agreed to end its military activity. The United States also announced its intention to recognize the dos Santos government. After more negotiations, accompanied by continued fighting that resulted in the Angolan conflict's being designated the "world's worst war," a peace accord was finally signed in Lusaka, Zambia, in November 1994. At a meeting between Savimbi and dos Santos in May 1995 Savimbi officially recognized dos Santos as president, and both committed themselves to the Lusaka Accord and cooperation in national reconstruction. In June 1995 the MPLA proposed constitutional changes creating two vice presidents, one of which was offered to Savimbi contingent on demobilization of UNITA soldiers. The slow pace of this process resulted in dos Santos's appointing a new government in June 1996 in which the National Assembly Speaker, Fernando José França Van Dúnem, became prime minister. This government contained no UNITA representatives although the government said they would be included as soon as UNITA met its obligations under the Lusaka agreement.

In April 1997 the Government of Unity and National Reconciliation was finally established after three previous attempts. Under this arrangement Savimbi was given a special role as leader of the opposition, but he did not attend the ceremony marking the inauguration of the new government. His absence cast some doubt on the continued success of the peace process. This doubt was further reinforced when some other senior UNITA members remained outside the government, saying they preferred to remain in opposition.

At the end of October 1997 the UN imposed additional sanctions on UNITA for failure to abide by the Lusaka agreement. Although UNITA announced that it would disband its remaining forces and was recognized as a legally constituted party in March 1998, by June fighting had spread to 14 of the country's 18 provinces. At the end of August 1998 the government suspended UNITA's government and parliamentary representatives from office.

A split emerged within UNITA in early September when a splinter group UNITA-Renovada (UNITA-R) declared the suspension of Savimbi and the establishment of a new UNITA leadership pending a party congress. The National Assembly revoked Savimbi's special status in October 1998, and the struggle for leadership of the movement increased when UNITA-R failed to secure leadership of the party's parliamentary contingent. Instead, Abel Chivukuvuku was elected UNITA's chairman and while he declared he no longer supported Savimbi, he did not back UNITA-R, choosing instead to form his own faction.

In January 1999 President dos Santos reorganized the Council of Ministers and assumed the post of premier. In October 1999 government forces began a large-scale offensive against UNITA, leading to talks between the two sides beginning in June 2000. UNITA put forth a 12-point peace plan in October, which was rejected by the government. Fighting continued, and although Savimbi indicated that he was prepared to abide by the Lusaka agreement, the government rejected a continuation of talks and offered to negotiate with UNITA-R.

THE 2002 CEASE-FIRE

Reflecting the country's weariness with the war, a coalition of church and civic groups launched an appeal for peace. Nevertheless, fighting continued, and in a government offensive in February 2002, UNITA leader Jonas Savimbi was killed. His replacement, Antonio Demba, was also reported killed shortly thereafter. Savimbi's death effectively ended UNITA's military challenge to the government. The armed forces halted their offensive against UNITA in March 2002 and signed a memorandum of understanding with UNITA later that month. Shortly after that a cease-fire agreement was announced, and UNITA accepted the Lusaka agreement, ending the war.

Angola's civil war also prompted intervention in neighboring countries. During the conflict in the former Zaire, now the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), the Angolan government supported rebels led by Laurent Kabila in their effort to oust Mobutu Sese Seko from power. Mobutu had allowed UNITA to use Zaire as a conduit for smuggling diamonds and arms, and UNITA sent troops to support Mobutu in his effort to retain power. Angolan forces also offered military support after the August 1998 rebellion against Kabila. Angola finally withdrew its troops from the Democratic Republic of Congo in October 2002.

Angola also supported the former leader of the Republic of Congo, General Denis Sassou-Nguesso, in his effort to oust President Pascal Lissouba. This intervention was prompted by attacks by both the Front for the Liberation of the Enclave of Cabinda (FLEC) and UNITA, operating from safe havens in Congo, against the Angolan enclave of Cabinda. Angolan support helped Sassou-Nguesso return to power. By mid-2003 the Angolan armed forces had reduced the threat in

Cabinda to pockets of resistance in the north, and FLEC indicated its willingness to negotiate a peace agreement that would guarantee the enclave autonomy. The government also indicated a willingness to negotiate, but the rebellion collapsed with the defection of 18 former FLEC officers to the Angolan armed forces.

The System of Government

In theory Angola is a multiparty democracy, although decades of civil war have prevented the genuine establishment of any such government. In practice, since the end of the civil war in 2002, the country has operated as a one-party state under the authoritarian rule of Jose Eduardo dos Santos.

EXECUTIVE

The president is directly elected by a secret ballot for a term of five years and may be reelected for two consecutive or nonconsecutive terms. The president is the head of state, head of government, and commander in chief of the armed forces. He or she also has the power to appoint and dismiss the prime minister, the cabinet ministers, and other government officials, to appoint the Supreme Court judges, to preside over the Council of Ministers, to declare war and make peace with the authorization of the National Assembly, to preside over the National Defense Council, to declare a state of siege or emergency, to announce the holding of general elections, issue pardons, and commute sentences, and to perform all other duties specified by the constitution. The president and head of state is Jose Eduardo dos Santos, and the prime minister is Fernando de Piedade Dias dos Santos.

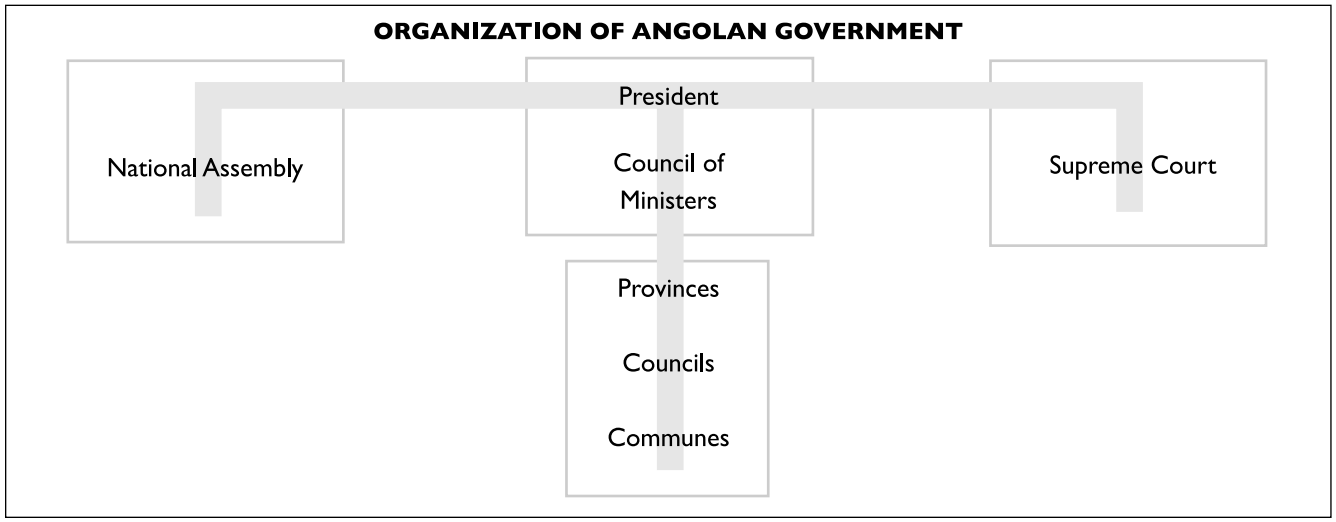
LEGISLATURE

The National Assembly is made up of 220 deputies elected for a term of four years. The government is responsible to the National Assembly. The National Assembly meets twice a year and in special sessions when convened by the president or on the initiative of the Standing Commission of the National Assembly or of no less than one-third of the deputies. The Standing Commission represents the National Assembly and exercises legislative powers between sessions. Angola's first multiparty democratic elections in 1992 produced the following distribution of seats:

Party	Seats
MPLA-PT	129
UNITA	70
Social Renewal Party	6
National Front for the Liberation of Angola	5
Liberal Democratic Party	3

Angolan Democratic Forum, Angolan National Democratic Party, Democratic Alliance of Angola, Democratic Party for Progress–Angolan National Alliance, Democratic Renewal Party, Party of the Alliance of Youths, Workers, and Farmers, and the Social Democratic Party—1 seat each (Three seats set aside for overseas Angolans were not filled).

The renewal of civil war by UNITA precluded both the runoff election scheduled for 1992 and all subse-



quent elections. President dos Santos pledged to hold legislative elections in 2006.

JUDICIARY

According to the constitution, the organization, composition, and competence of the courts shall be established by law. Judges are to be independent in their duties. There is a constitutional court that can rule on legal and constitutional matters and consists of seven judges, three of whom are nominated by the president, three elected by the National Assembly, and one elected by a full session of the Supreme Court. In addition to the Supreme Court, there are also provincial courts and municipal courts. Supreme Court judges are appointed by the president.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Angola is divided into 18 provinces, each headed by a provincial assembly that consists of 55 to 85 deputies. The executive bodies of the provincial assemblies are the provincial governments, led by provincial governors who are answerable to the provincial assemblies, the council of ministers, and the president. The provinces are further subdivided into councils, communes, circles, neighborhoods, and villages.

The Electoral System

Prior to the 1992 elections the MPLA and UNITA agreed to a proportional representation system. Under this system each province is represented by five members. The remaining 130 deputies are elected at the national level according to proportional representation. All citizens age 18 and older are eligible to vote.

The Party System

Since the end of the civil war in 2002 Angola has been an authoritarian state under the rule of one party, the Popular Liberation Movement of Angola (MPLA) led by President dos Santos. The party has endorsed multiparty elections, the next of which is to occur in 2006, but no party has enough power to present a challenge. UNITA, the second party in influence, is now part of the MPLA ruling coalition.

Major Political Parties

POPULAR LIBERATION MOVEMENT OF ANGOLA–LABOR PARTY (MPLA–PT)

The MPLA was established in 1956 and was one of the original three groups that took up arms against the Portuguese. The MPLA was backed by the former USSR and proclaimed the People's Republic of Angola after independence in 1975. The MPLA became a Marxist-Leninist party after its first party congress in 1977. Locked in a bitter civil war with UNITA, the MPLA gradually introduced reforms, and at its 1990 party congress the party abandoned its Marxist-Leninist tenets and endorsed multiparty elections.

At the MPLA party congress in December 2002 President dos Santos was reelected chairman of the party, providing a strong indication that he will run for the presidency again. MPLA secretary-general Joao Laurenco was denied reelection and replaced by Juliao Mateus Paulo. The newly created post of party vice president went to Antonio Pitra Neto.

NATIONAL UNION FOR THE TOTAL INDEPENDENCE OF ANGOLA (UNITA)

UNITA was founded in 1966 and took part, along with the MPLA and FNLA, in the struggle against Portuguese colonialism. UNITA proclaimed a rival Democratic People's Republic of Angola in conjunction with the FNLA at independence in 1975. UNITA became the sole opposition to the MPLA after the demise of the FNLA in the late 1970s and waged a 27-year civil war with the MPLA for control of the country. Although its early ideological roots were influenced by Maoism, UNITA was subsequently backed by the United States and South Africa. Aid from the United States and South Africa enabled UNITA to continue its effort to unseat the MPLA, but Savimbi's decision to reject the 1992 election results and return to war brought domestic and international criticism. Nevertheless, UNITA's access to diamond-mining revenues allowed it to continue military action.

In the aftermath of the civil war, UNITA has attempted to transform itself into an effective opposition party despite its participation in government. In October 2002 UNITA reunified with the creation of a new political commission that included

members of UNITA-R. General Paulo Lukamba was named UNITA party leader pending a party congress. UNITA's leadership changed in 2003 when Isaias Samakuva was elected party leader over Paulo Lukamba, who had been acting head of UNITA since Savimbi's death.

Minor Political Parties

NATIONAL FRONT FOR THE LIBERATION OF ANGOLA (FNLA)

Organized in 1962 the FNLA was also one of the original resistance groups to Portuguese colonialism. The FNLA collapsed in the late 1970s and remained inactive throughout the 1980s. The FNLA leader, Holden Roberto, returned to Angola in 1991 after a long exile and announced his intention to run for president. The FNLA fared poorly in the 1992 elections, however, as Roberto received just over 2 percent of the presidential vote and the party managed to secure only five seats in the National Assembly. As of mid-2005 Roberto was still the party leader, but the FNLA's influence remained weak.

SOCIAL RENEWAL PARTY (PRS)

The PRS came in third in the 1992 elections, gaining six seats in the National Assembly. Leadership is disputed between Eduardo Kuangana and Antonio Muachicungo.

DEMOCRATIC RENEWAL PARTY (PRD)

The PRD started as a faction of the MPLA when an abortive coup in 1977 led to a purge of the MPLA leadership. The PRD was the first party to receive the Supreme Court's permission to gather signatures in order to gain legal status. The party's president, Luis da Silva dos Passos, received less than 2 percent of the presidential vote in 1992, and the party secured only one seat in the National Assembly.

LIBERAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY (PCD)

The PCD won three seats in the National Assembly in the 1992 elections, but its leader, Amalia de Vitoria Pereira, finished tenth among the candidates for president.

Other Political Forces

There are no other political forces at work in Angola. The media is under state control; students are indoctrinated in government-run schools and universities; and the military supports the government of President dos Santos.

National Prospects

Although the civil war has ended, Angola continues to struggle economically and faces formidable political challenges. One of the key political tasks is holding new elections. Elections were last held in 1992, but fighting resumed after UNITA refused to accept the results. The MPLA and UNITA are currently at odds over the date for new elections. UNITA called for elections to be held by mid-2005, and a coalition of civil society organizations and minor political parties formed the Campaign for a Democratic Angola calling for elections in 2005. UNITA threw its support behind this effort, but to no avail. The MPLA government maintained that the country needed to meet a variety of conditions before elections could be held. Among the conditions specified by the government are a new constitution, a new electoral law, the rebuilding of the country's infrastructure, the return of refugees, and restoring state services and administration to all districts of the country. Then, the government says, the preparations for elections such as registering voters and installing an independent electoral commission can be completed.

UNITA argued that there was no need for a new constitution before balloting but rather that constitution drafting should be the work of a newly elected National Assembly. A draft constitution, drawn up by a technical commission consisting of 22 members (12 from the MPLA, seven from UNITA, and three representing smaller parties) presented a draft constitution to the Constitutional Commission of the National Assembly in January 2004. Opposition representatives walked out of the commission in May 2004 charging that the MPLA was dragging its feet on an election timetable. In response, the MPLA announced an election timetable culminating in elections to be held in September 2006. The preparations for elections would include legislative approval of the electoral law, constitutional reform, registration of voters, and the establishment of a National Electoral Council.

Angola also continues to struggle economically. The country has valuable resources including oil and diamonds, both of which financed the civil war. UNITA smuggled diamonds out, while the MPLA pumped oil to support their war efforts. The Angolan government has come under intense criticism for its handling of oil revenues since the late 1990s. A 2002 International Monetary Fund (IMF) report was highly critical and charged the government with graft and corruption. In 2004 Human Rights Watch released a report charging that $4.2 billion had disappeared from state oil revenues between 1997 and 2002. The government denied the charges but concern about corruption and a lack of transparency in the oil sector have adversely affected Angola's ability to secure reconstruction aid. Donors have been slow to respond to appeals for reconstruction aid, and negotiations with the IMF have not yet produced an agreement that would open the door to more aid. Among the IMF's concerns are financial transparency, the ability of the government to restrict public spending, and government borrowing. The missing oil revenues only add to concerns about the government's ability to practice fiscal responsibility. Aid is essential because estimates are that it will take over $4 billion to rebuild infrastructure. Repatriating refugees and providing for demobilized soldiers will also continue to be expensive. In addition, elections will cost several hundred million dollars. In July 2005 the IMF noted Angola's progress in addressing its financial problems and concluded that it would move toward the development of an IMF-supported program to aid Angola.

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ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA

By Thomas D. Anderson, Ph.D.
Revised by Soeren Kern



Antigua and Barbuda is a parliamentary democracy that lies between St Kitts and Guadeloupe in the northeastern Caribbean. It consists of three islands—Antigua, Barbuda, and Redonda—with a total area of 440 square kilometers and a population of about 75,000, of which 1,200 live on Barbuda and none on Redonda. Its peoples are mainly black, and they are literate in English.

The System of Government

The modern political development of Antigua and Barbuda began in 1967 when it became an Associated State of the United Kingdom; independence was granted on November 1, 1981. The country is now a parliamentary democracy.

EXECUTIVE

The head of state is the British monarch represented by a governor-general. Executive power resides in the prime minister (the leader of the ruling party), who presides over the council of ministers, which is responsible for the administration of the state.

LEGISLATURE

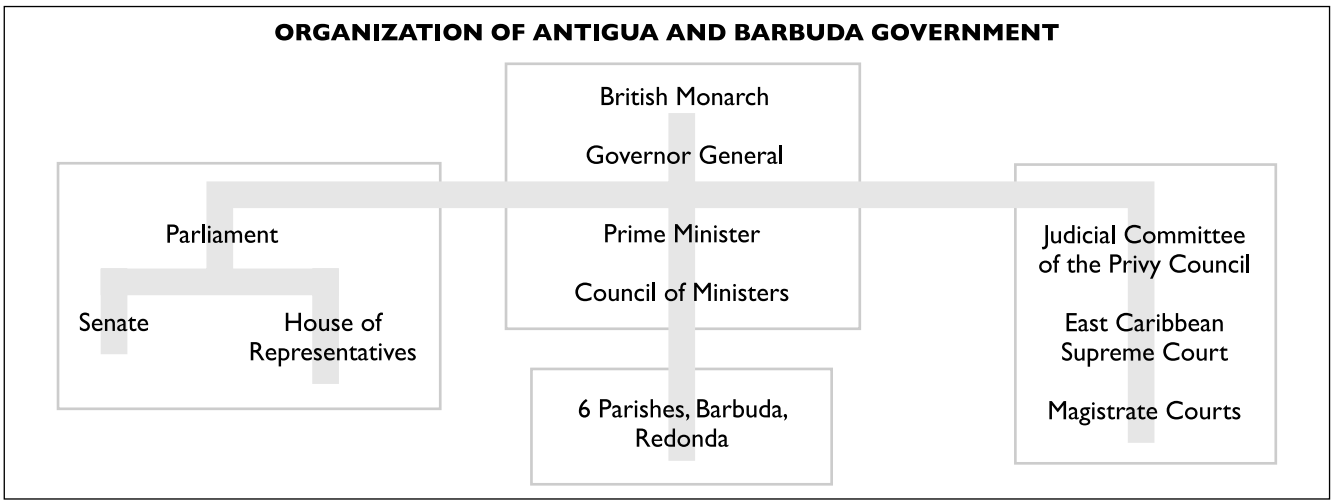
Parliament, the supreme lawmaking body, consists of two legislative chambers. The House of Representatives has 17 members who are elected in single-member districts for five-year terms. There is universal suffrage for citizens 18 years and older. The Senate is composed of 17 members appointed by the governor-general: 11 on the advice of the prime minister, four on the advice of the leader of the opposition, one on the advice of the Barbuda Council, and one on the advice of the governor-general alone. All legislation is introduced in the House of Representatives, and the Senate then reviews and passes each measure to the governor-general for official approval.

JUDICIARY

The legal system is based on English common law. The higher court is the East Caribbean Supreme Court. Further appeals go to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council in London. The constitution at independence guaranteed that the judiciary of Antigua and Barbuda was to be completely autonomous. Thus, the country shares its judiciary with five other former British small island countries. An effect is that the appointment or dismissal of judges requires agreement by all six heads of state.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The country's political subdivisions consist of six parishes and two dependencies (Barbuda and Redonda).



The Electoral System

All citizens age 18 and older are eligible to vote. Elections may be called at any time but are required to be held at least every five years.

The Party System

Although a variety of political parties have operated in Antigua and Barbuda since 1946, the political dynasty of the Bird family dominated Antiguan politics for more than half a century. This changed when Baldwin Spencer and the opposition United Progressive Party (UPP) won a landslide victory in general elections in March 2004. The premiership of Lester Bird, Spencer's predecessor, had been dogged by allegations of bribery and of missing funds from Antigua's health care system.

Major Political Parties

ANTIGUA LABOUR PARTY (ALP)

For many decades the Antigua Labour Party (ALP) was the dominant political party in Antigua and Barbuda. The ALP, which was formed by Vere Cornwall Bird and other trade unionists prior to independence, first ran candidates in the 1946 elections and became the majority party in 1951, beginning a long history of electoral victories.

Voted out of office in the 1971 general elections that swept the progressive labor movement into power, Bird and the ALP returned to office in 1976. The party won renewed mandates in every subsequent election under Vere Bird's leadership until 1994 and also under the leadership of his son, Lester Bird, up until March 2004, when the ALP lost power in national elections. The ALP is now the main opposition party and is led by Robin Yearwood. The party retains four seats.

UNITED PROGRESSIVE PARTY (UPP)

The UPP in composition is a coalition of the United National Democratic Party (UNDP), the Antigua Caribbean Liberation Movement (ACLM), and the Progressive Labour Movement (PLM). The PLM was the other principal party prior to independence, but its subsequent history reflects the tendency toward party splitting. The party emerged from a split in the ALP in 1967. Between 1983 and 1985 the PLM disintegrated, which led to the formation of the United People's Movement (UPM) and the National Democratic Party (NDP).

The March 2004 election handed Baldwin Spencer's UPP a 13-seat Parliamentary majority.

Minor Political Parties

Minor parties include the Barbuda People's Movement or BPM; the BPM's leader is Thomas H. Frank.

Other Political Forces

The country's past colonial relationship with Great Britain has continued to influence its political system in the present, as does its status as a prime destination

for tourists from the United States and elsewhere. Antigua and Barbuda has played an active role in Caribbean affairs and is a member of the Caribbean Community and Common Market (CARICOM); it was expected to join the CARICOM Single Market and Economy by the end of 2005.

National Prospects

Antigua and Barbuda is considered one of the Caribbean's most prosperous nations, due to its tourism industry and offshore financial services sector. It has become popular as a port of call for U.S. cruise ships and has attracted large investments in infrastructure. But a reliance on tourism makes the nation vulnerable to downturns in the world market and exacerbates the economic effects of seasonal hurricanes. Moreover, the country has no mineral resources and limited agricultural production. It has also been the subject of allegations of corruption and money laundering.

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REPUBLIC OF ARGENTINA

(República Argentina)

By Roberto Patricio Korzeniewicz, Ph.D., and Aldo Vacs, Ph.D.
Revised by Soeren Kern



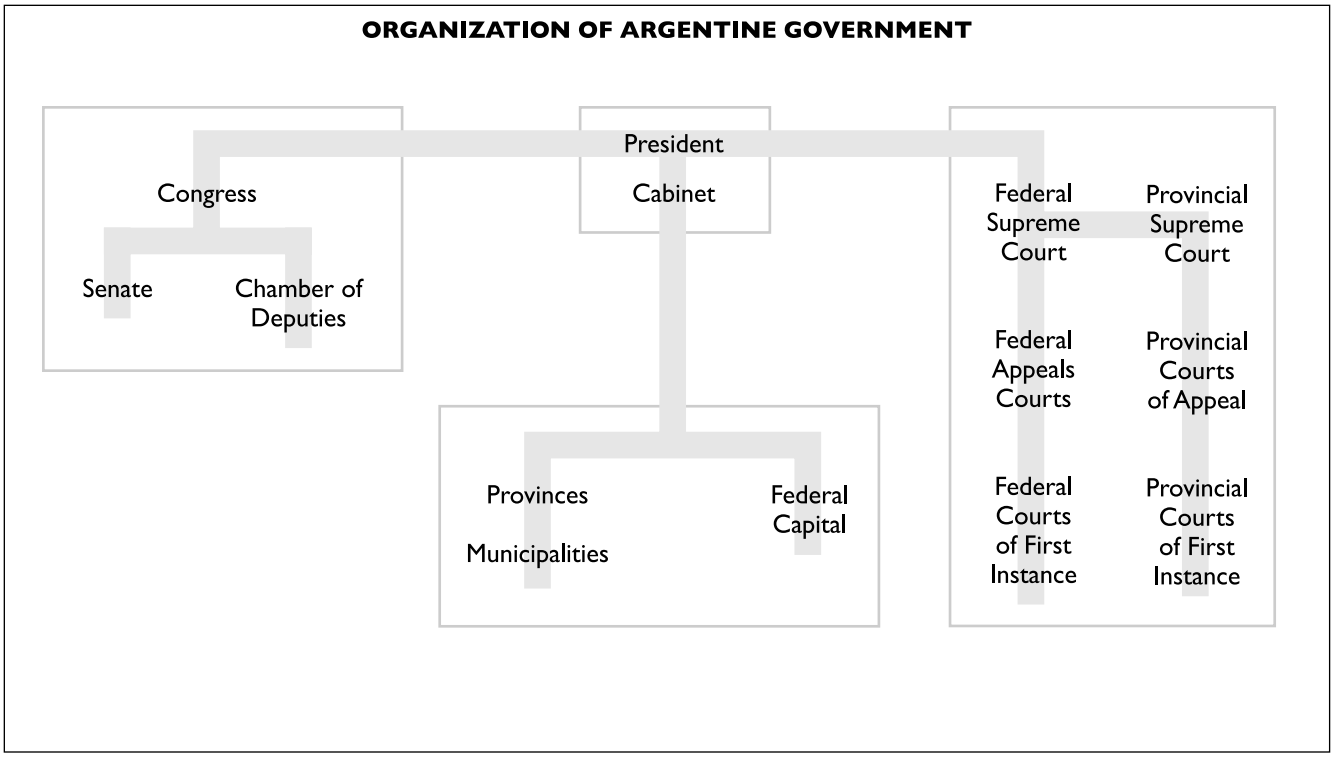
Argentina encompasses about 2.8 million square kilometers (1.1 square miles), making it the fourth-largest country in the Americas (after Canada, the United States, and Brazil). Extending 3,650 kilometers (2,268 miles) from north to south and 1,430 kilometers (889 miles) east to west, the country is about four times the size of Texas or one-third the size of Europe. Argentine governments have also claimed sovereignty over additional territories in Antarctica (477,000 square miles, overlapping with territories claimed by other nations such as Chile or Britain) and several islands controlled by Great Britain in the South Atlantic (the Falkland/Malvinas Islands, the South Georgia/Georgia del Sur Island, the South Orkney/Orcadas del Sur Islands, the South Sandwich/Sandwich del Sur Islands, and the South Shetland/Shetland del Sur Islands). The country is politically divided into 23 provinces and a Federal Capital (Capital Federal).

The country is shaped roughly like an inverted triangle. The southernmost point of Argentina is Tierra del Fuego, above Cape Horn. In the south and west, Argentina shares a long border with Chile along the Andean Mountains. Much of the country's eastern border runs along the Atlantic Ocean, in a coastline measuring 2,850 kilometers. Above the Rio de la Plata, the eastern border of Argentina meets with Uruguay and Brazil. In the north, Argentina shares borders with Bolivia (in the high plateau of the Andes Mountains) and Paraguay (across the Pilcomayo, Paraguay, and Alto Paraná rivers). At the present time, the only territorial dispute affecting the country is a minor one with Chile over a small, glacier-covered portion of their border.

Argentina's population grew from 500,000 in the 1810s to four million by the 1890s, eight million immediately before World War I, 16 million in the aftermath of World War II, an estimated 34,665,000 in 1995, and 39,500,000 by 2005. Much of this growth, particularly in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, was accounted for by large waves of immigration from Europe and neighboring countries. Spanish is the official language of the country, although many also speak English, French, German, and Italian, and the country is heavily urbanized.

The System of Government

Argentina has a republican and representative political system with moderate federal features. The constitution, originally written in 1853 but amended five times thereafter (most recently in 1994), provides for a division of powers among the executive, a bicameral Congress, and a judicial branch. Much of the twentieth century, however, was characterized by considerable political instability and long periods of authoritarian rule.



EXECUTIVE

The executive branch consists of the president, the vice president, and the cabinet. Executive power is vested in the president. The 1853 constitution introduced a presidentialist system that has been retained through subsequent amendments. As "supreme chief of the nation," the president has extensive powers over domestic and foreign policy, including the general administration of the country, the appointment of administration officials, the implementation of the laws, the right to introduce laws before Congress and to veto or approve legislation in part or as a whole, the nomination of justices for the Supreme Court of Justice (Corte Suprema de Justicia), and the conduct of foreign relations. As commander in chief of the armed forces, the president appoints and promotes (with the approval of the Senate) senior military officers. The president may declare, in case of external attack or domestic disturbances, and with the approval of the Senate, a state of siege, temporarily suspending some civil liberties.

Historically, the executive branch has dominated the legislature and the judiciary, which often have been unable to provide an effective counterweight to the power of the president. The 1853 constitution invested a large amount of power in the presidency. The importance of parliamentary and judicial institutions was further reduced throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Authoritarian regimes periodically closed Congress and removed distrusted judges at will, and even elected charismatic presidents often limited debate and dissent within Congress and used a variety of mechanisms to shape the judiciary to their needs. This weakness of parliament and the judiciary relative to the executive has persisted in recent decades.

Until 1994 the president and vice presidents were elected for six-year terms—with no possibility of immediate reelection—by an electoral college whose members were elected by popular vote. With the constitutional reforms of 1994, the president and vice president are now directly elected by popular vote for four-year terms, with the possibility of immediate reelection for one term only. Elections are held under a *balotaje* system, with runoffs between the two most popular tickets held if in the first round the leading ticket (1) has less than 40 percent of the vote or (2) has between 40 percent and 45 percent of the vote but less than a 10 percent advantage over the second-most-popular ticket. The president and vice president are elected together and must be at least 30 years old.

In the case of death, illness, absence from the country, resignation, or removal from office, the president is succeeded by the vice president. Next in the succession line are the president of the Senate, the president of the Chamber of Deputies, and the president of the Supreme Court, although new elections must be called

within three months if one of these three positions is forced to assume the presidency.

The president can appoint or remove ministers at will. Ministers must countersign all presidential decrees referred to their respective areas to validate them and are considered individually and collectively responsible for the acts of the administration that they legalize. Ministers may be called to testify before Congress and may participate without vote in its deliberations. Constitutional amendments in 1994 created the position of chief of cabinet, who is answerable to the president but politically responsible to Congress and can be removed through a vote of no confidence. The chief of cabinet undertakes the general administration of the country; appoints administrative employees; convenes, coordinates, and chairs cabinet meetings in the absence of the president; sends bills to Congress; and responds to congressional inquiries. The chief of cabinet must appear at least once a month before Congress, alternating between the two chambers.

In the most recent presidential elections, Néstor Carlos Kirchner, the governor of Santa Cruz province in Patagonia, was awarded the presidency by default on May 25, 2003, after former president Carlos Saúl Menem, who was trailing badly in opinion polls, withdrew from the runoff election. Menem had won the first round of voting with 24.4 percent (4,686,646 votes), compared with 22.0 percent (4,232,052 votes) for Kirchner. Both Kirchner and Menem belong to the Justicialist or Peronist Party (PJ); there is no official representative of the PJ, and presidential primaries were not held within the party. Kirchner and Daniel Scioli, his vice president, were elected on the same ticket by popular vote for four-year terms. The next presidential elections are set for 2007.

Although a total of 13 candidates competed in the presidential race, only five of them were considered to be serious contenders. Of the other main candidates, Ricardo López Murphy won 16.3 percent, and Elisa María Avelina Carrió and Aldolfo Rodriguez Saá each won 14.1 percent. Voter participation was almost 80 percent.

LEGISLATURE

The legislative branch consists of a National Congress (Congreso Nacional) divided into two houses: the Chamber of Deputies (Cámara de Diputados) and the Senate (Senado). According to the constitution, the deputies represent the nation as a whole, and the senators represent the provinces and the Federal Capital. The chambers meet simultaneously in regular session between May 1 and September 30 but can be recalled by the president for a special session.

Deputies are elected by popular vote through a system of proportional representation, with each of the 23 provinces and the Federal Capital considered a separate electoral district. The total number of deputies serving in 2005 was 257. Congress periodically determines the number of inhabitants required to elect one deputy as well as the total number of representatives assigned to each district. Beginning in 1994 one representative was elected for each 161,000 inhabitants or remaining fraction no smaller than 80,500, with each province electing a minimum of five deputies. The constitution requires that deputies be at least 25 years old, that they have been citizens for at least four years, and that they be natives of the province in which they seek election or have resided there for at least the two previous years. Deputies serve four-year terms and may be reelected. One-half of the seats in the Chamber go up for election every two years.

Until 1994 the Senate consisted of 48 members: two for each province (appointed by their respective legislatures) and two for the Federal Capital (chosen by an electoral college selected for that purpose). The 1994 constitutional reforms established the direct election of senators in each province and the Federal Capital, and the number of senators was increased from two to three per district (with two senators representing the majority party and one elected by the first minority). The total number of senators is now 72. The 1994 reforms also reduced the term of office from nine to six years (with the possibility of reelection). One-third of the seats in the Senate are up for election every two years. Senators must be at least 30 years old, citizens for at least six years, and natives of the province in which they seek election or must have resided there for at least the two previous years.

Congress has the power to make all laws and regulations; levy taxes and establish the budget of the central government; grant subsidies to the provinces; coin and borrow money; issue commercial, criminal, mining, and labor and social security codes; regulate commerce and navigation; establish the courts below the Supreme Court; ratify or reject treaties and integration accords; authorize the executive to declare war; declare a state of siege and intervene in a province; and accept or reject the resignation of the president and vice president. Bills on most subjects can be introduced in either house by their members or by the president (except for bills related to taxation and conscription, which can only be initiated in the Chamber of Deputies). Following the introduction, bills are sent to appropriate com-

mittees (*comisiones*) for consideration and, if approved by a majority of committee members, returned to the floor of the pertinent chamber for debate and a final vote. A simple majority of each chamber is necessary to pass ordinary legislation, but a two-thirds majority is required to override a presidential veto.

Both chambers of Congress possess similar powers, and their joint approval is required to pass most legislation. However, the Chamber of Deputies has the exclusive right to initiate impeachment proceedings against the president, vice president, ministers, and Supreme Court justices. The Senate has the exclusive right to judge those impeached by the lower house, to authorize the president to declare a state of siege in cases of external attack, and to approve presidential nominations of judges, diplomatic envoys, and senior military officers. Disputes between the two chambers are negotiated repeatedly rather than resolved through conference committees.

As a result of the Senate elections in 2003, the PJ now holds 41 seats, the Radical Civic Union (UCR) has 16, and provincial parties control 15. The next elections for the Senate are set for October 2005 to elect one-third of its members. As a result of the 2003 elections for the Chamber of Deputies, the PJ now controls 133 seats, the UCR holds 46 seats, the Interbloque Federal (IF) coalition has 23, the Support for an Egalitarian Republic (ARI) 11, Socialists 6, and other provincial parties have 38. The next elections for the Chamber of Deputies are set for October 2005 to elect one-half of its members.

JUDICIARY

The legal system is based on the Napoleonic Code, judicial power at the national level is supposed to be exercised by the Supreme Court and the lower courts created by Congress, and the judiciary is divided into federal and provincial courts. Members of the Supreme Court, as well as those of the federal appellate and district courts, are named by the president with consent by the Senate. The judicial branch is formally independent, and the constitutional text particularly emphasizes that the president cannot perform judicial functions, interfere in open cases, or reopen those that have been closed or dismissed. In order to preserve judicial independence, the constitution establishes that the Supreme Court adopts its own internal regulations, their judges serve for life and cannot be removed unless they engage in misconduct and are impeached by Congress, and the salaries of judges cannot be reduced. In practice, the judiciary has remained the weakest of the three branches of government, affected both by external interference and by internal problems.

The Supreme Court interprets national legislation and has the power to rule on its constitutionality. It also has appellate jurisdiction over the lower federal courts and provincial supreme courts, and its rulings are binding on all other courts in the nation. In the past the Supreme Court had five or six members. In 1990 Congress passed a controversial bill (promoted by the executive to ensure a more favorable court) increasing the number of Supreme Court justices to nine.

Federal appeals courts are composed of six members and supervise the activities and hear the appeals of the courts of first instance (composed in turn of a single judge). Federal courts have jurisdiction over constitutional issues; international treaties; matters concerning foreign diplomatic personnel; navigation; litigation between two or more provinces, provinces and foreign states, or inhabitants of different provinces; and cases involving the application of federal laws. The federal courts have the power of judicial review, but declarations of unconstitutionality are rare, as the judiciary has generally avoided confrontations with the other branches of government.

The provinces have their own judicial systems, including Supreme, appellate, and first instance courts that deal with criminal, civil, and commercial matters. The Federal Capital has its own courts instituted by Congress but independent from the federal system. The provincial and local courts have jurisdiction over all matters not reserved to the federal courts, but their ruling autonomy is limited by the fact that they must enforce the criminal, civil, commercial, and mining codes enacted by the National Congress.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

According to the constitution, power is divided among the national government, the 23 provinces, and the Federal Capital, with the provinces retaining all power not delegated to the federal government. Each province elects its own governor and legislature. In most cases governors are elected to a four-year term (usually through direct electoral vote) and can sometimes be reelected to a consecutive second term. Governors have wide executive powers, including the appointment and removal of ministers, secretaries, and other political appointees; the introduction and veto of legislative bills; the issuing of decrees; and the ability to call the legislature into special sessions.

In most provinces, legislative power is exercised by a unicameral legislature (although some of the larger provinces have bicameral assemblies). Legislatures are usually elected every four years (except where there is a senate, whose members usually serve six years). In most cases, provincial legislative sessions last four to five months. Provincial legislatures have limited powers as compared with the National Congress and are subordinated to the federal government in decisions concerning financial and social matters. However, they have the power to legislate on budgetary, tax, education, health, and security issues and to impeach the governor (though conflicts among provincial powers often result in the intervention of the federal government to remove both governor and provincial legislators). As indicated in the previous section, the provinces and Federal Capital have their own judiciaries.

The provinces are divided into municipalities, departments, or districts that are governed by local authorities, usually including a municipal or town chief executive (*intendente*) and a representative council. Executive authorities are either elected by the local population or appointed by governors; council members are generally elected locally. Local authorities have limited power, with their responsibilities restricted to the imposition of local taxes and the use of municipal revenues for public works, health services, and cultural activities.

Since the 1994 constitutional reforms, the Federal Capital of Buenos Aires has been granted the right to have an autonomous government, with a mayor elected through direct elections (rather than being appointed by the president) to serve with an elected local chamber of representatives.

While Argentina's constitution proclaims a federal system of government, the national government has exercised historically a large degree of control over provincial authorities. The 1853 constitution itself assigned governors the responsibility of enforcing the national constitution and laws and empowered federal authorities to replace local officials when "the republican form of government" is endangered by circumstances such as resolutions, revolts, disorder, or merely the existence of an ineffective administration. Free from judicial controls, federal governments have interpreted this mandate broadly, frequently assuming direct control of provincial administrations and hence limiting the margin for effective autonomy for local authorities.

The Electoral System

The 1853 constitution called for the popular election of the president, vice president, deputies, and senators, but the effective creation of a system of electoral representation was punctuated by both progressive reforms and institutional setbacks. Overall, political reforms in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries have strengthened the secrecy and protection granted to voters, enfranchised larger sectors of the population (with universal, secret, and obligatory suffrage enacted for adult males in 1912 and extended to women in 1947), and enhanced proportional representation. Traditionally, voter participation has been high, ranging around 85 percent of eligible voters casting ballots in presidential elections to 75 percent for midterm congressional elections.

Voting is currently obligatory for all citizens between 18 and 70 years of age residing in the country, excluding prison inmates and people considered mentally incompetent. Since the early 1990s, absentee voting rights are also granted to citizens living abroad. For electoral purposes, the provinces and Federal Capital districts are divided into precincts of 250 to 300 voters each. Polling stations are supervised by citizens chosen from the electoral registry and by representatives from political parties. Military personnel are assigned to guarantee the safety of the voters and the enforcement of electoral rules.

Candidates for elected office are nominated only by legally recognized political parties. A regulation introduced in 1991 to increase the number of women in Congress was adopted as part of the 1994 constitutional reforms. The Allotment Law (Ley de Cupos) requires that at least every third place on a list of candidates presented for election by a political party be reserved for a woman. This law has increased the number of women in elected positions well above their traditional average (about 5 percent in the Chamber of Deputies) to 33 percent in the Chamber of Deputies and 42 percent in the Senate as of 2005, the highest female membership ever attained. Other reforms introduced in 1994 obligate the Chamber of Deputies to consider legislation if petitioned by 3 percent of voters; allow the Chamber of Deputies to submit bills to compulsory public referenda; and allow the president and Congress to organize nonbinding public referenda.

The Party System

Political parties attain legal recognition by presenting to an electoral judge the party's declaration of

principles, statute, platform, list of officials, and party members. The party's declaration of principles and its program must include acceptance of the constitutional norms and exclude the use of violent means to achieve its goals. Parties fulfilling these conditions and able to recruit at least 0.4 percent of the total registered voters in a district are recognized at the district level. Parties able to obtain recognition in two or more districts are in turn recognized as national parties. Parties that gather 3 percent or more of the total vote cast in each election receive funds from the national government to defray the cost of the electoral campaign. Voters can pick and mix candidates from different parties for different offices (although the general tendency is for voters to select a single party list for all candidates rather than to split their vote).

The two dominant parties in Argentina are the Justicialist or Peronist Party (Partido Justicialista or Peronista) and the Radical Civic Union or UCR (Unión Cívica Radical). Both parties were heavily influenced early in their history by highly charismatic political leaders (Juan Domingo Perón in the case of the Justicialist Party, Hipólito Yrigoyen in the case of the Radical Civil Union), and both have commanded strong electoral majorities at some point in their history.

Major Political Parties

RADICAL CIVIC UNION
(Unión Cívica Radical; UCR)

The UCR, founded by Leandro Alem, emerged in the 1890s as the first modern political party in Argentina, demanding political and administrative reform. Focusing on efforts to attain greater electoral transparency, demands by this party were instrumental in promoting the important electoral reforms of 1912 (Ley Saenz Peña), introducing universal, secret, and obligatory suffrage for adult males; providing for minority representation in Congress; and introducing a cleaner system of electoral registries. Following the adoption of these reforms, the UCR actively participated in elections with a vague but moderately nationalistic and redistributionist platform, upon which leader Hipólito Yrigoyen was twice elected president (his first term lasted between 1916 and 1922; his second term began in 1928 but was brought to an end by the conservative military coup of 1930). Support for the party was particularly strong among university students, middle- and low-income groups in both urban and rural areas, and marginalized sectors of the elite (such as landlords from the provinces).

After World War II, the UCR defined itself in opposition to Peronist rule. In 1955 the party supported the military coup that overthrew the Perón government, but thereafter it became divided between those who advocated reconciliation with Peronism (eventually splitting into the Intransigent UCR, or Unión Cívica Radical Intransigente, led by Arturo Frondizi, elected president in 1958 and overthrown by the military in 1962) and those remaining in strong opposition to any alliance with the Peronists (eventually becoming the People's UCR, or Unión Cívica Radical del Pueblo, led by Ricardo Balbín and including Arturo Illía, elected president in 1963 and overthrown by the military in 1966). The political activities of the UCR, as those of most parties, were officially banned during the subsequent military dictatorships (1966–73, 1976–83), and the party remained in the opposition during the brief return of Peronism to power (1973–76).

Raúl Alfonsín played a crucial role in promoting the UCR's return to power in the 1983 elections. However, the Alfonsín administration (1983–89) was beset by political and economic problems. Politically, the administration had to deal with the legacy of authoritarian rule and faced frequent conflicts with the military and organized labor. Most crucial was an endemic economic crisis, with economic recessions followed by periods of runaway inflation. In the 1989 elections the UCR candidate, Córdoba's governor Eduardo Angeloz, was defeated by Carlos Saúl Menem, the Peronist candidate.

Electoral support for the UCR fell dramatically for the 1994 constitutional elections, when leaders of the party were perceived as too willing to enter into political compromises with the Menem administration. In the 1995 presidential elections, the candidate of the UCR, Rio Negro's governor Horacio Massaccesi, came in third, receiving 17.1 percent of the vote. In the 1997 congressional elections the UCR formed an alliance with the Front of a Country in Solidarity (Frente del País Solidario, or Frepaso). Together, these parties gathered 45.7 percent of the vote and won several electoral districts throughout the country, including most notably Buenos Aires. The UCR's Fernando de la Rúa was elected as president in the 1999 presidential elections. However, widespread corruption in the administrations of Menem and de la Ruá shook confidence and weakened the economy. Moreover, although a policy that pegged the Argentine peso to the U.S. dollar defeated inflation, it also undermined Argentina's export competitiveness and created chronic deficits,

which were financed by massive borrowing. The contagion effect of the Asian financial crisis of 1998 precipitated an outflow of capital that gradually mushroomed into a four-year depression that culminated in a financial panic in November 2001. In December 2001, amidst bloody riots, President de la Rúa was forced to resign, and Argentina defaulted on $88 billion in debt, the largest sovereign debt default in history.

A legislative assembly on December 23, 2001, elected Adolfo Rodriguez Saá to serve as president and called for general elections to elect a new president within three months. Rodriguez Saá announced immediately that Argentina would default on its international debt obligations but expressed his commitment to maintain the currency board and the peso's one-to-one peg to the dollar. Rodriguez Saá, however, was unable to rally support from within his own party for his administration, and this, combined with renewed violence in the Federal Capital, led to his resignation after only one week, on December 30. Despite a poor showing in the 2003 presidential poll (2.3 percent), that year UCR candidates won 46 seats in the Chamber of Deputies and 16 in the Senate, making its representation second only to the JP in both houses.

JUSTICIALIST OR PERONIST PARTY
(Partido Justicialista o Peronista)

The Justicialist or Peronist Party was created to advocate support for Juan Domingo Perón. Shortly after a military coup in 1943, Colonel Perón was appointed to head the national labor agency (Secretaría del Trabajo). In the next two years Perón used his new position to develop a strong following among the ranks of labor. At the same time Perón began to advocate the need for countries to pursue a third position between capitalism and Communism and for the state to take an active role in promoting cooperation between workers and capitalists so as to achieve national grandeur. In a famous synthesis of his position, Perón called for Argentina to become "economically independent, socially just, and politically sovereign."

As a strong charismatic leader and upon being elected president (1946–52, 1952–55), Perón developed a strong hold over the Peronist Party and was able unilaterally to appoint or remove party authorities. The influence of organized labor grew considerably during Perón's first term in office. His second term was characterized by growing political conflicts and deepening economic problems. President Perón was overthrown in 1955 and spent the next two decades in exile.

In the physical absence of Perón, the Peronist Party experienced a growing division into factions. Organized labor became one of the strongest forces within the party, but trade unions were themselves divided along the ideological spectrum, over the degree to which economic aims should be subordinated to political goals and over the role of Perón leadership within the party. The more traditional political leaders within the party not only contended with the challenges of organized labor but were themselves split along ideological and regional lines. And throughout the 1960s and early 1970s the party experienced the growth of leftist tendencies that strengthened the bargaining power of the Peronists but further intensified the basis for political segmentation.

In 1973, as the military experienced a rapid erosion of their hold on power, Perón returned to Argentina. Around the same time the Peronist Party was reorganized as the Justicialist Party. Elected president for the third time, Perón sought to restore tight controls over the party structure. These efforts were not very successful: Old and new factions within the party intensified their efforts to gain political control, and Perón's old age and expectations of his demise only served to intensify these conflicts. Upon Perón's death in 1974 María Estela (Isabel) Martínez de Perón succeeded him as president of the country and as leader of the party. The Isabel Perón administration (1974–76) was characterized by growing disarray and ultimately the virtual collapse of the Justicialist Party. After the coup of 1976 the party was banned, and many of its leaders were jailed or persecuted by the new military authorities.

In the return to democracy in 1983 the candidate of the Justicialist Party, Italo Luder, lost the presidential elections to Raúl Alfonsín. This loss was widely blamed on the appearance that the party remained too closely tied to its personalist and rather authoritarian forms of organization. During the next years the party experienced intense conflicts between traditional and reform-minded leaders. Carlos Menem, at the time governor of La Rioja, was tied primarily to the more traditional forces within the party and was able to defeat more reformist leaders for the candidacy to the presidency in 1988. Upon winning the national elections with 51.7 percent of the vote and coming to office in 1989 the Menem administration moved toward adopting free-market policies, favoring fiscal and monetary austerity, and seeking to limit state regulation of the economy.

The shift of the Menem administration toward free-market policies during his tenure (1989–99) generated strong opposition within his own party,

as some argued that the new economic policies would increase unemployment and raise poverty rates. Within the mainstream of the party, Eduardo Duhalde often voiced criticism of the social impact of the free-market policies instituted by the Menem administration. A former vice president then serving his second term as governor of Buenos Aires, Duhalde was a presidential hopeful for the 1999 elections (he lost to the UCR's Fernando de la Ruá). After the resignation on December 30, 2001, of Adolfo Rodriguez Saá, a legislative assembly elected Duhalde as interim president on January 1, 2002. Duhalde—differentiating himself from his three predecessors (Menem, de la Rúa, and Rodriguez Saá)—quickly abandoned the peso's 10-year-old link with the dollar, a move that was followed by currency depreciation and inflation. In the face of rising poverty and continued social unrest, Duhalde also moved to bolster the government's social programs.

In the first round of the presidential election on April 27, 2003, Menem won 24.3 percent of the vote, Santa Cruz Governor Néstor Kirchner (PJ) won 22 percent, followed by Ricardo Murphy with 16.4 percent and Elisa Carrió with 14.2 percent. Menem withdrew from the May 25 runoff election after polls showed overwhelming support for Kirchner. President Kirchner took office on May 25, 2003.

After taking office, Kirchner focused on building his political strength. He encouraged changes in the Supreme Court and the military and undertook broadly popular measures such as raising the minimum wage, pensions, and the lowest government salaries.

Minor Political Parties

Argentina has numerous smaller parties, many of which often form coalitions to increase their effectiveness. In the 2003 elections for the Chamber of Deputies, for instance, a group of approximately 12 parties formed an alliance called the Interbloque Federal (IF); the alliance won 23 seats in the elections. The most important single party within the IF is probably the Federal Movement for Growth Recreation (Partido Recrear para el Crecimento, or RECREAR), led by Ricardo López Murphy, who himself won 16.3 percent of the vote in the 2003 presidential elections. The Support for an Egalitarian Republic (Afirmación para una Republica Igualitaria, or ARI) won 11 seats in the 2003 legislative elections; its presidential candidate, Elisa Carrió, won 14.1 percent of the vote in the presidential elections of 2003. The Socialist Party won 6 seats in the legislative elections, while its presidential candidate, Alfredo Bravo, won a little over 1 percent of the vote in the presidential elections.

Several other parties and political alliances that played important roles at the national and/or provincial levels during the 1990s have faded from the scene or retained only limited influence. The Front for a Country in Solidarity alliance (Frente del País Solidario, or Frepaso) emerged in 1995, and its presidential candidate in the elections that year won 29 percent of the vote, coming in second to incumbent Carlos Menem. Throughout the rest of the 1990s, Frepaso was part of the main opposition alliance, but after the collapse of the de la Rúa government at the end of 2001, it disappeared from the scene. The Union of the Democratic Center (Unión del Centro Democrático, or Ucede), formed in 1983 by a convergence of small conservative forces led by Alvaro Alsogaray, was an important ally of Carlos Menem during his tenure as president, but its electoral success wanted as the 1990s proceeded. As of 2005, it had only one seat in the Chamber of Deputies and no seats in the Senate.

The Progressive Democratic Party (Partido Demócrata Progresista, or PDP) was founded in 1914 in Santa Fé province by dissident members of the UCR. Originally established as a moderate center-left party, the PDP gradually developed into a more conservative force, with its support concentrated among middle-class professionals and small farmers in Santa Fé and the Federal Capital. The party has advocated the separation of church and state, the adoption of secular divorce, and the popular election of officeholders at all local and national levels. Since the return to democracy in 1983 electoral support for the PDP has fluctuated between 0.5 percent and 1.7 percent. As of 2005 the party had one seat in the current Chamber of Deputies.

The Argentine party system has been characterized by the existence of several provincial parties whose electoral bases are concentrated in one district and whose leaders, interests, and platforms are driven by local issues. Most of these parties subscribe to conservative or center-right ideological positions but tend to be pragmatic in their behavior. Some of these parties emerged as a consequence of the decline of the national conservative parties after 1916; others were the result of splits within the UCR and the Justicialist Party. Provincial parties are characterized by their strong endorsement of federalism. Some of these parties gained national predominance, particularly in instances when their senators' support was necessary for passage or rejection of bills supported by one of the two major parties.

Other Political Forces

THE MILITARY

Several interest groups have played an important role in shaping politics in Argentina. Perhaps the most important among these has been the armed forces. Organized as a professional institution during the last quarter of the nineteenth century, the armed forces remained subordinated to civilian authorities until the military coup of 1930. Since then the armed forces have become important political actors, contributing to the instability that characterized the country for much of the twentieth century.

The positions endorsed by military officers through much of this period were conservative, with a strong Roman Catholic, right-wing, and anti-Communist component and a general orientation toward the creation of a political system characterized by limited participation, a strong hierarchical order, and an emphasis on domestic national security. However, convergence around these basic ideas has sometimes been overshadowed by conflicts between conservatives and corporatists, nationalists and liberals, pro-Peronists and anti-Peronists, hard-liners and moderates.

Last in power between 1976 and 1983, the military lost much legitimacy with its defeat during the Falklands/Malvinas War. Since the return to democracy in 1983, one of the most salient issues affecting relations between civilian administrations and the armed forces has been the investigation, trial, and punishment of those responsible for human rights violations committed during the 1976–83 period. The military has also resisted the severe cutbacks experienced during recent decades. Obligatory military conscription was eliminated in 1995, when the armed forces shifted to an all-volunteer system.

Some concessions made to the military by Menem, especially his pardons of the members of the juntas imprisoned during the Alfonsín administration, his more sympathetic attitude toward military demands, and the promotion of more professionally oriented officers, satisfied most of the military and diminished support for the extremist groups that promoted rebellions during the first decade of democratic rule. The military subsequently has remained subordinated to the civilian government, performing its professional activities and exhibiting no signs of interest in meddling in the political arena.

ORGANIZED LABOR

Another salient political force is organized labor. Trade unions gained considerable strength around the turn of the century, particularly among workers involved in strategic economic activities (such as in the railroads and ports). Before the 1930s militants of various ideological affiliations competed for the political leadership of labor. Among the most important groups were anarchists, Socialists, and syndicalists. Various labor federations were initiated by these militants between the 1890s and 1930s, including the General Confederation of Labor (Confederación General del Trabajo, or CGT), created in 1930. But by the 1930s, when industrial unions grew considerably in construction and some manufacturing activities, as well as among state workers, the main groups contending for the leadership of labor were Communists and Socialists.

From his post as secretary of labor of a military regime (1943–45), Juan Perón used a combination of rewards and repression to promote some labor leaders and discipline others and to enhance the role of the state in regulating relations between workers and employers. The policies implemented by Perón often included the granting of higher wages, better working conditions, social benefits, the introduction of collective bargaining, and the official recognition of trade unions. On the other hand, opponents of these policies in the ranks of organized labor often faced a denial of legal recognition, removal from office, and/or persecution by security forces. These policies, combined with the leader's strong ability to convey a persuasive political message through the mass media and public demonstrations, contributed to the rapidly growing popularity of Perón among both urban and rural workers. When the military government sought to depose and arrest Perón in 1945 to bring his rising popularity to an end, massive labor demonstrations forced his release from confinement and were instrumental in launching his successful bid for the presidency in 1946.

Organized labor maintained a close relationship with Peronism thereafter. Following the 1955 coup against Perón and military efforts to cleanse trade unions of their Peronist leadership, a majority of trade unions again elected Peronist leaders. These leaders formed the Sixty-Two Organizations (62 Organizaciones), representing Peronist labor organizations. Peronist labor leaders regained control of the CGT in the early 1960s and retained control of organized labor thereafter. Although internally divided among Peronist factions (over issues such as the role of Perón in leading the movement, the relative priority to be accorded to economic and political goals, and the extent to which labor should negotiate with authoritarian or opposition regimes), organized labor became

an important actor in the political arena. By using its ability to mobilize workers and sympathizers, organized labor was able to strengthen or weaken political groups as well as civilian and military administrations in subsequent decades.

Organized labor lost considerable strength after 1976. Under the last military regime (1976–83) many labor officials were incarcerated amid accusations of corruption and mismanagement. Some labor officials who tried to oppose the military regime were kidnapped and killed by security forces or forced into exile. Remaining labor leaders were divided over whether or not to negotiate with the military regime. Greater political freedoms were regained after the return to democracy under the Alfonsín administration (1983–89), but a decade of virtually continuous economic crisis served greatly to undermine the bargaining power of labor.

This loss of bargaining power continued under the Menem administrations (1989–95, 1995–99). His administrations used legal recognition as a means of strengthening trade union officials sympathetic to their goals and of weakening those opposed to them. A presidential decree in October 1990 limited the right to strike of public and private workers employed in health services, public utilities, telecommunications, public transportation, education, justice administration, or any other activity whose interruption, according to the Ministry of Labor and Social Security, "could jeopardize the freedom or security of the community." Other laws passed in recent years have decentralized the process of collective bargaining and eliminated state intervention; the labor code has been modified to make it easier for employers to change working conditions, fringe benefits, and wages and to hire and dismiss employees; wage and salary increases have been tied to increases in productivity; and the rules on compulsory union membership have been loosened.

BUSINESS

Business interests have at times played an important role in shaping political change. The most traditional organization among agricultural producers is the Argentine Rural Society (Sociedad Rural Argentina, or SRA), founded in 1866 to represent the interests of the wealthiest landowners (cattle raisers and grain producers). Although it has fewer than 10,000 members, Rural Society has exercised considerable influence as a strong advocate of private property and free-trade policies and an enemy of state intervention and protectionism. The Rural Society was a strong institutional supporter of Menem, applauding the elimination of exchange controls, the reduction of export taxes and import duties, the elimination of regulations and agricultural state boards, the privatization of state enterprises, and the measures directed to reduce labor costs. Support for Menem's free-market policies also came from the Argentine Rural Confederations (Confederaciones Rurales Argentinas, or CRA), founded in 1942 to represent medium-to-large agricultural producers. Including roughly 100,000 members, the CRA nonetheless opposed the Menem's administrations' taxation policies.

The most important industrial organization is the Argentine Industrial Union (Unión Industrial Argentina, or UIA), founded in 1887. Other important business organizations include the Argentine Chamber of Commerce (Cámara Argentina de Comercio, or CAC), organized in 1924 to represent the interests of the commercial sector.

THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

A final political force of considerable relevance has been the Roman Catholic Church. Overall the church has supported governments that promised to implement policies corresponding to a conservative interpretation of Roman Catholic teachings, regardless of the authoritarian or democratic origin of these administrations. Throughout the 1976–83 period a majority of the bishops and cardinals of the Argentine Episcopal Conference (Conferencia Episcopal Argentina, or CEA) supported the military regime or adopted neutral positions, while only a few openly opposed the authoritarian government's policies. The CEA did engage in some significant conflicts with the Alfonsín administration (particularly over legislative bills affecting paternal authority, the legalization of divorce, and educational reforms).

During the Menem administrations conservative sectors of the church criticized the introduction of programs dealing with acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS) and called for harsher policies to repress pornography, drug addiction, homosexuality, abortion, corruption, and other activities they deemed sinful. More progressive sectors of the church criticized the Menem administrations' application of market policies, claiming that such reforms tend to undermine welfare conditions for the poor.

In the early twenty-first century the church retained a significant amount of influence in Argentina, although it was increasingly competing with

evangelical protestant churches, which especially made inroads among the country's urban poor.

National Prospects

The persistence of democracy since 1983, the commitment of most forces in the opposition to channel their demands through their participation in electoral politics, and the gradual loss of importance of corporate mechanisms of political representation (particularly among the military but also within organized labor and the business sector) are all indicative of the gradual consolidation of democracy in Argentina in a century previously marked by the prevalence of political instability and dictatorship. In the late-1990s the prospects for the continuation of democracy in Argentina were brighter than ever before. A deep recession, however, was the prelude to economic collapse in 2001, leaving more than half the population living in poverty. The country struggled with record debt defaults and currency devaluation, as well as considerable political instability.

After Argentina had three presidents in less than two years, Néstor Kirchner won an uncontested presidential runoff vote in May 2003, his rival, former president Carlos Menem, having quit the race. Kirchner's key challenges have been managing Argentina's foreign debt crisis and maintaining the support of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and international lenders.

Argentina's economy began a recovery in March 2002 that has been far more impressive and robust than anticipated by leading international and domestic analysts. In 2003 an export-led boom triggered an 8.7-percent surge in real gross domestic product (GDP). Domestic car sales and exports increased 105.4 percent and 19.2 percent, respectively, in 2003. Tourism activity boomed: Argentina received 3.3 million foreign tourists in 2003, a record high. The expansion created new jobs, and unemployment dipped from 17.8 percent in May 2003 to 14.5 percent in December 2003. Investment in real terms jumped 38.1 percent, and capital flight decreased. The recovery's strong impact on revenue levels, combined with the Kirchner administration's prudent control of spending, achieved exceptional results, with the fiscal surplus reaching 2.3 percent of Gross Domestic Product.

Kirchner encouraged changes in the Supreme Court and the military and undertook broadly popular measures such as raising the minimum wage, pensions, and the lowest government salaries. In 2005 Kirchner's high approval ratings showed signs of decline due to concerns over spiraling crime. In any case Argentina's democracy has weathered the recent storm, and its legitimacy is not in doubt.

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REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA

(Hayastani Hanrapetut'yun)

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Revised by Roger Kangas, Ph.D.



Armenia is located in the South Caucasus region. It is bordered to the north by the Republic of Georgia, to the south by the Republic of Iran and the Azerbaijani territory of Nakhichevan, to the west by Turkey, and to the east by the Republic of Azerbaijan.

The territories that make up the present-day Republic of Armenia were under Persian control for centuries before being absorbed into the Russian Empire in 1828. Following the collapse of the czarist regime, Armenia became an independent republic in May 1918 until December 1920. Armenia was at the forefront of the nationalist tide that swept the Soviet Union in the late 1980s and was one of the first of the Soviet republics to declare independence, in September 1991.

The actual territory of Armenia is quite small—only 29,800 square kilometers. The difficulties lie in the fact that of the 1,254 kilometers of borders, 1,055 kilometers are with Turkey and Azerbaijan (268 kilometers and 787 kilometers, respectively). These borders have been closed to all legal trade as a result of an embargo by those two countries with which Armenia has strained, and almost nonexistent, diplomatic relations. Population figures for Armenia are difficult to ascertain, as there are a sizeable number of Armenians who currently work abroad (largely in Russia). By mid-2005 estimates, there are slightly fewer than three million citizens currently in the country.

The System of Government

Armenia is a republic with 11 provinces under the authority of the central government in Yerevan, the nation's capital. On July 5, 1995, Armenia adopted a new constitution that shifted a great deal of power to the executive from the legislature.

EXECUTIVE

The president is the head of state and is directly elected. The prime minister is head of the government and is appointed by the president. The prime minister and his cabinet do not hold seats in the parliament. The president serves a five-year term and may not serve more than two consecutive terms. He may dissolve parliament; appoint or remove the prime minister; appoint four of the nine members and the president of the Constitutional Court and the Court of Appeals; appoint or remove any judge serving in any court other than the Constitutional Court; and appoint or remove the prosecutor general and any other prosecutor. The president may also declare martial law and rule by decree.

In the presidential elections of 2003 incumbent president Robert Kocharian ran for, and won, a second term. In the February 19, 2003, first round the opposition candidates were unable to develop a common strategy, and eight individuals ended up on the bal-

lot. In the March 3, 2003, runoff election Kocharian soundly defeated his rival Stepan Demirchyan, garnering 67.5 percent of the popular vote. International observers wrote less-than-supportive reports on the elections, citing irregularities in the voting process and the pressure the government placed on opposition candidates during this period. The next elections are scheduled for 2008, at which time Kocharian will not be allowed to run under the current constitutional two-term limit.

The prime minister is responsible for forming a cabinet ("government") that works with the National Assembly, although this position is ultimately responsible to the president. While there has been some discussion of increasing the power of the prime minister, the system currently remains a strongly presidential one. Andranik Markaryan took office as prime minister on May 12, 2000.

LEGISLATURE

The Armenian parliament is the National Assembly, a single-chamber body. The 1995 constitution engineered a massive shift of power from the legislature to the presidency, and the parliament has few options when dealing with the chief executive.

The National Assembly is empowered to pass legislation that eventually must require presidential approval. In addition, the Assembly can dismiss the prime minister and the government by a majority vote and can dismiss the president with a two-thirds vote in the instance where the Constitutional Court finds the president guilty of a national offense.

At the time of independence, the National Assembly had nearly 200 members. However, following the 1995 constitution and subsequent reform measures, the elections of May 25, 2003, saw the legislature reduced to 131 seats. Of these 56 are chosen in single-member districts and 75 are selected from party lists. All legislators serve four-year terms; the next round of elections is slated for May 2007.

Six different political parties won seats in the legislature during the 2003 elections, with three forming a pro-presidential majority of 70 seats: the Republican Party (40 seats), the Country of Law Party (19 seats), and the Armenian Revolutionary Federation (11 seats). Thirty-one legislators were unaffiliated and often sided with the government, thus giving Kocharian a commanding control over legislative politics. Not surprisingly, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and other international observer groups found the 2003 legislative elections to be "below international standards for democratic elections." Irregularities, intimidation, and other problems plagued the May balloting.

JUDICIARY

The 1995 constitution ordered extensive judicial reforms. A three-tiered system was introduced consisting of courts of first instance, review courts, and a court of appeals. Two other new judicial institutions were already functioning: the Council of Justice and the Constitutional Court.

The Council of Justice is an administrative body chaired by the president. It reviews the performance of judges and prepares lists for promotion of judges and prosecutors, nominates judges and prosecutors for positions, and prepares disciplinary proceedings against judges.

The Constitutional Court is a nine-member body, four of whom are appointed by the president and five by the National Assembly. The court reviews the constitutionality of laws, parliamentary decisions, and presidential decrees.

As of 2005 Soviet-era judicial institutions still functioned at the local level in Armenia. District courts handle all civil and criminal matters within a given province. Armenia's Soviet-era Supreme Court has been superseded by the Constitutional Court.

The various judicial bodies remain subject to political forces from both the executive and legislative branches. Moreover, the Constitutional Court rejected all appeals by opposition parties regarding irregularities that took place in the 2003 elections. There was a chance for a ruling on a potential vote of no confidence for the president, but this was shelved. Public opinion reinforced the notion that the judicial system is not neutral, as suggested by several independent polls taken in the early 2000s. Stories of corruption in the judicial system are widespread, and most Armenians prefer to avoid resorting to the courts. Judges rarely rule against the state in politically sensitive matters.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Armenia is divided into 10 administrative provinces plus the capital city of Yerevan. The provincial governors and the mayor of Yerevan are accountable only to the president, who appoints them, rather than to the local populace or the parliament. The governors, in turn, have the authority to remove local elected



officials and exercise substantial control over the administration of each province. However, the governors do not control local police forces, which remain under the control of regional officers of the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

A 1996 Law on Local Self-Government further established responsibilities for regional and local councils, especially in the area of budget formulation and tax collection. At present, land and property taxes are the only means by which local governments can raise revenues independent of the national government. Moreover, as these are modest, at best, the reality is that regional and local governments remain dependent upon the national legislative process.

The Electoral System

The electoral system uses a combination of methods. In the presidential elections, the first round is open to all registered candidates, and the winner must obtain a 50 percent plus 1 majority. Failing that a runoff election is held between the top two vote getters, and a simple majority is required. In the legislative elections 56 seats are designated for single-member districts that require a candidate to obtain an absolute majority. The remaining 75 seats are allocated through a party-based ballot system. All 131 seats are chosen at the same time. Voter turnout for both the presidential and legislative elections in 2003 was lower than in past years. Officially, the figures were 68.4 percent and 52.2 percent, respectively. International organizations suggested that these figures were inflated by the government.

The Party System

Armenian political parties in general are weak and poorly institutionalized, with small memberships. Most of the parties in the governing Republic bloc are backed by powerful individuals within the government or the economy. In fact, Armenian politics is a case of rule by a shifting set of powerful individuals heading up networks of supporters held together by patronage links. However, since independence, the number of parties has decreased, and several blocs of parties are emerging that could form the basis for a much more stable political party system in years to come.

The 1995 constitution and the Law on Political Parties regulate how, and in what manner, political parties can register in Armenia. These were updated in July 2002. As of 2005 a party must have at least 200 registered members and branches in at least one-third of Armenia's regions (four of 11). This act alone resulted in a reduction in the number of political parties registered in the country from 116 to 45, with most of the existing parties relegated to being very weak, local-based organizations.

Major Political Parties

REPUBLICAN PARTY OF ARMENIA (RPA)

This party has been the dominant party in Armenia since the late 1990s. Early on, the Armenian National Movement (ANM) and the National Democratic Union (NDU) were the key political forces in post-

Soviet Armenia. However, leadership squabbles and fissures within each of these parties caused their respective downfalls. Emerging as a major challenger to the discredited ANM of former President Levon Ter-Petrossyan was the Republican Party of Armenia, which championed the rise of Robert Kocharian. Since his assumption to the office of president in 1998, his party has become the largest faction within the National Assembly.

Total membership figures are not certain, but the RPA has offices in all regions of the country and dominates politics at the national and local levels. Prime Minister Markaryan chaired the party as of mid-2005.

ARMENIAN REVOLUTIONARY FEDERATION (ARF)
(Dashnaktsutyun)

The Armenian Revolutionary Federation is the oldest political party active in Armenia. Founded in 1890 by members of the Armenian population of the Ottoman Empire the ARF was the ruling party of the first Armenian Republic, from 1918 to 1920. Driven from Armenia by the Bolsheviks, the party transferred its base to Armenian diaspora communities in Lebanon, France, the United States, and elsewhere, where it remains a powerful force. Its platform at the time stood on the twin pillars of Socialism and uncompromising Armenian nationalism, both of which it retains today.

The ARF became a legal party in Armenia in 1991. Relations with President Levon Ter-Petrossyan rapidly became adversarial. The ARF campaigned for a strong parliament (at the expense of the executive), large-scale public spending, and the formal annexation of Nagorno-Karabakh to Armenia, and won 18 seats in the 1992 parliamentary elections, making it the largest opposition party in the National Assembly.

In December 1994 the mayor of Yerevan, Humbartsum Galstian, was murdered, and President Ter-Petrossyan accused the ARF of the murder and banned the party. Several members of the party were put on trial for belonging to an alleged secret organization within the party that was engaged in murder, drug trafficking, and extortion. In early 1998, however, President Ter-Petrossyan was forced to resign. Members of his party, the Armenian National Movement (ANM), moved quickly to join other parties, and its parliamentary bloc collapsed. Armenia's next president, Robert Kocharian, legalized the ARF in 1998, and the party enjoyed great popularity with the public through mid-2005.

This party is supportive of President Kocharian and as of 2005 had seats within the governing cabinet.

Minor Political Parties

COUNTRY OF LAW PARTY

This is a center-right party that ran on its own in years past but now is loyal to President Kocharian and works in alliance with the RPA. It has 19 members in the National Assembly, who are part of the governing coalition.

JUSTICE ALLIANCE FACTION
(Ararutiun)

This party won 15 seats in the legislative elections of 2003 and is seen as one of the key opposition forces in Armenia. In the period following the 2003 elections this organization attempted to rally support with other opposition forces to form a more credible united front. This group hoped to emulate the strategies used by successful opposition forces in neighboring Georgia (2003) and Ukraine (2004).

NATIONAL UNITY PARTY FACTION

This party won nine seats in the legislative elections in 2003 and began to work with the Justice Alliance Faction against the ruling coalition. Its leader, Artashes Geghamian, placed a respectable third in the 2003 presidential election and is seen as a key figure in Armenian politics.

Other Political Forces

THE NAGORNO-KARABAKH WAR

The Azerbaijani territory of Karabakh is a region of predominantly Armenian population lying within Azerbaijan. In 1979 (the last year for which reliable figures are available) the population totaled 160,000, 37,000 of whom were Azerbaijani and 123,000 of whom were Armenian. Armenians refer to the territory as Artsakh and Azerbaijanis as Yuxari Karabagh. In recognition of the concentrated nature of Armenian settlement in the region, it was given the status of an autonomous *oblast* by the Soviet government in 1924—a status that conferred a substantial degree of self-governing authority upon the *oblast* government while maintaining Azerbaijani sovereignty.

Gaining jurisdiction over Karabakh has long been a goal of Armenia and of the population of Karabakhs. Demonstrations demanding the transfer occurred in the mid-1960s and recurred periodically thereafter in

Yerevan and in Stepanakaert, the capital city of Karabakh. In January 1988 demonstrations began again and quickly spread throughout Armenia and Karabakh. Unrest escalated rapidly, with clashes between the local population and Soviet internal affairs troops and between local Azerbaijanis and Armenians becoming a daily event.

The Azerbaijani Supreme Soviet abolished Nagorno-Karabakh in November 1991; the Karabakh authorities responded by holding a referendum on independence. On January 6, 1992, Karabakh formally declared its independence from Azerbaijan.

The war for Karabakh led to approximately 50,000 deaths and the creation of about 740,000 Azerbaijani refugees and 40,000 Armenian refugees. The war was a military disaster for Azerbaijan, which lost control of almost all of Karabakh and a substantial amount of undisputed Azerbaijani territory bordering on Karabakh as well. Fighting halted in May 1994 when the two sides signed a Russian-mediated cease-fire, but a comprehensive settlement has thus far proved elusive. Although Armenia has denied direct involvement in the war, Armenian regular forces played an active role between 1992 and 1994, and Armenia continues to serve as a source of finance, supplies, and labor for the Karabakh government.

The war has been a major factor influencing Armenian political development. Parties and politicians in Armenia remain highly sensitive to the need to appear tough on Karabakh.

THE ARMENIAN DIASPORA

Without question, the large and effective Armenian diaspora in countries such as the United States and France has played a role in Armenian politics and economic development. These expatriate forces have ensured that foreign assistance to Armenia is, on a per capita basis, one of the highest in all the former Soviet states. Furthermore, there continues to be an active discussion of the events of 1916 in Ottoman Turkey, during which more than one million ethnic Armenians were murdered and which the Armenians emphatically declare to be genocide. While U.S. sanctions against Azerbaijan have been suspended due to that country's support for the U.S. war on terrorism, the Armenian lobby remains an influential force in the U.S. Congress.

ETHNIC MINORITIES

As Armenians make up nearly 96 percent of the population, the notion of minority politics is almost a nonissue in the country. The few minorities that remain are Russians, Jews, and Kurds. The small Russian minority is a link to relations with the Russian Federation, although admittedly security considerations are what make Armenia of value to Russia.

National Prospects

Lacking any resources that could attract international investment, crippled by massive emigration, and with what remains of the national economy straining under the weight of government corruption, Armenia's prospects appeared dismal in 2005. However, there was some cause for hope. In May 2003 Armenia was able to join the World Trade Organization. Since 2000 the leadership of the country has tried to integrate the country into a range of international organizations—both economic and security—to compensate for what it sees as an isolated position between Turkey and Azerbaijan. To this end, Armenia has been somewhat supportive of the United States in the latter's campaign against terrorism and has become a more active member of the NATO Partnership for Peace Program. Ironically, its bitter rival Azerbaijan has also been involved in these efforts. In all, the Armenian government is attempting to improve conditions at home by working with all potential partners: Russia, the United States, Europe, and even neighboring Iran.

Clearly, the situation in Nagorno-Karabakh is the primary security and political question for Armenia. The countless Minsk Group meetings of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and other efforts to resolve the frozen conflict have thus far failed. Within Armenia there is a strong reluctance to give up any territories gained unless the status of Nagorno-Karabakh is addressed simultaneously. This is juxtaposed with the Azerbaijani position that the withdrawal of Armenian forces from Azerbaijani territory must take place prior to any negotiations. For his part President Kocharian is left with few options, and the political leadership of Armenia continues to focus on other ways in which the country can develop in the future.

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COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

By Andrew Parkin
Revised by Michael Levy, Ph.D.



The island-continent of Australia contains one of the world's leading advanced, industrialized countries. Australia is heavily urbanized, with some 85 percent of its roughly 20 million residents living in cities. Australia was once a fairly homogeneous country, with most of its population British (or Anglo-Celtic) in origin—though with a small Aboriginal population. It has become, through large-scale immigration, increasingly cosmopolitan and multicultural, particularly since the mid-twentieth century. Though the country continues to maintain strong links with the United Kingdom, it has increasingly reoriented itself toward Asia.

The System of Government

Australia's liberal-democratic system of government has both a federal and a parliamentary structure. Federalism reflects the circumstances of Australia's colonial origins. On January 1, 1901, six self-governing British colonies—New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, South Australia, Western Australia, and Tasmania—federated to form the Commonwealth of Australia. The six colonies remained as component states of the new federal system. There are also two Territories—the Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory—directly administered for most of their history by the Commonwealth (national) government but that now enjoy a degree of self-government comparable to that of the states. The legislative, judicial, and central executive institutions of Commonwealth government are geographically located in the national capital, Canberra.

The act of the British Parliament that established federation provided Australia with a written constitution. This constitution specifies the distribution of powers between the Commonwealth and the states. The powers include defense, foreign affairs, immigration, international trade, currency, and postal service. Few of these powers are exclusive, most being formally concurrent with continuing state powers, though Commonwealth law prevails in any case of inconsistent concurrent legislation. The states retain all powers not exclusively transferred to the Commonwealth.

Since federation there has been a steady expansion of authority exercised by the Commonwealth government. This has been partly achieved by constitutional amendment, though such amendments, requiring approval in a referendum by a majority of voters in at least four of the six states as well as by a majority of voters nationwide, are difficult to achieve. Only eight out of more than 40 proposed amendments submitted to referendum have been approved. Some of these, however, have increased Commonwealth power, including the 1946 expansion of its authority to provide welfare benefits and the 1967 amendment providing power to assist Aboriginal Australians.

Rulings by the High Court of Australia, which exercises judicial review over constitutional matters, have also served to promote the prominence of the Commonwealth government. For example, the High Court has sanctioned the effective monopolization of income taxes by the Commonwealth since the 1940s; this, in turn, makes the states dependent on the disbursement by the Commonwealth of financial grants. Another important High Court ruling allows the Commonwealth, which under the constitution may "grant financial assistance to any state on such terms and conditions as the Parliament thinks fit," to specify such "terms and conditions" for financial grants in terms that involve powers otherwise "reserved" to the states. The High Court has also sanctioned application by the Commonwealth of its constitutional "external affairs" power even where the terms of international treaties encompass domestic policy areas otherwise regarded as under state jurisdiction.

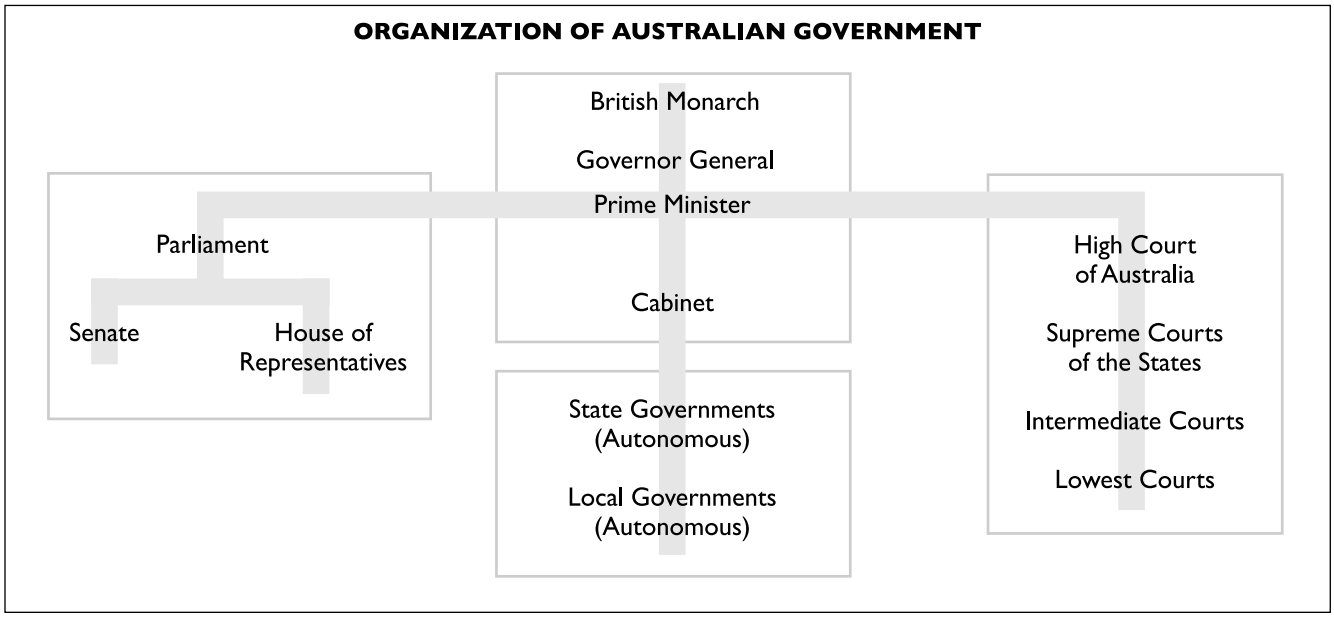
The intergovernmental balance is to a very significant degree affected by political as well as by legal-constitutional factors. Politically, the states are much stronger than their weakened constitutional status would suggest. A perception that a Commonwealth government is attempting to impose its will on an unwilling state tends to be unpopular with voters, and this acts politically as a deterrent to Commonwealth politicians and as a potential bargaining resource to state politicians.

The federal system coexists with parliamentary institutions. The British Westminster parliamentary model was adopted in the nineteenth-century colonies and has persisted after their redesignation in the twentieth century as states. The melding at the national level of parliamentarism with federalism required use of North American as well as British precedents and nomenclature. The national legislature (the Parliament) consists of two chambers: a House of Representatives in which the majority party (following Westminster conventions) forms the government, and a Senate in which there is (following the Washington model) an equal allocation of seats to each state (the Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory each elect two members to the Senate).

EXECUTIVE

Australia's head of state is the British king or queen, though the monarch plays a largely ceremonial and symbolic role. The formal powers of the sovereign are exercised by a governor-general appointed by the monarch on the advice of the Australian government. It is the firm convention of the parliamentary system that this head of state should act only on the advice of the government and, in particular, of the prime minister.

Beginning in the late twentieth century, an important debate developed in Australia over whether the country should abandon its constitutional monarchy in favor of an explicitly republican form of government. Such a reform would remove the British monarch as the head of government. Proponents



of a republic argue that the Australian role of the British monarch is an unacceptable anachronism at odds with Australia's national sovereignty, with the growing non-British component of its multicultural society, and with its developing links with the Asia-Pacific region. Supporters of a republic have sometimes disagreed over how the head of state should be selected, with some favoring an appointed president and others endorsing an independently elected head of state. Skeptics of the republican agenda include traditionalist defenders of the monarchical status quo, who wish to maintain the links with the British crown, and realists, who observe that Australia has long successfully survived as a de facto republic over which the British monarch in fact exercises no power at all and who are concerned about the potential divisiveness of the debate.

In the mid-1990s the Labor government of Prime Minister Paul Keating put forward a "minimalist" proposal for republican reform, under which the Australian people would be asked to endorse, through a constitutional referendum, the replacement of the monarch with an alternative Australian head of state to be known as a president. The powers of the president would be roughly equivalent to those already exercised by the governor-general. The president would be chosen by a two-thirds majority of a joint sitting of the House of Representatives and Senate. Keating's government was defeated in 1996 by a coalition led by the Liberal Party. The new prime minister, John Howard, was more cautious about republican proposals and was a moderate defender of the monarchical connection. Nevertheless, Howard's government sponsored a lively constitutional convention in 1998 that agreed to call a referendum on a proposal similar to that put forward by Keating's government. In 1999 Australian voters in every state rejected a republic, with nearly 55 percent of Australians voting to maintain the status quo.

RESULTS OF THE 1999 REFERENDUM ON ESTABLISHING A REPUBLIC

State	% for a republic	% opposing a republic
New South Wales	46.4	53.6
Victoria	49.8	50.2
Queensland	37.4	63.6
South Australia	43.6	56.4
Western Australia	41.5	58.5
Tasmania	40.4	59.6
Australian Capital Territory*	63.3	36.7
Northern Territory*	48.8	51.2
Total	45.1	54.9

**Results in the Australian Capital Territory and Northern Territory count toward the nationwide total only.*

The head of government is the prime minister, who, by convention, is the leader of the majority party or coalition in the House of Representatives. Other ministers are drawn from either house of Parliament, with most coming from the House of Representatives. The maximum number of ministers is fixed by legislation. It has become a bipartisan convention that the prime minister and most senior ministers form the cabinet, with the remainder in the "outer ministry" only participating in cabinet discussions when necessary to deal with matters specific to their portfolios.

The cabinet, chaired by the prime minister, is the central policy making institution of the government. It determines the government's strategic, policy, and legislative program, within the political constraints imposed by broad party expectations, by any necessary deals with the Senate, by advice received from public-service officials, and by public opinion as shaped and reflected in the mass media.

The major parties vary in how they, in government, choose their ministers. In the Liberal Party and the National Party, the party leader, elected by a meeting of parliamentary members of the party, has traditionally been empowered to nominate his or her ministerial team. With the Liberal and National Parties normally allied in a formal coalition, the relative allocation of portfolios between them has been generally determined by negotiation and is normally reasonably proportionate to their relative parliamentary strengths. In the Labor Party, the ministry usually has been determined in a ballot of all parliamentary caucus members, though the party leader (especially if the party is in government) can exercise a considerable personal influence on the outcome of this ballot.

Ministers are nearly always given policy and management responsibility for a particular portfolio of departments and agencies within the Commonwealth bureaucracy, though in some cases "senior" and "junior" ministers share responsibility for the same portfolio.

Departments and agencies are staffed by a nonpartisan public service. In the last decades of the twentieth century, significant structural and managerial reforms were introduced to improve the effectiveness, efficiency, and accountability of the public-sector bureaucracy.

Some departments, because of their key coordinating role and traditional prestige, are regarded as more significant. The Department of Prime Minister and cabinet is centrally involved in policy coordination through its advice to the prime minister and its administrative support for cabinet. The Treasury is responsible for the formulation of economic policy and advice. The Department of Finance oversees the expenditure of all other departments and coordinates the construction of the annual budget. Some important statutory authorities formally operate outside the public-service structure, with varying degrees of financial and policy independence, such as Australia Post (which runs the postal service) and the Australian Broadcasting Authority (which regulates radio, television, and the Internet).

LEGISLATURE

The House of Representatives is the forum that, by convention of Westminster origins, determines the composition of the elected government. Under the constitution, the House of Representatives must have "as nearly as practicable" double the number of members as the Senate, and each of the six states must have at least five members. Apart from the latter provision, which gives Tasmania an overrepresentation, single-member electoral districts are allocated between states and territories as nearly as possible in proportion to population.

Members of the House of Representatives are elected for a maximum three-year term. An election may be held sooner if the government loses its parliamentary majority and no alternative party or coalition can build an alternative majority or, more commonly, if the government perceives some electoral advantage in going to the polls early.

Each state has 12 senators, elected at large for six-year terms, half of them retiring every three years. Senate elections are customarily arranged to coincide with House of Representatives elections, but this is not always possible when the House is dissolved early. Even when the election dates coincide, the terms of office may not. There have been several attempts through a constitutional amendment to equate a senatorial term precisely with two House terms, but the necessary referenda have been defeated. Since 1975 the two Territories have each had two senators who, unlike their senatorial colleagues, must all seek reelection with every House of Representatives election.

RESULTS OF THE 2004 HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES ELECTION

Party	Seats
Australian Labor Party	60
Liberal Party of Australia	74
National Party of Australia	12
Others/Non-partisans	4

Although the Senate generally reviews legislation originating in the House of Representatives, the constitution provides that the two houses "shall have equal power" except in a few specific instances; the Senate, for example, cannot originate money bills. For a bill to become law, it must be passed in identical terms by both houses. There are cumbersome mechanisms provided in the case of a prolonged disagreement. Within certain time constraints if the Senate twice fails to pass a bill and if the government is prepared to fight an election on the issue, there can be a so-called double dissolution. This means that the entire membership of both houses must face simultaneous reelection. If there is still a deadlock after a double-dissolution election, there can be a joint sitting of both houses (in which senators are outnumbered two to one) to consider the disputed bill(s). Double dissolutions have occurred six times, most recently in 1987. The only joint sitting took place after the 1974 double dissolution returned both a Labor Party government and an opposition-controlled Senate. Such a complicated situation illustrates how difficult it sometimes is for a government, formed on the basis of the House of Representatives, to deal with a Senate controlled by the opposition.

RESULTS OF THE 2004 SENATE ELECTION

Party	Seats
Liberal Party-National Party coalition	21
Australian Labor Party	16
Australian Greens	2
Family First	1

Parliament is commonly regarded as the linchpin of the democratic system, since it is the debating forum in which legislation can be discussed, amended, and ratified, in which policies are debated and criticized, and in which the actions of the government are scrutinized. In practice, however, the locus of power is with the executive.

COMPOSITION OF THE SENATE AS A RESULT OF THE 2004 ELECTION

Party	Seats
Liberal Party-National Party coalition	39
Australian Labor Party	28
Australian Democrats	4
Australian Greens	4
Family First	1

An important factor entrenching executive dominance is the large scale of governmental activity, necessarily administered through the executive. This phenomenon, common to all Western democracies, is exacerbated by the Westminster-style strengthening in Parliament of disciplined political parties, making for no clear separation between the governmental executive and its origins in the legislature. Backbench members of the majority party or coalition identify closely with the government. They realize that they were almost certainly elected because of their party affiliation and that their chances of reelection depend on the performance of the government. If they were to oppose their own party's government in Parliament, the result might be the defeat of the government, its enforced resignation, and an early election. Without reendorsement by the same party, the backbenchers would have little chance of reelection (though several disendorsed members of Parliament successfully contested and won their seats in the 1990s in defiance of their former parties). It is usually much safer for any criticisms and misgivings to be expressed within party meetings than within Parliament (and Labor Party members of Parliament are in any case pledged always to vote in accordance with the majority decision of the party's parliamentary caucus). Party discipline is generally as rigid in the Senate as in the House of Representatives, despite the original intention that the Senate represent the interests of the States and despite the fate of the government not being at stake.

The internal procedures of the Parliament also contribute to its weakness. Parliamentary debates about proposed legislation or matters of public controversy, especially debates in the House of Representatives, where the government has a built-in majority, tend to be ritualistic and predictable, with government members praising the government and opposition members finding fault with it. The "committee" stage of legislative procedure, in which a bill can be examined clause by clause, sometimes produces useful technical amendments and improvements. There is also an increasing prominence accorded to some formal parliamentary standing committees, which take an active role in providing policy advice, examining draft legislation, and reviewing the implementation of legislation, thereby becoming more important in the career development of politicians.

It would be very misleading, however, to dismiss Parliament as insignificant. Parliament remains the formal and symbolic focus for the democratic system and remains in the public spotlight. It is the arena in which national leaders are identified and tested. It provides regular publicity for the opposition, whose leader is provided salary and privileges equivalent to those of a minister and whose "shadow cabinet" mirrors the portfolio responsibilities of the cabinet. A period during each day of a sitting Parliament is devoted to "questions without notice" during which ministers can be questioned about their portfolios. While ministers often evade probing questions from the opposition and indulge themselves in the self-congratulation invited by friendly queries from their own backbenchers, this question period does provide a well-publicized arena for the "cut-and-thrust" of political debate.

In addition, the notion of executive dominance can be significantly attenuated by the role and potential of the Senate. Because of its electoral system, it is very difficult for a governing party or coalition to command a majority in the Senate. The "balance of power" between government senators and opposition senators is usually held by minor-party and/or independent senators. While the defeat of its ordinary legislation in the Senate does not compel a government to resign and may provide the basis for the government to threaten the Senate with a double-dissolution election, a government's ability to govern is obviously impaired if such defeats become regular. The government therefore frequently needs to negotiate and bargain with minor-party senators and, sometimes, with the opposition in order to ensure the passage of legislation. The Senate has also upgraded its oversight and investigatory capabilities with respect to executive activities.

Even in the Senate, political considerations and party loyalty remain as primary factors. A government recently elected or otherwise confident of its popularity may rhetorically claim an electoral mandate to implement election promises. More commonly, compromises are reached under which the government is prepared to accept opposition or minor-party amendments that do not significantly subvert the essence of its proposed legislation.

A sensitive aspect of government-Senate relations concerns the Senate's power with respect to the government's budget, without whose legislative authorization a government cannot operate. Under the constitution the Senate is prohibited from amending bills dealing with taxation or financial appropriations, though it is assumed that it can defeat such bills and thereby effectively pressure the House of Representatives to make amendments.

Until 1975 the Senate had never defeated a government's budgetary legislation. In that year, however, the Liberal-National opposition in control of the Senate attempted to force what it perceived as an unpopular Labor government to resign and contest a new election. It therefore did not allow the Senate to pass the budget legislation. The government, however, refused to resign, citing the Westminster convention that a government that retains the confidence of the House of Representatives stays in office. A stalemate—a "constitutional crisis"—developed.

The most appropriate solution would probably have been a political one, with the stalemate persisting until public funds started to run out and the pressure of the crisis or public opinion or perceived political advantage produced a compromise on one or both sides. Instead, the situation was resolved, dramatically and controversially, by the unprecedented intervention of the head of state. The governor-general, contrary to the tradition that he act only on the advice of ministers but consistent with a literal reading of the constitution, dismissed Prime Minister Gough Whitlam and his Labor government. He installed the leader of the opposition as prime minister of a caretaker government, even though this new government had only minority support in the House of Representatives, and called a double-dissolution election. This election endorsed the new government with an overwhelming majority in both houses.

Debate still continues over the propriety of various actions in the constitutional crisis, particularly those of the governor-general. Another "constitutional crisis" resulting from a threat to the government's budget is unlikely in the foreseeable future because of a pervasive sentiment that the events of 1975 should be avoided if possible.

JUDICIARY

The High Court of Australia exercises judicial review over matters relating to the constitution as well as being the final court of appeal within the Australian system of justice. In many respects, the High Court was modeled on the United States Supreme Court and exercises a similar capacity to invalidate legislation it has deemed unconstitutional. The other courts created at the national level include the Family Court (established in 1975 to handle matrimonial, divorce, and associated custody and property matters; a separate Family Court exists in Western Australia), the Federal Court (established in 1976 with responsibility for a range of matters such as bankruptcy and administrative appeals), and the Industrial Relations Court (established in its current form in 1993 to exercise judicial power over industrial relations matters). Beyond these specialized courts, there is no further system of national-level courts. Instead, the court systems of the states have been vested with jurisdiction over Commonwealth law.

The High Court's varying interpretations of Section 92 of the constitution illustrate the political impact of its decisions. Section 92 declares that "trade, commerce and intercourse among the States . . . shall be absolutely free" and was presumably intended to prevent the reemergence of barriers to interstate trade such as the tariffs that had existed during the colonial period. High Court interpretations in the first half of the twentieth century gradually made Section 92 a significant restraint on any form of economic regulation, culminating in 1945 and 1948 in the annulment of attempts by the Chiefly Labor government to nationalize the private airlines and the private banks. Such a broad-brushed interpretation of Section 92 was overturned, however, by a later High Court in 1988 so that the original apparent intent of the section—to create an Australian "common market"—now seems to prevail.

In recent times the Court, besides revising its approach to Section 92, has also been innovative in other important areas. A Court majority in the early 1990s "discovered" several hitherto-unrecognized citizen rights guaranteed under a constitution that, in formal terms, features (in contrast to the U.S. Constitution) only a few explicit rights-type provisions. For example, the Court ruled in 1992 (in overturning legislation that attempted to prohibit, on cost and equity

grounds, paid political advertising in the electronic media) that the constitution guaranteed freedom of speech in relation to political matters. The Court has also overturned long-standing common-law interpretations to rule that some Aboriginal Australians hold, under certain conditions, "native title" to land hitherto thought to have been totally usurped by the British crown at the time of colonization. The Keating Labor government took advantage of this ruling (known as the *Mabo* decision) to institute a formal procedure of "native title" claims. A later High Court ruling (in the *Wik* case) that "native title" could coexist with pastoral leases presented the Howard coalition with a difficult political problem, requiring it to find some legislative resolution that appeased its supporters in the pastoral and related rural industries without negating the native-title rights the Court had discovered. The government legislation on this matter finally passed through the Parliament, after tortuous Senate negotiations, in July 1998.

Through its judicial review of legislation and role as ultimate arbiter on legal cases brought before it, the High Court is a significant political actor. The justices of the High Court—the chief justice and six associate justices—are formally appointed by the governor-general, on the advice of the government. Formerly appointed to life terms, justices have been subject since 1977 to a mandatory retirement age of 70. Appointed justices occasionally have had party and/or parliamentary associations (both coalition and Labor governments having at various times appointed their own former attorneys general), and the appointment process probably precludes potential appointees regarded as antithetical to government perceptions of the Court's role. However, the notion of judicial independence also remains as a strong value, and most appointees have had extensive experience in lower courts or in a state court system. High Court justices can be removed only by a resolution of both houses of Parliament on the grounds of "proved misbehaviour or incapacity," something that has never happened.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

In terms of providing direct public services to citizens, the states are a very prominent level of government. State-level identification remains fairly strong among Australians, reinforced by a social geography that sees about three-fifths of the population residing in five major metropolitan areas that also happen to be the seats of state governments and by the focus of the state-based mass media (though national networking is weakening this factor).

State governments in Australia provide extensive services. According to the federal constitution, states are responsible for regulation of local government and managing and providing public education, health and welfare, and police services. While states differ a little in the style, quality, and range of public services, standards and policy styles are fairly uniform by comparison with other federations. The modesty of the inter-state variation is assisted by an equalization component in the formula by which untied Commonwealth grants are distributed to the states and by regular national meetings of ministers responsible for specific portfolios.

Each state has its own constitution, most dating from the mid-nineteenth century, and each state operates under a parliamentary system, with parliaments normally having a maximum three-year or four-year term in office. In five of the states, the parliament is bicameral, with the composition of the government being determined in the lower house. The other state, Queensland, abolished its upper house in 1922. The Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory both have unicameral assemblies.

Much of what has been noted above, with respect to the Commonwealth level, about the dominance of the executive, the importance of the bureaucracy, the weakness of the lower house of Parliament, and the possible significance of the upper house (depending on party balance) applies also to the states. Each state government is led by a premier, who is the state-level equivalent of the prime minister. The premier chairs a cabinet, which is the chief policy making organ of the state. The government must be able to command a majority in the state assembly. Each state also has a governor, who is the formal representative of the monarch.

The two territories, which were administered directly by the Commonwealth for most of their history, have been granted a large degree of self-government by the Commonwealth to the point where they now have (with a few interesting exceptions) virtually the same effective powers as states. However, the degree of autonomy was tested in 1997 when controversial legislation passed by the Northern Territory legislature that had permitted voluntary euthanasia was overturned by a bipartisan majority in both houses of the Commonwealth Parliament. The Northern Territory government has for many years been controlled by the Territory's unique Country Liberal Party, whose campaign to win full statehood for the territory suffered a setback when

narrowly defeated in an indicative territory referendum in October 1998. In the Australian Capital Territory self-government is complicated by the co-location of the central organs of the Commonwealth government and where a proportional representation system produces a diverse and sometimes strange membership in the territory assembly.

Except for some sparsely populated areas that remain unincorporated, Australia is divided into a patchwork of about 730 local government jurisdictions. These local governments possess many of the superficial characteristics of sovereign political systems, with an elected legislature (the council) whose members then elect one of their number as mayor (though in some jurisdictions the mayor is elected directly by the voters). Local government as a whole, however, accounts for only a small fraction of total public-sector expenditure and is of less significance than in most other Western democracies. Local authorities principally are involved with property services—garbage, nonarterial roads, parking, street lighting, sanitation, development control, and so on—though in some states there is also involvement in water, sewage, energy reticulation, recreation facilities, and some welfare services.

The Electoral System

Australians directly elect representatives to two houses of Parliament at the Commonwealth level, to two at the state/territory level (except for unicameral Queensland and the two territories), and to their local council. Different electoral systems may be in operation for each arena.

There has been a long history of universal adult suffrage, of which Australian colonies were nineteenth-century pioneers (though relatively inclusive property qualifications applied until the 1970s in some state upper houses and until the 1980s for some local government systems). The Australian colonies also pioneered such devices as the preprinted secret ballot, still sometimes termed "the Australian ballot" in American political science textbooks. All citizens at least 18 years of age are eligible to vote. Except for most (though not all) local council elections, registration and voting are compulsory. Noncompliance without sufficient reason (such as illness) attracts a small fine. Turnouts of about 95 percent of eligible voters at Commonwealth and state elections are common.

Electoral boundaries generally are drawn up by independent commissioners, so that blatant gerrymandering is virtually unknown. Malapportionment, however, in the sense of an overrepresentation of rural voters, used to be quite common. Owing to reforms, only in Western Australia is there still an explicit system that favors rural areas over urban centers. In the Commonwealth House of Representatives, rural overrepresentation was completely eliminated in 1984.

The most common electoral system—used for elections for the House of Representatives and for all state lower houses except in Tasmania—is based on preferential voting and single-member districts. Under preferential voting, also called the alternative vote, voters rank candidates on the ballot in numerical order. If no candidate wins an absolute majority of first-preference votes, then the lowest-scoring candidate is eliminated, and his or her votes are redistributed at their full value according to the second preference indicated on those ballot papers. The process of elimination and redistribution continues until a candidate wins by acquiring an absolute majority of votes.

Although only major parties can usually hope to win a seat, the single-member preferential system allows some role for minor parties. In exchange for recommending to their supporters a particular ranking of major party candidates, minor parties sometimes hope to win policy concessions from major parties. The 1990 national election provides a good example. The Labor Party was returned to government despite winning less than 40 percent of all first-preference votes. This was sufficient to account for a majority of seats largely because the preference distribution from the unusually large number of first-preference votes for minor party candidates (especially those espousing environmental causes) strongly tended to favor Labor. Labor had attempted (successfully, as it turned out) to ensure such a flow of preferences by making a number of explicit environmental policy concessions.

The preferential system allows allied parties to endorse separate candidates for the same district without necessarily harming the alliance. For example, both the Liberal Party and the National Party, which often are coalition partners, may offer candidates for the same district. These candidates "exchange preferences"—in other words, each candidate recommends that his or her supporters give their second preference to the other candidate. This helps the higher vote winner of the two effectively to benefit from their combined vote if neither of them wins an absolute majority of first preferences.

Elections to the Australian Senate are conducted through an electoral system called the single-transferable vote. Senators are elected at-large from each state, with six representatives being elected from each state at

each election (twelve in a double dissolution). Voters rank order their preferences and may vote for as many candidates as are elected. Candidates are elected if they receive a quota of votes calculated as one-seventh (one-thirteenth in a double dissolution) plus one of the total valid votes. Candidates who win more than the requisite quota have "surplus" votes distributed to other candidates at their full value according to the second or subsequent preferences recorded by the voter. In this way, and with the progressive elimination if necessary of the lowest-scoring candidates and the distribution of their votes to other candidates according to the voters' recorded preferences, the requisite number of winning candidates is identified. Because candidates are listed on the ballot paper in party groupings and because most voters follow party recommendations in recording preferences (a practice now institutionalized by the introduction of an option for voters simply to indicate an endorsement of a particular party's registered preference ordering), the effect is very similar in practice to proportional representation.

Casual vacancies, caused by the death or resignation of an elected member during a term, are handled differently for each Commonwealth house. In the House of Representatives, a by-election is conducted for the vacated seat. In the Senate, a replacement senator is chosen at a joint sitting of the relevant state houses of parliament. The requirement under a 1977 amendment to the constitution that the replacement senator be from the same party prevents any alteration to the party balance in the Senate. This requirement is the constitutional entrenchment of a previous convention to the same effect, a convention which was nonetheless broken twice in 1975 by non-Labor state governments intent on curtailing the then-national Labor government and creating the basis for the "constitutional crisis" that followed.

The Party System

ORIGINS OF THE PARTIES

Modern political parties formed in Australia in the 1890s, some 40 years after the expansion of the franchise. The emergence and almost immediate success of the Australian Labor Party (ALP) in the 1890s served to solidify conservative interests. By the time of federation in 1901, the ALP was opposed by two relatively coherent groups, the Free Traders and the Protectionists, which fused in 1910 to form the Liberal Party. Thereafter, the major party on the Right underwent several changes in structure and name, absorbing various breakaways from the ALP, until in 1944 the modern Liberal Party was established. The Liberal Party generally operates in coalition with the rural-based National Party. Minor parties have generally been unable to win seats in the House of Representatives since World War II, though there have been several independent members elected. In the Senate multimember elections facilitate minor-party representation.

THE PARTIES IN LAW

Political parties are the key organizing devices that structure Australian political life and the character of elected governments. A party affiliation is not a legal requirement for becoming a candidate for Parliament—any person paying a nominal fee, which is refundable if he or she wins a specified proportion of the vote, is placed on the ballot—but usually only party candidates have viable prospects of success, and certainly the formation of governments seems inconceivable except through parties.

For most of Australia's history political parties were private organizations that were legally unrecognized. In 1977 the constitution was amended to provide that casual Senate vacancies should be filled by a member of the "same political party," but this provision fails to define what a party is. In the 1980s, public financing of party election expenses was introduced for national and some state elections, and this has led to parties being officially registered and distinctively recognized in law. To be eligible for election expenses, a political party must have at least one elected member of the Commonwealth Parliament or a state or territory assembly or at least 500 members. A party must also have a written constitution that declares its goals. Otherwise, parties are simply voluntary associations with a legal status and obligations similar to those of any other voluntary associations. Thus, their internal rules and procedures are largely self-regulated.

PARTY ORGANIZATION

The major parties are primarily federal or confederal in nature, and most organizational activity takes place within state-level branches. This has important ramifications for national politics, for it means that national politicians have their political origins and prime organizational bases within state or local branches.

Within the states the basic unit is the local suburban or district branch to which fee-paying members belong. Delegates from local branches meet, typically annually, in state conferences, at which platforms for

the state parties are debated. Delegates from the states then attend periodic national conferences responsible for national party platforms. The extent to which national-level party organizations can or should intervene in the affairs of a state branch is a matter of occasional debate and controversy, with such interventions becoming more frequent when national election prospects appear to justify it.

The major parties differ in the formal status accorded to parliamentary representatives vis-à-vis the party organization, though in practice the difference is not as acute as formal status suggests. While the Liberal Party formally affirms the autonomy of its parliamentary representatives, there is occasional pressure to the contrary from the party organization. In the Labor Party the policies and platform endorsed by the organization are formally supreme and binding on parliamentary representatives; in practice, elected politicians and governments are accorded substantial autonomy.

CAMPAIGNING

Compulsory voting means that election campaigns in Australia differ slightly from those in most other Western democracies. Parties need not be concerned with getting out the vote; what matters is influencing the actual vote itself.

Increasingly election campaigns are centered on the media image of the parties and particularly of the party leaders. The major parties direct a large proportion of their campaign expenditure into media advertising, especially on television, and have developed sophisticated marketing techniques to target specific subgroups through direct mailing or niche advertising.

Local campaigning by candidates in their districts is usually of less significance than the national campaign and judgments made by voters about the performance of political parties in government and the regional economy in their own particular state. Some politicians may attract a personal following worth a few percentage points that may be crucial in a close contest; recently a few disendorsed members of Parliament have managed to be reelected in opposition to the newly endorsed candidate from their own former party. Generally, however, variations in electoral support can be explained by national or state factors rather than local ones. Most House of Representatives seats are reasonably safe for one or another of the major parties: Only about one-fourth of seats could conceivably change hands in any one election, and intensive campaigning by the parties, involving visits by national leaders and targeted advertising in the local media, is largely restricted to these marginal seats.

INDEPENDENT VOTERS

The following table provides an indication of patterns of party support since World War II in national House of Representatives elections. The relative stability of the basic two-party system, which pitches Labor against a Liberal-National coalition, is quite apparent. While a majority of voters consistently vote for the same party, there are enough crossovers between elections to ensure a very competitive party system even though the net nationwide swing from election to election is rarely more than about 5 percent. There has been a noticeable decrease in the amount of support for the three main parties, particularly since 1990. Though minor parties have generally failed to capture seats in the House of Representatives, parties such as the Australian Democrats, the Australian Greens, and One Nation have combined to win a sizeable proportion of the national vote.

Political science research suggests that more than four-fifths of Australians identify with a political party and that this identification is a reasonably accurate, though certainly not perfect, predictor of voting support. In the past the best predictor of party identification was occupational class, with blue-collar voters tending to support the Labor Party and those with a white-collar background tending to support the Liberal Party. However, this relationship is weakening in what is, for most people, a socially mobile, suburban, relatively affluent, and increasingly multicultural society. For example, the Labor Party has increased its support base among middle-class professionals, particularly those with occupational links to the public sector.

Major Political Parties

LIBERAL PARTY

The Liberal Party was founded in 1944, but it is the fourth in a continuous succession of anti-Labor parties. Its 1944 materialization brought together the non-Labor members of Parliament, under the leadership of Robert Gordon Menzies, and fashioned a mass organization to sustain these parliamentarians. The success of the product was manifested in an unbroken 23 years in office that the Liberal Party enjoyed in coalition with the National Party (then known as the Country Party) from 1949 until 1972, the first 17 of these years with Menzies as prime minister.

PARTY VOTING FOR THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES: 1946–2004

Percentage of First-Preference Vote by Party

Year	Liberal Party	National Party	Labor Party	Australian Democrats	Election Winner
1946	33	11	50	—	Labor
1949	39	11	46	—	Lib/Nat
1951	41	10	48	—	Lib/Nat
1954	39	9	50	—	Lib/Nat
1955	40	8	45	—	Lib/Nat
1958	37	9	43	—	Lib/Nat
1961	34	9	48	—	Lib/Nat
1963	37	9	46	—	Lib/Nat
1966	40	10	40	—	Lib/Nat
1969	35	9	47	—	Lib/Nat
1972	32	9	50	—	Labor
1974	35	11	49	—	Labor
1975	42	11	43	—	Lib/Nat
1977	38	10	40	9	Lib/Nat
1980	37	9	45	7	Lib/Nat
1983	34	9	49	5	Labor
1984	34	11	48	5	Labor
1987	34	12	46	6	Labor
1990	35	8	39	11	Labor
1993	37	7	45	4	Labor
1996	39	8	39	7	Lib/Nat[a]
1998	34	5	40	5	Lib/Nat[a]
2001	35	5	36	5	Lib/Nat[a]
2004	40	6	38	1	Lib/Nat[a]

[a]*Lib/Nat = Liberal Party/National Party coalition*

Some leadership instability developed after Menzies' retirement, and the coalition lost office in 1972. It was returned to government under the leadership of Malcolm Fraser in 1975, was reelected in 1977 and 1980, and was then defeated, still under Fraser, in 1983. The Liberal Party then had to endure a prolonged unaccustomed and uncomfortable opposition role, losing another four successive national elections under various leaders until led to victory by John Howard in the election of 1996; Howard was reelected in 1998, 2001, and 2004.

The Liberal Party has managed to graft a cadrelike parliamentary party onto a mass-party base. This has allowed a relatively autonomous parliamentary leadership largely to develop its own policies and strategies while receiving organizational support for election campaigns.

The Liberal Party's members are disproportionately middle-class and Protestant. In comparison with their long-standing minority position within the Australian Labor Party (ALP), women have long constituted about half of the Liberal Party membership. An important function of the membership is to provide financial and election assistance, with local branches engaging in various fund-raising social activities. The Liberal Party also benefits from substantial business donations.

Far more than for the ALP, the members of Parliament are central to the Liberal Party ethos. The party organization is strongly federalist, with each state division enjoying a large measure of autonomy. Some variation exists in organizational structure, but generally local branches within the states, combined where necessary to cover each parliamentary electorate, have a primary role in selecting candidates and running local election campaigns. At the state level central councils representing local branches, members of Parliament, women's organizations, and Young Liberal Associations consider matters of general party business and policy, though their decisions characteristically do not bind the members of Parliament.

National business and policy are considered by the Liberal Party federal council, which has equal representation from each state (including delegates from the women's and young Liberal organizations), and by the federal executive. Sometimes, such extraparliamentary bodies attempt to influence the members of Parliament, but generally the parliamentary party sustains its autonomy.

Among the parliamentary members, the elected leader assumes great significance. He or she chooses members of a cabinet or shadow cabinet, in contrast to the ALP, where those positions are elective. In theory Liberal Party members are free to vote as they choose in Parliament, but apart from some rare cases of nonconformity (usually in the Senate), party discipline is in practice generally as firm as in the ALP.

Though factionalism is far less entrenched in the Liberal Party than in the ALP, there are groupings among parliamentary members based loosely on differences in policy or strategic orientation. These divisions sometimes manifest themselves in support for rival leadership contenders. In the 1980s, for example, the main line of policy division was between the market-oriented "dries" and the more pragmatic and socially oriented "wets." There was something of a reconfiguration in the 1990s, partly because the "dries" seemed to have triumphed in intellectual and policy terms. The party encompasses both "moderates" who are more pragmatically oriented toward an electorally successful formula and "hard-liners" with a paramount interest in pursuing market-oriented principles. A spectrum based on orientation toward economic policy, however, would not necessarily be consistent with a spectrum based on social policy: Some market ideologues are libertarian with respect to social policies, while others are explicitly conservative.

The Liberal Party features a mixture of classical liberalism, social liberalism, conservatism, and pragmatism. Its parliamentary members range from enthusiastic free-market advocates to supporters of a relatively generous welfare state, from social libertarians to conservative defenders of the traditional family, from moderate protectionists to evangelical free traders.

A brief listing of the important common elements of the Liberal Party platform would begin with individualism. There is a pervasive attachment to the sanctity and rights of individuals, who are regarded as responsive to incentives, such as profits, which lead to greater effort and productivity. Although the party has at times promoted a significant degree of public intervention and regulation, its long-standing strong support for private enterprise has become more pronounced. Whereas nearly all ALP members and politicians would, at least in principle, regard significant social and economic inequality as a matter for concern, Liberals would tend to accept some inequality as inevitable and perhaps socially necessary. Stability and order are also recurring themes. Liberal Party foreign policy was strongly anti-Communist during the Cold War period and strongly in favor of traditional alliances, such as with the United States, particularly against international terrorism.

In 1992, facing an electorally successful Labor government that had adopted a number of market-

oriented policies, the Liberal Party constructed a detailed and more radical promarket policy package entitled "Fightback!" The electoral defeat of 1993, widely attributed to the perceived radicalism of "Fightback!," led to a more low-key approach to the successful 1996 election. The Howard government in office vigorously pursued a number of proposals anticipated in the "Fightback!" agenda, including industrial relations reform, an attempt to weaken the influence of organized labor on the waterfront, and tax reform.

Electoral support for the Liberals has been socially more widespread than for the ALP, though it is strongest among those with a professional or managerial or lower-white-collar background than among blue-collar occupations. The safest Liberal seats are in more affluent residential suburbs. Women, members of Eastern Europe ethnic groups, and older-age cohorts tend to support the party in disproportionate numbers. Liberal members of Parliament are overwhelmingly from a professional, managerial, or business background.

AUSTRALIAN LABOR PARTY (ALP)

The Australian Labor Party emerged in the early 1890s when the failure of maritime and shearers' strikes persuaded trade unions to seek parliamentary representation. By 1899 a minority Labor government—the first Labor government in the world—held office in the Queensland colony, albeit for only five days before being defeated in Parliament. The ALP held the balance of power in the first Commonwealth Parliament from 1901, formed a minority national government for four months in 1904, and then won clear control of both houses in 1910. Since those early decades the ALP's history has been varied and volatile. At the national level its relatively long recent period in office from 1983 until 1996 contrasts with an earlier history when it enjoyed only a few short periods in office, primarily because of three devastating internal splits.

The first split came in 1916 over opposition within the party (particularly among Irish Catholic elements) to military conscription for service in Europe in World War I. This opposition caused Labor's prime minister (W. M. Hughes) to leave the party with many of his ministerial and parliamentary colleagues. These defectors joined the then-opposition to form a new National Party, which kept the ALP out of office until 1929. The Labor government that acceded in that year ruptured over the appropriate policy response to the Great Depression, losing office following a general election in December 1931. Again, some ALP parliamentarians formed a new anti-Labor grouping (the United Australia Party) in combination with the conservatives. After another decade in the wilderness the ALP in the 1941–49 period enjoyed a sustained period of national government under Prime Ministers Curtin and Chifley, producing innovative policies in social welfare, national development, economic management, public enterprise, and immigration. The third major fissure took place from 1955 to 1957 when a strongly anti-Communist and predominantly Catholic group broke away to form the Democratic Labor Party, which again helped to keep the ALP in opposition for many years. In the 1972–75 period Labor finally assumed national office again, under Prime Minister Gough Whitlam, for another brief period of government terminating with the "constitutional crisis." Its subsequent spell in opposition this time was comparatively brief, and Labor won back control of the national government in 1983 and was reelected three times under Prime Minister Bob Hawke and once under his successor, Paul Keating, until the Keating government lost office in the 1996 election.

The ALP is a federal party with its historical origins in the trade unions. Both aspects are essential for understanding its organization.

The key organizational components of the ALP are the state branches. The national components are largely umbrella bodies made up of delegates from the states, and most of the real life of the party remains at the state level. The trade union connection manifests itself in the formal affiliation of unions with the party in the states. Thus, there is a basic dualism in party membership, with tens of thousands of dues-paying voluntary members of local branches and well over one million members of trade unions affiliated with the party. Branch members are typically from a more middle-class background than are the unionists passively affiliated through their union. The proportion of women members, which used to be quite low, has risen substantially.

State conferences, usually annual, are the supreme policymaking bodies in each state. State branches differ in their procedures for selecting parliamentary candidates: In some states such selection is conducted at state conferences, while in others there are selection panels consisting of conference delegates and local members or, as in New South Wales, a plebiscite of local members.

The annual national conference and the more regular national executive meetings accord representation to the state branches roughly in proportion to population. The national bodies are the supreme organs of the party, able in principle to impose their authority

on state branches. More recently the state branches in Victoria, Queensland, and Tasmania, regarded at the time as electoral liabilities, have been forcibly reconstructed. Mostly, however, the national bodies are reluctant to intervene. There is a small national secretariat that is most conspicuous in organizing national election campaign strategies, but the party's most visible national presence is its representation in the national Parliament.

In the ethos and formal rules of the ALP, parliamentarians are subordinate to the organization, and party candidates are pledged to uphold the party platform. In practice, the parliamentary caucus and especially a Labor government enjoy a greater degree of policy and strategic autonomy than this formal pledge might suggest. Potential conflict between politicians and the organization is also attenuated by the influence of some members of Parliament in the party organization and, conversely, by the granting of endorsement for parliamentary seats to influential figures in the organization.

Some awkward conflicts have occurred, most recently with the Hawke and Keating governments in the 1980s and 1990s taking some positions (such as on privatization of public enterprises) that appeared to be in tension with official party policy and with the sentiments of many local branch members. But it is revealing that the party organization now typically defers to a Labor government's expressed position in such cases.

The ALP cannot be understood only in terms of its formal organizational structure. Semiformalized factions have become increasingly prominent at the national level, both within the parliamentary caucus and in national organizational bodies, and now provide the strongest trans-state linkages within the party. These factions represent loose alliances based on ideological affinities, power groupings, personalities, and, occasionally, patronage. Each faction tends to have its own caucus meetings, publications, and voting tickets for party ballots. The factions are self-described on a left-right (or radical-pragmatic) spectrum, and this does give an approximate indication of ideological predisposition while sometimes exaggerating the degree of ideological coherence.

The right faction, which in some states bears a distinctive local name such as Labor Unity, is the largest grouping, strongest in New South Wales, and has been the main party base of Prime Ministers Bob Hawke and Paul Keating. The left faction has been strongest in Victoria and features some internal friction between traditional left loyalists and pragmatic left elements who are more prepared to accept the compromises and disciplines of governmental office. A center faction, the smallest of the three with the self-appellation of the Center Left, developed in the 1980s as an explicit broker between the Right and the Left but has weakened considerably since the mid-1990s.

The main sources of finance for the ALP are membership dues, periodic fund-raising events organized by branches, affiliation fees paid by unions, and donations, usually by unions, though support from business sources has increased substantially in the 2000s.

The ALP always has purported to be a reformist party, though its ideological and policy positions have sometimes been complex and sometimes volatile. As an organizational coalition of reformers, ideologues, and pragmatists that seeks electoral majorities, the ALP is best described as a social democratic party. Its platform has long declared somewhat radically that it favors the "democratic socialization of industry, distribution, production and exchange," but this is immediately qualified by the rider "to the extent necessary to eliminate exploitation and other anti-social features in these fields."

The essential elements guiding ALP policy can be briefly, though simplistically, summarized. The ALP has traditionally been critical of inequality and injustice arising from capitalist economies, though it has accepted private enterprise within a mixed economy and its critical stance has probably owed more to Christian and humanist sources than to Marxism. In any case, this critical stance has been considerably tempered in recent decades. The Hawke and Keating Labor governments in the 1980s and 1990s were favorably disposed toward promarket policies and implemented important measures promoting business deregulation, privatization, competition, international trade, and reduced tariff protection.

The party generally stands for redistributive policies to promote a greater degree of social and economic equality. Today, this is likely to be expressed in terms of equality of opportunity and nondiscrimination in education, ethnic, urban, and social policy, as well as in industrial and welfare policy. Labor governments have twice put in place compulsory and inclusive national health insurance schemes, the first in the 1970s known as Medibank (effectively abolished by a later Liberal government) and a still-functioning successor instituted in the 1980s known as Medicare. In industrial matters the ALP lends general support to the trade unions, with whom the Hawke and Keating Labor governments negotiated a formal accord in the 1983–96 period representing an agreed position on wages, economic policy,

and industrial restructuring. This agreement produced a gradual evolution away from Australia's traditional centralized national wage-fixing system toward a moderate degree of enterprise-level bargaining, though still within a framework of strong union involvement and not a radical enough change for the new coalition government that won office in 1996.

The ALP tends to promote a rationalistic and benevolent view of government as an instrument for reform. The party also tends to promote Australian nationalism, which generally makes it pro-republican in the debate about the role of the monarchy. Many party members are skeptical of traditional international military alliances, though the Hawke and Keating governments were careful to endorse the alliance with the United States. At the national level the party has in the past tended to regard federalism as an undesirable impediment to the power of the national government, but its recent prime ministers have been prepared to sponsor a more pragmatic approach to cooperative intergovernmental relations, in recognition of the entrenched power of the states and of the reality of prominent state-level Labor governments that share the traditional state-level skepticism of Canberra.

The ALP's voting support has traditionally been strongest in urban, industrial, working-class districts and weakest among lower-white-collar and middle-class professionals. There is some concern in the party that some of its traditional blue-collar base as become disillusioned with the party's style of politics or has become attracted to the social conservatism of the Liberal Party. Rural support for the ALP is generally low, though the party does attract some support in provincial cities with an industrial base and in mining towns. Support for the ALP among women has generally been lower than among men. Among non-English-language-background ethnic groups, the ALP receives disproportionately good support from Southern European-origin voters but performs relatively poorly among Eastern European-origin voters.

NATIONAL PARTY

The National Party is often considered the political representative of Australia's rural sector. It was instigated by farmer and grazier organizations in the 1914–22 period and was originally known as the Country Party. It was renamed the National Country Party in 1975 and adopted its current name in 1982. Despite consistently winning only about 10 percent of the national vote, the National Party has been able to maintain a continual parliamentary presence since 1919 because of the geographical concentration of its voting strength.

In 1923 the party agreed to form a coalition with the larger anti-Labor party. This arrangement has continued ever since, so that the viable alternative to Labor governments at the national level and in most of the states is a Liberal-National coalition. The National Party is particularly strong in Queensland, where it is the main non-Labor party, and to a lesser extent in New South Wales and Western Australia. It has always been very weak in South Australia and Tasmania.

Though its voting strength is dwarfed by the Liberal Party and the Australian Labor Party, the National Party has more individual members than either party. The large number of dues-paying members has provided the party with a reliable funding base, enabling it to be less dependent than other parties on outside funding. The majority of members, and all the party's national parliamentary seats, are located outside of the major metropolitan areas. The party remains closely associated with the national farmer and grazier organizations.

Considerable autonomy, even over candidate endorsement, is delegated to local branches. Within the states the hierarchy is fairly simple. Local branches send delegates to electorate councils, while chairs of electorate councils form most of the state executive. As in the Liberal Party, National Party members of Parliament enjoy considerable autonomy in pursuing policies and electoral strategies.

As a representative of rural interests, the National Party has long supported public intervention to provide services to rural areas, to coordinate the marketing of agricultural products, and to guarantee incomes in the rural sector. This orientation sometimes creates friction with the deregulatory approach that increasingly characterizes its coalition partner, the Liberal Party. Because it is usually crucial to the survival of the coalition the National Party has been able to secure policy concessions from the Liberal Party, but it also faces criticisms from its rural constituency when it makes concessions to its coalition partner. Policy tests under the Howard government have included the decision to pursue a national uniform system of stringent gun regulations, angering the mainly rural-based gun lobby and some National Party backbenchers, and the attempt to find a resolution to the apparent conflict between "native title" and the interests of pastoral leaseholders. On matters of economic, social, and foreign policy the National Party tends to take a conservative position.

Minor Political Parties

AUSTRALIAN DEMOCRATS

Geographical concentration translates the National Party's relatively modest share of the vote into a solid parliamentary presence. The Australian Democrats usually achieve a comparable level of national support but cannot win House of Representatives seats because their support is dispersed. The party has achieved consistent success, however, in the Senate, where proportional representation has enabled the party to win representation.

The Australian Democrats were formed in 1977 around Donald Chipp, a former Liberal Party minister who resigned from that party after a public disagreement with the Fraser government. The Democrats have sought to occupy the middle ground between the major party groupings but have assumed a moderate-left image on social and economic issues as the Labor Party has moved somewhat to the pro-market Right. The Democrats support individualism within the context of a welfare state and have demonstrated a particular interest in such policy areas as education and the environment. They have often held a balance of power in the Senate since 1980 and thus have been able to exert some influence on government legislation. Voting support is found mainly among educated middle-class professionals.

AUSTRALIAN GREENS

The Australian Greens were formed in 1992 and are a confederation of groups that exist at the state and territory levels. Though the Greens have failed to enjoy success in general elections to the House of Representatives, they have won some seats in the Senate and have performed respectably in by-elections. The confederation's first member of the Senate was Bob Brown, who was elected in 1996. In 2002 Michael Organ won a by-election in New South Wales to capture a seat in the House of Representatives. The Greens focus on environmental issues and have generally favored left-of-center economic and social policies.

ONE NATION

The One Nation Party emerged in the 1990s as a novel factor in Australian political life. In 1996 Pauline Hanson was elected as an independent to the House of Representatives from a Queensland constituency. She won despite being disendorsed by the Liberal Party for insensitive remarks on race and immigration, particularly for harsh comments directed toward Aboriginal Australians. In Parliament she attracted intense media attention and a popular following for her opposition to Aboriginal land rights, multicultural policies, and immigration. In April 1997 Hanson formed a party that initially became known as Pauline Hanson's One National Party. In June 1998 the party scored a dramatic success in Queensland's state election, winning nearly one-fourth of the vote and 11 seats. At the Australian general election in October 1998, however, One Nation slumped, capturing merely 8 percent of the first preference votes and no seats in the House of Representatives and only a single seat in the Senate. Hanson herself lost her seat in 1998. The party's fortunes dropped further in 2001, when it won less than 5 percent of the national vote. Hanson retired from national politics in 2002 and was subsequently convicted of overstating the party's membership to secure campaign financing. Her three-year jail term was later overturned. By 2005 One Nation had ceased to exist as a national party.

Other Political Forces

Australia's open democratic system allows diverse interests to have access to and influence the political system. The media is not subject to state censorship and has an enormous impact on the political process, particularly because a large percentage of Australians regularly read newspapers and because a small number of media outlets control a large percentage of the newspapers. Neutral reporting is provided through the extensive network organized by the Australian Broadcasting Corporation.

Interests, particularly economic interests, are well organized. Sources estimate that there are some 10,000 individual pressure groups in Australia. Corporate interests are represented through a wide variety of organizations, including the Confederation of Australian Industry, which has traditionally backed the Liberal Party. The Australian Labor Party (ALP) developed from the trade union movement in the late nineteenth century, and in 1901, in the first federal elections, labor-backed candidates gained entry in the House of Representatives. The trade union movement, dominated by the Australian Council of Trade Unions, continues to support the ALP, though the influence of unions has diminished as trade union membership declined in the late twentieth century. Other interests, such as environmental groups, supporters of minority

(including Aboriginal) rights, and opponents of immigration and multiculturalism, are also well organized and have held demonstrations and utilized lobbying efforts to influence the government of the day. Think tanks, particularly conservative ones (including the Institute of Public Affairs, the Sydney Institute, the Centre for Independent Studies, and the Australian Institute for Public Policy), became important in the late twentieth century in providing the ideological foundation for Liberal Party policy. On the Left, groups such as the Evatt Foundation support the ALP and have provided an alternative to the right-wing think tanks.

National Prospects

Australians belong to an English-speaking democracy more culturally akin to Britain, Europe, and North America than to its Asian neighbors, and they expect the Australian government to maintain the country's advanced standard of living. Nevertheless, the country has reoriented itself somewhat toward Asia. Indeed, among its leading trading partners are Japan, China, and Singapore. Australia's mineral resources and its efficient unprotected agricultural producers have long been its economic strength and, in the past, were able to shield a protected manufacturing sector. Increasing pressure from international competition, the vagaries of world markets, and the economic crisis of the late 1990s in Asia presented Australia with problems and with new opportunities. The Australian economy is adjusting, with a steady decline in manufacturing protection, though at some cost in terms of historically high rates of unemployment and with uncertain political ramifications.

The principal tasks of the Australian government in the foreseeable future are, first, the continuing management and restructuring of the national economy to take account of the new international economic order and, second, the maintenance of a degree of social consensus about the immigration-driven ethnic diversification of the population and the need for reconciliation with Aboriginal Australians. Australia is likely to remain a politically stable, relatively affluent, and increasingly multicultural Western nation linked, with increasing self-assuredness, to its Asia-Pacific region.

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REPUBLIC OF AUSTRIA

(Republik Österreich)

By Valerie O'Regan
Revised by Paolo Morisi



The Austrian Republic was established following the dissolution of the Austro-Hungarian Empire in November 1918. At that time a Council of Ministers was formed, led by Karl Renner. In 1920 a new constitution was adopted introducing the federal form of government. Due to economic and political instability in the nation, the short-lived dictatorship of Engelbert Dollfuss was imposed in 1933. Dollfuss was assassinated by the National Socialists during the civil war of 1934, and national instability and political repression culminated in the 1938 Nazi occupation and incorporation of Austria.

Following World War II a provisional government was established under Renner. In July 1945 Austria was divided into four zones occupied by the Allied forces. The first post-war elections were held in November 1945, resulting in a coalition government (known as the Great Coalition) of the conservative Austrian People's Party (ÖVP) and the Social Democratic Party (SPÖ); in December, Renner became the first president of the republic. Austria regained its full independence and neutrality with the signing of the Austrian State Treaty on May 15, 1955.

THE GREAT COALITION

During the era of the Great Coalition, Austrian democracy was held together by the political élites of the two major parties (ÖVP and SPÖ) bent on neutralizing the centrifugal pulls of their society. The Great Coalition fits the consociational democracy model, a political system in which decisions are made through a consensus-building process rather than through adversarial relations between the government and the opposition. Socio-economic policy was also made on a consensual basis since the government involved a tripartite bargaining process (labeled corporatism) with the labor unions and the business association representatives. Austria's post-war political culture emerged in response to a general desire for national unity and for bringing Allied occupation to a close. These policies required a model of political organization that ensured a high degree of national cohesion. Thus, the government sought to involve the two main social partners in the development of socio-economic policy. Both the Austrian Trade Union Federation and the Federal Economic Chamber (employer association) were highly centralized organizations able to control dissenters and strike high-level bargains. This tripartite bargaining process is still operational today, and it is estimated that Austria has approximately 80 governmental commissions where labor and big business meet to decide major policy.

The Great Coalition endured for more than 20 years under a succession of chancellors. However, in April 1966 the ÖVP won a legislative majority and formed a single-party Council of Ministers. The majority shifted to the SPÖ in 1970; this one-party government lasted until the general elections of 1983, when the SPÖ lost its absolute majority in the legislature and formed a coalition government with the right-wing Freedom Party (FPÖ), led by Fred Sinowatz.

In September 1986 the ruling coalition collapsed, prompting the rescheduling of the April 1987 elections for November 1986. Although no party received an absolute majority, a coalition was formed in January 1987 between the SPÖ and the ÖVP that lasted into the 1990s.

EU ADMISSION

Despite the nation's commitment to neutrality following the signing of the Austrian State Treaty, Austria has maintained a strong economic relationship with its Western neighbors. Acknowledging the importance of this connection with the West, both coalition partners have supported Austrian participation in an integrated Europe. Consequently a key governmental goal was achieved in the national referendum of June 1994; with 81.3 percent of the electorate turning out for the elections, 66.4 percent of the voters supported Austria's admittance into the European Union (EU). As a result Austria became a full member of the EU on January 1, 1995, while maintaining its brand of active neutrality. Beginning in the late 1990s Austrian democracy experienced unprecedented political turmoil as a result of the growth of the FPÖ.

The FPÖ, led by the charismatic but highly controversial Jörg Haider, stood for typical extreme right policies such as opposition to mass immigration and to European Union enlargement. In the general election of October 3, 1999, the FPÖ managed for the first time to overtake the moderates of the ÖVP. As a result the ÖVP leader Wolfgang Schüssel decided to form a government with the FPÖ by co-opting many populist ideas, with the ultimate aim of stopping the losses his party had been suffering since the early 1990s. Schüssel and Haider, who had once spoken positively of the employment policies of the Third Reich, had anticipated major domestic and international opposition against the proposed coalition, but the harshness and extent of these protests by far exceeded their expectations. On January 31, 2000, the European Union threatened to introduce diplomatic sanctions should the FPÖ enter government. When the parties proceeded to form a coalition government, the EU sanctions were enforced with the support of the United States and Canada, while Israel's protest went even further, with the withdrawal of its ambassador. International uproar against Austria forced Haider to resign the FPÖ chairmanship; however, it did not stop him from remaining the party's charismatic leader as well as a key representative of the coalition committee, from which he still exercised control over FPÖ's policy decisions.

In July 2000 the EU softened its position against the Austrian government by commissioning the Wise Men Report. It argued that the FPÖ was still a radical, right-wing party that had exploited anti-immigrant and xenophobic sentiments in election campaigns. However, the report also concluded that the Austrian government was committed to common European values and that FPÖ ministers had not shown an excessive zeal in implementing right-wing policies and had by and large played according to the democratic rules of the game. As a result the EU lifted the sanctions against Austria.

A BREAK WITH THE PAST

The first ÖVP–FPÖ coalition lasted until the fall of 2002, and its policies represented a sharp break with Austria's post-World War II economic and political order. First, the governing parties trampled upon Austria's traditional consensus-building policy process by passing legislation through simple majority rule. Second, the government overruled the wishes of Austria's influential corporatist economic bodies and also removed from public posts individuals who sympathized or were affiliated with the SPÖ. Third, it also introduced policies that broke with Austria's social-democratic tradition by proposing tax cuts, the privatization of state assets, and tougher laws against illegal immigrants.

By the third year, though, the coalition began to unravel largely because of factional conflict within the FPÖ. Haider and the populist faction of the party committed the FPÖ to introducing large tax cuts before the next general election. In the summer of 2002, however, Austria suffered severe flooding, and chancellor Schüssel announced that the tax cuts would be postponed. This provoked a furious response from the FPÖ's populist faction, which opposed the actions of the FPÖ government ministers that had endorsed the postponement. The FPÖ populist faction, sensing that the responsibilities of government had restricted the party's ability to deliver on many of its pre-election promises, decided to withdraw its support from the government, thus forcing the collapse of the coalition.

As a result, a general election was called on November 24, 2002, in which the FPÖ dropped from 29 percent to 10 percent of the vote, while the ÖVP polled very strongly. The result forced a less influential FPÖ to rejoin the ÖVP in a new coalition government led by Schüssel. The FPÖ has toned down many of its more extreme views, while the ÖVP remains Austria's more powerful party. The ÖVP, by forming

a new alliance with the FPÖ, has been able to exert greater control of the state including nominating its supporters to key public posts. The ÖVP has also been able to appeal successfully to right-wing voters and Haider supporters.

The party system was shocked in 2005 when Haider and several fellow senior leaders of the FPÖ defected to start a new party, the Alliance for the Future of Austria (Bündnis Zukunft Österreich, BZÖ). The split called into question the future of the FPÖ and threatened to undermine the existing government coalition.

The System of Government

The Republic of Austria is a federal republic composed of nine provinces (*Bundesländer*), each with its own government and assembly. Austria has a parliamentary system of government. Although the Austrian president is elected directly by popular suffrage, he is merely a figurehead with limited power and responsibilities. In the Austrian system the chancellor, who is chosen by the political party with the strongest support in the legislature or by the largest party within the coalition able to form a working majority, is the true head of government.

In the Austrian system the established division of powers between the federal government and the individual provincial governments is rather complicated; however, most important political matters are delegated to the federal government. Legislative and executive powers regarding major policy areas are the responsibility of the federal government. These include issues relating to foreign policy, the military, immigration, the constitution, judiciary, criminal and civil law, and law enforcement. For other policy issues such as housing, education, social welfare, land reform, population policy, and matters concerning electrical power, the federal government formulates the policies, but it is the responsibility of the provinces to execute the laws. The individual provinces possess legislative and executive jurisdiction over zoning and regional planning, hunting, land transfers, conservation, and local law enforcement issues.

The individual rights of Austrian citizens are detailed in the Basic Law of 1867, the 1929 Constitutional Act, and the 1950 European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms. These fundamental rights include equality before the law, individual privacy in the home and in communication, and freedom of association, movement, expression, conscience, religion, and property.

EXECUTIVE

Austria has a popularly elected federal president and a chancellor chosen from the ruling party in the legislature. Austria's president (*Bundespräsident*) acts as the nation's head of state, a largely ceremonial role; this includes appointing the federal chancellor from the party with the largest representation in the lower legislative house, representing the nation in international affairs, and opening or discontinuing parliamentary sessions. The official responsibilities of the president, such as making governmental appointments, verifying laws passed by the legislature, signing treaties, and presiding over the army as commander in chief, are performed in conjunction with the chancellor or the appropriate minister. When the president is unable to fulfill the responsibilities of the office, the chancellor is given the authority to perform the duties until the president returns to office or a new president is elected.

The president is directly elected by popular vote for no more than two successive six-year terms, usually on the second ballot. To win the presidency on the first ballot, a candidate must attain a majority of the valid votes. If no candidate receives a majority on the first ballot, a second ballot is used to choose a winner from the two candidates that receive the most votes on the first ballot.

In Austria the actual head of government is the federal chancellor. The chancellor is appointed by the president from the party or the coalition of parties that wins the most seats in the election that fills the lower legislative house, the Nationalrat. Governmental affairs that are not entrusted to the president are conducted by the chancellor. Although the person holding this office is not authorized to give orders to the members of the cabinet, the chancellor is considered the leader of the cabinet. In this capacity, the chancellor can control the composition of the cabinet by proposing cabinet appointments or dismissals to the president; this ability provides a certain measure of influence in cabinet decision making. The chancellor also has control over civil servants' promotions and the government's law branch responsible for the constitutionality decisions for legislative proposals.

The most important government decisions are made by the cabinet. Cabinet responsibilities in decision making include approving reports that are to be sent to the legislature, confirming government bills,

drafting proposals over presidential actions, bringing matters before the constitutional courts, passing emergency powers decrees, calling legislative elections, and providing supervision over legislative conduct.

In April 2004 Heinz Fischer of the SPÖ defeated Benita Ferrero-Waldner of the ÖVP in the presidential election by winning 52.4 percent of the vote against 47.6 percent. Fischer has been in politics for over 30 years, the last 14 as speaker or deputy speaker of parliament. During the campaign he promised to defend Austria's traditional neutrality and called for a return to corporatism and consociational politics. He also challenged the ÖVP–FPÖ coalition to roll back free market–oriented economic policies. Wolfgang Schüssel of the ÖVP holds the office of federal chancellor. He was sworn in on February 28, 2003. Schüssel heads a center-right coalition government between the ÖVP and the FPÖ.

LEGISLATURE

Although Austria is a federal system and has a popularly elected president, it is fundamentally a parliamentary democracy, with the basic power residing in the legislative branch. Austria has a bicameral system; its legislature, the Federal Assembly (Bundesversammlung) is composed of a lower and an upper chamber. The main legislative body is the lower chamber, known as the Nationalrat. Members of the Nationalrat must be at least 21 years of age. This chamber consists of 183 deputies who are directly elected for four-year terms (subject to dissolution) by proportional representation in a three-tier system; allocation of chamber seats is based on the 43 regional and nine provincial constituencies and the one federal constituency. Parties must acquire 4 percent of the national vote to be represented in the Nationalrat. Nationalrat seats are apportioned to the parties through a two-stage process. The first stage takes place at the provincial level; the second stage allocates any remaining seats to the two national constituencies.

Responsibilities of the Nationalrat include policymaking, amending the constitution, and overseeing the Office of the People's Attorney. To create policy, the first step involves the initial reading and explanation of a bill that is submitted by the federal government (*Bundesregierung*) or introduced by a member of the Nationalrat; the bill is then accepted and sent to a legislative committee or rejected. If the bill is accepted, the committee prepares a final version of the bill for a second reading; during this reading the main debate of the proposed bill occurs. Changes to the bill can be made with the agreement of at least eight of the committee members. If action is not taken to suspend debate of the bill or return the bill to committee, the bill undergoes a final vote, known as the third reading. If the bill is passed, it goes to the upper legislative house where it can be rejected or approved or action dealing with the bill can be suspended for up to eight weeks. In the event that the bill is approved or action is not taken during the eight-week period, the president verifies the constitutionality of the bill and the chancellor proclaims the bill as law.

When amending the constitution, a two-thirds majority in the Nationalrat with at least half of the members in attendance is required to pass constitutional amendments or constitutional laws. Furthermore, to perform a partial or total revision of the constitution, a referendum must be held. To render a partial revision, the referendum is conducted when one-third of the members of either chamber request it.

In 1977 the Austrian government established the Office of the People's Attorney, patterned after the Scandinavian office of ombudsman. This position is accountable to the lower chamber exclusively. The responsibility of the office is to investigate citizen complaints of unjust treatment by any sector of the administration.

The upper chamber, the Bundesrat, has very limited power. This chamber is composed of 64 members who are indirectly elected by the nine provincial (*Länder*) legislatures; consequently, the upper chamber represents the interests of the *Länder*. Members of the Bundesrat are elected for four- to six-year terms corresponding to the term of their respective provincial assemblies (*Landtag*). The seats are allotted in proportion to the population of the province.

The powers of the Bundesrat are confined to the review and delay of legislation that has been passed by the Nationalrat. If the upper chamber rejects a legislative bill, its decision may be overturned by a "persisting vote" of the lower chamber, whereby a majority vote in the Nationalrat with at least half the members present is required to overturn the decision. A simple majority vote in both chambers is all that is necessary to enact ordinary legislation.

JUDICIARY

Three types of courts are provided for in the Austrian constitution: judicial, administrative, and constitutional. Judicial courts are established by law. Judgeships for the judicial courts are usually made by presidential appointment from a list of recommended candidates; candidate

recommendations are submitted to the government from tribunals. Authority to make such appointments can also be delegated to a government minister. The Supreme Judicial Court (Oberster Gerichtshof) is the principal authoritative court in the system.

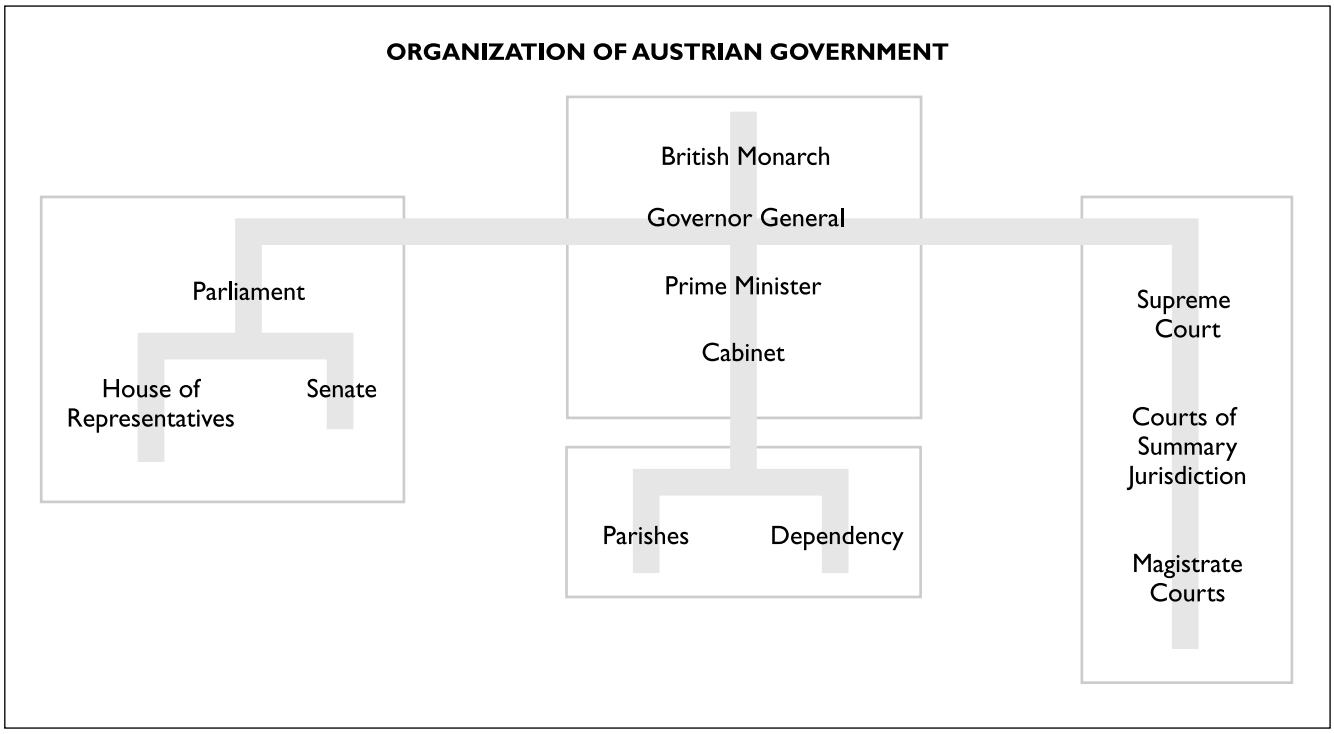
The Administrative Court (Verwaltungsgerichtshof) was established by Chapter 6 of the federal constitution act of 1929. Complaints about procedural or substantive problems in administrative rulings are dealt with by this high court. Up to 1995 administrative court judges were selected from candidate lists that were suggested by the government. In 1995 the selection process was changed to allow open advertisement and acceptance of applications from interested individuals.

The Constitutional Court (Verfassungsgerichtshof) was also established by the constitution act of 1929. This court determines the constitutionality of government statutes, as well as officiating over cases that involve monetary claims against the government, cases involving conflicts between the administration and the courts, conflicts between the different courts, and conflicts between the different levels of government. The constitutional courts can also arbitrate cases involving statutes, elections, human rights violations, treaties, regulations, and impeachment of public officials. As with the administrative court justices, up to 1995, the 14 regular members and six substitutes were selected by presidential appointment from candidates who were proposed by the federal government and the parliament. Since 1995 judicial vacancies must be publicly advertised and open to individual applications.

Besides the three higher courts, the Austrian judicial system also includes four higher provincial courts (*Oberlandesgerichte*), 17 provincial and district courts (*Landes-und Kreisgerichte*), and various local-level courts (*Bezirksgerichte*).

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Although the Austrian constitution places most of the governmental power at the federal level, the provinces are given a considerable amount of responsibility for local government administration. Austria is composed of nine provinces (*Länder*); each province has its own provincial assembly (*Landtag*), directly elected by the citizens of the province by a proportional technique, and an administration supervised by a governor chosen by the assembly. The provincial assemblies function in the same way as the Nationalrat when governing the provinces; they are responsible for the implementation and execution of basic laws that have been formulated in the Nationalrat, such as those embodying education, fiscal, and social policies. The



assemblies are also responsible for the legislation and execution of local policies such as zoning, regional planning, and local law enforcement. In addition to these duties, the provincial assemblies elect the members of the Bundesrat.

Since 1984 the smaller political parties, such as the Green parties, have prevailed in winning seats in the provincial assemblies. During the 1990s Green parties acquired as few as two and as many as seven seats in five of the nine provinces; the Greens have been the most successful in Vienna.

Besides the provincial government, each community has a council. One member of the council is chosen by the other members to act as the head of the community (*Bürgermeister*). The members also choose a committee to execute and administer the council resolutions.

The Electoral System

A system of proportional representation is used in Austrian parliamentary elections. Seat allocation is accomplished in two stages. During the first stage the total vote in each electoral district (*Wahlkreis*) is divided by the number of seats apportioned to that district. The resulting number is referred to as the electoral quota: the number of votes needed to win a seat in that district.

To be eligible to get additional seats in the second stage, a party must win at least one seat in the first stage. Votes and seats that are not allocated in the first stage are proportionately appropriated in the second stage between two larger provincial units (*Wahlkreisverbände*); the first of these larger units is made up of the three eastern provinces (Vienna, Lower Austria, and Burgenland), and the second is composed of the other six provinces. The purpose of the second stage is to benefit smaller parties by gathering votes that may be scattered across the provinces.

In 1970 an electoral law was instituted to increase the number of Nationalrat deputies from 165 to 183; the law also decreased the number of electoral districts from 25 to 9. Once again, the purpose of this law was to help small parties by making the number of votes necessary to win a seat more equal. Following the establishment of this law each of the provinces became an individual electoral district.

At present all Austrian citizens over the age of 19 are eligible to vote. Citizens vote by means of an equal, direct, and secret ballot that lists party names in their order of electoral strength from the last election. To indicate the voter's choice, the voter places a mark next to the preferred party list. Only three of the provinces have compulsory voting in the parliamentary elections; however, voting turnout is high in all provinces despite the lack of a compulsory requirement in six of the provinces. Voting in presidential elections was compulsory for the entire country until 1982 when a constitutional amendment gave the provinces the authority to impose such voting requirements.

The Party System

Parties remain the vital entities of Austrian democracy. During the period of the Great Coalition, when the joint ÖVP-SPÖ government had a parliamentary majority that could count on the support of over 90 percent of the deputies, the president was rendered a figurehead with no political power. The chancellor and the ministers, who were also the leaders of the two main political parties, retained the power to determine the course of public policy. Austria has transformed its original two-party system into a four-party system; but even in this system the role of the president has been sidelined by the powerful parties. According to the constitution the Austrian political system is similar to French semi-presidentialism, which is grounded upon a powerful president. In reality the political system functions differently, as the Austrian president has a very limited political role.

Although instances of single-party and all-party governments have taken place (ÖVP government from 1966 to 1970 and SPÖ government from 1971 to 1983; all-party government from 1945 to 1947), coalition governments between the ÖVP and SPÖ (Great Coalition) have spanned the years from 1945 to 1966 and after 1987 to the 1990s. In 1999 SPÖ and ÖVP dominance came to an end due to the emergence of the third force, the FPÖ. The FPÖ and the ÖVP formed a coalition government that the Austrian newspapers labeled the "black-blue" coalition. The chancellor Schüssel revived the "black-blue" coalition with the FPÖ in March 2003 even though, a few months before, the FPÖ representatives had walked out of his first government. Since 1999 the SPÖ has been relegated to the opposition, and the government has implemented a number of policies that have challenged Austria's corporatist socio-economic regime.

In the postwar period a system was established to distribute appointive offices according to partisan affiliation and support. The *Proporzsystem* (the Austrian version of the spoils system) is used to determine employment and other benefits in various Austrian

institutions such as state-owned industries and businesses; hence, the system offers the two principal parties the opportunity to reward party loyalty as well as maintain their influence over the bureaucracy. Up to 1966 the ÖVP and SPÖ applied this system in determining cabinet appointments and other government jobs. Since 1999 the FPÖ has vigorously challenged the established spoils system with the removal of managers affiliated to the SPÖ from state-owned industries. Another strategy adopted by the FPÖ to dismantle the *Proporzsystem* has been to privatize state assets, reduce the role of the state in regulating the national economy, and eliminate certain economic corporatist boards of interest mediation and representation.

The split among FPÖ factions that led to the formation of the Alliance for the Future of Austria (BZÖ) in 2005 promised to undermine the existing ÖVP-FPÖ government coalition.

ORIGINS OF THE PARTIES

Traditionally the Austrian party system has been dominated by the three *Lager,* or encampments: the Social Democratic-Marxist; the Catholic-conservative; and, the weakest of the three, the pan-German nationalist. These *Lager* originated in the nineteenth century and have been powerful forces in shaping political structures. After both world wars the parties stepped into the political vacuum to revive political life. In the second republic the *Lager* have managed to coexist in contrast to their battles of the interwar period.

There are two ways to get a new party on the ballot. The first way is for the party's application to be supported by three parliamentary deputies. If the party lacks the necessary support, the new party must obtain between 200 and 500 signatures from voters in each of the provinces within the 30-day period prior to the election for the party to be included on the ballot. This task is not as simple as it appears since many voters are unwilling to identify with a nonestablished party.

PARTY ORGANIZATION

There are two distinct types of party organization in Austria: direct membership and indirect membership. The SPÖ and FPÖ use direct membership, whereby partisan support is established by locality and province; this method of organization centralizes party power and contributes to higher partisan discipline. On the other hand the ÖVP uses an indirect method of membership through various associations.

Party leader selection is based on seniority and party loyalty. Due to strong party discipline incumbents in the Nationalrat and other elective offices tend not to be challenged from within the party. Party discipline among the electorate contributes to the stability of the political parties and the assurance that most elected officeholders will be reelected. The role of the average party member is usually a passive one; most members claim to have joined the party for political reasons or for materialistic gain. However, within the parties, a substantial group of activists can be found. For party activists special services are provided; these services include public-financed party academies and research centers that offer educational activities, facilities, and material relating to party activity.

CAMPAIGNING

Changes in the financing of campaigns occurred in July 1975, when the Party Law of 1970 was first applied. This electoral law provides federal monetary support to political parties for publicity and campaigning purposes. All parties with at least five members in the Nationalrat are entitled to a specific amount of funding with additional funds distributed on the basis of the number of votes obtained in the previous election. Smaller parties that have remained unrepresented in the Nationalrat but have captured 1 percent of the vote are also granted monetary support based on the proportion of votes received. All parties that are eligible for funds must be registered with the Ministry of the Interior; the parties must also have established measures defining membership rights and duties. Because the party law lessens the financial advantage held by the big parties, smaller parties like the FPÖ that acquire less financial support from membership and association contributions have benefited from this electoral reform.

The early stages of campaigning begin approximately one year before a scheduled election, with campaign activity suspended during the summer months. The onset of serious campaigning starts a few months prior to the election. However, over the years, the intensity of political campaigns has decreased because races have become less ideological. Rather than attempting to raise specific issues or ideologies, campaigns strive to appeal to the positive emotions of the electorate.

Recently the style of campaigns has become more Americanized. Parties use the mass media to communicate to the voting public. Party leaders meet on television to discuss the election and provide information that may influence the voters' decisions. Campaigning and the marketing of candidates have become the responsibility of experts; as a result, the process has become more expensive. The use of survey techniques

and information to test the appeal of possible campaign issues has also increased the expense of the campaign.

During the 2002 campaign the SPÖ and the ÖVP sought both to mobilize their own traditional supporters and to attract the votes of former FPÖ voters whom polls suggested were willing to consider other parties. All parties used traditional campaign instruments (posters, rallies, and speeches), as well as more modern methods (television and the Internet). Throughout the campaign numerous staged TV debates were held. There were six head-to-head confrontations between the leaders of the four parliamentary parties. The last roundtable, held three days before election day, was watched by more than one-third of the electorate.

The SPÖ even resorted to hiring United States campaign guru Stanley Greenberg to design a campaign message and theme that would allow the party to recapture all those blue-collar and lower middle class voters that in 1999 supported the FPÖ.

INDEPENDENT VOTERS

Although party identification has been traditionally strong in Austria, it has decreased over the years, and voters are more inclined to shift party loyalties from one election to another. Since the 1960s the number of "floating" or independent voters has increased, ranging from an estimated 5 percent in the early years to over 10 percent of the electorate in 2002.

Despite the increase of independent voters, party membership still remains high compared with other European countries; the majority of voters still associate with one of the two dominant parties, the SPÖ or the ÖVP, or the smaller FPÖ. The high level of party attachment is attributed to the belief that party affiliation can result in personal benefits such as employment and advancement opportunities.

Major Political Parties

AUSTRIAN SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY

(Sozialdemokratische Partei Österreichs; SPÖ)

HISTORY

The Social Democratic Party was originally formed in 1889 and was subsequently redesignated the Austrian Socialist Party (Sozialistische Partei Österreichs) before it returned to its original name in 1991. The party successfully united the previously separate factions of the Social Democrats and the radical Socialists without adopting extreme Socialist radicalism. The SPÖ of the First Republic identified with orthodox Marxism; in the Second Republic the party took a less ideological stand. From 1947 to 1966 the SPÖ served as the junior coalition partner with the ÖVP. In 1970 the party returned to office as a minority party under the chancellorship of Bruno Kreisky before winning a majority in 1971; the majority was maintained in the 1975 and 1979 elections. Due to increasing domestic problems, in 1983 the SPÖ lost its majority in parliament. Rather than form a minority government as it did in 1970, the SPÖ formed a coalition with the FPÖ that lasted until 1986, as a result of the FPÖ's swing to the right. Realizing the need for support to rule the nation, the SPÖ as the senior member and the ÖVP re-formed a coalition, which lasted into the mid-1990s. Since 1999 the SPÖ has been in opposition, a difficult predicament for a party that held government power for a 30-year period between 1970 and 2000.

ORGANIZATION

Organizationally the SPÖ is more centralized than either the FPÖ or the ÖVP. Party leadership decisions are almost always accepted by the party congress. Although the same can be said about the other parties given the high level of party discipline in Austria, the need for compromise is less necessary in the SPÖ because of the party's ideological, policy interest and regional uniformity.

The party is supported by local, district, and provincial party organizations. The SPÖ also has strong ties with corporate organizations such as the Austrian Trade Union, the Federal Chamber of Workers and Employees, and the Austrian Labor Farmers' Association; however, these organizations are not components of the SPÖ like the ÖVP suborganizations. Membership in the SPÖ is done on a personal level. Rather than establishing party affiliation through membership in associations as is the case in the ÖVP, citizens who subscribe to the ideals of the party personally choose to join the SPÖ.

In the local groups, a special party official known as the confidant provides the connection between the party members and the party leaders. There are approximately 70,000 confidants making up about 10 percent of the total SPÖ membership. Confidants are trained at the party headquarters. Most of the top officials of the SPÖ are chosen on the basis of seniority, achievement, and adaptability from this group of confidants; other top officials have been recruited from qualified technocrats.

Delegates to the party conferences are chosen by provincial and local party organizations, the Austrian Trade Union, the youth organization, and other auxiliary organizations. Additional delegates include the party members of the Nationalrat. A special party council assembled by the party leader is responsible for candidate ranking and selection, although the council does consult with other party organizations.

Up to 1991 the party published a daily newspaper, *AZ*; financial problems then forced the newspaper to stop publication. The SPÖ continues to print a monthly theoretical journal, *Die Zukunft* (The Future).

POLICY

Up to the 1950s the party's platform was aligned with orthodox Marxism. In 1958 the party's orientation changed to a more humanistic Socialism. The new approach concentrated on the economic, political, and social development of each citizen through reform. In addition, the new SPÖ program declared that Socialism and Christianity were compatible. By 1966 the party had become less of an ideological party and more of a pragmatic, left-wing liberal party. In 1991 its name was changed from the Socialist Party to the Social Democratic Party, reflecting its shift toward the political center in the late 1980s. The party abandoned its doctrine on nationalization, thus allowing limited privatization of state assets to take place; it started to reduce the size of the welfare state it had built up in the 1970s; and it gradually shifted in favor of EU membership.

The SPÖ advocates a progressive taxation approach with high social expenditures and economic planning. Along with this approach the party has worked to maintain a low level of unemployment while keeping inflation under control. The electorate regards the SPÖ as providing political stability; in 1995 the SPÖ was elected on the basis of its apparent commitment to securing jobs and pensions and because of its opposition to an ÖVP–FPÖ coalition. In addition, the SPÖ supported Austria's permanent neutrality.

More recently the SPÖ has shifted back toward defending traditional Socialist values and is perceived by voters as the party that wants to preserve traditional Austrian institutions such as corporatism. The SPÖ fought against cuts to the welfare state and has opposed the full retreat of the state from industry. Should it enter office after the next general election, the SPÖ has vowed to reverse elements of the present government's reform agenda such as tax cuts and the privatization of state enterprises. During the 2002 general election the SPÖ promised to cancel the purchase of the Eurofighter military plane and to adopt policies designed to reduce the number of people unemployed and kick-start the national economy through an increase in public spending. Since 2000 the SPÖ has also resorted to more decisive measures to counter the ÖVP–FPÖ coalition government. In response to the government's proposed purchase of the Eurofighter, for instance, the SPÖ suggested that it was willing to resort to popular petitions as a means to force the government to back down.

MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY

In comparison with the ÖVP, the SPÖ is a mass-membership party; SPÖ membership is direct and individual rather than based on indirect membership through organizations that are associated with the party. The party represents a majority of the workers and a substantial portion of the lower middle class. SPÖ supporters mainly come from in and around the larger cities; members also tend to oppose or be indifferent to the Catholic Church. Most of the electorate who vote for the SPÖ are members of the party. As of 2002 the membership of the SPÖ was approximately 600,000.

Because the party's platform is popular with female voters, women constitute over one-third of the party membership. This can be viewed as significant since women make up over 54 percent of the electorate. The party also relies on young voters who support the party's liberal policies. Besides maintaining its support in the urban communities, the SPÖ has increased its support in rural and Catholic areas.

Reflecting some of the antinuclear and ecological concerns of portions of the urban electorate, some prominent members of the SPÖ have transferred their support to the Green parties. Beginning in 1983 and up to the early 2000s, the effects of the shift in party support of the Greens can be seen in the Nationalrat. In 1983 the Green parties (ALO and VGÖ) won 3.3 percent of the vote; during the 2002 election the Greens won 9.5 percent of the vote. Support for the SPÖ decreased through the 1980s and early 1990s but increased in the early 2000s. The SPÖ won 33 percent of the vote in the 1999 general election and 36.5 percent of the vote in 2002.

FINANCING

Financial support for the SPÖ comes from membership dues, the party tax on functionaries, and federal subsidies.

LEADERSHIP

From 1967 to 1983 Bruno Kreisky led the SPÖ. Kreisky was viewed as a father figure to many Austrians during a time of international insecurity. When the SPÖ lost

its parliamentary majority in 1983, Kreisky resigned as party leader and Fred Sinowatz, the former vice chancellor, became party leader. In protest over the Kurt Waldheim presidency, Sinowatz resigned as chancellor and party leader. In June 1986 a former finance minister, Dr. Franz Vranitsky, became the new federal chancellor and party leader.

The party leader as of 2005 was Alfred Gusenbauer, who succeeded Viktor Klima, who in 1999 led the SPÖ to its worst-ever electoral defeat. Gusenbauer is not a great debater and performed poorly against the more charismatic ÖVP leader in the major 2002 electoral debates. He has also been the target of considerable intra-party criticism from radical SPÖ factions that want to push the party further to the left. In November 2004 Gusenbauer was re-elected leader of the main opposition SPÖ. He received 89 percent of the vote (down from 99.6 percent two years before), which was interpreted as a small (but still significant) vote of no confidence among party members in his leadership.

AUSTRIAN PEOPLE'S PARTY
(Österreichische Volkspartei; ÖVP)

HISTORY

Founded in April 1945, the ÖVP evolved from the prewar Christian Social Party (1918–38). The party is regarded as an antiliberal, non-Socialist collective party and bases its ideology on Christian Democratic political thinking. Furthermore, the ÖVP supports the independent and democratic rule of the Austrian nation. The Christian Social Party was part of an anti-Socialist alliance with other Christian, fascist, and authoritarian groups during the 1920s and 1930s; however, despite the common anti-Socialist bond, these groups rarely agreed on other issues such as economic policies or the nation's position on Mussolini's Italy and Hitler's Germany.

Originally the fundamental doctrine of the party was that religion (Catholicism) is essential for the education and coexistence of the people. However, since 1965 the ÖVP has portrayed itself as a party of the political center; the religious view has been replaced by a nonideological perspective. Although many of the members of the ÖVP were affiliated with the Christian Social Party, most do not consider the ÖVP to be the actual successor to the Christian Social Party, since the ÖVP has avoided establishing a link with the church. One of the reasons for the avoidance of party-church ties may be the decree issued by the Austrian bishops prohibiting the church's political activity.

Following World War II the ÖVP was considered the dominant party from 1946 to 1970. During the 1980s and 1990s the ÖVP lost political ground to the SPÖ. But when the FPÖ emerged as a serious contender for moderate votes, the ÖVP began to embrace right-wing policies. In 1999 the ÖVP decided to co-opt the FPÖ into government and force the populists to accept the compromises that come with government incumbency. The strategy worked, allowing the ÖVP to reestablish itself as Austria's most important political party with 42.3 percent of the vote in the 2002 general election. Most of the ÖVP electoral gains came at the expense of the FPÖ.

ORGANIZATION

The party was formed by the union of three influential vocational associations: the Austrian Farmers' Association (OBB), the Austrian Economic Association (OWB), and the Austrian Association of Workers and Employees (OAAB). There are three other less-influential groups that are included in the composition of party organization: women, youth, and retirees. Each group is financially and economically independent, issuing its own programs. All six of the separate groups are organized at the provincial level. Besides the individual provincial groups, the ÖVP has an organization in each province and each local district. The combination of separate interests must be defined and integrated to determine the objectives for the party as a whole. The efforts of the party continue to be maintaining contact with party supporters and recruiting new voters.

The ÖVP is considered a member party rather than a voter party; the member-vote ratio is approximately 1:2.3. Intraparty democracy is a priority of the party. Each unit is entitled to send 25 delegates to the national party conference; these delegates are joined by at least 10 delegates from the provincial organizations of the party, the party's members of the provincial governments, and the ÖVP's Nationalrat deputies.

ÖVP candidate selection and party list ranking are a complex process. First, the candidates are proposed at the district level; the candidates are then discussed by the party leaders in each province, and their proposals are submitted to the national directorate. The candidate proposals can be vetoed by the national party leaders, but the provincial organizations retain the right to choose at least 5 percent of the nominations. Although candidate rankings are also the prerogative of the provinces, the provincial suborganizations have a major role in determining the ranking of the candidates' names on the ballot. Ultimately, the national leadership can reject rankings made by the provincial

suborganizations; however, most disputes are resolved by negotiation.

POLICY

During the postwar period the ÖVP distanced itself from the fascist-authoritarian faction it was associated with and emphasized its commitment to democracy. Due to the influence of the farmers and business personnel who make up the ÖVP constituency, the party advocates a strong conservative economic and social policy and staunchly supports EU membership. The 1972 Salzburg Program characterized the ÖVP as a progressive center party and adopted a social market economy policy.

The party must consider the interests of the different groups that form the party constituency. The farmers want the party to maintain the conservative Christian ideology of the past; they request state subsidies to sustain their farming lifestyles through difficult weather and land conditions and to halt the flow of labor and resources to the urban areas. Constituents associated with the business groups want the ÖVP to uphold the non-Socialist agenda by challenging Socialist-endorsed welfare and education policies. In addition, employment issues are important to many of the groups that compose ÖVP membership. According to an exit poll, members of the electorate voted for the ÖVP in the 1995 election because of the party's commitment to reducing expenditures and preventing tax increases. Most recently, elements of the right-wing populist agenda of the FPÖ have been adopted by the ÖVP to attract right-wing voters. Some of the most relevant ones include harsher policies related to immigrants and asylum-seekers, free-market socio-economic policies, and tax cuts. In 2000, for instance, Interior Minister Ernst Strasser of the ÖVP implemented measures to tighten immigration and asylum policies. He introduced obligatory citizenship classes for new immigrants and proposals for 24-hour fast-tracking of asylum applications.

MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY

Although direct membership in the ÖVP does occur, most members join the party indirectly through the previously mentioned suborganizations. As of 2005 party membership totaled 630,000. Most members and ÖVP elected officials are practicing Catholics.

In 1999 the ÖVP obtained one of the worst electoral results in its history, gaining 26.9 percent of the vote, some 500 votes less than the FPÖ. In 2002 the party produced an astonishing comeback, winning 42.3 percent of the vote and 79 seats and significantly eroding the FPÖ's base of support. This success is largely attributed to the ÖVP strategy aimed at challenging the FPÖ on its own ground. The ÖVP has co-opted policies and campaign themes that appeal to FPÖ voters.

FINANCING

Approximately 30 percent of the federal party's income comes from membership dues to the suborganizations. Other party funds come from party taxes gathered from functionaries who acquired their positions due to party influence, business donations, and the federal government.

LEADERSHIP

The chair of the ÖVP is Dr. Wolfgang Schüssel. Schüssel replaced former party chairman Erhard Busek because Busek had made too many enemies within the party. In 2002 the ÖVP obtained an excellent electoral result, thus pulling ahead of the SPÖ by gaining 5.8 percent more votes. Schüssel is an excellent debater and strategist. The collapse of the FPÖ's vote, for instance, is largely a consequence of the competitive strategy of Schüssel's ÖVP. Schüssel co-opted the FPÖ into government and then proceeded to adopt policies that appealed to FPÖ voters.

The party seems well positioned as Austria's leading party. Its major challenge is to balance the federal budget and reduce state intervention in the economy, while reducing the unemployment rate and increasing GDP growth. The 2005 upheaval in the FPÖ, however, threatened to undermine the ÖVP's government coalition.

FREEDOMITES OR THE FREEDOM PARTY

(Die Freiheitlichen; FPÖ)

HISTORY

In January 1995 the Freedom Party of Austria (FPÖ) officially changed its name to the Freedomites. The party was founded in 1956 by a former Nazi, Anton Feinthaller, and drew a considerable amount of its support from former National Socialists. The party is considered the successor to the right-wing League of Independents; in the 1970s the party shifted away from its extreme right-wing tendencies to a more liberal perspective. Due to this shift in political ideology, the party suffered from factional disputes between the right-wing nationalists and moderate liberals through the early 2000s.

After the 1983 election the party formed a coalition with the SPÖ; this was the first time that the party had participated in a federal government. The coalition collapsed in 1986 with the election of a right-wing party chairman, Jörg Haider. However, during the 1986, 1990, and 1994 elections, the party made substantial gains in Nationalrat balloting at the expense of the ÖVP and, to a lesser extent, the SPÖ. Over this period the Freedomites also gained electoral strength in provincial elections, especially in Vienna.

In 1999 the FPÖ obtained a stunning result during the general election, winning 26.9 percent of the vote and beating the ÖVP for second place behind the SPÖ. For the first time in its history the FPÖ had been able to overtake the moderates of the ÖVP and become a serious challenger for control of Austria's middle-class voters. In the wake of its strong electoral showing the FPÖ entered into a coalition government with the ÖVP.

No longer in the opposition and no longer able to deploy its successful strategy of irresponsible opposition, the FPÖ gradually lost the support of some of its voters. While prior to 1999 the FPÖ had been able to promise both tax cuts and increased government expenditures such as fixed child payment for all parents notwithstanding economic status, in 2000 it was severely constrained by the negative state of government finances. In the 2002 general election the FPÖ was severely defeated, managing to gain only 10 percent of the vote and 18 seats. After the election the FPÖ once again took part in a coalition government with the ÖVP, but this time the party was much weaker compared to 1999. In April 2005 most of the FPÖ's original membership left the party to form a new one, the Alliance for the Future of Austria (Bündnis Zukunft Österreich, or BZÖ). The FPÖ's future was thus called into serious doubt.

ORGANIZATION

Delegates to the national conference are elected by provincial congresses; the delegates select the party leader and chief deputies. Senior party appointments and party activities are the responsibility of the party leader. Despite the centralized nature of the leader's authority, the party is plagued by factional disputes that influence the decision making of the leader; furthermore, the party discourages excessive centralization and encourages a considerable level of local independent activity.

The party publishes a weekly newspaper, *Neue Freie Zeitung* (New Free News), and a theoretical journal, *Freie Argumente* (Free Debate).

POLICY

The Freedomites have been considered a populist, right-wing party advocating moderate social reform, worker participation in management, and more stringent immigration controls. The party also maintained an anti-EU membership position, although the party's position did not halt Austrian EU membership. In the 1990s and early 2000s the party tilted away from an extreme nationalist character and liberalized its perspective on important issues; its adoption of the name Freedomites was intended to show the party's rejection of old-style party politics. This change was viewed as resulting from generational changes in the party's top ranks; however, the Freedomites continued to advocate "Austria First" interests.

Because of its belief in individuality and achievement, the party platform is anti-Socialist and anti-Catholic, perceiving both convictions as constraints on individual freedom and liberty. The party disapproves of excessive government regulation and the established *Proporzsystem* that distributes jobs and benefits according to party affiliation and support; as a result, the two major parties have monopolized the distribution of significant government jobs.

Once the FPÖ joined the ÖVP in government in 1999, it began to push for policies that eschewed Austria's traditional consensual politics. The FPÖ, for instance, passed bills to balance the state budget, reduce taxes, privatize state assets, and crack down on illegal immigrants. The FPÖ also deployed a new style of government that broke with tradition and produced decisions without consulting Austria's influential corporatist institutions.

MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY

Party membership was approximately 35,000 as of 2005, but the defection of numerous party leaders in April 2005 has split the party's base and called into question its future. In the past, 10 percent of the voters who voted for the Freedomites were also members of the party. Most of the party supporters have been civil servants, white-collar workers, or self-employed; many have come from small towns. The provinces that showed the strongest support for the party in provincial elections of the 1990s are Vienna, Carinthia, and Vorarlberg.

FINANCING

Since the party receives less money from membership donations (due to a smaller membership) and external economic help, it depends more on government

subsidies to finance party campaigns and programs than the SPÖ and ÖVP.

LEADERSHIP

Over the years the leadership of the old FPÖ party and the current Freedomites has fluctuated from a right-wing orientation to a more liberal attitude. In September 2002 divisions within the FPÖ escalated over the timing of tax cuts and the issue of EU enlargement and led to a number of senior party members resigning their posts. This led to the collapse of the ÖVP–FPÖ coalition and to new elections. In the November 2002 general election the ÖVP obtained an excellent result, winning 42.3 percent of the vote and 79 seats, while the FPÖ only managed to win 10 percent of the vote and 18 seats. Despite polling very badly in the general election, the FPÖ, under the new leadership of Herbert Haupt, agreed to revive the right-to-center coalition with the ÖVP in February 2003. In June 2004 the moderate Haupt stepped down as party leader and was replaced by the state secretary for social affairs, Ursula Haubner, the sister of Jörg Haider. However, Haider, Haubner, and several other founding members left the party in April 2005 to form a new party, the Alliance for the Future of Austria (Bündnis Zukunft Österreich, or BZÖ). Upon this defection, Hilmer Kabas stepped in as interim party leader. Kabas was subsequently succeeded as party chairman by Heinz-Christian Strache.

PROSPECTS

In the early 2000s the FPÖ retained a sizeable membership and strong local party branches and received public funding at the provincial level. It also retained 10 percent of the popular vote. The party continued to occupy the populist, right-wing political space. However, the defection of Haider and his allies—including most of the FPÖ's representatives in parliament—to form a new, competing party in 2005 has called into question the future of the FPÖ.

Minor Political Parties

AUSTRIAN COMMUNIST PARTY (Kommunistische Partei Österreichs; KPÖ)

The KPÖ was formed in 1918 in Vienna. Under the Dollfuss dictatorship (1933–34), the party was banned and forced to go underground until 1945. After the Second World War the KPÖ gained some importance because of the support it received from the Soviet occupying force; consequently, the party was given positions in the government. Following signing of the Austrian State Treaty in 1955 and the withdrawal of the Soviets, the party was unable to win a seat in the Nationalrat (the party had one seat in the *Bundesrat* from 1945 to 1954). Other events, such as the invasion of Czechoslovakia, so increased the Austrian people's fear of a Soviet threat to their own homeland that the party lost more support. The party lost the few provincial-level seats it held by 1970. The party remains a weak political force and is considered inconsequential in the electoral arena; the KPO won 0.5 percent of the vote in the 1999 general election and 0.6 percent in 2002. It has no parliamentary representation.

The KPÖ organization is based on the principle of democratic centralism. The party advocates land reform, nationalization, and a policy of strict foreign neutrality; it also opposes Austria's membership in the EU. Support for the party comes mainly from the trade unions and the industrial centers. Walter Silbermayer is the current chairman of the party.

THE GREENS—THE GREEN ALTERNATIVE (Die Grünen—Die Grüne Alternative; GRÜNE)

In 1986 a number of Green groups formed an alliance to contest the general election. The following year three of the groups organized the Green Alternative. The three groups included the Austrian Alternative List (Alternative Liste Österreich; ALO), which was a left-wing party linked to the West German Greens, the Citizens' Initiative Parliament (Bürgerinitiative Parlament, BIP), and the United Green Party of Austria (Vereinte Grüne Österreichs, VGÖ). Unable to retain its organizational identity, the VGÖ withdrew from the alliance; this left the GA one parliamentary seat short of the minimum eight seats necessary to qualify the party as a parliamentary group. In 1990 the GA overcame the problem when it won 10 Nationalrat seats. In 1993 the party changed its name to the now official name, The Greens—The Green Alternative (Die Grünen—Die Grüne Alternative; GRÜNE). During the following elections of 1994 and 1995, the GRÜNE won 13 seats and nine seats, respectively. In 1999 the GRÜNE won 14 seats and 7.4 percent of the vote, while in 2002 it won 9.4 percent of the vote and 17 seats.

The GRÜNE advocates a vigorous ecological reorientation of the tax system, by calling for the raising

of taxes on gasoline and other non-renewable forms of energy to fund renewable energy projects. Its present party leader, Professor Alexander Van der Bellen, an economist and former member of the SPÖ, is a very popular politician who has managed to grow the electoral support of the GRÜNE to record levels.

LIBERAL FORUM
(Liberales Forum; LF)

In February 1993 five FPÖ (now the Freedomites) deputies who were opposed to the FPÖ's nationalist struggle founded the Liberal Forum; among the five deputies was the 1992 FPÖ presidential candidate, Heide Schmidt. During the 1994 election the LF prevented the FPÖ from gaining a bigger share of the vote by winning 5.7 percent and 11 seats of its own. The party lost 0.5 percent of its vote share and one seat in the 1995 election. Since then the party has practically disappeared from the political scene as a result of its failure to win seats in parliament in either the 1999 or the 2002 general elections. Heide Schmidt now holds the leadership position of the LF.

THE HANS-PETER MARTIN LIST

At the European Parliament elections in June 2004 a list headed by an independent candidate, former journalist Hans-Peter Martin, gained a surprise 14 percent of the vote after waging an anti-fraud "transparency" campaign to expose alleged expenses abuses in the European Parliament. Martin was expelled by the SPO as he sought to highlight the generous perks and expenses paid by the parliament through secret filming and taping of conversations.

ALLIANCE FOR THE FUTURE OF AUSTRIA
(Bündnis Zukunft Österreich; BZÖ)

This party was formed in 2005 by Jörg Haider and many other senior leaders of the Freedomite Party when they left the FPÖ. Many of the FPÖ's parliamentary representatives also joined the BZÖ, leaving the Freedomite Party's future in doubt. The BZÖ advocated some positions that have long been the hallmark of Haider, such as stricter controls on immigration, but it also called for the adoption of a flat tax, supported the minimum wage, and called for a shift to organic farming techniques.

Other Political Forces

The country's main labor and business organizations have been an integral component of the political party system through the consensual governing process established after World War II. Organizations such as the Austrian Trade Union Federation and the Federal Economic Chamber are thus intimately involved in political decisions regarding labor agreements and economic policies.

The country's membership in the European Union has exerted a strong influence over the country's political process, and that influence will likely continue in the foreseeable future. At the same time, Austria is one of only two European countries (the other is Switzerland) that has pledged to retain its neutrality in the future. The country's conservative political leaders, particularly Jörg Haider, have frequently been at odds with the EU over the prospect of EU expansion, which the conservatives oppose.

National Prospects

Austria's change more than six years ago from a "red and black" to a "black and blue" coalition that is, from the so-called Great Coalition between the SPÖ and the ÖVP to the center-right governing alliance comprising the ÖVP–FPÖ—triggered profound changes.

First, there has been a change from the decades-long cooperation between the two major parties to the present coalition government, which has produced greater conflict in various political institutions. The government, for instance, has taken more aggressive positions with regard to the *Proporzsystem* that has led to an increase of the ÖVP's and FPÖ's influence in federal bodies (railways, social security administration, public radio and television) at the expense of the SPÖ.

Second, the ÖVP–FPÖ coalition has also approved conservative financial policies, such as the privatization of Austria's state-owned industries, which have been a direct challenge to the country's corporatist regime based on large-scale state intervention.

Third, the present governing coalition has also changed Austria's traditional EU policy. As a result of the inclusion of the FPÖ in the government, the EU imposed sanctions on Austria. This action strengthened Austria's nationalist and anti-EU sentiment and has also forced the governing coalition to adopt a more assertive posture when dealing with the EU. The

Austrian government, for instance, has vowed to call a national referendum on the issue of Turkey's entry into the EU. Given the rise of anti-immigration sentiments among Austrian voters, the referendum result could derail major EU-Turkey negotiations. Overall, since Austria joined the EU in 1995, the country has benefited from membership in terms of wider economic and trade relations with its EU partners.

The 2005 formation of the Alliance for the Future of Austria (BZÖ) placed in doubt the governing coalition and indeed the future of the FPÖ. While Jörg Haider's support in 2005 was not as strong as it had once been, it remained to be seen how this new political party would influence the party system in Austria.

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REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN

(Azerbaycan Respublikasi)

By Robinder S. Bhatty
Revised by Roger Kangas, Ph.D.



The territory of Azerbaijan is 86,600 square kilometers, including the exclave of Naxcivan. At present, forces of Armenia and the self-proclaimed "Republic of Nagorno-Karabagh" government occupy approximately 17 percent of Azeri territory. The population of Azerbaijan is one of the fastest growing of the former Soviet states. In mid-2005 there were an estimated 7,911,974 citizens—a figure that will most likely surpass 9 million by 2010.

Azerbaijan is located in the South Caucasus region. It is bordered on the north by the Russian Federation; to the south by the Republic of Iran; to the east by the Caspian Sea; and to the west by the Republics of Armenia and Georgia. The territories that make up present-day Azerbaijan were incorporated into the Russian Empire during a period of piecemeal annexation from Persia between 1804 and 1828. Azerbaijan enjoyed a brief period of independence from 1918 to 1920 following the collapse of the czarist regime in Russia, then was forcibly incorporated into the Soviet Union in 1920.

Azerbaijan regained its independence in December 1991 following the disintegration of the USSR.

The System of Government

Azerbaijan is a secular republic composed of 59 administrative regions, 11 cities, and one autonomous state. Its November 12, 1995, constitution (amended August 24, 2002) calls for a president and unicameral national assembly that are directly elected by the people and a prime minister that is appointed by the president.

EXECUTIVE

Azerbaijan is a parliamentary republic headed by a directly elected president. The president has a wide range of powers. The president is commander in chief of the armed forces and appoints district governors and district and Supreme Court judges. He may remove judges and governors from their posts at his discretion. He may also supersede parliament entirely and rule by decree.

Under the 1995 constitution the president is elected for a five-year term. There is no limit on the number of terms the president may serve.

The first non-Communist president of independent Azerbaijan was Abulfaz Elchibei of the Popular Front, who took office in June 1992 after elections that were considered free and fair by international observers. President Elchibei was overthrown in a coup d'état and eventually replaced by Heydar Aliyev in June 1993. President Aliyev was directly elected on October 3, 1993, allegedly winning 98 percent of the vote. Two other candidates received less than 1 percent of the vote each. The Azerbaijan Popular Front boycotted the vote, which was declared undemocratic by international observers.

Aliyev won another election in 1998 and was the front-runner for the October 15, 2003, election.

However, in April of that year he collapsed at a public event and was hospitalized, remaining out of public view for much of this time. On August 4, 2003, he appointed his son, Ilhom, to be the prime minister. Ilhom had been previously appointed first vice president of the Azerbaijani State Oil Company and also first vice chairman of the New Azerbaijan Party; thus, speculation had surrounded his possible succession of his father. The elder Aliyev eventually withdrew from the race in favor of his son, who won handily in the October balloting, officially receiving 76.84 percent of the vote. Since that time Ilhom Aliyev has been able successfully to coalesce his authority. This is no small feat, given the sheer power the elder Heidar Aliyev wielded during his tenure as president (and before, as first secretary of the Azerbaijani Communist Party during the Soviet era). The death of the elder Aliyev shortly after the election further put the attention on the new president.

The powers of the prime minister, not surprisingly, are not as broad as those of the president. The prime minister is responsible for forming a government that dictates the day-to-day policies of the country, in cooperation with the legislature. In reality, the prime minister is responsive to the president and follows the wishes of his superior executive office holder. As of November 2003 the prime minister is Artur Rasizade and the first deputy prime minister is Abbas Abbasov. Both are influential advisers to President Aliyev and are seen as prominent political actors in the Azeri elite.

LEGISLATURE

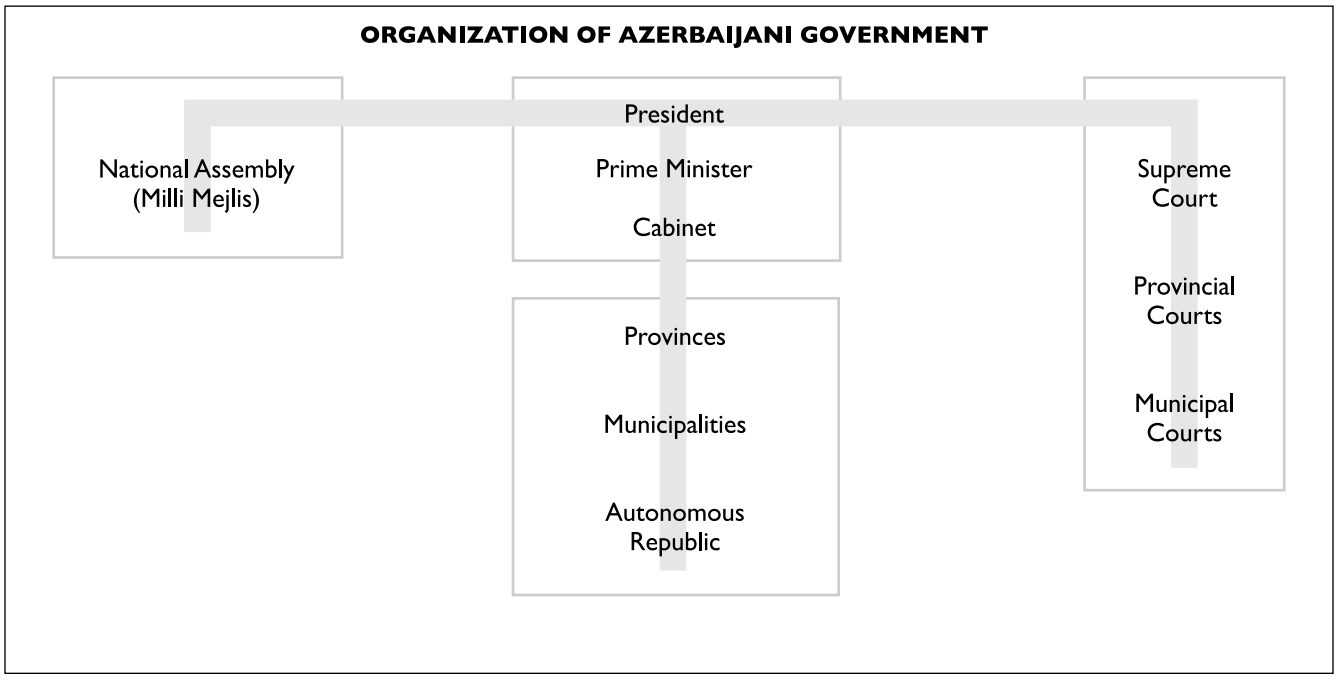
The Azerbaijani parliament is the Milli Mejlis, which has a single chamber with 125 seats, 100 of them single-member ridings and 25 divided on the basis of proportional representation. As of November 2005 all 125 seats are contested in single-member districts.

According to the constitution, the Milli Mejlis is the supreme law-making body in Azerbaijan. It works in conjunction with the prime minister and his cabinet on executing the directives sent by the president. The powers of the Milli Mejlis have been reduced over time, and it is not seen as a real rival body to balance the authority of the president.

As of the last round of elections (November 2000), the Milli Mejlis is dominated by the New Azerbaijan Party (NAP), which holds 108 seats. The Azerbaijani Popular Front holds seven, the Musavat Party holds two, and individuals who have various party affiliations take the remaining eight seats.

JUDICIARY

The Azeri legal system has undergone some reform since the end of the Soviet era. In particular, the 1995 constitution set up a system of district courts around the country and a Supreme Court in Baku that also serves as a court of appeals. The Supreme Court also has exclusive jurisdiction over cases involving national security. Much of the legal code remains unchanged from the Soviet era, however. The Popular



Front government (1992–93) did revise some of the criminal statutes, introducing new classifications of crimes and setting out minimum and maximum sentences in each category.

Judges are appointed and removed by the president, and in general the judiciary is heavily politicized and favors the state. Trials are generally public, and defendants are entitled to court-appointed attorneys. However, defense lawyers in political cases have often been subject to harassment by police or thugs.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Azerbaijan is divided into 59 *raions*, or provinces. Each province is administered by a governor, called the head of the executive power, appointed directly by the president, who may also remove them at his discretion. They serve until relieved. There are also 11 major cities that have their own mayors, also appointed by the president. Some of these *raions* and cities are currently under Armenian occupation.

The Naxcivan Autonomous State (under the terms of the 1995 constitution, it is no longer referred to as an "autonomous republic"), a region under Azeri jurisdiction but physically separated from Azerbaijan by territory of the Republic of Armenia, has its own parliament, its own cabinet, and its own constitution. It does not have a president or prime minister. The Naxcivan parliament has jurisdiction over social and economic matters and can impose taxes. It has no formal armed forces and no independent foreign policy; however, relations between the Naxcivan government and Iran are much warmer than are Iran's relations with the Azeri central government in Baku. This is a reflection of Naxcivan's geographic situation, sandwiched between Iran and Armenia; in particular, it is heavily dependent on Iran for food and energy supplies.

Provincial and municipal civil servants are employees of the central government in Baku. Subnational governments have no authority to levy taxes and depend completely on disbursements from the national government. Although there have been calls to reform the regional and local political structures, allowing them to raise more revenues independent of the national government, nothing has been done.

The regions do have their own councils that are now directly elected for five-year terms. However, the elections in 1999 and 2004 were heavily criticized for being fraudulent and under the control of the ruling New Azerbaijan Party.

The Electoral System

Azerbaijan's national parliament, the Milli Mejlis, used to employ a mixed system of proportional representation and "winner-take-all" representation. Of the 125 seats in the parliament, 100 were single-candidate, winner-take-all ridings; 25 were reserved for proportional representation to be divided among competing parties on the basis of their percentage of the national vote.

The electoral system changed slightly for the November 2005 elections. In that, all 125 members of the Milli Mejlis are to be directly elected in single-member districts. Those elected will continue to serve five-year terms with the next scheduled elections to take place in November 2010.

Revisions in the registration laws for political parties in 2000 and 2002 require that individuals running for president amass 40,000 signatures with representation in all districts of the country. This was a problem in the 2003 elections as opposition candidates protested that the Central Electoral Commission often declared their signature sheets invalid. As for the election itself, a simple majority is required for the winning candidate. In 2003 Ilhom Aliyev won with 76.84 percent of the vote. His closest rival, Isa Gambar, garnered only 13.97 percent of the vote. There were over 1,000 international observers, including 600 representing the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). The consensus view was that the election was not "free or fair" and "failed to meet OSCE standards." Moreover, the protests that took place after the election, which resulted in over 100 injured and one killed when police dispersed the demonstrators, only further stained the elections.

The Party System

Prior to independence in December 1991 the only legal party in Azerbaijan was the Azerbaijan Communist Party. The Popular Front, founded in the fall of 1989 as a coalition of liberal Baku intellectuals, hard-line nationalists, and a broad assortment of other political factions, did not function as a political party until 1992. The Musavat Party, which governed the first Azerbaijan Republic between 1918 and 1920, was able to remain active in Turkey during the Soviet era and became active again in Azerbaijan in 1992, first as part of the Popular Front govern-

ment and subsequently as an independent party. All other Azerbaijani political parties were created during or after 1992.

Excepting the Communist Party, the ruling New Azerbaijan Party, the Popular Front, and the Musavat Party, Azeri political parties tend to have small memberships and are weakly institutionalized. In general, they serve as platforms for the ambitions of individual leaders. Moreover, as many of the opposition figures remain at odds with each other, there is little unity among the parties. This further weakens them and in turn benefits the ruling New Azerbaijan Party.

By Azeri law, political parties must obtain 50,000 signatures to be registered by the Ministry of Justice. Over time, this has meant that the total number of political parties has decreased—from over 100 in the early 1990s to fewer than 40 in the early 2000s. Indeed, of these, there are only a handful of parties that can legitimately be considered active organizations at the national level. The election commission barred the majority of these from participating in the 2003 elections, provoking a round of mergers between them. Some of these mergers dissolved after the elections; others remain.

Parties do campaign, but financial constraints limit all but a few to the cities of Baku and Ganje. Most voters are independent, if not apathetic. Party leaders tend to claim large memberships, but this appears to be based on the signature lists required for registration rather than on actual, card-carrying memberships.

Azerbaijani politics is dominated less by political parties than by clans, based on kinship, patronage, and personal ties. These in turn frequently have a strongly regional character. Beginning in the Brezhnev era, Azeri politics was strongly shaped by rivalries between clans based in the autonomous republic of Naxcivan, the home of then-chairman Heydar Aliyev, the city of Baku and the regions surrounding it, and the city of Agdam. The Nakhichevani clans became dominant in politics and the state, a position they have regained since Aliyev's return to power.

Azerbaijan's political elite, whether government or opposition, retains a strongly Nakhichevani flavor. Almost all political parties are headed by individuals born in the cities and villages of Nakhichevan. Since the creation of the New Azerbaijan Party, Nakhichevanis have become steadily more entrenched in the state bureaucracy in Baku. This development has caused a good deal of resentment among the non-Nakhichevani population of the country.

Major Political Parties

NEW AZERBAIJAN PARTY
(Yeni Azerbaijan Partisi)

The New Azerbaijan Party was founded following the ascension to power of President Heydar Aliyev. It is heavily populated by members of his immediate and extended family and supporters from the autonomous state of Naxcivan and is strongly entrenched in the upper and middle reaches of the state bureaucracy. The party's policy is essentially pro-Western; it seeks to maximize the involvement of Western companies in the Azerbaijani economy and in seeking a resolution to the Karabakh conflict. It opposes a political role for religious institutions and has thus been quite hostile to Iranian interests.

Membership estimates are as high as 150,000, which is probably a fair assessment given the importance of this party for political and economic life in the country. It remains the key political party in Baku and in the outlying regions.

The party structure consists of a series of riding organizations, consisting of the local ruling party boss and his associates in the towns and villages in a given *raion,* who answer to party bosses in the *raions,* who in turn report to the national party headquarters in Baku. Party bosses not infrequently hold government positions, and state assets have been used for party functions.

Party financing, as is the case with most Azeri parties, is extremely opaque. The party is one of the primary vehicles through which patronage is distributed from the center to the periphery; most local chapters receive funds from the national party headquarters. Where the national party raises its funds is unclear. Large contributions by prominent business interests are known to occur but are not widely publicized.

A committee of chairmen runs the New Azerbaijan Party, although the political head of the party is President Ilhom Aliyev. Much like his father, Ilhom has delegated the day-to-day activities of the party to others. The party's prospects are very positive as long as the current president is able to remain in power.

POPULAR FRONT
(Azerbaijan Xalq Cabhasi)

The oldest and still the largest opposition political party in Azerbaijan, the Popular Front began as a group of liberal intellectuals based in Baku in 1988–89 who attempted to press the then-Communist government

to make greater reforms in keeping with the spirit of Gorbachev's *glasnost* and *perestroika*. The movement grew rapidly to encompass almost every non-Communist political faction in the country, and in the process lost what little coherence it had, save for the goal of achieving independence from the USSR. Although the front formed the first non-Communist government in 1992, it is a considerable misstatement to describe it as a political party at that time. The party in Baku had little effective control over those claiming to be Popular Front members in the regions. Only with the overthrow of the Popular Front government in 1993 by a rebellious warlord, Suret Huseynov, did a period of consolidation occur.

The front is much reduced in size and moral authority, a result of the rampant corruption of front government officials in 1992–93. Nonetheless, it retains much of its nationwide presence and is the dominant partner in the Democratic Congress, the alliance of opposition parties created in 1997.

Party financing is less opaque than that of the government, although it is still unclear in many respects. The front has received financial support from German foundations seeking to encourage democracy in Azerbaijan and from Azerbaijani supporters within and outside the country, especially in Turkey and Germany.

After the death of the founder Elchibei in August 2000, the party leadership split into two factions—"Classic" and "Reformist" wings. Both of these factions run separate campaigns in Azeri politics and are, in spite of their mutual dislike for the NAP, responsible for the continued weaknesses within the opposition. Ali Kerimli is associated with the reformist wing of the Popular Front and is expected to remain a key figure in Azeri politics for some time. Mirmakhmoud Fattayev, who sees himself as the rightful heir to Elchibei's legacy, heads the classic faction.

Minor Political Parties

MUSAVAT (EQUALITY)

The origins of the Musavat Party date back to the pre-Soviet era, as it was an organization founded in 1911 by the reformist Mamedimin Rasulzade, who later helped found the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic in 1918–1920. It was re-founded in 1992 and successfully registered in 1993. The party espouses a liberal agenda that sees itself as a logical alternative to the NAP. The current leader is Isa Gambar, an influential and controversial opposition figure in Azeri politics.

AZERBAIJAN NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE PARTY (ANIP)

Headed by yet another rival of the Aliyev family, Etibar Mammadov, the ANIP is a party that bases much of its support on Azeris who fled Armenia or the occupied territories in the early 1990s. It has a history of strong nationalist commentaries and, yet, sees itself as a party that supports businesses and opening Azerbaijan to outside investors.

AZERBAIJAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY (ADP)

While this party originated from the important exclave of Naxcivan, it has had a history of opposition to the NAP. Thus, since its inception in 1992, it has been unregistered twice. It currently is a legal party in Azerbaijan and remains under the leadership of Rasul Guliyev. Guliyev's personal stamp remains most important for this party, which does not really profess a clear policy alternative to the other opposition parties.

Other Political Forces

ISLAM

Azerbaijanis are predominantly Shiite Muslims. Soviet suppression of religion was quite effective, on the whole; Azerbaijan possessed few mosques upon independence and few Azerbaijanis worshiped regularly. Religious education experienced a sudden rise in popularity following independence, and there are many religious schools in Azerbaijan, funded primarily by Turkish interests. The popularity of religious schools, however, appears to be in large part a response by parents to the perceived material shortcomings of public education—unmotivated teachers, poor facilities, low budgets, and a lack of discipline—rather than an expression of interest in religion per se. In general, religion is more popular among the rural population.

Since independence, there has been an explosion of mosque building in Azerbaijan, funded by Turkish, Iranian, and Saudi foundations and individuals. Azerbaijani religious institutions are supervised by a state-supported religious practices board, which controls the appointments of *imams,* or religious leaders, to mosques and the administration of mosque finances. The government is extremely sensitive to attempts to politicize religion and has moved aggressively against the Islamic Party of Azerbaijan, which has sought to

challenge the board's control of the mosques. In 1997 the leaders of the party were arrested, charged, and convicted of espionage and subversion of the government of Iran.

Since 2001 and the increase in international concern over radical Islam and the variants that use terrorism as a tactic, the Azerbaijani government has paid greater attention to Islamic schools, organizations, and clerics within the country. At present it appears that there are no serious threats of Islamic extremism in the country, although that situation could change, depending upon a number of factors, such as the ability of the government to improve the economic conditions of the citizenry and the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh stalemate.

THE NAGORNO-KARABAKH WAR

The Azerbaijani territory of Karabakh is a region of predominantly Armenian population lying within Azerbaijan. In 1979 (the last year for which reliable figures are available) the population totaled 160,000, 37,000 of whom were Azerbaijani and 123,000 Armenian. Armenians refer to the territory as "Artsakh" and Azerbaijanis as "Yuxari Karabagh." In recognition of the concentrated nature of Armenian settlement in the region, it was given the status of an autonomous *oblast* by the Soviet government in 1924—a status that conferred a substantial degree of self-governing authority upon the *oblast* government while maintaining Azerbaijani sovereignty.

Gaining jurisdiction over Karabakh has long been a goal of Armenia and of the population of Karabakhs. Demonstrations demanding the transfer occurred in the mid-1960s and recurred periodically thereafter in Yerevan and Stepanakaert. In January 1988 demonstrations began again and quickly spread throughout Armenia and Karabakh. Unrest escalated rapidly, with clashes between the local population and Soviet internal affairs troops and between local Azerbaijanis and Armenians becoming a daily event.

The Azerbaijani Supreme Soviet abolished Nagorno-Karabakh in November 1991; the Karabakh authorities responded by holding a referendum on independence. On January 6, 1992, Karabakh formally declared its independence from Azerbaijan.

The war for Karabakh led to approximately 50,000 deaths and the creation of about 740,000 Azerbaijani refugees and 40,000 Armenian refugees. The war was a military disaster for Azerbaijan, which lost control of almost all of Karabakh and a substantial amount of undisputed Azerbaijani territory bordering on Karabakh as well. Fighting halted in May 1994 when the two sides signed a Russian-mediated cease-fire, but a comprehensive settlement has thus far proved elusive. Although Armenia has denied direct involvement in the war, Armenian regular forces played an active role between 1992 and 1994, and Armenia continues to serve as a source of finance, supplies, and labor for the Karabakh government.

The war has been a major factor influencing Armenian and Azeri political development. Two Azerbaijani presidents were overthrown following military defeats in Karabakh: Ayaz Mutalibov in March 1992 and Abulfaz Elchibei in June 1993. Both the Azerbaijani Popular Front and the Karabakh Committee, which led the independence movements in their respective countries, derived much of their popularity from their hard-line positions on the dispute. Parties and politicians on both sides remain highly sensitive to the need to appear tough on Karabakh.

While there have been efforts to solve the crisis, most recently through the Minsk Group of the OSCE, all have failed. This remains a key domestic issue in Azeri politics and, obviously, a great security concern.

ETHNIC MINORITIES

Azerbaijan is a multiethnic state. Upon gaining independence in 1991, the Azerbaijan population was approximately 82.7 percent Azeri, 5.6 percent Russian, 5.6 percent Armenian, and 2 percent Lezghin, with additional large minority populations of Talysh and Kurds.

The Azeris are an ethnically Turkish people who are Shiite Muslims; the remaining ethnic groups in Azerbaijan are an unusual mix of peoples from the Caucasian region of the former Soviet Union. The Russians in Azerbaijan are left over from Soviet rule. While there was once a larger Armenian population in Azerbaijan, many of them fled between 1988 and 1990 in the wake of pogroms and ethnic strife connected to the Karabakh conflict.

Information about other important ethnic groups in Azerbaijan is also difficult to obtain. Most Talysh, for instance, a Persian-speaking group related to the Tajiks of Afghanistan, identified themselves as Azerbaijan in the census until 1992–93. At that time a nationalist Talysh revival took place, part of a general upsurge of political consciousness in the former Soviet Union, and this caused a jump in the self-identified Talysh population from perhaps 200,000 to about one million. An uprising by an ethnic Talysh warlord, Alikhram Gumbatov, who tried to set up an indepen-

dent Talysh state in southern Azerbaijan in 1993 and whose rebellion was bloodily and effectively crushed, caused an equally sudden deflation in the numbers of those claiming to be Talysh.

In the case of the Kurds, at one time there may have been between 50,000 and 100,000 Kurds concentrated in the area around the city of Lachin, in Kelbajar province (the strip of land between Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh). There were so many Kurds in this region that for a few years in the 1920s the Soviets created a region called Red Kurdistan, and when Armenian/Karabakhi forces invaded in 1992, they claimed to be supporting a Kurdish uprising against the "Turks" (the Azeris). In fact, the Kurds of Lachin were highly assimilated into the Azeri population and generally identified themselves as Azerbaijani in the Soviet census. The Armenian invasion converted the population into refugees scattered across camps in Azerbaijan. It is impossible to know how many Kurds remain in Azerbaijan.

National Prospects

Azerbaijan is potentially the richest of the Soviet successor states, thanks to its enormous oil reserves. Since 1991 Western oil companies have competed fiercely for contracts to explore for and extract oil and natural gas. As of 1997 the value of these contracts stands at over $20 billion. Western direct investment in the Azerbaijani oil and gas sector now exceeds investment in the Russian oil and gas sector. While poverty remains endemic in Azerbaijan, as it does across the former Soviet Union, the massive injections of Western capital offer the possibility, if they are wisely invested, of revitalizing the national economy.

Nonetheless, the country faces serious problems. Strong Armenian forces remain in control of a substantial portion of Azerbaijani territory, and there is little sign that Armenian leaders are willing to compromise on their demands for complete sovereignty.

After much discussion and speculation about Azerbaijan's potential profits from the vast oil and gas reserves, the country is now beginning to see these profits realized. Construction on the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan (BTC) pipeline was finally started in the early 2000s and was completed in 2005. Throughput will reach upwards of one million barrels of oil a day by 2010, giving the country much-needed revenues (for oil sales and transit fees) as well as a better connection within the regional energy pipeline grid. As long as international companies find Azerbaijan a "business-friendly" environment, they will continue to explore and exploit the untapped reserves in the country.

After 2001 Azerbaijan began to benefit from its support of the U.S.-led campaigns in Afghanistan and Iraq. As part of a broader deal over flyover rights and other forms of support, the United States agreed to suspend the Section 907 sanctions against Azerbaijan, which had been in place since 1992's Freedom Support Act. In addition, the United States has provided Azerbaijan with security assistance, particularly focused on the Caspian Sea and its border with Iran. Finally, Azerbaijan has been more active in the NATO Partnership for Peace program. While Azerbaijan may not seek full membership in the security organization, it does envision closer ties with the Western partner states.

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COMMONWEALTH OF THE BAHAMAS

By Thomas D. Anderson, Ph.D.
Revised by Soeren Kern



The Commonwealth of the Bahamas consists of over 700 islands and even more cays that lie about 80 kilometers east of south Florida and extend southeastward to the British Turks and Caicos Islands. Only about half of its roughly 10,000 square kilometers of area is occupied by its population of about 301,000. Some 85 percent of this total are black, including perhaps 75,000 Haitian refugees; the remaining white proportion includes a growing number of affluent retirees. The language is English, with some Haitian Creole. The economy is relatively prosperous and based mainly upon tourism and financial services. Agriculture is insignificant with only 1 percent of the area planted. The Bahamas also has one of the world's largest open-registry shipping fleets.

The System of Government

The Bahamas is a parliamentary democracy that was granted independence from Britain in 1973. The head of state is the British monarch, with actual power exercised by the prime minister. The legislature is bicameral.

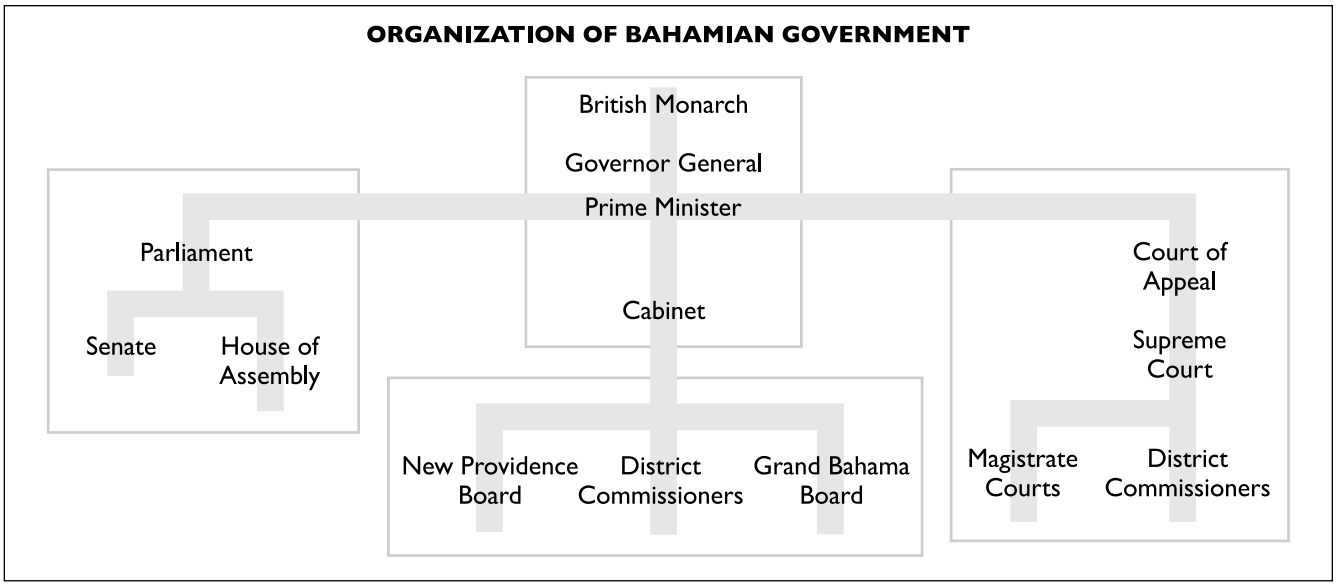
EXECUTIVE

The head of state is the British monarch, who is represented in the Bahamas by an appointed governor-general. Actual executive power is exercised by the prime minister and cabinet. Although officially appointed by the governor-general, the prime minister is the leader of the elected majority party in the House of Assembly. The cabinet, which is also appointed by the governor-general upon recommendation of the prime minister, oversees the affairs of state and originates nearly all legislation. The prime minister may at any time request the governor-general to dissolve the parliament.

LEGISLATURE

The parliament is bicameral, with a Senate and a House of Assembly. Of the 16 members of the Senate, nine are appointed by the governor-general on the advice of the prime minister, four on the advice of the leader of the opposition, and three on the advice of the prime minister after consultation with the leader of the opposition. Appointments are for five years and may be renewed. The Senate serves primarily as a consultative body with the limited power to delay legislation proposed by the House of Assembly.

The House of Assembly consists of 40 members elected to five-year terms. Bills may be introduced either in the House or the Senate, but the power of the purse is confined to the House. Should a bill be rejected twice by the Senate after having been passed twice by the House, it may still be formally approved by the governor-general. Proposed constitutional amendments must pass by a three-fourths majority in each chamber and then be submitted to a national referendum.



JUDICIARY

The justice system is based on English common law and is administered by the Supreme Court and the Court of Appeal. The Supreme Court consists of a chief justice, who is appointed by the governor-general on the advice of the prime minister in consultation with the leader of the opposition, and of two additional justices. Supreme Court decisions can be appealed to the Court of Appeal, which consists of a president and two judges, who also are appointed by the governor-general on the advice of the prime minister. The ultimate appeal is to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council in London.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Local divisions are based on 18 accepted island groupings and are, with two exceptions, administered by centrally appointed district commissioners. The islands of New Providence (site of the capital of Nassau) and Grand Bahama have locally elected governing bodies.

The Electoral System

Elections must be held at least every five years, although early elections may be called by the prime minister. Such must be held within 90 days following dissolution of the parliament. All citizens 18 years or older are eligible to vote. Each of the 40 constituencies returns one representative elected by a simple plurality. Turnout commonly exceeds 90 percent of this constituency, which is more than 95 percent literate and enjoys a free press. Elections in general have been regarded as fair, although in 1982 both main parties raised challenges on allegations of fraud. Neither challenge was sustained. There are few barriers to the formation of a political party, and a number of minor parties have competed at various times but have had little success. The two major parties are well organized with active local members in every constituency and frequent national conventions. Campaigns are spirited but focus mainly on personalities since ideological differences are minor.

The Party System

The main parties are the Free National Movement (FNM) and the Progressive Liberal Party (PLP). These two have alternately held power since the country's independence. Historically, the PLP has had the image of serving the needs of the country's oppressed blacks, whereas the FNM was viewed as favoring outside investment interests over the needs of the poor. The fact that both have won elections in a country that is 85 percent black suggests that a majority of voters do not always share these perceptions.

Major Political Parties

PROGRESSIVE LIBERAL PARTY (PLP)

The Progressive Liberal Party was formed in 1953 by Lynden O. Pindling (1930–2000), a black attorney who

remained the party's leader for 44 years. Other than a leadership dispute in 1967 between Pindling and Cecil Whitfield, who formed an offshoot body called the Free PLP (later the Free National Movement), the party has demonstrated excellent unity and organization. Except for a short period in the mid-1970s, it has enjoyed firm support from the Trade Union Congress (TUC), the labor organization that originally spawned the PLP.

In the political spectrum, the party is slightly left-of-center but is basically a moderate, pro-American party with a free-enterprise perspective. Nonetheless, during his tenure Pindling at times argued that in periods of economic stress, the Bahamas should strive to be less dependent on foreign investment.

In October 1984 a crisis erupted in the ruling PLP government over allegations of ministerial involvement in drug trafficking, an outcome of an investigation by a royal commission. Two PLP ministers resigned after being named in the probe by the commission. Demands for Pindling's resignation grew, both from the opposition FNM and from PLP officials, when the commission reported that he had failed to disclose millions of dollars in loans and gifts from foreign businesses. Deputy Prime Minister Arthur Hanna, a loyal Pindling follower, resigned, and many wanted him to assume party leadership. Pindling refused to step down, however, and then dismissed two cabinet ministers who had urged him to do so. The effect was to erode the credibility of the party among the voters.

In 1992 Pindling suffered his first political defeat in 25 years when the FNM won control of the House of Assembly, leaving the PLP in the role of opposition. In early elections called in 1997, the PLP lost even more ground to the FNM, and Pindling then ceded party leadership to Perry G. Christie. Pindling died in August 2000. In the general elections held in May 2002, the PLP won 29 of the 40 seats in the House of Assembly, and Christie became prime minister.

FREE NATIONAL MOVEMENT (FNM)

The Free National Movement was formed late in 1971 as a merger between the onetime United Bahamas Party (UBP) and dissidents from the PLP who called themselves the Free PLP. In the 1972 elections the FNM won 9 seats to the PLP's 29. In December 1976 the party suffered a split, with most of the old UBP forming a new party called the Bahamian Democratic Party (BDP). In the election of 1977 the BDP won five seats to only two for the FNM. In 1979 four BDP members of parliament left to form the Social Democratic Party (SDP), which briefly became the official opposition. The remaining BDP member of parliament and, later, one of the SDP members rejoined the FNM. Going into the 1982 elections, the FNM held four House seats and the SDP three. The SDP then disbanded prior to the elections, from which the FNM emerged with 11 seats and 44 percent of the vote. A key factor in the reunification of the opposition forces was the return to politics in 1981 of Kendall Isaacs, who had retired for reasons of health in the early 1970s. As a former attorney general and senator, he resolved the personality conflicts and brought the FNM renewed respect.

In 1992 the FNM won control of the House of Assembly under the leadership of Hubert Ingraham, who had replaced Hubert Alexander as party head. Once in power, Ingraham instituted some major revisions of Pindling's policies. These changes included the privatization of most of the economically unsuccessful state-owned hotels and the establishment of a minimum wage of $4.15 an hour. An associated surge in the economy caused the unemployment rate to fall from 14 percent to 10 percent.

These circumstances induced Ingraham in February 1997 to call for early elections, the first such in 30 years. Standing and ringing a school bell 34 times, Ingraham predicted his party would win 34 seats. The results on March 4 vindicated his confidence (and obvious political astuteness) when his supporters did indeed win 34 of 40 seats in the House. All FNM candidates were reelected, the first such triumph in 20 years, and the party's share of the popular vote rose by 2.6 percent to 57.6 percent. At the same time, however, Ingraham stated that he would not seek another term. In the general elections held in May 2002, the FNM was turned out of power by the PLP. The FNM kept hold of seven seats, while independents held four seats.

Minor Political Parties

Among the minor parties is the Coalition of Democratic Reform (CDR), founded in 2000.

Other Political Forces

The Trade Union Congress (TUC) was firmly associated with the PLP until 1975, after which its leadership moved toward the FNM. That party's dissention late in 1976 caused the TUC to negotiate an agreement with the PLP under which the party promised to give the

TUC greater weight in forming party policy. Although the 1977 elections failed to demonstrate the relative political clout of the TUC, the experiment did demonstrate a degree of independence of the TUC from the PLP.

National Prospects

The recent demonstrations of democratic vitality in the Bahamas suggest that the relative prosperity of the past decade is likely to continue. Because the major sectors of the economy are tourism and financial services, an image of political stability is a major factor. Both activities are extremely sensitive to social and political unrest, and financial flight could occur with little advance notice.

Current concerns are much the same as those of the past. The Bahamas continues to be one of the major conduits for the drug trade, both to Anglo-America and to Europe. The Bahamas is also an important gateway for illegal aliens bound for the United States. Official cooperation with foreign law enforcement agencies to mitigate the flow of illegal narcotics and migrants has improved. However, few believe that the flow actually can be stopped, because the country's islands are geographically too fragmented and too close to the United States. Governmental measures to protect the oceanside environments that attract tourists, however, can do much to maintain or to increase the returns from this activity.

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KINGDOM OF BAHRAIN

(Mamlakah al-Bahrain)

By Fred H. Lawson, Ph.D.



Bahrain, an island nation in the Persian Gulf, is a constitutional monarchy whose ruler governs the country's 430,000 citizens in consultation with a bicameral national assembly, a small group of advisers that includes members of the ruling family, and professional administrators. The ruling family is descended from a branch of the Bani 'Utub tribal confederacy that arrived in the islands around 1780 and set up a commercial, estate-holding aristocracy over the local inhabitants. Class distinctions were reinforced by religious ones, as the new rulers were Sunni Muslims and the indigenous farmers, pearl divers, and fisherfolk were Shiite Muslims.

Serious outbreaks of political violence have occurred repeatedly in the country from at least 1911 to the present. These protests can be grouped into four distinct waves. During the 1910s and 1920s local merchants and tradespeople joined together in opposition to economic regulations proposed by British colonial officials. From the 1930s through the 1950s a similarly broad coalition of social forces demonstrated against continued British domination, against the presence of large numbers of foreign workers on the islands, and in favor of allowing local labor to unionize. From the 1950s to the 1970s riots and strikes pitted Bahrain's working class against the ruling family and state officials. Some protests took on sectarian overtones, appearing as conflicts between Sunnis and Shia; however, these incidents were for the most part characterized as well by persistent demands for changes in the country's economy to benefit poorer workers. Partly as a result of a general strike by construction, shipyard, and aluminum-plant workers in March 1972 that threatened the regime's industrialization program, Bahrain's emir (ruler) authorized the establishment of the country's first, but short-lived, electoral system.

Beginning in 1991 popular unrest reemerged both among educated Bahrains demanding reinstatement of the elected parliament and among poorer Shia agitating for a more equitable social order. This fourth wave of protest assumed a more violent form in 1994, after security forces arrested key Shiite leaders and steadily escalated confrontations with demonstrators. Large-scale marches and demonstrations continued until the spring of 1999.

The System of Government

In February 2002 the ruler (emir) assumed the title of king (*malik*) and promulgated an amended constitution based on a revised version of the National Action Charter that had been approved by popular referendum a year earlier. The amended constitution asserts that the foundation of sovereign authority in Bahrain inheres in the person of the monarch and that the country is a constitutional monarchy.

EXECUTIVE

King Hamad bin 'Isa Al Khalifah (born 1950) became ruler of Bahrain in 1999 upon the death of his father.

This pattern of succession was codified in the amended constitution of 2002. The new constitution gives the king the authority to rule both directly and through an appointed council of ministers. Other provisions grant the king the right to ratify all legislation adopted by the National Assembly, to amend the constitution, to declare or rescind martial law, and to act as the country's supreme judge. Such legal prerogatives are buttressed by tribal authority structures within the Khalifah clan.

Close relatives of the king fill the most important posts in the country's cabinet. Ministers who are not members of the Al Khalifah have largely been drawn from sons of the country's established rich merchant community who received specialized training in Western universities.

LEGISLATURE

Bahrain's first national elections were held in December 1972. Chosen were 22 representatives to a constitutional assembly by the country's native-born male citizens 20 years of age and older, grouped into 19 electoral districts centered on the cities and towns. Several candidates ran for office in each district, with the winner in single-member districts being the one who received a plurality of the votes cast. In each of the three two-member districts in Manama and Muharraq, the two candidates getting the most votes were the winners. Candidates ran as individuals or as part of informal, personalist slates headed by such prominent local businesspeople as 'Abd al-'Aziz Shamlan and Hisham al-Shahabi. These same procedures were followed in December 1973, when Bahrain's first National Assembly was elected.

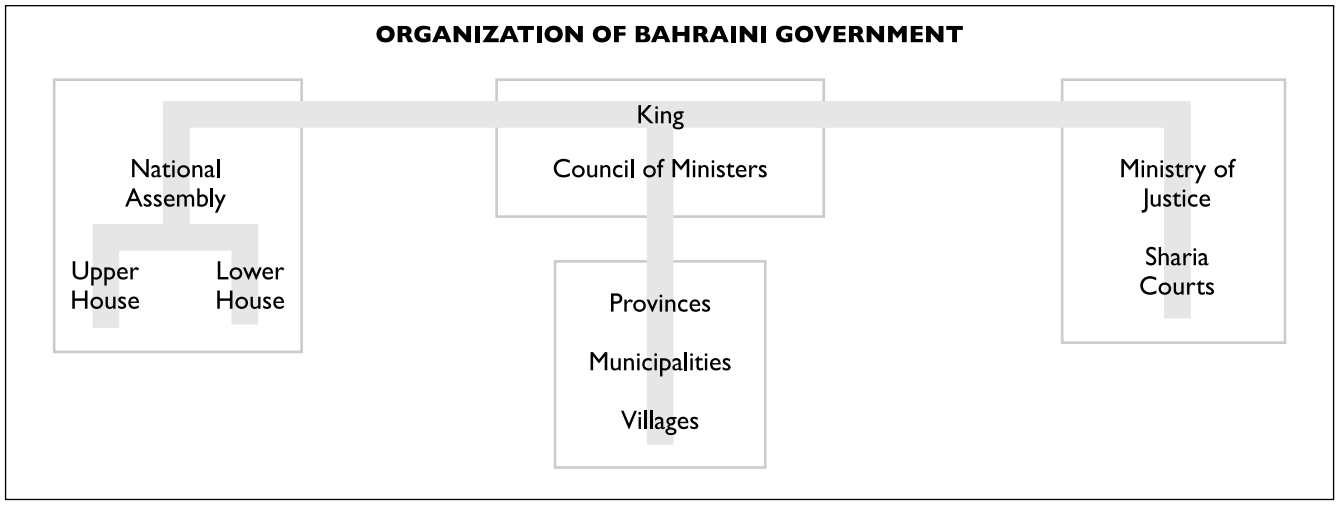
College-educated professionals, shopkeepers, middle-income merchants, and the owners of the country's newspapers were the strongest supporters of the new electoral system. The merchant elite was noncommittal on the issue of a popularly elected parliament and did not participate in the elections either as candidates or as voters. Employees of the state bureaucracy also avoided becoming involved with the assemblies, since they would have had to resign their government posts in order to run for seats.

Radical organizations, such as the local branch of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Oman and the Arab Gulf (PFLOAG), actively tried to convince potential voters not to go to the polls on the grounds that the new assembles represented only a façade for the continuation of autocratic rule. These organizations—whose members were largely workers and students, both indigenous and expatriate—demanded more comprehensive freedoms of press and assembly, the release of those they claimed were political prisoners, and the adoption of laws permitting trade unionization as first steps toward a democratic order.

Purely by chance, radical demands coincided with the last-minute withdrawal of the al-Shahabi slate from the 1972 constitutional assembly elections. This coincidence led the cabinet to suspect collusion between the radicals and this slate of candidates, generating a measure of opposition inside the ruling family to the election process in general. As a result, when a group of young representatives led by Dr. 'Abd al-Hafi Khalaf of the banned National Liberation Front–Bahrain and Yusif Hasan al-Ajaji emerged as winners in the 1973 balloting, the government prevented many of them from taking their seats in the Assembly on the basis of technicalities in the election law.

Despite the fact that the National Assembly was authorized only to give advice and consent to laws initiated in the cabinet, and was thus not a true legislature, its members began seriously to debate two volatile issues during 1974. One issue was the formulation of a general labor law that would have permitted trade union organization and restricted the importation of foreign workers. The other major issue was the continuation of a strict Public Security Law that had been used to suppress the PFLOAG, Ba'this, and local Communists. It became clear by mid-1975 that the two largest informal blocs of delegates within the Assembly, the People's and the Religious blocs, acting together could not force the government to cancel the Public Security Law. At the same time the cabinet and the Religious bloc could find no grounds for collaboration. Consequently, the National Assembly became hopelessly deadlocked. In August 1975 the prime minister submitted the cabinet's resignation to the emir, who dissolved the Assembly but reinstated the government, giving the cabinet "full legislative powers."

In January 1993 the ruler issued a decree creating an appointed Consultative Council (*majlis al-shura*) to replace the National Assembly. Members of the reconstituted body were granted the right to discuss laws proposed by the cabinet as well as—under strictly limited conditions—to offer legislative proposals of their own. The council was enlarged to 40 members in September 1996 and was authorized to raise issues for discussion regarding social, educational, health, and cultural affairs in addition to advising the cabinet on policy.



In September 2000 the ruler once again increased the size of the Consultative Council, to 59 members. He then appointed a 46-member Supreme National Committee to draft a new basic law, called the National Action Charter. The charter mandated that the National Assembly be reconvened, this time with an appointed, advisory upper house and an elected, law-making lower house. More than 98 percent of voters in a February 2001 referendum approved the charter. A year later the ruler proclaimed that municipal council elections would be held in May 2002 and that National Assembly elections would follow in October. At the same time officials in the palace announced that the appointed upper house would enjoy the same rights to propose and adopt legislation as the elected lower house. For both houses, the amended constitution stipulates that draft bills must be referred first to committee, at which point the council of ministers determines whether and when to bring them to the floor of the National Assembly for debate.

Despite electoral procedures that appeared to give an advantage to candidates sponsored by the regime, 42 of the 50 municipal council seats were won by representatives of popular Islamist organizations. Consequently the authorities reconfigured electoral districts during the summer of 2002, and the council of ministers granted full voting rights to selected citizens of the other five member-states of the Gulf Cooperation Council. These measures, in addition to significant differences between the provisions of the National Action Charter and those of the amended constitution, led several influential Islamist societies to boycott the parliamentary elections. Turnout for the two rounds of balloting in October 2002 hovered around 50 percent of registered voters. Victorious candidates included not only supporters of the ruling family but also members of the larger Sunni Islamist organizations, along with a handful of liberal critics of the regime.

JUDICIARY

Bahrain's system of autonomous religious courts has gradually been incorporated into a centralized judiciary closely linked to the state bureaucracy. Sunni courts have a history of subservience to tribal custom and thus to the interests of the ruling family. Shiite courts have resisted integration into a central structure but have been forced to accept a secondary role by their need for government subsidies to fund religious schools and other institutions.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

In September 1996 Bahrain was divided into four provinces. A senior member of the Al Khalifah was appointed military governor of each one. The four governorates represent administrative subdivisions of the central bureaucracy and enjoy no policy-making autonomy. Responsibilities of the elected municipal councils have yet to be institutionalized.

The Electoral System

Representatives to the lower house of the National Assembly are elected from single-member districts in which the winner is the candidate who gains a plurality of the votes cast. All native-born citizens are eligible to vote. In addition, the government has conferred full voting rights on citizens of the other five member-states of the

Gulf Cooperation Council who own property in Bahrain. More controversially, a substantial number of resident expatriates employed in state agencies and the armed forces have been accorded such rights as well. Although municipal and parliamentary elections have taken place without intimidation or outright fraud, the authorities have taken care to draw district boundaries so as to give government supporters a pronounced advantage.

The Party System

Political parties in Bahrain are prohibited by law. What little party system there is only began to emerge during the brief life of the 1973 National Assembly.

Three informal blocs appeared in the Assembly in the early part of 1974. The first, the People's bloc, advocated traditional labor demands for unionization, worker participation in economic policymaking, and higher wages. Its members came from poorer families of Manama and Muharraq (Bahrain's largest urban centers) and included Ba'th Party, Communist, and PFLOAG sympathizers. The Religious bloc also supported a wide range of labor reforms but tied these to demands for puritanical restrictions on the licensing of youth clubs, the sale of alcoholic beverages, and various aspects of relations between men and women in public places. Its members came from rural and suburban districts in which the Shia were predominant; they were supported—directly and indirectly—by the country's Shiite religious authorities. Finally, the independents advocated a number of diverse programs that were largely in line with the maintenance of an unregulated market economy on the islands, as well as the delegates' individual vested interests. These representatives were almost all middle-ranking merchants, contractors, and employers who had the support of their respective business associations, families, and social clubs.

Rival groupings of representatives proved even more diffuse in the opening months of the 2002 National Assembly. After several representatives publicly demanded that political parties be legalized, the king issued a statement saying that it was up to the Assembly to decide whether or not such a step would be in the best interest of the nation.

Major Political Parties

There are no political parties in Bahrain.

Minor Political Parties

There are no political parties in Bahrain.

Other Political Forces

RADICAL ORGANIZATIONS

Since 1974, when the local section of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Oman and the Arab Gulf (PFLOAG) split with the more active parts of the movement based in southern Oman, there has been little overt political activity by the resultant Popular Front in Bahrain (PFB). When 'Abdullah Madani, the owner-editor of Manama's conservative newspaper *al-Mawaqif,* was found murdered in November 1976, the government accused those responsible of being PFB members. This connection was never proved. Both the PFB and the moral radical National Liberation Front–Bahrain went underground following the dissolution of the 1973 National Assembly.

STUDENT AND YOUTH ASSOCIATIONS

Youth and athletic-social clubs continue to provide forums for political discussion and mobilization. In March 1977 Bahrain's interior minister announced the closing of two youth clubs allegedly "infiltrated" by "some destructive elements." Members of two student organizations, the National Bahraini Club and the Bahraini Students' Club, clashed at Kuwait University in January 1978, apparently as a result of political disagreements. The clash precipitated arrests of students and other young people inside Bahrain the following month.

RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS

Antigovernment agitation by Shiite religious leaders finds fertile ground among poorer Bahraini workers. Attempts to detain and deport militant preachers resulted in widespread demonstrations in the fall of 1979. At least one Shiite secret society, al-Sanduq al-Husaini, was raided and several of its members were arrested by the police during the summer of 1980. But political demonstrations again erupted in Jidd Hafs—a working-class, Shiite suburb of Manama—in early December of that same year. Quick action by state security forces appears to have been necessary to prevent the rioting from spreading to Zarariah, a poor district of Manama populated by unskilled foreign laborers.

In December 1981 government officials announced the arrest of more than 70 members of the Islamic Front for the Liberation of Bahrain (IFLB) for conspiring to overthrow the regime. This organization, led by the Hojatoleslam Hadi al-Mudarrisi, called for the overthrow of the Al Khalifah and the creation of an Islamic republic on the islands. The conviction and imprisonment of IFLB activists the following spring severely weakened the local Islamist movement but left a number of smaller, more militant groups largely intact. The authorities tried to undercut the appeal of such organizations by authorizing the establishment of joint worker-management councils in the country's larger factories. Joint councils already existed at Bahrain Petroleum Company and Aluminum Bahrain; in mid-1980 they were extended to plants operated by Gulf Air, the Arab Shipbuilding and Repair Yards, and other larger enterprises.

Bahrain's Shiite movement revived after the 1990–91 Gulf War, when the government refused to recognize a string of petitions demanding the immediate reinstatement of the National Assembly. A leading Shiite preacher, Shaikh 'Ali Salman, used his Friday sermons to appeal to the population to support the drive to recall the parliament. In addition, his sermons criticized the government for failing to take steps to combat rising unemployment among Bahraini citizens and commented on trends in regional affairs. Other prominent Shiite religious figures joined Salman in demanding political reforms. Their efforts mobilized not only the general public but also such previously apolitical forces as the members of local religious societies (*husainiyyahs*) and women in outlying villages. Growing activism among the Shia led to a series of clashes between protesters and the police throughout 1994 that culminated in Salman's arrest and deportation in January 1995.

In the wake of Salman's forcible exile, popular protests broke out across the country. Security forces suppressed the demonstrations by force, detaining suspected activists and subjecting them to unsupervised interrogation and corporal punishment. Officials immediately accused foreign operatives of fomenting the violence and even produced a group of young Shia who confessed on local television to belonging to a Bahraini branch of Iranian-sponsored Hizbullah. By the last months of 1995 political agitation had turned into outbursts of arson and sabotage. Luxury hotels, state-affiliated commercial and industrial establishments, and cafes catering to foreign laborers were all attacked during the course of 1996. Meanwhile, the authorities began negotiating with the Shiite religious leadership. These talks resulted in the release of several imprisoned preachers in September 1995, but crowds took to the streets once again when it became clear that others remained under arrest. An October 1995 rally outside the residence of Shaikh 'Abd al-Amir al-Jamri, who had started a hunger strike to protest the continued detentions, attracted some 75,000 protesters, making the event by far the largest political demonstration in the country's history.

In the wake of the 1994–99 uprising, Shiite activists congregated in the Islamic National Accord (Wifaq) Society, which became the largest and most prominent of the country's religious associations. Opposite the Wifaq Society stood the (Sunni) Muslim Brotherhood, whose members made up a major bloc of elected representatives in the National Assembly. Two smaller religious organizations, the Islamic Arab Centrist (Wasat) Society and the Islamic Action Society, joined the Wifaq Society in March 2003 to issue a joint manifesto opposing the implementation of the amended constitution.

National Prospects

Persistent popular discontent over the restricted character and hesitant pace of the political changes enacted by King Hamad leave little room for collaboration between the Al Khalifah–dominated establishment and liberal reformers. The regime's insistence on granting immunity from criminal or civil prosecution to military and security personnel accused of engaging in human rights abuses during the 1994–99 uprising limits the prospects for national reconciliation. At the same time, the government's continuing practice of conferring full voting rights on resident Baluchi, Yemeni, and Syrian expatriates, most of whom hold positions in state agencies or the armed forces, undercuts the legitimacy of the newly restored electoral system.

In the aftermath of the 2003 Gulf War, Islamist militants from surrounding states, most notably Saudi Arabia, were reported to be infiltrating Bahrain in significant numbers. Such radicals posed a serious threat to the ruling family and liberals alike and dampened public demands for more extensive reforms during 2003 and 2004. Nevertheless, National Assembly representatives have become increasingly diligent in subjecting cabinet ministers to formal questioning, especially with regard to the conduct of economic affairs, and more vocal in condemning official mismanagement and corruption. Although high oil prices enabled the authorities to contain discontent during the immediate postwar period, simmering, class-based unrest and religious disparities

offer a wide range of issues around which liberal and radical challengers might mobilize once oil revenues return to more moderate levels.

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PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH

(Gana Prajatantri Bangladesh)

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Revised by Leon Newton, Ph.D.



Bangladesh is a unitary state comprising the former East Pakistan province of Pakistan. With a population of about 141 million, it is one of the most densely populated countries in the world. Since Bangladesh won its independence from Pakistan in a civil war in 1971, continuing political strife has allowed neither government selection and policymaking processes nor norms of office to become established. In December 1990 President Hossain Muhammad Ershad, a general, was forced from office. Elections were held in February 1991 for a new parliament under a neutral caretaker government. The new government fell in 1995 under pressure from the opposition that all future elections be held under a neutral caretaker government. Following an election in February 1996, which was boycotted by the opposition, this demand was conceded through a constitutional amendment, and new elections were held in June 1996. The acceptance by all parties of the concept that elections will be held under neutral caretaker governments raises hope that the parliamentary form of government will continue.

Prior to the present government system, Bangladesh experienced three different governmental periods and styles:

1. A parliamentary system from 1972 to 1975, under the strong leadership of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman (a.k.a. Mujib), the father of independence and leader of the Awami League (AL)
2. A presidential system (already established under Mujib just before his assassination) from 1975 to 1982, under General Ziaur Rahman (a.k.a. Zia)
3. A military-dominated presidential system with aspects of one-party rule under General Ershad from 1982 through 1990

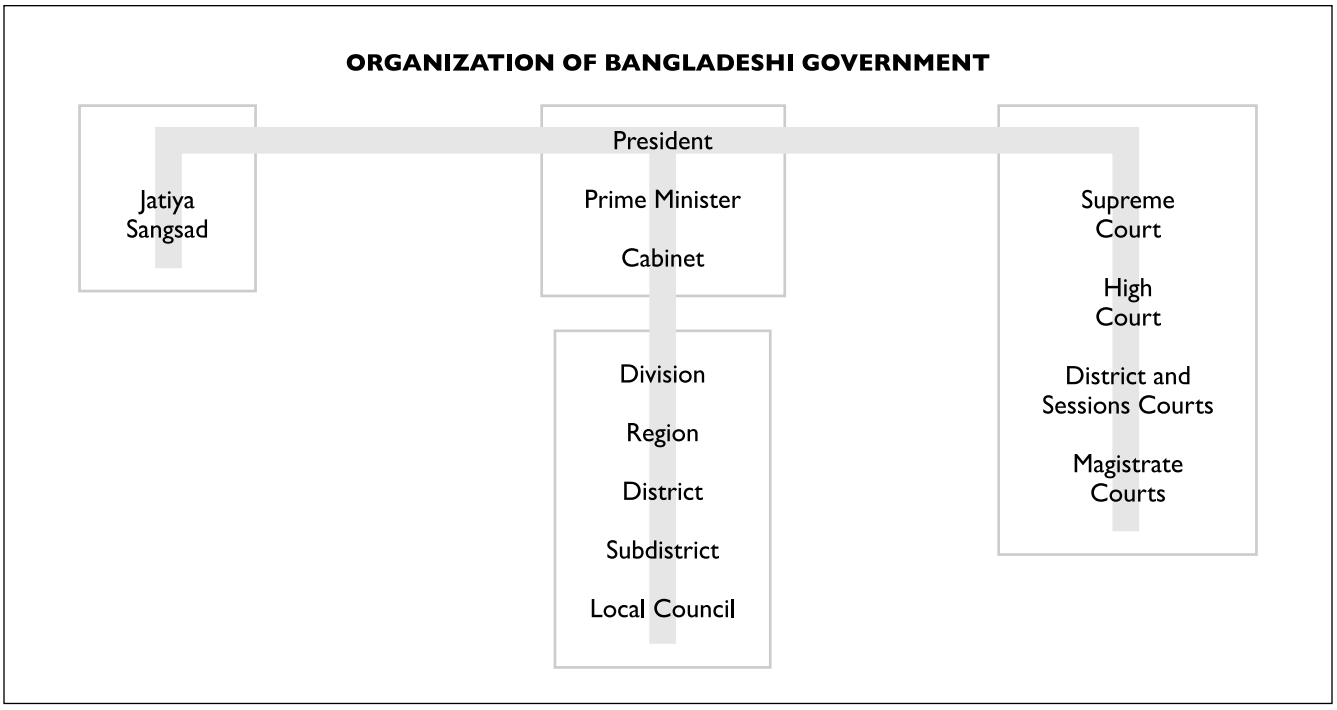
The transitions between these periods, including the one leading to the present parliamentary system, all involved assassinations, coups, or other extraconstitutional actions. Throughout, the constitution was not abrogated, although it was often suspended or amended, usually by decree, to authorize whatever changes the leader desired.

The System of Government

Bangladesh is a parliamentary democracy consisting of six administrative divisions with a legal system based on English common law. Its constitution came into effect December 16, 1972. The constitution was suspended from March 24, 1982, through November 10, 1986, and has been amended many times.

EXECUTIVE

Executive power is wielded by the prime minister, who is the head of government and leader of the parliamentary majority. The head of state or president (a largely ceremonial position) is elected by the parliament. The powers of the prime minister, assisted by a cabinet, are those expected in a British-style form



of government. The president's role is important whenever parliament is dissolved; he or she directs placement of a caretaker government to supervise the elections. The real power is held by the prime minister. The president is elected by the legislature every five years. The prime minister is appointed by the president and must be a member of parliament. According to the constitution, the president can dissolve parliament upon written request of the prime minister. Khaleda Zia, the widow of Ziaur Rahman, became prime minister after leading a coalition headed by the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) to a landslide victory in the 2001 elections. She had previously served as prime minister between 1991 and 1996. Iajudden Ahmed was appointed president on September 6, 2002.

LEGISLATURE

Bangladesh has a unicameral 300-seat body, the National Parliament (Jatiya Sangsad). The 300 legislators are elected every five years by popular vote. In the parliamentary elections held in October 2001, a four-party coalition led by the BNP won a landslide victory, capturing 47 percent of the vote and 215 out of the 300 seats in the parliament. The Awami League (AL) is the main opposition party, having won 62 seats in the elections.

JUDICIARY

The Supreme Court headed by the chief justice is the highest judicial body in the country and comprises an appellate division (the court of last appeal) and a high court division. The high court is an intermediate court of appeals between the appellate division and the district courts. The president appoints the chief justice and all other judges, including those in the appellate division and the high court division of the Supreme Court, in consultation with the chief justice. This convention was upheld in 1994 when the chief justice protested that he had not been consulted on appointments. The government backed down, and some of the appointments were withdrawn. Bangladesh's judiciary is a civil court system. The local government level officials are elected, but large administrative units are run by a civil service.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Each of the governments in Bangladesh has made modifications in the local government system that were intended to bring government closer to the people. In the present system there are five levels of local government: division, region, district, *upazilla* (literally, subdistrict), and local councils. There are six divisions covering different areas of the coun-

try: Dhaka (central), Chittagong (southeast), Sylhet (northeast), Barisal (south), Khulna (southwest), and Rajshahi (northwest). There are 19 regions, 64 districts, 486 *upazillas,* and 4,405 local councils. Urban areas have municipal committees that combine individual local councils. Four cities are municipal corporations that have a consolidated local government. These are Dhaka, Chittagong, Khulna, and Rajshahi. The members of the corporation (city council) are directly elected, as are the mayors. A city administrator (roughly equivalent to a city manager) is appointed by the central government.

Powers are unevenly divided among the various levels. The divisions are coordinating bodies concerned principally with development issues. They are headed by a civil servant designated a commissioner. The regions were formally called districts. In the 1982 reorganization of local government, no specific powers were assigned to the regions, and they exist in name only. The current districts are headed by a deputy commissioner and have elected councils. Their powers are limited but again center on development issues.

The key level of local government is the *upazilla.* The administration is headed by an *upazilla* officer and has an elected body, the *upazilla parishad.* It is here also that the court system begins. The *upazilla* council can consider all local issues, including such matters as health, family planning, education, agricultural development, and small industry. The *upazillas* receive development grants from the central government. These must be spent in specified areas for which maximum and minimum percentages are prescribed (e.g., for agriculture the range is 30 percent to 40 percent of the grant). The decisions within the ranges are made by the *upazilla parishad.*

Below the *upazillas* are the union councils. These have directly elected members and also some appointed members to represent underrepresented segments of the population. The councils have limited legislative powers because most of those have been transferred to the *upazillas.* The councils are concerned with such local issues as roads, veterinary clinics, elementary education, and health. The average population covered by a union is about 26,000.

The Electoral System

The parliament is elected by universal suffrage by all citizens over the age of 18. The election is held from single-member constituencies, which are reapportioned following each decennial census, the last in 2001. Elections are on a plurality system. Candidates, both men and women over the age of 21, of all political parties are eligible to contest as well as independents. The government takes responsibility for the registration of voters. The rules for local body elections are the same. In the 2001 parliamentary elections, nearly 75 percent of eligible voters cast ballots.

The Party System

ORIGINS OF THE PARTIES

Political parties in Bangladesh originated during the struggle against British colonial rule that culminated in the independence of Pakistan in 1947 and its separation from India. Prior to independence the two major parties were the Muslim League, a party limited in membership to Muslims but not a party that could be described as "fundamentalist," and the Krishak Praja Party (Farmer's People's Party), which represented the rural small landholders and was, in form at least, open to both Muslims and Hindus.

After independence, the AL was founded specifically to be open to both Muslims and Hindus. An alliance of the refounded Krishak Sramik Party (KSP; Farmer's and Worker's Party) and the Awami League—the United Front—trounced the then governing Muslim League in the East Pakistan provincial assembly election in 1954. After martial law was imposed in 1958, the KSP gradually disappeared, leaving the Muslim League and the AL as the major contestants in the 1970 election, in which the AL won an enormous victory and led Bangladesh to independence. Since the independence of Bangladesh the Muslim League has all but disappeared, although a small party operates under that name. The AL is a centrist party and has disclaimed the Socialism espoused by Mujib. It and the other major parties, particularly the BNP and the JP, are not communally (religiously) or regionally based, although the BNP and the JP are often described as center-right parties. The exception is the JI, which is an Islamic revivalist party.

THE PARTIES IN LAW

There are at present no restrictions on political party activity, although there have been in the past. Following the coup against Mujib in 1975 and the imposition of martial law by Ziaur Rahman in the same year and by Ershad in 1982, political activity including activity by parties was banned. As martial law was relaxed in each case, political party activity was allowed.

PARTY ORGANIZATION

In general, Bangladeshi parties are hybrids combining mass- and cadre-party characteristics. In large part, party adherence reflects traditional patron-client relationships, particularly in the rural countryside (where more than 80 percent of the population lives). Kinship groups such as *gushti* (patrilineage) and *poribar* (family of procreation) and their residential distribution in the *bari* (cluster of households with a common courtyard) play a central role in local political alignments. Typically, political parties mobilize support from dominant and well-connected lineages, and much local political activity centers on recruiting locally powerful persons who head economically (ownership of land being an important indicator) or demographically dominant lineages that can activate a host of kin-group ties in their political support. The various small Marxist and left-wing parties also use kinship ties to mobilize support, often by capitalizing on tensions between rich and poor *baris* and on intralineage conflicts over landownership. The loyalty of influentials cannot be ensured by political parties, as other parties try to win them over and are often successful.

Policy or ideological issues have generally played little part in campaigns except in the urban areas, although issue-based politics is increasing in the rural areas. Of greater importance is the role played by personalities and their manipulation of traditional patron-client structures. Violence has been a common feature in campaigning, although much less was reported in the 1991, 1996, and 2001 campaigns and balloting.

Bangladesh has over 50 parties of varying size and strength, most of them little more than projections of personalities.

Major Political Parties

AWAMI LEAGUE (AL)

HISTORY

The AL was founded as the Awami Muslim League in 1949 by Husain Shaheed Suhrawardy and Abdul Hamid Khan Bhashani (who subsequently broke away to form another party, the National Awami Party). The word "Muslim" was soon dropped in order to open the party to all communities, most notably the Hindus, who formed nearly one-fifth of the population of East Pakistan in the 1950s. The AL headed several coalition governments in East Pakistan from 1956 to 1958 and was represented in several coalitions in the Pakistan central government in 1956, 1957, and 1958. Suhrawardy was Pakistan's prime minister in 1956–57.

In the elections held in 1970, the AL won 160 of the 162 East Pakistan seats in the Pakistan National Assembly and 288 of the 300 seats in the East Pakistan Assembly. Subsequently, under Mujib's leadership, it led the movement for independence and was the ruling party in Bangladesh from 1971 to 1975.

After Mujib's assassination in August 1975, the party was temporarily banned along with all other parties and the leader, Abdul Malek Ukil, was jailed. In the 1978 presidential election it supported the unsuccessful campaign of General Muhammad Ataul Ghani Osmany against the BNP's General Ziaur Rahman. The same year the party split when a small group led by Mizanur Rahman Choudhury formed its own AL; Mizan later joined the JP (Jatiya Party) and was briefly prime minister. In February 1981 Mujib's daughter, Sheikh Hasina Wajid, was recalled from India, where she had been in exile, and assumed the leadership. She became prime minister in 1996, having led the AL to a victory in the parliamentary elections. The party captured 173 out of 300 seats in those elections. In 2001, however, the AL lost the elections to a four-party coalition led by the BNP. It won only 62 seats and became the primary opposition party. However, the election marked the first time in Bangladesh's history that an elected government served the full five years of its term.

ORGANIZATION

The personalized nature of the party and the severity of factional conflict weaken the party's organizational structure. Factionalism is to some extent inherent in the "umbrella" nature of the AL: as the party of independence, it was composed of divergent interests. Factionalism can also be attributed to what is often characterized as a Bengali propensity for political schism. With Mujib's death and the party's loss of power, factional conflict erupted and led to the 1978 split. Factionalism has also been rampant in the various fronts organized by the party among students (Bangladesh Students League), labor (Jatiyo Stramik League), peasants (Jatiyo Krishak League), and youth (Awami Jubo League). However, it can be said that the assumption of the leadership by Sheikh Hasina has moderated the degree of factionalism, as did the party's success in the June 1996 election.

POLICY

Early on, the party was an advocate of a Socialist economy. The four principles of Mujib's program were democracy, Socialism, secularism, and nationalism. Of the four, Socialism has been abandoned, and the

party now stands for a market economy, although during its 1991–96 government it was slow to move in this direction. Nonetheless, many of the more senior leaders have been reluctant to abandon Socialism and state-owned enterprises completely.

MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY

Initially emerging as a middle-class body representing urban professionals (lawyers, businesspeople, teachers, doctors) and students, the AL's support base expanded during the Bangladeshi independence movement to incorporate a wide variety of interests. Popular support for the party (strongest in 1971) diminished rapidly in the face of its poor record in office and the growth of corruption in its ranks. While the elections of 1979 and 1981 demonstrated the reemergence of considerable support for the AL, its defeat indicated that the majority of people still recalled its record in office uneasily. The same concerns seemed to be a primary factor in limiting the appeal of the AL in 1991, but it was able to gain a plurality in both the popular vote and in seats in parliament in June 1996. Its support then waned again in the 2001 elections. As a party advocating secularism, it appeals strongly to the Hindu minority (now approximately 12 percent of the population).

LEADERSHIP

Among the important leaders are Sheikh Hasina Wajid (born 1947, Gopalganj district), president of the party and prime minister between 1996 and 2001. She has a power base in her home district and also draws strength from being the daughter of Mujib; Abdur Razzak (born 1942, Shariatpur district), former general secretary and minister of water resources, whose power base is in the Faridpur region; and Tofail Ahmed (born 1943, Bhola district), minister of industries and commerce and earlier an important student leader, whose power base is in the southern areas of the country.

The leadership has been the target of violent attacks in recent years. In 2004 Sheikh Hasina survived a grenade attack at a party rally in Dhaka. In another attack in January 2005, party leader Shah Kibria was killed.

BANGLADESH NATIONALIST PARTY (BNP)

(Bangladesh Jatiyabadi Dal)

HISTORY

The BNP was formed in September 1978 by President (General) Ziaur Rahman from sections of the parties that had supported his successful candidacy in the 1978 presidential election: the National Democratic Party (launched in February 1978 under the leadership of Vice President Abdus Sattar with Zia's blessing), the pro-Beijing National Awami Party (NAP), the leftist United People's Party, a portion of the Muslim League, and an organization representing Hindu scheduled castes ("untouchables"). After Zia's assassination in May 1981, power struggles in the BNP, particularly over the selection of its presidential candidate in 1981, seriously threatened its unity. An open split was averted by the timely intervention of the army chief, General Ershad, who persuaded Acting President Abdul Sattar to stand for election as a compromise candidate. Despite his election victory, Sattar was unable to control intraparty factionalism, thus provoking the military (led by Ershad) to depose him. Other causes of Ershad's coup included allegations of corruption and Sattar's refusal to agree to Ershad's demand for a constitutional role for the military in the governance of the country.

The party strongly opposed Ershad's regime, although some dissidents deserted and joined Ershad. Zia's widow, Khaleda Zia, became chairperson in May 1984; being consistent in her opposition, she stemmed the outflow of members. The BNP refused to contest the 1986 and 1988 elections under Ershad's government and worked with the AL to cause Ershad's fall in December 1990. In the 1991 election for parliament, the BNP won a plurality of seats and was able to form a government with Khaleda Zia as prime minister. The BNP lost the 1996 elections to the AL and led the opposition between 1996 and 2001. In 2001, however, the party won a landslide victory as leader of a four-party coalition with the Jamaat-e-Islami, the Jatiya Party–Naziru, and Islami Oikay Jute. The coalition captured 215 out of the 300 seats, and Khaleda Zia once again became prime minister.

ORGANIZATION

The BNP began as a hastily assembled, loosely structured party formed to support Zia's political ambitions. It comprised four distinct and seemingly incongruent strands: (1) Zia's own factional followers, many of whom formerly belonged to the military and the bureaucracy; (2) much of the leadership and party cadres of the Muslim League; (3) many from Bhashani's faction of the leftist NAP; and (4) a number of prominent people who had not previously been active in party politics. Fissures in the BNP were thus inherent in its heterogeneous composition and focused on divisions such as retired military and civilian bureaucrats versus politicians, Socialists versus non-Socialists, Islamists versus secularists, and freedom fighters versus "collaborators." It was Zia's personality and official patronage that held this uneasy coalition together. The party suffered a number

of defections to Ershad's JP after the 1982 coup and the partial civilization of that government (for example, a former minister, Moudud Ahmed, who rose to become prime minister and vice president under Ershad but who has now rejoined the BNP, an example of the limited loyalty to parties in Bangladesh).

Khaleda Zia has shown considerable skill in uniting the party despite the personal and ideological differences of its base supporters. However, her government has struggled in the face of numerous general strikes called by the AL-led opposition and an increasing threat of Islamic terrorism, which included a string of bomb attacks in August 2005.

POLICY

The platform of the party is based on the 19-point program announced by Zia prior to his election to the presidency. It is a general program of development for Bangladesh that includes improvements in agriculture, education, health services, and population planning. Nationalism is stressed, but this does not mean self-reliance; it is understood that foreign assistance is required to reach the development goals. In general the party displays some distrust of India and was not fully supportive of the 1996 agreement with India, negotiated by the AL government, that governed the division of the waters of the Ganges River between the two countries. The BNP supports free-market economics and the continuance of the privatization program of Ershad. Secularism is not as strongly advocated as in the AL program, but modifications of secularism have been limited; an Islamic state is not a goal.

MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY

The BNP draws support from a broad cross-section of society. Like the AL and the JP, it is not regionally centered. It perhaps draws less support from the Hindu minority than the AL.

LEADERSHIP

The current party leader is Khaleda Zia (born 1945), who is party chairperson and prime minister.

JATIYA PARTY–ERSHAD (JP-E)

The JP-E was formed in 1985 as a vehicle for the political ambitions of Ershad. It included a number of defectors from the BNP and the AL, along with some who entered politics from business and the bureaucracy (many of the latter did not remain in politics). Among those brought into the party from the BNP were former ministers Moudud Ahmed and Kazi Zafar Ahmad and from the AL, Mizanur Rahman Choudhury, all of whom became prime ministers under Ershad. In the 2001 elections the party won 7.5 percent of the vote and 14 seats in parliament. It is part of a 14-party opposition alliance led by the AL.

JAMAAT-E-ISLAMI (JI)

(Islamic Assembly)

The JI is the Bangladeshi manifestation of an Islamic revivalist party founded by Maulana Syed Abu Ala Maududi in 1940 in India. After independence in 1947 it became an important but generally unsuccessful party in Pakistan. The present party in Bangladesh is the successor to the party's branch in East Pakistan.

The party is not fully organized in all areas of the country. It appears to be strongest in membership (not in voting strength) in urban areas. The JI advocates the establishment of an Islamic state in which law would be based on and in agreement with Islamic law, the sharia. A precise definition of what this would mean in the context of Bangladesh has not been given, but it is generally assumed that among other things it would mean the restriction of rights for women and minority groups.

The party joined the coalition led by the BNP for the 2001 elections. It delivered 18 seats out of the total of 215 won by the alliance. Motiur Rahman Nizami is the leader of the party.

Minor Political Parties

There are a host of other parties in Bangladesh. Two of these, the Jatiya Party–Naziru and the Islami Oikay Jute, are members of the governing coalition led by the BNP. Other minor parties include the Jatiya Party–Manzur, the Krishak Sramik Janata League, and 10 other parties of the alliance of 14 that form the opposition.

Other Political Forces

The military has twice declared martial law, in 1975 and 1982, under the leadership of Zia and Ershad, respectively. However, the role of the military in politics has decreased. When Ershad was forced to resign in 1990, the military reportedly refused to come to his assistance. Reported political actions by military officers in 1996 resulted in the dismissal of those accused. This met with no active response from other military

officers. It is far too early to aver that the military will not play a role in politics in the future, but its participation seems far less likely than in the past.

The bureaucracy has also played a role at times. Most recently, during the 1995 agitation by the AL, JP, JI, and others against the BNP government's refusal to accept the demand for the holding of elections under neutral caretaker governments, several civil servants clearly stated their support of the demand. This, however, is rare. Another example came in 1971 when some civil servants left the Pakistani government positions they held, while others remained at their posts. Senior civil servants do exercise much power in decision and policymaking.

Students can be and have been mobilized for political activity. Each major party has a student wing. In the 1990 agitation against Ershad, the agreement between the BNP and AL student wings forced the parent bodies and their leaders, Khaleda Zia and Sheikh Hasina, to work together on a single-point program: the ouster of Ershad followed by free and fair elections.

Parties also have associated labor and farmers' groups. With a low level of industrialization, labor groups are not large, but they are mainly concentrated in urban areas and can at times, such as during the demonstrations against Ershad, add numbers to the demonstrators. Farmers' groups are less active if for no other reason than the lack of easy means to communicate in rural areas. In rural (as well as urban) areas, a more recent phenomenon is nongovernmental organizations. Many of these are centered on the "uplift" of women and therefore draw the wrath of the JI.

In the early 2000s religious extremism became an increasing problem in Bangladesh. A wave of bomb attacks in August 2005, apparently conducted by Islamic fundamentalists, badly shook the country's political elite. Before that time, the BNP continually insisted that Islamic militancy had no traction in the country. After the bombings, the government switched tactics and banned two Islamic fringe groups, Jamatul Mujahideen and Jagrata Muslim Janata Bangladesh.

National Prospects

At its independence Bangladesh was described as an "international basketcase." In the 25 years of independence, it has clearly graduated from that category. It has made impressive strides in agricultural development and in population planning. Nonetheless the country's economy remains subject to the pressure of population and the vagaries of climate that regularly produce floods and cyclones. Bangladesh is short of three required resources for development: (1) financial resources for savings and investment; (2) human resources in the sense of a trained, well-fed, and healthy population; and (3) natural resources, other than a fertile soil and natural gas, that could lead to a greater share of industry in the gross domestic product. It has found some niches in industry, especially the highly successful garment industry, which has surpassed jute as the principal export. Bangladesh, however, will remain for many years to come a major recipient of international development assistance.

The political institutions are also weak. Interest groups are all but nonexistent, and the media are only now beginning to develop. However, the depoliticization of the military, if it continues, makes the continuation of the parliamentary system more likely. The rise of Islamic terrorism, as marked by the bomb attacks of August 2005, threatened the BNP-led government and indicated a problem that could have ramifications for years to come.

Bangladesh is considered one of the most democratic states within the Muslim world and a leading voice among least developed nations. Other nations' continued support for democratization should make Bangladesh a continuing international priority in the region.

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BARBADOS

By Thomas D. Anderson, Ph.D.
Revised by Soeren Kern

Barbados is a small island (430 square kilometers) that lies in the Atlantic Ocean about 150 kilometers east of the Windward Islands. The population of about 278,000 is 90 percent black, 6 percent mixed race, and 4 percent white. With an urban proportion of only 38 percent, the rural population density is one of the highest in the world

The System of Government

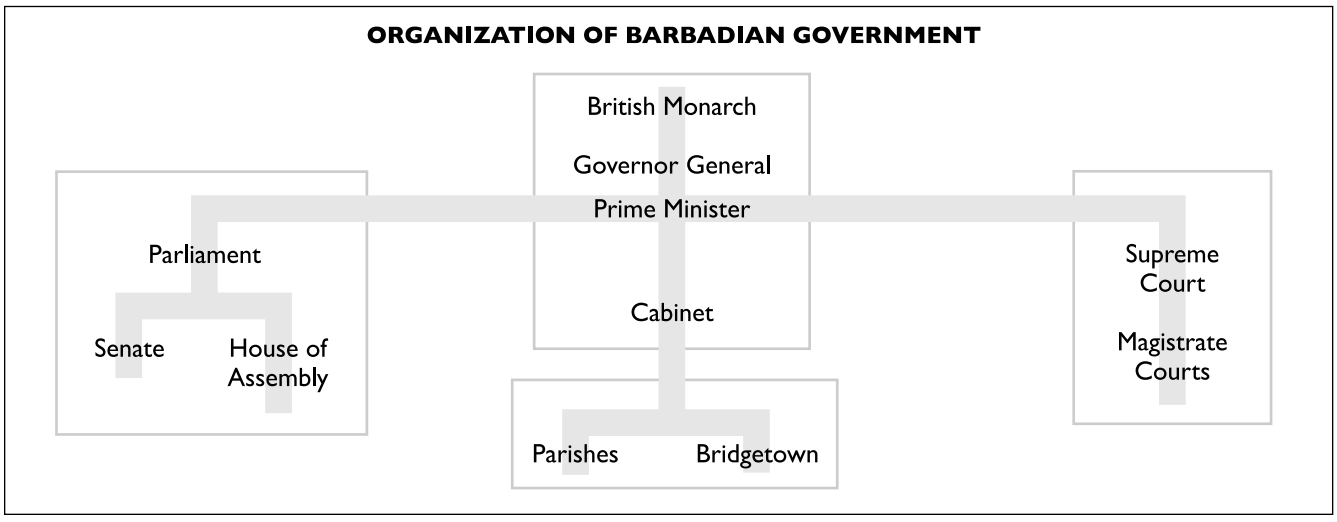
Barbados is a parliamentary democracy and a constitutional monarchy within the British Commonwealth of Nations. The country gained independence from Britain in 1966. There is a clear division of powers among the executive, the judiciary, and the legislature.

EXECUTIVE

The formal head of state is the British monarch represented by a governor-general. The governor-general appoints as prime minister the leader of the political party that holds the most seats in the House of Assembly. In practice, the prime minister exercises the executive power in the government.

LEGISLATURE

The bicameral legislature consists of the Senate and the House of Assembly. The Senate has 21 members



appointed by the governor-general: 12 on the advice of the prime minister; two on the advice of the leader of the opposition; and seven on the advice of religious, economic, cultural, and community organizations. The House of Assembly consists of 30 members, who serve five years upon winning a plurality in direct elections.

JUDICIARY

The Barbadian judicial system is based on English common law, which is administered by a system of courts of summary jurisdiction and the Supreme Court of the Judicature. The latter consists of the High Court and the Court of Appeal.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Barbados is divided into 11 parishes and the municipality of Bridgetown, the capital. All local government units are under central government control. All Bajans 18 years of age or older are eligible to vote. Parliamentary candidates are elected by simple plurality in single-member districts. Voter turnout traditionally is approximately 70 percent.

The Electoral System

General literacy on this small island with a free press provides a well-informed and politically conscious electorate. Campaigns usually are marked by spirited competition between well-organized constituency groups. Party loyalty notwithstanding, elections can be decided on the basis of personality. National elections are scheduled at five-year intervals.

The Party System

Although at least three political parties regularly vie for Assembly seats, party identification is strongest with the Barbados Labour Party (BLP) and the Democratic Labour Party (DLP).

Major Political Parties

BARBADOS LABOUR PARTY (BLP)

The BLP, which developed out of the trade union movement, was founded by Grantley Adams in 1946 to work for economic improvement and the extension of political rights. Under the leadership of Grantley Adams's son, John Michael Geoffrey "Tom" Adams, the BLP pursued a cautious domestic and foreign policy that supported free enterprise and encouraged foreign investment. In the early twenty-first century, it is an essentially social democratic party that has actively opposed Marxist political activities in the region. In the general election held in September 1994, following a no-confidence vote that went against the incumbent prime minister, Erskine Sandiford of the DLP, a BLP government headed by Owen Arthur (the current prime minister) came to power. In 1999 Arthur again led the BLP to a landslide victory, promising economic growth and international competitiveness, and to make Barbados a republic. Arthur won a third term in May 2003.

DEMOCRATIC LABOUR PARTY (DLP)

The Democratic Labour Party was founded in 1955 under the chairmanship of F. G. Smith and consisted primarily of dissidents from the BLP. Once regarded as to the right of the BLP, the DLP has in recent years shifted to a social democratic position more similar to that of the BLP on many issues. As the main opposition party, the DLP is led by Clyde Mascoll, who was elected president of the DLP as part of a party reorganization in 2001.

Minor Political Parties

Among the minor parties, the most important is the National Democratic Party (NDP), founded in 1985.

Other Political Forces

The country's traditionally important agricultural sector has shrunk, and this is one reason for relatively high unemployment, 10.7 percent in 2003. Labor unions play a vocal role in Barbadon politics. Among these organizations are the Barbados Workers Union, the Clement Payne Labor Union, the People's Progressive Movement, and the Worker's Party of Barbados.

National Prospects

Since independence Barbados has been one of the best-governed countries in the world, and there are

no reasons to believe that this status will not continue. Like most small former colonial entities, it did not begin self-rule in a prosperous condition, yet it has emerged as one of the most economically successful of the new countries. Aside from some (currently) minor deposits of offshore natural gas, it has no mineral base and a very crowded rural sector. Nonetheless in 2002 its GDP per capita was estimated to be $8,790 (U.S.). Unlike most of the country's poorer Caribbean neighbors, Barbados has an economy that blends productive agriculture with light manufacturing and tourism. The latter is likely to continue to be the most important, but increasingly wedging into the economic triad is an electronic dimension that includes software and computer services. Internationally Barbados has cooperated with its neighbors and with the United States, although a traditional cautionary stance is maintained with respect to the latter. Prime Minister Owen Arthur in 1997 instituted a program of instruction in conversational Spanish in primary schools, an action that appears to be an increased recognition of the need for closer interaction with its Latin American neighbors.

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REPUBLIC OF BELARUS

(Respublika Bielorus')

By Jeffrey K. Hass, Ph.D.

A landlocked nation, Belarus is located in central-eastern Europe, with Poland and Russia on the western and eastern borders, Ukraine to the south, and Latvia and Lithuania to the north. The climate is between continental and maritime, with cold winters and cool summers. Much of the terrain is flat, and there are several square kilometers of marshland. Much of southern Belarus was contaminated by the Chernobyl nuclear accident in 1986; while Ukraine was host to the disaster, the radioactive fallout harmed Belarusian territory worse than Ukrainian land, contaminating more than 20 percent of Belarusian land and leading to, at one count, approximately 400,000 cancer deaths.

As of July 2005 Belarus had a population of roughly 10.3 million, with 45 percent male and 55 percent female. While the death rate was higher than the birth rate, immigration left population growth in only slight decline, at –0.09 percent. The life expectancy for males was 63.03 years and for females 74.69 years; however, such statistics might not take into account deaths resulting from Chernobyl radiation. Belarusians make up 81.2 percent of the population, followed by Russians (11.4 precent), with Poles, Ukrainians, and various others making up the remaining 7.4 percent.

The System of Government

The Belarusian political system is, in theory, democratic and following a federal structure. Belarus is divided into six *voblasti* and one municipality (Minsk, the national capital). According to the Belarusian constitution adopted on March 15, 1994, the legal system is one of civil law (rather than Anglo-American common law) and comprises three branches: the executive (president and prime minister), the legislature (Supreme Soviet), and the judiciary (Supreme and Constitutional Courts). In practice, however, Belarus is a dictatorship under Aleksandr Lukashenko, who has used executive power to undermine the constitution, the legislature, local power, the judiciary, the media, and basic freedoms such as freedom of association and speech.

EXECUTIVE

The executive branch is headed by the president, who serves as a national leader, and the prime minister, who acts as the head of government. The prime minister's duties are straightforward: He suggests and implements policies, leads the state bureaucracy, and coordinates the activities of the numerous ministries. However, the actual powers and duties of the president have been in flux.

Initially Belarus did not have a presidency. In 1991, in the wake of a failed August coup, the Supreme Soviet named its deputy speaker, Stanislav Shushkevich, to be the "president of the [Belarusian] parliament" and carry out the duties of a weak president; that is, Belarus did not have a formal, Western-style presidency but had instead a temporary presidential position. Additionally, Vyacheslav Kebich served as prime minister for the now-independent republic, carrying out such

duties as running the state bureaucracy and promoting and implementing domestic policies. Shushkevich's duties included meeting with foreign dignitaries and serving as a central figurehead for suggesting policies and legislation. However, in reality, Shushkevich had even fewer powers than the emasculated presidents of Eastern European nations or pre-Kuchma Ukraine.

Following labor protests in the autumn of 1993 and a signature campaign by the Belarusian Popular Front (BPF) to move parliamentary elections from 1995 to March 1994, the parliament in January 1994 removed Shushkevich as parliamentary president, leaving executive functions with the prime minister. On March 15, 1994, the parliament added an article to the draft constitution (also passed March 15, 1994) creating a presidency, and it called for elections to be held on June 26, 1994. Aleksandr Lukashenko won the first and second rounds of voting and became the first Belarusian president, and he then proceeded to consolidate power in the presidency.

According to the 1994 constitution, the president was a weak figurehead whose basic function was to nominate the heads of the Constitution Court and the Electoral Commission, represent Belarus on the international stage, take part in the work of the Supreme Soviet (including suggesting legislation), and, in general, head the executive branch. In November 1994, in a move to enhance his own powers, Lukashenko created the "presidential vertical line," sending presidentially appointed representatives to regions and districts to abrogate local political power and to answer directly to the president, rather than the regional and district electorate. Then in April 1995 Lukashenko called for a referendum in which Belarusians expressed 75 percent support for returning Soviet-era political symbols to prominence, 77.6 percent support for presidential powers to dissolve parliament (if it violates the constitution), 82.4 percent support for economic integration with Russia, and 83.1 percent support for making Russian a second official language.

In another move to enhance Lukashenko's power, Belarus held a national referendum in November 1996 to replace the 1994 constitution with a new version drafted by Lukashenko. Originally planned for November 7 (in honor of the Bolshevik Revolution), the referendum was moved by Lukashenko to November 24. While the Constitutional Court and the Election Commission ruled that the referendum was illegal—the 1994 constitution gave this right to call one only to the Supreme Soviet—Lukashenko ignored the parliament and the court and dismissed the head of the Electoral Commission. The newly passed constitution strengthened the powers of the president vis-à-vis the legislature—for example, the Senate was to be appointed by the president rather than directly elected. Additionally, the new constitution lengthened the term of office.

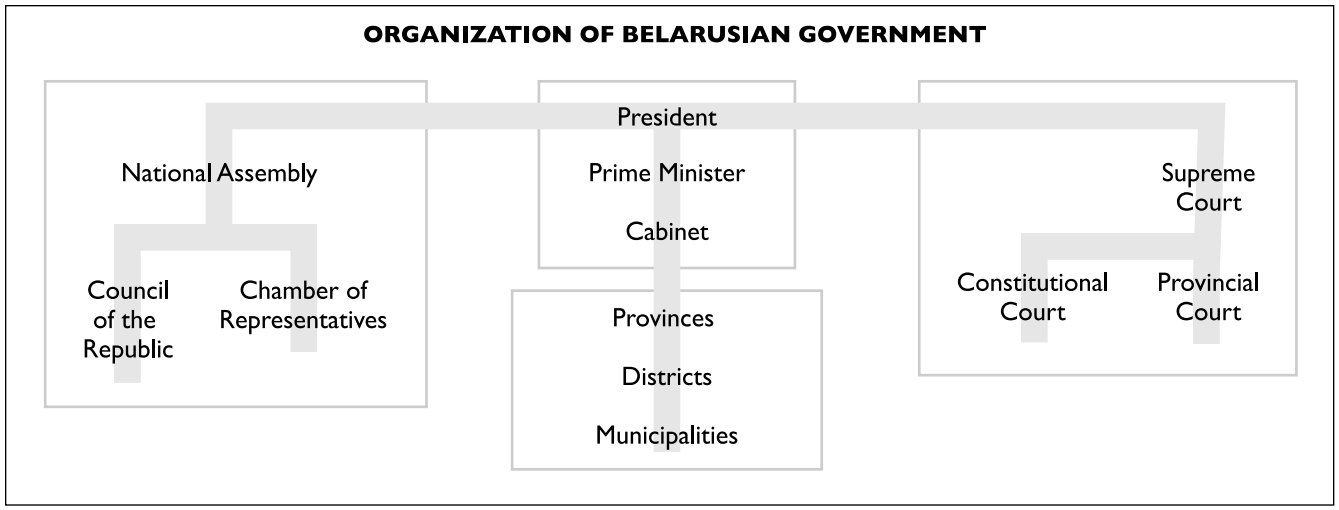
In the referendum 70.5 percent of Belarusians voted in support of Lukashenko's draft constitution while 7.9 percent supported the parliamentary draft of the constitution. Accusations of vote tampering followed the referendum but to little effect. In 2004 the constitution was revised again to eliminate presidential term limits.

LEGISLATURE

Lukashenko's 1996 constitution altered the legislature. It renamed the Supreme Soviet the "National Assembly," which henceforth was to be bicameral. It was now composed of the Chamber of Representatives (the lower house), whose 110 members were to be elected directly through single-mandate elections, and the Council of the Republic (upper house), appointed directly by the president and by regional authorities (those elected and those executive representatives appointed by the president). The first members of the lower house were those delegates of the old Supreme Soviet who had remained loyal to Lukashenko during the political confrontations of 1996.

The Council of the Republic is now composed of 64 members, of which 56 are elected at meetings of deputies of local- and *oblast*-level soviets; the others are appointed by the president. Under the 1996 revision the president, after his term, was to become a senator for life (the 2004 revision removed term limits from the office of president). The National Assembly comes up for election and appointment every four years.

According to the constitution, the National Assembly has the power to legislate. The Chamber of Representatives is authorized to "consider" legislation proposed by the presidency or by 150,000 or more citizens; further, the Chamber has the right to consider questions of no confidence and impeachment proceedings (at the risk of provoking dissolution). The Council of the Republic has the power to adopt or reject those laws passed by the Chamber and to elect six judges of the Constitutional Court. Bills that receive a majority vote in the Chamber (where legislation is initiated) must receive majority support in the Council. If the president signs the bill or lets it sit for two weeks, the bill becomes law; if the president vetoes the bill, it returns to the National Assembly for reconsideration and possible alteration. A two-thirds majority in both houses can override the presidential veto.



In practice, however, Belarus's legislature has been mainly a rubber stamp for Lukashenko. Not only is the legislature weak institutionally, but the Chamber delegates are those who were loyal to Lukashenko in 1996, and the senators are appointed by Lukashenko or his subordinates. In Stalinist fashion, Lukashenko has made the National Assembly "his" body through law and through the power of appointment. In the practice of power, the parliament has lost the fight and remains today in the shadow of the president.

JUDICIARY

It may as yet be too early to speak about an effective, independent judiciary. In theory the judicial branch is autonomous from other branches and answerable only to the law. The job of lower courts, at the local and district levels, is to adjudicate disputes and rule on criminal cases. Belarusian law follows the continental system, where courts apply laws rather than rule on them or use precedent to establish legal interpretations. Cases coming before the court are argued de novo each time.

However, the courts do not appear to have autonomy, which may be in part because of pressure from above. Lukashenko repeatedly disavowed the rulings and legitimacy of the pre-1997 Constitutional Court, and so the present court, being appointed by the president and aware of the history of interbranch relations, may be playing a game of political safety.

The highest judicial organ is the Supreme Court, which has the right and obligation to rule on the constitutionality of presidential decrees and parliamentary legislation and has the duty to rule on the grounds of potential presidential impeachment if the National Assembly makes such a petition. Six of the eleven judges are appointed by the president, and the remainder are appointed by the Senate.

Lower courts, which deal with criminal cases and with arbitration of conflicts, are in theory supposed to follow Western-style procedure. However, court cases have been closed to the public, defendants have not been allowed to call witnesses in their defense, and judges have been hesitant to rule against the heavy-handed tactics of the state. In their defense, judges cite the lack of space for proper open proceedings and an attempt to speed up court proceedings as reasons for such apparent violations of standard international judicial practice; just as likely may be the attempt of the executive branch to use the judiciary to silence opposition and create political order.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Local government in Belarus remains problematic to systematize, due to power struggles and Lukashenko's power acquisition. Belarusian local government follows a three-level hierarchy. At the top of the hierarchy, Belarus is split into six *voblasti*; the next level is 141 *raiony* and 38 cities; at the lowest level are towns, villages, and settlements (1,592 total). In theory, each level is to be run by elected deputies and executive figures, who sit for four-year terms and have authority over local budgets, local policies, and local politics (subject to the constitution and national laws).

In theory, local governments are autonomous and local political leadership is chosen through direct elections. However, Lukashenko undermined this auton-

omy in 1994. First, he disbanded local councils and legislatures. He then placed local regions under local administrations headed by centrally appointed officials. In this way Lukashenko created a direct line of command from the president to the regions; handpicked representatives act to implement presidential commands and power in the regions and in practice to act as local watchdogs—in essence re-creating a chain of command reminiscent of that of the republican Communist Party structure.

The Electoral System

According to the 1996 constitution, a president's term is for five years; elections are called by the Chamber of Representatives two months before the end of one term or in the case of an invalid election. For a presidential election to be valid, more than 50 percent of registered voters must cast legitimate ballots; to win, a candidate must receive 50 percent of votes cast, or else there will be a runoff two weeks later between the top two vote getters.

The term of office for Chamber members and senators is four years. In elections held in October 2000 and March 2001, 81 of the 110 representatives elected were not formally aligned with any party. The largest formal party representation was for the Communists (6 seats) and Agrarians (5 seats). Parties opposed to Lukashenko's regime boycotted the elections and gained no formal representation in the Chamber of Representatives.

Some former deputies opposed to Kukashenko have created a "shadow government," known as the Consultative Council of Parties. This shadow government is not quite the same as the British shadow governments, in which opposition party leaders act as if in parallel posts in order to confront the ruling party in a more organized and effective manner. The Belarusian shadow government is a group of opposition leaders confronting the regime; however, its status is illegal.

The 1996 referendum allowed Lukashenko to run for another term as president, and he handily and expectedly defeated his opposition, Vladimir Goncharik, gaining 75.6 percent of votes in the first round. (Opposition figures claimed the real vote was much closer.) In 2002 Lukashenko settled scores with the opposition, sentencing journalists and editors critical of him to hard labor for "defaming" his image and cracking down on opposition generally. In the summer of 2004, before the upcoming parliamentary elections, Lukashenko proposed another referendum—that he be allowed to run for yet another term, in official violation of the Constitution. This referendum was approved in October 2004. Lukashenko will remain in office after the 2006 presidential election, assuming he wins it.

The Party System

Given political developments in the late 1990s and early 2000s, especially Lukashenko's drive to centralize all power in the presidency and his person, it may be premature to talk about developed political parties. Except for the descendants of the Communist parties, most parties in Eastern Europe are not fully developed; in Belarus the case is extreme because representative democracy, the very basis for a party system and party development, has been hindered. First, elections are founded on individual-based, rather than party-based, procedures: voters elect individuals and not party lists, hindering the development of a few strong parties. Further, by disbanding the freely elected parliament of 1995 and replacing it with a handpicked parliament, and by wielding the police against any political activity (individual or organized) that seems to threaten his position, Lukashenko has effectively stood in the way of party organization and evolution. Some opposition party leaders have been arrested or have been forced to flee as political refugees; others have been harassed. After the proroguing of the 1995 parliament, some party members (such as those of the Belarusian Popular Front) created a shadow government to organize the opposition.

Thus it is difficult to develop a clear picture of political parties, since they remain inactive and oppressed and information such as membership figures remains vague at best (when available).

Major Political Parties

COMMUNIST PARTY OF BELARUS

(Kommunisticheskaya Partuya Belarusi; KPB)

The Communist Party of Belarus was temporarily banned from 1991 to 1993, when its members formed the Belarusian Party of Communists (PKB). By 1993 the KPB was legalized, although not all its original members returned from the PKB out of policy differences. The KPB supports closer ties with Russia and

Russian culture and is resistant to economic reforms, for example subsidies for industry and the population, minimal privatization and restructuring, and the like. This is probably why the KPB draws its approximately 2,000 to 3,000 members and electoral support mostly from state officials and pensioners, especially around Minsk. The party's goals are also close to Lukashenko's policy line, and unsurprisingly the party supports Lukashenko's leadership. The president, in turn, has not bothered the KPB as he has others.

BELARUSIAN PARTY OF COMMUNISTS

(Partiya Kommunistov Belaruskaya; PKB)

The Belarusian Party of Communists formed in 1991 to replace the temporarily banned KPB and rejoined the KPB when it returned in 1993. However, after the 1996 referendum some PKB members elected to withdraw the party from this union, and it now is independent and has approximately 2,000 to 3,000 members. While the PKB desires a strong state role in the economy, it does not support Lukashenko and joined the Consultative Council of Parties, the so-called shadow government.

BELARUSIAN POPULAR FRONT

(Adradzennie)

The Belarusian Popular Front, or Adradzennie, was formed on June 25, 1989, as the initial main opposition party to the Communists. The Popular Front continued resistance to Communist domination of the Supreme Soviet in 1992 and in 1994 called for early parliamentary elections, demanding that political and economic reforms and restructuring be carried out. The Popular Front came into conflict with Lukashenko over his heavy-handed tactics in dealing with the legislative branch, and it eventually rose to lead active opposition (such as demonstrations) and the shadow government. While the party has, by several claims, close to 10,000 members, some of its leaders are not in Belarus out of fear of harassment or worse. (Zenon Poznyak, an important party leader, received political asylum in the United States.) Adradzennie has been one of the leaders of anti-Lukashenko opposition. The party supports total Belarusian independence and culture and is strongly anti-Communist. The moderate and more radical wings continue to cooperate.

Minor Political Parties

Other smaller parties and parliamentary factions have organized for elections and party activity in Belarus but are less significant than the major parties. The United Democratic Party, founded in November 1990 and drawing its membership from various social strata, favors market reforms, creation of a true democracy, and independence from Russia. The Belarusian Social Democratic Assembly (or Hramada) draws from workers, peasants, and the intelligentsia. The Hramada takes a middle position between those of the Communists and the Popular Front, advocating a market economy with state control in key areas and membership in the Commonwealth of Independent States but independence from Russia. The Belarusian Peasant Party, drawing on peasants, supports market reform, land privatization, and democratic development. The Agrarian Party has lately become more pro-European and joined the Consultative Council of Parties. Other groups include the United Civic Party, the Christian Democratic Union, and various other small organizations.

Other Political Forces

Street protests following the October 2004 election demonstrated popular unrest, though Lukashenko has dismissed popular revolution as impossible. Western observers have denounced alleged human rights violations and voting irregularities in Belarus, calling for reforms that Lukashenko has firmly refused to implement.

National Prospects

Belarus is one of the less fortunate of the former Soviet republics. With an economy suffering from structural weaknesses and a polity engaged too much in conflict and power building to implement economic reforms, the Belarusian economy is unlikely to "take off" anytime soon. Further, Lukashenko's efforts to centralize power in the presidency, and in his own person, have evoked protests that only help destabilize the political landscape.

If Belarus is to progress, three issues must be dealt with. First is the creation of political institutions and traditions of democracy. Belarus has had perhaps the hardest time of all the nations of the former USSR in creating democracy, mostly because

of the actions of Lukashenko and his coterie. The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) warned in June 1997 that thanks to the actions of the president and executive branch and the inability of the authorities and police to respect civil rights, Belarus was headed toward a totalitarian form of government.

There are few counterweights to strong presidential rule. A powerful group with outside resources has not developed (unlike in Russia), and opposition groups are weak and not well organized. Belarus's lack of importance on the world stage may have helped Lukashenko avoid the scrutiny that Boris Yeltsin underwent. Finally, the bulk of the Belarusian population does not seem actively opposed to Lukashenko's actions; in fact, Lukashenko appears to have some (tacit) support from those who desire a strong leader.

For political stability to be achieved, either a compromise between Lukashenko and his opposition must be reached or one side must win the political battle. In the early 2000s Lukashenko showed no signs of suggesting a compromise on any terms but his own. A democratic outcome for Belarus appeared dim as of 2005, and it was likely that any degree of political calm would only be achieved by repression. There was a ray of democratic hope, however. Lukashenko's popular support appeared to be waning in 2005. In addition, while the economy had not crashed during his reign, there were signs of trouble as the state continued to support unproductive enterprises. Poll data suggested that a majority of Belarusians did not support a third term for the president. This opposition might not translate into a Lukashenko defeat in 2006: the propaganda machine was churning out praise of the president, and there was a widespread informal perception that opposition was futile or that the majority of Belarusians actually support Lukashenko.

The second issue that must be addressed is one of solving the problem of national identity. While Belarus does enjoy an historical heritage, stretching back to ties with the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and the Commonwealth of Poland in the 13th and 16th centuries, it lacks a widespread sense of contemporary unique identity as is the case in Ukraine or the Baltic states. Can local dialects, which differ from Russian, be considered Belarusian? How many Belarusians speak a "native tongue" fluently and as a first language? When we consider that until Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev undertook repressive measures in 1991, the Belarusian population at large did not support independence (as did the populations of Ukraine or the Baltic countries), this problem stands out.

The third issue is a need to clarify relations with Russia. In 1999 Russia and Belarus signed a treaty agreeing to form a two-state union with political and economic integration; neither country, however, has taken serious steps to carry this out. On the one hand, the increasing integration of Belarus's economy into Russia's could result in important improvements. While adopting Russia's tariff and tax structures may bring initial pain, obtaining resources will be easier and cheaper, and being under Russia's "economic wing" may force additional economic reforms. Lukashenko has been supportive of integration; he even voted against the Belarusian Supreme Soviet's resolution to leave the Soviet Union. However, Lukashenko also wants Belarus to be admitted to Russia as an "equal partner," and it is not at all obvious that Russian leaders have such plans. As of the early 2000s Russia's president Vladimir Putin was chilly toward both Lukashenko and a merger between the two countries, so the idea of merger remains a question mark.

Were Belarus to be swallowed bit by bit into Russia, it might have at best a status as some sort of "special *oblast,*" but this would not shore up Lukashenko's power, especially as regions in Russia have gained more autonomy and democratic procedures for choosing leaders; this cannot appeal to Lukashenko's drive for power. On the other hand, nationalism and national identity in Belarus have been weak, far weaker than in the Baltic states, Ukraine, or Eastern Europe; a unique, independent Belarusian identity does not seem so widespread beyond the elite as is the case in (western) Ukraine. Integration into Russia could cut out such an embryonic identity and could lead nationalist-inclined elites to grow even more vocal.

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KINGDOM OF BELGIUM

(Koninkrijk België; Royaume de Belgique)

By William G. Andrews, Ph.D.
Revised by Soeren Kern



The System of Government

Belgium, with a population of 10.3 million, is a constitutional, federal, parliamentary monarchy. It formed when the Catholic southern provinces of the Netherlands, including part of present-day Luxembourg, seceded after the 1830 revolution. The 1831 Belgian constitution was more liberal and democratic than the authoritarian Dutch monarchy.

The unitary state that the constitution prescribed was reinforced by the dominant Roman Catholic Church. However, a sharp linguistic cleavage divided the French-speaking population of Wallonia from the Dutch speakers of Flanders. That division was masked by the predominance of French-speaking elites in all walks of life and in the capital, Brussels, which became a French-speaking enclave within Flanders. In the 1960s the Flemish began to reject Walloon dominance and to demand a decentralized state, leading to a series of sweeping constitutional reforms making Belgium "a federal State composed of communities and regions."

EXECUTIVE

The king governs through a prime minister and cabinet ministers recruited from and responsible to the lower house of the Belgian Federal Parliament, the Chamber of Representatives. Until 1950 kings participated actively in governmental matters, virtually daily. King Baudouin (1950–93) and Albert II (1993–), though influential behind the scenes, have usually played public roles only during ministerial crises. An exception was Baudouin's 1990 refusal, on moral grounds, to sign a bill legalizing abortion. This precipitated a constitutional crisis that was resolved by the king's stepping aside temporarily on the grounds of "incapacity," permitting the bill to become law. Amendments of 1993 restrict narrowly the king's authority to pick prime ministers and to dissolve parliament. The constitution requires that each government include the prime minister, seven French-speaking ministers, seven Flemish-speaking ministers, and an indeterminate number of secretaries of state. Members of parliament appointed to a government lose their parliamentary seats immediately and cannot return until reelected.

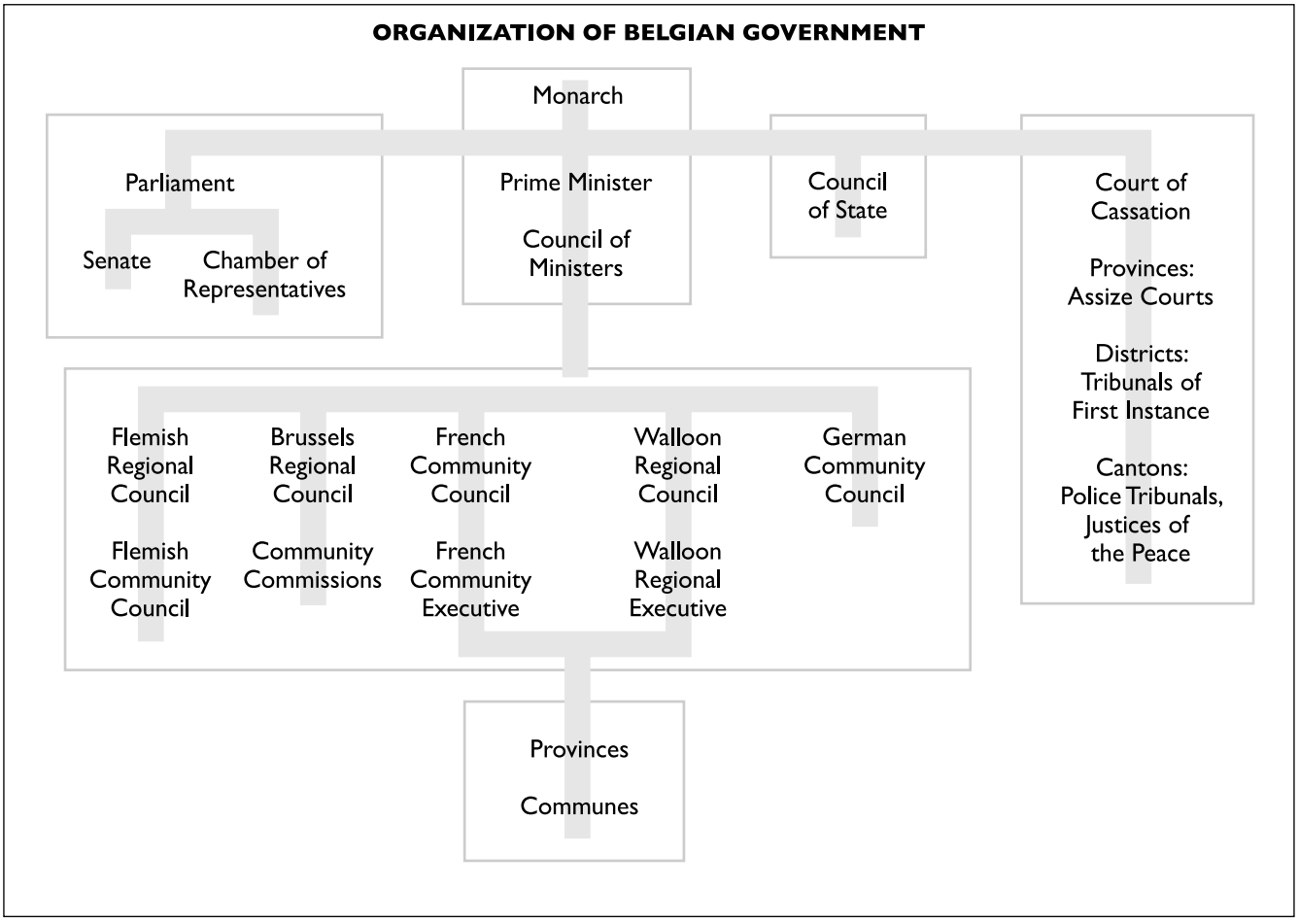
Governments have maximum lives of four years, corresponding to the four-year term of the Chamber of Representatives. Until the 1960s a stable three-party system (Christian Socials, Liberals, and Socialists) produced an equally stable pattern of government. Since the party system fragmented in the 1960s, governments have been short-lived, collapsing by the breakup of coalitions, not through adverse votes in parliament. In this situation the king is a unifying factor encouraging the formation of broad coalitions. Governmental stability has been further undermined in recent decades by preoccupation with two basic problems: reform of the state and the severe, perennial budget deficit.

LEGISLATURE

The constitution distributes legislative authority among federal, regional, community, local, and provincial bodies. At the national level, the 150-member Chamber of Representatives, elected by proportional representation, is dominant. The 71-member Senate, which was reduced from parity to a secondary chamber in 1993, has a complex electoral system. Forty members are elected for a four-year term by proportional representation, and 31 members are elected by the elected members. Flemish voters elect 25 senators and Walloons 15 by proportional representation. The Flemish Council and the French Community Council each designate 10 senators from among their members, and the German Community Council names one. The Flemish senators thus chosen co-opt six more members and the Walloons four more. At least one Fleming and six Walloons must be Brussels residents. The total includes 41 Flemings, 29 Walloons, and one German—reflecting the distribution of the population. In addition, the king's heirs are senators by right. Senatorial seats are distributed among the political parties within each linguistic group proportionately to the share of the votes won by their lists for the directly elective senators. Both chambers serve four-year terms.

The 1993 amendments define the legislative competence of the federal government as "only the matters formally attributed to it by the constitution and laws passed in conformity with it" and confer "the other matters" on the communities or regions. Federal authority covers defense, internal security, the budget, monetary policy, and some foreign and social welfare matters. Both chambers have the power of initiative, but the government introduces most legislation, after review by the administrative Council of State.

Most bills are introduced in the Chamber of Representatives and, if adopted, sent to the Senate. The Senate may ignore, adopt, or amend a bill but cannot reject it. If the Senate ignores or adopts a bill, it becomes law. If the Senate amends a bill, the Chamber makes the final decision, defeating it or passing it with none, some, or all of the Senate's amendments. The Chamber has sole legislative authority to enact the



ELECTIONS TO THE CHAMBER OF REPRESENTATIVES

	2003 %	Seats	1999 %	Seats
Vlaamse Liberalen en Democraten (VLD)	15.4%	25	14.3%	23
Socialistische Partij Anders SPA-Spirit	14.9%	23	9.6%	14
Christen-Demorcratisch & Vlaams (CD&V)	13.3%	21	14.1%	22
Parti Socialiste (PS)	13.0%	25	10.1%	19
Vlaams Belang (VB)	11.6%	18	9.9%	15
Mouvement Réformateur (MR)	11.4%	24	10.1%	18
Centre Démocrate Humaniste (CDH)	5.5%	8	5.9%	10
Ecologistes Confédérés (Ecolo)	3.1%	4	7.3%	11
Nieuw-Vlaamse Alliantie (NVA)	3.1%	1	–	
De Vlaamse Groenen (Groen)	2.5%	–	7.0%	9
Front National (FN)	2.0%	1	1.5%	1
Others	4.2%	–	10.3%	8
Total		150		150

federal budget. Bills affecting relations among the linguistic communities may begin in either chamber, and passage requires a two-thirds majority of all votes cast in both chambers, including a majority in each linguistic group in each chamber. Also, any linguistic group can delay consideration of a bill that it calls a threat to community interests.

A joint "parliamentary concertation committee" resolves "conflicts of competence" between the federal chambers. An arbitration court and the Senate settle "conflicts of interest" among the federal, regional, and community legislatures. Constitutional amendments require a parliamentary declaration identifying the provisions to be revised, followed by a dissolution and new elections. The new parliament must pass the amendment by a two-thirds majority in both houses.

JUDICIARY

The highest ordinary court is the Court of Cassation. The cabinet appoints judges for life from nominations submitted by the Court itself and, alternately, by the Chamber of Representatives or the Senate. The Court has no power of judicial review with respect to legislation. It can examine administrative decrees for conformity to the law, but this function is largely exercised by the Council of State, which has general oversight of all administrative bodies. The absence of judicial review regarding parliamentary legislation is not regarded as a deficiency, because all important legislation requires broad interparty agreement and results from extensive consultation with affected interests.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Flemish demands for parity and autonomy were largely fueled by the shift in the balance of population and economic power after World War II. Flanders grew and prospered, while the smokestack industries that had given Wallonia its edge declined. The Flemish required fundamental restructuring of the Belgian state. Four waves of constitutional amendments began in the late 1960s and culminated in 1993. The early measures provided for extensive decentralization, short of federalism. That failed to satisfy the Flemish. Further reform was long stalled by disagreement over the status of Brussels.

Finally, the Flemish accepted continued Walloon control of Brussels and the provision of large subsidies for the Walloon social security system in return for very broad autonomy in Flanders. The constitutional revisions divided Belgium into four linguistic regions (Wallonia, Flanders, bilingual Brussels, the German-

speaking area) and three cultural communities (Walloon, Flemish, German). The complicated system of representation includes the Flemish Regional Council (124 members), the Walloon Regional Council (75), the French Community Council (75 from Wallonia, 19 from Brussels), the Flemish Community Council (which has merged with the Flemish Regional Council), the German Community Council (25), the Brussels Regional Council (75), and Flemish, French, and joint community commissions for the Brussels region. All councils are elected for five-year terms.

The regional councils have primary economic responsibility, including foreign trade, for their respective regions, and the community councils and Brussels community commissions share authority over hospitals, education, local welfare services, and cultural affairs, including international cultural cooperation. Even before the last reform wave, the regions and communities were spending 40 percent of the national budget.

Below the regional and community levels of government are provinces and communes. Each of the 10 provinces has a council from which an executive council is elected to work alongside a governor appointed by the central government. The powers of the provinces are limited, and the regional and cultural bodies may well make them redundant. More important are the 596 communes, which rest on very old traditions and serve as a source of recruitment for national politics as well as expression of local interests. Communes may join in intercommunal "urban areas" and "federations." Each commune has an elected council from which a board of aldermen is chosen, headed by a burgomaster who, though centrally appointed and paid, is in practice a nominee of the commune. The communes have extensive powers, subject to veto by the provincial governor, with the Council of State having the final say. At the local level, one or another national party usually dominates, but the communal councils are elected by proportional representation, avoiding one-party government.

The Electoral System

Elections to the Chamber of Representatives take place at least every four years. The number of members and their distribution among the provinces is adjusted periodically according to the results of a decennial census. Universal male suffrage was introduced after World War I, and women obtained the vote in 1949. The voting age was lowered from 21 to 18 in 1981. Voting is compulsory, producing a high turnout of some 95 percent but with a high proportion of spoiled ballots, often over 5 percent of total votes cast. The Chamber of Representatives has been elected by proportional representation since 1900. Each voter casts a ballot for a party list or for one candidate on a list, but votes may not be split among parties.

Party lists are presented at the district (arrondissement) level. Provinces have from two to five arrondissements. Seats are distributed among the lists within each arrondissement, and remainders are transferred to the provincial level for further distribution. Proportionality is thus ensured on a provincial basis but not necessarily for the country as a whole. The effect of the electoral system is a slight bias in favor of the larger parties, but smaller ones are not unduly penalized. The system has not impeded the growth of small linguistic parties, which tend to have regional concentrations of support.

The Party System

ORIGINS OF THE PARTIES

In the early period parties were loose associations of Liberals and Catholics who formed informal coalitions, so-called union cabinets to meet the king's desire for political unity. With the dispute over the papal ban on freemasonry in 1846, the Liberals became anticlerical, and majoritarian government became the rule. The Socialists emerged in 1885 as a second secular party, and the extension of the franchise in 1894 cut the Liberals' support sharply. Unwilling to serve alone with the Socialists, the dominant Christian Socials introduced proportional representation in 1900, which led to a stable three-party system. After women gained the vote, the Christian Socials gained a decisive edge on the Socialists.

The party system changed radically in the 1960s as the language issue arose. "Community" parties, based on linguistic activist groups, won up to 20 percent of the vote by 1971. The impact of the conflict was profound on the traditional parties: except for the small Communist Party, they split into separate linguistic parties. Thus, the Christian Socials, Socialists, and Liberals each now form two distinct parties. As a result, Belgian politics is characterized by advanced multipartism.

THE PARTIES IN LAW

Apart from the operation of the electoral laws, the Belgian parties are relatively free from legal regulation, with no restrictions on the nature of parties that can

compete. The freedom of party activity tends to be limited by the language issue, since it is important that a party not appear to discriminate against any linguistic demands. The amended constitution also entrenches the linguistic parties. Corporate donations are illegal, but each party represented in either house benefits from an annual, direct state subsidy of over U.S. $65,000 plus U.S. $0.50 per vote received in the preceding parliamentary election.

Perhaps more important are the large number of state jobs that the parties distribute to their loyal adherents. All linguistic councils, the regular civil service, and other institutions such as the state schools are part of this patronage system. Moreover, since the bulk of social security schemes are administered by party-affiliated organizations, the parties have a highly privileged position at both local and national levels.

PARTY ORGANIZATION

The structure of Belgian parties has been largely determined by the strong "associational" features of the society. Party membership is important, and there is a fairly high ratio of members to voters. Also, the parties' links with organized interest groups have considerable importance. Of particular interest in this respect are the three labor unions—Christian, Socialist, and Liberal—each linked to the respective party. The Christian Socials benefit most from "association," with numerous ties to Catholic organizations and to the Flemish Farmers' League (Boerenbond). The organizational strength of the parties depends on their linguistic homogeneity, which resulted from the breakup of the traditional parties.

The larger parties have similar national structures: a supreme congress of delegates from the districts that meets yearly and a small executive national committee or bureau that manages party affairs. Between the congress and the national committee is a general council, consisting of members of both bodies, that has a watchdog function. A marked "separation of powers" exists between the national party organization and the parliamentary bloc. Party presidents are not usually government officeholders (elected or appointed) but nevertheless rank somewhat above a cabinet minister. The party leaders' status is based largely on their rule as chief negotiators in intraparty disputes over linguistic issues. Once such a dispute is resolved, the party's ministers in government have little or no freedom of action. Failure to resolve such disputes has regularly caused governing coalitions to collapse. The linguistic splits in the older parties mean that the Flemish and Walloon communities retain only tenuous links with each other and cooperate only on policy questions not related to the linguistic issue. Candidate selection is local, but the central organizations have vetoes. A practice similar to U.S.-style party primaries has been used for candidate selection, but that practice has declined in recent years.

The smaller community parties lack the powerful organizational base of the larger ones, largely because all major organized economic and cultural activities are preempted by the major parties. The smaller parties do benefit from high local concentrations of support.

CAMPAIGNING

Elections to the Chamber of Representatives take place at least every four years. In fact, seven of the eight elections before 1991 were called before the four-year period expired. However, the elections of 1991, 1995, 1999, and 2003 followed parliaments that ran nearly full term. Despite the apparent intensity and intractability of the linguistic issue, survey data suggest that most Belgians place its resolution lower on the list of priorities than, say, the economic situation of the country. Nonetheless, the average voter has great difficulty ignoring the linguistic appeal, and the ramifications spill over to the economic sector because of the varying economic fortunes of the two regions.

Much of the campaign momentum is preserved by party activists and elites rather than the mass of the electorate. Voters are well aware that a forthcoming election will not be decisive, and campaigning centers on mobilizing existing support to increase a party's representation and thus enhance its bargaining power. Parties can enter the government without great difficulty, if they so wish, because prime ministers strive to gain broad interparty support with an "excess majority."

Campaigns are media-dominated, each region in its own language. The powerful regional press is largely formally independent of the parties but committed to definite political directions. The role of personalities is important, because of the "personalized" vote. Although voting is compulsory, interest is high and voters are made to feel they should not "let down" their language communities.

INDEPENDENT VOTERS

Traditionally, party identification was strong in Belgium and cut across linguistic boundaries. Thus, the Christian Socials could rely on the Catholic vote throughout the nation, particularly in rural Flanders. The stability of party identification weakened in the 1960s: the

Socialist, Christian Social, and Liberal parties' 95 percent share of the vote in 1958 fell to between 70 and 73 percent from 1981 to 1995. By 2003 their share had fallen to just over 65 percent.

To some extent, the initial growth of support for the new community parties was a protest vote that weakened as the major parties divided into linguistic wings. The new parties have not built up stable identification with substantial parts of the electorate. Their radicalism is a partial antidote to immobility in the political system, on economic as well as linguistic matters. But the efforts of successive governments to resolve some of the outstanding problems seem to have induced a good share of their voters to return to their former voting loyalties.

Major Political Parties

SOCIALIST PARTIES

(Parti Socialiste, PS; Sociaal Progressief Alternatief, SP.A)

HISTORY

These two parties had a common origin and history until their linguistic division in October 1978. The party was founded in 1885 as the Belgian Workers' Party and soon became a political force by winning manhood suffrage through the pressure of a general strike. During the interwar years the party participated in governments both with the Catholic Party and in "tripartite" governments that included the Liberals. In 1944 the party sought wider appeal by changing its name to the Socialist Party but still found it difficult to compete successfully against the Christian Socials, with their close connections to the Catholic Church. Nonetheless, the two parties were highly compatible and regularly joined in coalition governments after 1945. The parties officially divided into the PS and SP in 1978. The SP changed its name in 2001 to become the Social Progressive Alternative (SP.A). The SP.A is in alliance with the small Flemish nationalist party Spirit (SP.A–Spirit).

ORGANIZATION

Even before the final break in 1978, the two wings of the party had developed separately. From 1971 onward two party presidents were elected, one Walloon and one Flemish, and the two sections of the party entered elections in Brussels on competing lists. The structures of the two parties are similar: each has an annual congress as the authoritative decision maker, an executive that manages the organization, and a general council to make decisions between congresses and coordinate the different elements of the party. The parties form a joint coordinating committee on national-level policies. The regional federations of the parties are relatively independent, especially in the selection of parliamentary candidates, where primary elections are still important.

POLICY

The PS is traditionally Socialist and anticapitalist, while the SP.A tends to be moderate and reformist. During the early constitutional disputes, the PS favored more autonomy for Brussels than did the SP. Both parties supported European Union and NATO membership. The two parties have worked with recent governments to moderate the austerity policies adopted to deal with the budget problems, especially the limits on wage increases and the social security cuts. The PS is the most outspoken major party advocate of economic equity for Wallonia.

CHRISTIAN SOCIAL PARTIES

(Parti Social Chrétien, PSC; Christelijke Volkspartij, CVP)

HISTORY

Catholic political organizations developed between 1846 and 1884, coalescing in that year to form the Catholic Party, which then became the dominant force in Belgium for the next 30 years. When the party was reconstituted in 1945 as the Christian Social Party, an attempt was made to move away from a strict confessional appeal. Since then the Christian Socials have participated in almost all coalition governments, with either or both of the Liberals and Socialists. Though the party was made up of the two distinctive linguistic elements, it maintained a unitary structure until 1968, when the two "wings" held separate party congresses; the common presidency fell into disuse from 1972 onward. Since 1993 the parties have moved back together somewhat.

The June 1999 general election saw a significant drop in overall Christian Social support. Driven in part by resentment over a mishandled dioxin food-contamination crisis just before the June 1999 election, Belgian voters rejected Jean Luc Dehaene's long-standing coalition government of Christian Socials and Socialists and voted into power a coalition put

together by Flemish Liberal Leader Guy Verhofstadt. The parties' support remained relatively unchanged in the 2003 election.

ORGANIZATION

The formal structures of the PSC and CVP are similar, each having a national congress as the supreme policymaking organ, a president, and an executive bureau. Each also has a national council, consisting of members elected from the congress and selected members, that oversees party policy between congresses. Although the PSC and CVP are now separate parties, there is fairly close cooperation between them, and they share the same party headquarters in Brussels. They coordinate their activities through an unofficial presidium consisting of the leading officials of the parties from parliament and the national party organizations. However, the decisions of the presidium must be ratified by the bureaus of the two parties. Local organizations exist from the arrondissement downward. They are active and enjoy a degree of autonomy, especially in candidate selection for which local primaries are held, although central approval is required for the candidate lists.

POLICY

Both parties believe in "an economy in the service of man" and favor policies of social responsibility and justice, a high level of employment tempered by a need to secure price stability, and avoidance of waste. The PSC tends to be more conservative economically than the CVP, which is strongly influenced by its trade union connections, but the CVP is more clerical. Both parties oppose abortion and supported Belgium's membership in the European Union and NATO.

LIBERAL PARTIES

(Parti Réformateur Libéral, PRL; Vlaamse Liberalen en Democraten, VLD)

HISTORY

The VLD and PRL are successor parties to the Liberal Party, one of the traditional parties. The Liberal Party was the first to be established in Belgium, in 1846. It was bourgeois and strongly anticlerical. The widening of the franchise affected the Liberals adversely until they were rescued by the adoption of proportional representation in 1900. During the interwar years the Liberal Party was the smallest party in the three-party system. In 1961 the party was rejuvenated, dropping its old title to become the Party of Liberty and Progress (PVV). It renounced anticlericalism but remained attached to economic liberalism and orthodox financial management. At the same time, party organization was strengthened, with the party president gaining authority. The reforms increased the party's electoral attraction, its representation rising from 20 to 48 seats in 1965. The Liberals had regularly served in government, but the changes made them more conservative and less inclined to join coalitions with the Socialists.

At first, the Liberals avoided splitting over the linguistic problem and favored preserving a unitary state, but in 1970 the Flemish PVV effectively became a separate party. The Party of Walloon Reform and Liberty was formed in 1976, combining with the French-speaking Brussels Liberals in 1979 to form the PRL. The PVV reorganized in 1992 as the VLD, with the addition of some "personalities" from other parties, in an effort to broaden its appeal. In 1993, the PRL and the FDF formed an alliance for the next European, local, and parliamentary elections, with a view toward eventual merger.

From 1987 to 1999 the Liberals formed the opposition, but in June 1999 Flemish Liberal leader Guy Verhofstadt won the general election. His first government (1999–2003) was a six-party coalition between the Flemish and Francophone Liberals, Socialists, and Greens. It was the first Liberal-led coalition in generations and the first six-party coalition in 20 years. It also marked the first time the Greens had participated in Belgium's federal government. Verhofstadt reconstituted a four-party coalition government in July 2003, this time with only the Liberals and Socialists in power.

ORGANIZATION

The parties have similar structures, with annual delegate congresses, a chairman for the VLD and a president for the PRL, executive bureaus, and administrative councils. Despite their separation, the two parties cooperate on coalition policies and research.

POLICY

Liberals advocated economic laissez-faire until 1961, when they became more progressive. In recent years they have returned somewhat to market orthodoxy in economic policy, especially as opposed to the Socialists. Both favor abortion rights, NATO, and European integration. The PRL, representing declining heavy industry in Wallonia, is more inclined to favor government subsidies and rescue operations, opposes privatization, and wants Walloon family subsidies raised to the Flemish level. The VLD favored the 1993 constitutional reforms, while the PRL was opposed. Both have favored limiting social security to cut the budget.

FLEMISH BLOC

(Vlaams Blok, VB)

The Vlaams Blok is a Flemish nationalist party, established in 1978 as an alliance of two offshoots from the more moderate Volksunie. It advocates an independent Flemish state, including Brussels, and a minimal role for government. It is anti-immigrant, anticrime, antidrug, and anti–European Union. The VB is the most popular party in Flanders, where it won 24 percent of votes in the June 2004 regional elections. In national elections in May 2003, the party posted its best performance in its 26-year history by taking 18 seats in parliament. But the party was banned in November 2004 for violating anti-racism laws. The ban will have little effect on altering the VB's position on immigration, and the party was expected to reform under the name Vlaams Belang (Flemish Interest).

ECOLOGIST PARTIES

(Parti Ecologiste, Ecolo; Anders Gaan Leven, Agalev)

Ecolo first contested a national election in 1978 in Wallonia, winning 0.8 percent of the vote. In 1981 it joined forces with the Flemish Anders Gaan Leven (Live Differently). Besides their environmental concerns, the parties take generally leftist, redistributive positions, for instance, opposing social security cuts and favoring family tax credits and immigrant rights. Ecolo's support increased steadily from 4.8 percent in 1981 to 6.6 percent in 1985, 7.1 percent in 1987, and 10.0 percent in 1991. In 1991 Ecolo won 10 seats and Agalev seven seats, but in 1995 they slipped back to six and five seats with 8.4 percent of the vote. Following significant gains in the 1999 general elections, the two green parties joined a federal coalition cabinet for the first time in their history in Prime Minister Verhofstadt's six-party coalition government. The parties experienced significant losses in the May 2003 election, however, with Ecolo winning only four seats in the Chamber and Agalev winning none. Failing to clear the required 5 percent hurdle to be able to enter a coalition, they were thus excluded from the new government formed by Verhofstadt between the Flemish and Francophone Liberals and Socialists.

PEOPLE'S UNION

(Volksunie, VU)

Volksunie is a moderate Flemish nationalist party in a tradition that began primarily as a cultural movement in the 19th century. Several specifically Flemish parties emerged in the interwar years. During the German occupation in World War II, the movement became an active, separatist political force. Volksunie was formed in 1954 by a number of smaller parties and reached a high point in 1974 with 22 seats. It declined somewhat after 1974 and lost its more nationalist supporters to VB in 1991. VolksUnie split in 2001 into two branches, Spirit and NVA, which later joined, respectively, the Socialists and Christian Socials.

Minor Political Parties

COMMUNIST PARTY

(Parti Communiste; PCB)

The Belgian Communist Party was formed in 1921 as a breakaway from the Workers' Party. It never succeeded in becoming a mass party, though it served in government in 1946–47. Thereafter it declined. The party dropped its hard-line Communist strategy in 1954, but its decline continued. In 1990 it dropped its Flemish section and by 1991 polled less than 1 percent of the vote. It has won no parliamentary seats since 1981. Membership is 5,000. The party has a national central committee and political bureau and three regional councils. It advocates a parliamentary road to Communism.

FRENCH-SPEAKING DEMOCRATIC FRONT

(Front Democratique des Francophones; FDF)

The FDF, founded in 1964, is the party of French speakers in the Brussels area. It opposed the 1993 reforms, though it strongly supports autonomy for Brussels with its French character protected. The FDF is closely allied with the Walloon Party and claims about 18,000 members. Its electoral strength peaked in 1978, when it won 11 seats, but declined thereafter. It won no seats in 2003.

WALLOON PARTY

(Parti Wallon; PW)

The Walloon Party was formed in 1985 by a merger of the Walloon Rally, the Popular Walloon Rally, and the Walloon Independence Front. The first and largest of them had been formed in 1968 by a number of smaller

French-speaking groupings as a direct reaction to the success of the Flemish Volksunie. The PW is much more regional than linguistic, as demonstrated by its primary concern with Wallonian economic problems. The party is more left-leaning than the other community parties, drawing some support from previous adherents to the Socialist Party but differing from the Socialists in its greater appeal to practicing Wallonian Catholics. The party is linked with the Brussels FDF through their joint advocacy of a "special relationship" between Brussels and Wallonia. The party has declined steadily since the early 1970s, especially as a result of splits, one faction leaving for the PVV in 1976 and another for the PS in 1981. It has won no seats in parliament since 1981.

NATIONAL FRONT

(Front National; FN)

The National Front (FN) is the Vlaams Blok's counterpart in Wallonia and Brussels but has been far less successful. It won one seat in the 2003 elections.

PARTY OF GERMAN-SPEAKING BELGIANS

(Partei der deutschsprachigen Belgier; PDB)

A German-speaking minority of about 60,000 people in Belgium is concentrated in the eastern border area. Although the PDB has never won representation nationally, it holds seven of the 21 seats on the German cultural council.

PARTY OF LABOR

(Partij van de Arbeid; PdvA)

The PdvA is a Marxist-Leninist party that opposes the orthodox Communist Party. The PdvA called itself "All Power to the Workers" until 1979. It has never won as much as 1 percent of the vote or any seat in parliament.

Other Political Forces

Belgium is a highly unionized country, and organized labor is a powerful influence in politics. About 53 percent of all private sector and public service employees are union members. Belgian labor unions take positions on a wide range of political issues, including education, public finance, defense spending, environmental protection, women's rights, abortion, and other issues. They also provide a range of services, including the administration of unemployment benefits and health insurance programs.

Belgium's three principal trade union organizations are the Confederation of Catholic Labor Unions (CSC/ACV), the Belgian Socialist Confederation of Labor (FGTB/ABVV), and the Confederation of Liberal Labor Unions (CGSLB/ACLVB). Until the 1950s the FGTB/ABVV was the largest confederation; since then, however, the CSC/ACV has become the leading trade union force.

National Prospects

The instability of Belgian coalition governments and the extreme multipartism that seemed endemic for decades have been ameliorated somewhat in recent years. Substantial progress has been made in meeting the linguistic demands of the Flemings and in decentralizing authority, although the status of Brussels remains a sore point and considerable polarization continues.

Two underlying economic problems remain. One concerns the increasing economic imbalance between Wallonia and Flanders. The relative prosperity of Flanders and the structural problems of Wallonian industry exacerbate the linguistic rivalries. The other is the general weakness of the economy. By 2003 the public debt stood at 102 percent of Gross Domestic Product, although the budget was balanced. This represents a significant improvement over the recent past, when the chronic state budget deficit ran 6 percent to 8 percent and the public debt stood at 140 percent of GDP. In their approach to economic problems, the Walloons and Socialists lean toward tax rises and the Flemings and Christian Socials tend to favor budget-cutting solutions. The unemployment rate has persistently been among the highest in Western Europe, and the country is more at the mercy of world markets than its neighbors due to its lack of natural resources and the consequent need to import materials. These problems have been aggravated by several serious political scandals in recent years that have further undermined public confidence in the government. Every time the constitutional crisis seems to be resolved, which should permit greater attention to the economic and budgetary crises, some new incident disproves the optimism. In short, the long struggle for community peace and prosperity in Belgium seems far from over and the breakup of the country remains a real, though probably distant, possibility.

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BELIZE

By Kirk Bowman, Ph.D.



Belize is bordered by Mexico to the north, Guatemala to the west, and the Caribbean to the east; with a total area of 8,867 square miles, Belize is slightly smaller than the state of Maryland. The country has some 200 cayes (islands) in the Caribbean and the largest barrier reef in the Western Hemisphere.

The population of Belize, about 279,000, consists of various ethnic groups. According to the 2002 census, seven different ethnic groups have at least 3 percent of the population and each speaks a different language (Mestizo 44 percent, Creole 31 percent, Garifuna 7 percent, Ketchi Maya 4 percent, East Indian 4 percent, Mopan Maya 4 percent, and Mennonite 3 percent). The Creoles (of African and English descent) were previously the largest ethnic group and inherited the largest share of civil service and political positions from the British during the transition to independence. The dramatic increase in the Mestizo population (Spanish-speaking, with many migrating from war-torn Guatemala and El Salvador) has produced reports of ethnic tensions and anti-immigrant sentiment that has spilled over into politics.

The System of Government

Belize is a parliamentary democracy that gained independence from Great Britain on September 21, 1981.

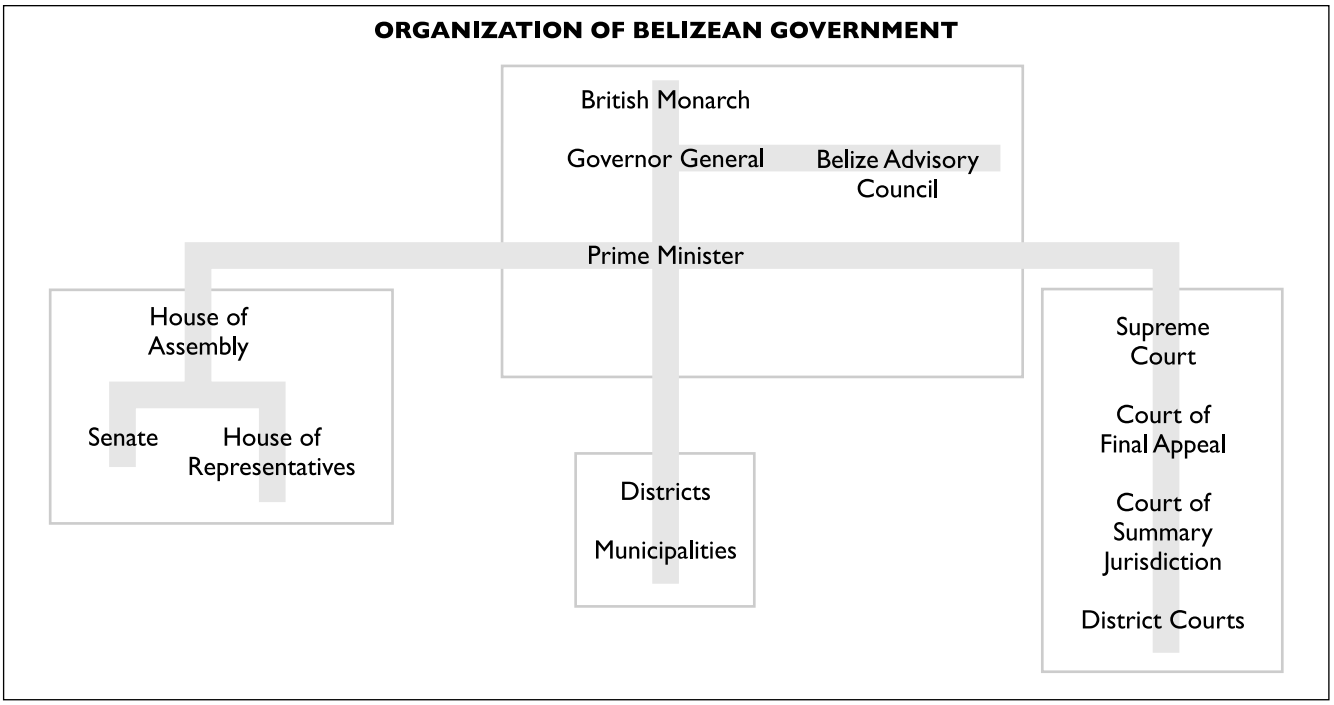
EXECUTIVE

As a member of the Commonwealth, Belize recognizes the British monarch as the titular and ceremonial head of state; that person is represented by an appointed governor-general who must be Belizean. The governor-general appoints the leader of the largest party in the House of Representatives as prime minister. The prime minister is chief of state and wields extensive executive powers. Elections are held at least every five years, although the prime minister may choose to call early elections, as George Price and the People's United Party (PUP) did in 1993.

LEGISLATURE

Belize features a bicameral legislature (House of Assembly) consisting of an appointed and weak Senate and an elected and strong House of Representatives. The House of Representatives, originally composed of 18 members, has been expanded to 29 members elected in first-past-the-post or simple-plurality and single-member-district format. The eight members of the upper house or Senate are appointed by the governor-general. Five members are nominated by the prime minister, two by the leader of the opposition, and one by the governor-general in consultation with Belize Advisory Council.

Bills may be introduced by either house, with the important exception of money bills, which may only be introduced in the House of Representatives. Normally, bills passed by both houses become law, but if the Senate fails to consider a money bill within 30 days



of its passage by the lower house, the bill may be sent directly to the governor-general for his or her assent. Bills receive two readings and votes in the House of Assembly. The House of Representatives may pass a resolution of "no confidence" in the prime minister, which will trigger new national elections.

In the 1998 national elections the People's United Party (PUP) swept the governing United Democratic Party (UDP) out of office in a landslide election that turned on dissatisfaction with tax policies. The PUP won 26 out of 29 legislative seats and 59.4 percent of the vote. The UDP won the remaining 3 seats. This was the fourth straight election to result in a loss for the ruling party. The era of alternation of power ended in 2003, as the People's United Party (PUP) won 22 of the 29 seats in the House of Representatives, while the United Democratic Party (UDP) won the other seven seats.

JUDICIARY

The Belize judicial system is based on British legal traditions and modifications enacted by the House of Assembly. The courts cannot overturn acts of parliament but exercise some degree of autonomy and independence. The country is divided into six judicial districts, which have both a summary court (criminal matters) and a district court (civil matters). Judges on these lower courts are often ordinary civil servants who are subject to the authority of the executive. A Supreme Court that uses a jury system can hear both appeals and original cases. Final appeals may be made to the British Privy Council; however, there have been moves to constitutionally abolish this appeal as an affront to Belizean sovereignty.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Belize consists of six districts; below this are municipalities. Seven towns have elected town boards, and Belize City has an elected city council. There are also village councils for smaller towns, although these receive no financial support from the national government.

The Electoral System

Members of the House of Representatives are elected in 29 single-member districts with simple-plurality or first-past-the-post electoral rules. Universal suffrage has existed since 1954, and the voting age is 18. Elections are held at least every five years. The 2003 national elections had a 79 percent turnout. A highly competitive two-party system has evolved, and independent candidates and new parties have not fared well.

The Party System

The party system is well developed in Belize. From the 1950s to 1984 the PUP and its charismatic leader, George Price, dominated national politics. The dominance of the party can be attributed both to the skilled leadership and to the identification of the party with nationalism and moves toward independence. The more conservative UDP became a force in the late 1970s and captured the parliament in 1984. The incumbents lost control of the parliament in the next three national elections (1989, 1993, and 1998); this trend ended with the 2003 elections, when the PUP won its second consecutive landslide victory. After independence one of the major electoral issues revolved around an often-heated territorial dispute with Guatemala. In September 1991 a treaty ended the dispute, and the two countries now have established diplomatic relations. The major election issues currently center on economic issues, immigration policies, charges of corruption, and taxes.

Major Political Parties

PEOPLE'S UNITED PARTY (PUP)

The People's United Party was founded in 1950 as a leftist social-democratic party. The party was originally supported by the General Worker's Union and the Roman Catholic Church. George Price was one of the original founders who solidified control of the party after cofounders Philip Goldson and Leigh Richardson left in 1956 to form the Honduran Independence Party, which merged in 1956 into the National Independence Party. Many regard Price as the father of the country. With the PUP campaigning for independence from Britain, the party won all nine Assembly seats in 1957 and all 18 seats in 1961. Price directed PUP dominance, expanded political autonomy from Britain, and was the first minister in 1961 and the premier in 1965. The PUP won every election until the country gained its independence in September 1981, at which point Price became Belize's first prime minister. While the party had conventions, they were largely public shows of support for the decisions of Price and his immediate circle of advisers. The party controls a weekly newspaper, the *Belize Times*.

In the first post-independence election in 1984, the party was defeated and a rift between centrist and leftist factions became evident with the defection of two former ministers (Louise Sylvestre and Fred Hunter), who formed a new party. The tension between centrist and leftist faction continues. The party bounced back and won the 1989 elections with 15 of 28 seats, promising to soften the suffering caused by neoliberal economic policies. In 1993 the party swept the Belize City council elections, and early national elections were called. However, the PUP won only 13 of 29 seats, thus allowing the UPD to form a government. Said Musa led the party to victory in 1998 and became prime minister. Musa laid out an ambitious plan to encourage economic growth while furthering social-sector development and maintaining the traditional deep interest in the environment and sustainable development. In the March 2003 elections the party solidified its power by winning 22 of the 29 seats; Musa continued as prime minister.

Although George Price is Creole, the PUP's strongest backers have recently been Spanish-speaking Mestizos. The party has pushed for greater integration with Central America; it also gained observer status in the Central American Parliament and joined the Organization of American States in 1991.

UNITED DEMOCRATIC PARTY (UDP)

Founded in 1973, the UDP is a free-market and conservative party whose support is highest among Creoles (blacks) even though the longtime leader, Manuel Esquivel, is Mestizo. The UDP also claims a following among Mestizos and Mayans.

The party was formed as an alliance of the Liberal Party, the People's Development Movement, the National Independence Party, and the United Black Association for Development. The party waged a campaign charging the PUP with Communism in the 1979 elections and won 47 percent of the vote and five seats. The UDP opposed independence from Britain until a resolution of the dispute with Guatemala was finalized, and it boycotted official celebrations of independence in 1991.

Esquivel became party leader in 1982. He advocated neoliberal economic policies and pro–United States foreign policies. Under Esquivel's leadership, the UDP broke the PUP's control of national power by winning 21 out of 28 seats in the 1984 elections. The UDP pushed for foreign investment, especially in the tourism sector, which was expanded noticeably. Many observers and Esquivel himself suggested that the UDP was now the dominant party. However, the UDP lost to the PUP in 1989 in a very tight contest.

In September 1991, with the PUP in control of the government, Belize and Guatemala formally estab-

lished diplomatic relations, apparently ending Guatemala's long territorial claim to Belize. In exchange for Guatemala's formal recognition of Belize, Belize agreed to give Guatemala favorable access to the Caribbean Sea. Esquivel, as leader of the UDP, in an act of bipartisanship, supported the agreement and toured the country in October 1991 to explain the terms and ramifications of the treaty. A nationalist faction within the UDP, led by a longtime political figure, Philip Goldson, split from the UDP over this support and launched the National Alliance for Belizean Rights (NABR). Thus the territorial dispute with Guatemala was not fully resolved.

Potentially disastrous consequences of this fissure in the UDP were averted when the NABR campaigned alongside the UDP in the 1993 national elections. After the coalition won 16 of 29 seats in the parliament, the NABR was included in the Esquivel government. The NABR subsequently declined in influence and was not included in the 1998 party ticket. The disastrous 1998 and unfavorable 2003 election results have led to soul-searching within the UDP and a call for new leadership.

Minor Political Parties

NATIONAL ALLIANCE FOR BELIZEAN RIGHTS (NABR)

The party was organized in February 1992 by Philip Goldson. The NABR has been a vociferous opponent of concessions to Guatemala. Goldson, a longtime Guatemala critic, has also decried the large influx of Spanish-speaking Mestizo refugees who have settled in Belize. This immigration, coupled with emigration of Creole Belizeans to the United States, has rapidly changed Belize from a majority Creole country to a majority Mestizo country, and the NABR treat this demographic shift as a threat. The party won no seats in the 2003 national elections.

Other Political Forces

SOCIETY FOR THE PROMOTION OF EDUCATION AND RESEARCH (SPEAR)

SPEAR is a nongovernmental organization founded in 1968 "to empower people to struggle for justice, democracy and sustainable development." SPEAR has a history of progressive and controversial work that often places it at odds with the government, regardless of which party is in power.

National Prospects

A longstanding territorial dispute with Guatemala continues, although tensions are reduced and cooperation has increased in recent years. Negotiations with Belize and Guatemala were scheduled to resume on February 25, 2000, in Miami, Florida. However, they were suspended due to a border incident of February 23, 2000, in which a four-man Belize border patrol was taken into custody by a larger Guatemalan patrol. Eventually, on November 8, 2000, the two parties agreed to respect an "adjacency zone" extending one kilometer east and west of the border. The claim still remains unresolved despite a third-party facilitation process. In August 2003 Guatemala rejected recommendations of the process. Discussions began again in May 2004 under the auspices of the Organization of American States. The Guatemala issue and Belize's relationship with the British are no longer the dominant political issues. The economy and living conditions for Belizeans will be key political issues in future elections. Belize's role in the transshipment of illegal drugs into the United States has created tensions that may spill over into politics.

While Belize's ethnic diversity has been as much a source of pride as its biological diversity, there are signs that ethnic divisions may play a larger role in politics in the future. Party leadership has been in the same hands for many years; new leadership is likely to emerge. A stable two-party parliamentary system appears firmly entrenched. One of the decision awaiting future governments will be whether Belize remains a Caribbean country attached to the Central American isthmus or a more integrated member of Central American political and economic institutions.

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REPUBLIC OF BENIN

(République du Bénin)

By Michael Radu, Ph.D.
Revised by Peter Molotsi, Ph.D.
Revised by Benjamin N. Lawrance, Ph.D.



Benin is a West African country of approximately 7,400,000 (2005). The country was proclaimed independent from France on August 1, 1960, as the Republic of Dahomey, with a multiparty, presidential government structure. The three major political figures—Justin Ahomadegbe, Souro-Migan Apithy, and Hubert Maga—all of whom had served as president by 1972, were supported by the three most important ethnic groups in the country, the Fon, Yoruba, and Bariba, respectively. From October 28, 1963, when the first military coup occurred, until 1972, the country was known as the most unstable and coup-prone in Africa.

On October 26, 1972, a group of officers led by Major Mathieu Kérékou staged a coup. Kérékou installed a military Marxist-Leninist regime on November 30, 1974. One year later Dahomey became the People's Republic of Benin and came under the rule of the Popular Revolutionary Party of Benin (PRPB). The constitution of August 26, 1977, provided for all political activities to be centralized under the PRPB—the "leading nucleus" of the people. Kérékou reigned as president until a peaceful democratic revolution forced the abandonment of "Marxism-Beninism," as it was disparagingly known, in December 1989. Political reforms were adopted in February 1990.

Nicéphore Soglo was elected to the presidency with 68 percent of the vote between March 10 and 24, 1991. The full transition to a multiparty democractic constitution was completed on April 4, 1991.

The System of Government

Benin has a presidential, democratic multiparty political system, in which the military plays a marginal role. Its constitution dates from December 1990, and the country completed the full transition to a multiparty democracy on April 4, 1991.

EXECUTIVE

The chief of state and head of government is the president. He or she is elected for a five-year term by popular vote of all Beninoise citizens and may be a member of a political party. The term may be repeated only once, and the president must have been a Beninese citizen for at least 10 years. A presidential vacancy is filled by the speaker of the National Assembly. A new head of state must be elected within 40 days. The president addresses the nation in a state of the nation address from the National Assembly once a year. The cabinet (Executive Council) is appointed by the president and approved by the National Assembly.

During the 2001 election the main opposition candidates boycotted the run-off poll because of alleged irregularities. The four top-ranking contenders following the first-round presidential elections were Mathieu Kérékou (incumbent) with 45.4 percent; Nicéphore Soglo (former president), 27.1 percent; Adrien Houngbédji (National Assembly speaker), 12.6 percent; and

Bruno Amoussou, 8.6 percent. The second-round balloting, originally scheduled for March 18, 2001, was postponed for days because both Soglo and Houngbedji withdrew, alleging fraud; this left Kérékou running against his own minister, Amoussou. Kérékou won the second-round election on March 22, 2001, and is the current president.

LEGISLATURE

The democratic constitution of 1991 provides for one unicameral 83-seat National Assembly (Assemblée Nationale), elected every four years. Each member of parliament (MP) represents approximately 70,000 inhabitants, and his or her position is renewable. The vacancy of the speakership is filled by a successor elected within 15 days when the Assembly is in full session or at an immediate meeting held in compliance with the rules of procedure. The vacancy of an MP is filled by his or her substitute, elected in the same manner.

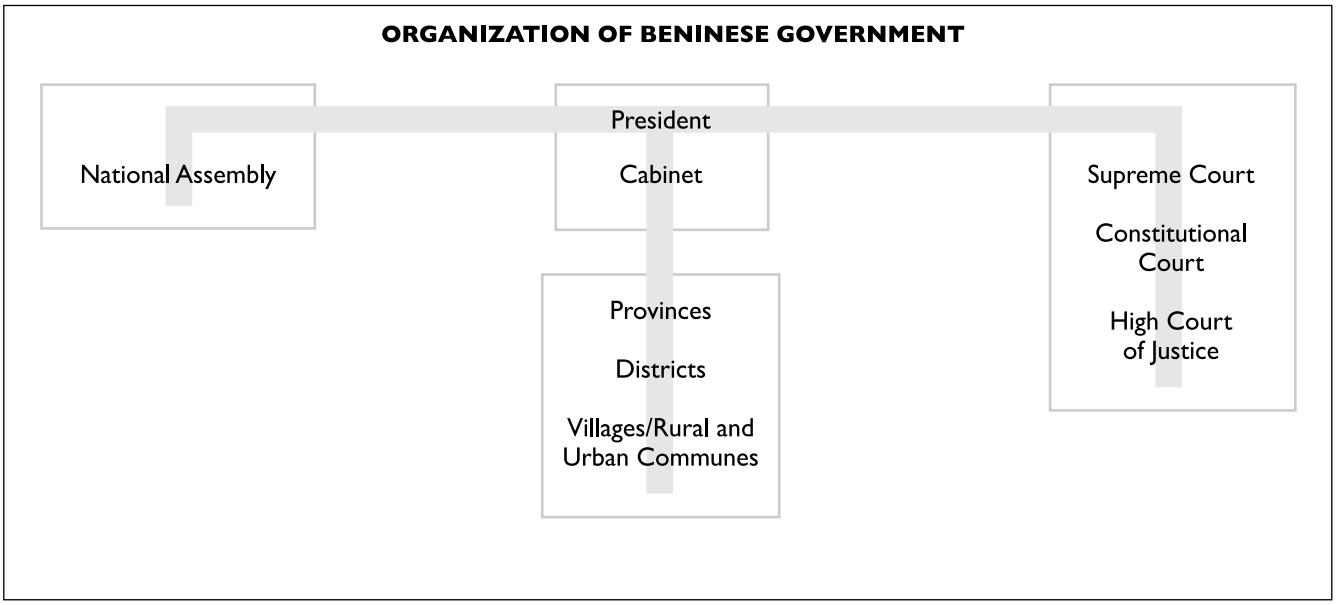
The Economic and Social Council (ESC) exists to advise on bills submitted to the legislature. Bills for programs of an economic and social character are obligatorily referred to it. The president may consult the ESC on all economic, social, cultural, scientific, and technical issues. The ESC can, on its own initiative, in the form of recommendation, call the attention of the National Assembly and the government to economic and social reforms that it deems appropriate to or in discordance with the general interest. The ESC elects its president and board from the MPs. The composition, organization, and functioning of the ESC are specified by an act of parliament.

The current National Assembly is controlled by a coalition of parties loyal to Kérékou and opposed to former president Soglo. Elections took place in March 2003 and were generally considered to be free and fair. Although there were some irregularities, these were not significant and did not greatly disrupt the proceedings or the results. These elections resulted in a loss of seats by a pro-Soglo coalition led by the Party for the Rebirth of Benin (PRB), the primary opposition party. The other opposition parties, the Party for Democratic Renewal (PRD; led by the former minister Adrien Houngbédji) and the Alliance Étoile (AE), joined the government coalition.

JUDICIARY

The constitution provides for a Supreme Court (Cour Supréme), a Constitutional Court, and a High Court of Justice. The civil and criminal judicial system is based roughly on French civil law and customary law.

The Supreme Court is the highest jurisdiction of the state with respect to administrative, judicial matters, and government audits. It also has jurisdiction regarding contentious local elections. There is no recourse against its decisions, which constrain the executive, the legislative, and all lower jurisdictions. The government consults on all administrative and jurisdictional issues. It can, at the request of the executive, be in charge of the formulation and modification of all legislative and regulatory texts, prior to their



review by the National Assembly. The president of the republic appoints the president of the court for a five-year term, after requesting the advice of the National Assembly; the president of the court is chosen from among magistrates and high-level jurists with a minimum of fifteen years' experience. Such appointment is made by decree taken during the Council of Ministers. The president of the court cannot be removed from office during the five-year term, which is renewable only once. The office is incompatible with a position in any ministry or in elected, civilian, or military office.

The Constitutional Court is composed of the following:

1. Three magistrates with a minimum of 15 years' experience, among whom two are appointed by the board of the National Assembly and one by the president of the republic
2. Two high-level jurists, professors, or practitioners of law, with a minimum of fifteen years' experience, among whom one is appointed by the board of the National Assembly and the other by the president of the republic
3. Two personalities with high professional reputation, among whom one is appointed by the board of the National Assembly and the other by the president of the republic

These magistrates cannot be removed from office during their mandate.

The High Court of Justice is composed of the members of the Constitutional Court, except that body's president, as well as six MPs elected by the National Assembly and the president of the Supreme Court. The court elects a president from among its members and has the jurisdiction to judge the president of the republic and the members of the government for deeds qualified as high treason or infringements committed in the exercise of their functions, and to judge their accomplices in case of plots against the country's national security.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Benin is divided into 12 administrative regions: Alibori, Atakora, Atlantique, Borgou, Collines, Couffo, Donga, Littoral, Mono, Oueme, Plateau, and Zou. There are direct local and regional elections every four years. The capital, Porto Novo, and the largest city, Cotonou, are mayoralties.

In December 2002 Benin held its first democratic municipal elections since the collapse of Marxism-Leninism. The process was smooth with the significant exception of Cotonou's district 12, the contest that would ultimately determine who would be selected mayor of the capital. That vote was marred by irregularities, and the electoral commission was forced to repeat that single election. Soglo's PRB party won the new vote, paving the way for the former president of Benin to be elected mayor of Cotonou by the new city council in February 2003.

The Electoral System

Suffrage extends to all citizens 18 years and over. The election of the president requires an absolute majority, and the constitution provides for a second, runoff election if necessary. The election for the National Assembly takes place over two consecutive months and is based on proportional representation. The constitution provides for an independent National Electoral Commission to govern and administer freedom and fairness in voter enrollment and election procedures.

The Party System

The multiparty constitution provides for freedom of political organization on every level of Benin society. Since the scrapping of the Marxist-Leninist system, dozens of parties have organized and registered. All of the more than 100 active political parties as of 2004 had a broadly democratic party structure, with the exception of the Communist Party of Benin (PCB), which had a traditional Communist power structure. There is no state financing of political parties, and there are no restrictions on campaign fund-raising.

Major Political Parties

ACTION FRONT FOR RENEWAL AND DEVELOPMENT

(Font d'action pour le rénouveau et le développement; FARD)

This party is headed by President Mathieu Kérékou, who won the presidential elections in 2001. During the 2003 legislative elections, the party established a coalition known as the Presidential Movement. As part of this alliance, the FARD cofounded the Union for Future Benin along with the Social Democratic Party. The Union for Future Benin ended up winning 31 out

of the 83 seats in the National Assembly; the overall Presidential Movement alliance captured 52 seats. The FARD was shaken by the admission in 2005 by the American company Titan that it had funded Kérékou's 2001 presidential campaign with $2 million (U.S.). However, there was no suggestion that Kérékou himself knew of the campaign donations.

SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY

(Parti social-démocrate; PSD)

The PSD has been an important supporter of President Mathieu Kérékou. Its candidate in the 2001 presidential elections, Bruno Amoussou, was a minister in the Kérékou government at the time. With the two leading opposition candidates boycotting the second-round elections, Amoussou finished second in the overall ballotting to Kérékou. In the 2003 legislative elections, the PSD cofounded the Union for Future Benin, which ended up winning 31 out of the 83 parliamentary seats.

BENIN RENAISSANCE PARTY

(Parti de la renaissance du Bénin; PRB

The PRB is led by former president Nicéphore Soglo. In the 2001 presidential elections, Soglo won 27 percent of the popular vote in the first round of elections but boycotted the second round. In the 2003 legislative elections, the PRB won 15 seats.

DEMOCRATIC RENEWAL PARTY

(Parti du renouveau démocratique; PRD)

The PRD is led by Adrien Houngbédji, who won 12.6 percent of the vote in the first round of the 2001 presidential elections but, like Soglo, boycotted the second round. The PRD won 11 seats in the 2003 legislative elections.

Minor Political Parties

Minor political parties are often represented by groupings or alliances in the National Assembly. Among the parties that won seats in the 2003 legislative elections are the African Movement for Development and Progress (9 seats), the Key Force (5 seats), the Alliance Étoile (3 seats), the Impulse to Progress and Democracy (2 seats), and the Movement for Development and Solidarity (1 seat).

Other Political Forces

For much of its existence, Benin has been politically unstable. Several coups have been accomplished through the military, including the one that placed former military officer and now president Kérékou in office. The military today is supportive of the government, although there remains the possibility that this might change. Public-sector workers have also exerted pressure upon the government in the past through strikes, which have resulted in concessions. The 2005 admission by an American corporation, Titan, that it had supplied $2 million (U.S.) to fund Kérékou's 2001 presidential campaign offers evidence that multinational corporations may also be playing a key role in the country's politics.

National Prospects

Inasmuch as Benin was a Communist model in West Africa, many view it now as a model for post–cold war democratic transition. There is genuine political and press freedom, and Togolese and Nigerian opposition forces turn to the example of allies in Benin. Cotonou has hosted several West African conferences about related issues. Benin is a regional leader in the investment in and use of information technology. Kérékou's reelection is notable for his declared "born-again" Christianity and his simultaneous use of traditional African voodoo. Kérékou has also steered a path of rapprochement with his old rival, the President of Togo, Gnassingbé Eyadéma.

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KINGDOM OF BHUTAN

(Druk Yul)

By Leo E. Rose, Ph.D.
Revised by Leon Newton, Ph.D.



The rule of the Wangchuk dynasty in Bhutan (Druk Yul—"Land of the Thunder Dragon") goes back only to the first decade of the 20th century, when a hereditary monarchy replaced the theocratic Buddhist political system that had dominated most of Bhutan since the mid-17th century. The first two Wangchuk kings (Druk Gyalpos) held authoritarian powers until 1953, when the third Wangchuk ruler established a National Assembly (Tshogdu) that was granted some powers on legislative matters and in the selection of the cabinet (Lodoi Tsokde) ministers. Over the years the Tshogdu has become increasingly assertive on important policy issues. While the final voice in decision making is still retained by the current ruler, Jigme Singye Wangchuk, he is usually very careful to ascertain the views of the Tshogdu in his decision-making process. Even more important, perhaps, are the substantial decentralization policies introduced by the king in the 1980s, under which elected district and local officials have been granted a major voice on a broad range of economic and social issues.

The System of Government

Bhutan is a constitutional monarchy, although there is no written constitution as yet. A 39-member drafting committee composed of legislative, judicial, and monastic members and the Royal Government unveiled a written constitution draft in March 2005; the draft was to be distributed to the public and either adopted or voted down in a subsequent referendum. Buddhist values, which are part of public policy, influence the state and people, even though 25 percent of the population is Hindu Nepali Bhutanese.

EXECUTIVE

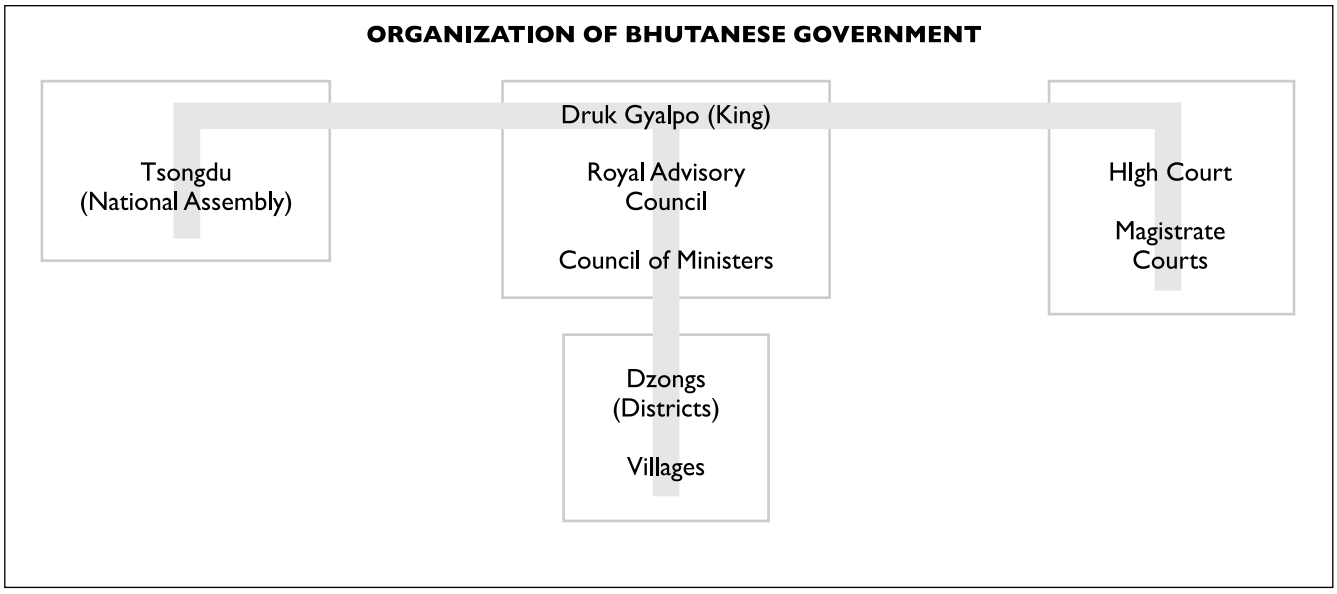
The king or Druk Gyalpo is the chief of state. The chairman of the Council of Ministers is the head of government. The Council of Ministers is nominated by the king and approved by the National Assembly to advise the king in government matters along with the Royal Advisory Council, also nominated by the king. Members of the Council of Ministers serve fixed five-year terms. Royal advisors may remain longer.

LEGISLATURE

The unicameral National Assembly has 154 seats composed of 105 members elected from villages, 12 from religious groups, and 37 chosen by the king to represent government interests. A Buddhist monastic order advises the legislature. All Assembly members serve three-year terms.

JUDICIARY

Because Bhutan had no written constitution as of mid-2005, the legal system was still based on Indian law and English common law. The Supreme Court of Appeal is



the king. The high court judges are all appointed by the king; beneath the high court are magistrate courts.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Bhutan is divided into 20 districts, each of which is headed by an elected officer. Districts are composed of villages, each one again headed by a locally elected leader.

The Electoral System

The king's position is hereditary. No votes are cast to elect him, but democratic reforms instituted in 1998 grant authority to remove the king by two-thirds vote of the National Assembly. Local elections for the Assembly were scheduled to be held in late 2005. Prior to 2002 each family had one vote. A new law passed that year, however, stipulated that each citizen over the age of 21 could vote by secret ballot for a representative to the National Assembly.

The Party System

Bhutan has no political parties. Parties are illegal.

Major Political Parties

Bhutan has no political parties.

Minor Political Parties

Bhutan has no political parties.

Other Political Forces

Bhutan has accomplished much in the context of serious ethnic conflicts in southern Bhutan, where the migrant Nepali Bhutanese (Lhotshampa) community constitutes about 90 percent of the population. Several programs introduced by the royal government in 1988–89 to "preserve" the traditional Buddhist political and social culture (Tsuwa Sum) met with strong resistance from some of the Hindu Nepali Bhutanese, resulting in the first serious conflict in modern Bhutan. About 20 percent of the Lhotshampa community in southern Bhutan were either forced out of their homes or fled the country, first to India and then most of them to refugee camps in southeastern Nepal. This led to a major crisis in Bhutan-Nepal relations that by mid-2005 was still unresolved. The two governments meet periodically to discuss this issue but have not yet made much progress in reaching an agreement.

The sentiment in Bhutan has turned increasingly hard-line toward the Lhotshampa dissidents—termed *ngolops* (traitors) by the Bhutanese. The *ngolop* "resistance" movements have established bases in the Indian-Bhutan border area from which raids are launched periodically into southern Bhutan, directed primarily at Lhotshampa families that have refused to leave Bhutan and join the resistance movement—or "terrorists"

as the Bhutanese call them. In the 1997 Tshogdu session, some hard-line Bhutanese members introduced a resolution stipulating that all relatives of *ngolops* should be excluded from the government service and security forces, and the demand was even made that they should be expelled from the country. What was even more disturbing was that a number of cabinet ministers supported the resolution even though the king has stated repeatedly that no Bhutanese should be punished for acts committed by a relative. The debate on this issue may well be the most important and virulent in Bhutan's modern history, with possible major consequences for the political system.

National Prospects

Bhutan's international relations with states other than Nepal remain very good. The country has joined the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), the South Asian Free Trade Agreement (SAFTA), and the Bangladesh, Indian, Myanmar, Singapore, and Thailand Economic Cooperation Forum (BIMSTEC). It has also applied for membership in the World Trade Organization. Along with Bhutan's steady economic growth, the numerous governmental reforms in the late 1990s and early 2000s have secured the country's status as a developing constitutional monarchy and bode well for its future. The refugee issue involving 100,000 Bhutanese in Nepal remains unresolved, and these citizens remain in UN-run camps.

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REPUBLIC OF BOLIVIA

(República de Bolivia)

By José Antonio Lucero, Ph.D.



Since independence, Bolivia has experienced overlapping periods of *caudillo* rule, oligarchy, social revolution, single-party rule, military regimes of Left and Right, and, most recently, multiparty electoral democracy. In economic terms, Bolivia has been both a classic example of economic disaster and a paradigmatic case of successful structural adjustment. These and other contrasts make this multiethnic nation of nearly 9 million people—70 percent of whom self-identify as members of one of various indigenous communities—one of the more complex political environments in the region.

HISTORY

After independence from Spain in 1825, political factions formed largely around the personal struggles of competing strongmen, or *caudillos*. The first five decades of the republican period were characterized by fierce struggles among elites who often used state power to extract the nation's wealth, concentrated in silver and tin mines. It was not until the conclusion of the War of the Pacific (1870), during which Bolivia lost its coast, that political parties began to form. Between 1884 and 1899 Bolivia experienced its first period of long-term civilian rule.

A two-party political system ostensibly pitted Liberals against Conservatives. In actuality, political competition was less about ideology than about the personalistic struggles between a few powerful men. These elites were usually affiliated with tin or silver oligarchies and controlled most of the land. In this remarkably stratified society, indigenous peoples (*indígenas*) and poor, "mixed-race" Mestizos were often forced by landlords into highly exploitative land-tenure arrangements and personal labor service obligations. The small middle sectors of society depended on the political ruling class for the employment and wages that allowed them to maintain their social status.

Oligarchic rule, however, faced several challenges in the 20th century. Several catastrophic events—including the Great Depression and the devastating loss to Paraguay during the Chaco War (1932–35)—had profound effects on the Bolivian political system. Held responsible for much of the political and economic turmoil, ruling elites were greatly weakened. New actors entered the national stage and offered political alternatives that ranged from extreme right wing to Trotskyist. The most important of these new groups was the less extreme, but still revolutionary, multiclass Nationalist Revolutionary Movement (MNR).

MNR AND MILITARY RULE

In April 1952, after being denied the presidency it had won in the 1951 elections, the MNR led a social revolution that marked the beginning of a new chapter of Bolivian history. The tremendous inequality in land distribution (6 percent of landowners controlled 92 percent of cultivated lands) made the MNR's antifeudal, antioligarch platform extremely attractive to popular sectors. For 12 years (1952–64) the MNR

ruled over a modernizing statist development project that in many ways took the Mexican PRI as its model in creating corporative, state structures to channel the politicized peasants and miners. The MNR created a Ministry of Peasant Affairs and peasant and labor unions, and thus forged a structure for an asymmetrical dependent alliance between the MNR-controlled state and rural sectors. After 1952 the MNR distributed land, installed universal suffrage, nationalized the tin mines, and inaugurated schools in its efforts to build a hegemonic party.

These efforts were shattered in 1964 when the vice president, General René Barrientos, put an end to MNR rule and inaugurated 18 years of military rule. One of the central pillars of the new regime was the so-called Military-Peasant Pact (PMC, Pacto Militar Campesino) that maintained the populist and clientelistic tenor of MNR rule. The PMC was based on clientelistic relations that the officer corps had built in the countryside. Like the MNR government, the military sought to maintain a monopoly on organizing labor and peasants. In 1969 Barrientos died in a helicopter crash. At the time of his death and during a rapid succession of unstable successor governments, opposition to the PMC on the part of peasants was growing on several fronts. A relatively rapid turnover of governments (three presidents in less than two years) and extreme dissatisfaction with state attempts to restructure agrarian life provided early opportunities for protests on the part of the masses, especially in the highlands of Bolivia.

General Hugo Bánzer Suárez (1971–78) finally ended the string of short-lived post-Barrientos governments. Less of a natural populist than Barrientos, Bánzer tried to maintain the PMC by making up with repression what he lacked in charisma. As with many authoritarian governments, Bánzer's rested upon a fragile and shifting foundation of support. Yet through a mixture of military repression and institutional improvisation vis-à-vis the two major rival political parties, Bánzer maintained his rule for eight years, making him the longest-serving president since 1871. In 1978, responding to international and internal pressure, Bánzer called for elections and Bolivia entered another transitional period. The transition was a rocky one for Bolivians. Between 1978 and 1982 seven military and two weak civilian governments tried to rule Bolivia.

THE RETURN OF CIVILIAN RULE

In October 1982 military rule came to an end (again) as the military was forced by popular opposition, international isolation, and internal weakness to honor the results of the 1980 election. Hernán Siles Zuazo of the MNRI, the leftist splinter-party of the MNR, assumed the presidency with the support of a coalition of leftist parties and the help of the syndicalist movement. At that moment Bolivia was experiencing the worst economic crisis in its history. In the period 1982–85 Bolivia under Siles Zuazo saw the failure of six successive stabilization plans. His leftist alliance did not make his job any easier as long-suppressed demands predictably increased from labor and peasant syndicalist groups. This was only made worse by the government's highly inflationary resort to printing more currency; each attempt at stabilization resulted in greater social protest. By 1985 hyperinflation reached more than 25,000 percent. The Siles government and the forces that had supported it were severely discredited. Siles was forced out in 1985, a year from the end of his second term. The debacle that Siles presided over set the stage for the aggressive neoliberal reforms of MNR leader Víctor Paz Estenssoro.

Three days after Paz Estenssoro became president in 1985, he issued Decree Law 21060, the cornerstone of his New Economic Policy, which managed to bring hyperinflation to an end. However, it was not without painful side effects. Massive layoffs (euphemistically dubbed "relocations") cut into the organizing and strategic strength of mineworkers and other labor groups. A majority of those poor continued to be *indígenas*. Although an Emergency Social Fund did cushion some of the blow, the poor continued to bear a disproportionate share of the neoliberal burden.

Interestingly, the new economic policy of Bolivia was accompanied by some new political maneuverings. Bolivia's electoral system is one in which congress often has the final say in electing the executive. Consequently, coalitions in congress—more often than popular elections results—determine who will be president. In October 1985 Víctor Paz Estenssoro struck a deal (Pacto por La Democracia) with the ex-general Bánzer, now president and head of the rightist Nationalist Democratic Action (ADN), whereby the ADN would provide legislative support for the MNR executive in return for a greater share of access to state patronage.

Coalitions would be important in other election years. In 1989 Jaime Paz Zamora, head of the leftist Revolutionary Leftist Movement (MIR) and third-runner-up in the elections, made a pact with the second runner-up, Bánzer, in order to become the next president. In 1993 the surprising alliance of MNR leader Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada (Paz Estenssoro's neoliberal finance minister) and Víctor Hugo Cárdenas,

head of an Indian/syndicalist political party, the Tupak Katari Revolutionary Liberation Movement (MRTKL), won a plurality of the vote and had enough support in congress to secure the executive.

In a striking twist, in 1997 Hugo Bánzer became the first democratically elected, former military dictator in the Americas. His right-leaning ADN party had been an important player in previous elections, but his previous presidential campaigns had been unsuccessful. Due to illness he was unable to finish his term and stepped down in 2001; he was succeeded by his vice-president, Jorge Fernando Quiroga Ramírez. In 2002 Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada and the MNR narrowly defeated Movement toward Socialism (MAS) leader Evo Morales. In 2003 protests of police and popular sectors forced President Sánchez de Lozada from office; his vice president, Carlos Mesa Gisbert, assumed the presidency. Since the return of democracy to Bolivia, Mesa was been the first president to govern without the support of a multiparty coalition. Like his predecessor, however, Mesa was forced from office by widespread protests about energy policies and resources. Mesa resigned in June 2005 and was replaced by Supreme Court head Eduardo Rodríguez, who agreed to lead a caretaker government until new elections could be held in December 2005.

The System of Government

Under the 1967 constitution (as amended in 1995 and 2004), Bolivia is a unitary republic and a representative democracy. Article Two of the constitution stipulates that sovereignty resides in the people, and while it is inalienable, its exercise can be delegated to the legislative, executive, and judicial powers.

EXECUTIVE

The constitution gives substantial powers to the executive. It rests executive authority in the president, elected since 1997 to five-year terms (presidents before the 1997 elections served four-year-terms), and his 12 ministers. If no candidate secures a simple majority—which no candidate has been able to do since democracy was restored—congress selects the president from one of the top two candidates. The president makes ministerial appointments, has extensive powers in making foreign and economic policy, commands the armed forces, and in times of crisis can call a state of siege. The president's appointment powers allow him to distribute patronage to political allies, though since 1989 the public sector has diminished in size. The president can also use executive decrees to legislate important policy (e.g., the New Economic Policy) without congressional approval. The constitution bars consecutive reelection but allows presidents to run again after sitting out at least one election.

In the 2002 elections the first-round (popular) vote was distributed as follows: Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada (MNR), 22.5 percent; Evo Morales (MAS), 20.94 percent; Manfred Reyes Villa (New Republican Force, NFR), 20.91 percent; Jaime Paz Zamora (MIR), 16.3 percent; Felipe Quishpe (Pachakuti Indigenous Movement, MIP), 6.1 percent; Ronald MacLean (ADN), 3.4 percent; Alberto Costa Obregón (Liberal and Justice Party, PLJ), 2.7 percent. Sánchez de Lozada was chosen president by congress, and his MNR governed in alliance with the MBL (MNR-MBL ran as one party) and with the support of the MIR party. After Sánchez de Lozada was forced out of office by widespread protests in 2003, the MNR-MIR coalition ended and Vice President Carlos Mesa Gisbert, an academic and political independent, assumed the presidency. Mesa was similarly forced out by popular protests in June 2005. A caretaker government led by Supreme Court head Eduardo Rodríguez stepped in, and early elections were called for December 2005.

LEGISLATURE

The constitution provides for a bicameral legislative body. The Congreso Nacional (National Congress) is composed of two chambers: the Cámera de Diputados (Chamber of Deputies) with 130 members and the Cámera de Senadores (Chamber of Senators) with 27 members. The congress meets for 90 sessions every year, unless the executive or a majority of congress request more sessions. Members of both chambers serve five-year terms. Congress has the right to pass, abrogate, interpret, and modify all laws. While the president has veto power, congress can override any veto with a two-thirds majority.

The constitution grants the legislative branch 22 prerogatives that can be roughly divided into three categories: economic policy, foreign policy, and political powers. Congress's main economic power is approving the annual budget, though the executive has often bypassed congress by approving the budget through decree. In foreign policy, congress has the power to approve all treaties and international agreements. It also has the power to decide whether foreign troops

may travel through Bolivia, though this too has not always been respected.

Congress's most important political power can be found in Article 90 of the constitution. The provision holds that if none of the candidates for the presidency or the vice presidency obtains the absolute majority of valid votes in the general election, the congress will chose among the top two contenders. In Bolivia's multiparty system, a presidential contender has never passed this demanding electoral hurdle since democracy was reinstalled in the 1980s, so congress is often put in the role of kingmaker. Beyond this electoral power, congress has other significant oversight powers over the executive. For example, a single senator or deputy may call ministers to testify through a procedure known as *petición de informe oral* (request for an oral report). A request for a written report (*petición de informe escrito*) may also be used to request executive explanation of certain policies, events, and actions. The congress may also use minutes of communication (*minutos de comunicación*) to call executive attention to particular issues.

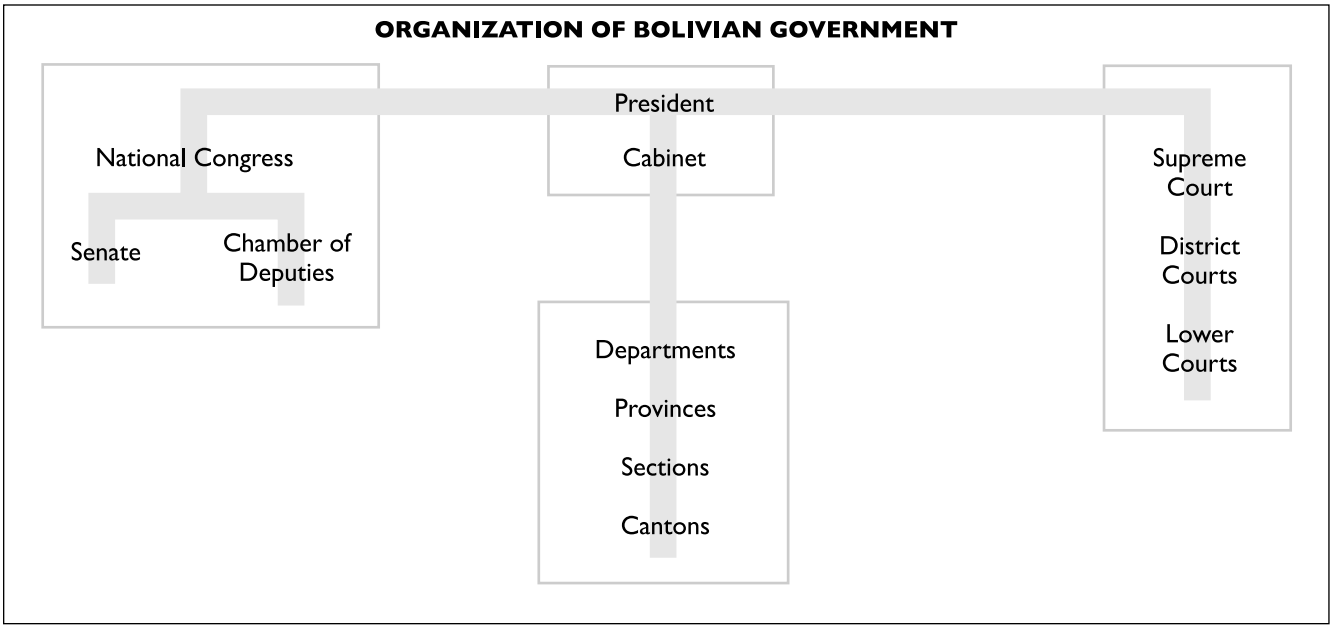
This mixture of strong presidential authority and strong congressional checks on the executive makes Bolivia something of an institutional hybrid. Like many other countries in the Americas, it has features of a presidentialist system: presidents serve fixed terms, do not depend on votes of confidence, and can use executive decrees to bypass congressional checks. It also has some features of a parliamentary system: the legislature not only has important checks on the executive but actually selects who will fill the executive post.

In the 2002 elections the MNR, the party of former president Sánchez de Lozada, had the most success (47 total seats in both houses), while indigenous parties (MAS, 35 seats; and MIP, 6 seats) did surprisingly well. Combining seats in both chambers, the party distribution of congressional seats was as follows: MNR (47), MAS (35), MIR (31), NFR (27), MIP (6), UCS (Civic Solidarity Union, 5), ADN (5), and PS (Socialist Party, 1).

JUDICIARY

Judicial power in Bolivia is distributed in a rather complex manner. The Supreme Court of Justice, a Council of the Judiciary, and the Constitutional Tribunal are the most important upper bodies of the Bolivian judiciary. The Supreme Court of Justice (Corte Suprema de Justicia) is composed of a president and 11 ministers. Ministers are selected for 10-year terms by the Chamber of Deputies from a list proposed by the Council of the Judiciary (Consejo de la Judicatura). Ministers of the Supreme Court cannot be reelected. The constitution gives the Supreme Court power to appoint District Court judges, resolve appeals from lower courts, settle questions of jurisdiction among lower courts, and serve as the arena for the trial of presidents, vice presidents, ministers, and other officials for crimes committed while in office.

Nominees to the Superior District Courts are nominated by the Judicial Council. Once nominated by the council, it is up to the Superior District Courts to actually fill lower judicial appointments. District Court



judges serve six-year terms. Lower court judges (Jueces de Partido) serve four-year terms. Judicial appointments are often part of the political patronage that is a major part of Bolivian politics. While the judiciary is theoretically independent from the other branches of government, the patrimonial tenor of politics keeps the courts politicized.

The Council of the Judiciary, the administrative and disciplinary body of the judicial branch, is presided over by the president of the Supreme Court and composed of four judicial counselors (Consejeros de la Judicatura). These counselors serve 10-year terms and are elected by the congress. In addition to nominating Superior District Court judges, they also nominate lower court judges.

The constitution assigns constitutional interpretation, a task usually left to supreme courts, to another judicial body known as the Constitutional Tribunal (Tribunal Constitucional). Article 122 of the constitution gives the tribunal various powers including the power to determine the constitutionality of the laws and decrees, resolve jurisdictional conflicts between public agencies, and arbitrate disputes between the other branches of government. The five magistrates of the Constitutional Tribunal are selected by congress, and eligible candidates include judges, public officials, academics, or attorneys with over 10 years of experience. They serve 10-year terms.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

While Bolivia is a unitary system, it has moved toward greater decentralization in recent years. Bolivia's administrative structure consists of 9 departments, 112 provinces, 320 sections, and 1,384 cantons. Until very recently local officials were selected directly by the executive. Small rural communities were often out of the reach of the national state and national funds. In 1993, out of 320 municipalities, 181 received no federal money; the three major cities—La Paz, Cochabamba, and Santa Cruz—received 90 percent of federal funds. In 1994 the Law of Popular Participation (LPP) was passed in order to rectify the urban and central bias of Bolivian political organization. The LPP gives municipal councils (Consejos Municipales) and local mayors new powers and, more importantly, new funds. The LPP stipulates that 20 percent of the national budget should be redistributed to the 320 local section governments. To increase accountability, the law also creates Oversight Committees (Comités de Vigilancia) that ensure that new funds are being allocated properly. Significantly, the new law also gives legal status to alternative forms of political organization—unions, neighborhood association, or indigenous community—and gives these various base organizations (Organizaciones de Base, OTBs) representation in local governing bodies. The LPP is largely seen as the brainchild of former vice president Víctor Hugo Cárdenas. He calls it a "historic act of reparation," since it is the "first time [that] the indigenous population is being legally recognized in this country." Internationally, sources as different as the United States Agency for International Development (US AID) and the Cuban Foreign Ministry have applauded the law. Though the law has indeed expanded the channels of participation and representation, some critics have argued that local spaces have become dominated by local elites linked to traditional political parties, and thus simply reinforced Bolivia's patrimonial political system.

The Electoral System

The Bolivian electoral system is constituted by a National Electoral Court, electoral judges, electoral notaries, departmental notaries, and electoral justices. The National Electoral Court is the most important body in that it can recognize or deny the participation of any political party, front, or coalition. It approves ballots, tallies results, and investigates accusations of fraud. The Electoral Court is composed of six members elected by congress, the Supreme Court of Justice, the president of the republic, and the political parties with the highest number of votes in previous elections. Members serve for four years and are eligible for reelection. Voting is obligatory in Bolivia; only citizens over 70 may abstain from voting. Voters must show a birth certificate, national identification card, or a military service card in order to vote.

While Bolivia has had universal adult suffrage since 1952, in 1997 the voting age was lowered from 21 to 18. Additionally, instead of serving four years, presidents and members of congress now serve five-year terms. Legislative elections are now a mix of first-past-the-post and proportional representation systems. Half of the members of the Chamber of Deputies are elected in single-member districts; the other half are allocated in terms of proportional representation. The Senate is composed of three senators from each department, also according to a system of proportional representation. In an effort to reduce the number of small, weak parties that litter the Bolivian political landscape,

congress in 1986 reestablished the D'Hondt formula of proportional representation and created a 9 percent threshold for seats in congress. Another recent change to the constitution holds that if no presidential candidate wins an absolute majority, congress will chose the president from between the top two candidates, rather than the top three.

The Party System

ORIGINS OF THE PARTIES

In the wake of the disastrous War of the Pacific (1870), the Bolivian political arena began to take shape as a new two-party system. The Liberal Party (Partido Liberal, LP) was closely identified with the emergent tin-mining oligarchy. The declining silver oligarchy developed links with the Conservative Party (Partido Conservador, PC). The Liberal Party soon dominated Bolivian politics, but lingering *caudillismo* and internal factional strife produced a political dynamic that continued to be extremely personalistic.

Politics was embedded in Bolivia's pattern of dependent, outwardly oriented economic development in which sources of wealth were largely limited to landholders and owners of export enterprises. Government service became a route to some of that wealth. Consequently, government posts became commodities that political factions struggled over and later distributed to their political clientele. The patrimonial dynamic of Bolivian politics is one of the more enduring legacies of the 19th century.

After the liberal elites were effectively eliminated by the aftermath of the Chaco War (1935), new parties of the Right and the Left filled the new political space. One of these parties to emerge during this period, the MNR, led a national revolution in 1952 and attempted to reshape the political arena. Attempting to recreate a Mexican-style single-party state proved unsuccessful, however, as the military intervened. Bolivian politics was for much of the century the story of military coups and weak civilian regimes.

The return of democracy in 1982 has seen the rebuilding of Bolivian parties. Initially, tiny parties with little followings proliferated throughout the country. They were dubbed "taxi parties" because it was said that the entire membership of any of these parties could hold a national convention in the confines of single taxicab. Over the years, electoral reforms have tried to reduce the number of parties, and a few parties have become dominant in Bolivian electoral campaigns. In 2002 the party system underwent a significant shift, as several traditional parties of the Left and Right entered crises and indigenous parties received unprecedented levels of popular support.

PARTY ORGANIZATION

By most accounts, political parties remain closed, hierarchical bodies. Decisions are made by a few individuals, and party members have little say in party operations. The MNR attempted to move away from this image of undemocratic internal party organization by using primaries and national conventions to increase participation. Despite these changes, most parties (including the MNR) are still characterized by a certain modern-day *caudillismo*.

CAMPAIGNING

The 2002 election represented a showdown of traditional and "new" opposition forces. Campaigning as "outsiders," Manfred Reyes Villa (NFR) and Evo Morales (MAS) achieved almost identical levels of support (20.91 percent and 20.94 percent respectively), only a few points behind the "insider" Sánchez de Lozada (MNR, 22.5 percent). In the runoff between the top vote-getters, determined by congress, the support of other traditional parties (MIR, ADN) made an MNR victory over MAS possible.

Since the 1990s the Internet has been an increasingly important medium for campaigning. ADN, MAS, and MIR, among others, had sophisticated Web sites that allowed online users to read party platforms, learn about the candidates, and even e-mail questions to the candidates. The Ministry of Communications and the Ministry of Popular Participation, among others, also have Web sites highlighting the accomplishments of the past governments. The National Electoral Court has Web sites providing detailed election data. While the number of Bolivians who can actually access the Internet is undoubtedly still small, the sophisticated use of computer technology is doing much to change Bolivia's images as a "backward" political system.

The United States continues to exert a tremendous influence over Bolivian politics. The threat of decertification (i.e., not certifying Bolivia as a U.S. ally in the war on drugs) and the accompanying risk of losing U.S. aid has made the United States an important part of every Bolivian election. This was especially apparent in the 2002 candidacy of the *cocalero* (coca leaf grower) and MAS party leader, Evo Morales. For his opposition to U.S-supported coca eradication, Morales has long been a target of U.S. criticism. As Morales gained support in Bolivia, the U.S. ambassador, Manuel Rocha, suggested to Bolivian voters that a vote for Morales

would put U.S. aid to their country in jeopardy. Rather than discouraging voters, the statement fed nationalist sentiment. Morales's popularity rose markedly and gave him a surprise second-place finish in the presidential race. Morales jokingly referred to the U.S. ambassador as his "campaign manager."

Major Political Parties

Bolivia has many parties, but three in particular have dominated the political scene in recent years: Nationalist Democratic Action (ADN), Nationalist Revolutionary Movement (MNR), and Movement of the Revolutionary Left (MIR). This three-party configuration, however, was seriously challenged by the decline of several parties including the right-leaning ADN and the leftist populist parties UCS and CONDEPA. The decline of these parties was due in part to the deaths of their respective leaders (ADN's Bánzer died of cancer in 2002, UCS's Max Fernández died in a helicopter crash in 1995, and CONDEPA's Carlos Palenque died of a heart attack in 1997). This party system dealignment has opened opportunities for indigenous leaders Evo Morales and Felipe Quispe, who now lead their own parties. Party formation in Bolivia continues to occur in one of two ways. Parties either splinter off from older, established parties, or new populist parties emerge as electoral vehicles used by political entrepreneurs.

NATIONALIST DEMOCRATIC ACTION

(Acción Democrática Nacionalista; ADN)

The right-leaning ADN was formed by former dictator and president Hugo Bánzer Suárez in April 1979. Bánzer skillfully used this new party as a vehicle to stay relevant in Bolivian politics after military rule ended. Over the years it increased in popularity among the middle class and the industrial sector. It also had the support of unhappy members of the ultraright FSB (*Falange Socialista Boliviano*, Bolivian Socialist Falange) and MNR. Interestingly, one of the more important alliances in Bolivian politics in the 1980s and 1990s was between Bánzer's rightist ADN and Paz Zamora's leftist MIR. This alliance allowed Paz Zamora the presidency in 1989, and it helped give Bánzer the presidency in 1997. Bánzer campaigned as a committed democrat and made fighting poverty a central pillar of his platform. He also pledged to eradicate the drug problem in the next five years. Such a promise was perhaps directed more at the United States than at domestic audiences.

Bánzer resigned from the presidency in 2001 due to cancer and died in 2002. Given the personalist nature of Bolivian parties, the death of the leader resulted in serious electoral consequences. In the 2002 elections the ADN presidential candidate, Ronald Maclean, won only 3.4 percent of the vote, and the party won 1 Senate seat and 4 seats in the Chamber of Deputies.

MOVEMENT OF THE REVOLUTIONARY LEFT

(Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionaria; MIR)

Since the party's founding in 1971 by Jaime Paz Zamora, Oscar Eid Franco, and Antonio Araníbar (among others), the MIR's platform has been moderately left-wing, though when occupying the executive, the MIR continued the neoliberal reforms of Paz Estenssoro's New Economic Policy. While the MIR draws its support from the urban middle class, it has made some inroads into the peasant vote. The MIR joined the MNRI and the PCB (Bolivian Communist Party) in 1982 to form the Popular Unity Coalition, or UDP (*Unidad Democrática y Popular*). In 1985 MIR leader Paz Zamora campaigned on his own for the presidency. In 1989 a pact with ADN gave Paz Zamora the presidency.

In the 2002 election Paz Zamora came in fourth in the first round of the presidential election with 16 percent of the vote, and the MIR won 5 Senates seats and 26 in the Chamber of Deputies. The party's prospects have been clouded somewhat in recent years by the accusation that Paz Zamora has drug-trafficking connections. The United States denied Paz Zamora a visa at one point and publicly expressed its concern over his candidacy in 2002. Paz Zamora maintains that had it not been for U.S. opposition, he would have won the presidency in 2002.

NATIONALIST REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT

(Movimiento Nacionalista Revolucionario; MNR)

Founded in 1941 by Victor Paz Estenssoro, Hernán Siles Zuazo, and Walter Guevara (among others), the MNR has evolved from the statist party of the revolution to a party that champions the neoliberal economic reforms that have done away with much of the corporatist and populist features of the early MNR state. When it came to power in 1952, the MNR sought to integrate the masses—especially miners, peasants, and Indians—into

a new hegemonic party. A military coup put an end to those plans. Infighting also changed the MNR's ideological composition. A split between two of the founders—Paz Estenssoro and Hernán Siles Zuazo—in 1978 resulted in the creation of the more left-leaning MNRI, headed by Siles Zuazo.

The MNR captured the presidency in 1985 amid conditions of economic crisis. Paz Estenssoro's stabilization plan managed to tame hyperinflation and inaugurated the economic orthodoxy that continued to guide economic policy well into the 1990s. In 1993 the MNR again won the presidency as Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada, Pas Estenssoro's finance minister, entered into an alliance with Katarista leader Víctor Hugo Cárdenas. The alliance of a neoliberal technocrat and an Aymara Indian leader proved to be an effective electoral mix as Cárdenas helped take votes from more populist leaders that were targeting the urban indigenous, or *cholo*, vote in the La Paz department. Under the Sánchez de Lozada–Cárdenas administration, economic reforms in pensions and privatization were accompanied by political reforms in government decentralization and legal recognition of Bolivia's substantial indigenous population.

While the MNR, with the help of the Movement for a Free Bolivia (MBL) and the MIR, was successful in winning back the presidency in 2002, this proved to be a pyrrhic victory. Sánchez de Lozada was forced out of office by violent protests provoked by the government's new tax policies and a plan to export natural gas through Chile and to the United States, the country seen as responsible for the pain of structural adjustment and coca eradication. In 2003 the MNR lost control of the government as Vice President Carlos Mesa, who was a political independent, assumed the presidency and held a referendum on gas exportation, which allowed him to reach provisional agreements with social movement leaders.

With the 2002 elections the MNR remained an important congressional force as it (in alliance with the MBL) won 11 seats in the Senate and 36 in the Chamber of Deputies.

MOVEMENT TOWARD SOCIALISM

(Movimiento al Socialism–Instrumento Políticos para la Soberanía de los Pueblos; MAS-IPSP)

While this is not a new party (it was founded in 1987), the MAS went through a renaissance when the *cocalero* leader, Evo Morales, was given control of the party in the late 1990s. To its traditional leftist program, Morales added the cause of peasant coca farmers and indigenous peoples, summed up in the additional letters he added to the MAS party name, IPSP, which in translation is the Political Instrument for the Sovereignty of the Peoples.

The MAS was dismissed as a minor party until 2002, when it came in a surprising second place in the presidential race and won a significant number of seats in congress. Much of the success of the MAS and Evo Morales was attributed to the consequences of U.S. Ambassador Rocha's suggestion that a vote for Morales would put U.S. assistance in jeopardy. Morales made much of these comments and refused to debate other candidates, insisting that he would only debate Ambassador Rocha. As Morales put it, "I prefer to argue with the owner of the circus, not the clowns."

Morales is a key opposition leader in both the congress and the streets. Many have noted that Morales is moderating his rhetoric and tactics in order to maximize the MAS's electoral prospects in regional and national elections. In 2002, the MAS won 11 seats in the Senate and 27 in the Chamber of Deputies.

Minor Political Parties

CONSCIENCE OF THE FATHERLAND

(Consciencia de Patria; CONDEPA)

CONDEPA was founded by television personality Carlos Palenque, known popularly as "el compadre." Palenque used a nightly television show in which he encouraged usually low-income indigenous and *cholo* La Paz residents to speak out about their problems. Palenque and his wife, Monica, were extremely popular, especially in La Paz, where Monica even served as mayor.

In what sounds like a soap opera, CONDEPA entered a crisis when Carlos and Monica had a public falling out and ultimately divorced. The crisis deepened when "el compadre" died unexpectedly in March 1997. While reports maintained that he had died of a heart attack, Monica left the country in part to get away from accusations that she had somehow contributed to Palenque's death.

The 2002 election provided further evidence of CONDEPA's profound crisis. Fractured internally, the party won no seats in either house of congress. In 1997 it had won 27 seats. Analysts suggest that traditional supporters of CONDEPA transferred their votes to the

parties of high-profile indigenous leaders such as Evo Morales (MAS) and Felipe Quispe (MIP).

MOVEMENT FOR A FREE BOLIVIA

(Movimiento Bolivia Libre; MBL)

Founded in 1985 by Antonio Araníbar, the MBL splintered off from Jaime Paz Zamora's MIR. After a brief association with the United Left (IU), the MBL left the IU alliance in 1989 largely out of concern that continued association with such an explicitly leftist grouping would hurt its electoral chances. While the MBL is known to be center-left and concerned with agrarian issues, it has supported the neoliberal MNR in general and Sánchez de Lozada in particular. In 2002 internal crisis within the MBL prompted it to join the MNR. These parties ran under a single MNR-MBL banner in the 2002 elections, winning 11 seats in the Senate and 36 in the Chamber of Deputies.

PACHAKUTIK INDIGENOUS MOVEMENT

(Movimiento Indígena Pachakutik; MIP)

Formed in 2001, this party is led by Felipe Quispe, an important highland indigenous leader. Quispe has long been associated with radical Aymara politics and was imprisoned for belonging to an armed revolutionary group. After being released from prison, he became the leader of the main confederation of indigenous and rural workers (CSUTCB) and like Evo Morales became a key figure in anti-neoliberal protests. His rivalry with Morales is well known, though the two leaders do cooperate occasionally in protest actions.

To the surprise of Morales, Quispe had little trouble registering his MIP for the 2002 elections, even though he was 10,000 signatures short of the number set by law and despite the fact that other indigenous parties like MAS had previously had much difficulty in registering for elections. Some observers noted that the Electoral Court was under pressure from traditional parties that wished to allow the MIP to participate in elections in order to divide the indigenous vote and dilute the electoral prospects of the MAS.

While Quispe only won 6 percent of the vote in the 2002 elections and MIP won six seats in the Chamber of Deputies, Quispe continues to be an important political force. Unlike Morales, Quispe has not moderated his political message since the election, going so far as to resign his seat in congress and call for the creation of a separate indigenous state.

NEW REPUBLICAN FORCE

(Nueva Fuerza Republicana; NFR)

The NFR began as a regional party based in Cochabamba. Founded in 1995 as a center-right party, it was recognized as a national party in 1996 and participated in the 1997 elections. It was part of President Bánzer's coalition but has since expanded its appeal by incorporating a more populist message and including indigenous candidates on its lists.

The former mayor of Cochabamba, Manfred Reyes Villa, is the NFR leader and as presidential candidate placed third in the national elections of 2002 with 20.91 percent of the vote, only slightly behind Evo Morales (20.94 percent). The NFR won two seats in the Senate and 25 seats in the Chamber of Deputies. Among the NFR congressional members are indigenous leaders Alejo Veliz, a *cocalero* leader and rival of Evo Morales, and Juan de la Cruz Villca, former CSUTCB leader. These leaders, however, are not seen as NFR militants but rather as leaders who "borrowed the jersey" of the NFR in order to participate in elections. Such "borrowing" is a normal practice in Bolivia as candidates cannot run as independents but only with legally recognized parties.

TUPAK KATARI REVOLUTIONARY LIBERATION MOVEMENT

(Movimiento Revolucionario Túpak Katarí de Liberación; MRTKL)

The MRTKL is one of many "Katarista" groups that take their name from an 18th-century Indian rebel leader and trace their political origins to the 1970s, when Genaro Flores and other rural labor leaders founded the Katarista movement as an explicitly hybrid expression of class and ethnic consciousness. Using the rural unions that were a product of the MNR and military populist rule, Flores and others organized indigenous peasants against the Bánzer dictatorship. They also advanced a critique of the colonial legacy of racism that continues to exploit and degrade the substantial indigenous population of Bolivia.

Víctor Hugo Cárdenas, head of the MRTKL, was more successful than most Katarista leaders in bringing *Katarismo* into the political mainstream. The peak of his political career, thus far, was his term as vice president under Sánchez de Lozada. His success was not celebrated by all, however. Branded by some as a "sellout," Cárdenas has had to endure criticism from within the Katarista movement and without. Katarista

parties performed miserably in the 1997 elections and won no congressional seats in 2002.

CIVIC SOLIDARITY UNION
(Unión Cívica Solidaridad; UCS)

Founded in 1989 by Max Fernández, owner of Bolivia's largest brewery, the UCS offered another populist alternative. Like CONDEPA, the UCS has had to cope with the loss of its founder and leader, who died in a plane crash in 1996. Fernández enjoyed national support but had his strongest electoral base in the city of Santa Cruz. He was seen as a *cholo* success story and had a popular following among poor and indigenous voters. Fernández played the coalition-building game well. In 1993 the UCS joined the MNR coalition and secured several posts in the cabinet. After 1997 the party remained politically relevant under the leadership of Max Fernández's son, Johnny. The party lost seats in 2002, winning five seats in the Chamber of Deputies and none in the Senate.

Other Political Forces

INDIGENOUS AND PEASANT ORGANIZATIONS

Among other political forces, Indian movements and organized rural labor movements are among the more important nonparty actors. Highland indigenous leaders like Felipe Quispe of the CSUTCB and Evo Morales of the *cocalero* movement are not the only important indigenous actors, as other groups on the other side of the republic have had their own impact on national politics. The political energy of the "first nations" of Bolivia moved from Aymara-dominated Katarismo to a more plural assemblage of Indian movements that found their loci at the community level. The most impressive organization of groups came from the eastern lowlands of Bolivia in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Various groups from throughout Bolivia came together under the Confederación Indigena del Oriente, Chaco y Amazonia de Bolivia (CIDOB; Indigenous Confederation of the East, Chaco, and Amazonia of Bolivia). In 1991 one member group, the Coordinadora de Pueblos Indígenas del Bení (CPIB, Coordinator of the Indigenous Peoples of Bení) led a dramatic and well-publicized "March for Territory and Dignity," in which 12 different "first nations" walked over 700 kilometers until finally reaching La Paz. The march captured national and international attention for 40 days. In 1996 indigenous groups marched again in opposition to proposed agrarian reforms. Since 2000 highland organizations have been more active than lowland groups in protesting neoliberal policies.

A series of social "wars" have given new life to the more radical popular movements of the highlands. In 2000 a "water war" over the privatization of water in Cochabamba brought a multiethnic coalition together in opposition to then president Bánzer's reforms. *Cocalero* farmers, also based in Cochabamba, rode the anti-imperialist energy of these protests to further their own struggle against forced coca eradication, a cause also championed by highland Aymara leader Felipe Quispe. In 2002 a "gas war" over the plan to export Bolivian natural gas provided another occasion for indigenous highland movements to block roads, convoke large protests, and ultimately force President Sánchez de Lozada from power.

In 2005 rising gas prices led to a new wave of protests, as indigenous activists organized roadblocks throughout the country and brought the major cities to a virtual standstill. On June 6, with 80,000 protestors surrounding the presidential palace and demanding the nationalization of the country's gas industry, President Mesa was forced to resign.

ORGANIZED LABOR

Labor unions have historically been an important political force in Bolivian politics. The mineworkers' union in particular, the FSTMB (Federación Sindical de Trabajadores Mineros Bolivianos, Bolivian Mineworkers Syndical Federation), has played a large role. FSTMB leader Juan Lechín was one of the founding members of the MNR-labor coalition. In the wake of the 1952 revolution, labor unions and peasant unions were organized into the Confederation of Bolivian Workers, the COB (Confederación de Obreros Bolivianos). In the early years of MNR rule, the COB had significant influence over government appointments to ministries of mines, labor, and peasant affairs.

Lechín and Paz Estenssoro parted company in the 1960s. The United States attempted to de-radicalize the Bolivian revolution by throwing its support behind the more conservative Paz. During the next two decades military rule diminished the power of labor unions in government. However, the COB outside of government became an independent and active opposition political force. The COB joined with other syndicalist movements in opposition to military dictatorship. The most important peasant labor force was the Kataristaled CSUTCB (Confederación Sindical Unica de Tra-

bajadores Campesinos Bolivianos, Unified Syndical Confederation of Bolivian Peasant Workers). These union organizations organized strikes and protests that constituted an important part of social opposition to the dictatorship of Bánzer.

The COB made clear its opposition to many of the privatization schemes of the Sánchez de Lozada government and continues to be an important protest voice in Bolivia. The ouster of President Mesa in June 2005, with protestors demanding the nationalization of Bolivia's gas industry, was another clear indication of the strength of the COB.

REGIONAL CIVIC COMMITTEES

Regional differences are also politically important in Bolivia. Since the 1960s Bolivia has diversified economically with extensive lowland colonization and the development of the hydrocarbon industry, mainly in Santa Cruz. By 1978 Santa Cruz had become the second most important city in the republic. Still, most decisions were made in La Paz. Growing frustration over centralized rule along with long-standing regional animosities led to the establishment of the Santa Cruz Civic Committee (Comité Cívica Pro Santa Cruz), which called for a greater role in national political life and administrative decentralization.

Civic committees have sprouted in other regions and seem to have supplanted political parties in the articulation of regional interests. In every election since 1985, parties have had to recruit regional committee members for their party lists. Moreover, when congress members have to choose between party and regional loyalty, partisan considerations usually lose out.

National Prospects

Contradictions continue to characterize Bolivian economic and political life. Macroeconomically, Bolivia is in much better shape than in the lost decade of the 1980s. Still, neoliberal medicine has left many unemployed, and poverty remains the country's greatest problem. The elections of 2002 were the fifth democratic elections since the end of military rule in 1982, yet widespread anger with Sánchez de Lozada's free-market policies meant that the democratically elected president was unable to finish his term, and a similar fate befell Mesa in 2005. Constitutional reforms have opened the doors to greater participation, but party organizations and regional bosses keep the tradition of patrimonial politics alive. Nonetheless, with the growing power of indigenous and labor voices and their success in toppling the presidencies of Sánchez de Lozada and Mesa, the political terrain is likely to remain in flux in the coming years.

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BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

(Bosna i Hercegovina)

By Stephen C. Markovich, Ph.D.
Revised by Nikolaos Tzifakis, Ph.D.



Before Socialist Yugoslavia fell apart and war broke out, Bosnia and Herzegovina was often seen as a microcosm of the country. This was due to the fact that it was geographically situated in the middle of Yugoslavia and its population was composed of three ethnic groups. According to the census of April 1991, Bosnia and Herzegovina was inhabited by 4.4 million people, 44.8 percent of whom were Bosniaks (Muslims), 33.5 percent were Serbs, and 17.3 percent were Croats. That census also revealed that in only 32 out of 109 districts did one of these ethnic groups constitute 70 percent or more of the population. That is, the ethnic groups lived intermingled rather than apart. Indeed, Bosnia's multiethnic and multicultural character throughout the centuries has defined the country as a "crossroads of civilizations" that has alternately been a land of encounters, coexistence, and symbiosis.

The Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina proclaimed its independence as a state following a popular referendum held on March 1, 1992. Though the Serbs boycotted the referendum, Muslims and Croats—over 62 percent of the eligible voters—came out strongly and overwhelmingly supported Bosnia's statehood. Despite the success of the referendum and international recognition of Bosnia's independence, the new country got off to a rocky start. Civil war broke out, and the warring factions undertook campaigns of ethnic cleansing. As a result 250,000 people died, 1.3 million people left Bosnia, and 969,000 Bosnian citizens were internally displaced. Although approximately half of the refugees and internally displaced persons have returned to their prewar homes, the country's demographic outlook has been irreversibly altered. What is more, ethnic hatred, war memories, and nationalistic policies have since undermined Bosnia's very existence as a united multiethnic state. While the integrity of Bosnia and Herzegovina has de jure been preserved, the country's status de facto remains questionable.

The System of Government

On paper the constitution establishes a loose asymmetric confederation of two entities and a central superimposed government for the country as a whole, now officially called Bosnia and Herzegovina. One entity, the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (the Bosnian Federation) represents the union of Bosniak- and Croat-dominated areas, which make up 51 percent of the country's territory. This is a loose decentralized federation of 10 cantons—5 Bosniak, 3 Croat, and 2 mixed—so autonomous that they maintain their own constitutions, parliaments, and governments. The other entity, the Srpska Republika, is a centralized one mostly comprising Serb-dominated areas that correspond to 49 percent of Bosnia's territory. The country's system of government rests primarily on the Dayton Accords, signed in December 1995. What the accords did, among other things, was bring the war to an end, impose a peace process under a NATO-led multina-

tional force, and draft a constitution that frames a complicated system of government. This system fails to reconcile the logic of the de facto partition of the country with the logic of preserving a united multiethnic state.

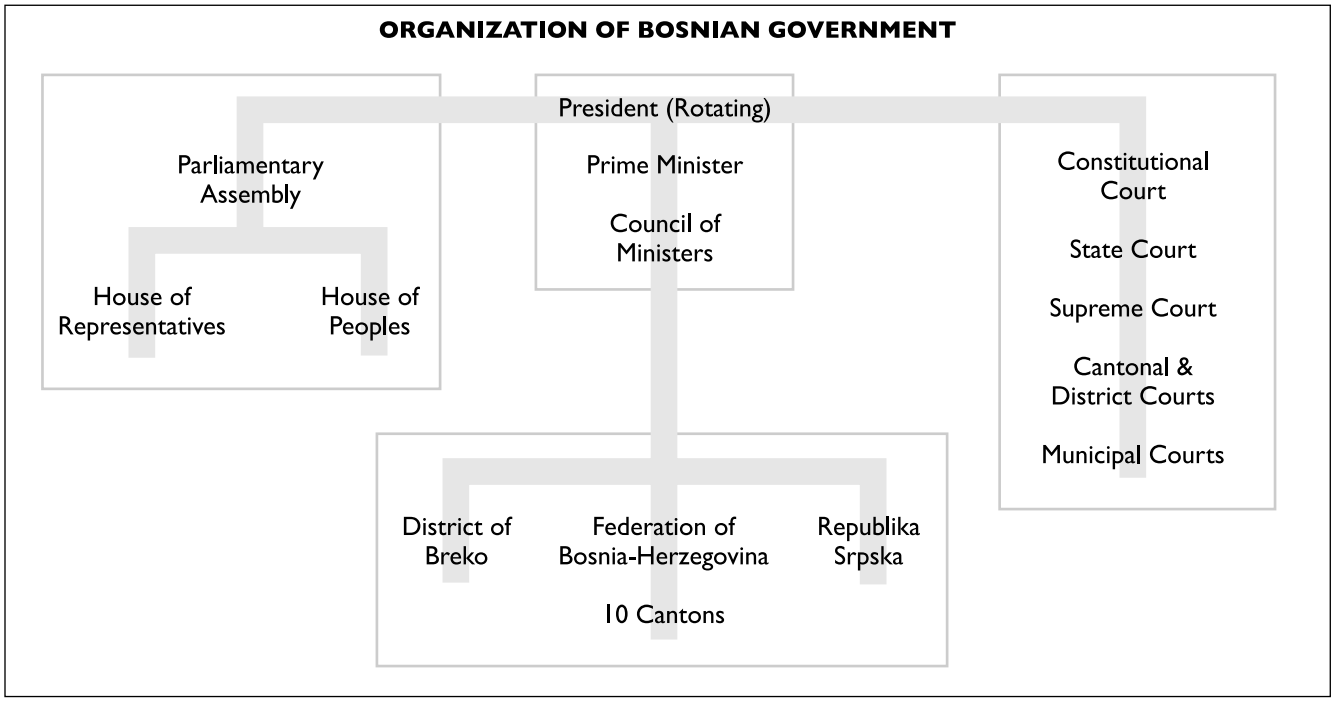
The district of Brcko has practically evolved into a third entity since March 1999. While international arbitration decided that Brcko belonged simultaneously to both the Bosnian Federation and the Srpska Republika, in March 2000 the district acquired its own institutions and was awarded enough autonomy to manage its own affairs.

The establishment of several centers of power at different levels generated a complex system of government. This system was rendered unstable and dysfunctional by the prevalence of nationalist parties in the Bosnian political scene that exploited the institutional check mechanisms (e.g., the veto right) to obstruct the implementation of the peace process.

In 1997 the international community attempted to unblock the Bosnian system of government by vesting its high representative in the country with the power to pass laws and decisions at any constitutional level and the authority to dismiss any noncooperative elected representative, party officer, or public official. The so-called Bonn powers of the high representative are unlimited in extent not only because he or she can dismiss even presidents and prime ministers but also because the high representative is not at all accountable to any national institution and independently interprets the powers of the office. Indeed, the office of the high representative has made such use of its power that it has dismissed over 100 public officials and has endorsed over 500 binding decisions and laws. In that sense, absolute executive and legislative power rests within the hands of the high representative, and the country has virtually been transformed into an international protectorate. Therefore, practical division of powers in the country does not coincide with the constitutionally prescribed system of government.

EXECUTIVE

At present in Bosnia and Herzegovina, there are 14 governments: one at the state level, two at the level of the entities, one for the district of Brcko, and 10 at the cantonal level within the Bosnian Federation. The executive for the central government includes a rotating tripartite presidency, a prime minister, and a council of ministers. (Until 2002 there were three prime ministers, each coming from a different region.) The tripartite presidency includes one Bosniak, one Croat, and one Serb, each of them directly elected by their own people; the prime minister is appointed by the presidents and confirmed by the House of Representatives; and the ministers are appointed by the premier and approved by the House of Representatives. Within this structure of government, the tripartite presidency is the strongest institution, but that does not mean much since the powers of the central government collectively and its branches indi-



vidually are limited. The high representative has great latitude; for example, the central government originally had only three ministries, and this changed only in 2000, when the high representative started to enlarge the central government's competencies by establishing seven additional ministries.

Constitutionally, the president can propose an annual budget and determine revenues, expenditures, and the printing of money; he/she has authority over foreign policy including the appointment of ambassadors, the making of treaties, and relations with international organizations. These presidential powers are limited not only by the fact that they cover so few jurisdictional areas but also because they are shared with the premier and the ministers, who may be slow to implement them, and with the central legislative houses, which may reject presidential proposals. Even more restrictive than the checks within the central government are the checks available to the three ethnic groups in the entity governments. For example, if the dissenting member in a two-to-one vote in the tripartite presidency feels the decision or proposal is detrimental to his ethnic group, he may refer the action to his ethnic delegation in the respective entity legislature, and this delegation—Bosniak, Croat, or Serb—may veto the presidential action. This ethnic-entity veto over actions by the central government tilts political power toward the entity governments.

The constitutional amendments of 2002 set the composition and the ethnic makeup of the entities' executive branches. These amendments came in compliance with a ruling by the Constitutional Court of Bosnia about the equality of all three ethnic groups throughout the entire country. In particular, the executive of the Bosnian Federation consists of a president and two vice presidents—each from a different ethnic group—elected by the federation legislature, and of a premier and ministers appointed by the president in concurrence with the vice presidents and confirmed by the legislature. Each minister in the federation has a deputy minister who is from a different ethnic group, and the federal government must be composed of 16 members: 8 Bosniaks, 5 Croats, and 3 Serbs.

The executive of the Srpska Republika consists of a president and two vice presidents—each from a different ethnic group—elected directly by the people, and of a premier and ministers appointed by the president and approved by the legislature. The government of the Serbian Republic is composed of 16 members: 8 Serbs, 5 Bosniaks, and 3 Croats.

Both entities maintain considerable authority, as they have powers over all jurisdictional areas that have not been constitutionally assigned to the central government: powers over police and military forces, economics and finance, education, culture, and communications and media. Thus, they are in position to run their own affairs. While within the Srpska Republika power remains concentrated on the entity level, within the Bosnian Federation most competencies are delegated at the cantonal level. All in all, as noted earlier, more power rests with the entities than with the central government.

LEGISLATURE

In Bosnia and Herzegovina there are at present several legislatures at different levels: one bicameral legislature at the state level, two parliaments at the level of the entities, one assembly for the district of Brcko, and 10 assemblies at the cantonal level within the Bosnian Federation. The legislatures for the central government and the two entities share powers with their respective executives. These legislatures, set in variations of the presidential-parliamentary model, can approve, amend, or reject executive proposals and can confirm and remove premiers and ministers but not the presidents, who are directly elected by the people.

The legislature in the central government is called the Parliamentary Assembly and is composed of a lower house called the House of Representatives and an upper house called the House of Peoples. The lower house has 42 members, who are elected directly by the people, and the upper house has 15 members—5 Bosniaks, 5 Croats, 5 Serbs—who are chosen by the entity legislatures.

The legislature for the Bosnian Federation, called the National Assembly, has a lower house, the House of Representatives, which is composed of 98 members elected directly by the people, and an upper house, the House of Peoples, which is composed of 58 members chosen by the cantonal assemblies. The constitutional amendments of 2002 determined the ethnic composition of the federation's legislative chambers. In particular, the House of Representatives includes at least four members from each of the three ethnic groups, and the House of Peoples consists of 17 representatives of every major ethnic group in addition to seven representatives of other ethnic communities.

The legislature for the Srpska Republika is a unicameral body called the National Assembly that includes 83 members elected directly by the people. In compliance with the constitutional amendments of 2002, the National Assembly includes at least four representatives of each of the three main ethnic groups. Srpska's new constitution also calls for the

establishment of a 28-member Council of Peoples; the National Assembly is to elect eight members from each major ethnic group in addition to four members of smaller communities. Although this institution is not a second chamber of the entity legislature, it will play a key role in the legislative process as it is charged with ensuring that parliamentary decisions do not adversely affect any ethnic group. All three national communities maintain the right to veto any decision or law at the state or the entity level of the legislative process if such a law or decision is considered to be destructive of their national interests.

Finally, the legislature of the district of Brcko is a 29-member assembly. Brcko's first election process took place in fall 2004. Before this the assembly was composed of members appointed by the district's international supervisor.

JUDICIARY

The Dayton Accords assigned the administration of justice to the Bosnian Federation and the Srpska Republika, so the central authorities were left with no responsibility for a state judicial system. As a result two judiciaries and separate legal systems developed in Bosnia that had little or no communication between them and provided the ideal ground for impunity and nonenforcement of decisions. Corruption, political interference, low level of professionalism, absence of resources, and the persistence of ethnic prejudices also plagued the Bosnian judiciaries. The high commissioner intensified judicial efforts in the early 2000s.

At the apex of Bosnia's judiciary system is the Constitutional Court, composed of nine judges. Four of them are appointed by the House of Representatives of the Bosnian Federation, two by the National Assembly of the Srpska Republika, and three by the president of the European Court of Human Rights in consultation with the tripartite presidency. This court is supposed to ensure the conformity of laws for the country and to adjudicate disputes between the branches of the central government and between the three governments as well. The Constitutional Court has emerged as a strong central institution with direct influence on Bosnia's politics through the adoption of key decisions, such as the one recognizing all three ethnic groups as constituent peoples in the entire territory of the country.

In December 2000 the high representative established the State Court of Bosnia and Herzegovina. This court is charged with cases that lie within the areas of jurisdiction of the state, such as citizenship and foreign trade. It has three divisions (criminal, administrative, and appellate) and a number of special panels for issues such as organized crime, economic crime, and corruption. The State Court began work in January 2003 after being staffed by both national and international judges.

Finally, the entities have their own judicial systems. The Bosnian Federation has a supreme court, 10 cantonal courts, and 57 municipal courts, and the Srpska Republika has a supreme court, five district courts, and 28 municipal courts. Municipal courts have original jurisdiction in most civil and criminal cases, and cantonal courts have appellate jurisdiction in the Bosnian Federation. The supreme courts act as the last instance of the regular court procedure.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Prior to the civil war there were 109 municipalities in Bosnia and Herzegovina, but demographic transfers and political redistricting have increased this number to 145. Each of these municipalities has an elected council and mayor, and most of them tend to be dominated by one of the ethnic groups. As previously mentioned, in the Srpska Republika the municipalities are the only form of local government, while in the Bosnian Federation the municipalities are grouped into 10 cantons. Each canton has a president chosen by a cantonal council that has been directly elected by the people. The cantonal councils are responsible for police and security, education and culture, radio and television, land and energy, and regulation of local governments. Some of these powers are exercised jointly with the federal government, and others are delegated to the municipal governments. The municipalities in both the Bosnian Federation and the Srpska Republika are responsible for such matters as housing and property, public utilities, licensing of radios and newspapers, reconstruction and development, citizenship, and local courts.

The Electoral System

In the post-Dayton era, elections for the tripartite presidency were held in 1996, 1998, and 2002. Parliamentary elections at both state and entity levels, as well as presidential elections for the Republika Srpska, were organized biannually in 1996, 1998, 2000, and 2002. The Bosnian political scene was dominated for the greatest part of this period by the three nationalist parties that fought the civil war—the Bosniak Party for Democratic Action (SDA), the Serb Democratic Party (SDS), and the Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ).

For all elections, all citizens over 18 years old who were listed on the 1991 census were eligible to vote; those who were not listed could gain eligibility by providing proof of citizenship, and refugees could also gain eligibility through a special registration process. All Bosnian elections until 2001 were organized and administered by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), while the 2002 elections were coordinated by the Bosnian Electoral Commission, which was formed following the adoption of the Law on Elections in August 2001.

Members of the tripartite presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina are elected directly by the people for four-year terms in majoritarian, first-past-the-post systems. Each of them is essentially elected by his own ethnic group in the Bosnian Federation and the Srpska Republika. In the 1996 elections Alija Izetbegovic from SDA won the Bosniak seat; Kresimir Zubak from the HDZ, the Croat seat; and Momcilo Krajisnik from the SDS, the Serb seat. For the first term Izetbegovic assumed the chair of the tripartite presidency by virtue of his gathering the most total votes in the election, but for subsequent terms, beginning with the 1998 elections, the legislature decided that the three members would rotate the chair every eight months. In the 1998 elections Izetbegovic kept the Bosniak seat; Ante Jelavic, then president of the HDZ, won the Croat seat; and Zivko Radisic, a candidate from the Socialist Party of Republika Sprska (SPRS), won the Serb seat. The resignation of Izetbegovic in 2000 and the dismissal of Jelavic by the High Representative in 2001 led to the change of the presidency's composition in advance of the 2002 elections. The high representative bypassed the SDA and the HDZ and installed members of moderate parties in the two seats, namely, Beriz Belkic from the Party for Bosnia-Herzegovina (SBiH) and Jozo Krizanovic from the Social Democratic Party (SDP). The 2002 elections brought the nationalists back in power, with the Bosniak seat won by Sulejman Tihic from the SDA, the Croat seat by Dragan Covic from the HDZ, and the Serb seat by Mirko Sarovic from the SDS (who later resigned and was replaced by Borislav Paravac).

The 42 members of the lower house in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the House of Representatives, are elected directly by the people, 28 of them through proportional representation in the Bosnian Federation and 14 of them through proportional representation in the Srpska Republika. In the 1996 elections the SDA won 19 seats, the SDS 9 seats, the HDZ 8 seats, and three minor parties 6 seats. The 1998 elections confirmed the dominance of the nationalist parties, with the SDA-led coalition winning 17 seats, the HDZ 6 seats, and the SDS 4 seats, while seven coalitions and minor parties shared the remaining 15 seats. In the 2000 elections the three nationalist parties won the control of only 19 seats of the House of Representatives. This permitted the transfer of power to a loose coalition of more moderate parties that was formed with the support of the international community. The so-called Alliance for Change was a 10-party coalition of the SDP, the SBiH, and eight minor Croat and Bosniak parties that additionally counted on the parliamentary support of several Serb parties such as the Party for Democratic Progress (PDP) and the Party of Independent Social Democrats (SNSD). The coalition was apparently not based on the genuine convergence of party programs and merely reflected a marriage of convenience to gain access to power. The allied partners soon highlighted their differences, and the Alliance for Change disintegrated ahead of the 2002 elections. The SDP, the largest partner in the Alliance for Change, then suffered a serious defeat in the 2002 elections, losing half of its seats in the parliament. The three nationalist parties mustered 20 seats in the House of Representatives and came back to power with the support of the PDP and the SBiH.

In compliance with the constitutional amendments of 2002, the lower house of the Bosnian Federation, the House of Representatives, has 98 members who are directly elected by the people for four-year terms through a system of proportional representation. (Previously the federal House of Representatives had 140 members and elections were scheduled on a biannual basis.) The election results in the federal parliament have followed the same patterns as the results in the state parliament: The nationalists of the SDA and the HDZ monopolized power in the federal institutions until the 2000 elections, when the Alliance for Change briefly took control of the legislature. A 10-party coalition designed by international experts to end the monopoly of the three nationalist parties, the Alliance for Change dissolved in advance of the 2002 elections. In those elections the nationalist parties returned to power: The SDA won 32 seats, and the HDZ won 16 seats and formed a government with the SbiH, which won 15 seats, under the premiership of Ahmet Hadzipasic from the SDA.

The 83 members of the unicameral National Assembly of the Srpska Republika are similarly elected directly by the people for four-year terms through a system of proportional representation. While the SDS has constantly come first in votes in every election process, since 1997 it has never succeeded in mustering a clear majority in the National Assembly.

Because the SDS has adopted policies contrary to the Dayton process, the high representative has tried to prevent it from determining government policies in the Srpska Republika. For example, whereas the SDS was altogether excluded from government from 1997 to 2000, it was then obliged to concede to vesting its support to the formation of a government of experts led by Mladen Ivanic from the PDP. In 2002 the SDS won 26 seats, the SNSD 19 seats, the PDP 9 seats, and the SDA 6 seats. Given that cooperation between the SNSD and the PDP proved impossible, a government was formed with the participation of the SDP, the SDA, and the PDP and headed by Dragan Mikerevic from the PDP.

The president and vice presidents of the Srpska Republika are directly elected by the people through a majoritarian, first-past-the-post system. The presidency of the Bosnian Serb entity has always been won by candidates who enjoy the support of the SDS. In the 2002 elections Dragan Cavic, former vice president and member of the SDS, won the presidency with 35.9 percent of the vote, while Ivan Tomljenovic from the SDP and Adil Osmanovic from the SDA were respectively elected in the Croat and Bosniak seats of vice presidents.

The Party System

Following the collapse of Communism in 1990, the government of Bosnia and Herzegovina permitted the establishment of opposition political parties to challenge the faltering Communist Party. Within a few months there were over 40 registered parties in the republic. Still, in the parliamentary elections of November 1990, only three of them, all ethnically based, gained more than 10 parliamentary seats on their own and established themselves as major parties: the SDA, the SDS, and the HDZ. Not only were these parties the ones that led interethnic relations in the country to deadlock and effected the outbreak of civil war, but they also survived the passage to the post-Dayton era and have remained the major players in the country's political scene. Nevertheless, several new parties have emerged that have received the support of the international community and succeeded, either alone or as part of coalitions, in playing an important role in the country's politics. The most successful among them are the SBiH, the SDP, the PDP, and the SNSD.

Major Political Parties

PARTY OF DEMOCRATIC ACTION

(Stranka Demokratske Akcije; SDA)

The Party of Democratic Action was founded in 1990 by a group of Muslim leaders headed by Alija Izetbegovic. The SDA party platform is based on a mixture of Islamic ideas and nationalistic elements. It supports the preservation of an independent and united Bosnia and Herzegovina in which the Muslims will play a dominant role. Once the civil war ended, several of its officials appealed openly for a more Islamic society with measures such as a ban on alcohol, pork, and short skirts and the change of the street signs' color to Islamic green. Nonetheless, the SDA professes support of democratic ideas, free enterprise, and interethnic cooperation, and it has repeatedly managed to enter into power-sharing agreements of governance with the Croats and the Serbs. Indeed, the SDA finds it easier to form governing coalitions with the SDS and the HDZ than with the SBiH, which is also a Bosniak party with a similar program platform.

The SDA calls for cooperation with the international community and for the legislative approval of all of the high representative's decisions and laws. The party claims no tolerance toward corruption; still, it has been shaken by the involvement of some of its senior officials in economic scandals.

The SDA supported the constitutional amendments of 2002, though it expressed its disappointment for the application of higher standards of power-sharing to the federation than the Srpska Republika. Above all, the party stands for the strengthening of the state's central institutions and has advocated the need for the adoption of a new state constitution that would altogether abolish the entities and cantons. While the aging Izetbegovic had to pass the party leadership to Sulejman Tihic in 2000, the SDA has continually held the Bosniak seat in the tripartite presidency and has participated in most central and federal governments. The country's prime minister as of mid-2005 was SDA member Adnan Terzic.

SERB DEMOCRATIC PARTY

(Srpska Demokratska Stranka; SDS)

The Serb Democratic Party was founded in 1990 by Radovan Karadzic and a close group of followers. Karadzic and his party favored the preservation of the former Yugoslavia as a single state, and when

that proved impossible, they supported Slobodan Milosevic's efforts to unite all Serbs into a new Yugoslavia. Despite failure to unify all Serbs through war, the party maintained its radical nationalistic program during the first post-war years. The SDS believes that the Dayton process will not work out and that the country will eventually be partitioned. The party envisages the entity's secession and unification with Serbia, and it has implemented policies to that end.

When the party was successively excluded from governing coalitions that were formed in both the state and the entity levels, its members realized that the party had to adopt a more pragmatic program because the international community was committed to making the Dayton accords work. The SDS adjusted its nationalistic platform to the realities of Dayton and limited its ambitions to the preservation of the status-quo, which guarantees the Serbs a quasi-state entity. The SDS keeps defending the preservation of every state prerogative of the Bosnian Serb entity; it continues to delay the process of the return of refugees and internally displaced persons of Croat and Bosniak origin; and it resists every reform effort by the high representative. Still, the SDS promulgates its support for the preservation of Bosnia's integrity and the country's Euro-Atlantic orientation. While the party could not prevent the adoption of the constitutional amendments of 2002, it has endeavored to render these changes decorative, and it has professed its opposition to any further revision of the constitution. What is more, the SDS demanded the organization of a new census of the population in advance of the 2004 municipal elections, hoping to legitimize the effects of the ethnic cleansing policies in the country's demographic makeup. In spite of its nationalistic platform and obstruction of the peace process, the SDS remains the largest party in the Srpska Republika and has significant representation in the state and entity institutions.

CROATIAN DEMOCRATIC UNION

(Hrvatska Demokratska Zajednica; HDZ)

The Croatian Democratic Union was founded in 1990 under the leadership of Stjepan Kljujic. In its platform, the party precisely followed the orientation and policies of its sister party in Croatia, the HDZ of Franjo Tudjman. Indeed, Tudjman interfered so extensively in Bosnian Croatian politics that he gradually transformed the Bosnian HDZ into a subordinate branch of Croatia's ruling HDZ. Tudjman successively replaced every chairman of the Bosnian HDZ that either challenged his policies or was no longer suitable in the implementation of these policies. Like the Croatian HDZ, the Bosnian HDZ has been a nationalist party that has seen itself as the defender of Croats and Croatian interests in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

During wartime the HDZ supported the division of Bosnia between Croatia and Serbia and endeavored in the post-Dayton era to sustain a third entity in the country, so-called Herceg-Bosna, which was also semi-integrated into the Croatian administration. However, Tudjman's death in December 1999 implied the end of Croatia's support to Herceg-Bosna, and the high representative's offensive on its parallel institutions brought about the demise of the Bosnian Croat entity in 2001. A group of moderates headed by Barisa Colak subsequently took the leadership of the party, and the HDZ has started talking about the necessity of strengthening the state institutions by eliminating entities and cantons. While Ante Jelavic, HDZ's previous chairman, has been marginalized, the nationalistic trend envisaging Western Herzegovina's secession and integration into Croatia remains strong, thus keeping the party divided on its political orientation. In spite of its internal problems, the HDZ has consistently been the uncontested representative of the Bosnian Croat people, always receiving over 90 percent of their vote.

SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY

(Socijaldemokratska Partija; SDP)

The SDP is the largest civic party in the country, having within its ranks members of all ethnic groups. It was founded in 1998 and is a successor of the Bosnian League of Communists. The party supports the strengthening of the state institutions and the high representative's policies in the country.

The SDP was the party around which the Alliance for Change was formed in 2000. When the alliance failed to change the socio-economic conditions in the country, the public blamed the SDS. Whereas in 2000 it came first in the federation, receiving 27.3 percent of the vote, in 2002 this shrank to the 15.7 percent. In the aftermath of the elections, Zlatko Lagumdzija, the party's chairman, was sharply criticized for the party's defeat. Lagumdzija managed to stay in place in his party's leadership, but over 100 party members defected from the SDP to establish a new party called the Social Democratic Union (SDU).

PARTY FOR BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA

(Stranka za Bosnu i Hercegovinu; SBiH)

The SBiH was founded by Haris Silajdzic, a cofounder of the SDA and prime minister of the Bosnian federation during wartime. The SBiH is a Bosniak party having an ideological affinity with the SDA. It supports the strengthening of state institutions as well as the role of the high representative in the country, including the "Bonn powers."

The SBiH has participated in governing coalitions since 1998. Because it has managed to cooperate harmoniously, not only with civic and moderate parties in the Alliance for Change but also with nationalist parties in 1998 and 2002, the SBiH has been characterized as a chameleon of politics that voluntarily adopts the ideological coloration of the bigger parties with which it allies. Indeed, while it emphasized its Bosniak identity in coalitions with the SDA, it highlighted its civic program during its participation in the Alliance for Change. As a result, the party has been criticized for not having a clear political philosophy and serving merely as a vehicle for its leadership's accession to power.

In September 2001 Silajdzic resigned from the party leadership and gave his place to Safet Halilovic. Still, the SBiH maintained its political influence in Bosnian politics, and in the 2002 elections it secured 6 seats in the state House of Representatives, winning 16.2 percent of the votes in the federation and 3.9 percent of the votes in the Srpska Republika.

PARTY OF INDEPENDENT SOCIAL DEMOCRATS

(Stranka Nezavisnih Social-Demokrata; SNSD)

The SNSD is the Serb party that broke the monopoly on power of the SDS in the Srpska Republika. It is led by Milorad Dodik, prime minister of the entity during from 1998 to 2000. The SNSD is a moderate social-democratic party that is ideologically close to the SDP. It supports the strengthening of state institutions and approves the work of the high representative. Although Dodik is not a nationalist, he owes much of his electoral success to his call for the protection of the Srpska Republika's prerogatives. Thanks to its merger with the Democratic Socialist Party, the SNSD became in 2002 the second largest party in the Serb entity, receiving 22.4 percent of the votes.

PARTY FOR DEMOCRATIC PROGRESS

(Partija Demokratskoga Progresa; PDP)

The PDP is a Serb party led by Mladen Ivanic and the preferred partner of the international community in the Republika Srpska. In the Serb entity it acts as a nationalist party—indeed, some humorously call it "SDS lite"—while at the state level it behaves as a pragmatic centrist party that supports the Dayton peace process and the country's Euro-Atlantic integration. The PDP's dual positioning has prompted some observers to characterize it, like SBiH, as a chameleon that is void of political program and cares only for access to power. Others view the PDP as merely the smarter and younger brother of the SDS in the country's politics. This is because it stands for the same principles as the SDS without jeopardizing its relations with the international community. Although the PDP is not as popular as the SDS among the Serb people—it received 15.2 percent of the votes in 2000 and 10.4 percent of the votes in 2002—it plays a regulating role in its entity's politics, since without its participation neither SDS nor SNSD could form a government.

Minor Political Parties

Bosnia's complicated system of government with several executives and legislatures in addition to the frequent organization of elections has permitted too many minor parties to gain representation by one or two deputies in a given state or entity institution. Some of these parties were onetime government members as part of large coalitions such as the Alliance for Change. Still, with the notable exception of the Serb Radical Party (SRP) and the New Croat Initiative (NHI), most parties fill no gap in the country's spectrum of political ideologies, and it is questionable whether they would survive if the country's system of government were to be reduced and rationalized.

Other Political Forces

Due to the complexity of the country's system of government, there are no discernable political forces that are not aligned with a major or minor political party. However, as previously mentioned, the international community has played a dominant role in the country's governance since the end of the civil war. The

system set up by the Dayton accords has not in practice proven to be workable. Indeed, its maintenance has been achieved thanks to the delegation of unlimited powers to the institution of the high representative. While this ensures that the political process functions normally in the country, it has been achieved only through Bosnia's transformation into an international protectorate where all major decisions are made by the international community.

National Prospects

The intervention of the international community put an end to the civil war, and the Dayton accords established on paper a united multiethnic state for the Muslims, Serbs, and Croats of Bosnia. But this state has been burdened with the memories of war, the revival of ethnic hatred, and the nationalistic programs by all ethnic groups. It has also had to operate under a complicated and dysfunctional system of government that was intended to bridge the ethnic groups' divergent interests. The international community's primary role in governing the country, while successful in keeping the country functioning, is evidence that the national political framework has not worked.

International observers are increasingly skeptical about the country's future. Some question how the international community can make the Bosnian people reacquire ownership of their country's reform process; simply put, the Bosnian politicians have believed for too long that responsibility for their country's fate rests with the international community. Other observers urge that the Dayton accords be renegotiated so that the Bosnian system of government becomes functional and the state becomes viable. While several Bosnian parties are in favor of altering the country's constitutional framework, there is no consensus over the envisaged changes. Above all, the international community fears that if it reviewed the Dayton accords, the nationalist parties might feel encouraged to maximize their demands. Therefore, the Bosnian peace process is at a crossroads, in need of continued commitment by the international community and new arrangements for its persisting problems.

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REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA

(Lefatshe la Botswana)

By Richard Dale, Ph.D.
Revised by David Sebudubudu, Ph.D.



Botswana, which is often mentioned as one of the economic and political success stories in a continent that is usually excoriated for an unsatisfactory postcolonial democratic record, had an inauspicious beginning. It was part of a larger area in southern Africa known as Bechuanaland, which was divided in the colonial era into northern and southern parts, with the southern part becoming a portion of the Cape Colony in South Africa and the larger northern area a British protectorate. It was the Bechuanaland Protectorate that became Botswana on September 30, 1966.

The System of Government

Botswana is a constitutional democracy modeled primarily after the British parliamentary system. It is Africa's longest continuous multiparty democracy, although one party—the Botswana Democratic Party (BDP)—has won every election since independence.

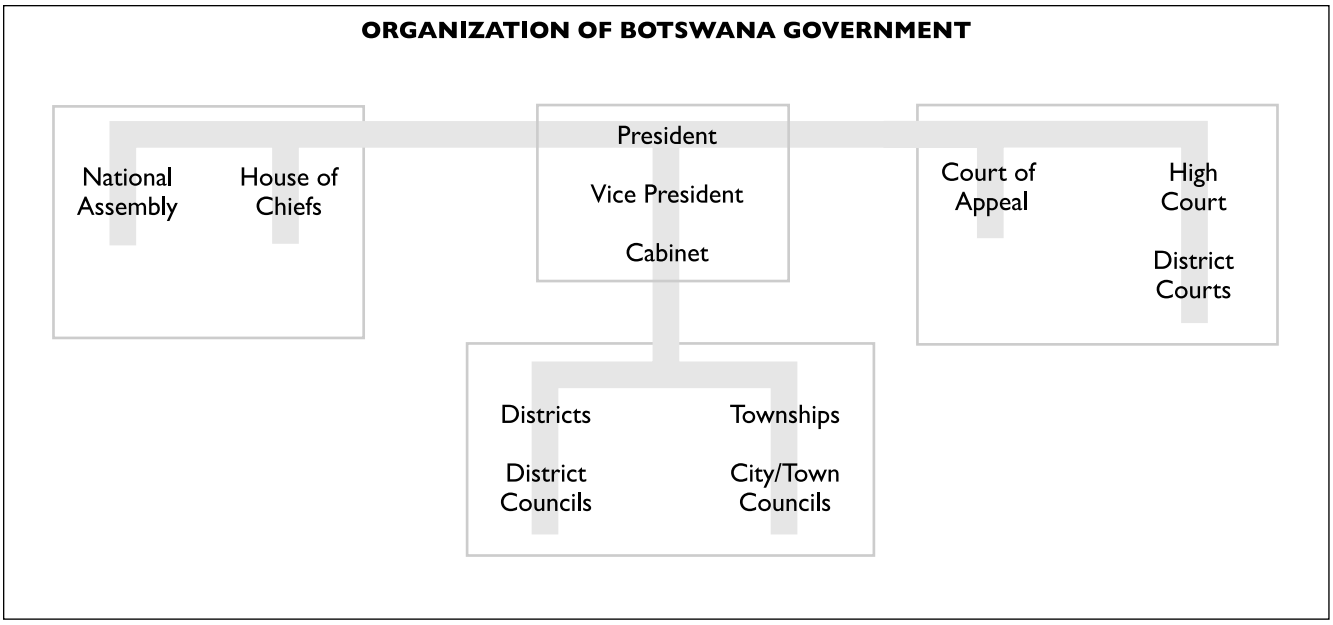
EXECUTIVE

At the pinnacle of the executive structure is the president, who combines the roles of head of state and head of government. Like prime ministers in a parliamentary system, the president is elected by members of parliament, not by the electorate at large, for a five-year term of office, corresponding to the terms of the National Assembly members. Until recently there was no limit to the number of times the president could be reelected, but the limit has now been fixed at two terms, beginning in 1999. The official opposition, the Botswana National Front (BNF), has proposed that the president be popularly elected, but the governing BDP has yet to accept this suggestion.

In addition to the president, there is a vice president, who also holds the portfolio of presidential affairs and public administration. The constitution follows the British (Westminster) model of responsible government, so that the cabinet is responsible to the elected chamber of parliament, the National Assembly. Cabinet members also have parliament membership. Legislation passing the National Assembly is submitted to the president, who has limited veto powers. The president also serves as commander in chief of the Botswana Defense Force (BDF), which was not created until 11 years after the nation became independent. Sir Seretse Khama served as the first president from 1966 until his death in 1980, and he was followed by his principal lieutenant, Quett K. Masire. Masire served until 1998, when he handed over the office to his chosen successor, Festus Mogae.

LEGISLATURE

For most purposes, Botswana is a unicameral state, with a National Assembly chosen by the entire electorate. For matters that may be considered in the traditional and/or tribal realm, there is a second chamber, the House of



Chiefs, representing the eight major tribal components of the nation (each of which has its own leadership and separate geographic location). Although it is neither directly elected nor as inclusive in its legislative domain as the National Assembly, the 15-member House of Chiefs serves to sustain traditional legitimacy for the postcolonial state. The National Assembly, with its 61 members (known as members of parliament, or MPs) who have five-year terms, is the focal point for much of Botswana's politics. It functions along the lines of the British House of Commons, which it resembles in many ways. Recently, the National Assembly developed a functionally specific committee system, akin to the one used in the United States, yet the National Assembly still retains the quintessential British parliamentary question period. Interest groups, which are often an integral part of Western political systems, are not yet especially significant or effective national political forces in Botswana and have no major and continuous impact upon the legislature. Of the 61 members, 57 are elected by popular vote and four are appointed by the majority party. In the October 2004 legislative elections the BDP won 44 seats (plus the right to appoint four others), the BNF 12 seats, and the Botswana Congress Party (BCP) one seat.

JUDICIARY

Botswana utilizes both traditional (African customary) and modern systems of law, with the latter drawing upon English law as well as the Roman-Dutch one prevalent in the Cape Province of South Africa. South African–based lawyers often have transnational private practices in Botswana. The highest echelons of the Botswana judiciary have included two judges from Zimbabwe, and the law curriculum at the University of Botswana used to entail study at the University of Edinburgh in Scotland. There is a Judicial Service Commission that is responsible for recommending suitable persons to the president for subsequent appointment to high judicial office, and the court system stretches from the district magistrate's court to the High Court and thence to the Court of Appeal. The government, in order to curb alleged corruption, may enact appropriate legislation. The Law Society of Botswana was established in 1996 to regulate, administer, and enroll members of the legal profession. In 1994 Botswana created a Directorate on Corruption and Economic Crime, and there is a Botswana Center on Human Rights. Over the years the New York–based Freedom House has given Botswana high marks on the quality of its civic culture and human rights.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Like most other African states, Botswana has a unitary rather than a federal system of government. During the colonial era the country was geographically divided into eight very unequal tribal areas, crown (that is, state) land, and enclaves for white residents. The country was predominantly rural, and both the Africans and the whites had consultative councils to advise the British resident (later the queen's) commissioner. Until the

British instituted self-government in 1965, the administrative headquarters of the protectorate were located in the Cape provincial town of Mafikeng, just across the South African border. Since then there has been considerable urban growth, especially in the new capital city, Gaborone, which replaced Mafikeng. The overwhelming bulk of the population is located in the eastern perimeter of Botswana, where the rail line connects Mafikeng with the Zimbabwean city of Bulawayo.

There are several ethnic groups in Botswana who have transnational ties with their kinsmen in Namibia, South Africa, and Zimbabwe, and for the moment those with the Bakalanga in Zimbabwe are the most vexing for the dominant Tswana cultural groups. Governance at the subnational level is undertaken by nine district councils, along with three town councils (for Jwaneng, Lobatse, and Selebi-Phikwe) and two city councils (Gaborone and Francistown). Elections at the subnational and national levels are held at the same time, with political parties active at both levels.

The Electoral System

Botswana uses the system commonly known as "first past the post" that its colonial mentor, Great Britain, still uses in its own elections. The candidate with the highest number of votes is declared to be the winner, even though that candidate may not have won a majority of the votes cast. The winning candidate is the sole representative of a given district, because Botswana, like the United Kingdom, uses the single-member constituency system rather than the multiple-member one found in proportional representation systems. As a result of the Constitutional Amendment Act of 1997, the voting age has been lowered from 21 to 18. This change, which was principally due to the pressure of the opposition BNF, was expected to benefit the BNF, which has a fairly stable electoral clientele in the urban areas, provided there is a high turnout of the newly enfranchised young adults, many of whom are un- or underemployed.

In addition, the 1997 Constitutional Amendment Act allowed Botswana citizens who live outside the country to vote and created an Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) composed of seven members that is to function in an independent fashion. In the past there have been isolated instances of electoral misconduct, which has tended to detract from the legitimacy of the electoral process, but the establishment of the commission bodes well for the integrity of the process and for public respect for the probity of the parliamentary system.

The Party System

Botswana has a multiparty system at the national level, although only three parties—the BDP (the government) and two opposition parties, the BNF and the BCP—were able to elect MPs to the National Assembly in the 2004 parliamentary general election. Political parties in Botswana are of relatively recent origin, reaching back only to about 1960, when the Bechuanaland People's Party (BPP) was created. The BPP took its cue, in large measure, from African nationalist politics and ideologies and slogans in South Africa, where a number of Africans from Botswana worked permanently or on a migratory basis. Prior to that time, independence for the Bechuanaland Protectorate was not a concrete aim, for much of the political capital of the native Africans (Batswana) and that of the Britons was expended on thwarting South Africa's and (to a lesser extent) Southern Rhodesia's efforts to incorporate all or part of the territory of Botswana in their own domains.

As the prospects for self-government for the protectorate increased in the early 1960s, the BPP began to face competition from the Bechuanaland Democratic Party (BDP), which was constituted in 1962 by the tribal notables and well-heeled white ranchers to ensure a les radical path to independence. Seretse Khama, whom the British had deposed as the heir to the chieftainship of the Bamangwato (the largest tribe) owing to his marriage to a Briton, enjoyed considerable traditional legitimacy in the protectorate and had studied law in Great Britain. In the first self-government elections held in March 1965, Seretse Khama's BDP emerged victorious, and Seretse became the country's first (and only) prime minister. Once the United Kingdom granted his nation independence, on September 30, 1966, Seretse occupied the office of president under the new constitution, which combined the offices of head of state and head of government.

Major Political Parties

BOTSWANA DEMOCRATIC PARTY (BDP)

This party, which is the dominant one, has enjoyed remarkable success in general elections, having won every election since the 1965 legislative assembly elections on the eve of independence. It has acquired the prestige associated with the accession to independence

at a time when white minority authority was the rule, rather than the exception, in the southern African region. Since independence it has used the symbol of a jack and the (Afrikaans) phrase *domkrag* for those Batswana who had difficulty pronouncing the English term "democracy"; the imagery suggested that the BDF would lift up (and thus improve) the nation, which started its independence with the most meager of resources.

An amalgam of traditional leaders and their followers as well as of the small but affluent white community, the BDP was the dominant force in the 1969, 1974, 1979, 1984, 1989, 1994, 1999, and 2004 parliamentary elections, although recently it has lost electoral ground to the BNF and has been riven by factionalism. Some of its MPs have been tainted by scandal, which was quite unknown in the earlier years of the party, when Seretse Khama served as president. Part of the explanation for such lapses in conduct can be traced to the growing wealth of the country—which has made Botswana one of the great success stories of sub-Saharan Africa—and the strategic ruling location of the BDP, which has enabled it to dispense a wide range of public goods.

BOTSWANA NATIONAL FRONT (BNF)

The BNF is now the official opposition in the National Assembly, which includes only three parties. The BNF secured 26 percent of the popular vote in the 2004 elections, winning 12 seats. Other national political parties have been marginalized. Led by Dr. Kenneth Koma until November 2001, when Otsweletse Moupo (a lawyer) took over, the BNF dates back to 1967 and has competed in every general election since 1969. Its core clientele tend to be the less traditional and urbanized Batswana as well as those who, from time to time, defect from the BDP. Observers have usually placed it to the left of the BDP on the political spectrum, if only on the basis of its political rhetoric. It has functioned as a critic of the BDP, suggested reforms (some of which the BDP has adopted), and has an outside chance of displacing the BDP in future elections. Were it to do so, many students of African democracy would assert that Botswana has become a full-blown democracy in which there is a peaceful transition of political power, a more difficult standard to meet than the usual one of competitive elections (which Botswana has met time after time).

BOTSWANA CONGRESS PARTY (BCP)

The BCP is the third-largest party in Botswana. Led by Otlaadisa Koosaletse, the BCP was formed in 1998 as a breakaway from the BNF. In the 1999 general election it won one parliamentary seat and a few council seats. On the whole, the BCP received 11 percent of the popular vote in the 1999 general election. In 2004 its popular vote increased to 16 percent, but the party still won only one seat.

Minor Political Parties

There are a host of small parties that do not have a significant following and have no representation in parliament. These include the Independence Freedom Party (IFP); the Botswana People's Party (BPP); the Botswana Progressive Union (BPU); the Botswana Labour Party (BPU); the Marxist-Leninist, Engels and Stalinist Movement of Botswana (MELS); the Social Democratic Party (SDP); the United Democratic Front (UDF); the United Socialist Party (USP); the United Action Party (UAP); and the New Democratic Front (NDF), the most recent offspring of the BNF. In preparation for the 1999 election, the BNF and most of these smaller parties—BPP, BLP, BPU, IFP, BWF, UAP and USP—entered into an alliance, the Botswana Alliance Movement (BAM), with the view to contest the 1999 election as one force. BCP, MELS, and SDF were not part of the alliance. This alliance was fraught with problems from the start, and the BNF pulled out of the alliance just before the 1999 election, while the BPP left the alliance after the election. The alliance did not gain any seats in parliament. BAM has since been registered as a political party. In 2003 the BNF, BAM, and the BPP entered into a frail electoral pact in which they agreed not to challenge each other in the 2004 general election.

Other Political Forces

Although most observers of Botswana's political system comment favorably upon the professional competence, probity, and loyalty of the national civil service, which was slowly localized to maintain high-quality performance, they have recently drawn attention to the Botswana Defense Force (BDF). Its small armed force

(primarily infantry and air force) was one of the very few in sub-Saharan Africa to postdate independence; it was formed in 1977 in response to the independence war in Zimbabwe, which spilled over into Botswana. The BDF, headed by Matshwenyeso Fisher, consumes too much of the country's gross domestic product in the opinion of some Botswana observers, who are anxious to see a reduced BDF establishment and budget as Botswana's contribution to balanced arms reduction in the southern African region. There is less concern about a possible BDF coup d'état, however.

In addition to the civil service and the BDF, multinational mining firms, especially the De Beers Consolidated Mines of South Africa, which oversees diamond mining in Botswana under the title of Debswana Diamond Company, have played a significant role in Botswana's remarkable economic growth and are significant stakeholders in the political stability of Botswana. However, the emergence of "blood" diamonds—illicit diamonds generated from other, more volatile parts of Africa that are often sold by rebel groups to fund their operations—poses a threat to Botswana's economic prosperity, which relies on legitimate, higher-cost diamonds for export.

National Prospects

Botswana can look forward to further successes and acolytes provided that its mineral-driven economy does not falter, on the one hand, and that it affords deeper and greater protection to those disadvantaged in terms of cattle, education, and marketable skills, on the other. Although very affluent by African standards, its economic and political system skews the allocation of political goods in the direction of its wealthier citizens. Many commentators who are quite impressed with Botswana's political record are nevertheless discomforted in terms of income inequalities, poverty, and unemployment. By the early 2000s HIV/AIDS had emerged as a huge challenge facing the country. These shortcomings attract the attention of the opposition BNF, which may more fully capitalize on these deficiencies in later general elections; much depends on the skill of the BDP in addressing these problems, thus neutralizing the BNF's appeals. The BNF and other opposition parties have so far failed to take advantage of these shortcomings in appealing for electoral support.

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FEDERATIVE REPUBLIC OF BRAZIL

(República Federativa do Brasil)

By Jeffrey J. Rinne, M.A.
Revised by Soeren Kern



Brazil is the world's fifth-largest country. Occupying almost half of South America, it shares a border with every other South American country except Chile and Ecuador. Brazil's economy is the world's ninth-largest. However, the distribution of wealth in Brazil is highly skewed. There are over 186 million Brazilians. Over 40 percent live in poverty.

Brazil's long history of slavery is a key determinant of the country's ethnic and cultural heritage. Approximately 45 percent of Brazilians identify themselves as black or mulatto, while 54 percent identify themselves as white. Most whites are descendants of Portuguese, German, Italian, or Spanish immigrants. A large number of Japanese also immigrated to Brazil during the late 19th century. Today, there are over 730,000 Brazilians of Asian descent. The surviving indigenous population in Brazil numbers less than 200,000.

Roman Catholicism is by far the most prominent religion in Brazil, but evangelical churches have grown rapidly during the past 25 years, and they continue to thrive.

HISTORY

During the past century Brazil's military has been a central actor in politics. In 1889, 1930, 1937, 1945, and 1954 the military directly intervened to shape the outcome of political struggles. In 1964 the military seized power and began 21 years of authoritarian rule under a string of military presidents. The military gradually began to relinquish power during the late 1970s, and in 1985 a civilian president was indirectly elected. Since 1989 Brazilians have chosen their president, legislators, governors, and mayors through free and direct elections.

A former colony of Portugal, Brazil became an independent monarchy in 1822. Dom Pedro I, the first emperor of newly independent Brazil, issued Brazil's constitution in 1824. The constitution established a bicameral legislature, but the emperor could dissolve the Congress whenever he wished. Brazil's second emperor, Dom Pedro II, was deposed by the military in 1889. The republic was declared on the following day, November 16, 1889.

The 1891 constitution established a decentralized, federal system of government with a directly elected president. During the Old Republic (1889–1930), "the official" candidate for the presidency invariably won. Elections were controlled by local political bosses, while national-level politics was settled through bargains between the oligarchs of Brazil's most powerful states. São Paulo and Minas Gerais were the preeminent states in this "politics of governors."

After the world economic crash in 1929, disgruntled politicians and high-ranking military officers organized a military uprising to transfer power to Getúlio Vargas, the loser of the 1930 presidential election. The "Revolution of 1930" suspended the 1891 constitution, and for the next four years Vargas ruled by decree. A Constituent Assembly completed a new constitution in 1934 and elected Vargas president for a four-year term. The military dissolved congress in

November 1937 and sponsored a Vargas dictatorship from 1937 to 1945.

POST–WORLD WAR II ERA

At the end of World War II dictators were widely discredited throughout the world. In October 1945 the military deposed Vargas, and the following year a new constitution was drafted by a newly elected Constituent Assembly. From 1946 to 1964 the principal route to political power in Brazil was through competitive, popular elections.

Three major parties vied for power during this period; all three were formed in 1945. Two of these parties were founded by Vargas in anticipation of the return to electoral politics. The Social Democratic Party (PSD) organized many of Brazil's rural political bosses, while the Brazilian Worker's Party (PTB) was an urban-based party designed to attract support from Brazil's emerging working class. The anti-Vargas forces formed a third party, the National Democratic Union (UDN).

Over the next 15 years the PSD and PTB dominated electoral politics in Brazil. Enrico Dutra, Vargas, and Juscelino Kubitschek were the first three presidents elected after 1945. Each was supported by one or both of these parties. Finally, in 1960 the presidential candidate backed by the UDN, Jânio Quadros, won a landslide victory. Mysteriously, Quadros resigned after just seven months, most likely expecting the congress to grant him near-dictatorial powers to convince him to remain president. Instead, the congress accepted his resignation and the vice president, João Goulart, ascended to the presidency.

Goulart's leftist policies and populist style were anathema to many powerful groups in Brazil, including the conservative military. Goulart sought to mobilize militant labor support, and despite threats from the military, he refused to distance himself from Brazil's Communist Party. At the end of March 1964 the military seized power.

One of the first acts of the military was to purge congress of its most left-leaning members. The congress then quickly elected General Castelo Branco as the new president. From 1964 to 1985 Brazil was governed by a succession of military presidents. Castelo Branco (1964–67) was followed by Artur da Costa e Silva (1967–69), Emílio Garrastazú Médici (1969–74), Ernesto Geisel (1974–1979), and João Figueiredo (1979–85).

There existed a consensus among leaders of the armed forces that the military was duty-bound to protect the nation from "irresponsible" politicians. Yet a majority of officers retained an ideological commitment to democracy. Severe constraints were imposed on the congress, elections, and individual civil liberties. Nonetheless, under military rule, elections were held regularly, and with the exception of 10 months in 1968–69, the congress continued to function.

Recurrent manipulations of the party system and electoral rules were necessary to construct election results that could meet with the military's approval. From 1964 to 1985 the president was indirectly elected. Beginning in 1964 the mayors of state capitals (along with other principal cities) were also indirectly elected. In 1966 direct elections were eliminated for governors. In 1977 one-third of the Senate was indirectly elected. Representatives to the Chamber of Deputies and state legislatures continued to be chosen through direct elections.

BEGINNING OF THE *ABERTURA* PROCESS

In the late 1970s President Geisel began a process of *abertura* (opening) that continued under his successor, President Figueiredo. In 1982 Figueiredo reintroduced direct elections for state governors. That same year voters also elected one-third of the Senate, the entire Chamber of Deputies, and new state legislatures. The results of these elections were clearly a victory for the opposition Party of the Brazilian Democratic Movement (PMDB). The PMDB won the governorships of Brazil's most developed states and a majority of the seats in the Chamber of Deputies. The government party, the Democratic Social Party (PDS), retained control of the Senate. More importantly, the PDS maintained control of the electoral college that would elect the next president in 1985. (The electoral college was composed of the entire congress plus six representatives from each state legislature.)

In 1985 the opposition candidate for the presidency was the elder statesman Tancredo Neves. Although the PDS was the majority party in the electoral college, Tancredo skillfully allayed the apprehensions of the military and convinced a group of PDS delegates to defect and support his candidacy. Tancredo was elected president but tragically died after undergoing intestinal surgery on the eve of his inauguration. The vice president–elect, José Sarney, ascended to the presidency.

The grand hopes that Tancredo had inspired were disappointed, but the democratization process moved forward. In May 1985 the congress reinstated direct elections for all mayors, abolished the electoral college, and legalized Communist parties. A new constitu-

tion was approved on October 5, 1988, and the following year Brazilians elected a president by popular vote for the first time since 1960. In 1993 a national referendum was held to choose among a presidential, parliamentary, or monarchical form of government for Brazil. Presidentialism won soundly.

The System of Government

Brazil is a federal republic composed of 26 states and a Federal District. Its constitution was approved on October 5, 1988.

EXECUTIVE

The 1988 constitution granted considerable power to the office of the presidency. The president appoints a cabinet of ministers, prepares and executes a national budget, proposes legislation to congress, and is commander in chief of the armed forces. The president controls a large number of federal appointments and federal spending projects that can (and are) distributed to craft support for the executive's agenda. The president can also exercise legislative power by issuing decrees that have the force of law. These decree-laws are valid for only 30 days, but if the congress does not vote to rescind a presidential decree-law, it can be perpetually reissued by the executive every 30 days.

The 1988 constitution established a five-year presidential term. However, in 1994 the congress reduced the term to four years through a constitutional amendment. Direct elections for president historically were decided by a single round of voting: the candidate with a plurality of votes was elected. In the new constitution, a runoff election was created for occasions when no candidate receives an absolute majority in the first round. The practice of barring presidents from seeking immediate reelection began in Brazil in the 19th century, but in 1997 the congress amended the constitution to allow immediate reelection to a second term.

Fernando Collor de Mello was the first president elected under the 1988 constitution and the first popularly elected president since the 1964 coup. Collor was formerly governor of Alagoas, a poor state in northeast Brazil. Though virtually unknown at the start of the presidential campaign, he projected a young, energetic image that successfully capitalized on the sense of malaise produced by years of stagnant growth and double-digit monthly inflation.

Collor invented a new party, the Party of National Reconstruction (PRN), as an electoral vehicle for his candidacy. In a field of more than 10 candidates, Collor won the first round with just over 30 percent of the vote, advancing to a runoff election against the second-place finisher, Luis Inácio Lula da Silva of the Workers' Party (PT). Collor won the runoff by a relatively narrow margin of 35 million votes to 31 million.

Once in office, Collor governed almost entirely by decree. His economic stabilization plans failed, and in 1992 the president's brother made startling revelations of graft and influence peddling by the president and his campaign fund-raiser, Paulo César Farias. In September 1992 the Chamber of Deputies initiated impeachment proceedings against the president. Collor resigned on the eve of his trial in the Senate, but the Senate nevertheless voted to strip Collor of the right to run for any elective office until the year 2000.

The vice president, Itamar Franco, ascended to the presidency. During the final year of his administration, Franco's "Real Plan" (the Real is the country's currency) successfully reduced inflation to under 2 percent per month from the nearly 40 percent monthly inflation rates of a few months before. Franco's finance minister during the Real Plan, Fernando Henrique Cardoso, received much of the credit for the plan's success. Moreover, as inflation continued downward in the months prior to the election, Cardoso's popularity rose steadily. On October 3, 1994, Cardoso was elected president after only the first round of voting with 54.3 percent of the vote.

Cardoso, a member of the center-left Brazilian Social Democratic Party (PSDB), was formerly an academic and later a senator. Although the PSDB held only a minority of seats in the congress, Cardoso fashioned a loose alliance with other parties of the center and right to support his administration.

During Cardoso's first term, inflation remained low and economic growth was moderate. In October 1998 Cardoso was elected to a second term. Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, commonly known as Lula, was elected president in 2002, after his fourth campaign for the office.

Lula, a former union leader, is Brazil's first working-class president. He pledged social change and promised to eradicate hunger. Investors remembered his radical rhetoric of the past and feared his election. As it became more apparent he would win, the Brazilian currency weakened, and Brazil's country-risk rating skyrocketed. In the months after his election, however, he took a conservative fiscal path, warning that social reforms

would take years and that Brazil had no alternative but to extend fiscal austerity policies. Following these reassurances, the Real recovered dramatically.

LEGISLATURE

Brazil has a bicameral National Congress composed of a Senado Federal (Federal Senate) and Câmara dos Deputados (Chamber of Deputies). The Senate has 81 members; three senators are elected from each state, plus three from the Federal District. Elections for the Senate are held every four years, alternately for one-third and two-thirds of its members. Senators serve eight-year terms.

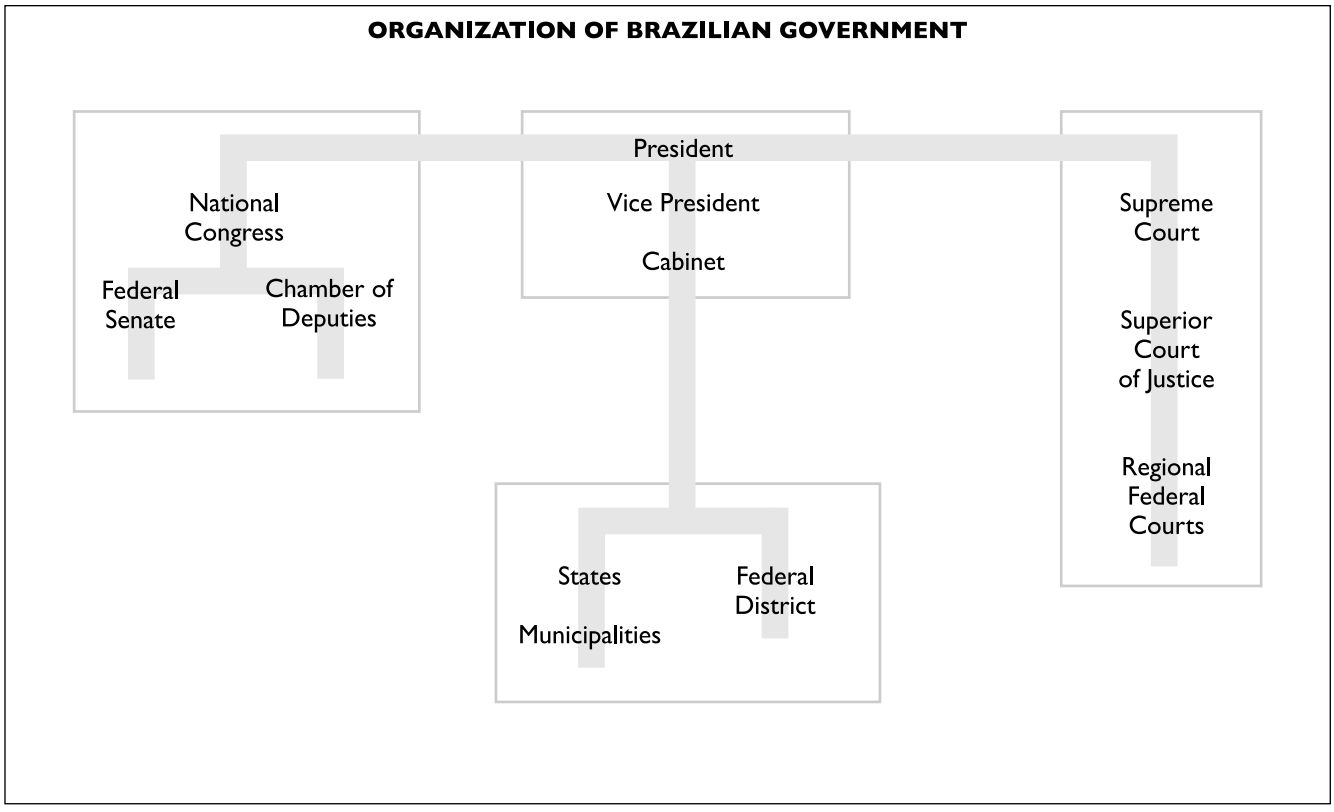
The Chamber of Deputies currently has 513 seats. Deputies are elected to four-year terms; elections are held once every four years to renew the entire Chamber. Each state elects a number of representatives in proportion to its population. However, the constitution guarantees each state at least eight deputies, and no state is allowed more than 70. This means that Brazil's least-populated states are significantly overrepresented. Brazil's most populous state, São Paulo, is allotted 60 representatives. Although São Paulo has 23 percent of Brazil's population, this state elects only 12 percent of the seats in the Chamber of Deputies.

Candidates for the Chamber of Deputies must be at least 21 years old. Candidates for the Senate must be at least 35. Both senators and deputies can be reelected repeatedly.

In making laws, each chamber operates as a revision body for the other. If a bill or law originates in the Chamber of Deputies, it must subsequently be approved by the Senate, and vice versa. If a piece of legislation is passed by one chamber, then approved with changes by the other, it must go back to the chamber where it originated for new debate and voting.

After legislation is passed by both the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate, it is sent to the president. The president may approve the legislation in whole or in part, or he may veto it. A majority vote of the full congress sitting in a joint session is necessary to override a whole or partial presidential veto.

As part of its oversight authority, the congress is empowered to call any minister or administrative officer of the president before congress to answer questions on a specified subject. The president must have the authorization of congress to declare war, and congressional approval is also necessary to declare a state of emergency. All international treaties must be approved by the congress, and the president and vice



president must have authorization from congress to be absent from the country for more than 15 days.

The Senate has exclusive competence in several areas. The Senate must approve the president's nominees for justices of the high courts, foreign diplomats, the attorney general, and the president and directors of the Central Bank. Borrowing by the federal, state, and local governments also must be authorized by the Senate.

The Chamber of Deputies may initiate impeachment proceedings against a sitting president, vice president, or minister with a two-thirds vote. The charges are then judged by the Senate.

JUDICIARY

The highest court in Brazil is the Supremo Tribunal Federal (Supreme Court). The court is empowered to review the constitutionality of legislation and executive actions, both at the state and the federal levels.

There are 11 justices on the court. Each is appointed for life. When there is a vacancy on the court, the president nominates a new Supreme Court justice. Supreme Court nominees must be between the ages of 35 and 65. The president's choice must then receive the approval of the Senate. The removal or retirement of a judge can be made by a two-thirds vote of the court's members.

Brazil's Superior Tribunal de Justiça (Superior Court of Justice) is an appellate court that also serves as the first court of action for certain crimes and *mandados de segurança* (injunctions against action or legislation of the government). The Superior Court of Justice is composed of a minimum of 33 judges. They are appointed in the same way as Supreme Court justices. One-third of the appointees must be former judges of the Regional Federal Courts.

Tribunais Regionais Federais (Regional Federal Courts) are located in each of the state capitals and the Federal District. They have at least seven judges. Brazil also has special military courts, labor courts, and electoral courts.

In every state and the Federal District there is a Tribunal Regional do Trabalho (Regional Labor Court). These courts adjudicate questions relating to collective bargaining agreements and individual work contracts between employers and employees. The court of appeal for the Regional Labor Courts is the Tribunal Superior do Trabalho (Superior Labor Court). The Superior Labor Court has 27 justices.

The Tribunais Regionais Eleitorais (Regional Electoral Courts) adjudicate cases concerning the eligibility of candidates for elected office and the legality of the election procedures. There are electoral courts in every state capital and the Federal District. Each has seven members.

The Tribunal Superior Eleitoral (Superior Electoral Court) is composed of three judges from the Supreme Court, two judges from the Superior Court of Justice, and two lawyers nominated by the president from a list of suggested candidates provided by the Supreme Court. Judges on the Superior Electoral Court are appointed for a two-year term and cannot serve more than four consecutive years.

Military crimes are judged by the Superior Tribunal Militar (Superior Military Court). The Superior Military Court is composed of 15 judges: three from the navy, four from the army, three from the air force, and five civilians. Members of the court are nominated by the president and must be approved by the Senate.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Brazil is a federal republic composed of 26 states and a Federal District. The states are Acre, Alagoas, Amapá, Amazonas, Bahia, Ceará, Espirito Santo, Goiás, Maranhão, Mato Grosso, Mato Grosso do Sul, Minas Gerais, Pará, Paraíba, Paraná, Pernambuco, Piauí, Rio de Janeiro, Rio Grande do Norte, Rio Grande do Sul, Rondônia, Roraima, Santa Catarina, São Paulo, Sergipe, and Tocantins. The federal capital is Brasília.

Each of the states has an assembly. The number of representatives in each state assembly is equal to three times the state's representation in the federal Chamber of Deputies, up to a total of 36. Then, if the state has more than 12 representatives in the Chamber of Deputies, another representative is added for every additional federal deputy.

Governors and state representatives are elected to four-year terms. At the municipal level, *prefeitos* (mayors) and *vereadores* (city council members) are also directly elected to four-year terms. The number of council members is determined by the city's population. Each city council has a minimum of nine *vereadores* and a maximum of 55. In 2004 there were 4,975 registered municipalities in Brazil. The most recent election for mayors and city council members in Brazil took place in October 2004.

Prior to 1997 immediate reelection to any executive office (e.g., governors, mayors) was forbidden. However, the 1997 constitutional amendment permitting the immediate reelection of the president enabled governors and mayors to seek immediate reelection as well.

The Electoral System

Elections for the president, vice president, governors, senators, federal deputies, and state legislators take place every four years on the first Sunday in October. All Brazilians over age 16 are eligible to vote. Voting is compulsory for literate citizens between the ages of 18 and 70. It is optional for illiterates and those between the ages of 16 and 18 and over 70. Women won the right to vote in 1932, the same year that obligatory voting was introduced. In 1985 illiterates were granted the right to vote.

Elections for the Senate alternate every four years between choosing one or two senators per state. Each state constitutes either a one- or a two-member district, depending on the election year. Voters cast a single vote if the election is for one senator and two votes if the election is for two. In an election to fill one Senate seat, the candidate who receives a plurality of the vote wins. If the election is for two Senate seats, the two candidates with the highest number of votes win. There are no runoff elections for Senate seats.

For elections to the Chamber of Deputies, each state (and the Federal District) constitutes a multimember electoral district. Seats are allotted through open-list proportional representation. Each voter may cast a single vote, either for a candidate appearing on the ballot or for a party only (i.e., without indicating a preference for a specific candidate). To determine the party's seats in the chamber, electoral officials must first determine the electoral quotient (i.e., the number of votes needed to elect a single representative). This is calculated by dividing the total number of valid votes by the number of seats to be filled. Then, the vote total received by a party and all candidates registered to that party is divided by the electoral quotient to determine the number of seats won by the party. After the vote totals of all parties are divided by the electoral quotient, remaining seats are allocated to the parties with the largest remainders.

The candidate(s) who will occupy the party's seat(s) is (are) determined by rank-ordering the vote tallies of the party's candidates. The candidate with the largest number of votes receives the first seat, the candidate with the second-largest the second seat, and so on until all the seats won by the party have been filled. This method of allocating party seats forces candidates to compete not only against other parties but against members of their own party as well.

The Party System

ORIGINS OF THE PARTIES

The parties of the Old Republic (1989–1930) were groups of elites rather than mass parties. (The Communist Party, founded in 1922, is a partial exception.) Two movements committed to mass mobilization emerged in the 1930s. Integralism was a paramilitary-style movement on the Right with strong affinities to European fascist parties. At the other end of the spectrum, the Aliança Nacional Libertadora (National Liberating Alliance; ANL) was a popular front movement led by the Brazilian Communist Party. In 1935 the Vargas government moved to repress the Left, and two years later, when Brazil entered the period of the Estado Nôvo ("New State," 1937–45), the state cracked down on the Integralists as well.

Under the Estado Nôvo all political parties were eliminated, all elections suspended, and the congress was shut down. The state established a set of corporatist institutions designed to circumvent the role of parties and parliament. Business and labor interests were to be directly represented in the state. With the end of the Estado Nôvo, Brazil entered a democratic period (1946–64) more representative and competitive than at any former time in the nation's history. The three nationally based parties that emerged in 1945 were without precedent in Brazil. These parties retained elements of elitism and clientelism, but they relied upon broad-based, popular support to compete for power through electoral politics.

From 1946 to 1964 the PSD was the largest party in Brazil. The organizational base of the party was primarily rural. Vargas's political genius (and that of his protégé, Kubitschek) was to combine successfully the power of this old-style, clientelist party with the more progressive PTB. The PTB was another Vargas creation. However, the PTB was an urban-based party that focused on mobilizing support from Brazil's growing working class. The Ministry of Labor was particularly important in the formation of the PTB.

Those who opposed Vargas and his brand of populism formed the UDN. For most of the period from 1945 to 1964 the UDN was the second-largest party in the congress. Though more conservative than the PSD, the UDN did not rely as heavily on rural areas for support. Like the PSD, the UDN experienced a gradual decline in voter support over time The PTB, however, retained its strength and surpassed the UDN congressional delegation in 1962. The decline in the combined strength of these three parties can be seen in

the accompanying table. Ten smaller parties organized by disparate political groups at the regional and state levels gradually captured a larger and larger share of the national vote.

The Partido Communista Brasileiro (Brazilian Communist Party; PCB) would likely have been a formidable electoral force during this period. The party was outlawed in 1935 under Vargas but legalized again in 1945. Participating in the December 1945 elections, the PCB won nearly 10 percent of the national vote, earning 15 seats in the Chamber of Deputies and one in the Senate. In 1947 the PCB was again outlawed by the state.

PERCENTAGE OF VOTE WON BY BRAZIL'S THREE LARGEST PARTIES IN ELECTIONS FOR THE CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES, 1945–62

Party	1945	1947	1950	1954	1958	1962
PSD	42.7	35.2	27.0	23.1	19.9	18.3
UDN	26.6	34.3	17.0	14.3	14.3	13.2
PTB	10.2	13.8	16.5	15.7	15.9	14.2
Total	79.5	83.3	60.5	53.1	50.1	45.7

Source: Assembled from Bolívar Lamounier and Judith Muszynski, "Brasil," in Enciclopedia Electoral Latinoamericana y del Caribe, *ed. Dieter Nohlen (San Jose, Costa Rica: Instituto Interamericano de Derechos Humanos, 1993).*

After the military coup in 1964, the military initially allowed the purged pre-1964 parties to function. But in October 1965 the military dissolved Brazil's 13 existing parties and created a new, two-party system to replace them. The Aliança Renovadora Nacional (National Renovating Alliance; ARENA) was created as the party of the military government, and the Movimento Democrático Brasileiro (Brazilian Democratic Movement, MDB) was invented as the party of the opposition.

For a time the electoral results obtained under this new party structure conferred legitimacy on Brazil's military leaders. However, in November 1974 the opposition MDB won a third of all seats in the Chamber of Deputies and 16 of the 20 Senate seats up for election. Four years later the MDB won a majority of the popular vote. Elections clearly were no longer serving to legitimate military rule.

The two-party system imposed by the military simplified voter choices: Brazilians voted either in favor of or against the regime. In 1979 the military government changed the party system yet again in an effort to diminish the "plebiscitary" quality of the elections. ARENA and the MDB were dissolved, and the formation of additional parties was legalized. The military hoped these changes would divide the opposition into several parties while maintaining ARENA's support under a new name. The Social Democratic Party (PDS) replaced ARENA as the party of the government, while the MDB placed the word "party" before its name to become the PMDB.

PERCENTAGE OF SEATS WON IN THE CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES BY PARTY, 1966–78 (% OF VALID POPULAR VOTE IN PARENTHESES)

Party	1966	1970	1974	1978
ARENA	67.7 (64.0)	71.9 (69.5)	55.8 (52.0)	55.0 (50.4)
MDB	32.3 (36.0)	28.1 (30.5)	44.2 (48.0)	45.0 (49.6)

Source: Bolívar Lamounier and Judith Muszynski, "Brasil," in Enciclopedia Electoral Latinoamericana y del Caribe, *ed. Dieter Nohlen (San Jose, Costa Rica: Instituto Interamericano de Derechos Humanos, 1993).*

The military's strategy was partially successful. Apart from the PDS and PMDB, three additional parties were founded and participated in the 1982 elections: the Democratic Labor Party (PDT), the Brazilian Labor Party (PTB), and the Workers' Party (PT). However, all three of these parties combined received little more than 5 percent of the vote. The PMDB continued to attract the vast majority of votes among those opposed to the military regime.

President Figueiredo's manipulation of the electoral law in anticipation of the 1982 elections actually helped to preserve the dominant position of the PMDB within the opposition. In July 1981 Senator Tancredo Neves and the federal deputies Magalhães Pinto, Thales Ramalho, and Miro Teixeira founded the Partido Popular (Popular Party; PP). The party's banner attracted moderate and conservative politicians in the expectation that the PP could win enough support in the 1982 elections to divide power with the PDS. However, the government's "November package" required voters to select candidates for all offices from a single party in order for their ballot to be counted. Since the PDS was strongest in local, rural politics, the government expected that the strength of candidates for local office would also win a vote for the party's state and federal candidates. However, the unintended consequence of this *voto vinculado* ("tied vote") was to force the PP into a hasty retreat to join the

PMDB. On December 12, 1981, one month after the "November package," the PP ceased to exist.

In January 1985 a sizable faction of the PDS defected to create a new party, the Partido da Frente Liberal (Party of the Liberal Front; PFL). When the prohibition against Communist parties was removed in 1985, the PCB and the Partido Comunista do Brasil (Communist Party of Brazil; PCdoB) legally formed again. The Partido Socialista Brasileiro (Brazilian Socialist Party; PSB) also reorganized in 1985. And on the Right, the Partido Liberal (Liberal Party; PL) was formed in 1985 by dissidents from the PFL and PDS.

Brazil's party system was gradually changing from a dominant two-party system to a multiparty democracy. However, through the mid-1980s Brazil's party system continued to be dominated by only two parties. The PFL joined the PMDB in support of the Sarney government, and both parties benefited when the Cruzado Plan successfully brought down Brazil's high inflation rate. By mid-1986 serious economic imbalances threatened the sustainability of the Cruzado Plan, but the PMDB and the PFL conspired to mask these weaknesses until after the November legislative elections. The PMDB won an absolute majority in both chambers of congress, and the PFL also fared well. But just days after the election, inflation shot back up and both parties were enormously discredited. The PMDB held 261 seats in the Chamber of Deputies after the 1986 elections, but only 109 four years later. The PFL won 116 seats in 1986 but held only 83 after the 1990 elections. Brazil's smaller parties began to draw a much larger share of the popular vote.

This splintering of parties has diminished since the 1990 congressional elections. The vote share of the larger parties has been less volatile, and the four biggest parties (the PFL, PSDB, PMDB, and PPB), all formerly allied with the current government, have drawn some representatives from smaller parties to their banners.

PARTY ORGANIZATION

Brazil today has the most fragmented party system in Latin America. There are 19 parties currently represented in the Brazilian congress, and none holds close

SEATS IN THE BRAZILIAN CONGRESS BY PARTY, 1990–2002

	Chamber of Deputies				Senate			
Party	**1990**	**1994**	**1997**	**2002**	**1990**	**1994**	**1997**	**2002**
PMDB	108	107	93	74	23	22	22	19
PFL	83	89	109	84	16	17	23	19
PSDB	38	62	96	71	10	11	13	11
PDS[a]	42	—	—	—	3	—	—	—
PDC[a]	22	—	—	—	3	—	—	—
PPB[b]	—	88	79	49	—	12	6	1
PT	35	49	51	91	1	5	5	14
PDT	46	34	24	21	5	6	3	5
PTB	37	31	22	26	6	5	4	3
PL	16	13	9	26	0	1	0	3
PRN	41	1	0	0	5	0	0	0
Others	35	39	30	71	9	2	5	6
Total	503	513	513	513	81	81	81	81

Sources: Compiled from data in Luis Fernandes, "Muito Barulho por Nada? O Realinhamento Pol'tico-Ideológico nas Eleições de 1994," Dados *38, no. 1 (1995); data for 1997 and 2002 provided by the Senado Federal and Cámara dos Deputados.*

[a]*The PDS and PDC merged in 1993 to form the PPR.*

[b]*The PPB was formed in 1995 through the merger of the PPR and PP. For 1994 the table shows the combined seats won by the PPR and PP.*

to a majority of seats. Brazil's system of proportional representation fosters this proliferation of parties by facilitating representation by small parties. The states constitute electoral districts for federal deputies, and this yields an extremely large district magnitude (total number of seats divided by the number of electoral districts). Large district magnitudes combined with the method of largest-remainders to allocate seats is one of the most permissive forms of proportional representation imaginable for the representation of small parties.

Brazil's numerous political parties are typically weak and fluid organizations. The Brazilian newspaper *Correio Brasiliense* reported on September 15, 1997, that since January 1995 federal deputies had changed parties at least 174 times. Party changes also occur in the Senate, though at a lesser rate. There are no legal obstacles to prevent a politician from changing parties while in office, and there are few barriers to creating new parties. Most politicians owe little to their parties. To win elections, politicians rely more upon their personal electoral appeal and ability to raise funds than upon their party organizations. In part because of this, politicians generally feel free to vote as they wish, often "selling" their vote in return for patronage benefits from the executive.

While most of Brazil's parties have weak national structures and ill-defined ideological positions, there is a great difference between some parties and others in their organization, level of cohesion, and ideological content. The parties of the left (the PT, PPS, and the PCdoB) have strong ideological identities. They are comparatively more disciplined parties—their representatives usually vote together in the congress—and they have strong links to the labor movement and other social movements. (On the Right, the voting record of PFL representatives has been fairly uniform by Brazilian standards). The PSDB and PDT, roughly centrist parties, are less dogmatic and less reliable as a block of votes in the congress. Still, they are more cohesive than many other Brazilian parties.

CAMPAIGNING

The Brazilian Congress approved a new electoral law in September 1997. In an election year, elections for president, vice president, senator, federal deputy, state deputy, mayor, and city council member are all held simultaneously on the first Sunday in October. Candidates must register by the July 5. Disseminating electoral propaganda is permitted only after that date.

Registered parties are allotted free radio and television time, divided equally among the candidates. Political parties may register a number of candidates equal to 150 percent of the positions to be filled in each electoral contest. Candidates may purchase advertising space in newspapers, but radio and television propaganda is limited to the free hour provided by the public.

Major Political Parties

WORKERS' PARTY

(Partido dos Trabalhadores; PT)

HISTORY

The PT was born out the "new unionism" movement of the late 1970s. A new generation of labor leaders challenged the rules and structures of state-controlled unionism in Brazil, and some quickly began to consider that workplace activism might not be enough. In October 1979 they founded the PT to represent the interests of workers in Brazil.

The PT has always been strongest in the industrial centers of the country, particularly in the region of greater São Paulo, the industrial hub of the nation, where the new unionism movement was born. The PT is divided between radical leftists and more moderate members, but the party has tended to vote as a bloc in the congress. The PT is among the most disciplined and programmatic parties in the congress.

In 1989 Lula da Silva, a union leader and founder of the PT, lost the presidential election by a mere four million votes. In the 1990 congressional elections the PT doubled its representation but still finished with a disappointing number of seats given the hopes that were sparked by Lula's strong performance in the election just a year before.

In the 1994 presidential election Lula again placed second, this time to Fernando Henrique Cardoso. But in the October 2002 elections Lula won the election with 61 percent of the vote. His challenger in the runoff was José Serra of the PDSB, the party of former president Fernando Henrique Cardoso. For the first few years of his tenure, Lula enjoyed solid approval ratings and pursued his agenda cautiously but steadily. However, in 2005 a series of corruption scandals significantly weakened his adminstration. As of mid-2005 he had not yet announced whether he would seek reelection in 2006.

POLICY

The PT advocates structural reforms—both rural and urban—to bring about a profound redistribution of wealth and income in Brazil. It argues that economic policy should be aimed at achieving full employment. Quality public education and health care should be made available to everyone. All workers should enjoy job stability, and the length of the workweek should be reduced. The PT has been generally opposed to increased integration with the international economy.

Despite these fairly radical policies, Lula won election in 2002 by moderating these stands and using more centrist rhetoric. Following his victory, he further sought to reassure nervous investors and international observers by moving cautiously. His actions in the first few years of his presidency frustrated the more radical wing of his party, with the result that a number of members broke off in 2005 to form a new party. The corruption scandals that hit the Lula administration in 2005 notwithstanding, the party's more moderate faction has clearly been in ascendence in the early 2000s.

MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY

The PT has historically had strong support among the most active unions, peasant movements, and grassroots organizations. The PT is also supported by Catholic and nonfundamentalist Protestant churches. Students, intellectuals, and white-collar employees constitute a significant portion of the leadership and membership of the party.

ORGANIZATION

Internal democracy is extremely important to the party. The PT is organized in a pyramid structure such that the party's base controls the decision making of the party leadership. Decisions are transmitted from the *núcleos de base* (basic units), to the *zones* (an intermediate level encompassing several basic units), to the state regional directories, and on to the national directory. The national directory is composed of 85 members elected at a biannual national meeting for a two-year term. The national meeting unites approximately 500 delegates elected by the party's members.

LEADERSHIP

In 2005 Lula was leader of the party, although Tarso Genro was the party's president. The party's leader in the Chamber of Deputies was Paulo Rocha.

PROSPECTS

The PT has grown steadily since the party was formed in 1979. But party loyalty is weak, and deputies and senators who belong to the PT do not always vote with the government. Though hailed by his supporters as a working-class hero, business leaders and investors have traditionally been wary of the party's charismatic leader, Lula. In his fourth attempt to win the presidency, he toned down his rhetoric and emphasized that he and his party had moved closer to the political center. He also pledged to meet targets set by the International Monetary Fund. These actions earned him solid approval ratings in the first few years of his presidency, but his administration was badly shaken by corruption scandals that erupted in early 2005. By mid-2005 his reelection campaign for the 2006 election was suddenly in doubt, and polls showed him trailing José Serra.

DEMOCRATIC WORKERS' PARTY

(Partido Democrático Trabalhista; PDT)

HISTORY

Leonel Brizola founded the PDT in 1980. Brizola was the pre-1964 leader of the PTB and the governor of Rio Grande do Sul at the time of the military coup. Brizola fled into exile after the coup and returned to Brazil in 1979. He hoped to form a new party under the old PTB label, but the electoral authorities awarded the right to use the name to Ivete Vargas, a grandniece of the former president. Brizola then founded the PDT. In 2002 the party won a combined 26 seats in congress, and it joined the ruling coalition led by Lula.

POLICY

The PDT's program is populist and reformist. Generally, the PDT is somewhat more moderate than the PT. The PDT believes the state has a fundamental role as regulator and defender of the national economy. The party favors the nationalization of foreign firms in strategic sectors and would restrict foreign capital.

MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY

The party is strongest in Rio Grande do Sul and Rio de Janeiro. A great limitation of the party is that it has never successfully penetrated the state of São Paulo, the country's most populous state and the state with the largest number of industrial workers.

LEADERSHIP

Leonel Brizola was the honorary president of the PDT until his death in 2004. As of 2005 the party's leader in the Chamber of Deputies was Severiano Alves.

PROSPECTS

The PDT's popularity remains minimal, and it continues to be relevant only insofar as it aligns itself with stronger parties, particularly the PT.

LIBERAL FRONT PARTY

(Partido da Frente Liberal; PFL)

HISTORY

The PFL was formed in 1985 by a faction within the PDS opposed to their party's presidential candidate, Paulo Maluf. The PFL defected to support the candidacy of Tancredo Neves, thus securing his election as president in the electoral college. After the 1986 elections the PFL was the second-largest party in the congress. Between 1986 and 1990 the party lost 31 of its 134 seats as politicians switched parties, but since 1994 the PFL has regained its position as the country's second-largest party. In the October 2002 elections the PFL won a combined 103 seats in the congress, behind only the PT's combined 105 seats. Along with the PSDB, the PFL formed the main opposition party to Lula's coalition government.

POLICY

The PFL defends a free-market economic model and generally opposes the more left-wing economic policies of the Lula administration.

MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY

The PFL is strongest in the northeast, particularly in Bahia and Pernambuco.

LEADERSHIP

Senator Jorge Bornhausen is leader of the party, while Rodrigo Maia is the party's leader in the Chamber of Deputies.

PROSPECTS

The PFL has attempted to craft itself into a "modern" party, with a clear program and disciplined voting by the party's representatives in the legislature. Much of the party's success has resulted from mixing this "modern" ideal with traditional, clientelist political structures in the northeast. The election of Lula in 2002 reflected popular opposition to the free-market economic policies advocated by the PFL. However, the corruption scandals that rocked the Lula administration in 2005 offered the PFL hope of winning the next elections in 2006.

BRAZILIAN SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY

(Partido da Social Democracia Brasileira; PSDB)

HISTORY

The PSDB was formed in June 1988 by center-left dissidents within the PMDB. A few members of the PFL, PDS, and PTB were also founding members of the party.

In 1994 the PSDB allied with the PFL and the PTB to elect Fernando Henrique Cardoso president of Brazil. In order to construct a legislative majority capable of passing constitutional amendments, the PSDB also drew the PMDB and PPB into the governing coalition. In 1998 Cardoso was reelected to the presidency, but in 2002 the PT's Lula won the election, beating the PSDB's José Serra. PSDB became part of the opposition along with the PFL. The PSDB won a combined 82 seats in the congress in the 2002 elections.

POLICY

Unlike the advocates of neoclassical economic policy, the PSDB platform supports an active state involvement to address issues of social inequality and the promotion of industrial competitiveness in the international economy. The PSDB platform also defends land reform and environmental protection. Still, this "neoliberal" position is markedly more right-wing than that of the governing PT.

MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY

The PSDB is identified as a gathering place for left-leaning but nonradical intellectuals. Many of the party's leaders, like former president Cardoso, are former academics of one sort or another. The party is essentially middle class. It appeals to a constituency favoring greater political and social equality but without endangering financial stability.

LEADERSHIP

Senator Eduardo Azaredo is leader of the PSDB. Alberto Goldman is the party's leader in the Chamber of Deputies. Mário Covas, the governor of São Paulo, and Fernando Henrique Cardoso, former president of Brazil, are prominent PSDB politicians. José Serra, the mayor of São Paulo and the losing candidate in the 2002 presidential election, was likely to to make another strong run in the 2006 election.

PROSPECTS

The historic election in 2002 of Lula, who ran on an explicitly anti-neoliberal platform, marked a significant defeat for the PSDB and its neoliberal counterpart, the PFL. However, both parties stood to gain by the corruption scandals that threatened the Lula administration in 2005. Polls taken in mid-2005 showed Serra as perhaps the favorite for the 2006 election.

PROGRESSIVE PARTY

(Partido Progressista; PP)

HISTORY

The PP was founded in 1995 through the merger of the Progressive Reform Party (PPB), the Progressive Party (PP), and the Progressive Republican Party (PPR). Previously, the PPR had been formed through the merger of Paulo Maluf's Partido Democrático Social (Social Democratic Party; PDS) and the small Partido Democrata Cristão (Christian Democratic Party; PDC). Many PPR politicians were former supporters of the military government. After changing its name to the Brazilian Progressive Party (PPB), the party won a combined 50 seats in the congress in the 2002 elections. It changed its name back to the Progressive Party in 2003.

POLICY

The PP is a right-wing party. It supports free-market reforms and international investment in Brazil.

MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY

The PP is strongest in the more developed southern region of Brazil. Many of Brazil's industrialists support the party.

LEADERSHIP

The party's most important voice is Paulo Maluf, former governor of São Paulo, former mayor of the city of São Paulo, and former presidential candidate. However, Maluf has a notorious reputation for corruption was convicted of such charges in 2001. In September 2005 he was arrested again on charges of intimidating witnesses in previous trials. The party's leader in the Chamber of Deputies is José Janene. Other important leaders are Esperidião Amin, former governor of Santa Catarina and senator; and Francisco Dornelles, former minister of labor.

PROSPECTS

The PP's platform has been overshadowed by the rise of the left-wing PT under the direction of Lula. The corruption charges dogging Maluf have hurt the party's national efforts, but its base—which includes a high number of business owners and entrepreneurs—has remained stable.

PARTY OF THE BRAZILIAN DEMOCRATIC MOVEMENT

(Partido do Movimento Democrático Brasileiro, PMDB)

HISTORY

The PMDB was launched in 1979 as a successor to the MDB. In addition to former MDB politicians, the PMDB also welcomed into its ranks many former members of ARENA and the PSD. In 1981 the PMDB accepted a merger with the more conservative Partido Popular (Popular Party; PP). Thus, the PMDB has served as a catchall party for politicians from many ideological currents.

In 1986 the PMDB held 308 seats in the congress—an absolute majority in both houses. By 1990 the PMDB had lost 173 of these seats to other parties. This dramatic change resulted, in part, from the collapse of the Cruzado Plan. However, politicians also left the PMDB as a result of sharp internal cleavages generated by the party's heterogeneous makeup. In June 1988 the more liberal faction of the party left to form the PSDB. In the October 2002 elections the PMDB won 93 seats in both houses, and the PSDB won 82.

ORGANIZATION

The PMDB has a national convention and party committees at the national, regional, state, and municipal levels.

POLICY

The PMDB was founded as a center-left party. Now roughly centrist, the party has a very heterogeneous makeup. The broad spectrum of views included within the party has made it difficult for the PMDB to present clear, concrete proposals. The party has preached fuller democratization as the key to solving all the nation's problems.

The PMDB joined Lula's governing coalition following the 2002 elections, but it became common for many PMDB legislators to vote against key elements of the government's reform program. In December 2004 the PMDB pulled out of the governing coalition.

MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY

The PMDB was formerly strongest in the cities and most-developed regions of the country. However, the party is now strongest in the interior and less-developed regions. Today, the PMDB is a mostly rural, clientelist party highly reliant on state patronage.

LEADERSHIP

José Sarney, Brazil's president from 1985 to 1990, is now a senator from the state of Amapá and a prominent congressional leader of the PMDB. José Borba is the party's leader in the Chamber. The PMDB's national president is Michel Temer.

PROSPECTS

Support for the PMDB has been slowly declining since the 1994 elections. People both within the party and without have frequently declared that the PMDB lacks a real identity and is undergoing an existential crisis. The PMDB's position is threatened on the Right by the appeal of the PFL and PP and on the left by the PSDB. Its decision to abandon Lula's governing coalition in December 2004 was driven by PMDB governors who perhaps had designs on running for president in 2006. The defection did not have a major impact, as many PMDB congressmen continued to vote with the government on many issues. Those who occupied minister positions even held on to those posts. However, in early 2005 one PMDB minister, Romera Jucá, was implicated in the growing corruption scandals plaguing the Lula administration and was forced to resign.

Minor Political Parties

Several smaller parties joined with Lula's PT to form the ruling coalition following the 2002 elections. These included the center-right Liberal Party (PL), the leftist National Mobilization Party (PMN), the leftist Popular Socialist Party (PPS, formerly the PCB), and the leftist Communist Party of Brazil (PCdoB).

The PCdoB was formed in 1962 by a Maoist splinter group from Brazil's Communist Party. The party's president is José Renato Rabelo. In 2002 the PCdoB elected 12 representatives to the Chamber of Deputies and 0 to the Senate. The leftist PMN elected one member to the Chamber and none to the Senate.

The PPS is the new name of the Brazilian Communist Party (PCB). The PCB was formed in 1922 but was legally proscribed for most of its existence between 1922 and 1985. At the PCB congress in 1991 the party elected a "renewalist" leadership and distanced itself from the tenets of Marxist-Leninism. In 1992 the PCB became the Popular Socialist Party. The party elected 15 representatives to the Chamber of Deputies in 2002 one to the Senate. The party initially joined the ruling coalition. In 2004, however, the PPS pulled out of the coalition.

The center-right Partido Liberal (Liberal Party; PL) elected a total of 29 members to the congress in the 2002 election. Its leader in the Chamber as of 2005 was Sandro Mabel.

Other minor parties include the Partido Trabalhista Brasileiro (Brazilian Labor Party; PTB), the Partido Socialista Brasileiro (Brazilian Socialist Party; PSB), and the Partido Social Cristão (Social Christian Party; PSC).

Other Political Forces

ORGANIZED LABOR

Two major labor confederations compete to represent organized labor in Brazil. The Central Única dos Trabalhadores (CUT) was formed in 1983 by the protagonists of "new unionism." These union leaders emerged from within the corporatist union structures officially recognized by the state, but they were typically members of a younger generation whose union experience was limited to the years of military rule. They demanded to negotiate directly with employers and sought to eliminate the Labor Ministry and Labor Courts as mediators of disputes.

The leaders of "new unionism," known as the *autênticos* (literally "authentic ones"), advocated the formation of a union confederation, independent from the state, that would include opposition unionists and worker associations that lacked legal standing under the existing labor legislation. Meanwhile, the traditional union leadership recommended a national union confederation limited to officially sanctioned unions. In short, they defended a confederation in compliance with existing corporatist structures.

In 1983 two national union confederations were created. The *autênticos* formed the CUT, and the more traditional union leaders created the National Coordination of the Working Class (Conclat), which in 1986 changed its name to Central Geral dos Trabalhadores (CGT) and in the 1990s became Força Sindical.

The CUT declared itself fiercely independent of the state, espoused Socialism, and emphasized that it defended the interests of one class (workers) in plain

opposition to another class (employers). Throughout the 1980s the CUT steadfastly opposed calls for "concertation" or a "social pact" among unions, business groups, and the state. The CUT led numerous strikes against the erosion of workers' wages by inflation and opposed the Cruzado Plan and a myriad of other government stabilization efforts. The CGT, meanwhile, participated in several failed attempts to fashion a tripartite "social pact" (in 1987, 1988, and again in 1989). When these economic plans repeatedly ended in ruin, the confrontational style of the CUT proved far more effective than the more conciliatory style of the CGT in attracting union support. The CUT grew prodigiously through the 1980s, while CGT membership remained stagnant.

At the close of the 1980s the CGT leadership began to articulate a "*sindicalismo de resultados*" (literally, "results unionism"). At the heart of this program is the claim that defending profits, free markets, a smaller state, and apolitical unionism is appropriate—even necessary—to reap material gains for workers. In 1991 the formerly moribund CGT became Força Sindical.

In the battle to represent Brazil's laborers, the CUT is clearly the largest and most representative union confederation. The CUT leadership was solidly opposed to what it viewed as the "probusiness" and "antisocial" reforms pursued by the Cardoso administration. The 2002 election of Lula, who was one of the founders of the CUT, marked a new era of influence for the country's labor movement, which had seen its popularity wane somewhat in the 1990s. As of 2005 organized labor remained perhaps stronger in Brazil than in any other Latin American country.

LANDLESS PEOPLES' MOVEMENT

The Movimento dos Sem-Terra (Landless Peoples' Movement; MST) is a grassroots movement that has organized highly publicized land invasions by landless farmers and their families in an effort to force the redistribution of land in Brazil.

Land reform has been a politically hot topic in Brazil for decades. Ownership of land is highly concentrated in Brazil; a few landowners possess tracts of uncultivated land larger than some Central American countries. The state's Instituo Nacional de Colonização e Reforma Agrária (National Institute for Colonization and Agrarian Reform; INCRA) has long proved unwilling or unable to implement a significant land reform program over the organized opposition of landowners. However, the MST has galvanized the public's attention and forced the state to dedicate greater time and resources to land reform.

The MST has carried out land invasions in almost every state in Brazil, but primarily in the south and southwest. As of 2005 the social base of the party rested with approximately 350,000 families who had settled on land throughout Brazil and another 250,000 who were in the process of making claims to land. The MST's capacity for grassroots mobilization and its tenacious challenge to Brazil's social order have captured the attention of the media, the government, landowners, urban unions, and average Brazilians throughout the country. The foremost leader of the MST is José Rainha Júnior. He has been imprisoned and threatened repeatedly for his actions, a fact that only increases his public stature and that of the MST.

The MST has historically considered itself a sister organization of the PT. Nonetheless, the moderate and centrist stance taken by President Lula of the PT upon his election in 2002 has highlighted the serious differences between the PT and the MST.

THE MILITARY

Military officers have long been recognized as vital actors in Brazilian politics. In 1930 the military ended the Old Republic by delivering power to Vargas, whom they kept in power with a coup in 1937, only to depose him in 1945. It was a military manifesto that led to Vargas's suicide in 1954, and it was a "preventive" coup in 1955 that ensured Kubitschek's succession to the presidency. In 1961 military officers led the fight against Goulart's succession to the presidency, and in 1964 the military summarily deposed him.

Since leaving power in 1985, the military has played a much smaller role in Brazilian politics. Ministers of the armed forces appear to enjoy greater autonomy vis-à-vis the government than would be permitted by the heads of other ministerial posts. However, civilians are clearly in charge of Brazilian politics. This is certain to remain true for the foreseeable future, but with the caveat that military intervention in politics has never been fully discredited in Brazil. The military did not commit human rights abuses on the scale of the Southern Cone dictatorships, and the military ruled during the remarkable economic growth of the 1960s and 1970s. Many Brazilians look back with nostalgia on the years of military rule, a sentiment periodically enhanced by news of corruption scandals involving existing politicians.

National Prospects

Brazil's continental size and rich natural resources have long encouraged predictions that it is destined to be a major world power. The "miraculous" economic growth rates of the 1960s and 1970s appeared to demonstrate that Brazil was fulfilling its promise. However, the economic stagnation and political turmoil of the 1980s temporarily quieted these auspicious predictions.

In the 1990s Brazil again asserted itself on the international stage. The return of democracy and the stabilization of the economy were applauded by international observers. Brazil became the leading country in Mercosur (the South American free trade region), and the country earned itself a permanent seat on the UN Security Council.

In the early 2000s Brazil remained a country with significant regional and international influence but also with colossal social inequalities at home. The 2002 election of Lula marked the advent of a government that seemed truly committed to addressing these inequities, albeit in a cautious manner. Following his election Lula signed treaties with countries including Russia, China, and South Africa in an attempt to invigorate the Brazilian economy. The administration had some success in its early years, but in 2005 it was seriously shaken by corruption scandals. These scandals threatened to undermine the PT's agenda entirely, and they increased the liklihood that new leadership would emerge following the 2006 election.

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STATE OF BRUNEI, HOME OF PEACE

(Negara Brunei Darussalam)

By Jeffrey K. Hass, Ph.D.



Once an empire stretching over Borneo and into the Philippines that declined due to internal fragmentation and conflict, Brunei became a British protectorate in the late nineteenth century. In 1959 Brunei adopted a constitution by which Brunei was designated self-governing, with only foreign affairs governed by the United Kingdom. After internal conflict (including a 1962 uprising by the Brunei People's Party, put down by British forces) and propositions to merge with Malaysia, Sultan Hassan al Bolkiah Muizaddin Waddaulah (reigning since 1967) declared an end to political parties and ruled by decree, and he proclaimed Brunei an independent and sovereign country in 1984.

The System of Government

Brunei is a sultanate with no democratic procedures; all power and authority derives from the sultan. The political system follows both the traditions of sultanism and the basic teachings of Islamic law and tradition. The sultan is not only the monarchical head of the nation; he is also the prime minister. Both these positions (traditional and formal) confer full decision-making power on the sultan alone. He is aided by a nine-man Council of Cabinet Ministers, in charge of implementing policies and running the day-to-day bureaucracy. Ministers are mostly members of the royal family, appointed by the sultan.

EXECUTIVE

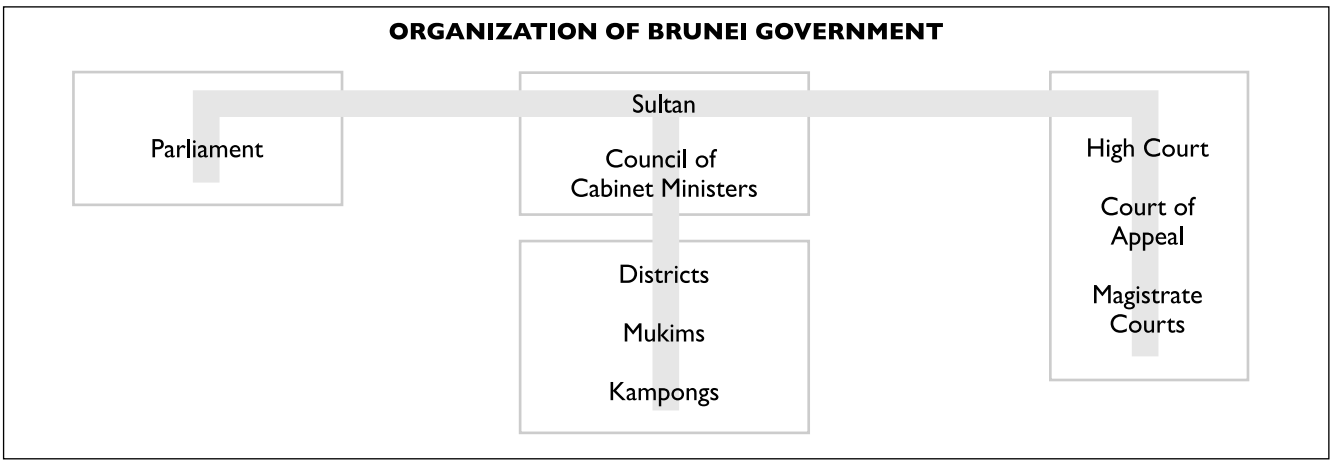
The executive bodies are the Religious Council, the Privy Council, and the Council of Succession. The Religious Council, whose members are appointed by the sultan, deals with religious matters. This is an important duty, since politics and society are linked to and guided by Islamic religious laws and norms. The Privy Council—until 1984 made up of the sultan's advisers—was altered in 1984, when the Council of Cabinet Ministers took its place in running the nation. Today the Privy Council, whose members are also appointed by the sultan, is composed of a set of policy advisers rather than administrators. The Council of Succession—again with members appointed by the sultan—serves only to decide on issues of succession to the throne in the case of the sultan's death or incapacitation.

LEGISLATURE

In September 2004 the sultan reopened the country's parliament, which had been suspended 20 years earlier. The body has 21 members, all appointed by the sultan. Following this move the sultan signed a constitutional amendment allowing for a 45-seat parliament, of which 15 members would be directly elected. The date for those elections had not been set as of mid-2005.

JUDICIARY

Brunei so far has followed the British common law system, although there have been some changes toward a



more civil law form. Cases usually begin at the local level, where magistrates preside. Appeals or serious civil and criminal cases go to the Supreme Court, made up of the High Court and the Court of Appeal. Judges for the Supreme Court come from the United Kingdom. The last stage of appeal for civil cases is the Privy Council, which sits in London. Alongside the Supreme Court are Syariah courts, which deal with issues of Islamic law.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Brunei is divided into four local districts, each of which is headed by an officer who reports directly to the sultan. Districts are subdivided into *mukims,* which in turn are divided into *kampongs* (villages). At each level, local officers oversee the respective municipal bodies.

The Electoral System

As Brunei is a sultanate, there are no elections (the last elections were held in 1962).

The Party System

Political parties are formally banned. Three parties were active in the past: the Brunei United National Party, led by Anak Hasanuddin; the Brunei National Solidarity Party, Brunei's first legal political party; and the Brunei People's Party. The Brunei National Democratic Party was allowed to register and organize officially in May 1985, but after the sultan forbade government officials from joining and various quarrels with the government, it was suppressed.

Major Political Parties

There are no political parties in Brunei.

Minor Political Parties

There are no political parties in Brunei.

Other Political Forces

In the early 2000s the sultanate became concerned that Islamic fundamentalist organizations, specifically Jemaah Islamiyah (JI), would seek to destabilize Brunei through terrorist actions. The JI was implicated in a deadly bombing in Bali in 2003, but as of mid-2005 Brunei had not yet experienced any incidents.

National Prospects

Brunei's sultan has tried to align his country with the Muslim world; he has condemned Israeli actions in the past and supported the Palestinian Liberation Organization's efforts to create a Palestinian homeland. However, in light of Brunei's size and difficulty in raising a serious army, the sultan has also called for nonaggression and peaceful solutions to political problems. Brunei is a member of ASEAN, the United Nations, and the Organization of Islamic Countries.

Brunei faces important choices in its near and middle-range political future. Vast oil reserves have allowed the creation of a welfare state and one of the highest levels of per capita income in the world; yet economic

dependence on natural resources may mean modernizing its economy, which could be tricky. Another question concerns democracy in Brunei. While there is a minority of activists who might wish for democracy, Brunei remains a sultanate. However, the 2004 decisions by the sultan to reopen the parliament and to allow for direct election of some parliament members in upcoming elections have provided hope that other democratic reforms may follow.

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REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA

(Republika Balgariya)

By Jeffrey K. Hass, Ph.D.



One of the more orthodox Communist countries in the Warsaw Pact, Bulgaria has slowly but surely made its way out of Socialist authoritarianism and is developing democracy and a market economy. Despite a sizable non-Bulgarian ethnic minority (especially Turks), the country has avoided the ethnic tensions that led to war in Russia (Chechnya) or the former Yugoslavia. The possibility of joining NATO and the European Union promises to bring Bulgaria closer to the West than ever in its history. Bulgaria's party politics were among the more stable in East Europe until the arrival of a new mass movement, but Bulgaria is not on the verge of civil chaos.

HISTORY

After the overthrow of Communist dictator Todor Zhivkov on November 10, 1989, Bulgaria began the precarious transition to parliamentary democracy. In 1990 the Grand National Assembly was called to draft a constitution (passed July 12, 1991). In December 1990 Dimitar Popov was named prime minister. Popov's government, associated with the Bulgarian Socialist Party (BSP), maintained a degree of political calm in 1991 and introduced economic reforms (price liberalization, land reform) that led to popular hardships. In 1991 only three parties cleared the 4 percent electoral barrier—the Union of Democratic Forces (SDS), the Bulgarian Socialist Party, and the Movement for Rights and Freedoms (DPS). Because the SDS had barely more votes than the BSP, the DPS became the kingmaker and established an uneasy coalition with SDS in 1991 to put Filip Dimitrov in the position of prime minister.

By November 1992 this coalition broke apart; Dimitrov and the SDS supported de-Communization of politics and society, attempting to punish those who had worked with the Communist Party by denying them access to politics and high positions. In July 1992 several large strikes resounded, as trade unions objected to the SDS's monetarism. Under pressure from the parliamentary opposition (the BSP), Dimitrov asked for a vote of confidence; the DPS threw its weight with the BSP and both voted against the government. After the 120-111 vote, Dimitrov had to resign, and Lyuben Berov became the next prime minister.

Berov was more sympathetic to BSP programs—populist policies, support for the social safety net, gradualism in regard to restructuring the economy. Initially both the BSP and President Zhelyu Zhelev (SDS)—consistently at odds with each other—supported Berov. As a result of policy weakness, Bulgaria's economy went into decline in 1994, spurring a cabinet reshuffle and a motion for a vote of confidence (May 1994), which Berov narrowly won. After the May showdown Berov conceded that with upcoming parliamentary elections in December 1994, his cabinet would most likely resign. Thus Berov turned to more modest policy projects.

The December 1994 parliamentary elections were a shock to the SDS: they dropped from 100 seats to 69, while the BSP went from 106 seats to a parlia-

mentary majority of 125. The harsh, uncompromising anti-Communist rhetoric of the SDS plus economic decline hurt their cause; voters in small towns and rural areas and those who cared more about their pocketbooks than Communist cleansing turned to the Socialists and their populist slogans. Zhan Videnov, BSP party leader, became the new prime minister and promised economic recovery without economic pain. Unfortunately, in 1995 banks hovered near crisis and the currency fell, draining reserves; meeting payments on Bulgaria's external debt further hurt government pockets. Crime and corruption continued to climb and became serious issues for the voting public.

In 1996 world grain prices rose; Bulgarian grain, kept at an artificially low price domestically, was exported for profit, and Bulgarians found themselves standing in breadlines for the first time since the collapse of Communism. The grain crisis—which prompted the resignation of several agriculture ministers in succession—led to a vote of no confidence, which Videnov survived, in January 1996. To add to Videnov's headaches, a fault line began to appear within the BSP, between an old guard supporting populism and minimal reform and another group supporting more effective reforms and opposing Videnov on the grounds that he was ineffective as prime minister.

Toward the end of 1996 presidential elections were held; governmental and parliamentary ineffectiveness helped propel democrat Petar Stoyanov to victory. Videnov and his government resigned, and Stoyanov gave the mandate to the Socialists (still the majority in parliament) to form a new government. However, with calls for new parliamentary elections and massive street demonstrations in the background, Socialist prime minister candidate Nikolay Dobrev eventually gave Stoyanov the option of forming a non-Socialist caretaker government until April 1997, when early parliamentary elections were to be held. Stefan Sofiyanski became the new prime minister, and April 1997 elections gave the parliamentary majority to a non-Communist coalition headed by the SDS.

As party competition settled, a surprise emerged in 2001: the return to active politics of King Simeon II (Simeon Sakskoburggotski). (Simeon II became king at six years old in 1943 and went into exile in 1946. Until his return he worked as a business consultant in Spain.) Simeon II formed the National Movement of Simeon II two months before the 2001 parliamentary election. A moderate right-wing party reflecting the king's vague ideology, the National Movement created a platform that emphasized the need for quicker integration with Europe, improved economic reform, and the fight against corruption. Simeon's National Movement rode a wave of public support for the returned king and popular displeasure with the status quo. The fresh but inexperienced party won half of the seats in the election, throwing aside the traditional competition between Socialists and the pro-market Right. To form a parliamentary majority, the National Movement brought the Movement for Rights and Freedoms (an ethnic-based party; DPS) into a ruling coalition. Simeon became prime minister in the new government but found the task of implementing his promises difficult. This hurt his and the party's prestige—Simeon's approval rating fell from 80 percent to 50 percent a few months after entering office—as well as that of Bulgaria's political Right. Further, the Movement for Rights and Freedoms jolted the right-leaning National Movement by publicly supporting a left-wing candidate for the presidency in 2001. Incumbent and right-leaning Petar Stoyanov, an independent earlier aligned with pro-reform democratic forces, lost in the second round to Socialist candidate Georgi Parvanov.

In the parliamentary elections of June 2005 the Coalition for Bulgaria, led by the Socialist Party, won the largest number of seats but not enough to form a government on its own. The coalition eventually decided to enter into a government with the National Movement and the DPS, and Socialist Party leader Sergei Stanishev became prime minister.

The System of Government

The Republic of Bulgaria is a parliamentary democracy based on a constitution adopted July 12, 1991.

EXECUTIVE

The executive branch is run by the president and the prime minister. The president has a vice president elected on the same ticket, but his duties are unclear.

The presidency is essentially a ceremonial position; real power lies in the legislature. The powers and responsibilities of the president include scheduling elections for the National Assembly; concluding international treaties; implementing laws; appointing and dismissing diplomatic personnel (upon motion from the Council of Ministers); granting or withdrawing Bulgarian citizenship; issuing pardons, granting asylum, and waiving debts to the state; and a few other

minor duties. The president enjoys a weak veto: If he disagrees with legislation, he may send it back to the National Assembly with his reasons for disagreement. If the bill receives an absolute majority, it becomes law over the president's objections. When the National Assembly is not in session, the president may issue decrees with the force of law; these decrees must be countersigned by the prime minister.

The president also performs a ceremonial function in the naming of the prime minister and the Council of Ministers: he must give the mandate to form a government to the largest parliamentary party, which then presents a candidate to the National Assembly. Should the parliament fail to approve a government within seven days, then under the constitution the president must give the mandate to the second-largest party. If the National Assembly cannot agree on a prime minister and government, the president can appoint a caretaker government and call for early parliamentary elections to break the deadlock; this is what happened in early 1997, when Dobrev feared he could not garner the parliamentary support—and the president created a caretaker government and called for early elections.

In essence, the president is a weak figure. This is due to the historical legacy of the Stalinist system, where one figure, the general secretary of the Communist Party, was a virtual dictator. Real executive power lies with the prime minister and Council of Ministers, who are approved by the National Assembly and require continued parliamentary support: the prime minister is under threat of a vote of confidence, which he or parliament can bring to motion. Finally, the Council of Ministers must resign before a newly elected National Assembly holds its first convocation.

The power of the prime minister and Council of Ministers lies in their control over the state bureaucracy—the police, the tax authorities, customs authorities, privatization committees, education, foreign policy, agriculture, and so forth. The prime minister and Council of Ministers may introduce legislation for consideration in the National Assembly. Ministers are responsible for day-to-day affairs and must answer for corruption and mistakes within their given ministries; serious mistakes are grounds for no confidence.

LEGISLATURE

The legislature, known as the National Assembly (Narodno Sabranie), is the most powerful political body in Bulgaria. Made up of 240 members elected according to proportional balloting and party lists, this unicameral body is entrusted with the fate of the nation; Article 67 of the constitution states that "Members of the National Assembly shall represent not only their constituencies but the entire nation." The powers of the National Assembly include passing, amending, or rescinding laws; passing the state budget; setting tax rates; scheduling the presidential elections; deciding on holding a nationwide referendum; approving and dismissing the prime minister and members of the Council of Ministers; approving and dismissing the head of the Central Bank; approving declarations of war and peace and approving the use of troops; declaring, on request from the president, a state of martial law; and other responsibilities.

The National Assembly has final control over the government by means of a vote of no confidence. Such a vote can be called in two ways. The prime minister can request it, or such a motion can be seconded by one-fifth of the National Assembly. Once the motion is before the parliament, an absolute majority—121 votes—is required for it to pass. From 1992 to 1995 no-confidence votes were precarious weapons, since the National Assembly was split almost evenly between the Union of Democratic Forces and the Bulgarian Socialist Party; the ruling coalition was whomever the Movement for Rights and Freedoms (the Turkish party) sided with, as became the case in 1992.

The major duty of the National Assembly is legislation: passing bills that are brought up by members of parliament or policies brought up by the Council of Ministers. Such bills must be deliberated (read and voted on) twice before they can pass and must receive a simple majority; in exceptional cases (not defined in the constitution), both votes may occur in a single session. Other acts of parliament that do not become laws—statements, for example—need be voted on only once.

JUDICIARY

After the collapse of Communism, the judicial branch emerged less than gloriously: under Communism the courts served as a cloak of legitimacy and as an extension of the power of the Communist regime. Upon coming to power after the 1991 parliamentary elections, the SDS party set out to build an independent, competent, Western-style judicial system. While the dearth of qualified, professionally trained jurists,

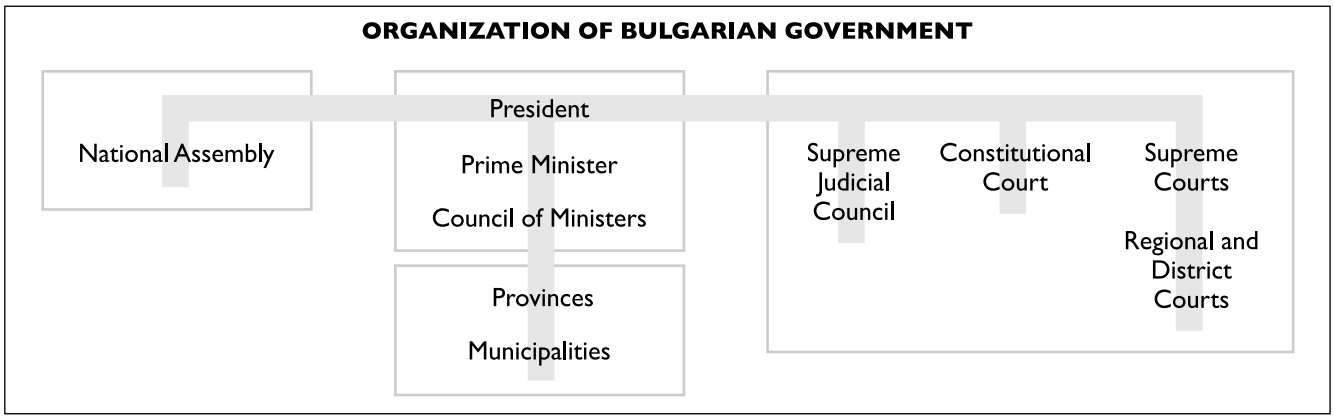
lawyers, and judges will make the functioning of the judicial branch problematic for some time to come, the institutional foundation has been set already.

The judicial branch is composed of three parts: the court system, the Constitutional Court, and the Supreme Judicial Council. The first, the court system, consists of the various courts from the local level up to the Supreme Courts, which engage in dispute resolution, decisions of justice in criminal cases, and dispensing of administrative justice. These courts follow the continental model of jurisprudence. Basically, laws passed by the legislature or issued by the government are considered to be the basis for judicial decisions. The courts do not add their own interpretations; further, past court decisions have no direct bearing on decisions for different cases, as is the case in Anglo-American common law. Each case for dispute or criminal justice is decided on its own grounds with application of relevant laws and rules. Disputes and appeals may be carried up the hierarchy: municipal courts at the bottom, then district and military courts, then courts of appeal, and finally to the top two courts, the Supreme Court of Cassation and the Supreme Administrative Court.

The Supreme Administrative Court has two roles. First, it oversees the administration of the law for administrative justice (e.g., criminal cases); and second, it rules on challenges to the legality of decisions of the Council of Ministers brought by outside parties. The Supreme Court of Cassation oversees the application of laws to disputes by all lower courts, in essence serving as the ultimate authority for disputes and appeals.

The Constitutional Court stands beyond the normal court system. Only this court has powers of legislative review (the power to declare legislation unconstitutional). Further, the Constitutional Court is empowered to decide on disputes concerning elections and division of powers between the various branches of government; the decision of this court is binding on all branches. The Constitutional Court is composed of 12 justices; four are appointed by the president, four are appointed by the National Assembly, and four are appointed by the Supreme Court of Cassation and the Supreme Administrative Court.

The Supreme Judicial Council, created in the 1991 constitution, is a body of 25 professional jurists: three members are the chairmen of the Supreme Administrative Court and Supreme Court of Cassation and the chief prosecutor; of the remaining 22 (all of whom must have at least 15 years' judicial experience), 11 are elected by the National Assembly and 11 are selected by judicial bodies. These 22 elected members serve a five-year term and may not be reelected to the council. The mission of this council is to handle appointments, transfers, and replacements of judges, prosecutors, and investigating magistrates. The council also appoints the chairmen of the Supreme Court of Cassation and Supreme Administrative Court, after conducting lengthy investigations. To this end the council has independence from other governmental bodies; its recommendations of chairmen of the two Supreme Courts may be returned by the president for reconsideration only once, and if sent to the president a second time, they must be accepted. The Supreme Judicial Council was set up in August 1991, but after the council was enlarged in the constitution, more members were added and the council began work in March 1992. Its first steps were bold and rapid: in March and April the council replaced 43 judges and prosecutors, reorganized central judicial bodies, and appointed new senior personnel.



REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Bulgaria is divided into nine provinces (*oblasti*), which are run by local councils. Cities are run by municipal legislatures and by mayors.

The Electoral System

The National Assembly's 240 seats are assigned to parties based on proportional balloting. All Bulgarians age 18 and older can vote. In an election, a voter casts a ballot for a party. Parties must receive at least 4 percent of all votes cast to receive the right to representation in the parliament; those that receive less than 4 percent do not qualify for positions. (An individual may run for parliament but must receive more than 4 percent.) The number of seats a party receives depends on two numbers: the number of votes received, and the number of votes cast for parties that overcome the 4 percent barrier. (Essentially, if a party does not gain 4 percent of votes cast, then all votes it receives are wasted.) The actual delegates for the National Assembly are then drawn from official party lists assembled before the elections; if Party A has 30 seats, then the first 30 people on the party list become parliamentary delegates.

The Party System

The party system in Bulgaria has been relatively stable. Under the constitution, citizens have the right to form political parties, which may then compete in elections and political life. The one major restriction on parties is that they cannot be organized along racial, ethnic, or religious lines, nor may they seek "violent usurpation of state power" (constitution, Article 11.4). This has not been particularly troublesome except for a brief moment in 1991. The Bulgarian Socialist Party protested that the Movement for Rights and Freedoms (DPS), a primarily Turkish-based group claiming to represent the Turkish minority, violated this constitutional prohibition. However, courts did not agree, and the DPS became the founder and largest member of a new 1996 coalition centered on ethnic and minority rights.

Bulgarian parties, with the exception of the BSP, have few grassroots connections to the masses. Instead, parties are essentially groups of elites who try to woo voters with their slogans and programs rather than trying to mobilize direct support, and who try to link their programs to the masses through feedback loops.

PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION, 11/11/01 AND 11/18/01

Candidate	% votes, first round	% votes, second round
Georgi Parvanov	36.4%	54.1%
Petar Stefanov Stojanov	34.9%	45.9%
Boromil Bonev	19.3%	
Pereta Indžova	4.9%	
Žorž Gan ev	3.4%	
Petar Beron	1.1%	

Source: www.electionworld.org

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTION, 6/25/05

Party	% from party vote	seats
National Movement of Simeon II	21.9%	52
United Democratic Forces	8.4%	20
Coalition for Bulgaria	34.2%	82
Movement for Rights and Freedom	13.7%	33
Union Attack	9.0%	22
Democrats for a Strong Bulgaria	7.0%	17
Bulgarian People's Union	5.7%	14

Source: www.electionworld.org

Major Political Parties

COALITION FOR BULGARIA

(Koalitsia za Bulgariia)

This coalition is led by the Bulgarian Socialist Party, the revamped Communist Party in social democratic

trappings. The Socialists held power from 1994 to 1997, when a sufficient number of voters felt disparaged by market reforms. However, their supervision of Bulgaria's economy was hurt when the Yugoslav civil war disrupted trade relations and income and when Socialist policies slowed reforms and hurt the fiscal discipline that had temporarily reined in inflation. Their Democratic Left coalition took second place in 1997, and in 2001 their Coalition for Bulgaria movement came in third (but with only three fewer seats than ODS). Despite these losses, the Socialist candidate Georgi Parvanov defeated incumbent Petar Stoyanov in the 2001 presidential race. In 2005 the Socialist-led Coalition for Bulgaria benefitted from dissatisfaction with the ruling coalition of the National Movement and DPS and won the largest number of seats in the parliamentary elections held in June. Lacking a majority, however, the Coalition for Bulgaria agreed to form a coalition government with both the National Movement and the DPS.

While the Socialists earlier were weary of privatization and price liberalization, they have embraced market reform and now champion social services and welfare, much as Socialist (usually former Communist) parties elsewhere in Eastern Europe.

MOVEMENT FOR RIGHTS AND FREEDOM

(Dvizhenie za Pravata i Svobodie; DPS)

Originally founded in 1990 to oppose forced Bulgarianization of Bulgarian Turks, the DPS became a wider umbrella organization representing the claims and voices of various ethnic minorities, although Bulgarian Turks still dominate the party. In the 1990s DPS joined with monarchist and centrist parties to form the Union for National Salvation. In 1997 DPS supported the United Democratic Forces' government, but at the end of that year tensions between the two emerged over ODS populism and a problematic record of reforms and publication of secret police files on DPS members. Its electoral support has grown steadily, from 15 in 1994 to 21 in 2001 and then to 33 in 2005. It joined coalition governments in both 2001 and 2005.

NATIONAL MOVEMENT OF SIMEON II

(Natsionalno Dvizhenie Simeon Vtori)

Upon returning to Bulgaria, Simeon II hastily set up a broad-based party as a vehicle to propel himself and his vision for Bulgaria to power. The party's basic platform called for improvement of tax laws, more forceful measures against corruption, and low-interest loans for entrepreneurs. National Movement's appeal in 2001 was its relative political inexperience; it was not tainted by political corruption or the compromise of previous governments. This attracted the protest vote of pensioners, civil servants, teachers, and the like who had lived on meager wages and had despaired of the growing corruption endemic in Bulgarian society. At the apex of the party are a hodge-podge of younger professionals and businessmen; political inexperience, which attracted voters, made governance difficult after 2001, and the party lost the 2005 elections to the Socialist-led Coalition for Bulgaria. It agreed to form a new government along with the Coalition for Bulgaria and the DPS

Like many post-Communist parties, National Movement is weak at the grass-roots level and has only a vague organizational structure; it is more accurate to describe the party as a loose social movement of people either in support of the monarch or opposed to other established parties and elites.

UNITED DEMOCRATIC FORCES

(Obedineni Demokratichni Sili; ODS)

ODS is a coalition of anti-Communist, pro-market, and pro-reform parties led by its largest member, the Union of Democratic Forces (Sayuz Demokratichni Sili, SDS). SDS was formed in December 1989 after the collapse of Communism. Early policies barred former Communists from political office. For most of the 1990s the SDS reform agenda was in the forefront. ODS through SDS's domination has promoted privatization, fiscal discipline and the control of inflation, and land reform. Benefiting from the collapse of Communism, SDS and the Movement for Rights and Freedoms formed a coalition and majority in parliament and formed a government in 1991 that pushed economic reform. When reforms created economic and social dislocation, voters returned the Socialists to power. When their policies and the war in Yugoslavia (traditional purchaser of Bulgarian agricultural produce) hurt Bulgaria's economy even more, SDS returned to power in 1997. It was the second-largest parliamentary group after the 2001 elections but was swamped by the National Movement's landslide victory. Soon after, two top leaders of the SDS left to form their own parties (which remain minor), threatening fragmentation and further weakening of the main party and overall coalition that had led Bulgaria out

of Socialism and into democracy, a market economy, and the possibility of entering NATO and the European Union. The coalition won 20 seast in the parliamentary elections of 2005.

Minor Political Parties

Several other small parties generally manage to win a handful of seats in the parliament. Two that won seats in 2005 were the Democrats for a Strong Bulgaria (Demokrati za Silna Balgarija) and the Bulgarian People's Union (Balgarskij Naroden Sajuz). Most other small parties survive only as members of larger coalitions such as ODS or Coalition for Bulgaria.

Other Political Forces

Those nonaligned domestic forces that may exert political pressure are generally subsumed into party and coalition structures in Bulgaria. Internationally, the country was not among those invited to join the European Union in 2004. However, Bulgaria signed an accession treaty with the EU in April 2005 and was expected to progress to full membership in 2007. Upon taking the post of prime minister in August 2005, Sergei Stanishev pledged to make EU membership his top priority. In 2004 the country did join the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO).

National Prospects

Bulgaria's transition out of Socialism was not smooth initially, although Bulgarians have been spared the horrors of internal conflict and authoritarian emergence that plagued Yugoslavia, Belarus, Russia, and others to the east. The party system, while young and in need of grass-roots structure and depth, has been fairly stable, with the same three major players now joined by a fourth. Politics was defined by the Communist past and by the pain of economic transformation. On the one hand, the SDS and DPS have defined themselves and their programs around the Communist past: the SDS is primarily an anti-Communist party that does not want Socialists in power; and the DPS exists in part as a reaction against Bulgarianization policies of Todor Zhivkov and the Bulgarian Communist Party before 1989. The Socialists, on the other hand, until 1996 had taken a populist stance against painful economic reform.

However, Bulgaria appears to be well on the way to democracy: parties and presidents have given up power when they were supposed to (e.g., election losses, votes of no confidence). There are other positive signs for the future. Bulgaria was invited to join NATO in 2004 and is in line to join the European Union, which will aid the process of market transition by expanding markets for its goods and labor and aiding investment from the West.

Bulgaria's primary problem is economic reform; until such reforms take hold and bring development, the population will remain discontented and will provide excellent fodder for the pitched political battles between parties. Bulgarian politicians and political parties have been playing by rules of the game, which appear to have become institutionalized in the country. While Bulgaria's economy may not be the envy of Eastern Europe, Bulgaria's democratic roots may be taking hold much deeper than elsewhere in the region.

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BURKINA FASO

(Burkina Faso)

By Christopher J. Lee, Ph.D.



Formerly known as the Republic of Upper Volta, Burkina Faso is located in West Africa to the north of Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Togo, and Benin, to the south and east of Mali, and to the west of Niger. With an area of 274,200 square kilometers and a population of 13,900,000 (mid-2005 estimate), the population density is approximately 56 persons per square kilometer. The main ethnic groups include the Bobo (southwest), the Mossi (north), the Gourma (east), and the Fulani (north and east). Indigenous religious beliefs are practiced by over 50 percent of the population. Islam follows next in popular practice, with Christianity placing third.

HISTORY

In December 1958 Upper Volta became a self-governing republic within the French West African community. It achieved full independence from the French on August 5, 1960.

Maurice Yaméogo became the first president of Upper Volta as the leader of the Volta Democratic Union (UDV). The UDV had support primarily from the Mossi, the largest ethnic group in the country at approximately 50 percent of the population. Other political parties were banned shortly thereafter. In January 1966 a military coup overthrew the government after a period of economic decline.

Lieutenant Colonel Sangoulé Lamizana took control and implemented measures that led to economic improvement. In December 1970 a process began of transforming the government from its military orientation to a more civilian one. Gérard Ouédraogo, leader of the UDV, became head of this civilian administration. With this political shift, other political parties began to form. In 1977 Lamizana introduced a new constitution. Elections took place in May 1978, and a civilian-oriented government controlled primarily by the UDV was installed. All parties, excluding the UDV, the Volta Progressive Union (UPV), and the National Union for the Defense of Democracy (UNDD), were banned.

In November 1980 Lamizana was deposed in a military coup led by Colonel Saye Zerbo after a period of economic decline. A government led by the Military Committee of Redressment for National Progress (CMRPN) was formed. After an unstable tenure, the CMRPN was overthrown in November 1982 and replaced with a military council, the Council of Health of the People (CSP), led by Surgeon Major Jean-Baptiste Ouédraogo. This government, divided by radical and conservative military factions, proved to be unstable as well.

In 1983, after the arrest and release of Prime Minister Thomas Sankara and a mutiny by troops supportive of him, Ouédraogo and the CSP were overthrown by Sankara in a military coup. A new government, headed by a National Council of Revolution (CNR) led by Sankara, was formed. This regime was supported by civilian leftists of the Patriotic League for Development (LIPAD). With this new government, Committees for the Defense of the Revolution (CDR) were estab-

lished nationwide to encourage the new government's agenda. In August 1984 Sankara changed the country's name to Burkina Faso. Later that same month Sankara dissolved the government in an attempt to shift away from his earlier Marxist leanings. This move was accompanied by educational and economic reform. However, this new agenda proved controversial.

By 1987 Sankara's power base had become fraught with division. Within the CNR, the Union of Reconstructed Communists (ULCR), the party from which he drew his support, suffered a split, which weakened his political standing. In October 1987 soldiers loyal to his rival, Blaise Compaoré, assassinated Sankara. Compaoré took control and supplanted the CNR with the Popular Front (FP).

This new government pushed a policy of economic liberalization while purging potential political opponents. In April 1989 a new political party was formed, the Organization for Popular Democracy/Labor Movement (ODP/MT). This relatively radical group contrasted with Compaoré's moderation, thus causing tension within the FP. Compaoré later asserted control over the ODP/MT, in April 1990.

In March 1990 a constitutional commission was formed by the FP. A draft was finished in October 1990 that sanctioned a multiparty system. On June 2, 1991, the constitution was approved through a national referendum. A transitional government was established with Compaoré as its head until elections could be held. Despite the government's efforts at creating a diversely represented system, critics contended that the ODP/MT dominated this process. During 1991 conflict arose over Compaoré's refusal to convene a national conference to widen participation in the transition process. Opposition groups formed the Coordination of Democratic Forces (CFD). This coalition of opposition elements led to political resignations and a boycott of the presidential election in December 1991. Compaoré, representing the ODP/MT, won as the sole candidate, though only 25.3 percent of the electorate voted. On December 24, 1991, he became president of the fourth republic.

Compaoré's first term was characterized by unrest, a result of political centralization and government economic policies. Despite a vocal opposition and an attempted boycott, Compaoré was reelected on November 15, 1998. The participation rate for this election was at 56.1 percent, with 87.5 percent voting for Compaoré. This turnout and result were interpreted as showing an increasing satisfaction with the status quo, though recent constitutional changes in the length and number of presidential terms reflect a new desire to limit the power of the executive branch. The next presidential elections were scheduled for late 2005.

The System of Government

Burkina Faso is a unitary republic that maintains a constitutional government supported by a multiparty political system. On June 2, 1991, voters approved the constitution in a national referendum. The constitution was amended in 2000.

EXECUTIVE

According to the constitution, executive power is vested in the president and the cabinet. The president appoints the cabinet, with approval from the prime minister. Through a constitutional amendment in 2000, the president's term of office has changed from seven years to five years. There is a limit of two terms. Presidential election is by universal adult suffrage.

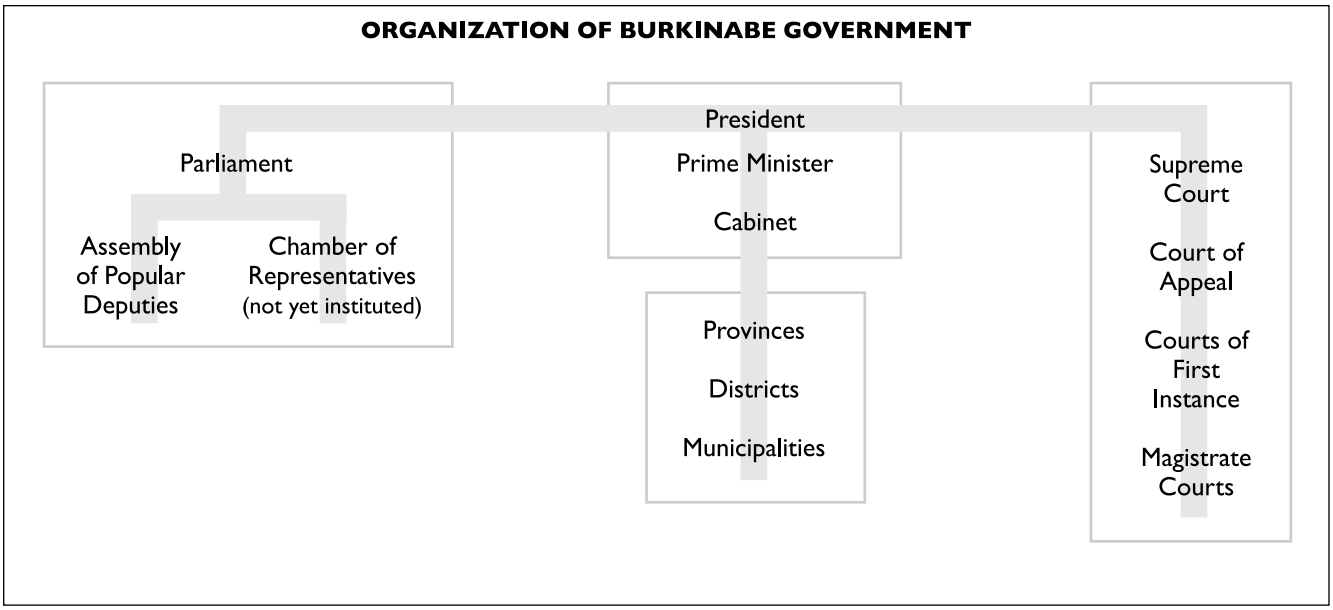
Blaise Compaoré is the current president of Burkina Faso. He was elected in 1991 following principles of a constitution approved earlier that year. He was reelected in 1998.

LEGISLATURE

The legislative structure is unicameral in practice. The Assembly of Popular Deputies (Assemblé des Députés Populaires; ADP) currently contains 111 seats, elected by universal suffrage. Members are elected for five-year terms. The prime minister is appointed by the president, although the ADP can veto the president's choice. The ADP or the executive branch may introduce legislation.

The 1991 constitution also allows for a second representative body, intended as a consultative chamber. This body, known as the Chamber of Representatives (Chambre des Représentants), is to contain 178 appointed members, serving three-year terms. However, this body has not yet been instituted.

In 1996 the ruling ODP/MT and 10 other parties joined together to form a new social democratic party, called Congress for Democracy and Progress (CDP). In the general elections to the ADP held on May 11, 1997, the CDP won a sweeping majority of seats, 101 out of 111. This election result was viewed as controversial. The CDP explained that the opposition was divided, but critics from the opposition side accused the CDP of



corruption. Elections in 2002 witnessed the reduction of CDP seats to 57.

JUDICIARY

The judiciary consisting of a Supreme Court and Appeals Court forms an independent branch of the government. However, this independence is questionable. Judges are responsible to the Higher Council, which is chaired by the president.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Burkina Faso has 45 provinces. Despite some past efforts at decentralizing government, local politics largely remains dictated by the climate at the national level. In May 2002 the CDP dominated municipal elections held in major towns nationwide. Its candidates won mayoral races in all but one of the country's 33 municipalities.

The Electoral System

Despite the 1991 constitution's intent of establishing a multiparty representative system of government, electoral politics in Burkina Faso has faced two main challenges impeding this process. The first challenge has been a persistent history of shifting authoritarian rule. This history of attempts to centralize control is a reflection of a second challenge, which is the ethnic diversity of Burkina Faso. The French created the geographic territory of Burkina Faso for political reasons. Like those of many other former colonial states in Africa, its state boundaries do not reflect a clear national cohesiveness.

These twin challenges have rendered uncertain the actual meaning of electoral politics in Burkina Faso. Ethnic institutions within local communities remain as a distinct alternative to the central government. Though a sense of national identity and the legitimacy of the central government both have increased, the meaning of representation in electoral politics is still debated, despite a party system with universal suffrage and representation based on a proportion of total votes.

The Party System

The general status of political parties has shifted back and forth dramatically since independence. With the establishment of a multiparty political system in 1991, political organizations have flourished in number if not in power. The legislative elections in 2002 marked the first time in Burkina Faso's history that multiple political parties, including opposition ones, participated in elections. Working in a large coalition called the Group of February 14, these parties were able to win 54 seats in total, just behind the CDP's 57 seats. Since that point, the CDP has passed redistricting measures, which the opposition parties have criticized as a transparent attempt to protect the ruling party's power base against further gains by the opposition.

Major Political Parties

CONGRESS FOR DEMOCRACY AND PROGRESS

(Congrés pour la Démocratie et le Progrés; CDP)

This social democratic party, founded in 1996, combined the ruling Organization for Popular Democracy/Labor Movement (ODP/MT) with 10 other parties to form a new foundation of support for Compaoré. It is led by Roch Marc-Christian Kabore, although Compaoré is its most important member. This party is assumed to have the most political influence in Burkina Faso. In mid-2005 Compaoré announced his intention to seek reelection in the November elections, despite the 2000 constitutional amendment limiting presidents to two five-year terms. Despite protests from the opposition, Compaoré argued that the amendment could not be applied retroactively.

AFRICAN DEMOCRATIC RALLY–ALLIANCE FOR DEMOCRACY AND FEDERATION

(Alliance pour la démocratie et la féderation-Rassemblement démocratique africain; ADF-RDA)

This coalition was succesful in winning 17 parliamentary seats in the 2002 legislative elections; it won 12.7 percent of the popular vote. It is led by Herman Yameogo.

PARTY FOR DEMOCRACY AND PROGRESS

(Parti pour la Démocratie et le Progrès; PDP)

This party joined in a coalition with the Socialist Party (PS) in the 2002 elections to win 10 seats in the parliament, with 7.5 percent of the popular vote. The party leader is Joseph Kizerbo.

Minor Political Parties

There are at least 46 registered political parties. Among those that won parliamentary seats in the 2002 elections are the Coalition for Federation and Democracy (CFD, 5 seats), the African Independence Party (PAI, 5 seats), and the National Renaissance Party (PAREN, 4 seats). The United Front for Democracy and the Republic (Front Uni pour la Démocratie et la République; FUDR), a coalition of 10 opposition parties that formed the major opposition party in the late 1990s, gave way to the Group of February 14 alliance for the 2002 elections.

Other Political Forces

TRADE UNIONS

Compaoré's first term of office was characterized by labor unrest as a result of new economic measures. Trade unions have also grown in strength and influence because of the repression of political parties under the current regime. Over 20 trade unions exist in Burkina Faso. The following are the four most important trade union umbrella organizations: the Burkina Syndicated Confederation, National Confederation of Burkina Workers, the Syndicated Union of Burkina Workers, and the National Organization of Free Syndicates.

National Prospects

With the reelection of Compaoré as president in November 1998, his hold on power appeared secure. The election turnout and result placed the opposition in an unclear position. However, pressures from and conflict with students and labor organizations have marked a growing civil society against his power. Issues such as poverty, HIV/AIDS, and the political crisis in neighboring Côte d'Ivoire have also placed pressure on the government. A coup plot was foiled in October 2003. Compaoré's popularity in the future will hinge upon regaining legitimacy through government reform as well as the improvement of economic conditions throughout Burkina Faso.

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REPUBLIC OF BURUNDI

(République de Burundi)

By Christopher J. Lee, Ph.D.



The Republic of Burundi is located in central Africa, surrounded by Rwanda to the north, Tanzania to the south, and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) to the west. Lake Tanganyika also lies to the west, forming a natural divide with the DRC. Though small in area at approximately 27,834 square kilometers, a population of 6,370,609 (2005 estimate) creates a high population density of 228.9 persons per square kilometer. Such density has created social tensions and ethnic conflict between Hutus and Tutsis, similar to its neighbor Rwanda. The population is 85 percent Hutu, 14 percent Tutsi, and 1 percent Twa. The capital is Bunjumbura.

Burundi existed as an organized political entity prior to the beginning of colonial rule in the late 19th century. It formally became a part of German East Africa in 1899, and in 1916 Belgium took control under a League of Nations mandate after the defeat of Germany during World War I. Despite being the numerical minority, the Tutsi maintained political control under the system of indirect rule that was established, a situation similar to that in Rwanda. Under pressure from the UN Trusteeship Council, a process of decolonization and democratization began in 1948. Independence was achieved on July 1, 1962.

The System of Government

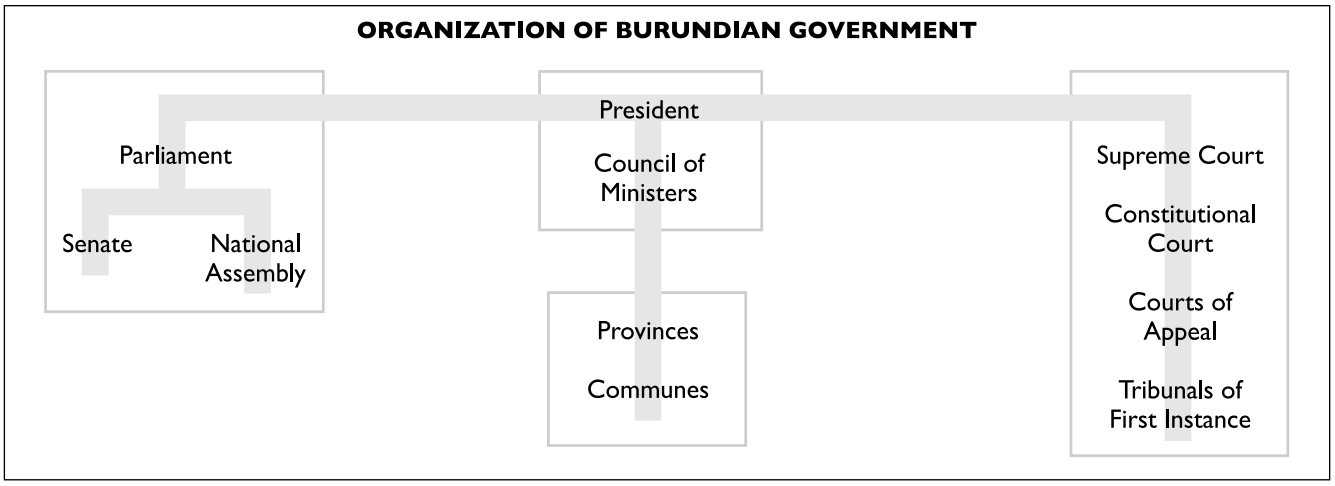
Burundi is in a period of transition, recovering from episodes of severe ethnic violence during the 1990s, similar to its neighbor Rwanda. After several attempts at political progress in the late 1990s, a new transitional government and constitution were established in late 2001 under a power-sharing format, influenced in large part by the Arusha Peace and Reconciliation Agreement signed in July 2001, under the guidance of Tanzania and South Africa. This transition period was expected to last three years but was extended to 2005, when a series of elections was finally held. These elections were won by the National Council for the Defense of Democracy–Forces for the Defense of Democracy (Conseil National Pour la Défense de la Démocratie–Forces pour la Défense de la Démocratie, NCDD–FDD), the main Hutu rebel group. In addition, a constitutional referendum was passed in February 2005 that outlined a method of power-sharing in the new government.

EXECUTIVE

The executive branch is headed by the president, who is elected indirectly from the members of the parliament. In August 2005, following the victories of the NCDD–FDD in the local and national elections, the parliament selected Pierre Nkurunziza of the NCDD–FDD as the nation's first democratically elected president. He will serve a term of five years.

LEGISLATURE

Burundi has a bicameral parliament consisting of the Senate and the National Assembly. Per the new



constitution, the National Assembly has 100 elected seats with terms of five years each and an additional 18 seats that are appointed. The 18 appointed seats are meant to ensure the constitutionally mandated 60 percent Hutu and 40 percent Tutsi makeup as mandated by the constitution, as well as representation for the minority Twa ethnic group as well as women. The Senate has a total of 49 seats, of which 34 are directly elected and 15 are appointed. The directly elected seats consist of one Hutu and one Tutsi from each of the 17 provinces; the appointed seats again serve the purpose of ensuring Twa and female representation. The National Assembly is directly elected, while the Senate is indirectly elected via communal council elections in each province.

JUDICIARY

The judicial branch of the government consists of a Supreme Court, a Constitutional Court, three Courts of Appeal, and seventeen Tribunals of the First Instance at the provincial level. There are also approximately 123 tribunals at the local level. The legal code is a combination of German and Belgian law, as well as with African customary law, particularly at the local level.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

There are 17 administrative provinces in Burundi with an appointed governor for each. Each province is further divided into approximately 129 communes that maintain locally elected councils to help address local matters. In addition, these coummunal councils elect the members of the Senate.

The Electoral System

The 2005 elections were the first multiparty elections in Burundi's history. They were generally judged as successful by international observers, although there was some violence as well as reports of voter intimidation. In the national elections voters selected parties rather than candidates.

The Party System

The party system in Burundi is dominated by the historic ethnic tension and conflict between Hutus and Tutsis. The main Hutu party is the NCDD–FDD, although the Front for Democracy in Burundi (FRODEBU) is also an important Hutu party. The main Tutsi party is Union for National Progress (UPRONA). In the 2005 national elections approximately 30 parties competed for seats.

Major Political Parties

NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR THE DEFENSE OF DEMOCRACY–FORCES FOR THE DEFENSE OF DEMOCRACY

(Conseil National Pour la Défense de la Démocratie–Forces pour la Défense de la Démocratie; NCDD–FDD)

This group was the most important Hutu rebel group during the civil war; it transformed itself into the

country's most powerful political party in advance of the 2005 elections, when it won 64 of the 118 seats in the National Assembly and 32 of the 49 seats in the Senate. It is led by Pierre Nkurunziza, who became the country's first elected president in August 2005.

UNION FOR NATIONAL PROGRESS (Union pour le Progrès national; UPRONA)

The Union for National Progress (UPRONA), originally founded in 1958, is primarily Tutsi in orientation. In the 2005 national elections UPRONA won 15 seats in the National Assembly and two in the Senate. It is led by Jean-Baptiste Manwangari.

FRONT FOR DEMOCRACY IN BURUNDI (Front pour la Démocratie au Burundi; FRODEBU)

FRODEBU was launched in 1992 against the constitution confirmed that year and is primarily Hutu in orientation. In the 2005 elections FRODEBU secured 30 seats in the National Assembly and five in the Sentate. It is led by Jean Menani.

Minor Political Parties

Among the minor parties that won seats in the parliament during the 2005 elections were the National Council for the Defense of Democracy (CNDD), a small faction of the former main Hutu rebel group; the Movement for the Rehabilitation of Citizens, which is predominantly Tutsi; and the Party for National Recovery, also primarily Tutsi.

Other Political Forces

Militia-based violence has remained an issue even into the election period in 2005. For instance, the rebel group Forces for National Liberation (FNL) refused to participate in the peace agreements in the early 2000s. In the local elections held on June 3, 2005, the Hutu-based FNL was blamed for attacks at several polling places, and it continued to clash with army forces. The United Nations peacekeeping mission, including troops from South Africa, remained active in the country as of September 2005.

National Prospects

Similar to its neighbor Rwanda, Burund has a post-colonial political history that has been defined by ethnic tensions and conflict between the Hutu majority and the Tutsi minority. Optimism has increased following the mostly succesfuly elections held throughout 2005. By September only one rebel group, the FNL, was still fighting government forces. Nonetheless, ethnic tensions leading to severe violence remain a threat to the country's fledgling democracy and its efforts to begin rebuilding the economy and fortifying civil institutions.

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KINGDOM OF CAMBODIA

(Preahreacheanachakr Kampuchea)

By Carlo Bonura Jr.
Revised by Joel Selway



The Kingdom of Cambodia (formerly known as the People's Republic of Kampuchea) is a multiparty parliamentary democracy with a constitutional monarchy. Its first democratic elections took place in May of 1993 under the auspices of a major United Nations initiative designed to end Cambodia's costly civil war. The conflict erupted after the fall in 1979 of the disastrous Khmer Rouge–led government, under which over 1.5 million people were killed by the Pol Pot regime. The three competing forces were the newly installed Vietnamese-supported Communist government, the deposed Khmer Rouge, and military forces loyal to Prince Norodom Sihanouk. After 10 years without a workable solution to the conflict in sight, a month-long meeting of the Paris International Conference on Cambodia was called in 1989. Two years of strenuous diplomatic effort resulted in the 1991 "Agreements on a Comprehensive Political Settlement in Cambodia," commonly referred to as the "Paris Accords." The Paris Accords accomplished the overwhelming task of securing agreement from all four major factions: the State of Cambodia forces led by Hun Sen, the armies of Norodom Sihanouk (who by now was king), the Khmer People's National Liberation Front led by Son Sann, and the Khmer Rouge, at the time led by Khieu Samphan.

Pragmatically, the accords led to the formation of the Supreme National Council (SNC), with King Sihanouk as its leader. The SNC constituted a formal mechanism for continued negotiations among the four factions over the future of the peace process. The accords also brought about the withdrawal of Vietnamese troops from Cambodian soil in 1989, a tentative break in the fighting among the internal factions, and the beginning of a long and complex transition to democracy.

The Paris Accords charged the United Nations with the duties of peacekeeping, removal of mines, repatriation of refugees, disarmament of the involved factions, and establishing an environment in which "free and fair" elections could take place in 1993. As a result, the United Nations established the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC), which began its mission on March 15, 1992. UNTAC consisted of 22,000 peacekeepers, amounting to one-fourth of the total UN peacekeeping force at the time.

Although UNTAC failed to completely disarm competing armies, by April 1993 it had repatriated over 360,000 refugees from camps along the Thai-Cambodian border without a major incident of violence against the refugees. Perhaps more remarkably, this massive repatriation occurred in the shadow of renewed warfare between the Khmer Rouge and government troops. Soon after the arrival of UNTAC, the Khmer Rouge reversed its acceptance of the Paris Accords and rejected the conditions established jointly by UNTAC and the SNC for the 1993 election. Thus the elections, held May 23–28, went forward with the expectation of Khmer Rouge attacks on Phnom Penh and anxieties over the possibility of a complete Cambodian People's Party (CPP, led by Hun Sen, formerly the Kampuchean People's Revolutionary Party) victory.

To the surprise of many, neither Khmer Rouge strikes nor a CPP victory came to fruition. Instead, 85

to 90 percent of the Cambodian electorate came out to vote in a peaceful election, choosing the National United Front for an Independent, Neutral, Peaceful and Cooperative Cambodia (FUNCINPEC), led by Norodom Ranariddh, son of King Sihanouk, to lead the country. FUNCINPEC received 45 percent of the vote, the CPP 38 percent, Son Sann's Buddhist Liberal Democratic Party (BLDP) 3.5 percent, the Kampuchean National Liberation Movement (Moulinka) 1.5 percent, and various other minor parties and candidates 6 percent, while UNTAC authorities marked 15 percent of the ballots as invalid. The victory came as a shock to the CPP's leaders, who had suffered losses throughout the country, including in provinces the party formerly controlled. The CPP immediately challenged the election results, citing irregularities in the electoral process. UNTAC rejected such charges and declared success in fostering "free and fair" elections. The crisis deepened after former FUNCINPEC commander Prince Chakrapong, newly aligned with the CPP leadership, led a failed coup against the fledgling government. In the process of bringing together the Provisional National Government of Cambodia, King Sihanouk guaranteed the CPP a central role in the government by accepting a dual prime ministership shared by Norodom Ranariddh as leader of FUNCINPEC and CPP leader Hun Sen. In the wake of Chakrapong's abortive coup, Sihanouk convened a "constituent assembly" of all candidates who had won seats in the election. The assembly, with Son Sann as its president, successfully promulgated the constitution on September 24, 1993.

This tense dual prime ministership, however, did not last long. In 1997 Hun Sen forced 20 FUNCINPEC legislators to flee the country and had the resulting parliament elect him as new prime minister, thereby eradicating much of the progress in democratization. One of the legislators in exile was former co–prime minister Prince Ranariddh. Hun Sen charged Ranariddh with security crimes, tried him in his absence, and found him guilty of arms smuggling. In order to prevent a possible reeruption of conflict, however, King Sihanouk pardoned Ranariddh, and following the 1998 general elections Ranariddh became president of the National Assembly. The 1998 elections were riddled with allegations of harassment by the victorious CPP. Nevertheless, a two-party coalition was formed between the CPP (winning 41 percent of the vote) and FUNCINPEC (31.5 percent).

In March 1999 the constitution was amended and a 61-seat Senate was created as an upper house. This main aim of this amendment was to end an impasse after the inconclusive national elections in July 1998 left the three main Cambodian political parties (CPP, FUNCINPEC, BLDP) unable to form a government. In February 2002 the first multiparty local elections were held. Doubts about the election arose when the CPP won in all but 23 out of 1,620 communes after pre-election killings of about 20 candidates and activists, as well as vote buying and other corrupt activities. The opposition Sam Rainsy Party got 13 communes and the royalist FUNCINPEC party 10.

In national elections held in 2003, the CPP won a plurality of the vote but failed to earn enough votes to govern alone. Following a year of political deadlock, the CPP and FUNCINPEC brokered a deal that allowed Hun Sen to continue serving as prime minister.

In 2004 King Sihanouk retired, handing over the throne to his son, Norodom Sihamoni. In the newly created role of retired king, however, Sihanouk retains considerable power.

The System of Government

The Kingdom of Cambodia is a unitary parliamentary democracy with a bicameral legislature. The current constitution took effect in 1993 and was amended in 1999 to include a Senate. The king is the head of state, whose duties include appointing the prime minister and Council of Ministers, signing certain decrees and treaties, declaring states of emergency, promulgating laws, and serving as supreme commander of the armed forces and chairman of the Supreme Council of National Defense. These roles are largely symbolic, with the king merely acting in accordance with government decisions.

EXECUTIVE

Executive power is held in the Council of Ministers. The Council of Ministers is led by one prime minister assisted by deputy prime ministers, with state ministers, ministers, and state secretaries as members. The leader of the winning party in the National Assembly is appointed prime minister by the king. The prime minister is the chief executive of Cambodia and has the right to initiate legislation. Members of the Council of Ministers are collectively responsible to the National Assembly, which must pass a vote of confidence in the government by a two-thirds majority.

King Sihanouk, as leader of the transitional SNC, ensured equal representation of major political parties in the cabinet, although this is not guaranteed by the constitution. In 2004, as part of the deadlock-breaking

coalition deal, the number of members in the cabinet increased from 80 to 180. In addition, there are seven deputy prime ministers. Thus it seems that power sharing in the government has become an expected tradition for junior coalition partners.

LEGISLATURE

The 1999 amendment altered the 1993 constitution by adding a second body to the legislative branch—the Senate—alongside the existing National Assembly. All laws must pass through the Senate for a hearing. Although the Senate can freely modify and reject proposed laws, the Assembly can subsequently choose to ignore any or all of the Senate's suggestions. However, if the Senate rejects a proposed law, that law cannot be reviewed a second time by the Assembly until a month has passed. The Assembly then needs an absolute majority to pass the law. Senators serve six-year terms. Most are universally elected, except for two who are appointed by the king and another two elected by the Senate itself. The number of senators elected cannot exceed half the number of the Assembly. All members of the Senate can initiate legislation.

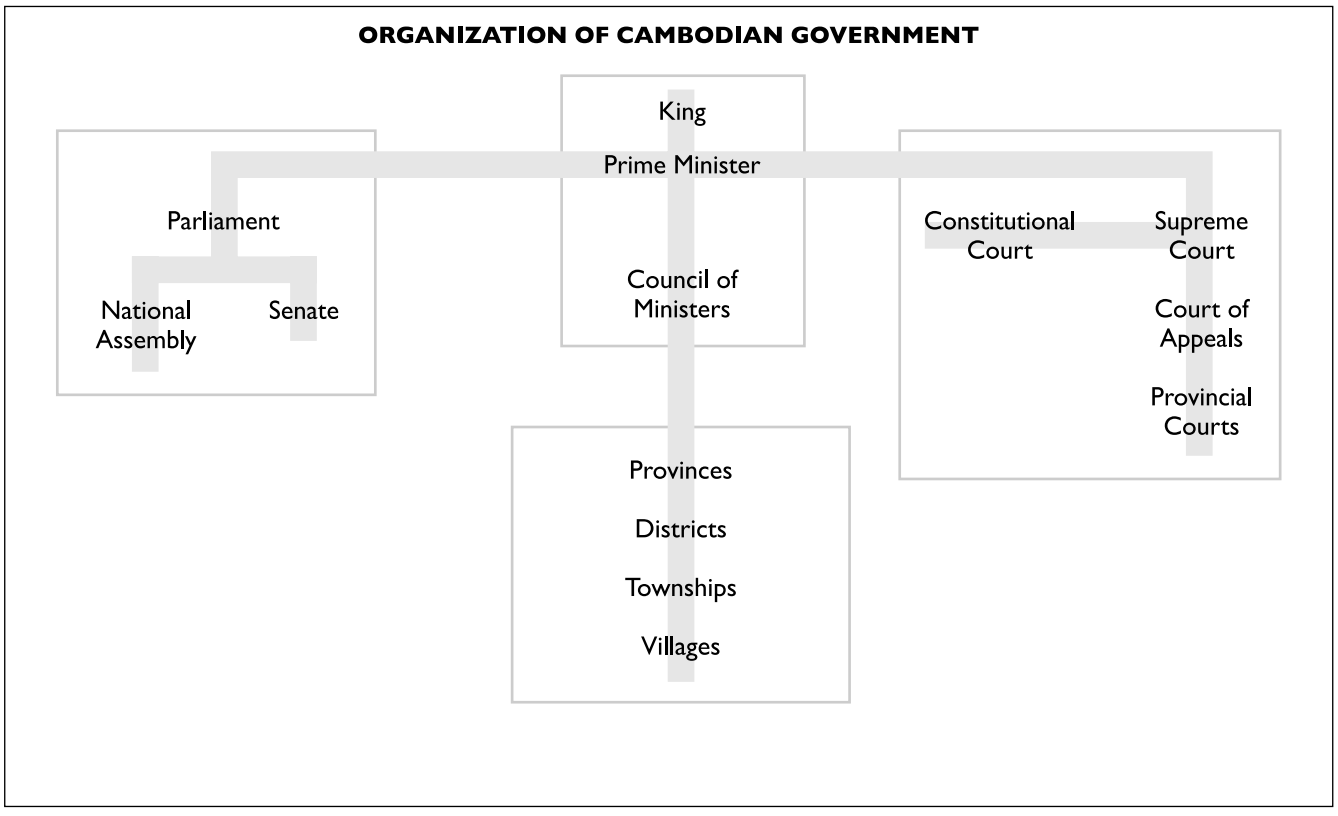
The National Assembly holds the bulk of legislative power. Consisting of no fewer than 120 members, it can be dissolved only after it has twice dissolved the government within a twelve-month period. The Assembly's duties include approving the national budget and administration accounts, adopting or repealing treaties and international conventions, proclaiming war, and approving or dissolving the government. All members of the National Assembly can initiate legislation. The current Assembly is made up of 123 members, of whom 73 belong to the CPP, 26 to the FUNCINPEC, and 24 to Sam Rainsy.

JUDICIARY

Cambodia's judiciary is independent, as established by the 1993 constitution. At the lowest level are the provincial courts, followed by a court of appeals. The Supreme Court is the highest court in the country. There is also a Constitutional Court, which rules on the constitutionality of laws proposed in the National Assembly.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Cambodia is divided into 21 provinces. Each province is divided into districts (*srok*), which provide the basis for the election of members to the National Assembly.



Provinces also contain smaller local municipalities such as villages and towns. Each breaks down into *khan* and *sangkat* in diminishing order.

In February 2002 the first multiparty local elections were held. The CPP won all but 23 out of 1,620 communes. This was mainly due to the massive influence current officials had on the local populace. However, the overwhelming victory was more a product of a young democracy than of a systematic control of localities by the central government as was the case in the past. One can hope that freer and fairer local elections will come with time.

The Electoral System

Cambodia has a complex proportional-representation electoral system. It uses a party-list system, where voters vote for a specific party, which subsequently selects its members based on the percentage of vote received.

The Party System

While Cambodia is a multiparty system, many international observers consider there to be no real chance for the opposition. The far left CPP is the main party and won just under 50 percent of the popular vote in the general elections in 2003. The CPP currently forms a government in coalition with the conservative monarchist FUNCINPEC. The other main party is the Sam Rainsy Party.

Major Political Parties

NATIONAL UNITED FRONT FOR AN INDEPENDENT, NEUTRAL, PEACEFUL AND CO-OPERATIVE CAMBODIA

(FRONT Uni National pour un Cambodge Indépendent, Neutre, Pacifique et Coopératif; FUNCINPEC)

FUNCINPEC, the National United Front for an Independent, Neutral, Peaceful and Co-operative Cambodia, is a royalist party that won a surprising victory in the 1993 elections. King Sihanouk controlled FUNCINPEC when the organization was purely a military organization fighting Communist rule under the People's Republic of Kampuchea. Upon Sihanouk's taking the provisional role of president in the transitional Supreme National Council, command of FUNCINPEC's military forces and leadership of its new political machinery transferred to his son Norodom Ranariddh. The 1997 coup forced Ranariddh into exile. Between that time and his return in June of 1998 Ranariddh organized a global campaign, meeting with leaders from England, France, the United States, and the ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) countries, to isolate Hun Sen's government diplomatically. FUNCINPEC participated fully in the 1998 elections, winning 43 seats in the National Assembly.

In May 2002 Prince Norodom Chakrapong stepped down as head of FUNCINPEC and set up his own Norodom Chakrapong Khmer Soul Party. His half-brother Prince Norodom Ranariddh, who was so influential during his period of exile, took the reins of the party. FUNCINPEC's power has steadily declined since the country's first elections, when it captured the majority of the vote. In 2003 FUNCINPEC received only 20.75 percent of the votes, finishing third behind the CPP and Sam Rainsy. Nevertheless, as part of the ruling coalition FUNCINPEC continues to play a major part in Cambodian politics.

CAMBODIAN PEOPLE'S PARTY (CPP)

(Manakpak Pracheachon Kampuchea)

The CPP arose out of the Kampuchean People's Revolutionary Party (KPRP). In 1990 the party's leaders decided to significantly change the party's identity in expectation of the 1993 elections. The party adopted its new name, renounced Communism, and expressed full support for multiparty democracy in Cambodia. The KPRP had controlled Cambodia's one-party Communist assembly from its origin in 1979 to its own political transformation toward the end of the Paris International Conference. Hun Sen became premier of Cambodia and the de facto leader of the KPRP in 1985 under the Vietnamese-controlled government. He remained in control of the party, directed its changes throughout the UN period of national transition, and continues to head the party to this day. At the time of the 1993 elections the CPP claimed 2 million members. In the 1998 elections the CPP won 63 of the seats in the National Assembly, giving it a majority.

The CPP swept the 2002 local elections and took 47 percent of the vote in the 2003 general elections. However, its thin margin of victory resulted in a political deadlock that lasted nearly a year. Finally, in 2004 the CPP and FUNCINPEC reached a deal that allowed Hun Sen to continue as prime minister and the CPP to serve as senior partner in the ruling coalition with FUNCINPEC.

In order to continue its dominance, the CPP will have to begin to ensure the huge leaps in economic development and political freedoms that the burgeoning middle class is beginning to demand. Hun Sen and his party exert considerable power over the Cambodian people. However, this influence should not be seen in a completely negative light. Many Cambodians feel that Hun Sen is the only one who can maintain stability in the country, and despite happenings that would make citizens of Western nations highly uncomfortable, Cambodia has been free of the widespread disorder seen over the preceding few decades.

SAM RAINSY PARTY

(Pak Sam Rainsy)

Sam Rainsy was a former minister of economics who attempted to form the Khmer Nation Party to oppose the policies of the CPP and FUNCINPEC. The government, however, outlawed this organization. As a result Rainsy went into self-imposed exile in Thailand. He returned to Cambodia to reenter politics in November of 1997. He later changed the name of his Khmer Nation Party to the Sam Rainsy Party. In the 1998 election the Sam Rainsy Party won 16 seats in the National Assembly, making it the only opposition party with representation in the Assembly. The Sam Rainsy Party has continued to increase in power. Seen by Western observers as the only true democratic politician in Cambodia, Sam Rainsy attracted the growing middle class. In the 2003 elections the Sam Rainsy Party hauled in 21.8 percent of the vote, surpassing the once-foremost party, FUNCINPEC. After an 11-month deadlock, the CPP and FUNCINPEC formed a new coalition government, leaving the Sam Rainsy Party in the opposition. The future for the party is uncertain. Its leader, Sam Rainsy, went into exile in 2005, when the National Assembly stripped him of immunity regarding defamation charges brought by the government. It is to be hoped that Sam Rainsy will be allowed to return to Cambodia and continue to lead his party to pressure the government to implement gradual changes toward full democracy.

Minor Political Parties

Three small parties won between 1 and 2 percent of the popular vote in the 2003 elections. They are the Khmer Democratic Party, the Rice Party, and the Indra Buddra City Party, which won 1.9 percent, 1.5 percent, and 1.2 percent, respectively. These votes failed to translate into any seats in the legislature, however. Due to the weakness of opposition parties in general, these small parties do not play a significant role in the Cambodian party system.

Other Political Forces

NGOS AND GRASSROOTS MOVEMENTS

There are a small but growing number of nongovernment organizations (NGOs) in Cambodia dedicated to democracy, the creation of a civil society, and the promotion of the rule of law and human rights. However, they face significant challenges. First, Cambodian NGOs remain dependent on support from abroad. In addition the NGOs are still nascent organizations. Most of their leaders are expatriates who left in the 1970s and returned to Cambodia after 1991. Thus they are viewed with suspicion by the government and somewhat by the people as well.

National Prospects

The 2003 elections represented an opportunity for Cambodia to demonstrate its democratic progress. There were positive signs, with opposition forces attracting large crowds and the Committee for Free and Fair Election in Cambodia (CFFEC) supplying at least one local election observer for every polling station in the country. However, CFFEC documented more than 200 cases of intimidation and threats within the campaign period alone. Such intimidation tends to be more subtle than previous threats of outright violence; for example, suggestions that opposition supporters will not get access to community resources or development funds is a common report from villagers under the iron grip of CPP local officials. The democratic atmosphere is still a long way from free and fair. Nongovernment organizations say at least 17 people were killed in the four-week campaign period of July 2003. Among ordinary citizens there remains an underlying sense of fear of

politics, which results in a reluctance to reveal one's political preference. However, the 11-month deadlock that resulted from the 2003 elections marked a big disappointment for Cambodian politics. With 47.35 percent of the vote, the CPP failed to gain the needed two-thirds majority to rule alone. This meant that one or both of the two major opposition parties, Sam Rainsy (21.87 percent) and FUNCINPEC (20.75 percent), had to join the CPP in a ruling coalition. The deadlock saw the two opposition parties at one point forming a new grouping, the Alliance of Democracy, refusing to join a coalition with Hun Sen as leader. Further, King Sihanouk went into self-imposed exile after opposition parties refused to turn up for the opening session of parliament. The fiasco finally ended in July 2004 when FUNCINPEC conceded and joined the CPP in a two-party coalition. Sam Rainsy left the country, claiming he was not secure in Cambodia. Thus it remains to be seen if Cambodia can make the full transition to democracy in the future or will follow the way of nearby other Southeast Asian countries with a long-standing paternalistic figure at the head of power.

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REPUBLIC OF CAMEROON

(République du Cameroun)

By Mark W. DeLancey, Ph.D.
Revised by Emmanuel C. Nwagboso



The Republic of Cameroon, a country of 16.4 million people (2005 est.), is in west central Africa. Cameroon was a German colony from 1884 to 1914 and then was a mandate/trust territory under France and Great Britain. The French section gained independence on January 1, 1960, and was joined on October 1, 1961, by the British section.

The System of Government

Cameroon is a highly centralized, nominally multiparty state. The major institutions of government are the president and his party (the Cameroon People's Democratic Movement, or RDPC, previously the Cameroon National Union, or UNC), the bureaucracy, and the legislature.

EXECUTIVE

The president of the republic serves as head of state and government. He is directly elected to a seven-year term by a majority of the votes cast and is reelectable once.

The constitution grants great power to the president. He is responsible for the conduct of the affairs of the republic and for ensuring national unity. He may initiate legislation and require a second reading of legislation he opposes. The president appoints the prime minister, and all significant legislation originates in the presidency. He is the head of the armed forces, is responsible for negotiating and ratifying treaties, appoints all major civil and military posts, directs the administration, appoints all ministers and vice ministers, and presides over the Council of Ministers. He can proclaim a state of emergency or siege, both of which grant him extraordinary powers.

President Ahmadou Ahidjo, Cameroon's first president, retired on November 6, 1982, and was replaced by Paul Biya, who had been prime minister. Biya was returned to power in the election of 1984 with 99.98 percent of the vote and in 1988 with 98.75 percent. In 1992 the first multiparty elections were conducted; Biya's proportion dropped to 39.9 percent. The election is considered fraudulent, but Biya has clung to the office in spite of widespread belief that John Fru Ndi of the Social Democratic Front (SDF) had more votes.

President Ahidjo ruled the country in a stern fashion. His presidential powers, his position as chairman of the party, and his political skills enabled him to build a system in which all power and authority emanate from the president; the presidency is essentially the government.

Upon taking office Biya moved to open the system to a more democratic mode, but a serious coup attempt in 1984 set him on a different course. He has used the structures and processes established by Ahidjo to return to authoritarian rule. But Biya lacks

the political skill of Ahidjo, and he has faced a serious economic crisis. As the democratization movement spread through Cameroon, Biya resisted with arrests and shows of force. In July 1990 he did allow a multiparty system to emerge but continued to fight against the writing of a new, more democratic constitution. President Biya retains power after his reelection in October 2004. His party, the RDPC, controls the National Assembly and has not acted on plans for a new constitution. The new prime minister is Ephraim Inoni.

LEGISLATURE

Under the 1996 constitution there is a bicameral legislature consisting of the Senate and the National Assembly, but since the 100-member Senate has never been formed, the legislature is essentially unicameral. The Assembly meets in two sessions per year, each limited to a maximum of 30 days; the president may call special sessions. Bills may be introduced by the president or by members of the Assembly and require a simple majority vote of members present to become law. The president may require a second reading, and then a majority of all members must vote in favor of passage. Constitutional amendment is the prerogative of the Assembly, requiring a simple majority in favor or a two-thirds majority in the case of a second reading. The president may request a national referendum on an amendment, and he may call on the Supreme Court to judge the constitutionality of any law.

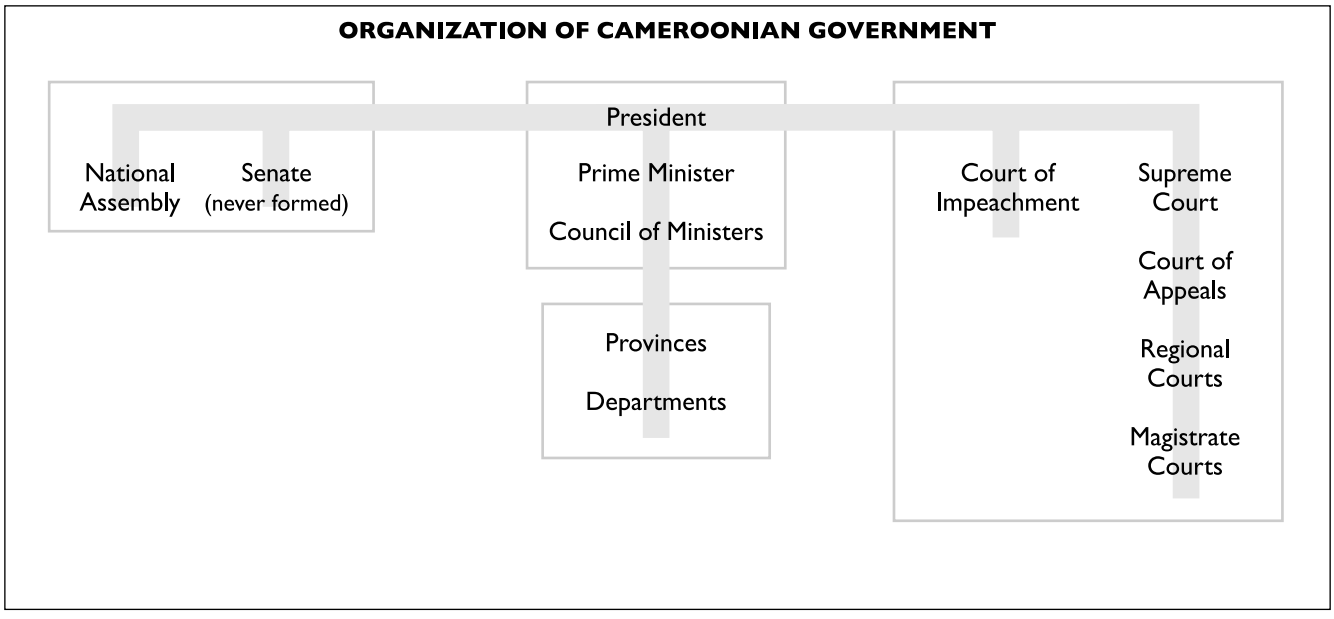
The Economic and Social Council, consisting of 65 members appointed by the president, and a small bureaucracy play an important role in writing legislation and in examining (and amending) it with respect to its impact on social and economic development.

Certain areas of legislation are reserved to the Assembly, but these may be turned over to the president at his request, unless the Assembly specifically rejects that request. These areas are citizen rights and obligations, labor law, general matters of defense, property law, civil and commercial law, nationality, local government, some aspects of criminal law, taxation, education, economic and social planning, and currency. The Assembly must also approve the budget. All other matters are reserved for the president, who issues statutes in those areas.

The constitution clearly gives the president powerful influence over legislative matters, and through his control of the party he is in a position to completely dominate the Assembly. Although the 1996 constitution called for a bicameral legislature, the president has never allowed one to come into being. The National Assembly has 180 seats; the RDPC won 149 of them in the 2002 elections. The next elections are scheduled for 2007.

JUDICIARY

The Supreme Court is appointed by the president. Its role is limited, but the constitution does give it certain responsibilities of possible significance. The Court



may determine that the president is "permanently prevented from attending to his duties." Also, at the request of the president the Court can determine the constitutionality of any law. The Court can also decide any disputes on the admissibility of a bill or amendment before the National Assembly. However, in any of the above instances the size of the Court is to be doubled by the addition of persons designated by the president. Below the Supreme Court are a Court of Appeals, regional courts, and magistrate courts. There is also a court of impeachment to try cases against the president, prime minister, and ministers for high treason. Its organization and membership are set by law, not by constitution, and are thus amenable to control by the president.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Cameroon is divided into 10 administrative units or provinces, and these are subdivided into *départements* (divisions). A hierarchy of administrators appointed by and reporting to the president governs each of these units. Each ministry has representatives at each of these levels who report to the presidential representative of the same level as well as upward to their ministry. Local governments consisting of locally elected personnel play a very limited role. In rural areas traditional authorities (derived to some extent from precolonial political systems) are active, although they are largely dependent upon the central government. Local rule is very weak in this highly centralized system.

The Electoral System

The president is directly elected by the nation as a whole, as is the National Assembly. Nominees are from single-member districts based on population. The ballot is secret and suffrage is universal for all persons 21 years or older.

The Party System

Despite the constitutional authorization of multiple political parties in 1990, Cameroon remains the domain of one party, the Cameroon People's Democratic Movement (RDPC). All other parties are secondary.

Major Political Parties

CAMEROON PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC MOVEMENT

(Rassemblement Démocratique du Peuple Camerounais; RDPC)

HISTORY

At independence there were numerous political parties of various types in anglophone and francophone Cameroon, including one major organization, the francophone Union of Cameroon Populations (UPC), that had been driven underground and into rebellion by the colonial administration. By 1962 the parties in East Cameroon, the francophone state, had coalesced voluntarily and under government pressure into the ruling party, l'Union Camerounaise (UC), under President Ahidjo. In West Cameroon a similar process of amalgamation was occurring, with the Kamerun National Democratic Party (KNDP) emerging as the major party. On September 1, 1966, the UC and the parties of the West joined to become the Cameroon National Union (UNC), the single party of the country. This was an elite party, a union of notables, each of whom brought his followers into the new party.

In March 1985 at the Bamenda Party Congress, the UNC became the Cameroon People's Democratic Movement, symbolizing Biya's assertion of power after the demise of Ahidjo. Although promises of democratization were made—and in part kept by allowing competition in local-level party elections—no structural changes were undertaken. The ties between the RDPC and the government are numerous, and in many respects the party and the government are still synonymous.

Over time the coalition nature of the early party has altered in the direction of a mass party, though powerful individuals still bring their followers into the party.

ORGANIZATION

The cell is the basic structure of the party. Cells are grouped into branches, into subsections, and then into sections. Party sections coincide with the *département*. Each unit has officers elected by its members. The ruling bodies of the RDPC are the congress, the National Council, the Central Committee, and the National Political Bureau. The congress meets every fifth year. The reports of these congresses are important documents, for they describe the general policy outlines of

party and government. The National Council meets every two years (if called by the president) to supervise the implementation of the decisions of the congress. The Central Committee is responsible for directing the affairs of the party and for the nomination of all candidates for election. It too meets at the request of the president. The National Political Bureau consists of 12 members, nominated by the president from the Central Committee and elected by the Committee. It is the true ruling body of the party and meets at the request of the president.

There are two significant affiliates of the RDPC: the Women's Organization of Cameroon People's Democratic Movement and the Youth Organization of the Cameroon People's Democratic Movement.

In addition to the reports of the party congresses, the RDPC publishes Biya's speeches, party manuals, and a bilingual monthly magazine, *l'Unité*.

POLICY

The policies of the party are those of the government: national unity, social and economic improvement through "planned liberalism" and "self-reliant development," cultural development, and bilingualism in the domestic sphere; nonalignment, respect for the sovereignty of all nations, and African unity in the international sphere.

National unity is the prime goal in this country where differences in religion (Muslim, Christian, and animist), geographic and cultural affinity (north and south and a welter of ethnic groups), and the French and English languages and other colonial heritages provide plenty of reason for separatist movements and fears of domination by one category or another. In a country with an annual GDP per capita of $1,900 (purchasing power parity, 2004 est.), development is also a prime focus of the government. Planned liberalism ("private initiative within the framework of the conditions of the national development plan") and self-reliant development ("the determination of the Cameroonian people to depend first and foremost on their endeavors") are the means to that end. A new policy, communal liberalism, was launched at the Bamenda Congress, but its definition has never been made clear. This is part of President Biya's New Deal policy—in effect a promise of more liberal economic and political measures to spread the benefits of Cameroon's progress to all its people.

FINANCING

Revenues are derived from membership fees, annual subscriptions, special contributions from members (especially militants), and proceeds from the sale of publications and other items. The government and business interests provide large but unknown amounts of support by allowing vehicles and other property, as well as personnel, to be used for party activities without charge. No overall financial figures are available.

LEADERSHIP

The prime figure in the RDPC is Biya, from Mvomeka in the central southern part of the country. Born in 1933, he is a Roman Catholic and a member of a small ethnic group, the Bulu. He rose to power as a client of Ahidjo, serving as his prime minister from 1975 until Ahidjo resigned in 1982. Other major figures include Joseph Charles Doumba and Luc Ayang.

Minor Political Parties

SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC FRONT (SDF)

This party, led by John Fru Ndi and founded in 1991, is the strongest opposition party. The main base of support comes from the anglophone population, especially in the Northwest Province, but support runs strong throughout the southern coastal area too. The party has taken a strong anti-French posture and supports the writing of a new constitution to establish a federal system with more autonomy for the anglophone population and strong safeguards for human rights. It is a major supporter of the constitutional draft published in 1993 by the All Anglophone Conference. The party boycotted the 1992 and 1997 legislative elections but participated in June 2002, winning 21 seats. SDF did participate in the 1992 presidential elections, and although officially its candidate, Fru Ndi, placed second, many believe that he won the election. SDF boycotted presidential elections in 1997 but participated again in 2004, when Ndi polled 17.4 percent of the vote.

CAMEROON DEMOCRATIC UNION

(Union Démocratique Camerounaise; UDC)

Adamou Ndam Njoya founded and leads this party, which relies on the Bamoun population for support. He has a reputation for integrity but has never been able to build his support beyond the Bamoun. In 2003 the UDC formed a coalition with the Social Democratic Front (SDF) that was called the Coalition for National Reconciliation and Reconstruction (CRRN).

The goal was for the CRRN to field a single candidate for the 2004 presidential elections, but early in 2004 the SDF pulled out of the coalition. Ndam Njoya won 4.4 percent of the vote in the presidential election that year.

NATIONAL UNION FOR DEMOCRACY AND PROGRESS

(Union Nationale pour la Démocratie et le Progrés; UNDP)

One of the most significant opposition parties of the 1990s, the UNDP has declined in its share of the vote. It is led by Bello Bouba Maigari, the man many believe Ahidjo wished to have take over after his resignation. Many see this party as the true descendant of Ahidjo's party, the Cameroon National Union. The major base of support is in the three northern provinces, but support exists elsewhere as well. Former Ahidjo loyalists have flocked to the UNDP. In the 1992 legislative elections the party won 66 seats and thus became the official opposition party. In the presidential elections later that year Bouba placed third behind Biya and Fru Ndi of the SDF. But UNDP's legislative hold dropped to 13 seats after the 1997 National Assembly elections, and the party took only one seat in 2002. Along with SDF and UDC, the party boycotted the 1997 presidential election, but Bouba accepted appointment as a minister of state in the RDPC government. UNDP was not a force in the 2004 presidential election.

UNION OF CAMEROON POPULATIONS

(Union des Populations du Cameroun; UPC)

This party was founded in 1948, before Cameroon's independence. Its leaders, Reuben Um Nyobe and Felix Moumie, both now dead, wanted immediate independence, a clean break with France, and a Socialist system. Banned by the French, one section went into exile and another went underground in Cameroon to engage in a bitter war with the French and then with the Ahidjo government. The UPC was legalized in 1991, and many of its members have returned from exile. It is led by Augustin Frederic Kodock. The party won one legislative seat in 1992 and increased to three in 2002.

Other Political Forces

The military has long been under civilian control and does not actively interfere in the country's political process. One notable force is the Cameroon Anglophone Movement (CAM). This movement is based on securing human rights and freedom from oppression for English-speaking peoples in several areas of the country.

National Prospects

The RDPC and President Biya seem secure in power. In the early 2000s the country embarked on plans to address poverty and economic imbalances. These plans were monitored by the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank; by mid-2005 the results were mixed, although the country's efforts on poverty reduction had shown some progress. The country enjoyed fairly stable economic conditions in the 1990s and early 2000s, following a precipitous 8-year period that saw the real per capita gross domestic product fall by more than 60 percent. Cameroon remains under the highly authoritarian rule of Biya, and the 2004 presidential election offered little hope that the country was moving toward a more open and fair democratic system of government.

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CANADA

By Robert A. Wardhaugh
Revised by Chris Palazzolo



Canada (derived from the Iroquoian word *kanata,* meaning village or settlement) is a nation of 32.8 million people with a diverse ethnic composition. The population is extremely concentrated and highly urban. About 90 percent live in a 320-kilometer strip along the Canada–United States border; about 60 percent live in central Canada in Ontario and Quebec; and over 75 percent live in metropolitan areas.

Canada's rather unique form of government is a product of the nation's development within the French Empire and then the British Empire and Commonwealth, as well as its location in North America in close proximity to the United States. In 1763 the French were defeated in the Seven Years' War, and control of their North American possessions effectively passed to Great Britain. The British were intent on assimilating their new *Canadien* colonists with the Royal Proclamation, but conditions to the south made for poor timing. When the 13 colonies rebelled over a decade later, they assumed that Quebec would join to throw off its new chains of tyranny. They were mistaken. The Quebec Act of 1774 provided the French population with a degree of cultural protection in such spheres as religion, law, and landholding. The British parliament hoped that the offering of tolerance would produce a loyal population. They too were mistaken. What it did was guarantee the survival of a distinct French character in the northern half of the continent.

The influx of 40,000 United Empire Loyalists from the newly independent United States into the remaining colonies provided British North America with a strong Anglo and conservative character as well. The British authorities attempted to satisfy both ethnic communities with the Constitutional Act of 1791. The act maintained the 1774 promises to *les Canadiens* but divided the colony in two, both with representative government.

The basic forms of Canadian government emerged over the next century. Over time and as the populations grew, the colonies of Lower Canada (Quebec), Upper Canada (Ontario), Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island were provided a governor, an appointed upper house, and an elected lower house. But the mother country made certain not to allow the same situation to develop as occurred in the United States. As a result the assemblies were representative institutions with little authority, and de facto power remained with the Crown's representative—the colonial governor—and his elites (the Family Compact in Upper Canada and the Château Clique in Lower Canada). Minor rebellions in the late 1830s convinced the British to relax executive control and move toward more responsible government, whereby the governor retained his advisers only as long as they were collectively able to muster majority support in the assembly. The Union Act of 1840 reestablished the two Canadas as one political unit in the hopes of returning to the plan of assimilating the French minority.

By the 1860s events south of the border were again forcing change in the political framework of

the colonies. The constant fear of American annexation during the American Civil War (and after invasions during the American Revolution and the War of 1812) reached new heights when the British (and Canadians) made it apparent that their sympathies lay with the Confederacy. In fear of an invasion by a triumphant and angry North, the Dominion of Canada was created in 1867. The new political creation would also allow an escape from the French-English squabbling and resulting political deadlock that had befallen the united colony of Canada. The British North America (BNA) Act confederated the colonies of Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick, with a total population of 3.5 million. Despite strong resistance in the Maritimes, the agreement was pushed through the colonial assemblies with the aid of British pressure.

The BNA Act also served as the Canadian constitution, but the situation would remain dominated by a hybrid of both written and unwritten constitutional precedents. The British tradition of an unwritten constitution (such as common-law precedents and the parliamentary form of government) was already established, and the new act contained a provision that Canada was to have a form of government "similar in principle to that of the United Kingdom." There was no specific mention of the executive roles of the prime minister or the cabinet. Any amendments to the BNA Act would require the approval of the British parliament.

Canada's relationship with Great Britain changed considerably in the twentieth century as the dominion moved toward autonomy. The Liberal government of Mackenzie King made successful efforts to thwart pressures toward imperial centralization emerging from the First World War. Canada resisted attempts to have it participate in "imperial" wars and pushed for the right to sign its own treaties with foreign nations. The battlegrounds for many of these developments were the imperial conferences that culminated in the 1926 Balfour Declaration and the 1931 Statute of Westminster. The former cemented the relationship of Britain to the dominions as equal members of the Commonwealth, and the latter allowed the dominion parliament full power over laws having extraterritorial operation. In 1949 the Supreme Court replaced the British Judicial Committee of the Privy Council as the highest court of appeal and the Canadian parliament gained the right to amend certain portions (not dealing with provincial interests, the five-year term of Parliament, or the language and educational rights of minorities) of the BNA Act without recourse to London. For fundamental changes the British parliament would still have to provide amending legislation.

In 1982 the Constitution Act was passed in Canada and received Royal Assent in Great Britain. The act, it was hoped, would end a long historical process in which the federal and provincial government had sought agreement on an amending formula that would allow for the patriation of the Canadian constitution. Quebec premier René Lévesque, however, refused to sign the new act on the ground that it did not provide guarantees for the province's cultural survival. Liberal prime minister Pierre Trudeau, a French Canadian federalist, pushed the agreement through ratification regardless.

The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms was part of the April 1982 constitutional package and became the first entrenched comprehensive statement of fundamental values. It outlined democratic rights including fundamental freedoms such as of conscience and religion, belief and expression, peaceful assembly, and association. In addition it served to protect equality as a democratic right and, in the political sphere, to guarantee presumed associated values such as universal suffrage, elections contested by competing political parties, rule of law, majority rule, and minority rights.

In 1984 the new Progressive Conservative (PC) prime minister, Brian Mulroney, stepped into the role of national negotiator in an attempt to bring Quebec into the constitution. He sought to appease Quebec's demands: recognition of "distinct society" status that would entail a constitutional veto; control over immigration into the province; financial compensation for nonparticipation in national programs; and involvement in appointments to the Supreme Court. In April 1987 a first ministers conference (gathering of provincial premiers) offered unanimous support for these provisions. The agreement, known as the Meech Lake Accord, failed to gain ratification by the provincial legislatures within the required three-year period. Quebec's demands began to face increasing opposition by such groups as anglophones, federalists, and native groups.

With the failure of Meech Lake Mulroney went back to the table and was able to formulate a still more comprehensive package that was unanimously agreed to on October 28, 1992. The Charlottetown Accord, as it was known, went further than the Meech Lake Accord. The new accord again recognized Quebec as a distinct society (but in a more limited sense). In terms of federal-provincial relations the accord called for significant limitations on the ability of the federal government to encroach upon issues of provincial jurisdiction, as well as for an elected Senate. Finally,

the agreement guaranteed Quebec 25 percent of the seats in the House of Commons. Facing increasing demands for public input, the government decided to obtain popular approval in a referendum. However, a national majority and six provinces, including Quebec, rejected the deal.

Three years later Quebec held its second referendum on independence, with the separatist forces losing by the barest of margins. Despite promises of another referendum with the victory of the separatist Parti Québécois in the provincial government electdions in 1998, none occurred, due to a marked decrease in support for separation. On the federal level, under the leadership of Liberal premier Jean Chrétien, attempts were made via the courts and the passage of the Clarity Act (1999) to limit Quebec's ability to secede from the federation. However, the federal government agreed to take any separatist victory seriously in the future. Despite some decline in separatist sentiment in Quebec with the recent Liberal victory, a distinct unease still exists between French and English Canada. The federation remains in flux as a result.

The System of Government

Canada's system of government is a representative democracy that combines federal structure and constitutional monarchy. The nation consists of 10 provinces and three territories. A federal government serves as the main administrative body, but each province also has its own government that administers to a sphere of local responsibilities as dictated by the constitution. Canadian federalism is not a static division of powers but a process that has undergone considerable and even dramatic transformation (between a centralized and decentralized structure) throughout its history.

In 1982 Canada's parliament passed the Constitution Act, and it received the assent of the British monarch. The act allowed for repatriation of the Canadian constitution, making Canada a fully sovereign state. (Under the BNA Act of 1867, Canada had depended on the British parliament to legislate changes involving provincial interests and the terms of parliamentary office, among other things.) The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, part of the 1982 constitutional package, outlines democratic rights, including such fundamental freedoms, as those of conscience and religion, belief and expression, peaceful assembly, and association. It also protects equality as a democratic right and, in the political sphere, guarantees universal suffrage, elections contested by competing political parties, rule of law, majority rule, and minority rights.

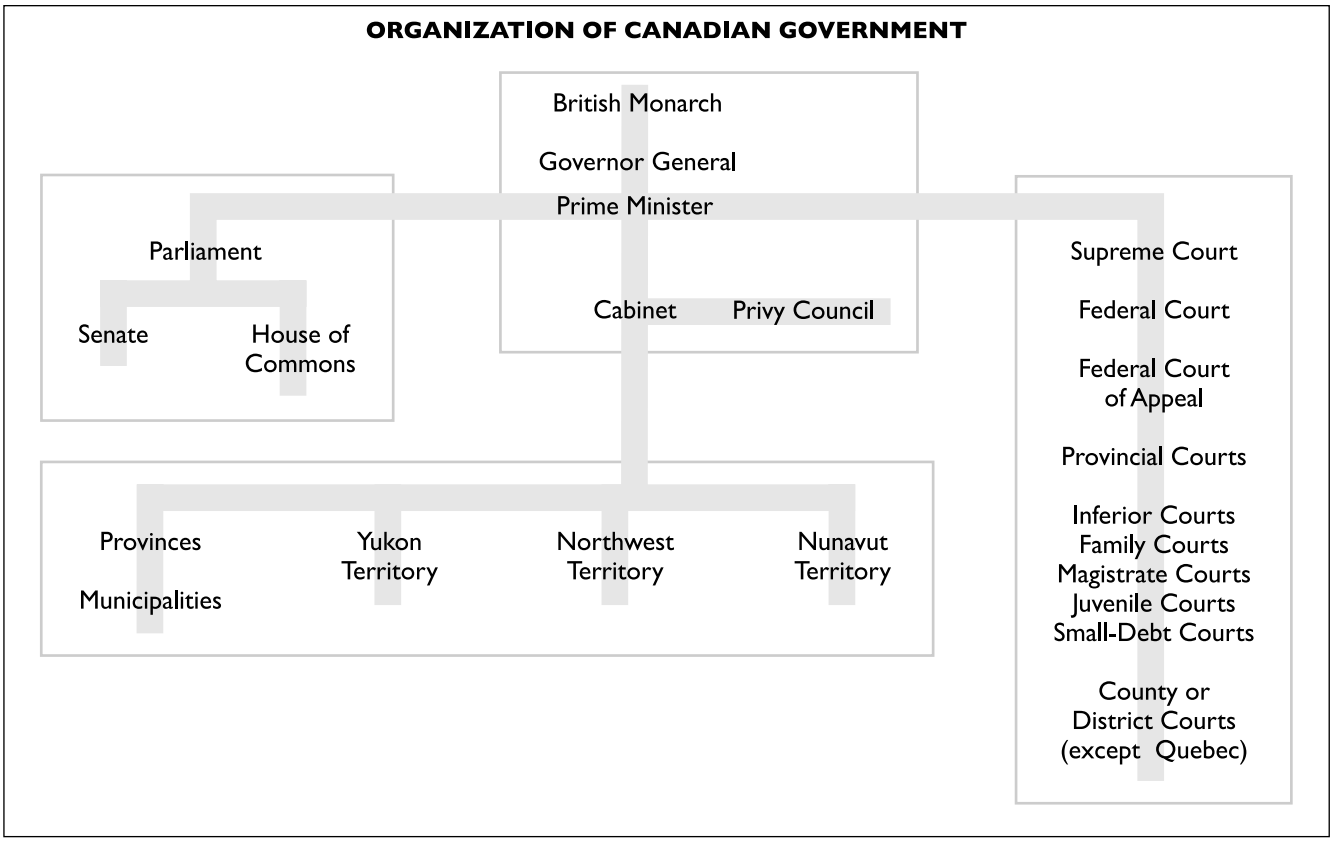
The constitution package was ratified over the objection of Quebec separatists, and Canada held national referendums in 1980 and 1995 that narrowly defeated proposed independence for the province. Although support for Quebec separatism has declined, the issue still raises some uncertainty about the future makeup of the federation.

EXECUTIVE

The formal executive in Canada consists of the British Crown represented in the capital city of Ottawa by a governor-general and in each of the provinces by a lieutenant governor. As in Great Britain the monarchical role is formal and its functions are ceremonial. The governor-general and lieutenant governors are officially appointed by the queen, but in practice the selections are made by the Canadian prime minister. The official term of office is six years, but usually the term is five years. The first Canadian to hold the post was Vincent Massy in 1952. Since the appointment of Major General Georges Vanier in 1959, governors-general have alternated between francophone and anglophone.

According to the Canadian constitution it is the Queen's Privy Council that serves as the advisory body of the head of state. The Council was originally created to advise the governor-general. Its members are nominated by the prime minister and appointed for life. It includes current and former ministers of the Crown as well as other politically influential figures. In reality the symbolic Council meets rarely, and then only for ceremonial purposes, with its intended political functions being exercised by the cabinet. The BNA Act makes no mention of the office of prime minister or the cabinet, yet they play the most significant role in the running of government.

Reflecting the principle of responsible government, the political executive is formed by the political party that enjoys the support of the House of Commons. The prime minister is the leader of this party. If no party holds a majority of the seats in Parliament, the executive will be formed by the party with the largest number, as long as the government can maintain power by gaining and holding the support of other groups. If a government loses the support of the House, either it will be replaced or Parliament will be dissolved and an election called. Minority governments and coalitions did not become a reality in Canada until 1921 when the traditional two-party system was disrupted. The



strength of alternative parties has varied since this time with minority government appearing in 1921, 1925, 1957, 1962, 1963, 1965, 1972, 1979, and 2004.

Under normal circumstances the prime minister is the leader of the largest political party in the House of Commons. He or she is selected at a national party leadership convention to which the various constituency organizations send delegates. The first convention was held in 1919. The prime minister, as with all members of Parliament, must win his or her own riding from among the 301 constituencies across the nation.

Upon winning power the prime minister must immediately deal with the usually difficult task of forming the cabinet. These ministers are usually chosen from among the members of Parliament (MPs), and most will be provided one or more portfolios (government departments). Certain departments are traditionally held by particular regions (Agriculture, for example, is usually held by a westerner). On occasion members of the Senate may be asked to accept a portfolio to ensure a government representation from all regions. Cabinet selections are based on such factors as regional distribution, talent, experience, and personality. Decisions reached in cabinet that carry legal force are called "orders-in-council."

The size of the cabinet has varied but increased quite dramatically in the post–World War II period alongside a burgeoning governmental bureaucracy and infrastructure. The general economic recession has led to calls for cost cutting and downsizing, and the size of the cabinet has followed suit. The prime minister and cabinet are members of both the executive and the legislature simultaneously.

In 1993 the prime minister also introduced a new ministry system based on the British precedent whereby eight secretaries of state are also appointed who serve as chief aides to the ministers. These secretaries are sworn to the Privy Council but attend cabinet meetings only on request and receive a reduced salary. Parliamentary secretaries play a similar role but have no statutory authority.

Decisions in cabinet are divided among the various communities that contain ministers, secretaries, and senior civil servants. In the early 1970s two central agencies were formed to help rationalize government operations. The Privy Council Office is an ostensibly nonpartisan agency staffed by civil servants (over 500 officers and support personnel) whose primary function is to coordinate cabinet activities and cabinet committee meetings. The clerk of the Privy Council is the top

civil servant in the nation. The Prime Minister's Office (PMO) is much more obviously partisan and is composed of appointed staff loyal to the prime minister. This office provides advice, drafts the Speech from the Throne, and does much public relations work. Like the cabinet, these two agencies have no constitutionally defined role and vary in purpose with the desires of the prime minister. The Public Service Commission (civil service) also plays a large role in staffing government departments, even to the level of deputy minister. In theory only ministers and parliamentary secretaries are politicians. Regardless, partisanship remains a strong factor in civil service appointments and there is a considerable amount of change when a new government comes into office.

By the 1980s decentralized decision making was becoming the norm. Committees such as the Priorities and Planning Committee (chaired by the prime minister), the Operations Committee, the Legislation and House Planning Committee, the Special Committee of Council, the Communications Committee, and the Security and Intelligence Committee were formed to coordinate policy making and bring recommendations to the cabinet. As of 1997 the government functioned with four committees: Economic Union, Social Union, Special Committee of Council, and Treasury Board.

The Canadian government establishes what are called royal commissions to investigate issues of public concern and then recommend suitable courses of action. The members of these sources of public policy advice are appointed by the government but are supposed to be experts in the particular field. Usual methods of gathering information include inviting briefs or staging public hearings. Although royal commissions have been employed throughout the past 100 years, they are often criticized as government ploys to educate the public on action already being taken, thereby creating the "appearance" of action. Probably the most influential commission in Canadian history was the Rowell-Sirois Report on Dominion-Provincial Relations. It reported during the Second World War and was instrumental in restructuring a more centralized federal system after the disaster of the Depression, in which several provinces went bankrupt. One of the most recent reports was that offered by the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples.

LEGISLATURE

Canada has a bicameral legislature. The Commons acts as a popularly elected lower house, and the Senate serves as an appointed upper house. Legally both houses are equal and all legislation must pass both to receive Royal Assent and become law. But as in Great Britain, it is the Commons that deals with the day-to-day government matters and formulates legislation.

The Senate was originally intended to protect the smaller provinces and minorities and to sit as the "house of sober thought," serving as a check on the lower house. It reserves for itself the roles of reconciling legal inconsistencies in Commons legislation and holding hearings on major social and political issues. New members of this body are appointed for life by the incumbent prime minister as a reward for public service. The longer a government remains in power, the more the Senate will reflect this party. A government entering office on the heels of a long-serving administration is forced to face a strongly entrenched Senate of a different political persuasion.

There has long been public opposition to the continued existence of the Senate and serious questions as to its usefulness. It is very clearly a patronage tool to reward older party members even up to the age of 75, the mandatory retirement age. Yet the house remains intact. The new constitutional amendment formula has opened the door to Senate reform by depriving it of its veto power over constitutional change. For example, even a move to abolish the Senate can be delayed but not prevented by that body. In recent years the demands for Senate reform have increased, but no new plan has met with approval. The "Triple E" model, standing for *elected, effective,* and *equal,* is the most popular and emerges from Alberta, reflecting regional alienation in western Canada. Indeed in 1989 Alberta held an election to select its representative to fill a Senate vacancy. Although Prime Minister Mulroney wanted a list of names, he finally went along with the appointment of the elected candidate. To date, this procedure has not been copied elsewhere.

The distribution of Commons seats is readjusted after each decennial census to take account of demographic changes. The House of Commons has 301 members at present, each member representing a single riding or constituency. The seats are allotted to the provinces in proportion to population. This gives the larger provinces such as Ontario (103) and Quebec (75) considerably more representation than the smaller provinces.

This lack of regional balance is supposed to be compensated for by Senate numbers because smaller provinces such as Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland are protected against having fewer MPs than senators. Unlike the Commons the Senate has fixed numbers of members according to region, with 24 from Ontario, 24 from Quebec, 24 from the West (6 from each of the four provinces), 24 from the Maritimes (10 each from New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, 4 from Prince Edward

Island), 6 from Newfoundland, and 1 each from the Yukon and the Northwest Territories. Normally, total membership in the upper house is 104. The constitution provides, however, for a possible temporary increase to 112 at the discretion of the prime minister. In 1990 this as-yet-unused provision was invoked by Conservative prime minister Mulroney to break the opposition of the Liberal majority against the goods and service tax.

Parliamentary sessions vary in length depending on the amount of legislation the government is attempting to introduce, but the Commons and Senate can meet as legislative bodies only during one of these sessions. They are usually held twice a year, commencing in October and January. The end of the sessions is not fixed. Parliaments are labeled consecutively; after the election of 2004 the legislative bodies met for the sitting of the 38th Parliament.

The formal powers of the House of Commons are substantial, but power lies mainly with the prime minister, his cabinet, and the caucus. It is here that legislation is created and party strategies are decided. General parliamentary committees do exist, and members of all parties have places on these bodies, but legislation is generally prepared within a government department and presented to the committees as a fait accompli. Individual members of the governing party without government responsibility ("back-benchers") can introduce private member's bills but are expected to follow party directives as indicated by the party whip. This strong sense of party discipline can pit a member's loyalty to his party against his loyalty to his constituents or his own conscience. This contradiction has been a common problem in Canadian political history and has served as part of the justification for third parties as well as ammunition against the traditional party system. Individual opposition to party direction and discipline at times leads to members' "crossing the floor" and switching parties or serving as "independents."

Policy formation is conducted in government through three main avenues—the Throne Speech, the budget, and legislation. The Speech from the Throne is given at the beginning of the session and is meant to provide the general direction of the government by outlining objectives. The budget is meant to provide an accounting of the government's finances and is usually the most controversial issue of the session. Depending on the size of the party's majority, the passing of the budget can provide an opportunity for opposition groups to defeat or "bring down" an administration.

The Commons Speaker fulfils an important symbolic and legislative function. In the past the Speaker was elected by the Commons on the basis of a nomination by the prime minister and seconded by the leader of the opposition. Tradition dictated that the post rotate between an English and a French Canadian. In 1986 a new procedure was introduced whereby the process was opened up to democratic selection. Any MP who does not explicitly withdraw his or her name becomes a candidate. Voting is carried out by secret ballot, and except for the announcement of the victor, results are kept secret. According to parliamentary rules all official comments in the House must be addressed to the Speaker. Members do not speak directly to each other and may not refer to each other by name. Rather, titles must be used (the prime minister, the leader of the opposition, the honorable member).

The effective role of the opposition in the House of Commons varies with the size of the government majority. Its role is to criticize legislation, propose amendments, and resort to obstructionist procedures to gain concessions. Possibly the most important weapon in the opposition's arsenal is the daily question period. The proceedings are televised to allow voters to evaluate their representatives. Regardless of the number of parties in the House there can be only one official opposition, known as the Loyal Opposition. This group is usually formed by the second-largest party in the Commons and sits on the benches across the floor from the governing party. The second-largest group, however, is allowed to defer the role if desired. Such was the case in 1921 when the new farmers' party known as the Progressives burst onto the scene with the second-largest number of seats. The Progressives balked the traditional party system and preferred to sit as a pressure group rather than serve as the official opposition. This role then fell to the party with the next most seats.

PERCENTAGE POPULAR VOTE BY PARTY, 2000 AND 2004 CANADIAN GENERAL ELECTION

	2000	2004
Liberal	40.8	36.7
Alliance	25.5	—
PC	12.2	—
CPC	29.6	—
NDP	8.5	15.7
BQ	10.7	12.4
Others	2.2	5.6

JUDICIARY

The federal structure that dominates Canada's political system is also reflected in its judiciary. The nation has the only integrated system of all federations. The remarkable degree of integration can be seen in the fact that a purely federal judicial power is not even mentioned in the Canadian constitution, which instead provides for a system with federally appointed judges to provincial superior and intermediate courts. The Supreme Court was established as a general court of appeal rather than one limited to federal and constitutional law. Parliament also has exclusive jurisdiction in the area of criminal law, while the provincial legislatures have powers to establish courts of criminal jurisdiction. As a result provincially established courts administer federal law. There has been a tendency in recent years to move toward a more bifurcated system of dual courts.

SEATS PER PARTY PER PROVINCE, 2004 CANADIAN FEDERAL ELECTION

	Liberal	NDP	CPC	BQ	Independent
National	135	19	99	54	1
Alberta	2	—	26	—	—
British Columbia	8	5	22	—	—
Manitoba	3	4	7	—	—
New Brunswick	7	1	2	—	—
Newfoundland and Labrador	5	—	2	—	—
Nova Scotia	6	2	3	—	—
Ontario	75	7	24	—	—
Prince Edward Island	4	—	—	—	—
Québec	21	—	—	—	54
Saskatchewan	1	—	13	—	—
Northwest Territories	1	—	—	—	—
Yukon	—	—	—	1	—
Nunavut	1	—	—	—	—

The highest court in the land is the Supreme Court, which serves as the final arbiter on civil, criminal, and constitutional cases. Each province has a complete court system for all types of cases, culminating in a provincial supreme court (sometimes called the superior court or the court of the queen's bench). Since 1987 these provincial courts have had appeal courts as well. The Federal Court of Canada oversees matters of law, equity, and admiralty.

Criminal law is uniform throughout Canada and determined by federal legislation. Civil law and related judicial matters are controlled provincially; all provinces follow a common-law tradition except Quebec, which uses the Code Civil du Québec, a system that has survived since the days of the ancien regime and is based on the Code Napoléon.

Canada's Supreme Court was established in 1875, soon after confederation, but it became the final court of appeal only in 1949. Its nine judges are appointed by the governor-general on the advice of the prime minister, and their tenure is relatively secure, with a retirement age of 75. They can be removed only by an address to the governor-general by both houses of Parliament. This would occur only after a formal investigation by the Criminal Judicial Council, including all the chief justices in the land. Such action has never occurred.

Canada's legislatures have authority over their jurisdiction, but if action is taken that crosses into another realm, the Supreme Court has the ability to demonstrate the federal division of power and declare it ultra vires (beyond jurisdiction). The entrenchment of individual and group rights in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms also limits parliamentary supremacy by protecting these rights. The use of the War Measures Act, which allows the Canadian federal government to exercise extraordinary power by suppressing civil rights in times of war, civil unrest, or natural disaster, is an exception to the rule. The act was last employed in 1970 in Quebec during the October Crisis by the government of the Liberal prime minister Pierre Trudeau to deal with the FLQ (Front de la Libération du Québec) terrorist group.

As with the Senate, pressure is mounting to make the Supreme Court a representative body. Three judges always come from Quebec and at least one judge from the regions outside central Canada. The Supreme Court fulfils all the normal functions of a final court

of appeal and provides advisory opinions and judicial review. The first woman to serve on the Supreme Court was Bertha Wilson in 1982. As of 2005 Canada's Supreme Court was the most gender-balanced national high court in the world, with five male and four female justices, including chief justice Beverley McLachlin.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Canadian provinces hold a significant number of exclusive powers in the areas of health, education, and welfare. Canada is one of the most decentralized federations, with provincial governments actually outspending the federal government and often impacting the daily lives of Canadians much more than the federal government. In fact provincial voter turnout levels have occasionally exceeded federal ones (both overall and in a given province).

When the Dominion of Canada became a nation in 1867, the architect behind confederation, John A. Macdonald, was intent on creating a strong, centralized federal system to avoid what he perceived as the mistakes that had just recently caused the American Civil War. The resulting federal union was to reserve the influential powers to the federal government while providing only minor local spheres of control for the provinces. The federal government also maintained the power to "disallow" provincial legislation. This overriding power was employed 112 times after confederation but has not been used since 1943. The lieutenant governors were also able to employ royal prerogative and veto legislation, but the power was not used. A power that has been employed, however, is the ability of the lieutenant governors to reserve provincial legislation for federal approval.

Since confederation in 1867 there has been a continual power struggle between the two levels of government. The provinces usually band together to push for increases in their jurisdictions, but they have not always stood united against federal encroachments into their domain. The glaring lack of balance in Canadian regionalism had led the more prosperous provinces (Ontario, Quebec, and later British Columbia and Alberta) to lead the resistance against increased federalism, while the poorer "have-not" provinces (Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba) have at times encouraged more federal control.

However, decentralization has been the norm over time in the federation. As a result the provinces have gained significant and substantial legislative and administrative competencies in many areas (sometimes referred to as "jurisdictional federalism"). As these responsibilities have increased and fiscal imbalances between the federal and provincial governments have become apparent, the Canadian system has evolved into a more cooperative federalist structure in which there is frequent intergovernmental negotiation, discussion, and consultation between the federal and provincial governments over different policy areas. Some have actually argued that such "cooperative federalism" is better described as "executive federalism."

Regardless of the term used, relations between the provincial governments and the federal government are characterized by frequent meetings between first ministers (prime minister and the premiers of each of the provincial governments) or between federal and provincial ministers responsible for a specific policy area to jointly discuss and negotiate concurrent and shared policy competencies and financial responsibilities. These meetings are part of a more elaborate network of forums for federal-provincial negotiations and discussions. Although these systems of intergovernmental relations have been generally successful in supporting both federal and provincial party goals and needs, they have been challenged by Quebec's increasing demands for fiscal and policy autonomy. From the late 1970s through the 1990s, when Quebec nationalism was at its peak, some scholars even used the term "contested federalism" to characterize the nature of the Canadian federalism (as the survival of the federation itself was at stake).

Complicating matters between federal and provincial levels are the financial grants that provinces may receive from the federal government to fund their policies and initiatives. Such grants have been viewed as a means for the federal government to encroach upon areas of provincial jurisdiction. The Framework for Social Union (1999) now requires that the federal government receive the assent of a majority of provincial leaders before establishing any "shared-cost" programs in areas of provincial jurisdiction. However, conditional grants currently make up only a small portion of federal grants. A federal transfers system has been instituted in order to ensure that all provinces provide roughly the same level of public services at roughly comparable levels of taxation (regardless of their revenue base). Each of the provinces except Ontario and Alberta receives such payments. All such payments are unconditional in nature. The Maritime provinces are those that benefit most from such payments, although Saskatchewan and Manitoba have also greatly gained from the transfers. Therefore it is not surprising that

these provinces have been more supportive (overall) of a more federalist structure.

The evolution of Canadian federalism has had important consequences for electoral behavior. Provincial politics is often separated from federal-level politics. It is not uncommon for citizens to split their partisan attachments between levels to reflect different preferences for policies at the provincial and federal levels.

As alluded to before, federal-provincial relations have been and continue to be complicated by French Canadian nationalism in Quebec. For many in the province any encroachments into provincial jurisdiction by Ottawa is viewed as a threat to Quebec sovereignty. In recent years there has been a shift toward federal devolution of powers in Canada. While the Liberal government of Pierre Trudeau attempted to be strongly federalist in the 1970s, the Progressive Conservative governments of Brian Mulroney in the 1980s sought constitutional agreement with Quebec and as a result moved toward increased provincial powers.

Many of these measures (in particular the Meech Lake Accord and the Charlottetown Accord) would have led to more limitations on the ability of the federal government to encroach upon provincial jurisdictions. They failed, however, primarily as a result of Quebec's "special" demands. In the late 1990s (particularly with the passage of the Clarity Act) the federal government reasserted some control over possible sovereignty or secessionist movements. However, the federal government has not been entirely victorious. Even though the Supreme Court ruled in 1998 that no province could unilaterally secede from the federation, it stated that any calls for secession through a referendum or other means would have to be considered and negotiated in a serious fashion. With a federalist government in place in Quebec other issues have come to the forefront, such as the democratic deficit, individual rights, and the rights of indigenous peoples. However, there are still deep political cleavages in Quebec concerning sovereignty, as well as a continued divide between Quebec and the rest of Canada.

Canada is usually divided into three significant regions—the Maritimes or Atlantic Canada (New Brunswick, Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island), Central Canada (Ontario and Quebec), and West Canada (Alberta, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and British Columbia, the first three of which are often referred to as the Prairie provinces). A fourth region—North Canada—consists of the Northwest Territories, the Yukon, and Nunavut. These three territories have no constitutional standing and are much more reliant on federal funding than the provinces.

Each province consists of a unicameral legislature (which varies in size from 27 members for Prince Edward Island to 125 for Quebec). The party with the most seats forms the government, with its leader becoming the premier. Each province also has its own lieutenant governor, who is the representative of the Queen as head of state. The party with the second-largest number of seats becomes the official opposition. Representatives are elected in single-member districts in a first-past-the-post system. Thus, in many ways, the mechanisms for the selection and the structure of the legislature reflect the federal setup.

Local or municipal government in Canada varies widely in function and form across the provinces. Most elections for local governing bodies (including school boards) and leaders are nonpartisan in nature.

THE MARITIMES

The Maritime provinces consist of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, and Newfoundland. Nova Scotia is the most populous of the Maritime provinces and Prince Edward Island the least. The inhabitants are largely of British and Irish ancestry, but there are significant groups of Acadian French centered in New Brunswick. A powerful sense of regional alienation, created in large part by economic difficulty, dominates Maritime politics. The fisheries remain the staple, and the problems facing this industry, such as the government-imposed cod moratorium, highlight the plight of the populace. The region is deficient in secondary industries, and federal transfer payments make up between 30 and 50 percent of provincial revenues. Newfoundland has the highest level of federal fiscal support in all of Canada (80 percent).

The Maritimes have demonstrated a remarkably strong loyalty to the traditional two-party system dominated by the Liberals and the Conservatives. Regional alienation has led some third parties, such as the New Democratic Party (NDP) and the Alliance and the Reform/Alliance Party (until 2003), to target the region as a base of support. Although the NDP has had some success in recent years, particularly in Nova Scotia, where it has recently been the official opposition, these efforts have largely failed due to the small "c" conservative nature of Maritime political culture and the western orientation of the third-party movements. Distinctly "Maritime" third parties have appeared in the region, but they have also failed to make headway.

CENTRAL CANADA

Central Canada is the most industrialized and politically important region in Canada, as it accounts for 188 of the 301 seats in the House of Commons.

The establishment of the province of Quebec in 1867 provided the French Canadians with what they perceived as an autonomous sphere that would ensure their cultural survival. The creation of Canada was believed to have been a compact of the two founding peoples, the English and the French. In recent years this "two-nations approach" has come under scrutiny particularly by those outside Quebec who argue that the dominion is a nation of 10 provinces, of which Quebec is only one. They argue that the two-nations approach does not pay proper attention to the many other ethnic groups that constitute the nation, not to mention the native peoples. Regardless, most Quebecers view the province as the French Canadian homeland.

Political sentiment in the province is divided between federalists and separatists, and French Canadian nationalism plays a volatile role in the national unity debate that dominates the political scene at both the federal and provincial levels. The move toward Quebec sovereignty and its separation from Canada has existed to some extent since before World War II but became the dominant issue by the mid-1970s.

Since confederation Quebec has sought to protect its cultural distinctiveness in both provincial and federal politics. The large number of seats in the province (75), along with the fact that the people usually vote as a bloc, has ensured that a successful party must pay attention to Quebec concerns. In the past, cultural issues have been dominated by religion, education, and military conscription; since the Second World War they have been dominated by the constitution and language.

The Conservative and Liberal Parties controlled Quebec federal politics until 1990 when the forces of separatism emerged in the form of the Bloc Québécois (BQ). Provincial politics, on the other hand, has long been under the influence of French Canadian nationalism.

Provincial politics is currently dominated by the Parti Québécois (PQ) and the Liberals. A smaller third party known as the Action Démocratique du Québec (ADQ) has also recently appeared on the scene. Liberal leaders have tended to be more federalist in nature, while the PQ has strong separatist leanings and has led the way for several failed referendums on Quebec's status in the Canadian federation (which have in turn led to many frustrations and to discontent between Quebec and the rest of Canada). Currently Liberals are in control of the provincial government, quieting nationalist sentiment. However, as previously noted, rifts remain within Quebec and between Canada and the rest of Quebec.

CANADIAN PROVINCIAL LEGISLATURES AS OF 2004

	Liberals	CPC	NDP	PQ	SP
Alberta	2	74	7	—	—
British Columbia	76	—	3	—	—
Manitoba	2	20	35	—	—
New Brunswick	26	28	1	—	—
Newfoundland	12	34	2	—	—
Nova Scotia	12	25	15	—	—
Ontario	72	24	7	—	—
Prince Edward Island	4	23	—	—	—
Quebec	76	—	—	45	4
Saskatchewan	—	30	28	—	—

Ontario is the most populous, wealthiest, and most politically influential of Canada's provinces. It is still predominantly of British stock, with large French, Italian, and German ethnic groups, and many others. Together with Quebec, Ontario forms the industrial heartland of the nation. The party that carries Ontario in the federal election has the best chance of winning office. Until the mid-1980s Ontario had been a bastion for the Progressive Conservatives. In recent years the NDP and the Liberals have both held the premiership. The NDP's power, however, has considerably waned of late.

THE WEST

The Canadian West as a region has changed over the years. Before World War II Canadians often distinguished the Prairie West (meaning the three Prairie provinces of Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta) from the Pacific West (British Columbia). The Prairie West was viewed as one agricultural region that, with minor provincial differences, contained a

diverse population resulting from the immigration boom at the turn of the twentieth century. British Columbia with its varying landscape of Pacific coast, Rocky Mountains, and northern forests was a region unto itself.

The West remains Canada's most politically radical region. Due to its relative youthfulness, the immigration influx and resulting ethnic diversity, the strength and influence of the agrarian movements, the great expectations that ended in the disappointment of the depression of the 1930s, and the dominance of central Canada, the region lacks much of the established Liberal and Conservative tradition. The West has served as the experimental site for numerous third-party movements, most notably the Reform Party (and later Alliance) in federal elections and the NDP (primarily in provincial elections, but in federal elections as well). The Liberals have traditionally been very weak in the Prairie provinces, but recently they have grown in strength in British Columbia. In most provinces party politics is characterized by a two-party system (with the possible exception of Alberta). Manitoba's politics has been dominated by the PC and NDP, and this was the case in Saskatchewan as well until the Saskatchewan Party recently emerged to challenge the other parties (in particular the NDP). Alberta's politics has been dominated by the PC since the late 1970s. British Columbia's politics until 1991 was characterized by alternation between the NDP and Social Credit parties, but Liberal strength has dramatically increased in recent years.

THE NORTH

The land mass north of the 60th parallel forms a region unto itself and is made up of the Northwest Territories, the Yukon Territory, and Nunavut. The vast area remains predominantly the home of the indigenous populations (Dene Nation, several Inuit peoples, and Métis). Although there have been efforts to win provincial status for the three territories, they are still under the constitutional authority of the federal government. They do have fully elected assemblies, responsible executives, and a form of delegated responsibility for most of the matters under their jurisdiction.

The Northwest Territories cover the area from Yukon to Baffin Island. The territorial government works out of Yellowknife. There are no parties in elections, and all candidates run as independents.

The Yukon Territory borders Alaska. Partisanship is alive and well in the Yukon, with Liberals, the NDP, and the regional Yukon Party all having held the government at one time or other.

Nunavut is the newest (1999) and least densely populated of the territories. Nunavut's head of state is a commissioner appointed by the federal minister of Indian and Northern Affairs. There is a unicameral legislature whose members are elected as independents without party label.

The Electoral System

Canada is a federal state and therefore has two concurrent electoral systems: a national one (which also covers the Yukon, Northwest, and Nunavut Territories) and a provincial one. Federal elections used to be conducted on the basis of the provincial regulations, but in accordance with the Canada Elections Act of 1920 these national contests are administered by the independent chief electoral officer and his or her staff. This office is precluded from voting. According to the constitution the Canadian prime minister is obligated to request a dissolution and an election from the governor-general every five years. The prime minister chooses the election date. Elections will occur earlier if the government is defeated, if it resigns, or if it wishes to go to the people to renew its mandate. The election date is always a Monday unless the day is a statutory holiday, in which case it is held on the following day.

Traditionally there was no permanent electoral list in Canada, and as a result the government, through the electoral officer (independent official responsible to the House of Commons), was responsible for enumerating all eligible voters prior to each election. This officer is instructed of the ensuing contest by the cabinet (officially the governor-in-council). The returning officers in each constituency are issued writs of election and supervise the contest at the riding level. After 1997 a permanent voters' list was compiled. The election in 2000 was the first election in which a permanent voters' list was used. The list turned out to have numerous inaccurate addresses in many ridings. Some commentators argued that such glitches in the system (along with other factors) contributed to the lowest recorded turnout in federal elections (60 percent).

All Canadian citizens who are 18 years of age or older are eligible to vote by secret ballot in both provincial and federal elections. Women gained the federal franchise in 1918 (at first this wartime measure was only extended to the wives, sisters, and mothers

of servicemen), while the provincial franchise varied from 1916 (Manitoba) to 1940 (Quebec). The native peoples received the right to vote in 1960 (the Inuit gained the right in 1950). Balloting is carried out in the voter's home constituency. Average voter turnout for both federal and provincial elections in Canada ranges from 60 to 85 percent of registered voters. French Canadians are less active in federal contests than English Canadians but more active in provincial elections.

Candidacy for election is open to any individual who files nomination papers with the signatures of 100 other electors and a deposit of $1,000 with a returning officer. The deposit is meant to discourage nuisance candidates, and the money is refundable if the individual submits the required election expenses return and unused official receipts within the prescribed time limit. He or she must also obtain 15 percent of the ballots cast. Party leaders have a veto over the choice of party candidates, but this interference is rarely employed.

The Canadian electoral system is based on single-member plurality with each member representing one constituency. In a nation of such diverse regional interests, the effect of this structure is twofold: Minority political parties or positions that are regionally based become overrepresented, and parties and issues that are both minority-based *and* diffused throughout the country become underrepresented. For example, the New Democratic Party is traditionally viewed as a regional, western-based party. During its history it has received substantial support everywhere except Quebec, garnering 15 to 18 percent of the vote but only 8 to 12 percent of the seats in Parliament. In the federal election of 1993 the Progressive Conservative government of Prime Minister Kim Campbell received 16 percent of the popular vote but only 2 seats in Parliament. In the same contest the Bloc Québécois with only 13.5 percent of the vote became the second-largest group in the House with 54 seats. Discrepancies between seat and vote shares tend to be even worse in provincial legislatures due to the smaller size of such assemblies. A classic example is the 2000 provincial election for Prince Edward Island, in which the PC won 85 percent of the seats with only 52 percent of the popular vote and the Liberals won a mere 15 percent of the seats with over 42 percent of the popular vote. These inconsistencies have long been debated, and calls for a system of proportional representation (usually by those groups that would benefit) have been heard since before the First World War.

When an elected member of either a federal or a provincial house can no longer hold the seat (due to death or resignation), a by-election is held in that constituency to select a new member. By-elections can be important as indicators of a government's standing or by endangering a government's majority.

The 1997 election witnessed the use of new election rules that reduced the length of the campaign to the new minimum of 36 days from the old standard of 47 days. Redistribution for this contest increased the number of seats from 295 to 301 (four new seats for Ontario, two for BC). Another change was intended to compensate for the varying time zones of the nation, which led to polls closing and results being known in eastern Canada long before they had closed in the far West. Under the new rule ballot counting took place at the same approximate time and results were not announced until the polls closed in the West.

The Party System

ORIGINS OF THE PARTIES

The traditional federal party system in Canada evolved from the nation's colonial history and was heavily influenced by the British system. In the years that followed 1867 it was further shaped by the forces of immigration and continentalism and has emerged into a distinctly Canadian system.

Prior to confederation two political groups emerged that reflected the struggle for responsible government in colonial society. The Tories as the dominant group, reflecting the strong influence of the United Empire Loyalists as well as the British imperial establishment, maintained power through an oligarchy consisting of the governorship, the executive council, and the various ruling cliques. Opposition came from a group known as the Reformers, who took inspiration from both the Whig tradition in Britain and the republican tradition in the United States. The struggle for responsible government, culminating in the Rebellions of 1837–38, cemented the identity of these political groups. In the years leading up to confederation political sympathies became more moderate and took the form of Conservative and Liberal, parties akin to the British system. Mass parties emerged at the end of the century after public voting (which often took up to six weeks to complete) was replaced by the secret ballot and the franchise was expanded.

The two-party system remained intact until 1921 when agrarian protest exploded onto the scene in

the form of the western-based Progressives, who won enough seats to qualify as the official opposition and force the first minority government in Canadian history. The Progressive Party was short-lived (lasting only two elections), but the traditional party system would never be fully restored. The Great Depression (known as the "Dirty Thirties") once again forced westerners to search for radical alternatives, but this time agrarian discontent coalesced with labor unrest and a burgeoning left-wing intelligentsia to form a more ideologically based social democratic party, the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation. Other protest parties have emerged since, but the CCF-NDP has remained the enduring third party. Most recently the Bloc Québécois and the Reform Party have come forward to challenge the traditional two-party system.

For a short period the Alliance replaced the Reform Party as an alternative to the Progressive Conservatives. However, in 2003 the PC and Alliance formally joined forces.

THE PARTIES IN LAW

Political parties are not mentioned in the Canadian constitution. The state registers parties and provides them with financial support if they meet basic requirements. Individual candidates who wish to stand for office need only make an election deposit of $1,000, which is forfeited if a candidate fails to receive 15 percent of the vote.

The Election Expenses Act of 1974 altered the basic financing of election campaigns. The act enables the state to subsidize campaigns indirectly by allowing individuals tax credits for gifts up to $500. It also requires that a party either have one representative in Parliament or field candidates in at least 50 electoral districts to be eligible for the indirect subsidies. These requirements are at present met by the Liberal Party, the Progressive Conservative Party, the New Democratic Party, the Bloc Québécois, the Natural Law Party, the Reform Party, and the Marxist-Leninist Party. The act was amended in 1983 with spending ceilings being tied to changes in the consumer price index. Spending is also adjusted to the size of the constituency by allowing an expense of one dollar each for the first 15,000 voters, 50 cents each for the next 10,000, and 25 cents each for the remaining voters. To assist candidates in very large but sparsely populated constituencies, a further 15 cents per square kilometer may be spent. Overall, qualified political parties receive reimbursement for 22.5 percent of their total allowable election expenses. Regulations concerning party financing changed somewhat in 2004. Strict limitations were placed on donations by corporations and unions. Additionally parties now receive public campaign funding dependent on the percentage of the vote won.

PARTY ORGANIZATION

In theory the main political parties that exist at both the federal and provincial levels keep their spheres of influence distinct. Party organizations are expected to exist at both levels and be able to function autonomously. While this autonomy exists to an extent, there is usually considerable cooperation, the level of which often depends on whether the party in question holds federal power. A party in government in Ottawa is usually facing scrutiny in some region or province of the nation. As a result connections between the federal and provincial organizations may work to the detriment of the latter.

In 1980 the issue of constitutional reform put each of the three major federal parties at odds with at least some of their provincial counterparts. (Differences in policy at the provincial and federal levels even within the same party have led many voters to split their partisan attachments between governmental levels. It is therefore not uncommon for the party system in a provincial election to look much different from the system in a federal election in the same province.) The federal Progressive Conservatives opposed Prime Minister Trudeau's proposals, but the PC premier of Ontario backed Trudeau because the proposals were popular in Ontario. The NDP premier, Alan Blakeney of Saskatchewan, opposed the proposals despite the federal party's support. In Quebec the provincial Liberal Party came out against the Liberal government in Ottawa. On the other hand a popular federal party or government may well witness attempts by its provincial counterparts to take advantage of that popularity.

In general the federal Liberal and Progressive Conservative Parties provide their provincial branches a fair degree of autonomy, while the New Democratic Party exerts more control in matters of both policy and financial concern. However, throughout Canadian political history there have been numerous examples of federal parties wielding undue influence in provincial and even constituent situations. It is also common for federal parties to send in their popular members to influence provincial campaigns. This is usually done with the permission and cooperation of the provincial parties.

But the organizational strength of both federal and provincial parties rests at the local level. The constituency associations of the major parties are associations

of volunteers who are particularly active in times of elections. The association is responsible for nominating a candidate through a local convention or committee meeting, raising funds for the candidate and party, and canvassing the electorate.

In most cases candidates are residents of the constituencies in which they run for election. Living in the riding helps convince the electorate that the candidate is sensitive to the area's needs. At times nonresidents run for election, but this usually occurs in the case of high-profile ("star") candidates who cannot win election in their home constituency or wish to provide party representation in a different region or province.

The various branches of a party usually meet in a national convention (each of the three main parties requires such a convention at least every two years). In general each party has a national council or executive consisting of both provincial and federal representatives that coordinates policy and national election campaigns. A party president, and not the party leader, is responsible for general administration and day-to-day party affairs. This distinction in roles allows the party leader some distance from the potentially troublesome (and scandalous) issue of financing.

The parties and party leaders wield considerable power in Canadian politics. Despite the system's emphasis on individual constituent representation and accountability, a large degree of party discipline is common. This is particularly the case with the mainline Liberal and Progressive Conservative Parties. Criticism of party discipline and calls for elected members to balk the system and answer first to their constituents have long come from the "radical" West and can still be seen in the New Democratic and Reform Parties.

The party leader's power devolves significantly from his or her critical importance to the electoral success of the party. Leadership battles are conducted at party conventions that then become "leadership conventions." The various constituencies are generally able to send delegates who will be provided a vote. A large degree of factionalism usually occurs and runoffs are conducted until only two candidates remain and one is proclaimed the leader. The defeated candidates are expected to adhere to party discipline and do what is best for party unity by throwing their weight behind the successful candidate.

CAMPAIGNING

Prior to World War II federal election campaigns in Canada severely tested the constitutions of the party leaders. The candidates were expected to make whirlwind tours of the massive nation, often crisscrossing its breadth several times by rail and car. Public speaking was the centerpiece of election strategy, and rallies were popular and heavily attended. The difficulties in reaching remote areas placed emphasis on the constituent candidates rather than the party leaders. New communications technologies have obviously affected this style of campaigning, and since the late 1950s elections have increasingly been staged through the mass media, particularly television. The media have focused attention on leadership, and increasingly the electorate is selecting personality over party or local candidates. In recent years the televised "leadership debate" has become the most important event in a national campaign, allowing candidates to score points or lose popularity with the populace. The growing use of opinion polls has also changed the way campaigns are run. The publication of these highly accurate measurements of popular standing undoubtedly influences voting patterns.

INDEPENDENT VOTERS

The extent to which both independent and undecided voters play a role in election campaigns differs according to circumstance and region. In the Maritimes, where partisan tradition remains strong, the number of independent voters tends to be quite low. In the West, where skepticism toward the Central Canadian–dominated political system is more pronounced, the independent vote is stronger.

During campaigns Canadian parties necessarily pay considerable attention to the "swing," or undecided, vote. Crucial areas where this vote is high are targeted and often receive extra attention during campaigns. In the 1997 federal election campaign, for example, Ontario with its large number of seats was critical for the success of the Liberal, Progressive Conservative, and Reform Parties. There was a large undecided vote that could swing toward any of the three groups. As it turned out, despite the closeness of the race, the Liberals won 101 of the 103 seats due to the winner-take-all system.

Major Political Parties

LIBERAL PARTY OF CANADA

HISTORY

The Liberal Party emerged as the colonial counterpart of the British Liberal Party after Canada gained dominion status in 1867. The party also emerged from the

group of Reformers that had opposed the oligarchic structure controlling the colony after the American Revolution and the Loyalist migrations. This Reform Party drew its support from both French and English segments of the population and was a loosely united but ethnically divided group of "Rouges" (anticlericals in Quebec) and "Clear Grits" (whigs in Ontario).

The Liberal Party based itself on an ideology that advocated protection of the common man, increased democracy, limited government, dominion autonomy, freer trade, and reform and an end to corruption. Through its ability to adapt to changing conditions and shift to meet new needs, the "middle-of-the-road" party has held office so often that it has become known as the "Government Party." From 1896 to 2004 the party won 22 of the 30 general elections.

ORGANIZATION

The Liberal Party maintains a strong relationship between its national and provincial organizations. Although they are separate organizations, the constituency associations of the national party belong to the provincial-level member organizations.

A national party convention meets every two years to set policy and elect national officers. It is broadly representative of party adherents with delegates from Parliament, the provincial organizations, the provincial legislatures, the constituency organizations, and the various commissions. The delegates to the convention serve as a consultative council between conventions. Party bylaws stipulate that they must be consulted by the national executive twice a year; this consultation is usually done by mail. Recently various reform commissions have made efforts to promote the democratic quality of the party. As a result the traditional procedure of reviewing the performance of the leader by a national convention of delegates was replaced in 1992 by provisions involving all party members in this review.

The 50-person national executive consists of national party officers and the administrative leaders of the provincial party organizations and the youth, women's, and aboriginal people's commissions. The selection of national officers is heavily influenced by the presidents of the provincial member organizations and the three affiliated commissions.

POLICY

The Liberal Party retained power for much of the twentieth century, largely due to its ability to win support in Quebec as well as wide-ranging support from English Canada. In both world wars the party opposed conscription and in doing so held Quebec. The most serious question facing the Canadian state has long been national unity, and the Liberals have become the defenders of this notion. They have served as a brokerage party, always attempting to carefully balance the various divergent interests in the country. When the CCF was gaining popularity in the 1940s on calls for the establishment of social programs and the welfare state, the Liberals shifted ground and stole the Socialist thunder. When recession struck in the 1980s and 1990s and calls went out for fiscal responsibility and government cutbacks, the Liberals became the party intent on balancing the budget. Their most impressive attribute has been the ability to maintain power. In the 1990s the party supported more of a neoliberal and fiscally conservative agenda (reduction in taxes and limitation of spending) as a means to balance the federal budget. However, there have been tensions within the party in recent years, particularly over conservative economic (such as fiscal policy) policies and more social-democratic social policies (such as the legalization of marijuana and same-sex marriage).

MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY

The party's ability to remain in office at the federal level while maintaining regional domination of Central Canada reflects the Liberals' traditionally strong bases of support in both Quebec and Ontario. The Maritimes also have a strong Liberal tradition despite powerful sentiments of regional alienation. The "Government Party" is extremely weak in the West with little hope of a long-term recovery. The Liberals have long been popular with ethnic groups, particularly those who have immigrated to Canada, for two reasons: The party has framed itself as the protector of minorities and has fostered the major immigration booms into Canada while in office. The party is also strong in urban areas among middle-class professionals.

FINANCING

The base of financial support for the Liberal Party comes from corporate sponsorship as well as individual and association donations.

LEADERSHIP

The leadership of the Liberal Party has been strong and durable and is one of the main reasons for its success and longevity. Due to the overwhelming success of the party, its leader can usually expect to become prime minister. A nonofficial tradition has developed whereby the party leadership takes turns passing between an anglophone and a francophone. After los-

ing two elections in 1984 and 1988, John Turner (who had been prime minister for a short time in 1984) resigned in 1990. The leadership convention in Calgary selected the 1984 runner-up to Turner, Jean Chrétien, on the first ballot. Chrétien returned the Liberals to power in 1993 and won reelection for his party in 1997. He stepped down in 2003, and former finance minister Paul Martin took over the party's leadership. According to the constitution of the Liberal Party a leadership review occurs only during the first national convention after a federal election. In 1992 the party approved a policy whereby all party members, and not just delegates to the leadership convention, have a direct say in reviewing the leader's performance.

PROSPECTS

The Liberals dominated Canadian politics in the latter part of the 1990s and the early 2000s. This success was considerably aided by an anti-Conservative backlash after the unpopular Mulroney governments of the mid-to-late 1980s and early 1990s. Liberals also benefited from the fracturing of the right-wing vote from the late 1980s to 2000. Liberal economic policies continued to be successful through the late 1990s and early 2000s. However, policy disputes opened up within the party, particularly between its left and right wings (exacerbated by the election of a new leader, Paul Martin). This conflict, as well as a financial scandal in early 2004, led to an electoral backlash and a minority Liberal government. While the right-wing forces within the party seem to have dominated, some fear that the NDP, with its left-of-center proclivities, will push legislation toward the left, possibly alienating some Liberal voters.

CONSERVATIVE PARTY OF CANADA (CPC)

HISTORY

The Conservative Party governed Canada for most of the first 30 years after confederation. The party was based on the strength of the traditional colonial oligarchies in both French and English Canada. John A. Macdonald became the moving force behind the party in the 1850s and 1860s and was instrumental in bringing about confederation. He maintained a strong alliance with Quebec conservatives and established the Canadian tradition of having an English prime minister from Ontario who governed with an influential French lieutenant from Quebec, in this case George Étienne-Cartier. The leaders of the Conservative Party were heavily involved with the transportation revolution in Canada and became inextricably intertwined with the railway companies and the "big interests" generally.

The Conservative Party came to advocate strong ties with the mother country and the British Empire overall as well as resistance to Americanization by the United States. In the late 1870s Prime Minister Macdonald's "national policy" set out Conservative policy. It called for protectionism in the form of high tariffs against the United States, the maintenance of the British Preference to encourage and protect Canada's favored position in the British market, railway expansion, and immigration into the West.

The oxymoron *Progressive* was added to the party name in 1942 as a condition for the acceptance of its leadership by the United Farmers of Manitoba premier, John Bracken. The premier, long a figure in the Progressive movement that was so strong in western Canada, argued that the Conservatives had to indicate a desire and ability to change with the times. The renaming was also an attempt to strengthen party fortunes in the West. The Progressive Conservative Party did win power in 1958 under the charismatic westerner John Diefenbaker. The resurgence of the party in 1984 demonstrated the nation's acceptance of the neoconservatism that was also popular in Great Britain and the United States.

With the appearance of the Reform Party in 1987, the Progressive Conservative Party found itself with a rival on the right wing of the ideological spectrum. The Reform Party's base was in western Canada, particularly Alberta. Throughout the 1990s, the Reform Party gained in strength, mainly at the expense of the Progressive Conservatives.

In an attempt to gain more support in eastern and central Canada and "break out" of the party's western alliance, Reform strategists as well as some Progressive Conservative members decided to establish a new party meant to unite the principal right-wing political forces in Canada. Although the proposed party met with some resistance from federal Tories, a number of significant provincial conservative leaders expressed interest and helped to establish the Canadian Reform Conservative Alliance in 2000. The PC as a whole refused to join the newly formed Alliance. Some argued that the Alliance tended to be more ideologically conservative in its social and fiscal policy than the more "progressive" PCs (or Tories) and that traditional conservatives were turning to the Liberals as their second choice over the Alliance.

In the 2000 election the Alliance performed well, scoring 66 seats in the House of Commons, becoming the second-largest party in the House (and consequently the Loyal Opposition). However, the party remained largely restricted to its western strongholds. Disappointed with the lack of widespread support across the country and with internal leadership struggles, party representatives reopened talks with the Progressive Conservatives. The replacement of the Reform Party by the Alliance further hurt the Progressive Conservative Party in the 2000 election. The Alliance outperformed the Progressive Conservatives and became the official opposition. The PC came in a dismal fourth place in number of seats. In late 2003 the Progressive Conservative Party's leaders agreed to merge with the slightly more conservative Alliance to create a new, unified right-wing party known as the Conservative Party of Canada (CPC).

POLICY

Since its founding in 2003, the CPC has sought to emphasize its moderate stands on issues such as health care, child support, and education. However, the party has struggled to present a unified moderate stance, with more conservative leaders of the party often voicing policy positions at odds with the CPC's national leadership.

LEADERSHIP

Stephen Harper became the new leader of the CPC in May 2004, defeating business executive Belinda Stronach and former PC regional leader and cabinet member Tony Clement.

PROSPECTS

The principal goal of the merger was to unite the rival political factions on the right. Many have argued that the Liberal victories in 1997 and 2000 were aided by such splits in the right-wing vote. However, some have argued that there may be some tensions in the CPC as the former Alliance members tend to be slightly more conservative than the traditional PC. The defection of the moderate Belinda Stronach to the Liberal Party in May 2005 hurt the CPC's efforts to position itself as a centrist party.

The CPC currently serves as the official opposition in the House of Commons. Given its mix of conservatism, it will be interesting to see what constituencies the new party can maintain in the future. It is not yet clear how the merger of the two parties will affect policy. It is also still unknown whether provincial PCs will join up with the new federal party or will run under the old moniker. However, several important provincial PC leaders have granted their support to the new CPC. The party is still referred to as the "Tories" (the traditional name for the former Progressives).

NEW DEMOCRATIC PARTY (NDP)

HISTORY

The New Democratic Party, known prior to 1961 as the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation (CCF), developed in 1933 as an amalgam of farm groups, labor associations, and middle-class intellectuals. It appeared on the Prairies (the first conventions being held in Calgary and Regina) out of the third-party traditions of the Progressives and the United Farmers. Unlike these previous groups, however, the CCF was not so much a populist party as a social democratic party with a definite Socialist philosophy. In the wake of the Great Depression and the crisis in capitalism, the movement was more likely to endure than previous third parties. The CCF gained popularity in the 1940s, winning office in Saskatchewan in 1944 as the first Socialist government in North America. The party became such a threat to the Liberal government of Mackenzie King during World War II that the Liberals were impelled to adopt planks for a social welfare system.

The CCF (and then the NDP) has generally maintained its traditional bases of support on the Prairies, in British Columbia, the North, and in Ontario (particularly northwestern), where it actually held the provincial premiership from 1990 to 1995. It is growing in popularity in some of the Maritime states, particularly Nova Scotia, where it is the official opposition in the provincial legislature. The NDP had its greatest successes in the late 1970s and 1980s. Its best performance appeared in the 1988 federal election, when it won 44 seats. It has also had significant influence during times of minority government. During the 1990s, however, the party underwent a rather significant decline, probably due to the extreme unpopularity of the NDP government in Ontario at the time as well as the upsurge in support for the Reform Party. Since 2000 the party has restructured itself somewhat and regained some of its popular support.

ORGANIZATION

An individual who joins the provincial wing of the party automatically becomes a member of both federal and provincial constituency organizations. Due to the weakness of the federal party and the strength of particular provincial parties, the two branches work together. The party's biannual federal convention

includes delegates from the provincial organizations, the federal constituency associations, the Young New Democrats, and some trade unions and farm groups. The party prohibits its members from belonging to other parties and requires that they pledge support to the constitution and principles of the NDP.

Between conventions the council is the chief governing authority. Its membership of over 100 includes 20 members who are elected by the convention and 20 elected by provincial party conventions, as well as provincial party officers. The associated trade unions and farm groups also elect members to the council. The council in turn elects from among its members the executive of 28 members. The executive is the center of power in the party and meets frequently.

POLICY

Over the years the Socialist tenets of the New Democratic Party have been weakened. For example, the party supports state control as opposed to ownership of industry. Since 1933 several key struggles within the left-wing movement, involving personality, policy, and ideology, have divided and weakened its overall success. In the late 1970s the "Waffle," or New Left faction, of the party was expelled.

Generally the policy of the NDP has been dictated by social democratic principles, conditioned by the party's agrarian support and shaped by the third-party tradition in Canada. The party is the main supporter of the nation's impressive social welfare system, including state-funded medical care, which the NDP was instrumental in establishing during the 1960s. Thus far the party has had its greatest effect on policy during periods of minority government when the ruling party has no choice but to rely on NDP support to maintain office. The NDP supports nationalization of industry and is usually opposed to foreign investment and domination by the United States. The party also emphasizes job creation and tax increases on corporations.

MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY

The NDP has strong organization in its bases of support in Saskatchewan, British Columbia, Manitoba, Ontario, and most recently Nova Scotia. It is gaining some support in the other Maritimes—about 10 to 20 percent of the vote in some cases (but wins few seats). Its support in Quebec is minimal at best. On occasion the NDP has attempted to ally with the Parti Québécois, out of some professed left-wing principles on behalf of the French Canadian nationalists, but such a marriage his proved impossible due to the very different objectives of the two groups.

FINANCING

Of all the major Canadian parties the NDP receives the greatest proportion of its finances from individual contributions. Labor unions and small businesses are also crucial sources of income. In recent years the poor showing of the party at the national level led to incurred debts emerging from the federal campaign of 1993, and the national headquarters' being put up for sale.

LEADERSHIP

Leadership has traditionally been one of the NDP's strong points. From Tommy Douglas to Ed Broadbent the party has been able to produce leaders who are more popular across the country than the party itself is. On several occasions the NDP leader has been the most popular among all the leadership candidates. But this strength has turned into a weakness since the retirement of Ed Broadbent in 1989. A leadership vacuum developed that was filled by Audrey McLaughlin (the first female leader of a major Canadian party). McLaughlin proved unsatisfactory and after losing official party status by gaining fewer than 12 seats in the 1993 federal election, she resigned in 1994. The leadership problem remained and was left unsettled for several years while the party attempted to reposition itself on divisive matters of ideology and policy. It then selected Alexa McDonough, from Halifax, Nova Scotia. While this choice strengthened party fortunes to an extent, the leadership problem remains. The NDP has no leadership review procedure, but the leader must seek reelection at the party's biennial national convention. The current leader is Jack Layton.

PROSPECTS

The NDP has rebounded since the early 1990s, when it lost its status as an official party in the House of Commons. In 2001 the party underwent a significant restructuring and reevaluation of its policies and principles. The 2004 election saw the NDP come in third in the popular vote (though behind the Bloc Québécois in numbers of actual seats). The party seems to be gaining more popular support in the Maritimes (though few seats). Its most promising successes in the area have been in Nova Scotia, where it serves as the official opposition in the provincial legislature. At the federal level the party may prove able to wield substantial influence on the current Liberal minority government.

The selection of Alexa McDonough of Halifax as leader of the NDP was an obvious attempt to break the regional party label and gain national recognition.

REGIONAL POLITICAL PARTIES

The pronounced regional characteristics of Canada, along with a relatively strong radical tradition, have allowed alternative parties to play an important role in the nation's political history. While many have come and gone, the tradition is strong and shows no signs of diminishing. The Elections Act provides that political parties may have their names officially recorded if they are able to nominate 50 candidates throughout the nation.

PARTI QUÉBÉCOIS (PQ)

The Parti Québécois is the provincial arm of the French Canadian nationalist movement. It achieved power first in Quebec in 1976, eight years after its creation, on a separatist platform under its flamboyant leader René Lévesque. Aside from vying for sovereignty association for an independent Quebec, the party stands committed to ensuring that power in the province is vested in the hands of the Québécois. The PQ government made history in 1980 by holding a provincial referendum on whether the Quebec government could commence negotiations with the federal government on the issue of sovereignty.

The party lost the referendum, and the PQ was defeated in 1985 but won office again in 1994 under Jacques Parizeau. Following on the heels of failed attempts by the Mulroney government to form a constitutional deal with Quebec, the new PQ government led the province into another referendum in 1995. This time the growing breach between French and English Canada over the constitutional question was glaring and the "oui" forces were defeated by the narrowest of margins. Parizeau resigned as PQ leader and Quebec premier soon after to be replaced by the popular leader of the federal Bloc Québécois, Lucien Bouchard.

The PQ performed badly in the 2003 provincial elections under the leadership of Bernard Landry. The performance seemed to suggest a decline in sovereignty demands and nationalist sentiment. However, the PQ (and its federal counterpart, the BQ) have recently benefited from the unpopularity of the Liberal government.

BLOC QUÉBÉCOIS (BQ)

The Bloc Québécois is the federal wing of the separatist movement in Quebec. It is rather ironic to refer to the party as a federal wing since its mandate is to break apart the federation. However, the bloc was formed in 1990 to provide the separatists representation in the House of Commons. Its first leader, Lucien Bouchard, was a Progressive Conservative cabinet minister in the government of Brian Mulroney. Bouchard broke from his party over the Meech Lake Accord. The bloc contested each of the 75 Quebec seats in the federal election of 1993 and won an impressive 54 constituencies. For decades the Liberal Party had framed its policies to prevent Quebec's falling into the hands of the French Canadian nationalists. Now it was a reality.

Due to the impressive Liberal majority and the collapse of the Progressive Conservatives and the NDP, the bloc held the second-largest number of seats and became the opposition. The party worked closely with the PQ government in Quebec, particularly when the Charlottetown Accord was defeated in a national referendum, thereby paving the path toward another Quebec referendum on sovereignty association. Even though it was a provincial referendum, Bouchard was the recognized leader of the "oui" forces. Soon after the referendum Jacques Parizeau resigned as premier and leader of the PQ to be replaced by Bouchard. Gilles Duceppe became the leader of the bloc. In the 1997 election Duceppe and the bloc ran a poor campaign and the party won 44 sets.

The BQ made its worst showing in the polls in the 2000 election with only 38 seats. However, the party resurged in 2004 with 54 seats. The unpopularity of the provincial Liberal government, which has sponsored many spending cuts in sensitive policy areas such as child care, as well as the 2004 Liberal financial scandal, have led to a resurgence in popularity of the BQ (and its provincial counterpart, the Parti Québécois). There has been some talk as to whether or not the BQ will form temporary alliances with other opposition parties such as the Conservatives or New Democrats when their goals align. However, this scenario seems unlikely.

Minor Political Parties

Canada has several other minor parties that usually place candidates in federal elections. Examples of these small movements that rarely win any seats are the Libertarian Party of Canada, the Marxist-Leninist Party of Canada, the Communist Party of Canada, the Rhinoceros Party (which spoofs the Canadian political tradition), and the environmentalist Green Party of Canada. In the 1993 federal election 14 groups ran the required 50 candidates to be officially recognized as a political party.

Of particular importance in recent years is the right-wing Saskatchewan Party (SP), established in

1997 by a coalition of former Progressive Conservative and Liberal supporters unsatisfied with the economic policies and record of the ruling NDP. The party has become the official opposition in the last two provincial elections (1999 and 2003), with a particularly strong showing in rural areas. Its key policy issues include lower taxes, more-liberal economic policies, economic growth, and job creation (which has been very low under successive NDP governments). Their most recent policy resolution is to "grow Saskatchewan by 100,000 people in the next ten years."

Other Political Forces

Aside from the actual parties placing candidates in the field, there are other forces that influence Canadian political life and culture such as environmental, religious, ethnic, women's and agricultural interest groups. In a parliamentary democracy such as Canada, however, with a capitalist economy tempered by a welfare state, the two major forces are the corporate elite and organized labor.

The corporate elite wields considerable political influence through campaign contributions and interlocking corporate directorates that include many prominent former Canadian politicians. The parties and government are well aware that it is in their interest to keep the corporations content.

The largest business association in Canada is the Canadian Chamber of Commerce. There are other large organizations that aim at influencing government policy in such fields as corporate regulation and taxation and freer trade such as the Canadian Manufacturers Association and the Business Council on National Issues. There are various associations attached to particular sectors such as the Canadian Industries Association, the Canadian Nuclear Association, and the Automobile Industries Associations, while the financial interests are represented by such groups as the Canadian Life and Health Insurance Association, the Canadian Bankers' Association, and the Canadian Federation of Independent Business. The Canadian Business and Industry International Advisory Committee is the group that is most significant in influencing government foreign policy.

The Canadian labor movement has long been a force on the political scene. On numerous occasions labor candidates have run in elections. In general, however, the labor movement has maintained a close relationship with the left-wing NDP. In 1961 the Canadian Labor Congress (CLC) was instrumental in the change in party label from CCF to NDP. The NDP has had difficulty in central and eastern Canada, and this has caused difficulties for national labor support. Recent divisions in the labor movement, along with the extreme unpopularity of Bob Rae's provincial NDP government in Ontario, have eroded the connection between labor and the NDP and the overall effectiveness of labor as a political ally. The CLC usually provides money, volunteer workers, and organizing skills to the New Democrats.

National Prospects

Canadian politics in the 1980s and 1990s was dominated by the question of Quebec secession. With the passage of the Clarity Act in 1999—which established a much stricter framework for secession—and the election of a federalist-leaning provincial government in Quebec in 2003 under Liberal leader Jean Charest, sovereignty and secession issues seemed to be on the back burner. Growing dissatisfaction with the Liberal government in Quebec has led to a resurgence of support for the separatist Bloc Québécois at the federal level (and the PQ at the provincial level), but this change may reflect reaction to Liberal economic policies in the province more than increased nationalist sentiment. Yet regardless of any decline in support for separation, the breach between French and English Canada remains large. Thus, as usual, Canadian federalism still seems to be in a state of constant flux. Constitutional questions about the status of Quebec in the Canadian federation have also provided incentives for greater self-government demands from other groups, such as Aboriginals. The newest territory, Nunavut, was established (1999) as a result of these efforts.

The Liberals' hold on power seems to be waning somewhat as indicated by their lack of a majority in the House of Commons. There has been policy infighting within the party, with more right-wing forces seeming to win out. The sponsorship scandal of 2004 has also negatively impacted the party's fortunes. Right-wing political forces, formerly divided between the Reform Party (later replaced by the Alliance) and the Progressive Conservatives, have united forces as the Conservative Party of Canada and have regained official opposition status. It is still unknown at this early stage of the CPC's existence whether the differing levels of conservatism among members from the former Alliance and Progressive Conservatives will be easily reconciled in policy making. On the left the NDP has demonstrated a general recovery from its decline in the

early and mid-1990s. It is actually growing in some of the Maritime areas (in particular Nova Scotia), where it has traditionally been weak. It may also play a pivotal role in the current minority government in pushing the Liberal agenda to the left in terms of free trade and public spending.

Economic growth is still fairly steady, projected at 2.9 percent growth in 2005. Hopes are that the Liberal Party and its allies will continue to take measures to decrease the debt despite campaign promises of increased public spending (which currently makes up 39 percent of GDP). Another important issue for the next few years is the reform of the health-care system. As health care is one of the major responsibilities of the provinces (but often heavily funded by the federal government), provincial-federal negotiations will be critical.

Federal election turnout continues to decline, with only 60.5 percent of eligible voters casting ballots. This figure marks the lowest participation rate since the beginning of the federation in 1867. Many provincial elections tend to record (on average) greater turnout levels than federal contests. Such figures may suggest that voters have grown dissatisfied with the federal political process and find more interest in provincial-level politics.

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REPUBLIC OF CAPE VERDE

(República de Cabo Verde)

By Walter Hawthorne
Revised by Vasilis Margaras



With a domestic population estimated in 2005 at 418,224 (more than this number reside abroad), this chain of 10 large and several small islands is situated some 720 kilometers west of Senegal. Cape Verde was discovered by the Portuguese in 1456 and was colonized by them shortly thereafter. It became home to a large African population during the time of the Atlantic slave trade. Portugal administered the islands until 1975, when Cape Verdeans claimed independence.

From independence to 1991 the country was ruled by a single party, the African Party for the Independence of Cape Verde (PAICV). In 1991, after constitutional changes and the staging of the country's first multiparty elections, the PAICV lost its hold on power. The Movement for Democracy (MpD) claimed a majority of the seats in the National Assembly, and the MpD's Carlos Veiga became prime minister. With this election Cape Verde became the first previously single-party state in sub-Saharan Africa to stage multiparty democratic elections. The MpD maintained its dominance of the Assembly in December 1995, when a new round of multiparty elections was held. However, MpD lost the 2001 elections to PAICV.

The System of Government

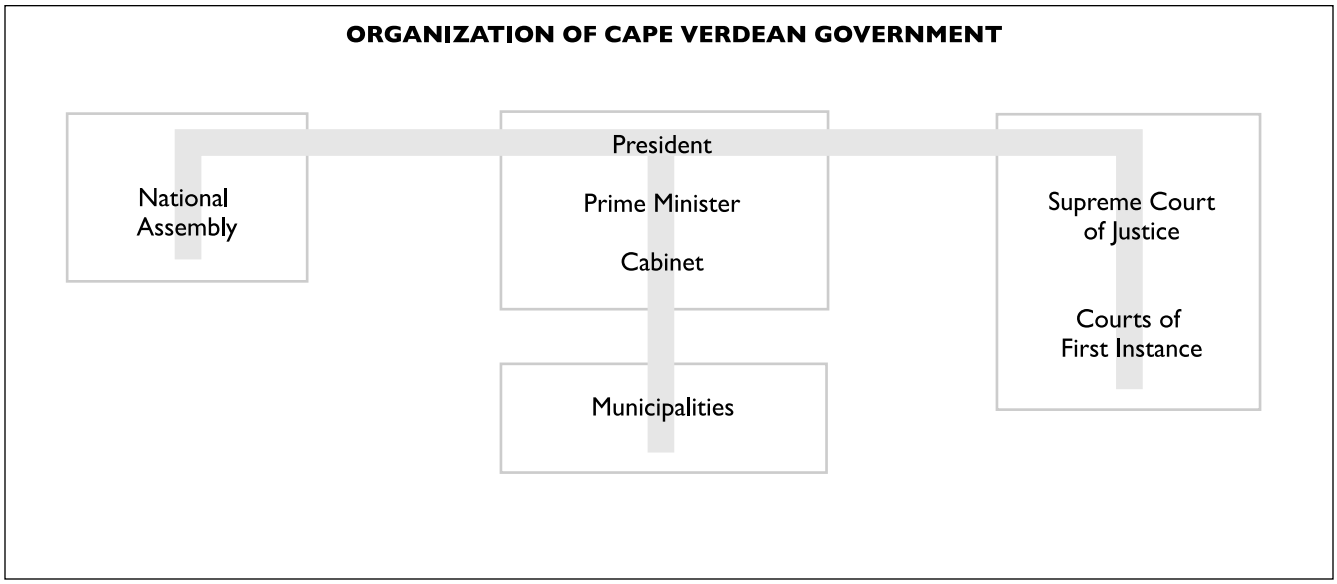
Cape Verde is a democratic republic, with a strong presidency and a unicameral legislature.

EXECUTIVE

Elected to a five-year term, the president of Cape Verde is head of state. The prime minister is the head of government. The prime minister, who is nominated by the National Assembly, is appointed by the president. The prime minister appoints members of the National Assembly to the cabinet, or Council of Ministers. In the country's first multiparty elections, António Monteiro, an independent, was elected president. He soundly defeated Aristides Pereira, a leading member of the PAICV and Cape Verde's president since independence. Monteiro was reelected in 1996. Pedro Pires of PAICV was elected Cape Verde's new president in 2001 by a margin of a few votes.

LEGISLATURE

Consisting of the National Assembly, Cape Verde's legislative branch is unicameral. Each of the islands, some of which constitute single electoral districts and some of which are divided into several districts, sends deputies to the Assembly. Further, diaspora residents in Africa, America, and Europe send six deputies, two from each region. Deputies are elected to five-year terms. In the 1991 elections the MpD won a resounding victory in the Assembly, taking 56 of the 79 seats. The PAICV won the remaining 23 seats. In the 1996 elections the MpD won 51 of what had become a 72-seat Assembly. The PAICV won 20 seats, and the Party for the Democratic Convergence (PCD) won 1 seat. In the 2001 elections PAICV returned to power with 40



seats. MpD got 30 seats whereas the Democratic Alliance for Change (PCD/PTS) gained 2 seats.

JUDICIARY

Cape Verde's constitution defines the general principles of judicial power. The Supreme Court of Justice is the highest organ of the court system. It is constituted by a minimum of five judges, one appointed by the president of the republic, one elected by the National Assembly, and the remainder appointed by the Supreme Council of Magistrates, a body consisting of the chief justice, judges elected by their peers, and citizens. Judges on the Supreme Court of Justice serve five-year terms. The plenum of the Supreme Court of Justice has the power to decide if one of its judges should be dismissed as a result of a disciplinary matter.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Cape Verde is divided into 17 municipalities. The registered electors of these municipalities elect a mayor and a council to administer local-level public affairs.

The Electoral System

Elections for both the presidency and National Assembly are held every five years. Through universal and secret balloting, citizens who have registered in the electoral census elect the president of the republic. Should no one receive an absolute majority of the votes, the two leading candidates participate in a runoff election. Cape Verde's 17 domestic and three overseas electoral districts send deputies to the National Assembly. The number of deputies that districts send to the Assembly is proportionate to the number of registered electors in each district.

The Party System

Since the emergence of the multiparty system in 1991, two parties have dominated the country's politics: PAICV and MpD. Smaller parties have emerged as well, although most do not have representation in the Assembly.

Major Political Parties

AFRICAN PARTY FOR THE INDEPENDENCE OF CAPE VERDE

(Partido Africano da Indepêndencia da Cabo Verde; PAICV)

The successor to the Cape Verdean wing of the African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde (Partido Africano da Indepêndencia da Guiné e Cabo Verde; PAIGC), the PAICV was founded in January 1981. The PAIGC was created in 1956 to lead the people of Cape Verde and Guinea-Bissau in a struggle for independence from Portugal. In Guinea-Bissau this

struggle took the form of a protracted guerrilla war. In Cape Verde the PAIGC concerned itself with organizing an extensive underground political network that attempted to increase local resistance to the colonial regime. After a coup brought down Portugal's government in April 1974, Portugal began to relinquish its grip on Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde. The Portuguese government recognized Guinea-Bissau's independence in September but stalled on the question of independence for Cape Verde. Amid PAIGC-organized strikes and protests Portugal finally agreed to United Nations–supervised elections for Cape Verde's National Assembly. With 92 percent of the vote the PAIGC won that election, and under the PAIGC Cape Verde became an independent nation on July 5, 1975.

Since its founding the PAIGC had been a binational party with the stated goal of unifying Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde. However, after a November 1980 coup in Guinea-Bissau raised tensions between the Guinean and Cape Verdean wings of the party, the PAIGC split and plans for a united country were discarded. In January 1981 the Cape Verdean wing of the PAIGC held a congress and changed its name to the PAICV.

Socialist in orientation at its founding, the PAICV created large state-owned/operated enterprises. Internationally the party pursued a policy of nonalignment. Hoping to increase foreign investment and boost exports, the PAICV gradually began to liberalize Cape Verde's economy in 1988. It also began a three-year process of preparing for multiparty elections. Most observers credit the PAICV with ensuring the fairness of those elections and with peacefully stepping aside when defeated by the MpD. However, the MpD was weakened by internal rivalries. PAICV changed its leadership and fought the 2001 elections successfully.

MOVEMENT FOR DEMOCRACY
(Movimento para Democracia; MpD)

The MpD was founded by Carlos Veiga, the former prime minister of Cape Verde. Having earned a law degree in Lisbon, Veiga worked as a public prosecutor in Cape Verde before becoming the attorney general of the republic under the PAICV in 1980. Pressing for the party to allow for a more open democratic system, Veiga resigned his post in 1982. From 1985 to 1990 he served on the Special Commission on Constitutional and Judicial Issues of the People's National Assembly. On the commission he played a key role in moving the country toward a more open electoral system. During this period a small group of PAICV members began to voice their desires for broader participation in government. Assuming that their movement would be small, the party's leadership revised the national constitution to allow for multiparty elections and permitted the formation of the MpD. Veiga became its candidate for prime minister. With support from the Catholic Church, which opposed the PAICV's stance on abortion, Veiga and the MpD won a shocking election upset in January 1991. In the 1995 elections their broad-based anti-PAICV coalition proved to be relatively stable.

Under Veiga the MpD undertook a much faster liberalization of the economy than the PAICV had attempted. Between 1991 and 1996, 13 of 44 state enterprises were privatized, 6 were closed, 11 were restructured, and the rest were in the process of being privatized. With World Bank funds the MpD-led government also began to reform the civil service. However, liberalization measures did not solve the problems of poverty. PAICV was able to focus its campaign on those problems and fought a successful electoral campaign in 2001. MpD seemed to be battered by internal rivalries and a lack of ideas.

Minor Political Parties

Of the country's minor parties, the most important is the Democratic Alliance for Change (a coalition of the Party for Democratic Convergence, Party of Work and Solidarity, and Democratic and Independent Cape Verdian Union), which gained two seats in the 2001 elections. Others are the Democratic Christian Party, Democratic Renovation Party, and Social Democracy Party.

Other Political Forces

The military is under civilian control and generally does not interfere in the political process.

National Prospects

Since the early 1990s Cape Verde has revised its constitution, held several peaceful multiparty elections, and witnessed smooth transitions between PAICV and MpD leadership in the National Assembly. Cape Verde does face the problem of severe and recurring droughts and does not have a large endowment of natural resources. However, in recent years the tourist sector

of Cape Verde's economy has grown, as has investment from nationals living abroad. Only time will tell if the PAICV will manage to promote a policy of rapid economic growth with a social face. Political stability and good rates of economic growth are positive characteristics of contemporary Cape Verde. However, a high level of unemployment and poverty are issues that need further attention.

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CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

(République Centrafricaine)

By Terry M. Mays, Ph.D.



The Central African Republic (CAR) is a landlocked, well-watered plateau country of approximately 3.8 million people (2005 est.) located in the heart of Africa. France granted the CAR independence in 1960, under the leadership of President David Dracko. Dracko ended the CAR's multiparty system in 1962 and declared a one-party state under his Mouvement d'Evolution Sociale de l'Afrique Noire (MESAN). The CAR quickly collapsed into economic ruin. Dracko's cousin, Colonel Jean-Bedel Bokassa, overthrew him on December 31, 1965. The CAR's trouble continued under Bokassa, who eventually crowned himself emperor of the "Central African Empire" in 1975. Bokassa's rule grew to such corrupt proportions that France acted in 1979 to topple the self-proclaimed emperor. France brought Dracko back to power, and the country's name reverted to the CAR.

The weaknesses of Dracko's first regime were evident in the second, as the country remained in near bankruptcy and dependent upon France for assistance. In 1981 Colonel André Kolingba overthrew Dracko's government. France chose not to intervene and quietly welcomed the change of government. Following a decade of continued economic and political misery for his citizens Kolingba reluctantly agreed to accept democratic reforms and new constitution in 1993. Ange-Felix Patassé won the country's first democratic presidential election in 1993 with 52 percent of the vote. Abel Goumba finished second in the election with 45 percent of the vote.

Patassé faced charges of corruption as the country continued to wallow in economic misery. In 1996 the CAR army attempted two coups against the government in reaction to pay issues. Essentially the French military maintained Patassé in power during this period. A deal with the army brokered by France brought Jean-Paul Ngoupandé into the government as prime minister. By November 1996 relations between Patassé and Ngoupandé had deteriorated, and the army launched a third coup attempt. Further negotiations resulted in the 1997 Bangui Accord, which included the establishment of national unity government and the arrival of French-supported African peacekeepers of the Inter-African Mission on Intervention and Surveillance of the Bangui Accord (MISAB). Fighting continued despite the accord, and MISAB launched a program to seize rebel weapons. An agreement provided for the integration of rebel elements into the national army. Further stabilization was followed by the introduction of a UN peacekeeping mission to replace MISAB.

The United Nations helped prepare the CAR for new elections in 1998. Voters went to the polls in November and December 1998. A coalition of pro-Patassé political parties, with the addition of four individual legislative victors, allowed the group to form a one-seat majority government in the National Assembly. Patassé won the presidential election of September 16, 1999, with 52 percent of the vote.

Patassé's government survived numerous crises after 1999. He claimed Kolingba was behind one coup attempt and arrested him. At the same time he blamed France for supporting Kolingba. Patassé's relations with France quickly collapsed. In October 2001 Patassé

relieved his military chief of staff, General François Bozizé, following a confrontation between Bozizé's followers and soldiers loyal to the government. Bozizé sought refuge in Chad, where he continued efforts to destabilize Patassé. Bozizé's supporters moved back into the CAR in October 2002 and seized areas of Bangui, the capital, before retreating in the face of government forces backed by Libyan soldiers and fighters of the Congolese Liberation Front (FLC) from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).

Libyan soldiers, officially labeled as a peacekeeping operation, remained in the CAR until December 2002, when they were replaced by 350 peacekeepers of the Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa (CEMAC). On March 15, 2003, Bozizé launched a new assault and quickly overthrew Patassé while he was attending a meeting in Niger. Over 1,500 FLC fighters fled back to DRC from the CAR. CEMAC peacekeepers agreed to remain in the CAR to assist the new government in maintaining stability following the coup. France, which prefers Bozizé to the pro-Libyan Patassé, deployed over 300 soldiers to the CAR, officially to assist the CEMAC peacekeepers. Unofficially the French troops served as a measure of visible support for Bozizé.

In elections held in May 2005, Bozizé defeated former prime minister Martin Ziguélé to capture the presidency and officially end the two-year period of military rule. Bozizé ran as an independent rather than as a member of a political party.

The System of Government

Since independence from France in 1960, the Central African Republic has undergone a succession of unstable governments, both elected and the result of coups. On December 5, 2004, voters approved a new constitution for the republic in a national referendum. The constitution provides for a strong presidency and a unicameral legislature.

EXECUTIVE

In accordance with the December 2004 constitution the president of the republic is the chief of state, elected by popular vote for a five-year term in a two-round election. The president appoints and dismisses the ministers, including the prime minister. Most of the formal business of the executive is transacted in the Council of Ministers. Chaired by the president, the Council of Ministers is composed of the prime minister and other senior members of the government. This body initiates laws. François Bozizé won the presidential election in 2005 and subsequently appointed Elie Dote as prime minister. The new Council of Ministers has 27 members.

LEGISLATURE

According to the 2004 constitution the members of the National Assembly are elected to five-year terms by universal suffrage of citizens at least 21 years of age. Originally the National Assembly consisted of 85 deputies, but this figure was increased to 109 prior to the 1998 election. As of 2005 the number was 105. Its members decide on questions submitted to them by an executive committee of the National Assembly, by the president, or by one-third of the deputies. The National Assembly is called by the president of the republic in two regular sessions per year of 60 days each at the most. The executive committee of the National Assembly selects a president of the Assembly to be invested in office by the president of the republic. The final arbiter on constitutional issues is the Constitutional Court, whose members serve a single nine-year term.

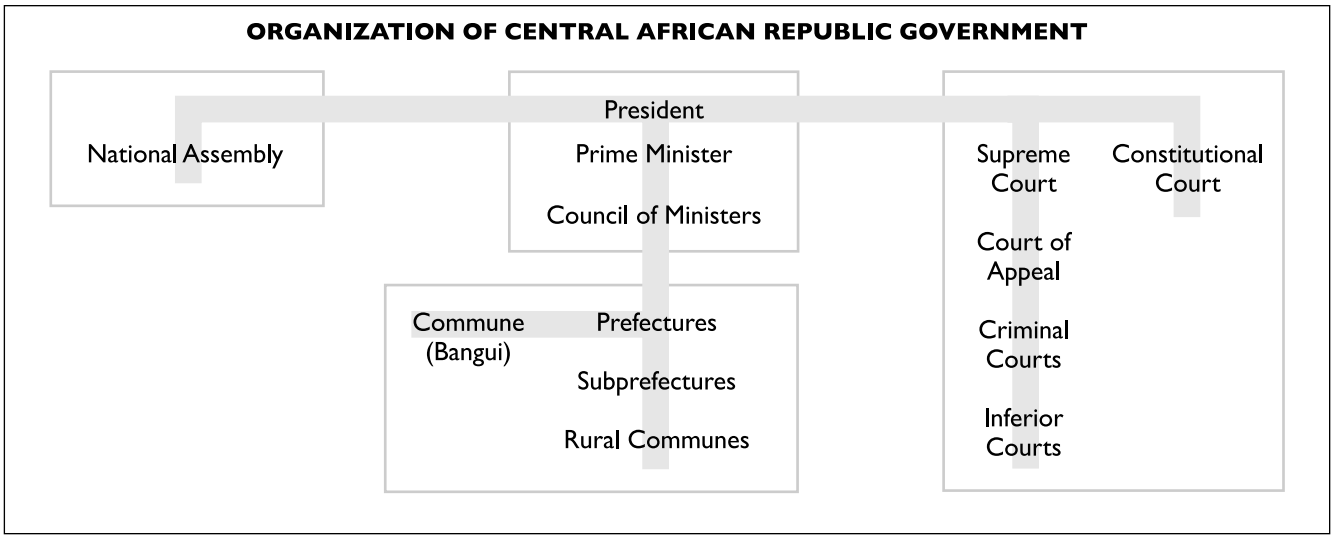
Legislative elections held in March and May 2005 resulted in a victory for the National Convergence "Kwa Na Kwa" coalition (KNK), a pro-Bozizé coalition that captured 42 seats. The Central African People's Liberation Movement (MLPC) captured 11 seats, while the Central African Democratic Assembly (RDC) won 8 seats. Independents captured 34 seats.

JUDICIARY

The apex of the CAR judicial system is the Supreme Court. There is a separate Constitutional Court, established in 1994, consisting of nine justices. Three of these individuals are selected by the president of the country, three by the president of the National Assembly, and three by other judges. Beneath the Supreme Court are the Court of Appeal, Criminal Courts, and Inferior Courts. After the 2003 coup the higher courts of the judicial system lost the little independence they had from the domination of the presidency. It remains to be seen whether this independence will be regained following the formal transition to democracy in 2005.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The CAR is divided into 14 political prefectures, two economic prefectures, and one commune (the capital



of Bangui). Each prefecture is further divided into subprefectures and rural communities.

The Electoral System

Direct universal suffrage is mandated for all national and local elections. Both president and parliament are elected in two-round elections. Candidates with more than 50 percent of the vote are elected in the first round.

The Party System

The organization of most political parties represents factional or ethnic-based groupings linked to specific leaders. Most do not have strong national appeal and derive their support from regions, ethnic groups, or urban alliances.

Major Political Parties

NATIONAL CONVERGENCE "KWA NA KWA"

(Convergence Nationale "Kwa Na Kwa"; KNK)

This coalition of small parties and independents was formed in advance of the 2005 elections. It supported Bozizé, who officially ran as an independent. The KNK captured the most seats in the legislative elections, winning 42 out of the 105 seats.

CENTRAL AFRICAN PEOPLE'S LIBERATION MOVEMENT

(Mouvement de Libération du Peuple Centrafricain; MLPC)

The MLPC is the political party of former president Patassé. It held 47 of 109 seats in the National Assembly prior to the 2003 coup. It was originally organized in Paris in mid-1979. In July 1986 the MLPC formed an alliance with the Patriotic Front for Progress in order to present a united front against the Kolingba government. The government granted legal status to the MLPC in September 1991. Much of the party's support is derived from the Sara in the northwest as well as from disaffected elements in the capital. In the 2005 legislative elections the MLPC captured 11 seats in the Assembly. Its candidate in the presidential elections, Martin Ziguélé, won 23.5 percent of the vote in the first-round presidential election, enough to earn a spot in the second-round runoff against François Bozizé. In the second round, Bozizé 64 percent to Ziguélé's 35 percent.

CENTRAL AFRICAN DEMOCRATIC ASSEMBLY

(Rassemblement Démocratique Centrafricain; RDC)

The RDC was the most powerful opposition group prior to the 2003 coup and is the party of former head of state Kolingba. The organization was established in May 1986 as the country's sole legal party. The party held 20 seats in the precoup National

Assembly. Following the 2005 elections the party held eight seats in the new Assembly. In the first round of presidential voting, Kolingba won 16.4 percent of the vote, not enough to earn a spot in the final round of voting.

Minor Political Parties

PATRIOTIC FRONT FOR PROGRESS

(Front Patriotique pour le Progrès; FPP)

The FPP, chaired by Abel Goumba, held seven seats in the National Assembly before the 2003 coup. It was founded in 1981 to oppose the Dracko government. Goumba has been very vocal over the years calling for democratic reforms in the CAR. In the 2005 elections the FPP won two seats in the Assembly. Goumba ran in the presidential election but polled only 2.5 percent of the vote in the first round of voting.

ALLIANCE FOR DEMOCRACY AND PROGRESS

(Alliance pour la Démocratie et le Progrès; ADP)

The ADP, established in 1979, is chaired by Jacques Mboliedas. The party held six seats in the National Assembly prior to the 2003 coup and won two seats in the 2005 elections. Its presidential candidate, Olivier Gabirault, won less than 1 percent of the vote in the first round of the presidential election.

DEMOCRATIC SOCIALIST PARTY

(Parti Socialist Démocratique; PSD)

The PSD, chaired by Enoch Lakoue, held six seats in the National Assembly prior to the 2003 coup and won four seats in the 2005 elections.

NATIONAL UNITY PARTY

(Parti de l'Unité Nationale; PUN)

PUN, chaired by Jean-Paul Ngoupandé, held three seats in the National Assembly before the 2003 coup. It won no seats in the 2005 legislative elections, and Ngoupandé polled only 5.1 percent in the first round of presidential voting. He threw his support behind Bozizé in the second round of voting.

DEMOCRATIC FORUM FOR MODERNITY

(Forum Démocratique pour la Modernité; FODEM)

FODEM, chaired by Charles Massi, held two seats in the National Assembly prior to the 2003 coup but won no seats in 2005. Massi won 3.2 percent of the vote in the first round of the presidential election in 2005.

Other Political Forces

CENTRAL AFRICAN TRADE UNION

(Union Syndicale des Travailleurs de Centrafricain; USTC)

The USTC, a trade union, exerts more political strength than many parties in the CAR. A USTC representative sat as the minister of civil service, employment, social security, and social integration in the post-2003-coup transitional cabinet.

ARMED FORCES OF THE CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

(Forces Armées Centrafricains; FACA)

The CAR Armed Forces has the means to maintain an individual in power, allow his overthrow, or conduct the coup itself. As their own interest group, members of FACA are conscious of pay and other benefits issues due to the army. FACA officers headed three ministries in the postcoup transitional cabinet, including the Ministry of Communication, National Reconciliation, Democratic and Civil Culture, the Ministry of Energy and Mines, and the Ministry of Public Security.

FRANCE

France had at least 300 soldiers stationed in the CAR following the 2003 coup. A defense pact between the two states permits French intervention in times of "invasion" or outbreaks of "anarchy." However, these soldiers were in the CAR officially under an invitation to provide logistical assistance to the CEMAC peacekeepers in the country. French funding is an important source of income for the functioning of the CAR government.

National Prospects

The stability of any government in the Central African Republic is very uncertain. The economy is in shambles, and even if dreams of a generation of Central African leaders were to come true and uranium, oil, and other minerals were to become important exports within the next few years, severe problems would remain. Corruption, mismanagement, poor health, insufficient food supplies, transportation problems, and a general malaise are so pervasive that the people of this poor, landlocked country seem unable to generate self-sustained development. Massive unemployment, a declining rural economy, and generations of instability have created conditions that work against political stability. Following his coup in 2003, however, Bozizé did make some progress in restoring order to the country, and the 2005 elections were generally seen as fair and free by international observers. However, the chronic nonpayment of civil service and army salaries remains a source of instability in the CAR, and its future prospects remain dim.

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REPUBLIC OF CHAD

(République du Tchad)

By Terry M. Mays, Ph.D.



Chad has suffered from civil violence and foreign intervention since receiving independence from France on August 11, 1960. The large state consists of 495,800 square miles of territory with an estimated population of approximately 9,538,000. A census has never been conducted in Chad.

Political problems in this large Sahelian country stem from colonial attempts at state building. Many diverse groups exist within the artificial border of Chad as carved out by the French. The Sara (approximately 25 percent of the total population), largely Christian and animist, live in the southern region of Chad. This area bases its economy on agriculture, and its inhabitants were favored by the French during the colonial period, which lasted from 1900 to 1960. The vast northern region of the country consists of arid and semiarid topography. The people living in the north are predominantly Muslim and are nomadic or seminomadic. The three major groups in the north are the Toubou (approximately 4 percent of the total population), the Arabs (approximately 14 percent), and various "Sahelians" who represent over 13 ethnic groups (approximately 27 percent). Each is divided into multiple clans. The Sara and their Islamic neighbors distrust each other due to their many differences and the former practice of slave raiding into Sara-populated areas. The population of Chad is classified as being 40 percent Muslim and 33 percent Christian, and religious differences add to the frequent cultural confrontations within Chad. This great diversity of cultures within Chad's borders has stymied all attempts at building a national identity and loyalty to the state. People tend to devote their loyalty to their particular clan or faction at the expense of the state. Thus Chad has experienced over 40 years of civil disorder, making it one of the poorest countries in the world.

Factional politics in Chad has prevented any one government or power that rules in N'Djamena from exerting effective control over the entire country. An ongoing feature of Chad's political situation, since northerners have risen to dominate the Chadian political system, has been the government's inability to exert total control over the south while constantly fighting new factional opponents in the north or others who are based in Sudanese sanctuaries. Factional politics between clans leads to a "today my friend, tomorrow my enemy" attitude. Clan alliances are fluid as leaders adjust their allegiances to reflect personal benefits.

Chad emerged at independence with French-selected François Tombalbaye as president. As Tombalbaye consolidated his power at the expense of other groups, open civil war emerged in the state. A successful coup on April 13, 1975, replaced Tombalbaye with Felix Malloum. Despite the change of government the civil war continued between the various factions. A series of conferences brought a loose coalition government to power on March 24, 1979, under Goukhouni Oueddei, who was overthrown by the American-backed Hissein Habre on June 6, 1980. Habre maintained con-

trol in Chad until he was overthrown by Idriss Deby on December 2, 1990.

The System of Government

Chad is a republic with a president who serves as the head of state, a prime minister fulfilling the duties of head of government, and a national legislature.

EXECUTIVE

The president is officially the head of state in Chad. The current president, Idriss Deby, came to power after ousting fellow northerner Hissein Habre on December 2, 1990. Deby originally held the position of national army commander within Habre's faction. Habre prevented a coup attempt by Deby in April 1989, forcing the latter to escape to Sudan with his supporters. After the successful December 1990 ouster of Habre, Deby appointed himself as president on December 4, 1990. The Sovereign National Council confirmed him as president on February 21, 1991, and reconfirmed him on April 6, 1993. A national presidential election held on July 3, 1996, provided Deby with a political victory and a claim to popular support for his regime. Deby was elected to a second term on May 20, 2001.

The president of Chad officially serves a five-year term and was originally restricted to serving two terms under the 1996 constitution. On May 26, 2004, the National Assembly approved a constitutional amendment to remove the two-term restriction. The amendment was approved by a 123-0 vote with one abstention. Prior to this vote opposition legislators walked out of the National Assembly. The amendment clears Deby to run for a third term in 2006. Officially the National Assembly has the authority to impeach the president for abuses of his office.

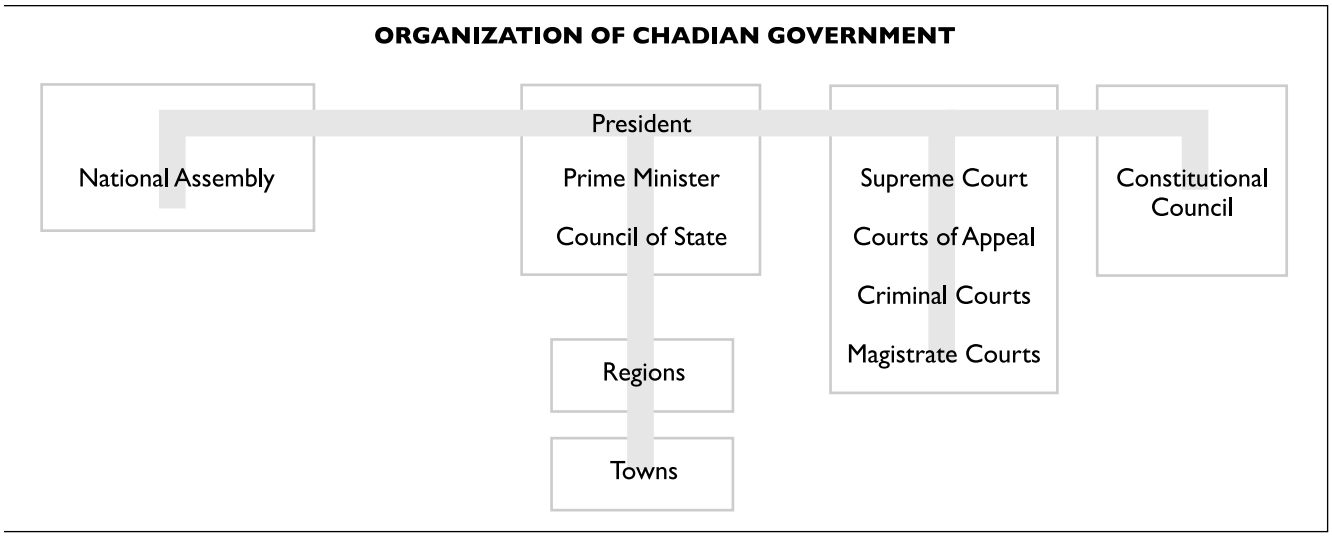
The executive branch of government originally consisted of a Provisional Council of State headed by Deby. The body was dissolved in March 1990 and was replaced by a Council of Ministers and a Provisional Council of the Republic. The government attempted to incorporate members of several new political parties into the Council of Ministers in May 1992. This move can be seen as a continuation of government attempts to ally any potential political opposition with the ruling Patriotic Salvation Movement (MPS).

The 1996 Chadian constitution retained the Council of Ministers led by a prime minister. Unlike his counterpart in other political systems the Chadian prime minister functions more as an assistant to the president than as the leader of a separate branch of government. Officially the prime minister serves as the head of government and coordinates the work of the governmental ministries. The prime minister is selected by and serves at the pleasure of the president and can be replaced at any time. The duties of the prime minister include coordination of Chad's economic and social programs. Dr. Fidele Moungar, a southerner, served as Deby's first prime minister. Deby's choice of Moungar illustrated the attempt to incorporate various factions into the government.

After disagreements between Deby and Moungar the pro-Deby Higher Transitional Council (CST) passed a vote of no confidence against the prime minister and forced his resignation. Delwa Koumakoye, a member of the National Assembly for Democracy and Progress faction, replaced Moungar on November 6, 1993. Deby forced Koumakoye from office and replaced him with Koibla Djimasta of the Union for Democracy of the Republic faction on April 8, 1995. As of 2005 the prime minister was Pascal Yaodimnadji.

After delays Chad held its first presidential election since independence on June 3, 1996. A field of 15 candidates competed in the primary round of the election, resulting in the need for a second round since none of the candidates received over 50 percent of the vote. The two candidates with the highest percentages of votes selected to compete in the runoff election were Deby with 43 percent of the vote and Wadal Kamougue with 12 percent. The July 3, 1996, runoff provided Deby with 68 percent of the votes cast and an election victory. Voter turnout declined between the June and July elections as many individuals became apathetic with the process and some opposition parties eliminated in the June election boycotted the July vote. Claims of irregularities and the arrest of at least one prominent opposition party member tainted the runoff. In both elections the government exhibited considerable caution and secrecy, delaying official announcement of the results for over a week.

Chad's next presidential election occurred on May 20, 2001. Marred by claims of voter fraud, it resulted in a second victory for Deby. Eight opposition party members of the national electoral commission resigned their posts in protest. A demonstration in the capital resulted in police violence and the temporary arrest of the other six presidential candidates. Chad's Constitutional Council reviewed the election results in June and ruled in favor of Deby. The official government presidential election results were released as



Deby (67 percent), Ngarlejy Yorongar (16 percent), Saleh Kebzabo (7 percent), Wadal Kamougue (6 percent), Ibni Oumar Saleh (3 percent), Kassire Coumakoye (2 percent), and Jean Alingue (2 percent). (The figures for each candidate have been rounded.) The next presidential election is scheduled for 2006.

Deby's power is based on his ability to maintain factional leadership of the MPS and prevent any other group from overthrowing him. Following his sweeping 2001 election victory with 67 percent of the votes, Deby has been able to claim officially that he has popular support. Other factors that must be considered include Deby's ability to maintain cordial relations with France, which stations approximately 1,000 soldiers in Chad and has already intervened to prevent a return of Habre to power, and the increasing flow of oil money into Chad since 2003. Deby also holds the position of military commander in chief.

LEGISLATURE

Chad's legislature is a 155-seat unicameral body known as the National Assembly. Officially the 1996 constitution calls for a bicameral legislature with a National Assembly and a Senate. However, the upper chamber has yet to be established. Originally the National Assembly housed 125 legislators, but this number was increased to 155 in August 2000. Deputies in the National Assembly serve four-year terms and are elected to represent specific districts of the country. Officially legislation may originate from a National Assembly deputy or someone from the executive branch of government. The president has 15 days to sign into law or reject legislation passed by the National Assembly. The National Assembly meets twice each year, beginning in the months of March and October.

The MPS controlled the legislature following the April 2002 elections. The Constitutional Council released the official results on May 19, 2002, and political parties winning seats in the National Assembly included the MPS (113), RDP (14), FAR (10), URD (6), RNDP (5), and the UNDR (3). Several other very small parties received one seat each in the National Assembly.

JUDICIARY

In 1999 Chad established a Supreme Court as outlined in the 1996 constitution. The Supreme Court sits at the top of the judicial pyramid and consists of three chambers. Sixteen justices, including a president, are assigned to the Supreme Court. Seven of these justices are theoretically chosen for their specialties in administrative and budgetary law, while the other members must be judges elsewhere in the judicial system. Justices serve for life unless impeached and are officially selected by the president of the republic and the president of the National Assembly. Constitutionally, the president of the Senate, if the body existed, should also have input in the selection of justices. In reality the president of Chad actually controls this court by appointing its members.

The 1996 constitution also outlines a High Court of Justice that was confirmed by law in January 2000. However, the Chadians have yet to establish this court. The constitutional purpose of the High Court of Justice is to judge national cases including treason against the state, severe violations of human rights, drug trafficking, corruption, and misuse of public funds. Courts of appeal

represent the middle tier of the national judicial system. Local courts and justices of the peace represent the lowest level of the judicial system. The Chadians have also employed a Constitutional Council to review election results and handle issues dealing with the constitution since 1999. The council consists of nine justices who serve nine-year terms and have the authority to review international treaties and even National Assembly legislation. The 2001 presidential election results were reviewed by the Constitutional Council, which upheld the process and ruled in favor of President Deby.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Prior to 2002 Chad was divided into 14 prefectures, each of which was subdivided into sous-prefectures. Each prefecture was administered by a government-appointed governor. Sous-prefectures were also administered by government appointees. Chad rearranged its local governmental system in 2002 and established 18 regions that correspond roughly to the previous prefectures. Traditional secular and religious authority figures continue to have some influence in many areas. Towns are governed by government-appointed mayors.

The Electoral System

Chad consists of 116 electoral districts. Seats in the National Assembly are divided among the districts based on population with each district allocated at least one seat. The president is selected by a national election. Voters must be at least 18 years of age, Chadian citizens, and in possession of their political rights. Those not permitted to vote include individuals who are insane, convicted of criminal offenses, in contempt of court, or in undischarged bankruptcy. Voter turnout in 2002 was estimated at 52 percent for the National Assembly and 61 percent for the presidency.

The Party System

Most Chadian political parties are built around the factional system of the country. The factions derive from the many divisions of traditional society within Chad. As factions form around clans and kinship groups, splinter groups and alliances continually emerge to alter the political scene. Most of the current major political factions were formed after Deby came to power in 1990. Deby granted permission to establish political parties within Chad in October 1991 in response to international pressure. Over 60 political parties currently exist in the Chadian political system. Many of these organizations are umbrellas for alliances of smaller political parties.

Major Political Parties

PATRIOTIC SALVATION MOVEMENT

(Mouvement Patriotique du Salut; MPS)

The MPS dominates politics and the government of Chad. The party holds 113 of the National Assembly's 155 seats, giving Deby and the organization the means to control legislation in the country. For example, in May 2004 the National Assembly passed a constitutional amendment to eliminate the two-term restriction on presidential terms. This move technically clears the way for Deby to run for a third presidential term in 2006. Several groups opposed to former president Hissein Habre formed the MPS in March 1990 with Deby as its leader. The MPS alliance included Deby's April 1 Action faction as well as two southern-based groups, including the movement for Chadian National Salvation and the Chadian Armed Forces. The latter organization should not be confused with the national army of Chad.

Minor Political Parties

RALLY FOR DEMOCRACY AND PROGRESS

(Rassemblement pour la Démocratie et le Progrès; RDP)

The RDP, chaired by Lol Mahamat Choua, is the strongest of the many opposition political parties in Chad, holding 14 seats in the National Assembly. In November 2003 the organization cut ties to President Deby after the MPS announced it would seek a constitutional amendment to eliminate the presidential two-term limit. RDP cabinet members also submitted their resignations over the issue.

REPUBLIC ACTION FEDERATION

(Fédération Action pour la République; FAR)

The FAR, led by Ngarlejy Yorongar, holds 10 seats in the National Assembly. Yorongar received 16.4 percent of the national vote, finishing second in the 2001

presidential election. The support base of this party is among the southern Christians in Chad.

UNION FOR RENEWAL AND DEMOCRACY

(Union pour le Renouveau et la Démocratie; URD)

The URD, chaired by Wadal Kamougue, maintains its power base in the southern areas of the country. The party has six seats in the National Assembly. Kamougue received 6 percent of the national vote and finished fourth in the 2001 presidential election.

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY FOR DEMOCRACY AND PROGRESS

(Rassemblement Nationale pour la Démocratie et le Progrés; RNDP)

The RNDP, led by Mamadou Bisso, holds five seats in the National Assembly. Kassire Koumakoye represented the RNDP in the 2001 presidential election and received 2.4 percent of the vote.

NATIONAL UNION FOR DEMOCRACY AND RENEWAL

(Union Nationale pour la Démocratie et le Renouveau; UNDR)

The UNDR, chaired by Saleh Kebzabo, has three seats in the National Assembly. Kebzabo received 7 percent of the national vote and finished third in the 2001 presidential election.

Other Political Forces

MOVEMENT FOR DEMOCRACY AND JUSTICE IN CHAD

(Mouvement pour la Démocratie et la Justice au Tchad; MDJT)

The MDJT is the largest of several groups in open rebellion against the government of President Deby. Youssouf Togoimi, a former Chadian minister of defense, established the organization in 1998. The group's support is found among the Toubou people of northern Chad. The MDJT, while actively engaging the government since 1999, has suffered from policy differences among leaders as well as defections of its fighters. A 2002 cease-fire with the government quickly collapsed, and Togoimi died in a land-mine explosion before the end of that year. Adouom Abbo assumed the leadership of MDJT as 2003 brought more defections and a new cease-fire with the government. Hard-line MDJT members refused to honor the cease-fire negotiated by Abbo and continued their war against the government.

Other groups in rebellion include the Movement for the Development of Democracy (MDD), the Chadian National Renewal Front (FNTR), and the People's Resistance Convention (CPR). These groups are small and do not pose an immediate serious threat to the government.

CHADIAN NATIONAL ARMY

The approximately 25,000-man Chadian National Army is an important force in national politics. First, the national army maintains President Deby in power by serving as a counter to opposition groups looking to topple the government. Second, fighters who defect from opposition groups are frequently provided jobs in the army. Third, the national army has its own set of priorities, much like other interest groups or political parties. In May 2004 Deby discovered that many senior officers had inflated the numbers of personnel in their units in order to draw the excess pay, while other officers had promoted themselves in order to receive higher salaries. Deby ordered a two-month pay freeze in order to sort out these issues. In response a group of officers attempted a coup on May 16, 2004. Military elements remaining loyal to Deby managed to thwart the coup attempt. The army remains a key player in Chadian politics, and Deby must keep it satisfied if he plans to remain in power. If enough soldiers believe their status would be better under another leader, the army could attempt another coup. Deby was originally the Chadian military commander before launching his first coup attempt against former president Habre.

National Prospects

Chad is a state in name only. The farther one travels from N'Djamena, the less governmental control is present. National authority rests with whichever faction has managed to gain control of N'Djamena and receive international recognition and aid. Although Chad did conduct two presidential elections, it is yet to be seen if democracy can really prevail in the country.

Irregularities in the process raise many questions as to the legitimacy of the elections. President Deby maintains his power through the receipt of French foreign aid and the presence of French soldiers as much as he does from claims of popular support.

The loss of French backing and military assistance could lead to the downfall of the Deby regime. Opposition groups have launched a number of unsuccessful coups against Deby since October 1991. The most serious challenge to Deby occurred with the Movement for Development and Democracy's military offensive in 1991 and 1992. The timely introduction of French paratroopers allowed Deby to transfer additional Chadian soldiers to halt the rebel offensive. Although the French did not actively participate in combat operations, they assumed security duties throughout the country. Deby survived a coup attempt by elements of the Chadian National Army in May 2004.

President Deby will continue to be challenged in his efforts to reconcile the multitude of rebel movements as well as political opposition parties and factions. As group leaders are brought into the government in exchange for reconciliation with their factions, splinter groups representing those left out of the government will refuse to honor the agreements and ally with others fighting to gain control of N'Djamena. Many of the factions are led by individuals with strong personalities who exhibit signs of never surrendering their goal of becoming the Chadian national leader. Deby has alienated former members of his government, including Fidele Moungar and Joseph Yodeyman, who lead their own factions.

The Chadian national economy is in shambles, and the state is one of the poorest countries in the world. At one point the most productive nonagricultural industry was the brewing of beer. The government is highly dependent upon foreign aid to survive economically. The one bright spot in the economy is the pumping and sale of Chadian oil. For the near future economic problems, combined with the factional political system, almost guarantee a continuation of the instability seen in Chad since 1960.

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REPUBLIC OF CHILE

(República de Chile)

By Jeffrey J. Rinne, M.A.
Revised by Soeren Kern



The Republic of Chile is a narrow land sandwiched between the towering Andes mountain range and the Pacific Ocean. At its widest point Chile measures only 110 miles; but from its northern border with Peru to the southern tip of South America the country stretches more than 2,600 miles. In area (292,257 square miles) Chile is somewhat larger than France. Chile's population in 2005 was nearly 16 million. The country has a high literacy rate and a relatively large middle class.

Chile's democratic tradition originated in the nineteenth century. After independence from Spain was achieved in 1818, the constitution of 1833 established a presidential system of government with a bicameral legislature. The franchise was highly restricted—limited to literate men of property—and electoral fraud was common, but elections for president and members of the legislature were held regularly. In the twentieth century Chilean politics rapidly became more inclusive. The electorate expanded swiftly, and political parties worked aggressively to organize these potential voters, first among the urban middle and working classes and later among rural workers. The result was a politically conscious, highly mobilized society.

By the 1940s the Chilean electorate had coalesced around parties of the left, right, and center in nearly equal numbers. Under this arrangement of voter preferences the party (or parties) of the center had substantial leverage because the Center could fashion alliances with either the left or right to construct an electoral majority. From the 1920s through the 1950s the Radical Party was the foremost party of the center. On several occasions the Radicals formed an alliance with the workers' parties on the left, but over time the Socialist and Communist Parties grew increasingly dissatisfied with the minimal benefits they gained from this political strategy. In 1956 the parties of the left formed the Popular Action Front (FRAP).

During the late 1950s and 1960s Chilean politics became increasingly divisive. The electorate continued to be almost equally divided into thirds, but the ideological space to craft compromises between the center and left, or center and right, decreased significantly. As the 1964 presidential election approached, the parties of the left, right, and center prepared to support their own candidates. In March, however, a by-election was held to fill a vacant congressional seat in a traditionally conservative district. Surprisingly the candidate of the leftist parties won, provoking fear among rightist party leaders that the Socialist presidential candidate, Salvador Allende, might win the upcoming election. To protect against this possible outcome, the right decided to endorse the centrist candidate, Eduardo Frei, as the lesser of two evils.

Frei was leader of the Christian Democratic Party (PDC). During the late 1950s and early 1960s the PDC surged in popularity to replace the Radical Party as the key electoral force of the center. With the support of the right, Frei won the 1964 presidential election with a remarkable (for Chilean politics)

55.6 percent of the vote. However, the dilemma of the "three thirds" remained. Six years later rightist party leaders were confident of their ability to win the presidency; they were backing a strong candidate, the former president Jorge Alessandri. Thus in 1970 the left, right, and center each campaigned for a different candidate. The winner of the election was Allende, the perennial candidate of the left, with a slim 36.6 percent plurality.

It is unlikely that Allende could have won a runoff election against the second-place finisher, Alessandri. But at that time runoff elections did not exist in Chile. In the event that no candidate received an absolute majority of the popular vote, the Chilean congress was empowered to choose between the top two finishers. The conservative National Party attempted to block Allende's election in the congress. However, in the past many winning presidential candidates had received only a plurality, and always congress had selected the candidate with the highest number of votes. After first demanding assurances from Allende that he would defend Chile's democratic system, the Christian Democrats, the largest party in the congress, voted with the Socialist and Communist Parties to elect Allende president.

Once in office Allende attempted what he had always promised: the creation of a Socialist economy through democratic means. However, after his first year the "Chilean Road to Socialism" encountered grave difficulties. Inflation increased sharply and the economy spun out of control. The government also lost *political* control as groups on both the left and the right engaged in an escalating series of protests with increasingly irreconcilable demands. The opposition to Allende pinned its hopes on the 1973 congressional elections, hoping to win the two-thirds majority necessary to overturn Allende's policies. But despite the economic and political chaos in Chile, Allende retained a solid base of popular support. The opposition parties won only 54 percent of the congressional vote, and the ungovernable stalemate continued.

The possibility of a coup was manifest long before it came. The Allende government made a last-ditch effort at a compromise deal with the Christian Democrats, but there was strong opposition from within both camps. The failure to reach a compromise ended the last possibility of restoring political governability within the boundaries of Chile's democratic system. Soon the crisis reached its tragic conclusion. When the armed forces moved to replace the government, Allende proudly refused to resign; he committed suicide while under attack in the presidential palace.

Many people were surprised to discover that the military junta did not seize power simply to "clean house" and oversee the installation of a new civilian government. The leaders of the coup were determined to effect a rigorous transformation of the Chilean polity and economy. This project began with the violent persecution of leftist party organizations and their members. Chile's Marxist parties were immediately outlawed. Thousands of the regime's opponents were tortured and killed; many were "disappeared." On December 17, 1974, the junta declared General Augusto Pinochet president of the republic, personalizing the dictatorship and demonstrating clearly that the military intended to remain in power for a long time to come. In 1977 Chile's remaining political parties were banned.

In 1980 the Pinochet regime promulgated a new constitution for the republic. Its "transitory dispositions" ensured that Pinochet would remain president until at least 1989, but the new constitution also created a timetable for a possible return to democracy. It mandated that a plebiscite be held in 1988 to approve (or reject) a candidate chosen by the military to serve as president of another eight-year term. Following the plebiscite congressional elections would be held—and if a majority of Chileans voted "no" in the plebiscite, elections for president would be held as well.

To legitimate the new constitution, a national referendum was held on September 11, 1980. During the weeks leading up to the referendum the government unleashed a heavy propaganda campaign in support of the new constitution; however, the regime's opponents were permitted little opportunity to campaign against it. The result of the voting was 67 percent in favor and 30 percent opposed. The new constitution took effect on March 11, 1981.

In 1988 Pinochet was predictably the choice of the commanders of the armed forces to serve another eight-year term as president. In preparation for the plebiscite the Pinochet regime opened new electoral registries in February 1987 and, the following month, passed a law allowing non-Marxist political parties to register. This placed the regime's opponents in a difficult position. They were reluctant to legitimate the existing political system by participating in the plebiscite, yet competing under the rules established by the Pinochet regime was the only strategy available that might restore democratic rule in Chile. Most opposition leaders eventually decided to take part in the plebiscite. Since Marxist parties were still prohibited, the moderate Socialists formed the Party for Democracy (PPD) as a catchall party for those on the left who wished to register and

vote in the plebiscite. By August 1988, 9 out of every 10 eligible voters were registered.

The yes-or-no structure of the plebiscite brought the center and left together around a common point of agreement: "no" to Pinochet and his regime. In February 1988 seventeen parties joined forces in the Command for the No. Led by the Christian Democrats and the moderate Socialists, this alliance waged a sophisticated and highly effective campaign. Pinochet and his supporters argued that a "no" victory would provoke a return to the chaos of the Allende period, but the "no" campaign skillfully allayed those fears, convincing a majority of Chileans to reject Pinochet.

Following his defeat in the plebiscite Pinochet agreed to observe the timetable established in the 1980 constitution and scheduled congressional and presidential elections for December 1989. In the interim the government and opposition (with the participation of a new conservative party, National Renovation) negotiated changes in some of the most undemocratic provisions of the 1980 constitution. The two sides eventually reached an agreement on a package of 54 amendments, including an increase in the number of elected senators, elimination of the ban of Marxist parties, expanded participation by civilians on the National Security Council, and an amendment simplifying the process for amending the constitution in the future. The package of amendments was approved in a national referendum on July 30, 1989.

Following their success in the 1988 plebiscite, the parties of the "no" campaign resolved to maintain their alliance for the democratic elections a year later. Renamed the Coalition of Parties for Democracy (Concertación de los Partidos por la Democracia, CPD), the alliance presented a single slate of candidates for the congress and a single candidate for the presidency. The Christian Democrats were the largest party in the CPD and were therefore entitled to select the presidential candidate. They chose Patricio Aylwin, and in December 1989 Aylwin was elected president with 55.2 percent of the vote, almost the same percentage as the "no" vote the year before. The CPD also won 72 of the 120 seats in the Chamber of Deputies and 22 of the 38 Senate seats for which there were elections.

The relationship between the Aylwin government and the armed forces was often tense. Pinochet stayed on as commander in chief of the army, refusing all requests that he step down. On December 19, 1990, Pinochet declared a state of alert. All military personnel throughout the country dispersed in battle gear to await further instructions. They were later ordered back to the barracks, but the message of this "readiness drill" was clear: Pinochet retained the power to limit the actions of the newly elected government.

Despite threats from the military the new government could not ignore the human rights record of the Pinochet regime. In April 1990 the government created the Commission on Truth and Reconciliation to investigate and document human rights abuses committed during the dictatorship. The commission's report, issued one year later, documented the death or disappearance of 2,279 Chileans at the hands of the military's security forces. Aylwin offered apologies and condolences to the families of the victims, but the government itself did not attempt to prosecute offenders—this was left to private actions in the courts. Pinochet publicly denounced the commission's report and defended the actions of his men, arguing that they had acquitted themselves honorably in an undeclared war.

The Aylwin government proposed various changes in the constitution inherited from the military regime. However, all but one of these projects stalled in the Senate, where the government was unable to muster the necessary two-thirds majority. The 1980 constitution had allowed the outgoing military regime to appoint nine senators, thereby giving the conservative opposition an effective veto against any proposal to reform the political system.

At the next general election, on December 11, 1993, Eduardo Frei Ruiz-Tagle, son of the former president, was elected to succeed Aylwin. Frei was the candidate of the CPD and triumphed with a remarkable 58 percent majority in a field of seven presidential candidates. Frei's closest rival was Arturo Alessandri, the nephew of another former president. Alessandri was supported by the Union for the Progress of Chile (UPP), a coalition of parties on the right. The two principal parties of the UPP are National Renovation (RN) and the Independent Democratic Union (UDI). Both emerged during the transition to democracy to represent former supporters of the Pinochet regime. Frei's administration was inaugurated in March 1994.

A presidential election was held on December 12, 1999, but none of the six candidates obtained a majority, which led to an unprecedented runoff election on January 16, 2000. Ricardo Lagos Escobar of the Socialist Party and the Party for Democracy led the CPD to a narrow victory with 51.32 percent of the votes. He was sworn in March 11, 2000, for a six-year term.

The System of Government

Chile is a democratic republic with a strong presidency and a bicameral legislature.

EXECUTIVE

Chile's 1925 constitution created a six-year term for the executive, without the possibility of immediate reelection. The 1980 constitution lengthened the presidential term to eight years. But after the victory of the "no" in the 1988 plebiscite the government and opposition agreed to an exception: The first president elected after the dictatorship would serve only four years. In February 1994, at the end of Patricio Aylwin's presidency, the congress voted to amend the constitution to establish a six-year presidential term without the possibility of immediate reelection.

The 1980 constitution created a runoff election for the presidency in the event that no candidate received an absolute majority in the first around of voting. This was the least controversial change from the former 1925 constitution because the lack of a runoff had played a key role in Chile's fall from democracy. In 1970 the Socialist candidate Salvador Allende had won a plurality of just 36.6 percent in the presidential race. The Chilean congress, empowered to select from the top two finishers in the absence of an electoral majority, chose Allende rather than the candidate of the right, former president Jorge Alessandri. The political right rejected Allende's Socialist policies and his very legitimacy, and the military seized power in the 1973 coup. The 1980 constitution provided for runoff elections to avert the kind of legitimacy crisis that occurred under Allende. The 1999 presidential election was the first to make use of the runoff provision, in a second-round contest between Ricardo Lagos Escobar and Joaquín Lavín.

The president appoints a cabinet of 21 ministers. These appointees do not require legislative approval and can be replaced at the pleasure of the president. Administrators for each of Chile's regions and provinces are also chosen by the president and continue to serve only with the president's approval. The controller general of the republic is another presidential appointee, but the president's choice requires the approval of the Senate. Once approved, the controller general cannot be removed, but he or she must retire at the age of 75.

If the president declares a piece of legislation urgent, then the congress must act on it within 30 days. If not, the legislation automatically becomes law when the 30 days expire. The president may call congress into special session and can enact certain laws by decree.

RESULTS OF PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS 1958–1999

1958	
J. Alessandri (Right: Independent)	31.2%
Salvador Allende (Left: FRAP)	28.5%
Eduardo Frei (Center: PDC)	20.5%
Luís Bossay (Center: Radical Party)	15.4%
1964	
Eduardo Frei (Center: PDC)	55.6%
Salvador Allende (Left: FRAP)	36.6%
Julio Durán (Center: Radical Party)	4.9%
1970	
Salvador Allende (Left: FRAP)	36.6%
J. Alessandri (Right: Independence)	34.9%
R. Tomic (Center: PDC)	27.9%
1989	
Patricio Aylwin (Center-Left: Coalition)	55.2%
Hernán Büchi (Right: Democracy & Progress)	24.4%
F. J. Errázuriz (Independent)	15.4%
1993	
Eduardo-Frei (Center-Left: Coalition)	58.0%
Arturo Alessandri (Right: Democracy & Progress)	24.4%
1999 First Round	
Ricardo Lagos (Center-Left: PPD)	48.0%
Joaquín Lavín (Right: Alianza por Chile)	47.5%
Gladys Marín (Communist Party)	3.2%
1999 Second Round	
Ricardo Lagos (Center-Left: PPD)	51.3%
Joaquín Lavín (Right: Alianza por Chile)	48.7%

LEGISLATURE

Before 1973 legislative power was vested in a bicameral Congreso Nacional (National Congress) composed of an upper house, the Senado (Senate), with 45 members, and a lower house, the Cámara de Diputados (Chamber of Deputies), with 150 members. Senators were elected for eight-year terms and deputies for four years.

The legislature was abolished after the coup and substantially redesigned before the Pinochet regime held elections for a new National Congress in December 1989. The Chamber of Deputies now has 120 members elected from 60 voting districts; two representatives are elected from each district. Deputies are elected from party lists to four-year terms and may be reelected.

The 1980 constitution called for a Senate with 26 elected members and nine appointed members. However, following the 1988 plebiscite the democratic opposition negotiated a constitutional amendment to increase the number of directly elected senators from 26 to 38. Senators serve eight-year terms and can be reelected. Half of the elected Senate is renewed every four years.

The president of the republic chooses two of the appointed senators (one former minister and one rector of a public university); three are chosen by the Supreme Court (two former justices of the Court and one former controller); and four are chosen by the National Security Council (one former commander in chief of the army, another from the navy, a third from the air force, and a former director of the national police). Before December 1997 all of these appointees—known as "institutional senators"—were chosen while Pinochet was still president. At that time all were replaced with new institutional senators.

Both the Aylwin and Frei governments attempted to amend the constitution to eliminate appointed senators. However, the conservative opposition in the Senate has thus far blocked all such efforts. In addition to the nine appointed senators the 1980 constitution also established that ex-presidents who have served at least six consecutive years may serve as senators for life.

The congress is empowered to propose and approve legislation. A piece of legislation approved by a majority of both chambers is sent to the executive to be signed into law. If the president vetoes the legislation, it must be sent back to the congress with the president's comments. The congress may then either vote to approve the changes (with a simple majority vote in each chamber) or vote to overturn the president's veto (with a two-thirds vote in each chamber). Amendments to the constitution also require a two-thirds vote by both chambers.

The oversight authority of the Chamber of Deputies includes the power to adopt accords or make observations by a majority vote of the members present. The government must then respond to the written document within 30 days. However, the government is not bound to a particular course of action.

The Chamber may initiate impeachment proceedings against the president, a minister, intendant, governor, or a superior or Supreme Court justice. Charges of impeachment are judged by the Senate. The Senate is also responsible for approving a president's choice for controller general.

REPRESENTATION OF CHILE'S MAJOR POLITICAL PARTIES IN THE NATIONAL CONGRESS

	Chamber of Deputies			Senate		
Political Party	**1993**	**1997**	**2001**	**1993**	**1997**	**2001**
Coalition of Parties for Democracy	70	70	62	21	20	20
PDC	37	39	23	13	14	12
PS	15	11	10	5	4	5
PPD	15	16	20	2	2	3
Union for the Progress of Chile	50	48	57	17	18	18
RN	29	25	18	11	7	7
UDI	15	21	31	3	9	11

Sources: For 1993, "Latin American Regional Reports—Southern Cone," RS-94-01, February 10, 1994; for 1997 and 2001, Chile Interior Ministry.

Note: Chile's smaller parties and independents are excluded from the table.

JUDICIARY

Chile's legal system is derived from Spanish law and based on the Code of 1857. The highest court in Chile is the Supreme Court. It is composed of 21 justices. The court elects a president from among its members

every three years. Each of the justices has tenure until the mandatory retirement age of 75. However, the congress is empowered to impeach and remove justices, and in January 1993 the congress exercised this power. A two-thirds vote of the Senate is required to remove a Supreme Court justice.

When there is a vacancy on the Court the president is entitled to appoint a new justice but must chose from a list of five individuals nominated by the Supreme Court itself. This role for the judiciary in the selection of new judges first appeared in the 1925 constitution as a means of protecting the independence of the courts.

There are nine appellate courts in Chile. Appellate court judges are appointed by the chief executive from a list of three names submitted by the Supreme Court. Below this are the courts of major and small claims, subdelegation courts, and local courts. Local courts have jurisdiction over both civil and criminal cases. Local court judges are appointed by the president from a list of three individuals submitted by the appellate court with jurisdiction in that region.

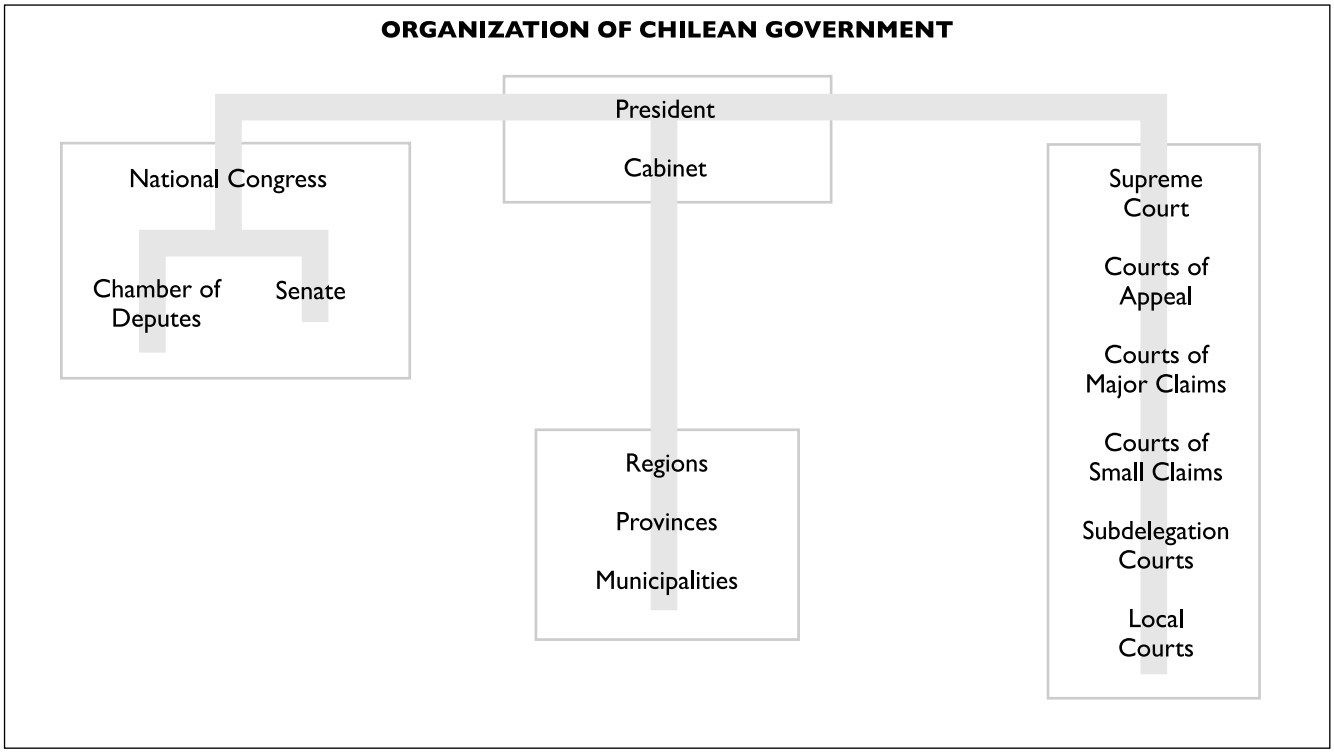
The Chilean justice system has established a tradition of integrity and independence. However, the courts were severely criticized in the report of the Commission on Truth and Reconciliation for refusing thousands of petitions for habeas corpus during the Pinochet dictatorship. Supreme Court judges were also strongly criticized by the CPD parties and human rights groups for frustrating the subsequent investigation and prosecution of human rights violators.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Chile is a unitary republic divided into 13 regions. Each region is administered by an "intendant" appointed by the president. The intendant is the "natural and immediate agent of the president." He is responsible for the coordination and oversight of public services and the maintenance of public order. He serves only with the favor of the president and can be replaced at any time.

Each of Chile's 13 regions is further subdivided into provinces. These are administered by a governor also appointed by the president. Governors take their instructions from the intendant but serve only at the pleasure of the president.

Elected local governments function at the municipal level (*comunas*). Municipal authorities are directly elected for four-year terms in each of Chile's more than 300 municipalities. During the Pinochet regime locally elected officials were removed and replaced by centrally appointed municipal leaders. In 1991 the congress approved an amendment to replace these appointed officials with directly elected representatives. The most



recent elections for local office were held in October 2004.

Municipalities have autonomy to administer their own finances. The sources of municipal finance include transfers from the regional government in which the municipality is located, local fines and fees, and the municipality's participation in the common municipal fund. This fund receives a percentage of monies (stipulated in law) from diverse revenue sources. The money collected is then distributed between Chile's varied municipalities according to criteria of size and equity.

The Electoral System

All Chileans can vote at age 18, and voting is compulsory. Women won the right to vote in 1949. Literacy requirements were officially eliminated in 1970.

Under the 1925 constitution a form of proportional representation was used to elect congressional representatives.

Between 1973 and 1988 no elections were held for any public office. Prior to the congressional elections in 1989 Chile's electoral law was changed to favor the conservative parties expected to be the minority. Instead of proportional representation the Pinochet regime established two-member districts to elect representatives to the Senate and Chamber of Deputies. There are 19 Senate districts and 60 districts for the Chamber of Deputies. The first seat in each district is awarded to the party (or party alliance) with the largest number of votes. In order to win the second seat as well, a party (or party alliance) must receive more than two-thirds of the district vote, or twice the number of votes of the second-highest list. If not, the party with the second-highest plurality receives the second seat.

The Party System

ORIGINS OF THE PARTIES

Organized political parties first emerged in the mid-nineteenth century, principally around the question of church-state relations. Early in the twentieth century the growing urban middle and working classes provoked an expansion of the party system as new parties sought to incorporate these emerging political actors. During the 1950s and 1960s party competition was heightened further as parties increased their organizational efforts among rural workers.

As might be expected, the Pincohet dictatorship was a watershed in the history of Chile's political parties. Some parties in contemporary Chile—like the PDC and the Socialist Party—predated the coup and formally reconstituted themselves as soon as they were legalized. Other parties emerged for the first time during the democratic transition. The most important of these recently created parties are, on the right, National Renovation and the Independent Democratic Union and, on the left, the Party for Democracy.

THE PARTIES IN LAW

Legal recognition of political parties prior to the 1973 coup was relatively easy. To appear on the ballot, the main requirement for a new party was that it submit a petition to the electoral authorities signed by at least 10,000 registered voters. Following the coup, party activities were outlawed by the junta. The electoral registry was ordered destroyed.

The 1980 constitution proscribed Marxist parties, but in March 1987 all other opposition parties were legalized. Non-Marxist parties were permitted to re-form provided they could collect at least 33,500 signatures from registered voters. Marxist parties were legalized again in the July 1990 referendum amending the constitution.

It is relatively easy to register a new political party in Chile, but in order to control the proliferation of minor parties, Chile's party legislation requires that a party dissolve itself if it fails to garner 5 percent of the vote in a national election.

PARTY ORGANIZATION

Chile's political parties have filled the entire spectrum from the revolutionary left to the conservative right. From the 1940s to 1970s the Chilean electorate was roughly divided in thirds among the left, right, and center. However, during this period the parties of the left became increasingly radicalized while the parties of the right experienced a gradual decline in support.

This profile of the Chilean party system was substantially altered by the years of dictatorship. Whereas before the coup the electorate was divided almost equally into thirds, today the revolutionary left has virtually disappeared. The right, which had been in decline, has emerged stronger. And the dilemma of the "three thirds" has been replaced (to this point) by competition channeled through two opposing coalitions, one center-left and the other on the right.

The left underwent a profound change during the Pinochet dictatorship. Thousands of the left's partisans

were tortured and killed, prompting a critique of the causes of the coup and a reevaluation of democratic institutions and the protections they confer. The less extreme parties on the left clearly fared better with the electorate in the 1989 elections. In particular the Communist Party, which had been one of the largest in Latin America prior to the coup, failed to win a single seat in the legislature from 1989 to 2001.

The rejuvenation of the right is manifest in the solid electoral performance of National Renovation and the Independent Democratic Union. Whereas the National Party was able to attract only about 20 percent of the popular vote in the 1960s and early 1970s, the new parties of the right have received more than 30 percent.

The change from proportional representation to the two-member district system for electing representatives created a strong incentive for parties to form broad coalitions. This tendency has been enhanced by the inclination of the Chilean electorate since the return to democracy to reject parties and politicians associated with the political extremes of either the left or right. The center-left CPD has clearly been the dominant force in Chile's electoral politics since it was formed in 1989. The coalition Union for Chilean Progress was formed by the parties on the right to compete with the CPD.

Major Political Parties

CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY

(Partido Demócrata Cristiano; PDC)

HISTORY

The earliest predecessor of the Christian Democratic Party was the National Falange, a Catholic reformist group that broke from the ranks of the Conservative Party in 1935. The Falange received meager support: In 1953 the party won only 2.9 percent of the vote in legislative elections. That same year the National Falange merged with the Conservative Social Christians to form the Christian Social Federation, which in 1957 became the PDC.

During the late 1950s and 1960s the PDC grew rapidly, attracting voters from both the right and left. Soon the PDC was the dominant party of the center in Chilean politics, and in 1964 the PDC's candidate, Eduardo Frei, won the presidency. The party's spectacular growth and Frei's success in the election (with the support of the right) led PDC politicians to overestimate their ability to end the division of the "three thirds."

When Allende won a plurality of the popular vote in 1970, the PDC was still the largest party in congress. The PDC congressional bloc voted to complete Allende's election, but the party staunchly opposed his policies as president. The left wing of the PDC splintered as some groups sympathetic to Allende's program left the party to join the Allende coalition. However, central figures in the PDC leadership initially welcomed military intervention. Many PDC politicians assumed the military would hand over power to them after removing the Allende government. After the coup, however, the PDC was placed in "indefinite recess," and in 1977 the party was formally dissolved.

The PDC reemerged quickly during the transition to democracy to establish itself as Chile's largest party. Patricio Aylwin, a former PDC senator, was a central spokesman for the "no" campaign. As the largest party of the CPD, the PDC has chosen Chile's last two presidents.

POLICY

The Christian Democratic Party's ideological position was strongly influenced by Christian humanism and corporatist thought. The PDC rejected both the individualism of capitalism and the collectivism of Socialism, defending a "third way" to development between these two extremes.

The PDC's ideology was given its first serious test during the presidential administration of Eduardo Frei Sr. During his presidency Chile's first meaningful land reform program was initiated, but the reach and pace of the program did not satisfy the left. Foreign ownership of Chile's copper mines was another contentious issue during the Frei administration. Frei's solution was a program for the "Chileanization" of copper. The government would not expropriate the mines. Instead it would buy a majority stake in the mines through agreements with the foreign companies. Both land reform and Chileanization of the copper mines demonstrated the PDC's strong reform impulse and the simultaneous moderation that underlay PDC doctrine and policy.

When a PDC candidate again assumed the presidency in 1990, the Chilean economy was enjoying impressive GDP growth and low inflation. The PDC, at the head of the CPD, pledged not to make any drastic changes in the orthodox economic model imposed during the dictatorship. To address the "social debt" accrued during the years of harsh military rule and orthodox market reform, the PDC-led government raised taxes somewhat to fund higher spending on education, poverty alleviation, and other social programs. However, the overall structure of the economy

and the priority of fiscal solvency were defended and maintained. Aylwin's successor, Eduardo Frei Ruiz-Tagle, followed the same recipe.

MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY

The PDC is a centrist party with its strongest support among middle-class workers and professionals.

LEADERSHIP

The current president of the PDC is Adolfo Zaldívar. Alejandro Foxley is another prominent PDC leader and has been mentioned for the presidency.

PROSPECTS

The PDC saw its support fall by 4 percentage points between the 1996 municipal elections and the 1997 congressional elections. The PDC is now the second-largest party in Chilean politics. In the 2001 elections the PDC lost its majority to the Independent Democratic Union (UDI), garnering only 35 combined seats in congress to the UDI's 42.

SOCIALIST PARTY

(Partido Socialista de Chile; PS)

HISTORY

The Socialist Party was founded in 1933. During the 1930s and 1940s the Socialists formed alliances with the centrist (and opportunistic) Radical Party. At that time the Comintern defended alliances of this type. However, in 1956 the Socialists allied with the Chilean Communist Party to form the Popular Action Front (Frente de Acción Popular; FRAP).

The Socialist Party reached the height of its power and influence in 1970 when Salvador Allende was elected president. The coup and subsequent repression by the military forced party stalwarts to reassess their positions, producing diverse opinions regarding the role and responsibility of the party. Party factions expressed conflicting views regarding the proper strategy to adopt for the 1988 plebiscite. The moderate Socialists decided to participate actively. Following the presidential and congressional elections in December 1989 the Socialist Party factions reunited. Socialist Party leader Ricardo Lagos, together with the Party for Democracy, led the CPD to a narrow victory in the two-round December 1999–January 2000 elections.

POLICY

During the Allende years the Socialists supported the expropriation of large private property, irrespective of whether the owners were foreign or domestic. The party advocated massive land reform leading to the formation of agricultural collectives, and management of large industries by workers' committees. In response to the threat these policies provoked from the military, the most militant Socialists advocated arming workers and peasants (a proposal that Allende always firmly rejected). In Chile the Socialists were far more radical than the Communists.

The experience of the dictatorship has changed the Chilean electorate and transformed the Socialist Party. Today the Socialist Party in Chile is more akin to social democratic parties of Western Europe. The party advocates greater social spending, but within the confines of fiscal solvency and within a private-market economy.

MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY

Urban and rural laborers remain the strongest constituency of the Socialist Party. The party is also supported by professionals and intellectuals with an ideological commitment to greater social equality in Chile.

LEADERSHIP

The Socialist Ricardo Lagos is one of the most articulate and charismatic political figures in Chilean politics today. Although Lagos is most clearly identified with the Socialist Party, he has been registered simultaneously in both the PS and the PPD, despite a law prohibiting dual party membership.

Camilo Escalona is president of the Socialist Party. Juan Pablo Letelier and Francisco Rivas are other prominent members of the party.

PROSPECTS

Support for the PS grew in the 2000 elections due to Lagos's strong popular support, and the vote tally of the PS and PPD combined is now slightly higher than that of the PDC. Lagos's term as president ends in 2006, but PS candidate Michelle Bachelet is widely seen as the likely victor in the December 2005 election to replace Lagos.

PARTY FOR DEMOCRACY

(Partido por la Democracia; PPD)

HISTORY

The Party for Democracy was formed by Socialist Party dissidents who believed the potential benefits from participating in the 1988 plebiscite outweighed the risks. Since Marxist parties were still illegal at that

time, the PPD was formed as a catchall party for those on the left who wished to participate and vote against Pinochet in the plebiscite. It was expected that the PPD would disappear once the Socialist Party was legalized, but instead the PPD has maintained an institutional identity of its own.

POLICY

The PPD proclaims to represent a more "modern" vision of the left. It is not entirely clear what this repeated claim of modernity is intended to mean. The PPD appears to have abandoned much of its Socialist leaning. The party is a member of the CPD.

MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY

The PPD has a somewhat younger membership than the Socialist Party and a more solidly middle-class constituency.

LEADERSHIP

Prominent leaders of the PPD include Jorge Schaulsohn and Eric Schnake. Senator Sergio Bitar is head of the party.

PROSPECTS

Support for PPD candidates was up slightly in the 1997 congressional elections. In alliance with the PS the PPD now appears poised to contest the supremacy of the PDC within the CPD. However, the party is without a strong potential presidential candidate of its own.

NATIONAL RENOVATION

(Renovación Nacional; RN)

HISTORY

National Renovation was founded in 1987 through the merger of the Movement for National Union, the National Labor Front, and the Independent Democratic Union (UDI). The RN split with the UDI over the 1988 plebiscite, but both parties supported the candidacy of Hernán Büchi in 1989.

In 1993 the RN allied with the UDI and the Center-Center Union in the Union for Chilean Progress. This rightist coalition was formed to challenge the electoral dominance of the CPD.

POLICY

The RN has sought to distance itself from the repression and authoritarian politics of the Pinochet regime while acting as champion for the liberal, free-market economic policies pursued by the military government after 1975. The party promotes itself as the vehicle of "modern" liberal conservatism. The RN emphasizes order, stability, efficiency, and free competition. Far less emphasis is placed on questions of human rights and democratic participation.

MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY

Middle- and upper-class businesspeople who fared well under the market reforms advanced during the Pinochet regime are the principal constituency of the RN.

LEADERSHIP

Andrés Allamand is a prominent member of the party who had been mentioned as a possible presidential candidate in 1999. However, he surprisingly lost his bid for the senate in 1997, finishing in fourth place.

PROSPECTS

The RN won 18 deputy seats and seven Senate seats in the 2001 elections. As a result the RN is no longer the dominant partner in the Union for Chilean Progress. The two largest parties are roughly equal in strength: The UDI is slightly superior in both the Chamber and the Senate.

INDEPENDENT DEMOCRATIC UNION

(Unión Democrática Independiente; UDI)

HISTORY

The Independent Democratic Union emerged as a party of the right during the transition to democracy. In some respects the UDI is a successor of the pre-Pinochet National Party. In 1987 the UDI joined in the formation of National Renovation but withdrew in April 1988 following the expulsion of its founder, Jaime Guzman, from the RN leadership. Guzman was formerly a legal adviser to General Pinochet. He was assassinated on April 1, 1991, by leftist militants of the Frente Patriótico Manuel Rodríguez (Manuel Rodríguez Patriotic Front).

The UDI is a member of the rightist alliance Union for Chilean Progress, along with the RN and the Center-Center Union

POLICY

The UDI supports the economic model implemented during the dictatorship but unlike the RN has not attempted to distance itself from the acts of repression by the Pinochet regime. The UDI has proclaimed itself

the trustee of the "protected democracy" ensconced in the 1980 constitution. The party is generally more dogmatic than the RN and less open to negotiating with the parties of the CPD.

MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY

The UDI membership is proud and largely unapologetic for the actions of the Pinochet dictatorship. UDI members may be said to hold a certain distrust of democratic institutions.

LEADERSHIP

Jovino Novoa is president of the UDI. In 1997 he was elected to congress, though polls listed him as an underdog. Joaquín Lavín, mayor of Las Condes, is a popular leader with a strong chance to be the candidate of the Union for Chilean Progress in the 1999 presidential election. His position was strengthened by the weak showing of the RN's Andrés Allamand in the 1997 elections. Juan Antonio Coloma is another prominent UDI leader.

PROSPECTS

In the 2001 congressional elections the UDI was one of the few clear winners. The party strengthened its position on the right, increasing its representation in the Chamber to 31 and in the Senate to 11.

Minor Political Parties

SOCIAL DEMOCATIC RADICAL PARTY

(Partido Radical Social Demócrata; PRSD)

The Radical Party was founded in 1863 as the representative of the emerging middle class. However, the party entered into decline during the 1950s and has never recovered. In an effort to restore its image the party changed its name in 1994 to Social Democratic Radical Party.

The party is a member of the CPD but elected only one senator and two deputies in 1993. In 1997 the PRSD elected four deputies. In 2001 the PRSD elected six deputies and no senators.

CENTER-CENTER UNION

(Unión de Centro Centro Progresista; UCC)

The Center-Center Union is the creation of the businessman Francisco Javier Errázuriz. Despite its name the party is not centrist. It is a populist-style party of the right that relies on the personal popularity of its founder. In 1989 Errázuriz ran for president and received a very respectable 15 percent of the vote. However, the UCC has little representation in the legislature. In 1993 the UCC joined the RN and UDI in the Union for Chilean Progress. In 2001 the UCC failed to elect any deputies or senators to the congress.

Other Political Forces

THE MILITARY

Numerous constitutional and legal changes implemented by the Pinochet regime served to increase the power and influence of the military in Chile's democratic system. Before leaving the executive, Pinochet guaranteed for himself the right to remain commander in chief of the army until 1998. Occupying that powerful position he was able to (credibly) declare: "The day any of my men is touched, the state of law is over."

The military holds half the seats on the National Security Council. The president is not commander in chief of the armed forces except during war. And defense spending cannot fall below a specified minimum, including 10 percent of foreign exchange from copper sales. During the Aylwin government, military courts continued to initiate legal action against civilians for defamation against the honor of the armed forces. In 2005, however, two events indicated that the civilian sector was gradually increasing its control over the military. First, in January, Pinochet was placed under house arrest after the Supreme Court upheld his indictment on human rights abuses during his tenure. Second, in July the constitution was amended to restore the president's right to dismiss military commanders.

ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

Nearly 80 percent of Chileans are Catholic. In political debates that address concerns of the Roman Catholic Church, the church has a prominent voice.

The political role of the church was particularly salient during the Pinochet dictatorship. The church hierarchy opposed the Allende government when it challenged the church's authority in education, and the church did not initially express disapproval when the military intervened to depose Allende. However, the church soon took a firm stand against the human rights record of the military, becoming perhaps the only sphere in civil society that could openly oppose the Pinochet regime. In 1976 the church created the

Vicaría de la Solidaridad (Vicarate of Solidarity), which provided legal aid and social services for the victims of the dictatorship. The church used its moral authority to speak out against the regime and aided protest groups.

In latter years, however, the church's influence has been waning somewhat. In 2004, for instance, President Lagos signed a law allowing Chileans to divorce. The church had vociferously opposed this measure, to no avail.

National Prospects

Chile's economy continues to post impressive annual growth rates with low inflation and decreasing indices of poverty. High domestic savings and investment rates helped propel Chile's economy to average growth rates of 8 percent during the 1990s. However, unemployment has hovered in the 8 to 10 percent range in recent years, well above the 5 to 6 percent average for the 1990s, although unemployment declined to 7.4 percent at the end of 2003 due to the sustained reactivation of the economy. The share of Chileans with incomes below the poverty line—defined as twice the cost of satisfying a person's minimal nutritional needs—fell from 46 percent of the population in 1987 to 18.8 percent in 2003. Chile's independent Central Bank pursues a policy of maintaining inflation between 2 and 4 percent. Inflation has not exceeded 5 percent since 1998. Chile registered an inflation rate of 1.1 percent in 2003 and was expected to see a 2.6 percent increase in 2004. Chile's democratic political system has also performed extremely well since 1989. Ironically this may have contributed to a sharp increase in absenteeism and null or blank ballots in the 2001 congressional elections. The increase has preoccupied many Chilean commentators, but nearly 70 percent of eligible Chileans voted in 2001, a percentage that compares very favourably with voting rates in the advanced industrial democracies. Today Chilean politics is duller and more predictable than in the highly charged days of the 1980s and early 1990s. This change has surely contributed to the drop in voter participation, but it is also a change worth celebrating.

In early 2002 the government committed to undertake a series of microeconomic reforms designed to create new incentives for private investment. The government also has encouraged the use of Chile as an "investment platform" for multinational corporations planning to invest in the region. The United States–Chile Free Trade Agreement entered into force January 1, 2004, following approval by the U.S. and Chilean Congresses. Chile now is facing the challenges of having to diversify its copper-dependent economy.

The CPD alliance has dominated Chilean politics since the return of democracy in 1989. And ahead of the December 2005 elections, its presidential candidate, Michelle Bachelet of the Socialist Party, was widely expected to win the presidency.

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PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

(Zhonghua Renmin Gongheguo)

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Further revision by Jason G. Tower



China's territory can be divided into three geographic and historical regions: the provinces of China proper, located south of the Great Wall, which were unified under the Qin (221 to 207 B.C.E.) and Han (206 B.C.E. to 220 C.E.) dynasties and have been ruled by Chinese or foreign (e.g., Mongol and Manchu) dynasties ever since; a much larger region consisting of the three provinces of the northeast, Jilin, Liaoning, and Heilongjiang (commonly known as Manchuria), Nei Mongol (Inner Mongolia), Xinjiang, Qinghai, and Xizang (Tibet), all of which were added to the Chinese Empire during the Qing (Manchu) dynasty (1644–1911); and the special administrative regions of Macau (Ao'mer) and Hong Kong, which were recovered from Portugal (1999) and Great Britain (1997), respectively. China has over 20,000 kilometers (12,400 miles) of land frontier, 6,452 kilometers (4,000 miles) of which form the borders with Russia and the former Soviet republics of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan. The border with India runs for over 3,400 kilometers (2,113 miles). Border disputes with India and the former Soviet Union have been a major feature of China's relations with its neighbors since the 1950s. More recently China has made progress on these issues, settling its dispute with Russia and signing a series of three treaties with Kazakhstan. Progress has also been made with the other Central Asian Republics and India, although disagreements remain.

In 2005 China's population was estimated to be 1,306,313,000, up from about 580 million in 1954, making it the most populous nation in the world. Most of the population is concentrated in the eastern part of the country, especially in the coastal regions, while the vast mountainous and desert regions of Inner Mongolia, Xinjiang, Qinghai, and Tibet are only sparsely inhabited. Of the total population roughly 91.9 percent are Chinese (officially known as the Han nationality). The remaining 8.1 percent are divided into 55 officially recognized nationalities, of which the most important are the Zhuang, Uygur, Hui, Tibetan, Yi, Miao, Manchus, Mongols, Buyi, and Koreans. Most of the minority groups are concentrated in the border regions, though the Hui can be found in every province in China.

HISTORY

The structure and process of government that evolved during the more than 2,000 years of Imperial rule beginning with the Han (206 B.C.E.) and ending with the fall of the Qing (1911) combined, in a unique fashion, the rational and despotic. At the apex of the system was the emperor (*huangdi*), who embodied the roles of ceremonial head of state with almost divine charismatic powers, chief executive, and supreme legislator. During the Qing dynasty he made the final decision on all policy matters of importance, enacted laws, and supervised the government bureaucracy at all levels. He was served by a sophisticated and functionally specific hierarchy of civil servants. The historian Albert Feuerwerker estimates that during the

eighteenth century, the high point of Qing power and prestige, a cadre of 20,000 civil servants governed a population of 300,000,000. For most common people the government was a distant (though often threatening) entity. Lower-level officials had to rely on the cooperation of the local gentry and numbers of often corrupt functionaries in order to maintain public order, raise taxes, and complete public projects such as canals and irrigation works. The constructive influence of even the most enlightened individuals on the villages and hamlets of China was thus much diluted by local interests.

An element of central importance in the continuity of the imperial system was Confucianism, which from the Han dynasty on served as the moral basis of the state and defined the culture and way of life for the ruling classes. As formulated by Confucius (Kong Fuzi, 551–479 B.C.E.) and Mencius (Mengzi, 372–289 B.C.E.) and elaborated by Han dynasty scholars, this body of thought was at once a philosophy of human nature, a system of ethics, and a political ideology. For Confucians society was not an aggregate of self-interested, private individuals but a highly interdependent system consisting of a complex and tightly drawn network of reciprocal, but unequal, social ties. These were regulated by the principles of *ren* (benevolence) and *li* (rites and ceremony).

On the political level the Confucian ruler, assisted by loyal officials promoted on the basis of merit, was responsible for preserving and promoting this social network, both by providing for the people's basic material well-being and by being a model of Confucian morality. Moral mobilization was especially stressed. Virtuous rulers and upstanding officials could and should, according to Confucian doctrine, inspire people to live up to the ideals embodied in *ren* and *li,* and the empire as a whole would prosper as a result. Superior and inferior were defined sharply, but the right of the former to rule was conditioned by the principle that he possessed superior merit and had an attitude of benevolent paternalism toward the latter. This was an ideal, however, and the growth of the emperor's absolute power in the Ming (1368–1644) and the Qing dynasties led to major abuses of power. For the common people, the repressive aspects of government—harsh laws and punishments, heavy taxes and corvées, as well as corruption—were often more apparent than Confucian benevolence.

The inability of the Qing dynasty to maintain internal peace, and China's humiliation at the hands of the Western powers, Russia, and Japan in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, led to the dynasty's overthrow and the dissolution of the imperial system itself in 1911. The period between 1912, when the first Republic of China was formerly established, and 1949 was largely one of disunity and civil war, exacerbated by the Japanese invasion of China in the 1930s. In 1949 the Chinese Communists were finally able to fill the political vacuum that had been left by the fall of the Qing 38 years before. The Communists have ruled the country since that time.

The System of Government

The People's Republic of China is, according to its 1982 state constitution, "a Socialist state under the people's democratic dictatorship led by the working class and based on the alliance of workers and peasants." It was established formally on October 1, 1949, after Communist forces under Mao Zedong defeated the Nationalists, or Guomindang (Kuomintang), under Jiang Jieshi (Chiang Kai-shek) after a prolonged civil war.

China has had five state constitutions since the founding of the People's Republic in 1949. In that year a provisional "Common Program" was adopted by the victorious followers of Mao Zedong. This document was replaced in 1954 by a formal constitution. New constitutions appeared in rapid succession in 1975, 1978, and 1982, reflecting the instability and rapid changes of a time when not only new leaders but new ideas were emerging that would profoundly reshape China's society, economy, and political system.

The structure of political institutions, as defined in the 1982 state constitution, continues to be based on the Soviet model of a dual hierarchy of party and state organs extending form the center to the local level. In this arrangement the Communist Party occupies a commanding position as the formulator of policy, while the state administration is charged with implementation. The principle of dual rule, adopted at the Eighth Party Congress in 1956, defines the dominant role of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) by stipulating that state organs are responsible not only to the state organs above them but also to the party organ on their own level. For example, the provincial state administration is subordinate to both the central state administration and the provincial party committee. In practice dual rule has meant that many political leaders at both the national and provincial levels have held both state and party roles. During the Maoist

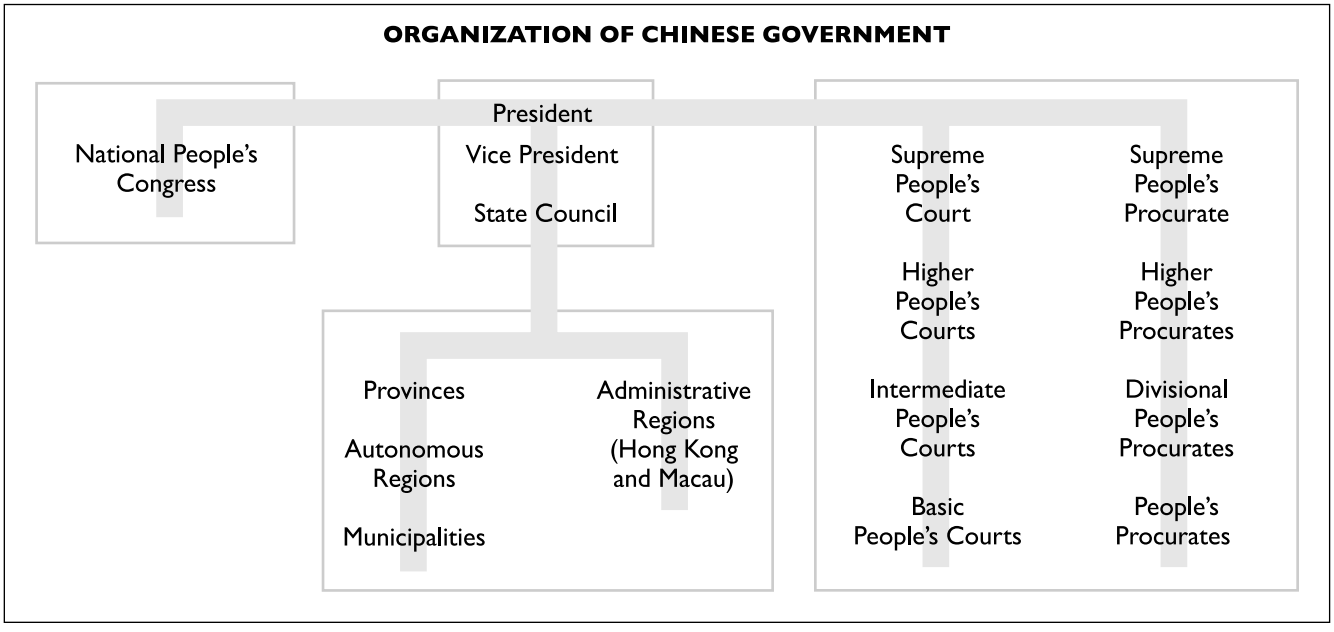
period (1949–76) interchangeability of state and party personnel was the norm and lines between the two bureaucracies were frequently blurred. While the last two and a half decades have seen attempts to draw a sharper line between party and state, the party remains firmly in control of the state apparatus.

EXECUTIVE

The 1982 constitution designates the president of the People's Republic of China as the head of state. The president's duties include promulgating laws and decrees, ratifying treaties and other agreements with foreign states, appointing members of the State Council and other important officials, and receiving foreign diplomatic representatives. In all these matters, however, the president is supposed to act on the initiative of the National People's Congress (NPC) or its Standing Committee. The National People's Congress chooses him or her for a five-year term. No president is allowed to serve more than two terms. There is a vice president who replaces the president if the office falls vacant before the NPC can convene to choose a successor. While the state constitution officially gives the right to choose the president to the National People's Congress, in practice the party chooses the candidate in advance and the NPC merely rubber-stamps the choice. In 2004 the president was Hu Jintao, who concurrently held the title of general secretary of the Central Committee of the party.

China's central executive body is the State Council, whose members, as mentioned earlier, are chosen by the president on the recommendation of the National People's Congress; many, if not all, positions on the State Council are agreed on in advance among party elites. The State Council is headed by the premier, who functions as head of government, and includes a secretary-general, vice premiers, and state councilors (state councilors are equivalent in rank to vice premiers). The number of vice premiers has varied considerably over the years. In 1982 there were 13. Since then the number has ranged from 2 to 4. The number of ministries and commissions under the State Council has also varied considerably over time as China has undergone periodic reorganizations to try to streamline its state bureaucracy. The current trend leans toward rapid consolidation and elimination of these ministries. In 1994 there were 40; by 2004 this number had dropped to 28. In 2004 the premier was Wen Jiabao.

The responsibilities of the State Council include submission of draft laws and the budget to the National People's Congress or its Standing Committee and the supervision of the various ministries and commissions under its control. However, even at this level the principle of dual rule applies and the party has precedence on all important matters. An interesting example is that of the two Central Military Commissions, one for the party and one under the State Council. The role of the Central Military Commission is to supervise the armed forces of the country, the People's Liberation Army. Until 1982 there was only one Central Military Commission, directly under the Communist Party's Central Committee. The state constitution of 1982 created a separate Central Military Commission under the



State Council. This innovation was supposed to help create a sharper distinction between party and state with the party CMC dealing with purely party matters and the state CMC being responsible for issues directly related to the running of government (such as the military budget and strategic doctrine). It was widely regarded by China specialists at the time as being a significant departure from the Maoist era. In practice, however, membership of the two commissions is identical and has been ever since 1982. The state CMC remains an empty shell, and it is the party CMC that directs all military policy.

LEGISLATURE

The National People's Congress, China's equivalent of a parliament, is elected by provincial-level people's congresses, autonomous regions, and municipalities and by units of the People's Liberation Army (PLA). In addition to a delegation from each of the provinces, autonomous regions, and municipalities and a delegation representing the military, there is a small delegation selected to represent Taiwan, which is regarded as a breakaway province. Delegates to the NPC are supposed to be elected every five years, though this principle has only been observed since 1978. There was a period of six years between the election of the Second NPC in 1959 and the Third in 1965. Ten years elapsed between the election of the Third NPC and the Fourth in 1975. During that 10-year period, due to the Cultural Revolution, no actual sessions of the NPC were held. The NPC has been a largely symbolic organization. Its sheer size, over 2,900 delegates, and the fact that it meets for only a few days each year guarantee that it has little role to play in formulating or debating policy.

The Standing Committee of the NPC meets more frequently, but it is mostly a rubber stamp. Nevertheless, since the 1990s the NPC has played a minor role in debating policy and serving as a forum for provincial elites to voice their concerns. In recent years delegates have even questioned parts of the national budget and other legislation presented to them for approval at the annual session. While the National People's Congress still does not function as a true independent legislature, its present role is in marked contrast to its total subservience under Mao Zedong. Although there are voices, both official and otherwise, within the PRC that hope to continue to push the NPC toward a more independent legislative role, it remains far from this goal. At the close of the 2004 session 99 percent of the delegates voted in favor of the 13 proposed amendments to the PRC constitution. The agenda remains under the control of the CCP, and the majority of the Congress's powers are never exercised—for example, the power to reconvene at any time with one-fifth of the vote. Many of the delegates spend less than 60 days per year involved with congressional work, and the Congress itself meets typically for less than two weeks per year. Thus, despite efforts to strengthen and increase the PRC's legislative organ, it remains tightly under the control of the CCP.

JUDICIARY

The 1982 constitution provides for people's courts on the levels of provincial, county, and local government and for a Supreme People's Court at the top, whose judges are chosen by the National People's Congress or its Standing Committee. Parallel with the court system is the Supreme People's Procurate and its corresponding lower-level branches. It is responsible for seeing that the courts operate in conformity with lawful procedure, and it represents the state in criminal trials. The procurates were abolished during the Cultural Revolution period (1966–76), and their restoration is part of an effort by China's post-Mao leadership to restore and foster a sense of rule by law. Since 1980 China has been slowly developing a criminal code. Progress has been slow, and many areas of the law, such as patents, did not have any legal code until the late 1980s or early 1990s. In the mid-1980s China reintroduced law courses into the university curriculum, and since then the number of individuals receiving law degrees and the number of law firms have rapidly increased.

Chapter Two of the 1982 state constitution contains 24 articles defining the fundamental rights and duties of Chinese citizens. Guaranteed rights include freedom of speech, assembly, and religion, the right to vote, and equal rights for men and women. Article 51 of the constitution, however, states: "Citizens of the People's Republic of China, in exercising their freedoms and rights, may not infringe upon the interests of the state, of society or of the collective." The Chinese state thus has considerable latitude in interpreting the limits of citizens' rights. The constitution also forbids any actions that might lead to independence for minority areas, stating that it is the duty of every Chinese citizen to preserve the unity of the country. In the 1990s Chinese dissidents attempted to use the legal system to push for better enforcement of existing rights. As of 2005, however, party goals retained a strong influence over the judiciary, and the rights of many groups, particularly those from the countryside, go unprotected.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

There are three levels of government below the national level. First, the country is divided into 31 provincial-level units: 22 provinces (Anhui, Fujian, Gansu, Guangdong, Guizhou, Hainan, Hebei, Heilongjinag, Henan, Hubei, Hunan, Jiangsu, Jiangxi, Jilin, Liaoning, Qinghai, Shaanxi, Shandong, Shanxi, Sichuan, Yunnan, and Zhejiang); five autonomous regions (Xinjiang, Ningxia, Nei Mongol, Xizang [Tibet], and Guangxi); and four municipalities (Beijing, Chongqing, Tianjin, and Shanghai). The five autonomous regions are each based on the largest minority group of that region—the Uygurs, Huis, Mongols, Tibetans, and Zhuang, respectively. Additionally, since 1999 there have been two administrative units known as special administrative regions (Hong Kong and Macau). China also regards Taiwan as a Chinese province, though no government organization currently exists for Taiwan. It is, however, represented at the National People's Congress.

At a secondary level the 31 provincial-level units are further subdivided into 2,138 counties, 710 cities, a number of autonomous counties and prefectures, and the districts of the four municipalities. At the third level of government are towns, districts within cities, and rural townships (*xiang*). Autonomous districts also exist at these lower levels of government. The term *autonomous* is applied to every unit of regional and local government where there is a substantial minority population. Autonomous areas are normally led by a member of the dominant minority group and enjoy certain privileges and rights aimed at preserving minority cultures and ways of life.

Government on the three subnational levels essentially parallels organization at the national level. The provincial-level units have people's congresses that are elected for five-year terms. County- and township-level governments also have their local people's congresses, elected for periods of three years and two years, respectively. At each subnational level the people's congress appoints a standing committee that is in turn responsible for selecting a people's government. In cities there traditionally has been a network of neighborhood committees, each committee representing between 2,000 and 10,000 families. The neighborhood committees are subdivided into residents' committees containing between 100 and 600 families, which are further subdivided into residents' small groups of 15 to 40 families. These units work closely with police and have a social control function. Work units such as factories, offices, and schools are also involved in surveillance and control. However, in major cities such as Beijing, Shenzhen, or Shanghai this old system is in the midst of change. A large number of villas and high-rises have crept into these cities and have brought with them a great deal of privacy for the upper-middle-class Chinese who can afford to live there. The residents' committees, although in some cases still in existence, have very little impact on the lives of individuals living in these new communities. Private schools and employers also pay much less attention to personal affairs. The simple example of a marriage license is illustrative of these trends. Prior to 2003 a man and woman both needed certified letters from their work units before they could begin the process of applying for a license. The marriage law promulgated in late 2003 changed this, and now individuals need merely bring their ID cards to the relevant authorities to obtain a marriage certificate.

On July 1, 1997, China's first special administrative region (SAR) was established following Great Britain's return of Hong Kong to the PRC. A second SAR was created with the handover of Macau from the Portuguese on December 20, 1999. These two SARs have the same status as provinces; however, under the provisions of the Basic Law (the constitutional document governing each SAR), they are to retain their own forms of government, legal and monetary systems for 50 years. China is responsible for the defense and foreign policy of these two enclaves, but according to the Basic Law they should retain their autonomy in all other respects. In practice this has not actually been the case. For instance, in 2003, under Beijing's influence, the Hong Kong government attempted to push through legislation that would alter the basic freedoms of the Hong Kongese people. After mass protests this legislation was shelved. Nonetheless, this episode demonstrates that the so-called independent system might not be immune to the influence of the PRC. This "one country two systems" formula was originally part of Beijing's strategy for reunification with Taiwan. In the wake of this recent controversy, however, this option has become much less attractive to the Taiwanese people.

The Electoral System

Direct popular elections are held at the basic level of town, city district, or township people's congresses, and at the county level for county, city, and municipal district people's congresses. Elections for province-level people's congresses and the National People's Congress are indirect: Deputies at each level elect deputies to the next-highest level. Deputies to the national and provincial-level people's congresses serve five-year

terms; those at lower levels serve three- or two-year terms. Suffrage is universal, and the minimum age for voting and running for office is 18.

In 1980 direct popular elections were held at the county level for the first time. Free elections were encouraged, the secret ballot has been introduced, and citizens who are not members of the Communist Party have been encouraged to nominate candidates or run for office themselves. By the late 1990s most elections at or below the level of county had become at least partially competitive (that is, there are more candidates than positions) are free (in that there are secret ballots), though other political parties have not been allowed to form at the grassroots level. In 1998 the NPC passed a law stating that all village committee elections were to be competitive and that candidates were to be selected by villagers, which was very successful in ensuring competitive elections. In recent years considerable debate has taken place within the Communist Party about the desirability of extending this modest experiment in pluralism to provincial-level and possibly even national elections. Any such extension of competitive, direct elections to higher levels of government is unlikely in the near future, if at all, and in any case is unlikely to include free and open competition from other political parties. Several experimental elections were actually conducted in Sichuan, Shanxi, Shenzhen, and Henan provinces at the township level from 1999 to 2002. By 2003 some of these elections seemed to have taken root. Nonetheless China still has a long way to go in terms of developing a democracy.

The Party System

For all practical purposes China is a one-party state dominated by the CCP. Although there are a handful of very small democratic parties, they must acknowledge the leadership of the CCP and defer to it in all important matters.

Major Political Parties

CHINESE COMMUNIST PARTY (CCP)

(Zhongguo gongchan dang)

ORIGINS OF THE PARTY

The Chinese Communist Party was established in 1921 by a small group of young intellectuals inspired by the Russian Revolution. During its first years of existence the CCP concentrated on trying to build a network of support among China's very small working class. Under orders from the Comintern in Moscow the CCP also formed a united front with the Guomindang, which was led by Sun Zhongshan (Sun Yat-sen). Sun had been an important figure in the movement to overthrow the Qing dynasty, and the Guomindang were a more powerful organization than the fledgling Communists.

After Sun's death, however, leadership of the Guomindang fell to Jiang Jieshi (Chiang Kai-shek), who opposed Sun's policy of receiving aid from the Soviet Union and alliance with the Chinese Communists. In 1927, after the combined forces of the Communists and Guomindang had successfully defeated a coalition of warlords, Jiang conducted a bloody purge of Communists, virtually eliminating the CCP's organization in the cities. It was at this point that the CCP began to shift away from an urban-based political strategy toward one built upon peasant revolt. Mao Zedong in particular had been a strong proponent of the revolutionary potential of China's peasantry, and by the 1930s Mao had created a strong guerrilla movement, the People's Liberation Army. Based in remote areas, it successfully resisted the Guomindang and later the Japanese during World War II. The most important base was Yan'an, established in 1935 after the epic 6,000-mile retreat known as the Long March. Yan'an was to serve as the "capital" of the Chinese Communist movement until after the Second World War. Despite a fragile truce between the Communists and the Guomindang in order to resist the Japanese invasion during World War II, fighting broke out between the two political movements in 1945. After a four-year civil war the Communists emerged victorious. The Guomindang retreated to Taiwan, where they have remained ever since, now one among a number of political parties there.

The period between 1949 and 1954 was known as the Common Program and served as a transition period during which China began its recovery from nearly constant turmoil and fighting since the collapse of the Qing in 1911. During this period the CCP consolidated its control over the country. In the countryside a massive land reform was carried out that redistributed land to the poor peasants and broke the economic power of the landlord class. Many landlords were executed in the process. In the urban areas the Communists gradually took control of industry, and in 1953 China began its first five-year plan. The 1950s also saw the defeat of ethnic nationalist movements

in Xinjiang and Xizang (Tibet). By 1954 the party had consolidated control throughout the country and the PRC's first state constitution was set up, giving China a Soviet-style regime.

The period between 1954 and 1980 was characterized by major swings between pragmatic policy and revolutionary romanticism resulting in considerable political instability at times. One of the most dramatic and tragic shifts was the Great Leap Forward from 1958 to 1960. Mao, impatient with the slow pace of economic construction, opted for a rapid, ideologically driven push to accelerate economic development and the creation of a Socialist society. In the countryside vast communes were set up with the average commune containing 20,000 people. In order to foster Socialist solidarity, peasants were no longer to eat in their own homes but were instead to take their meals in huge communal dining halls. With the goal of catching up with Britain in 10 years, the Chinese leadership encouraged the setting up of backyard furnaces to smelt scrap iron and produce huge amounts of steel. People were encouraged to work day and night to increase production. The result was a disaster. The backyard furnaces produced only poor-quality steel of no value. The communes proved to be unpopular and not economically viable. Combined with three years of bad weather, the policies of the Great Leap led to a major famine in which millions of people died. Between 1960 and 1965 the CCP pursued moderate economic policies allowing some degree of private enterprise and using economic incentives to motivate the peasants to produce more.

The next swing toward revolutionary radicalism occurred in 1966 with the start of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. While the worst of the Cultural Revolution's excesses were over by 1969, the political turmoil continued until 1976; this period is often referred to as the "10 years of chaos" in Chinese publications. The rationale for the Cultural Revolution is a matter of some debate. Some analysts feel that Mao launched it as a way of reasserting his power after being forced to retreat from day-to-day decision making following the failure of the Great Leap Forward. Others argue that Mao remained the dominant political figure within the party and that the Cultural Revolution was based more on his concerns about the future of Chinese Communism. Mao resented the pragmatic economic policies of the early 1960s because he feared they might lead to the restoration of capitalism. He also believed that the Soviet Communist Party had become another elite ruling class and had strayed from the goals of Communism—thereby falling into "revisionism" in the language of Mao. The Chinese party needed to renew itself and to push to a higher level of political consciousness, or it too would become just another ruling class. Accordingly Mao encouraged millions of Red Guards, college students, and other young people to attack the centers of power in the Communist Party and government and drag out those who stood for the status quo and were not sufficiently pure in their revolutionary zeal.

Many pragmatic leaders such as Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping were removed from office and condemned as "capitalist roaders." The Red Guards spread throughout the country attacking officials who were regarded as too conservative and destroying temples and other relics of the feudal order. At the height of the Cultural Revolution various Red Guard factions were fighting one another in the streets, and many areas were without effective government. In 1969 the army was called in to restore order, and the institutions of government were gradually rebuilt.

Despite the restoration of order in 1969, conflict continued among top party leaders. In 1971 Lin Biao, a radical, head of the People's Liberation Army and Mao's designated successor, died while attempting to flee to the Soviet Union after his plot to launch a military coup was exposed. Mao rehabilitated Deng Xiaoping, who had been one of the Cultural Revolution's most prominent victims, in order to use Deng to restore order to the military following the death of Lin. From 1972 to 1976 Chinese politics was a seesaw battle between pragmatists led by Deng Xiaoping and an ailing Premier Zhou Enlai, on the one hand, and the Cultural Revolution radicals led by the infamous Gang of Four—Mao's wife, Jiang Qing, and her allies Wang Hongwen, Yao Wenyuan, and Zhang Chunqiao. The conflict did not end until Mao's death in September 1976 and the arrest of the Gang of Four the following month.

Between 1977 and 1981 Deng Xiaoping slowly consolidated his power, putting the Gang of Four on trial, rehabilitating Cultural Revolution victims, placing his supporters in positions of power, extending his control over the army, and easing out Mao's last chosen successor, Hua Guofeng. In December 1978 the Third Plenum of the 11th Party Congress endorsed sweeping reforms in the agricultural economy, and in the 1980s reform was extended to the urban economy. December 1978 marks a watershed in the party's history. It represents an end to the radical policies of the Maoist period and the triumph of pragmatic policies. After 1978 the party became less and less concerned with ideological issues while economic growth and performance became the most important political goals.

PARTY ORGANIZATION

The organization of the party is hierarchical. At the very top is the Standing Committee of the Politburo, usually consisting of six to seven members. In 2003, however, nine members were "elected," perhaps establishing a new precedent. These individuals are the most powerful people in the party and are largely responsible for the formulation of policy and defining the regime's goals. The next level is the Politburo. The number of members has varied considerably over the years, though since the mid-1980s there has tended to be about 20 full members and between two and four alternate members. The Politburo is elected by the Central Committee, which is in turn elected by the National Party Congress. As with the National People's Congress, the Party Congress is supposed to be held every five years, though this has not always been the case. Only since 1982 have Party Congresses been routinely held every five years. The most recent was the 16th, held in November 2002. The delegates to the Party Congress, 2,120 of them in 2002, elect the Central Committee by secret ballot. The elections are not very competitive as delegates are given a preapproved list of candidates and there are usually only a few more names than there are seats to be filled. The 15th Party Congress set a record as the most competitive election in the party's history, with 10 percent more candidates than seats. There is not, however, a trend of increasingly more competitive elections. At the 16th Party Congress, 208 candidates vied for 198 seats, a drop to only 5 percent more candidates than seats.

After the 16th Party Congress the members of the Standing Committee were Hu Jintao, general secretary and president of the PRC; Wen Jiabao, premier of the State Council; Zeng Qinghong, vice president of the PRC; Huang Ju, vice premier; Jia Qinglin, chairman of the People's Political Consultative Conference; Wu Bangguo, chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress; Wu Guanzheng, secretary of the Disciplinary Inspection Committee; Luo Gan, state councilor; and Li Changchun. In addition to the standing committee, 15 regular members were also elected to the Politburo, bringing total membership up to 24. Seven of the Politburo members were provincial party representatives, up from five at the time of the 15th Party Congress. This continues the trend over the past several Congresses of an increase in the representation of regional interests in the Politburo. It should be noted, however, that of these seven provincial leaders five hail from the developed seaboard provinces, which indicates that the needs of the interior provinces of the country could be underrepresented. Military representation on the Politburo remains at two, and there was one alternate candidate elected.

The Central Committee usually has over 200 members and therefore is too unwieldy to meet more than once a year, when it endorses policies put forward by the party's leaders in the Politburo. These annual meetings are known as plenums. Hence the Third Plenum of the 11th Central Committee, which marks the beginning of economic reform in China, met in the third year after the 11th Party Congress elected the 11th Central Committee. The Central Committee elected at the 16th Party Congress has 198 full members and 158 alternate members. The demographics of the new Central Committee closely parallel those of the Committee elected during the 15th Party Congress in terms of age, turnover rate, number of provincial representatives, number of women, number of minorities, and members of the military (22 percent of the Central Committee of both the 15th and 16th Congresses). This last statistic indicates that military representation has become an institutionalized feature of the Central Committee.

The Central Committee also elects several commissions to carry out various party functions. The three most important are the Party Secretariat, the Disciplinary Inspection Commission, and the Central Military Commission. The Party Secretariat is responsible for carrying out the party's day-to-day activities and overseeing personnel issues. It is headed by the general secretary. In 2005 the general secretary was Hu Jintao, who was also head of the party and president. The Disciplinary Inspection Commission was created in 1978 to look into abuses by members of the party. It is the primary organization concerned with rooting out corruption. In 2005 it was headed by Wu Guanzheng, who was also a member of the Standing Committee of the Politburo. The Central Military Commission is the organization that leads the military. The commission consists of a chair, a permanent vice chair, and other members. Most members of the CMC are military officers. Traditionally the chair of the CMC is given to the most powerful person in the party. Mao held the chairmanship of the CMC from 1949 until his death in 1976. Deng Xiaoping was the chairman from 1980 until 1989. Jiang Zemin held the post from 1989 until 2004, when he resigned and was replaced by Hu Jintao. Prior to the 16th Party Congress a number of commentators indicated the meeting's importance in terms of institutionalizing a new mechanism of leadership succession, and eyes fell on Hu as the candidate for the central leadership positions. After the conclusion of the Congress, however, it became relatively apparent

that Jiang Zemin had not lost his grip over control of the PRC, maintaining the position of chairman of the CMC as well as leadership of the Taiwan Affairs Office. Additionally Jiang managed to stack the Politburo with his supporters and create a number of obstacles to attempts by Hu to expand or consolidate his power. With Jiang's resignation, however, it seemed clear that Hu had succeeded in consolidating his power at last.

Below the national level, party organization parallels the organization of the state. For every provincial-level government there is a party-level congress, committee, standing committee, secretariat, and discipline inspection commission. The party provincial secretary is the head of the provincial party organization and usually takes precedence over the governor, though occasionally the two posts have been held by the same person. Important personages in the people's provincial-level government are also usually on the provincial-level party committee. The pattern is repeated at the county level. At the most basic levels, such as villages and neighborhoods, there are usually only a small number of party members. In these cases there is usually a party branch or cell. These party branches play a key role in explaining party policy and generating support at the grassroots level. Party committees also exist within various branches of government. The People's Liberation Army, for example, has its own party committees and discipline inspection commissions. Party committees in the PLA extend well down to the regimental level, and political commissars and party branches or cells exist right down to the level of platoon and squad. Party committees and branches also exist in all government-run factories, schools, and other places of work.

POLICY

According to the party's 1992 constitution the party's official ideology is "Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought." At the 15th Party Congress in September 1997 "Deng Xiaoping Thought" was added to the official canon in an amendment to the party's constitution. In 2004 yet another ideological addition was made with the Revision of the Constitution to include Jiang Zemin's "Theory of the Three Represents." Marxism provides the philosophical base for all Communist parties. The party constitution provides an analysis of historical development and predicts a future utopian society brought about by a revolution led by the working class under the guiding principle "from each according to his ability, to each according to his need." Leninism, with its emphasis on a party of disciplined, professional revolutionaries, provides the justification for the necessity of the Communist Party to lead the working class, seize power, and begin the task of transforming society in order to bring about the utopian society that Marx predicted. "Mao Zedong Thought" refers to the application of these universal principles to the specific conditions found in China, the belief that Marxism-Leninism must be modified to reflect the actual Chinese political and economic conditions. Mao, for example, regarded the peasantry as a revolutionary class, which is a major deviation from the ideas of Marx and Lenin, and Mao included peasants in the Communist coalition that was a necessity given the very small size of China's working class. "Deng Xiaoping Thought" refers to the economic and political reforms that took place under Deng's leadership from the late 1970s until his death in 1997. The "Theory of the Three Represents" differs from the other theories enshrined in the constitution in that it is not linked to the name of its proponent. It refers to Jiang Zemin's theory that the party should "represent the development demand of the advanced forces of production, the progressive direction of China's advanced culture, and the fundamental interests of the vast majority of the Chinese people." In practice this has meant the evolution of the Communist Party toward a party of the "whole people."

Many of the policies pursued under Mao were closely tied to the party's ideology. State ownership of industry and control of the agricultural sector were consistent with the Leninist dictum that the party should command the heights of the economy in order to bring about a Socialist transformation of society. In this respect China followed the same path as other Communist regimes. Other features of CCP policy before 1978 reflect the particular nature of the Chinese Communist movement. Mao and other party leaders distrusted hierarchy and were concerned that the existence of status differences impeded progress toward an egalitarian society. This interpretation of Marxism helps explain such policies as the elimination of ranks within the armed forces and sending high-ranking officials to the countryside to learn from the peasants. Mao and others also preferred ideological incentives to economic incentives as a means of motivating workers in factories because economic incentives were believed to reinforce feudal or capitalist tendencies. In fact a tendency to emphasize extreme egalitarianism is a marked feature of many policies adopted under Mao. This is not to say that Mao ignored practical issues or the importance of economic development for a country as poor as China, but he did stress the importance of political and ideological goals consistent with the

aim of creating a Socialist society. Thus there is the constant tendency to move toward radical policies. The Great Leap Forward was an attempt to push China more rapidly toward a utopian Communist society by rapidly speeding up the pace of economic development. The Cultural Revolution involved a wholesale attempt to wipe out vestiges of China's feudal society, destroying many monuments and other historical treasures in the process. Another goal of the Cultural Revolution was to renew the revolutionary zeal of the party and recommit it to its sacred task of building Communism. Mao felt that there was a tendency for Communist parties in power to become just another ruling class and that therefore a revolution was needed every 10 years or so to renew the party and keep it on the revolutionary path.

With the late 1970s CCP policy went in a different direction. Post-Mao leaders were primarily concerned with China's low level of development. In addition Deng and many of his closest associates had been political targets during the Cultural Revolution and were thus determined to prevent any return of the radical agenda. The Communist Party rejected Mao's slogan that class struggle was the key link and instead argued that the key link would be economic development. Although the CCP has occasionally worried about ideological issues and political challenges from society, the driving force in Chinese politics since the late 1970s has been economic development. While the party constitution of 1992 states that the ultimate goal of the CCP is the creation of a Communist social system, it also states that China is in the early stage of Socialism, that this stage will last perhaps a hundred years and cannot be bypassed, and that in this early stage the party's central task must be economic development, with all other goals and tasks subordinated to the goal of economic construction. The party constitution further states that this means that the party must uphold an ownership structure that allows for diverse means of ownership, not just state ownership. The CCP's constitution commits it to the principle that some must get rich before others and that people should get paid according to their work, not their needs. The adoption of Deng Thought further entrenches the importance of pragmatic economic policy as the most important function of the party, and the incorporation of the Theory of the Three Represents has moved the party toward representation of interests of a much broader segment of the population, including even capitalists.

Economic policy since the late 1970s can perhaps best be described by Deng Xiaoping's famous axiom "black cat, white cat, so long as it catches mice, it is a good cat." He meant that whatever method produces results can be adopted. As a consequence most of the Soviet-style economy has been dismantled and there is an ever-widening gap between the Marxist-Leninist ideology of the party and its actual policies.

One of the earliest and most dramatic sets of reform policies has centered on the agricultural economy. The most successful of these reforms is the household responsibility system. Under this system individual households contract with the state to produce a certain amount of a given crop. Anything that the household produces above that amount can be sold on the open market, thus providing a market incentive to produce more. Chinese agriculture grew rapidly in the 1980s, and by 1984 China had become a net food exporter. The household responsibility system resulted in a significant improvement in the standard of living for peasants, with better housing and greater purchasing power to buy household goods such as TVs. Peasants can contract out land for 50 years in some cases, and many have become quite rich. The agricultural reforms hastened the disintegration of collective institutions that provided the poorest peasants with economic security and social services. The people's communes have been replaced as an administrative unit by the township (*xiang*). A second policy that met with great success, at least in the eastern seaboard provinces of the country, was the encouragement of small collective and privately owned enterprises, especially in the countryside. Freed from the control of the old commune system, township-owned and other collective enterprises were able to operate independently and become profit-oriented. Industrial output of these rural enterprises grew at an annual rate of 21 percent between 1979 and 1985, and they maintained similar rates of growth in the early 1990s. By the late 1990s, however, these enterprises began to recede both in terms of their importance to the overall economy and in terms of their overall profitability and financial performance. Reasons for this change included more intense competition from foreign and private enterprises, and corruption.

Another area of reform has been China's "Open Door" policy. This phrase refers to a range of policy initiatives since about 1980 designed to increase China's trade and attract foreign investment. The initial impetus for these policies stemmed from the perception that China was falling behind in technology and that the only way to change this situation was to acquire expertise, equipment, and funding from abroad. This was a total rejection of the Maoist policy of self-sufficiency,

whereby China engaged in very little foreign trade and economic contact with capitalist countries was illegal. One set of policies has been aimed at attracting foreign investment and technology transfer. Starting in 1980 China has allowed foreign business to invest in joint ventures and in the 1990s and 2000s has been increasingly willing to allow wholly foreign-owned businesses to be set up in China. To encourage investment China has introduced many laws to protect such investment and has set up special economic zones, designed explicitly for foreign investment, in coastal areas. Many other areas have also solicited foreign investment. Joint ventures cover a vast range of activities and products including soft drinks, electronic equipment, airplane parts, automobiles, and other manufactured goods. In recent years such ventures have branched into the service industry, such as hotels, and even education. In 2003 China attracted $115 billion in foreign direct investment, surpassing the United States as the largest recipient of FDI in the world. Chinese trade grew dramatically in the period following 1978. In 1978 China's total imports and exports were valued at just under 20 billion dollars. By 2003 Chinese trade valued $851 billion. China has joined the International Monetary Fund and World Bank and more recently became a member of the World Trade Organization. A final element of the Open Door policy has been to promote study abroad. China has encouraged tens of thousands of its students to pursue such studies, and the early 2000s even began to show signs of a change in the pattern of the "brain drain" effect, with more Chinese returning home after obtaining degrees abroad.

Somewhat more problematic have been various reforms aimed at the urban economy. The system of Soviet-style planning has been gradually reduced, and very little of the economy is still covered by planning. Stock markets have been created in the cities of Shanghai and Shenzhen. Laws have been passed to enhance legal protection of business and create a better economic environment. Price controls have been removed on most items, and by the early 1990s the economy was clearly becoming a predominantly market economy. County-level and other small collective and private enterprises have been encouraged in the urban economy and have become a dynamic and growing part of it. In 2001 the state sector accounted for only 25 percent of industrial production. The state-owned industries are the only sector in the Chinese economy that has consistently had a poor economic performance since the beginning of reforms. Estimates as to the number of state enterprises that are running at a loss vary considerably, but the most conservative estimates put them at one-third of the total in the late 1990s and early 2000s. Other estimates make that fraction as high as two-thirds. While the Chinese have had bankruptcy laws since the 1980s, few state enterprises have been allowed to go bankrupt and the party has been nervous about closing unprofitable enterprises as it fears the unrest that might follow rising urban unemployment. In 1997 Jiang Zemin unveiled plans to sell off many enterprises and convert others to joint stock companies, with the state retaining only the largest enterprises under its control. It was reported in 2001 that of the 6,599 large and medium-sized state-owned enterprises that had been in the red in 1997, 70 percent had either become profitable, had been restructured, or had merged. Despite some improvements, however, many analysts indicate that the problem of the SOEs is far from resolved.

Overall the economic reform polices have produced dramatic results. The economy has become increasingly marketized, and China had one of the highest economic growth rates in the world throughout the 1980s and 1990s. Real growth in GNP averaged 8.75 percent a year between 1979 and 1990. Real growth remained high in the 1990s and was at 9.7 percent in the first quarter of 2004. At the same time there are many problems. There have been several bouts of inflation that the state has been able to control only through tough retrenchment policies, creating a boom-and-bust cycle in the economy. Differences in income between individuals have grown, and there is increasing polarization between rich and poor. There is also a growing gap between the rich coastal provinces and the less-developed inland provinces. Crime is on the rise, and there has been a massive increase in corruption. Corruption may be one of the most serious problems facing the party, especially since it played a major role in the downfall of the Guomindang in the 1940s. In the past two decades 4,000 corrupt officials fled the country with a total of $50 billion and over a million were disciplined or expelled from the party.

Political reforms have been a less important part of the Dengist era, being essentially limited to minor changes in the party and state apparatus. The most important set of political changes has been the drive during the 1980s to retire old, poorly qualified officials and replace them with younger, better-educated, and better-qualified officials. Political reform has also meant the introduction of a legal code and the reorganization and streamlining of state bureaucracy. Other changes have included the use of the secret ballot and the introduction of some competition into elections, as described elsewhere in this article. Political reform has

not meant any major move toward democratization despite pressure both within the party and outside it to make politics more democratic.

There is a persistent line within party debate that further economic reform will require greater political reform, though its advocates have so far failed in their attempts to persuade the rest of the party to deepen political change. Deng adamantly opposed political liberalization, and it appears his successors share his views on the matter. Outside the party, reform has created new social groups and demands for a greater say in affairs. In 1989 frustrations over the pace of economic and political reform combined with anger over corruption and inflation to spark student protests in Beijing's Tiananmen Square. These protests received significant support from the city's population and were brutally put down by units of the People's Liberation Army. Many of the party officials associated with the decision to fire on the demonstrators were still either in power or closely tied to the leadership as of 2005. There have been calls to reassess the official Chinese record of Tiananmen in recent years; however, these have largely been suppressed. It is unlikely that there will be substantial political reform as long as that remains the case. The issue of more democratization is likely to return, however, as pressure groups both within and without the party remain and may not be as weak in the future as they are now.

FINANCING

The basis for party finance is unclear. Some revenue comes from membership dues. The party is known to control a great deal of real estate and other assets.

LEADERSHIP

Prior to Deng Xiaoping's death in 1997 Chinese politics was dominated by the veteran leaders who had led the Chinese Communist Party since the 1930s, all of whom had taken part in the establishment of the People's Republic of China. While some of these veterans were still alive in 2005, none of them were at the center of power. The leadership centering on Jiang Zemin that emerged from the 15th Party Congress represented the first postrevolutionary generation of PRC leaders. The 16th Party Congress in 2002 saw the rise of a fourth generation of leadership centered on Hu Jintao. At first Hu was unable to consolidate his power, and Jiang retained significant control of the party. However, Hu succeeded in his consolidation attempts in 2004, and Jiang essentially retired to the sidelines, giving up the last of his party posts.

MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY

The Chinese Communist Party had 66 million members in 2003, making it by far the largest Communist Party in the world. Even with this huge membership, the CCP includes only a small fraction of China's nearly 1.3 billion people—despite the party's claim that it is a true party of the people and therefore represents most of the population of China. In fact members of the CCP form the political elite of China. Most military and other government officials of any importance are party members, as are most managers in state-owned industry. Originally party membership was open to workers, poor peasants, soldiers, intellectuals, and "other revolutionaries." During the Maoist period people from "undesirable" backgrounds, such as rich peasants, landlords and their relatives, capitalists, and those associated with the Guomindang, were excluded from membership. In the post-Maoist era entrance standards have become far more lax. The class background of one's parents or grandparents is no longer a factor in recruitment, and in the 1980s and 1990s many of China's new rich were let into the party. In the early 2000s capitalist membership in the CCP was even formalized through a constitutional amendment.

Party members are admitted on a one-year probationary basis before becoming full members, and breaches of discipline are punishable by expulsion from the party. Party members are expected to be not only competent and highly motivated, but models of virtue who will set a good example for the rest of society. The increase in corruption in recent years has been a major source of concern in this regard and has done much to tarnish the party's image.

In the past the party recruited heavily among workers and poor peasants because they were considered to be the most revolutionary. However, many of these recruits had little or no education and few had administrative skills. Since 1978 the party has made great efforts to improve the quality of its new members and to ensure that skills and knowledge are important for promotion within the party. Most of those who have been promoted to the highest levels of the party since the mid-1980s are technocrats with a university education. This stands in stark contrast to the first generation of Chinese Communist leaders, most of whom had no formal education beyond primary school. Young people are usually recruited through the Communist Youth League, whose members are between the ages of 15 and 25. The Communist Youth League is an important part of the party's efforts to recruit new members and has been the power base for several prominent party leaders over the decades.

Minor Political Parties

Mass organizations exist to educate and mobilize the nonparty "progressive" elements in the population and to act as "transmission belts" to important groups in society. Important mass organizations include the All-China Federation of Trade Unions, the All-China Women's Federation, the All-China Federation of Literary and Art Circles, and the All-China Federation of Youth. There are also several religious organizations representing Daoists, Buddhists, Moslems, Protestants, and "patriotic" Catholics. The Chinese People's Consultative Conference (CPCC) is an organization that plays an advisory role to the central authorities and used to be a key element in governance as it included important representatives from outside the Communist Party. Notable personages who have served in the past have included the Panchen Lama, second only to the Dalai Lama in importance to Tibetan Buddhism, and the younger brother of the last emperor of the Qing dynasty. The CPCC no longer seems to play a prominent role in Chinese politics. Up until the 16th Party Congress it had been led by Li Ruihuan, a reform-minded member of the Standing Committee of the Politburo. Jiang was able to force Li into early retirement during the 16th Congress, however, and he was replaced with Jia Qinglin, the former mayor of Beijing, also a member of the Standing Committee. At the time of writing it remains unclear what, if any, role the CPCC will play in the future of Chinese politics. The argument has been made that the CPCC should become a lower house, similar to the House of Representatives. No serious consideration seems to have been given to this idea, however.

In addition to the mass organizations there are eight small "democratic parties." They include the Revolutionary Committee of the Chinese Guomindang, the China Democratic League, the China Democratic National Construction Association, the China Association for Promoting Democracy, the Chinese Peasants and Workers Democratic Party, the China Zhigongdang (party for public interest), the Jiusandang (September 3 party), and the Taiwan Democratic Self-Government League. These political parties are the remnants of parties that were allied to the CCP when it came to power. They have only a very limited political role and must acknowledge the leadership of the Communist Party. They are allowed to recruit new members and all have branches throughout China. The collective membership of these parties is estimated at 500,000–600,000, but the accuracy of these figures is somewhat questionable. Coordination between these eight parties and the CCP takes place through the CPCC. In the past these parties have made complaints regarding the speed of political reform in China; however, they remain closely tied to the CCP, and their activities are closely monitored.

Other Political Forces

MILITARY

The role of the People's Liberation Army includes more than national defense. The virtual identification of party and army during the years of revolutionary struggle gave the army political and ideological as well as military functions. This state of affairs continued after 1949. The PLA was heavily involved in national construction projects during the entire Maoist period and was held up as a model of revolutionary virtue in the "Learn from the PLA" campaign the early 1960s. Soldier and martyr Lei Feng was considered the model citizen. During the Cultural Revolution Marshal Lin Biao, the head of the PLA, was one of the leading radicals around Mao, though other PLA leaders opposed the excesses of the Cultural Revolution.

In the post-Mao era the PLA has become far less involved in ideology and has shed many of its political roles. Efforts have been made to modernize the military, such as the introduction of more modern weapons systems and an improvement in training and officer education. The PLA has also undergone extensive reorganization with deep cuts in manpower, the disbanding of economic units such as the railway construction troops, and the reintroduction of ranks. All these changes have contributed to making the PLA a more modern and professional military force. However, the PLA is still well represented in the highest circles of the Communist Party and maintains a strong membership on the Central Committee, though this is still well below the level it enjoyed in the 1960s and 1970s.

Some Chinese analysts believe that the military's influence over foreign policy has increased over the past 10 to 15 years, especially in the wake of political movements in Taiwan. Chinese military expenditures have been on the rise, and the fact that Jiang Zemin holds his primary formal position of power as the chair of the CMC could also further strengthen the army in terms of its ability to influence PRC politics. It should also be noted, however, that during this same period much of the vast business empire that the PLA had

built up during the earlier years of the reform period was stripped away. While the gun does not control the party in China, the PLA is likely to remain a factor in China's politics and the economy for the foreseeable future, especially if Taiwan continues to move away from the traditional cross-straits status quo.

National Prospects

The Chinese Communist Party is one of the few remaining Communist parties in power. Whether it will continue to remain in power will depend on how it deals with economic and social problems in the coming years. On the one hand the CCP has enjoyed considerable economic success. China has had one of the fastest-growing economies in the world since the early 1980s. It is a major trading nation and in 2004 had the second-largest foreign currency reserves in the world. Living standards have improved remarkably, and the major shopping districts of Beijing and other leading cities are full of Chinese with cellular telephones buying laptop computers and even automobiles—images that were unimaginable 10 years ago. By some measures China is already the second-largest economy in the world; it grew at a rate of 9.7 percent the first 3 months of 2004 and is expected to continue growing with annual rates of at least 7 percent through 2005. The economic reforms are firmly in place, and there is absolutely no question of turning back the clock.

On the other hand many economic challenges remain and China's prosperity has come at the expense of many new social ills. China's state industrial sector remains hugely inefficient with most firms running at a loss. China's financial system is in desperate need of reform, and by mid-2005 inflation rose to over 5 percent. While China has a new middle class, problems such as begging are becoming more common as income gaps continue to widen. Prostitution, crime, and drug addiction are all on the rise in many areas. Regional and urban-rural income gaps have also become greatly aggravated, and policies have yet to place those from the countryside on a more even playing field compared with their urban neighbors. Although some improvements have been made, the rights of migrants from the countryside to the cities are either not protected, or violated, leaving migrants with little recourse. The cost of education beyond junior high in the countryside has also become prohibitive, preventing many students from ever having a chance at a college education, and intensifying the rural-urban divide. China's rapid economic growth has brought pollution as well as prosperity: The air in many cities is frequently below world minimum health standards. The worship of money and the rise of materialism have fed corruption, whose increase continues to sap the prestige and legitimacy of the party. Many look back with nostalgia to the Maoist period as an era of clean government.

In addition to these social problems China's rapid economic growth has created new political and social groups. There is now a private business class, and people are better educated and more aware of what the rest of the world has to offer. More and more nonstate organizations are being set up with the potential to develop into political pressure groups. Peasant protests are not uncommon, and the party's ability to control and mold society has been reduced by its own reforms. There is a more active dissident movement in China, though it is not strong enough to present any serious challenge to the party. Within the party there are groups that feel that political reform will be necessary to preserve the party and that the system needs to become more open to maintain and preserve the economic reforms. The Hu-Wen leadership showed some signs of opening slightly, allowing the media more freedom to cover issues related to the spread of the severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) epidemic in 2003. This movement came to an abrupt halt after these trends spread to other issues. At present there seems to be little interest among the leadership in substantive political reform, but that could change. Exactly how China will change in response to these problems and challenges is highly uncertain. But it will change. The Chinese system has been a highly dynamic and flexible one; it is likely to be able to adapt and shift in order to meet its challenges.

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REPUBLIC OF COLOMBIA

(República de Colombia)

By Alejandro S. Hope
Revised by Soeren Kern



Colombia is a nation located at the northernmost tip of South America, covering 445,000 square miles (1,138,914 square kilometers) with coasts on both the Atlantic and the Pacific Oceans and bordering Brazil, Ecuador, Panama, Peru, and Venezuela. Its population of nearly 43 million people (2005 est.) makes it the third-most-populous country of both Latin America and the Spanish-speaking world. Its capital, Santafé de Bogotá, has over 5 million inhabitants, and other major cities include Medellín, Cali, and Barranquilla. Colombia is over 70 percent urban, and its literacy rate is around 85 percent. Ethnically the Colombian people are predominantly of mixed European and Amerindian stock, although there is a significant African presence (around 18 percent of the total population) and some scattered indigenous groups (around 700,000 people). The great majority of Colombians are Roman Catholics, but other Christian denominations have made significant inroads in recent years.

The major cleavage in Colombian politics—much stronger than class identification or ethnic rifts—is support for either the Liberal or the Conservative Party. The two traditional parties have overwhelmingly dominated the political landscape since the 1840s (winning over 95 percent of the electoral positions since 1945). Their rivalries and agreements have shaped the political life of the country and determined the level of violence. On many occasions their feud for power and patronage resources has engendered bloody civil wars. The most brutal scenes of political strife took place during the War of the Thousand Days (1899–1902) and during the period known as La Violencia (roughly 1948–56), in which, respectively, 100,000 and 200,000 Colombians died.

As a consequence of La Violencia, Colombia experienced the brief populist dictatorship of General Gustavo Rojas Pinilla (1953–57). The return to civilian government came about as a result of a landmark agreement between Conservative and Liberal leaders that created the so-called National Front. Under the accord Liberals and Conservatives alternated in the presidency and carved up by halves congressional seats and administrative positions during a 16-year period from 1958 to 1974. The coalition significantly reduced the level of political violence, but at the cost of stultifying democratic practices. Since 1974 there has been a gradual return to more competitive politics, but consensus persists on major issues, such as economic policy.

The System of Government

The politics of Colombia is rife with contradictions: The country is formally a unitary republic, but regional impulses run deep; its system of government is strongly presidentialist, but the power of the chief executive is effectively checked by institutional and extrainstitutional actors; political violence reaches ghastly levels, but it has not disturbed one of the longest stretches of civilian government in Latin America; finally, partisan

divisions are deeply entrenched, but so is a culture of consensus that has provided the country 40 years of uninterrupted political stability and economic growth.

EXECUTIVE

The president of the republic is chief of state, head of government, and supreme administrative authority. In typical Latin American fashion the presidency has extensive formal powers that far surpass the authority of both the legislative and judiciary branches. The president may appoint and remove cabinet ministers and most public officials without congressional authorization; he or she has extensive veto power over legislation, including a line-item veto over the budget, as well as broad executive decree faculties and, most important, the power to invoke—unhindered by congress—a "state of internal commotion," during which civil rights and existing legislation are suspended for three months.

Ministers may initiate legislation, participate in congressional debates, and declare a matter urgent. The legislature does not hold firmly the purse strings of the government: If the budget is not approved prior to the beginning of the fiscal year, the budget of the preceding period remains in place (without inflationary adjustment). The chief executive, moreover, has wide authority to determine economic policy: The Central Bank is nominally autonomous, but the government names six of the seven members of its ruling board. The president is also commander in chief of the armed forces and directly controls most police units. He or she can negotiate without congressional oversight with foreign powers, although any foreign treaties must be submitted to the legislature for ratification.

Notwithstanding the wide powers of the presidency, executive authority is limited to a larger extent than in most other Latin American countries. Congress may override a presidential veto with simple majorities in both chambers. In congress presidential power is limited by factional infighting within the parties and the approval of legislation usually requires intense politicking. On security and defense issues the armed forces often have a mind of their own, and their influence has been growing over the last 25 years as a result of the war against leftist guerrillas and the drug cartels. In some portions of the rugged Colombian countryside extrainstitutional actors (e.g., drug lords or guerrillas) wield more power than governmental institutions. Civil society can also check the power of the president: Business groups and the Catholic Church have substantial authority over economic policy and social issues, respectively. The press is significantly free, although threatened by violence, and public opinion can put massive pressure on government even in nonelectoral periods.

The president is elected for a four-year term in a direct popular election. If no candidate obtains an absolute majority in the first round of voting, a second contest is held three weeks afterward between the two leading candidates. The constitution of 1991 stipulated that the president could not seek reelection under any circumstances, even after an intervening term. However, Álvaro Uribe Vélez, a Harvard- and Oxford-educated lawyer who was elected president in May 2002, persuaded the congress to pass a constitutional amendment that would allow him to seek a second term. As of mid-2005 the Supreme Court had not yet ruled on the constitutionality of this amendment. An independent in the 2002 election, he was elected on the first round with 53 percent of the vote, giving him a strong mandate.

Breaking a tradition of more than a century, the constitution of 1991 created the office of the vice presidency. The vice president is chosen by direct popular election, running on the ticket of the president. He or she is the designated successor in the event of the president's ill health, death, or resignation and would serve until the end of the term. The vice president may hold administrative functions at the discretion of the head of government, but the constitution does not automatically guarantee him anything other than ceremonial functions. Real power is more often vested in key ministers, such as the minister of the interior (police and internal affairs), the minister of finance (economic policy), and the minister of defense (usually a military officer).

PRESIDENTS SINCE 1945

1945–46	Alberto Lleras Camargo	(Liberal)
1946–50	Mariano Ospina Pérez	(Conservative)
1950–53	Laureano Gómez	(Conservative)
1953–57	Gen. Gustavo Rojas Pinilla	(military dictator)
1957–58	Military Junta	(presided over by Maj. Gen. Gabriel Paris)
1958–62	Alberto Lleras Camargo	(National Front/ Liberal)

1962–66	Guillermo León Valencia	(National Front/ Conservative)
1966–70	Carlos Lleras Restrepo	(National Front/ Liberal)
1970–74	Misael Pastrana Borrero	(National Front/ Conservative)
1974–78	Alfonso López Michelsen	(Liberal)
1978–82	Julio César Turbay Ayala	(Liberal)
1982–86	Belisario Betancur Cuartas	(Conservative)
1986–90	Virgilio Barco Vargas	(Liberal)
1990–94	César Gaviria Pérez	(Liberal)
1994–98	Ernesto Samper Pizano	(Liberal)
1998–2002	Andrés Pastrana Arango	(Conservative)
2002–	Álvaro Uribe Vélez	(Colombia First/ Conservative)

LEGISLATURE

The Colombian congress is a bicameral legislature composed of a Senate (Senado) and a House of Representatives (Cámara de Representantes). It holds two regular sessions annually, from March 16 to June 20 and from July 20 to December 16, but it may be convened for special sessions. The Senate has 102 members, elected for a four-year term through a system of proportional representation from a national list. Two seats are reserved for representatives of indigenous communities. In October 2003 voters rejected a proposed constitutional amendment to reduce the Senate's size to 88 seats. The House of Representatives has at present 166 members, serving also four years and elected in two-member districts of 250,000 inhabitants (guaranteeing at least two representatives per department); five seats are reserved for ethnic minorities. All members of congress may be reelected indefinitely, and congressional elections are not held concurrently with the presidential ballot.

The formal authority of congress is quite large in comparison with that of other Latin American legislatures. The elected body has the power of initiation, amendment, interpretation, and repeal of legislation. It must approve the budget and any modification to the tax code, as well as exercising oversight on public spending. Its attributions include ratification of appointments of high-ranking military officers and diplomats. Congress may remove cabinet ministers through a vote of no confidence in both houses and can initiate impeachment procedures against the president.

The Senate is responsible for conducting impeachment proceedings, at the request of the House of Representatives. Furthermore, it selects the members of the Constitutional Court and the attorney general, as well as ratifying declarations of war and entry of foreign troops. The lower chamber of congress has as its specific attributions complete oversight over public spending, as well as the initiation of impeachment investigations against the president, Supreme Court justices, and the attorney general.

In daily practice congressional power has been significantly reduced in recent years. The constitution of 1991 did away with many prerogatives that buttressed the clientele-building capabilities of members of congress. Legislators can no longer hold other public positions simultaneously, nor can alternates be elected to serve temporarily as substitutes: The temporary absence of a congressman results in forfeit of the position to the runner-up in the election. Nepotism and pork-barrel legislation (*auxilios*) have been banned. The goal was to reduce the very marked orientation of Colombian congressmen toward regional politics and to strengthen the internal discipline of parties.

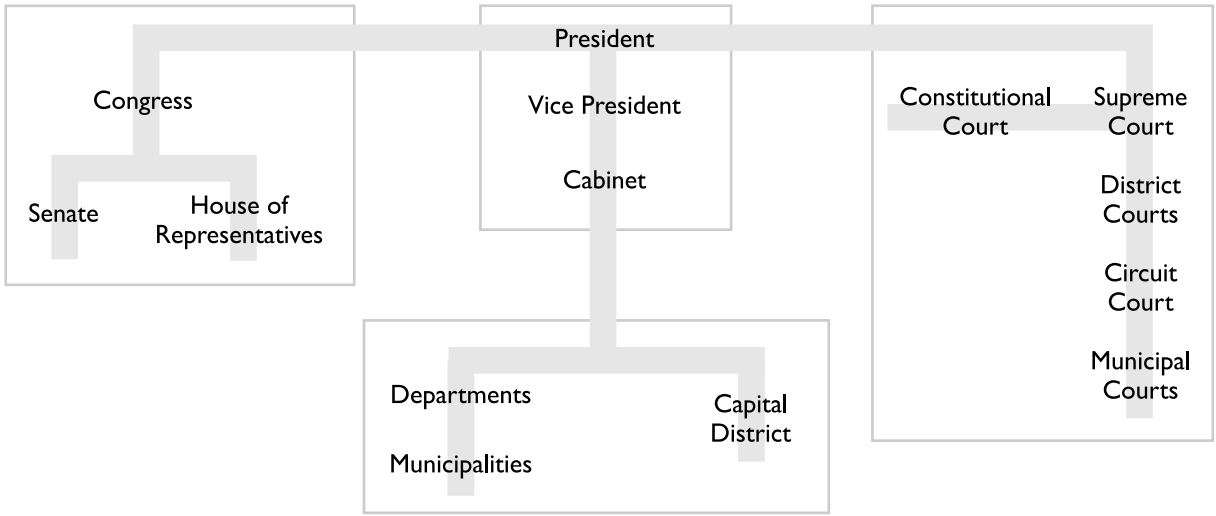
Traditionally, factional struggles within parties have been intense, particularly on issues of patronage and electoral legislation. Fiscal policy is often derailed by the attempts of legislators to broker deals favoring their local fiefdoms. Presidents have found it difficult to count on solid congressional majorities: Cross-party, single-issue coalitions are not strange occurrences. Nevertheless there are some indications of growing party cohesiveness in congress, particularly on issues of crucial importance for the government. For instance, Liberal legislators stood solidly behind President Samper during the investigations of his campaign finances and prevented the initiation of impeachment proceedings in the Senate.

In the March 2002 elections the Liberals elected 54 representatives and 28 senators, while the Conservatives won 21 and 13 seats in the two houses, respectively. Minor party and independent candidates won the majority of the seats in both legislative houses.

JUDICIARY

The Colombian judicial system is founded on Roman law tradition. Juries are employed infrequently, if at all. At the head of the court system stands the Supreme

ORGANIZATION OF COLOMBIAN GOVERNMENT



Court of Justice. It serves as the tribunal of last resort of all disputes involving ordinary legislation. It may also investigate and bring to trial the president (after impeachment), members of congress, the attorney general, and other public officials. Justices are selected by the Supreme Council of the Judiciary (Consejo Superior de la Judicatura), although they may be removed by the Senate; they serve eight-year terms. For administrative matters and questions regarding executive decrees the highest court is the Council of State. Its members are also selected by the Supreme Council of the Judiciary and serve eight-year terms.

The Supreme Court does not subject legislation to judicial review; that role is reserved to the Constitutional Court. That body rules on the constitutionality of laws, referenda, and international treaties challenged by the chief executive or any citizen. Its eight justices are selected for an eight-year term by the Senate from lists presented by the president and may be removed by the upper house of congress. Since its inception in 1991 the Constitutional Court has yet to face a major case where the vital interests of the government or other key political actors were at stake, making it difficult to measure its real power. Prior experience, however, points to a long tradition of judicial independence, even in the face of strong executive pressure.

The lower courts—including district courts, a circuit court, and municipal courts—are usually overburdened and inefficient, and their integrity has been severely shaken in recent years by violence, corruption, and drug trafficking. The constitution of 1991 introduced a series of reforms to the judicial system that may in the long run improve the administration of justice. The creation of the Supreme Council of the Judiciary is intended to heighten the accountability of judges and reduce inefficiencies in the court system. Moreover, the constitution allows for the election of justices of the peace at the municipal level. Most important, the fairly recent autonomy of the attorney general is expected to help restructure the entire criminal investigation system and improve the conditions for the prosecution of crimes.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Colombia is at present divided into 32 departments and the capital district (Distrito Capital) of Santafé de Bogotá. Each department is subdivided into munici-

palities (*municipios*), the lowest level of government. Moreover, the constitution of 1991 allowed for the creation of autonomous indigenous territories, spanning one or more departments. The new constitutional framework also introduced the direct popular election of the governors of the departments and the mayors, including the mayor of Bogotá. Governors and mayors are chosen for three-year terms; the former cannot serve a second term, while the latter may be reelected indefinitely. The departments have popularly elected unicameral assemblies (*asambleas departamentales*), and the municipalities have elected councils (*concejos municipales*), both serving three-year terms.

Building on a deeply entrenched tradition of regionalism, the constitution of 1991 greatly strengthened regional and local governments, endowing them with electoral legitimacy and enhancing their faculties and resources. Power, however, is still heavily centralized. The fiscal structure is strongly biased in favor of the central government, and most bureaucrats report directly to Bogotá. Education, health, and most social spending are prerogatives of the national government, limiting the clientele-building capacity of governors. In many provincial towns municipal councils exist only in name and often do not meet. Mayors must frequently consult on major decisions with the governor of their department, and their financial resources are severely limited.

The Electoral System

Colombians choose their president, vice president, legislators, department governors, mayors, departmental assemblies, and municipal councils in direct popular elections. Every citizen 18 years or older may vote, except for individuals deprived of their political rights by court order. Women obtained the right to vote in 1957, and all property and literacy qualifications were abolished in 1936. Prior registration is not necessary to vote: Citizens need only present their *cédula de identidad* (identity card) at their assigned polling places. Elections are organized by the autonomous National Electoral Council (Consejo Nacional Electoral), whose members are selected by the Council of State from lists presented by legally registered political parties. The Electoral Council prints and distributes the official ballots and regularly informs on the vote count during election day. The centralization of electoral organization has been a fundamental political transformation of recent years: Prior to 1991 political parties distributed their own ballots and supervised the vote count, opening the door for mutual and frequent accusations of electoral fraud. Elections are always held on Sunday, with polls open from 8 A.M. to 4 P.M. Violent clashes between rival party supporters are not uncommon on election day.

The president and vice president must be elected by absolute majority, thus often necessitating a second round. Lower-level executives (governors and mayors) are chosen by a plurality of voters within their respective political division (departments or municipalities). All legislatures (congress, departmental assemblies, and municipal councils) are elected by a list system of proportional representation. Congressmen and departmental assemblypersons are chosen at large within their respective departments; councilors are elected at large within their municipality. Seats are apportioned through a system of electoral quotient, obtained by dividing the total number of valid votes by the number of available positions. The excess seats are distributed by largest remainder in descending order. There is no legally established threshold to obtain representation, but the number of available seats is usually small, thus raising the electoral quotient.

Lists are determined by party directorates at the departmental or municipal level and then sent to Bogotá for approval by the national directorate. In many instances factionalism impedes compromise at the local level and several competing lists are sent to the national headquarters. National party leaders may broker a compromise between contending groups or allow the registration of competing lists. The practice of multiple party lists has been in decline in recent years as a result of a change in electoral rules: Votes for lists that do not reach the electoral quotient are no longer redistributed to the list with the same party label that has the most votes but to the largest vote winners in strict descending order, notwithstanding their party affiliation. Consequently internal party cohesion has been enhanced, as well as the relative power of national leaders. Nevertheless, recent elections have still seen an average of 13.2 lists per department. Candidates gain seats by their place on the list and may run outside their department of residence. Key party leaders are often placed in safe districts near the top of the departmental ticket. Since 1991 the lists have no longer included alternates: In the permanent or temporary absence of a legislator, his or her seat is given away to a member of a competing list.

Voting is not compulsory for Colombian citizens, and abstentionism has become a growing concern. In the congressional elections of 2002, only 42 percent of registered voters went to the polls. In the presiden-

tial election that year, the turnout was only slightly higher, 46 percent. Turnout is usually higher in urban than in rural areas and seems to be positively correlated to income and educational level. The most common explanations for the high level of abstentionism include discontent with the party system, the lack of interest generated by traditional elite candidates, and the logistical difficulties of voting (e.g., obtaining a *cédula* or finding the polling place).

The Party System

ORIGINS OF THE PARTIES

The two traditional Colombian parties trace their origins to the conflict that erupted in the immediate postindependence period between the followers of Simón Bolívar and Francisco de Paula Santander. The two main cleavages separating the two groups were the organization of the State and the role of the Catholic Church within it: The Conservatives, identified with Bolívar, stood for centralism and Catholicism as the state religion; the Liberals, with Santander at their head, championed federalism and anticlericalism. By the 1840s the terms *Liberal* and *Conservative* had become part of common political parlance.

The struggle for power and patronage between the traditional parties has often led to armed conflict. In 1957, after La Violencia and the Rojas Pinilla dictatorial interlude, two key political figures, Alberto Lleras Camargo (Liberal) and Laureano Gómez (Conservative), negotiated the crucial Sitges Agreement that gave form to the National Front. The front managed to reduce political violence (although intermittent partisan clashes continued until 1965), as well as avoiding the cycle of instability and military intervention. Since the mid-1980s the parties have gradually and painfully adapted to more competitive politics. In recent years their style and organizational features have undergone a process of modernization and campaigns have seemed more "normal," acrimonious affairs.

In 2002 Álvaro Uribe defected from the Liberal Party and instead ran for president essentially as an independent, supported by a small right-wing party known as Colombia First as well as the Conservative Party. Colombia remains a two-party system for all practical purposes.

THE PARTIES IN LAW

Colombian law defines political parties as "permanent institutions that reflect political pluralism, promote and channel citizen participation, and contribute to the formation and manifestation of popular will, with the goal of gaining power . . . and helping influence the political and democratic decisions of the Nation." There are few legal restrictions on electoral participation: To obtain legal recognition and inclusion in the ballots, a party must present to the National Electoral Council a copy of its internal regulations and political platform as well as 50,000 signatures. Since 1986 political parties have received government subsidies (equivalent to $1.5 million in 2004) according to the following formula: 80 percent of the subsidy is distributed in proportion to the number of seats obtained by each party in the last election, and 20 percent is distributed in equal shares to all parties. Campaign financing is subject to different regulations. Private contributions are allegedly regulated by the National Electoral Council, but soft, unaccounted money seems to flow easily into the parties. Moreover, the system of patronage has tended to favor the two-party system, notwithstanding the legislative efforts to improve the fairness of electoral processes.

PARTY ORGANIZATION

The changes brought by the constitution of 1991 have tended to gradually transfer decision-making power and rent-seeking opportunities from elected officials to the national bureaucracy. For parties that has meant a strengthening of national directorates at the expense of regional bosses.

Party statutes call for the organization of biennial national conventions, attended by government and party officials. National cadres, including the president or director of the party, are elected on such occasions. Moreover, national conventions serve to nominate the presidential and vice presidential candidates in election years. Even though the conventions are formally democratic, national power brokers tend to dominate the proceedings and departmental representatives usually ratify the decisions previously taken by the leadership. By contrast national directorates seldom meddle in departmental or municipal conventions and local bosses rule over the selection process of congressional candidates and regional party leaders.

Even though the parties enjoy a strong measure of regionalism and decentralization, major strategic decisions are usually controlled by a handful of top national politicians, the so-called natural bosses (*jefes naturales*). In a pattern reminiscent of the Japanese Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) the natural bosses often do not hold formal positions within the organizational structure of the party. They are usually former presidents or presi-

dential candidates, mostly recruited from the elite and frequently belonging to traditional political families. Their power is a function of their prestige, their access to power, and the size of their clientele. They are regularly called either to head the party during electoral periods or to design the overarching electoral strategy.

CAMPAIGNING

Long-standing patterns of party identification have traditionally constituted the major source of electoral support for the two traditional parties. The existence of a significant number of so-called hard votes (voters who support a party under all circumstances) has tended to inhibit strenuous campaign activity, centering the efforts of party machines on bringing out the vote. That role has been traditionally assigned to local or regional bosses (so-called *caciques* or *gamonales*) tied to a specific national faction led by a "natural boss." Electoral results used to depend on the turnout: The winning party was the one better able to bring out its supporters on election day.

In recent decades, however, the Colombian political landscape has seen a rise in the numbers of unidentified voters, more alert to programmatic and/or character issues and capable of important mood swings. Consequently campaigns have become more intense, seeking to stir interest and capture the "floating vote." Moreover, the two-round system introduced by the constitution of 1991 has forced candidates to seek absolute majorities, thus enhancing the strategic relevance of independent voters. For instance, according to some exit polls close to 40 percent of the voters in the second round of the presidential elections of 1994 were independents; with a very low turnout, their majority support for Ernesto Samper gave him the decisive edge to defeat his Conservative rival, Andrés Pastrana.

Presidential campaigns have tended to gather more interest and organizational resources than congressional contests. Campaigns are usually led by the presidential candidate in coordination with the national directorate. Candidates go on the stump for a significant portion of the campaign, holding rallies, giving speeches, and meeting local bosses throughout the country. Recent electoral contests, however, have been increasingly fought in the electronic media, particularly on television.

Campaigns are not normally fought in terms of issues. Even though the Liberals tend to be somewhat more to the left on economic matters, the ideological proximity of the two major parties makes it difficult for the electorate to differentiate between the proposals of the leading candidates. The main campaign "issues" usually have to do with the character and the record of the candidates; lately the question of the drug trade and its social, economic, and foreign-policy implications has come to the foreground of political debate. In 2002, for example, Uribe ran successfully on a hard-line policy to combat drug trafficking.

Campaigns are usually long-drawn and expensive battles, lasting almost a year and straining the financial resources of the parties. Since 1986 the government has partially reimbursed campaign expenses, but parties and candidates still depend massively on private contributions, and the flow of private resources to electoral campaigns is poorly regulated. Industrialists, coffee growers, and other wealthy party supporters have traditionally been a major source of campaign funds, and charges of influence peddling are not uncommon. More disturbingly, drug cartels have apparently begun to pour money into the war chests of major candidates. On the evening of the second round of the presidential elections of 1994 the defeated candidate, Andrés Pastrana, accused his Liberal rival, Ernesto Samper, of receiving 6 million dollars from the barons of the Cali drug cartel. Even though the president consistently denied the charges, the scandal led to the indictment of a number of campaign officials, including Samper's chief adviser, Fernando Botero, and to a failed impeachment procedure against the chief executive. According to Colombian sources the question is not whether the campaign received the money, but whether Samper knew about the source of the donation. Presidential campaigns are obliged to address the illegal-drugs issue. In the run-up to the 2002 election Álvaro Uribe ran on a national security platform to combat drug trafficking. Drug cartels and rebel groups targeted violence at his campaign in response, and on his inauguration on August 7, 2002, FARC (Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia) terrorists launched rockets at the presidential palace that killed 19 people and injured many more. Uribe escaped harm but declared a state of limited emergency as a first step toward strengthening the country's law-enforcement and military capabilities. Ironically, in 2004 *Newsweek* magazine published an article suggesting that Uribe had collaborated with a leading drug cartel in the early 1990s. However, Uribe disputed the article.

INDEPENDENT VOTERS

The number of independent voters has grown in recent decades. Party identification has been consistently declining for at least a generation, particularly in urban

areas. Industrialization and urbanization seem to be the root causes of the declining allegiance for traditional parties. The gradual demise of age-old patron-client networks in the countryside has made it more difficult and more expensive to sustain a permanent support base. The young, more independent of family traditions, mores, and political preferences, have been particularly difficult to recruit as either members or mere sympathizers of the main parties. Moreover, polls suggest that Colombians regard traditional politics with extreme cynicism and hold the political class in very low public esteem. Uribe's victory in the 2002 presidential election, during which he ran as a candidate from the small Colombia First party, is further proof of the rise of independent voters.

However, the rise of independent voters does not yet spell doom for the two-party system. Party identification, though decreasing, is still high by Latin American standards, and party identifiers still vote massively for their preferred party in every contest. Third parties still face significant formal and informal inequalities, particularly with regard to financial resources and access to the electronic media.

Major Political Parties

CONSERVATIVE/SOCIAL CONSERVATIVE PARTY

(Partido Conservador/Social Conservador)

HISTORY

The Conservative Party has its roots in the Catholic and centralist tradition of the nineteenth century. In modern times, during the so-called Liberal Republic (1930–46) and the subsequent period of La Violencia (1948–58) the internal cleavages of the party gradually emerged as the organization sought to regain a mass following. The main rivalry was between the supporters of two former presidents, Laureano Gómez and Mariano Ospina.

Gómez, a prominent political figure since the 1930s, was a radical Catholic intellectual, an admirer of the Franco regime in Spain, and a quasi-dictator from 1950 to 1953. Even though he negotiated the landmark Sitges Agreement of 1957, his faction steadfastly opposed the National Front. After 1965 the faction was led for many years by Alvaro Gómez Hurtado, son of the founder. It usually stands slightly to the right of mainstream Conservative thought, although it has eliminated its early authoritarian proclivities. Successively known as Laurenistas, Doctrinarios, Alvaristas, Lauro-Alvaristas, and Independientes, the faction currently calls itself the National Salvation Movement (Movimiento de Salvación Nacional; MSN) and virtually broke away from the party in 1989, fielding its own presidential candidate (Alvaro Gómez Hurtado) in 1990 and presenting its own list in the legislative elections during the 1990s and again in 2002.

The faction of Mariano Ospina was dominant within the party throughout the National Front period and imposed its candidates in the presidential elections of 1962 and 1970. After the death of Ospina leadership passed to former president Misael Pastrana. Known as Ospino-Pastranistas or Unionistas, the faction is ideologically somewhat more moderate than the Alvaristas but rallied behind Gómez Hurtado in the presidential elections of 1974 and 1986 and supported Belisario Betancur in 1982. It is important to note that factional infighting is more centered on personality issues and regional politics than on clear ideological or class divides. The Ospino-Pastranistas led the transformation of the party in the 1980s, moderating its discourse and changing its name to Social Conservative Party in 1987. It still dominates most of the party's internal decision bodies.

A third contending faction has been on the rise since 1990. In that year Andrés Pastrana Arango, son of the Ospino-Pastranistas' leader, founded a personalized movement, the so-called New Democratic Force (Nueva Fuerza Democrática; NFD). The group is led by younger, more technocratic cadres and is perceived as the reformist wing of the Conservative Party; it is more inclined toward free-market economics and has sought to attract a younger, more urban electorate. In 1994 the movement managed to rally all the Conservative factions behind the presidential candidacy of its leader and obtained the best electoral result for a Conservative nominee since 1982. And in 1998 Pastrana won the presidency.

ORGANIZATION

The Social Conservative Party, in conjunction with the semidissident MSN and NFD, has organizational presence throughout the Colombian territory. The party has traditionally found its strength in patron-client networks covering rural areas. According to most observers of Colombian politics the Conservatives have a more comprehensive territorial structure at the municipal level and their machine is usually more effective than the Liberal Party in garnering the "hard vote" on election day. The Conservative organization tends to be extremely hierarchical and centralized,

firmly ruled by the leaders of the main national factions in Bogotá. Traditionally, factional struggles were contained by the national directorate, and a measure of party discipline existed in spite of intense personal rivalries. Over the last decade and a half, however, infighting has degenerated into open schisms, and disputes over nominations have become increasingly acrimonious.

Like its Liberal rival, the Conservative Party has attempted to create a network of affiliated social organizations, finding some support in rural areas. The initiative, however, has been less than successful in recruiting social movements. The party maintains its constituency in urban areas by its control of part of the media. In Bogotá two dailies, *El Nuevo Siglo* and *La República*, have a clear Conservative tendency. Several provincial papers, as well as a number of radio stations and television programs, also tend to support the Conservative cause. The party has no formal affiliation with any international organizations, although it has informally attended some Christian Democratic meetings.

POLICY

The Conservative Party has historically stood behind centralism, close ties between church and state, and the preservation of the traditional social order. Until the 1930s Conservatives opposed the extension of the suffrage, and they had marked authoritarian tendencies up through the 1950s, particularly among the supporters of Laureano Gómez. In recent years the organization has stood somewhat to the right of center on most social and economic issues. It tends to oppose state interventionism and social welfare measures. Some of its elected officials, such as former president Belisario Betancur, even showed a slight populist bent and were keen on augmenting social spending. Nevertheless, the party backed the economic liberalization measures of the Gaviria administration, and lately, under the leadership of Andrés Pastrana and the NFD, it has acquired a more technocratic discourse.

On social issues the party's policies tend to be in accordance with its name. During the 1980s Conservatives opposed the legalization of divorce championed by the Liberals and were ambiguous regarding birth control policies. However, their differences with their Liberal rivals have been more marked on national security questions. Most Conservative politicians opposed President Gaviria's policy of *sometimiento,* whereby drug lords obtained a guarantee of nonextradition to the United States in exchange for their surrender to the Colombian authorities. Moreover, they have steadfastly resisted negotiations with the leftist guerrillas and called for hard-line measures against subversive activity.

In 2002 the party failed to run its own presidential candidate, instead supporting former Liberal Party member Álvaro Uribe. During his first term the Conservative Party remained a staunch ally of Uribe, and it was supportive of his effort to amend the constitution to be able to run for reelection in 2006.

MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY

The Conservative Party has presence throughout Colombia, but its strength varies by department. Its major strongholds are located in the central valleys of the country, particularly in the departments of Antioquía, Cundinamarca, Caldas, North Santander, and Risaralda, as well as in Narino, on the southern Pacific Coast. It tends to attract more votes in rural areas than in large metropolitan areas. The party has a strong appeal among upper- and middle-class voters, as well as among older age groups. Moreover, its constituency has traditionally included rural landowners, provincial industrialists (particularly from Antioquía), the church hierarchy, military officers, and a portion of organized labor, particularly the Christian-oriented Union of Colombian Workers (Unión de Trabajadores Colombianos; UTC).

FINANCING

The party finances its activities from a combination of sources, including government subsidies, membership fees, corporate donations, contributions from officeholders and wealthy private supporters, and fundraising events. In nonelectoral periods the financial requirements of the organization are not significant and the permanent staff is small. During campaigns the party draws heavily from every possible source of funding. The scandal that enveloped the Liberal Party over alleged contributions from drug traffickers did not leave the Conservatives unscathed: Since the early 1990s the Colombian political milieu has been seething with allegations that drug money filtered into the electoral efforts of the two major parties.

LEADERSHIP

Party leadership has traditionally been drawn from long-standing political dynasties, such as the Gómez, the Pastrana, or the Ospina. Stability and long-term mandates have been constants at both the national and the regional levels; many of the present top cadres have been active in politics since at least the 1950s. Nevertheless, the organization has undergone

a gradual process of rejuvenation in recent years. As of 2005 its leader was Carlos Holguín Sardi. Other prominent members were Jorge Sedano González, Adriana Patricia Arbelaez, and José Ignacio Burgos.

LIBERAL PARTY

(Partido Liberal)

HISTORY

The lineage of the Liberal Party goes back to the struggle between Francisco de Paula Santander and Simón Bolívar in the immediate aftermath of the War of Independence. Descending from Santander, the party has historically been the rallying movement of the urban middle classes and the champion of anticlericalism. The modern factions within the party date back to the period known as the Liberal Republic (1930–46), when moderate elements opposed the allegedly radical reformist efforts of López Pumarejo. The divide between moderates and radicals grew throughout the 1940s, particularly during the reign of Jorge Gaitán, the populist mayor of Bogotá, whose murder in 1948 unleashed La Violencia.

In the 1980s the influence of Luis Carlos Galán and his Nuevo Liberalismo faction progressively grew, in spite of his failure to secure the Liberal nomination in 1986. Galán's meteoric rise to prominence, however, was cut short in 1989 when gunmen of the Medellín drug cartel killed him during a campaign rally. His murder threw the Liberal Party into unprecedented turmoil and left the younger generation without effective leadership. Nevertheless, the indignation over the crime and the mantle of Galán's legacy was sufficient to guarantee the nomination and electoral victory of César Gaviria, a chief adviser of the murdered politician. His economic and institutional reforms (the so-called *revolcón*) and his soft-line drug policy faced intense opposition within the party, fatally weakening the remnants of the Nuevo Liberalismo.

In 1994 Ernesto Samper, a younger member of the orthodox faction, gained the nomination with a center-left discourse that stood in moderate opposition to the economic liberalization measures of the Gaviria administration. His presidency, nevertheless, was consistently sapped by the drug-money scandal. Amid deep divisions within the party Horacio Serpa Uribe, the interior minister, emerged as the Liberal presidential candidate. But Serpa won only 31.8 percent of the vote in the May 2002 presidential election and was soundly defeated by Álvaro Uribe.

ORGANIZATION

Since World War II the Liberal Party has been beset by virulent factionalism that has weakened the internal discipline of the organization. Regional bosses have played a somewhat bigger role among the Liberals than in the Conservative Party. Leadership has tended to be collegial, even though sitting Liberal presidents are usually seen as the head of the party. Decision making on strategic issues is a complex process, requiring the participation of the president, the national directorate, the heads of the main factions, and some regional leaders. During campaign periods the party usually names a prominent figure to lead the electoral efforts as sole director (*director único*). At the local level the Liberals are better organized in the cities than in the countryside, and their territorial structure is usually considered somewhat weaker than its Conservative counterpart.

The Liberal Party has a number of affiliated organizations, incorporating mostly urban social movements and some sectors of the middle class. Nevertheless, the links between the fellow traveling organizations and the formal structure of the party remain weak. By contrast the party has a strong presence in the media, particularly the printed press. Bogota's two leading dailies, *El Tiempo* (owned by a great Liberal family, the Santos) and *El Espectador,* have marked Liberal tendencies. Many provincial papers also boast Liberal leanings, as do many radio stations and television programs. The party has no international affiliation, although in the 1970s the possibility of joining the Socialist International was discussed.

POLICY

In the nineteenth century and the early decades of the twentieth the main Liberal causes were federalism, the separation of church and state (particularly in the field of education), and the extension of the suffrage. In the post–World War II period the Liberals have been somewhat on the left on economic and social issues, promoting a measure of state interventionism as well as social welfare measures and legislation favoring organized labor. In the 1960s and 1970s they championed Keynesian macroeconomics and the growth of the public sector. Since the 1980s, however, they have converted to a moderate free-market creed, and during the Gaviria administration they pushed through an economic liberalization agenda. President Samper turned slightly to the left, but the key economic features of the *revolcón* (privatization, trade liberalization, and such) remained virtually intact.

On social issues the Liberals stand for continued secularization and religious tolerance: In the 1980s

they supported the legalization of divorce against the firm opposition of the Catholic Church and the Conservatives. Their policy toward the leftist guerrillas and the drug cartels tends to swing between resolute persecution and peaceful incorporation. Nevertheless, they are usually perceived as the dove party: In the late 1980s President Barco negotiated the surrender of the M-19 guerrillas and their transformation into a legal political party. In the early 1990s President Gaviria opted for a policy of no extradition and negotiated surrender to deal with the bosses of the drug cartels. Lately the party has adopted a more hard-line policy toward the guerrillas and the drug trade, partly in response to the drug-money scandal and U.S. pressures.

During the first term of President Uribe, a former Liberal himself, the party found itself divided toward his administration's more conservative policies. A prominent faction within the Liberal Party, including numerous Liberal congressmen, supported Uribe's administration and his efforts to seek reelection in 2006.

MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY

The Liberal Party has been the dominant actor in Colombian politics since the 1930s, obtaining consistently between 45 and 55 percent of the vote in every national election since 1946. The party has obtained either an absolute majority or a plurality in every congressional election since the war, with the exception of the elections for the Assembly of 1991. In the presidential contest of 2002 Liberal candidate Horacio Serpa Uribe won 31 percent of the vote and was soundly defeated by Álvaro Uribe. The organization has presence throughout Colombia, although its main power base has traditionally been located in the more urban and industrialized areas, particularly Bogotá and the departments of Cauca and Valle, as well as in the coastal departments of Córdoba, Atlántico, and Magdalena. The party draws support from all sectors of Colombian society but has traditionally been stronger among the urban lower and middle classes. Young voters tend to lean toward the Liberals. The party's constituency usually includes the major Bogotá industrial groups, a large portion of the intelligentsia, university students, and the biggest labor organization, the Confederation of Colombian Workers (Confederación de Trabajadores Colombianos; CTC).

FINANCING

The Liberal Party finances its activities in much the same way as its Conservative counterpart (although sometimes membership dues are collected), and its financial requirements are equally small in nonelectoral periods. The scandal over alleged contributions of drug cartels to Ernesto Samper's war chest severely rattled the country and led to unending speculation about the extent of influence peddling in the upper reaches of the political class.

LEADERSHIP

As with its Conservative competitor, the Liberal Party draws most of its top leadership from traditional political families, belonging mostly to the upper-middle classes. Former presidents, such as Julio César Turbay and Alfonso López Michelsen, still carry significant weight. In 2005 the party leadership was won by former president Gaviria.

PROSPECTS

Although the Liberals retain control of congress, the party was hard hit by the scandal surrounding the campaign finances of Ernesto Samper. The president's approval rates tumbled, and the economy appeared surprisingly fragile, paving the way for the Liberals' presidential losses in 1998 and 2002. The party's chances in 2006 may hinge on whether President Uribe, backed by the Conservative Party, is successful in his effort to run for reelection.

Minor Political Parties

Colombia has about 60 political parties in total, but with few exceptions (ANAPO in 1970, M-19 in 1991), minor parties have been unable to break the two-party mold of Colombian politics and usually serve as mere tokens to pluralism. The left has been traditionally prone to extreme sectarianism and personality politics, rarely posing a real electoral threat to the status quo. The main area of strength for third parties usually lies in urban areas, particularly in Bogotá, among the university-educated middle-class voters. Colombia First

One of the small parties of note is Colombia First. This right-wing party is essentially the organ of President Álvaro Uribe, a longtime Liberal Party member before his candidacy in 2002. It is closely allied to the Conservative Party and holds no seats of its own in the congress. Other small parties that won seats in the 2002 legislative elections include the Radical Change party (9 combined seats in the congress), Team Colombia (7 combined seats), Civic People's Convergence (5 seats), Liberal Opening (5 seats), Colombia Always (5 seats), and the United People's Movement

(4 seats). Other small parties that ran candidates in the 2002 presidential election include the Social and Political Front (candidate Luis Eduardo Garzon won 6.2 percent), Colombia Yes (candidate Noemi Sanin won 5.8 percent), and the Green Oxygen Party, whose candidate, Ingrid Betancourt Pulecio, was kidnapped by guerrillas in advance of the election and remained held as of mid-2005.

Other Political Forces

Even though there is no consensus on the extent of their influence, it is undeniable that interest-group pressure and extrainstitutional actors play a fundamental role in Colombian politics. Traditionally the Catholic Church and the military, as well as business organizations, have been significant forces in decision-making processes and wielded veto power over some policy areas. Organized labor has seen its influence decrease in recent years but still has some say over economic policy. Interest-group pressure is usually applied through the executive branch, but lobbies also work through the major parties and the legislature. According to recent evidence the rise of a relatively insulated technocratic class may have reduced the sway of interest groups, but state autonomy is still significantly limited if faced by concerted societal pressure.

Most interest groups tend to represent upper- and middle-class interests, excluding the peasantry and the large majority of the working class from the policymaking process. Peasant organizations have historically had little influence on the design and implementation of agrarian reform programs and have often opted for direct-action measures, including guerrilla activities. Most workers are not represented by organized labor and have little or no access to decision makers.

Interest-group pressure is usually exerted during policy implementation efforts, coming after government decisions and seeking mostly redress or exemptions from particular measures. Rarely do lobbies directly participate in policy design within the executive branch, reserving their bargaining power for congressional battles and judicial review processes. They usually do not shy away from confrontational tactics, using boycotts, demonstrations, and strikes as often as necessary. Nevertheless, the relationship between major pressure groups and the political class is embedded in a network of family and personal links and rarely escalates to an open clash.

BUSINESS ASSOCIATIONS

The most powerful business organization is the National Association of Industrialists (Asociación Nacional de Industrialistas; ANDI), comprising the 500 most powerful industrial concerns in the country. It holds considerable financial resources, as well as high visibility, easy access to policy makers, and official presence on numerous government boards. It champions free-market measures, although it has traditionally supported protectionism and only grudgingly supported the trade liberalization measures of the Gaviria administration. It wields significant influence over economic policy, particularly over taxation and industrial policy. The counterpart to the ANDI in the tertiary sector is the National Federation of Merchants (Federación Nacional de Comerciantes; FENALCO). The FENALCO is ideologically close to the ANDI, although it is more supportive of free trade. Its extensive organizational structure covers most of the Colombian territory and has substantial financial resources, as well as a well-established network of formal and informal contacts with the political sphere.

Some associations grouping rural interests are also a significant political force. Most particularly the National Federation of Coffee Growers (Federación Nacional de Cafeteros; FEDECAFE), an association of the largest producers and exporters, can extract significant concessions from government in every policy area connected to coffee production and trade. Several cabinet ministers have served ex officio on its national board, and it has close ties with both major parties and key bureaucratic agencies. Other agricultural interests are represented in sectoral associations, including sugarcane, rice, and cotton producers, and have some influence over trade and fiscal policy.

CATHOLIC CHURCH

The Catholic Church exerts more political power in Colombia than in any other Latin American country (with the possible exception of Chile), even though its influence has been decreasing in recent years. Prior to the enactment of the constitution of 1991 the church had a privileged legal status, protected by a concordat with the Vatican. Under the present constitutional framework Catholicism is no longer the official religion of the country, although it is still practiced by the vast majority of Colombians, notwithstanding the recent penetration of Protestant denominations. The church hierarchy still has significant influence within the Conservative Party, as well as close ties with the UTC labor federation

and considerable power in many policy areas, particularly education and social development. But its influence is being steadily eroded by the growing secularization of Colombian society. Since the late 1980s the church has lost two major battles: First, it failed to prevent the legalization of divorce, in spite of its outspoken opposition to the measure; second, it was unable to guarantee its privileged legal position and its dominant role in the educational system in the Constitutional Assembly of 1991.

ORGANIZED LABOR

The Colombian labor movement has never obtained the institutionalized status or the power of its counterparts in other Latin American countries such as Mexico, Argentina, or Venezuela. Even though two of the three major labor confederations have strong ties with the major parties, their influence over decision making has always been limited by the conservative and probusiness bent of the Colombian political class. Moreover, in spite of significant unionization efforts organized labor covers only a small and falling fraction of the working class. Legislation favoring labor has been on the books since the 1940s, but the climate for union militancy and development is less than favorable and law enforcement in labor matters tends to be selective and repressive.

Organized labor is divided between the party-aligned confederations and the so-called independents. The biggest "official" organization is the Union of Colombian Workers (Unión de Trabajadores Colombianos; UTC), a movement strongly identified with the Conservative Party and right-wing Christian Democratic thought. It is particularly influential among industrial workers in Medellín and Cali.

Its Liberal counterpart is the Confederation of Colombian Workers (Confederación de Trabajadores Colombianos; CTC). Slightly more left-wing than the UTC, the CTC is the oldest labor federation in the country (founded in 1934), has quasi-organic ties to the Liberal Party, and dominates most public-sector unions. Among the independents the field is controlled by the Trade Union Confederation of Colombian Workers (Confederación Sindical de Trabajadores de Colombia; CSTC), a militant organization founded by a number of Communist-led unions. Expelled from the CTC in 1966, it is the largest labor federation in the country. Although the CSTC is alleged to maintain some ties to the FARC guerrilla group, its radicalism and confrontational tactics have been gradually abandoned since their peak in the late 1970s.

MILITARY

The Colombian armed forces have traditionally been less infected by authoritarian tendencies than most of their Latin American counterparts. During the independent history of the Colombian state they have staged only three coups: in 1830, 1854, and 1953. In total, military officers have led Colombia for just six years, and only the Rojas Pinilla dictatorship lasted more than one year. Their political role has been limited by a deeply held antimilitarism among both the political class and the general population. For the most part the military have been content to serve as instruments of civilian politicians, even though they have always had a significant influence in national security matters.

The power of the armed forces, however, has steadily grown since the onset of guerrilla activities in the mid-1960s. The Ministry of Defense is usually run by an army general, and it has become common practice to name military officers as departmental governors in particularly violent areas. The military have only grudgingly accepted peace negotiations with the guerrillas and have consistently maintained a hard-line position against subversive groups. In 1985 they forced President Belisario Betancur to order a military operation to dislodge from the Supreme Court building the M-19 commandos who had seized it in previous days. According to several observers the incident was a "24-hour coup."

The political clout of the armed forces has also grown as a result of the growing militarization of the drug war. The military were decisive in the dismantling of the Medellín and Cali cartels, even though they have been beset by allegations of corruption. In recent years several generals have been accused of providing protection to drug lords, leading to a number of indictments and damaging the public standing of the armed forces. In general terms the drug war has opened a widening rift between military officers and civilian politicians. Moreover, the political crisis resulting from the drug-money scandal has led to growing calls for direct military intervention. In the aftermath of the failed impeachment proceedings against President Samper, the Colombian political milieu was simmering with rumors of an impending military coup, even though the military leadership repeatedly denied having any intention of dislodging the elected authorities from power.

In 2004 Colombia assigned 3.2 percent of its GDP to defence. The security forces number about 250,000 uniformed personnel: 145,000 military and 105,000

police. President Uribe ushered in even higher levels of spending for the military, largely funded through a one-time tax. Many Colombian military personnel have received training in the United States or in Colombia. As part of Plan Colombia—a wide-ranging antinarcotics strategy—the United States has provided equipment to the Colombian military and police through the military assistance program, foreign military sales, and the international narcotics control program.

GUERRILLAS

Marxist-inspired guerrillas, mostly of Castroite leanings, have been active in Colombia since the mid-1960s. Their military campaigns have been intermittent, reaching a peak in the late 1960s and the early 1980s. In recent years they have intensified their war against the Colombian government, concentrating their attacks against oil infrastructure and military facilities in rural areas, particularly in the eastern departments of Casanare and Arauca.

Since the downfall of the Soviet bloc and the suspension of Cuban aid the guerrillas are thought to finance their activities by obtaining subsidies from drug traffickers and by carrying out kidnappings. At present the armed groups do not have either the popular support or the military strength to pose a clear threat to political stability and probably have lost the capability to mount spectacular actions in urban areas, such as the 1985 seizure of the Supreme Court building. They are still, however, a constant thorn in the authorities' side and can apply significant political pressure, particularly by destroying strategic infrastructure and by kidnapping prominent figures and military personnel. Government policy toward the guerrillas has fluctuated between repression and negotiation, but since the relative fiasco of the peace process in the late 1980s and early 1990s hard-liners have prevailed and no political compromise seems in sight.

The Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia; FARC) is the largest active guerrilla movement, grouping some 2,000 fighters. Traditionally it was perceived as the military wing of the Communist Party and the Patriotic Union, but in recent years both organizations have publicly disavowed the armed struggle. Since the FARC's inception in 1966, its ideology has been Castroite, although lately it has played down openly Marxist themes, adopting a more sanitized nationalist discourse. It is particularly active in the department of Casanare, where it mounts constant attacks against oil infrastructure. In the late 1980s it flirted with a possible surrender, but the assassination of numerous Patriotic Union militants reinforced its commitment to guerrilla tactics. In 1996 the FARC humiliated the government and the armed forces by capturing 100 soldiers and forcing a compromise to secure their release. In 2002 the FARC kidnapped presidential candidate Ingrid Betancourt; she remained held as of mid-2005.

Another group is the National Liberation Army. The most active clandestine organization in the 1960s, its membership and its power have dwindled in recent years. It still has a presence in some rural areas of eastern Colombia, but it lacks a significant support base. And there is the M-19, which renounced armed struggle in 1989 and has since acted as a legal political force.

As a vigilante response to the guerrilla groups, right-wing paramilitaries were started more than 20 years ago by rogue military officers, landowners, and drug traffickers in an attempt to erode support for leftist rebels by killing their supporters and taking back territory. But many of these have evolved into drug-running outfits, and several paramilitary commanders are now wanted in the United States on drug-trafficking charges.

The Uribe administration has taken a hard line against left-wing guerrillas and right-wing paramilitaries alike. Uribe has boosted spending on the military and police and has set about arming peasants in vulnerable areas of the country. Major offensives have been launched against the guerrillas. Antiterrorism laws have expanded the military's power to make arrests and detain suspects.

But Uribe's government has been criticized for continuing negotiations with the paramilitaries, because although they claim to have enacted a cease-fire, they have continued to carry out assassinations, kidnappings, and other crimes. The talks are shaky in part because the government wants the paramilitary commanders to serve at least five-year jail terms; the commanders say they will withdraw from talks unless the government drops that condition.

DRUG TRAFFICKERS

Building on the skills and routes of emerald smugglers, Colombian drug traffickers created in the 1970s and 1980s probably the most powerful criminal organizations in the world. By the end of the 1980s the two major groups—the Medellín and Cali cartels—controlled 80 percent of the world's cocaine trade, obtain-

ing unprecedented financial resources and political clout. More recently, however, the Colombian mafias have gone through hard times. In the late 1980s the Medellín cartel declared war on the Colombian government on the issue of extradition to the United States. It won a partial victory, gaining nonextradition, but in exchange for the negotiated surrender of its leader, Pablo Escobar Gaviria. After his escape from prison in 1992 the authorities organized a massive manhunt that ended in 1993 with the killing of the legendary drug baron.

After the demise of the Medellín cartel the government persecuted the Cali barons, in spite of their donations to the presidential campaign of Ernesto Samper. The law-enforcement campaign led to the capture of the Rodríguez Orejuela brothers, kingpins of the Cali drug mafia. According to Colombian sources the virtual elimination of the cartels has atomized the drug trade but has not reduced its volume. The new generation of drug barons probably does not have the power of its predecessors, and in fact control of the main drug trade in the Americas had moved to Mexico by the early 2000s. Nonetheless, the influence of criminal organizations in the political process in Colombia remains quite significant. The drug-money scandal that enveloped the Samper organization revealed the disturbing closeness between politicians and the criminal underworld, and the ties are probably still binding, in spite of the downfall of the most powerful drug lords.

The protracted drug-fueled war in Colombia is far from over, but the energetic leadership of Álvaro Uribe has helped improve the country's prospects to an extent not seen for at least a decade.

National Prospects

The present trends in Colombian politics point, paradoxically, to both continuity and change. The drug-money scandal paralyzed the Samper administration and shook the political system to its foundations. Nevertheless, the crisis did not produce a clear alternative to the domination of the traditional parties. The presidential victory of the Conservative Pastrana was welcomed, especially in the business community, as promising change. Pastrana sought a formula for peace with the guerrillas. He moved to strengthen the economy, proposing legislation to change the tax system and sharply reduce tax evasion.

In 2002 the Uribe administration released a much-awaited Colombian national security strategy, entitled "Democratic Security and Defense Policy." The plan fit within the broader social, economic, and political goals of Plan Colombia. Though much attention has been focused on the security and military aspects of Colombia's situation, the administration also is spending significant time on issues such as expanding international trade, supporting alternate means of development, and reforming Colombia's judicial system.

Described as a hard-line and right-leaning politician, Uribe has pursued a two-pronged strategy for pacifying the country by co-opting right-wing death squads and battling Marxist rebels. Although this effort has won him high approval ratings, guerrilla attacks on civilians have continued. Keen to disarm the paramilitaries, Uribe's government has engaged in formal peace talks with far right warlords. Uribe also has sought international mediation to end the violence and has courted U.S. military and financial assistance.

Uribe has brought a new urgency to policing operations. It is now safe to drive between Colombia's cities, and even the most remote towns and villages enjoy police or military presence. Attacks on pipelines, energy installations, and other infrastructure are less common. So are kidnappings and car theft. Several oil companies have already returned to a country written off only recently as too insecure.

Uribe's supporters in congress passed a constitutional amendment to allow him to run for a second term; in mid-2005 that amendment was under review by the Supreme Court. There are good pragmatic reasons to keep Uribe at the helm. But changing the rules so that he can run again may expose him to accusations that he is unwilling to relinquish power. As a result Uribe likely will work to institutionalize the innovations he has introduced to Colombian governance so that progress is not so dependent on his involvement.

The Colombian political system has proved its extreme resilience, enduring the blows of narcoterrorism and guerrilla warfare, as well as a prolonged political crisis. Its major features—bipartisan hegemony, presidentialism, clientelism—will likely carry on into the foreseeable future. Nevertheless, winds of reform are blowing in the country. Its changing demographic, social, and economic outlook could lead to significant transformations in political style and content over the next decade. Moreover, it would be imprudent to minimize the general disgust felt at the traditional political class and the massive, if nebulous, desire for change. The Colombian people may still confound most analysts in the very near future.

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UNION OF THE COMOROS

(Union des Comores; Udzima wa Komori)

By B. David Meyers, Ph.D.



The Union of Comoros is a confederation of three islands, inhabited by approximately one-half million people, located between the mainland of East Africa and Madagascar. On July 6, 1975, the three declared themselves independent; a fourth Comoran island, Mayotte, is claimed by the government but has chosen to remain a French territory.

In early August 1975, less than a month after independence, the nation's first president, Ahmed Abdallah, was overthrown in a coup assisted by French mercenaries. The coup leader, Ali Soilih, was himself overthrown when Abdallah, with support from France, South Africa, and these same mercenaries, returned in 1978. Abdallah declared a one-party state and drove all opposition into exile. In November 1989 he was assassinated by his mercenary guards and replaced by the president of the Supreme Court, Said Mohammed Djohar. In 1990, in an election marked by allegations of widespread fraud, Djohar defeated Mohamed Taki Abdoulkarim for the presidency. Djohar's presidency was marked by absolutism, nepotism, and corruption, which encouraged assassination and coup attempts.

In September 1995 a coup, aided by many of the same mercenaries, ousted Djohar. Under pressure from South African president Nelson Mandela, French military forces then intervened. They ended the coup but would not allow Djohar's return until he promised to allow free elections, supervised by a French military contingent. In March 1996, following two rounds of elections, Mohamed Taki Abdoulkarim, who had briefly been installed by the mercenaries, became the country's president.

Political stability has, however, proved elusive, and the fate of the country itself is currently in doubt. In 1997 the islands of Anjouan and Moheli seceded from the federation. The separatists are themselves divided between those who demand reattachment to France and those who prefer to retain some ties to the government on Grande Comore. Meanwhile, Comoran president Taki's sudden death, of a heart attack, in November 1998 left the country leaderless. In April 1999, five months after Taki's death, interim president Tadjiddine Massounde was overthrown in a bloodless coup led by army colonel Azali Assoumani. A month later Azali decreed a constitution that gave him both executive and legislative powers but promised his many critics that he would relinquish control of the country to a democratically elected president in 2000. Instead, in 2001, a year that saw four coup attempts and the approval by referendum of a new constitution, Azali resigned from the military and prepared to run as a civilian candidate for president. In April 2002 he was victorious in a second round of voting when his two major rivals, claiming that the polling had been fraudulent, withdrew and urged their supporters to boycott the polls. Meanwhile the new constitution, written with substantial assistance from South Africa, had created a loose confederal system but left many important questions, including the distribution of political powers and the share-out of public finances, unresolved. Legislative elections, originally scheduled for April

2003 but delayed for a year by Azali, have given control of that body to his opponents. This will complicate the legislators' task of either amending the constitution or drafting a new one.

The System of Government

Possibly the most politically unstable country worldwide, the Union of Comoros has endured 19 coups or attempted coups since independence. Additionally, secessionist tensions, which flared in 1997, have not been resolved and continue to threaten the nation's existence. On a number of occasions foreign military forces—French, South African, and mercenary—have been the arbiters of who governs. The current constitution has been in effect since December 2001. Written with substantial assistance from South Africa, it created a loose confederal system but failed to resolve many important questions, including the distribution of both political powers and public finances. Nominally, Comoros is an independent republic.

EXECUTIVE

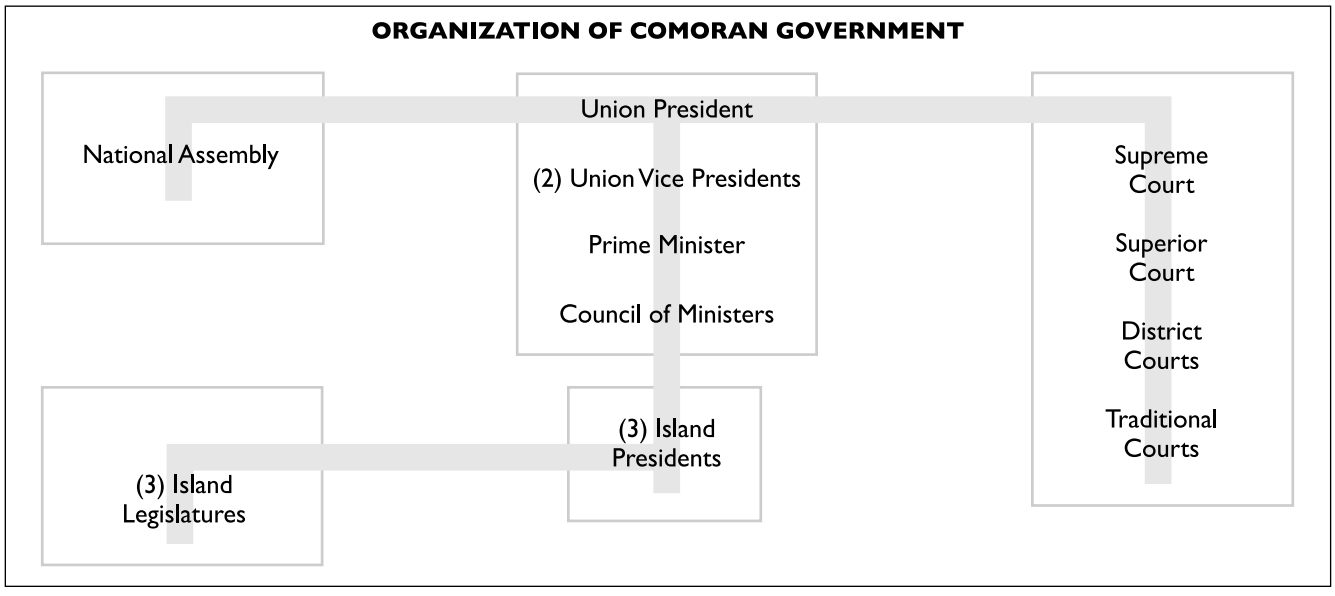
According to the 2001 constitution each of the three islands of the Comoros popularly elects its own president. The national presidency, which rotates every four years among the three islands, is decided in a separate election, resulting in three island presidents and a Union president. There are also two Union vice presidents, one from each of the islands that do not hold the presidency. The Union president is to be assisted by a Council of Ministers and a prime minister, all of whom he appoints. Azali, however, has not appointed a prime minister. On Grande Comore, Azali has been in continued conflict with island president Abdou Soulé Elbak.

In the 2002 Union presidential election, held only on Grande Comore, Azali Assoumani won almost 40 percent of the vote in the first round and, following the withdrawal of his opponents, 80 percent in the second round. If the constitution is not amended or replaced, at the next election he will be ineligible for the Union's presidency as the office will shift to one of the other islands.

LEGISLATURE

The unicameral federal parliament of the Union of the Comoros, the National Assembly, has 33 seats, 18 elected in single-seat constituencies (seven for Grande Comore, five for Anjouan, three for Mwali) and 15 (five from each) chosen by the individual island's parliaments. Members serve five-year terms. The powers of the Assembly, in relation to those of both the Union government (the president and his appointees) and the separate islands' governments, are unclear in practice and sometimes in law. The Assembly has the responsibility of amending the current constitution or replacing it completely.

The April 2004 Assembly elections further complicated Comoros politics because an alliance of parties and individuals in opposition to Azali won 12 of the 18 contested seats. All 15 representatives from the regional parliaments, including those from Grande Comore, are also opponents, resulting in an opposition that would control the legislature by 27 to 6. Other than their opposition to Azali the representatives from



the three islands have little in common. In May 2004 Azali announced that the opening of the newly elected Assembly would be "postponed."

JUDICIARY

According to the constitution the apex of the judicial system is a Supreme Court. Two of the Court's judges are appointed by the Union president, two are elected by the federal Assembly, and one elected by the council of each island; former national presidents are also eligible to join the Court.

There are district courts in the major towns, a superior court in the capital, and traditional religious courts that apply Muslim law in matters relating to social and personal relationships.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Each of the three islands has its own legislature and president who are responsible for establishing and enforcing their own law. Although there are constitutional questions concerning the division of some powers between the central government and that of the islands, in reality each of the three currently governs most of its own affairs. There are municipal governments in the four largest towns. Many local decisions are made by clan leaders and in the mosques.

The Electoral System

The president is chosen by elections held on one of the three islands, by rotation, every four years. The election has two rounds, with the second a runoff among the two front runners. The three island presidents are similarly chosen. In the Union Assembly 18 members are chosen from single-member districts; 15 other Assembly members are elected by the islands' legislatures, five from each island. If no candidate for an elected seat receives over 50 percent of the vote there is a second round of balloting.

Elections in the Comoros have frequently been marked by boycotts, disruptions, and allegations of fraud.

The Party System

In 1975 the first president of Comoros, Ahmed Abdallah, outlawed opposition parties. From 1989, when the ban was lifted, until 1996 Comoros had numerous political parties. Many of these parties were found on only one island; some had been created to support a single individual.

In 1996 President Mohamed Taki Abdoulkarim called for all parties to dissolve and to join him in creating the National Rally for Development (RND). Most of the political parties that had supported him in the second round of the 1996 presidential elections chose to join. The National Front for Justice (FNJ), an explicitly Islamic party, worked closely with Taki and the RND but maintained a separate identity.

Most of the political parties opposed to President Taki and his constitutional changes formed a coalition, the Forum for the Restoration of Democracy (FRD), led by Abbas Dioussouf, who had been Taki's final opponent in the 1996 elections.

Major Political Parties

CONVENTION FOR THE RENEWAL OF THE COMOROS (CRC)

The Convention for the Renewal of the Comoros (CRC) is the descendant of former president Taki's National Rally for Development (RND). The party supports President Azali and favors a more centralized government than does any of its opponents. Although it is the only party to be organized on all three islands, its only electoral victories have been on Grande Comore, where it won six of the nine contested National Assembly seats. CRC only holds a minority of the seats in Grande Comore's parliament.

Minor Political Parties

Seventeen political parties participated in the most recent national and/or regional elections in Comoros. Some of these parties may have disappeared immediately after elections; others are tiny, often built around a single individual. In general, parties from the islands of Moheli and Anjouan are opponents of Azali and the CRC and proponents of further regional autonomy. Most of the parties on Grande Comore, where the Union capital is located, support the Union but differ among themselves regarding support of or opposition to Azali.

The 2004 election for the National Assembly was contested between CRC candidates and a loose coalition called the Camp des Iles Autonomous (CdIA). The

CdIA was created by the presidents of the three islands and various party leaders who put aside their differences in order to better oppose Azali.

It is impossible to know whether the CdIA will continue as a united opposition group. Among the problems is that the Assembly, where these leaders might provide a united opposition, may never get to meet, and if it does, the differences within the group may cause its dissolution. As many of the parties within the CdIA are themselves loose alliances, the opposition may be further fractured.

Other Political Forces

External forces, in recent years primarily South Africa, have been major influences in Comoros politics. South Africa hosted and mediated the reconciliation accords that ended secession of Anjouan and Moheli and produced the current confederal system. South Africa pressured Azali to allow the National Assembly elections that he had postponed, and South African observers were present at some polling places. The African Union, successor to the OAU (Organization of African Unity), has also tried to aid reconciliation.

National Prospects

The continued existence of the Union of Comoros is, as it has been on a number of previous occasions, in question. The political system is shattered, and the economy, in what is already one of the poorest countries in the world, continues to deteriorate. President Azali's power and authority, now based almost exclusively on a coup-prone army, does not extend beyond Grande Comore, and even there he is challenged by island president, Abdou Soulé Elbak.

Further Readings

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DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

(République Démocratique du Congo)

By Timothy P. Longman, Ph.D.
Revised by Koen Vlassenroot, Ph.D.



The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) is a country of 60 million people, with more than 300 ethnic groups. After gaining independence from Belgium on June 30, 1960, the Congo quickly disintegrated into a period of severe social upheaval. Persistent political instability, regional secession, and civil war eventually prompted Mobutu Sese-Seko, who was head of the military, to take power in November 1965. From 1971 to Mobutu's ouster in 1997, the country was known as Zaire. While Mobutu successfully consolidated central government control and put an end to most civil unrest, his regime was marked by highly authoritarian rule and extensive corruption. Mobutu's refusal to allow a transition to democratic rule, his attempt to exploit ethnic divisions in the country, and his mismanagement of the refugee crisis in the Kivu provinces gave rise to a rebellion that drove him from power. This rebellion was led by Laurent-Désiré Kabila and received support from a number of African countries. After Kabila's assassination in January 2001, his son Joseph Kabila became president. Although Joseph Kabila has shown more political openness than did his father or Mobutu, his government was also a military dictatorship. In July 2003, following the December 2002 Pretoria peace agreement, Kabila's government became part of the transitional government of national unity.

HISTORY: MOBUTU'S OUSTER

The Pretoria agreement was the final result of a long process of peace negotiations between the Kabila-led government, Congolese armed groups, and neighboring states. Prior to this peace agreement these actors were involved in two consecutive wars. The first one erupted in October 1996, when the Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo/Zaire (Alliance des Forces Démocratiques pour la Libération du Congo-Zaïre, or AFDL), a rebel movement led by Laurent-Désiré Kabila and supported by some of the country's neighbors, started a military campaign against extremist elements operating from Rwandan refugee camps in Zaire. The 1994 genocide in Rwanda and subsequent Rwandan Patriotic Front conquest of the country drove more than one million Rwandan refugees into Zaire, where they allied with local Zairian ethnic groups. In North Kivu these coalitions quickly resulted in attacks on local Tutsi communities. When, in 1996, a coalition of Mobutu forces and armed Hutu refugees also started openly attacking Banyamulenge (Congolese Tutsi from Rwandan origin) villages, Banyamulenge youngsters asked for support from Rwanda and prepared their own military campaign against the Hutu militias and their Zairian allies. The coordinated attacks of local and Rwandan Hutu militias against the Congolese Tutsi populations persuaded the Rwandan regime to support these Banyamulenge and to deal with the growing insecurity coming from the Rwandan refugee camps in Zaire. From these refugee camps, extremist elements had started undertaking small-scale incursions into Rwanda, without being hindered by Mobutu's regime. This led to the formation of

the AFDL on October 18, 1996. The AFDL's leaders announced its intention to drive Mobutu from power, to eliminate the rampant corruption in the Zairian government, and to restore democracy, and they called on all opponents of Mobutu to join in their fight. Kabila initially served as spokesperson of the AFDL but quickly emerged as its leader.

With extensive support from the armed forces of Rwanda and Uganda, the AFDL conquered most of eastern Zaire by the end of 1996 and from this base pushed rapidly westward toward the capital, Kinshasa. The Armed Forces of Zaire (Forces Armées Zairoises), demoralized by the declining conditions in the country and their own lack of pay, put up little resistance. Under pressure from the international community, particularly South Africa, President Mobutu finally agreed to enter negotiations with the AFDL in early May, but by the time Mobutu and Kabila met on May 4, the AFDL had little reason to seek a compromise, since it had conquered more than half the country and was approaching the capital. Two weeks after the meeting, Mobutu fled Zaire for exile in Morocco, where he died of prostate cancer a few months later.

LAURENT-DÉSIRÉ KABILA'S REGIME

On the day of Mobutu's flight from Zaire, Laurent-Désiré Kabila named himself president and changed the country's name back to what it had been at independence, the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Kabila was formally sworn in as president by the country's Supreme Court on May 29, 1997, in a ceremony in Kinshasa attended by the presidents of Angola, Burundi, Rwanda, Uganda, and Zambia. Kabila opted for a presidential form of government, in which he enjoyed extensive powers.

When Kabila took power he initially received wide support from the international community, which despite Kabila's Marxist past believed that he would allow economic development, and the Congolese public, which believed that the AFDL victory offered a chance for the country to emerge from decades of political corruption and decline. Kabila promised to hold elections within two years, and he named a government that included members of parties that had been opposed to Mobutu, such as the Union for Democracy and Social Progress (Union pour la Démocratie et le Progès Social, or UDPS) and the Patriotic Front, as well as repatriated exiles and a few former associates of the slain prime minister Lumumba.

Within days after Kabila's seizure of power, however, opposition to his regime began to emerge. Several demonstrations were held in Kinshasa in May to protest the exclusion from Kabila's cabinet of major Mobutu opponents, particularly Etienne Tshisekedi, the leader of the UDPS. Kabila quickly outlawed public demonstrations and banned political party activity, arguing that parties divide the population along racial and ethnic lines, and numerous subsequent demonstrations were violently dispersed. In addition, the new Congolese president never succeeded in establishing his control over the entire territory. By the beginning of 1998 the regime proved unable to solve many of the problems that had initiated the war in October 1996 and to bring about stability and socioeconomic development. Although the AFDL campaign against Mobutu was a military success, in political terms it was a total failure. Insecurity along the eastern borders continued to be a serious concern for Rwanda, Uganda, and Burundi. Internally, the legal status of the Banyamulenge and similar groups remained unresolved, while Kabila had to face growing popular resentment against his Tutsi allies in Rwanda and Uganda.

The inherent weakness of the new regime was due to the rapidity with which the Mobutu regime was vanquished. The AFDL lacked any real popular support, while the newly created Congolese Armed Forces (Forces Armées Congolaises) was too fragmented to become a serious military force. Kabila's version of regime building was one of strengthening his personal hold on power by reducing the influence of the AFDL and employing members of his own ethnic community. Furthermore, the coalition of international and internal forces that overthrew president Mobutu proved to be very short-lived. Soon after Kabila came to power, it became clear that the regional alliance in support of the AFDL was a very fragile one. Although all the actors that were involved in what was presented as "Kabila's rebellion" shared the aspiration of putting an end to the Mobutu regime, the vision of a common enemy was the only binding force. Once the common objective had been reached, the alliance lost its cohesiveness. When Kabila started looking for new (internal and external) allies to reduce the influence of his former "allies" and to gain much needed internal support, his former eastern allies started preparing a new military rebel movement, the Rally for Congolese Democracy (Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie, or RCD) in the Republic of the Congo. The RCD began its military campaign in August 1998.

THE RCD CAMPAIGN

The RCD-led rebellion was more than a simple repetition of the AFDL campaign, as former allies now became adversaries, new coalitions proved to be fleeting, and economic interests became guiding principles. This new war set in motion a total fragmentation of the political and military landscape. The first reason was the growing division within the RCD rebel movement into opposing factions, which had the effect of intensifying the struggle for control over the eastern parts of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, leading to a carving up of the Congolese territory into separate politico-military regions (each controlled by different rebel groups). The second reason for the complication of the politico-military landscape was the entrance of new actors and the formation of new (local and regional) coalitions. The RCD rebellion also gave new breath to the formation of rural militias, known as Mai-Mai or Mayi-Mayi.

International pressure to end the Congolese conflict resulted in a number of peace accords. In August 1999 a number of belligerents signed the Lusaka Peace Agreement. This accord led to the Inter-Congolese Dialogue but could not put an end to the conflict itself. Three months later agreement was reached on the deployment of a UN monitoring force. However, Laurent-Désiré Kabila was assassinated in 2001; his son Joseph Kabila then became president. In July 2002 another peace agreement was signed between the Congolese government and Rwanda and resulted in the withdrawal of Rwandan troops. In December 2002 the Congolese parties to the Inter-Congolese Dialogue signed a further agreement about a two-year political transition process, which started only after the signing of the final act, in April 2003 in Sun City, South Africa.

Since its inauguration in July 2003, the power-sharing government that was set up as part of this transition process has been faced with internal division and divergent political interests among its members and with a lack of resources necessary to put forward the needed reforms. Most discussions have been focused on the sharing of political and military power among its components, yet efforts to establish a national and unified army that is able to ensure stability in the country have faltered due to a lack of trust between the former warring parties. In addition, various armed groups that are not included in the peace process continue to threaten the stability of large parts of eastern Congo, which is seen by Congo's neighbors as a serious threat to their interests and security.

The System of Government

The current government of national unity, led by Joseph Kabila, was installed after the start of the transition process in June 2003 and includes representatives of the main belligerents of the Congolese war (1998–2003) as well as a number of other influential political players. This government replaces the government that had come to power by military force in May 1997.

After 2003 Congo operated with a transitional constitution. One of the documents adopted as part of the Sun City 2003 agreement, this constitution specified a number of general principles and basic rights as well as the powers of each institution in the DRC. A new permanent constitution was approved by the National Assembly in May 2005. Elections were scheduled for 2006.

EXECUTIVE

The presidency of the transitional government of national unity is held by Joseph Kabila, who already had this position in those parts of the DRC that were controlled by governmental forces before the implementation in June 2003 of the December 2002 Pretoria peace agreement. This agreement, which officially put an end to the Congolese war, includes a power-sharing transitional government. The president has four vice presidents. Two are from the principal former rebel movements—Azarias Ruberwa from the RCD-Goma (RCD-G) and Jean-Pierre Bemba from the Movement for the Liberation of the Congo (Mouvement de Libération du Congo, or MLC). One, Abdoulaye Yerodia, is from the former government and the fourth, Arthur Z'Ahidi Ngoma, is from the nonarmed political opposition. These vice presidents are more than ceremonial, as they hold key policy portfolios. The cabinet has 36 ministers and 25 deputy ministers from the former government structures; the rebel movement factions RCD-G, MLC, RCD-ML, and RCD-N; the Mai-Mai forces; and civil society. Nevertheless, the RCD-G, MLC, and ex-government components are the largest components of the transitional government and hold the majority of ministerial posts.

LEGISLATURE

As part of the transition process, a two-chamber parliament was installed in 2003. This parliament has a National Assembly of 500 members and a Senate of 120 members. These members have been appointed by

their entities in the Inter-Congolese Dialogue. RCD-G, MLC, and ex-government components, however, hold the majority of senior-level positions in the National Assembly and the Senate. Certain provinces (e.g., the Kivus) are overrepresented, while other regions (e.g., the Kasais) are underrepresented. The National Assembly and Senate have to adopt more than 60 laws regarding the constitution—among them, laws on nationality, functioning and organization of political parties, elections, and institutional management. On March 15, 2004, the Assembly passed a political parties act.

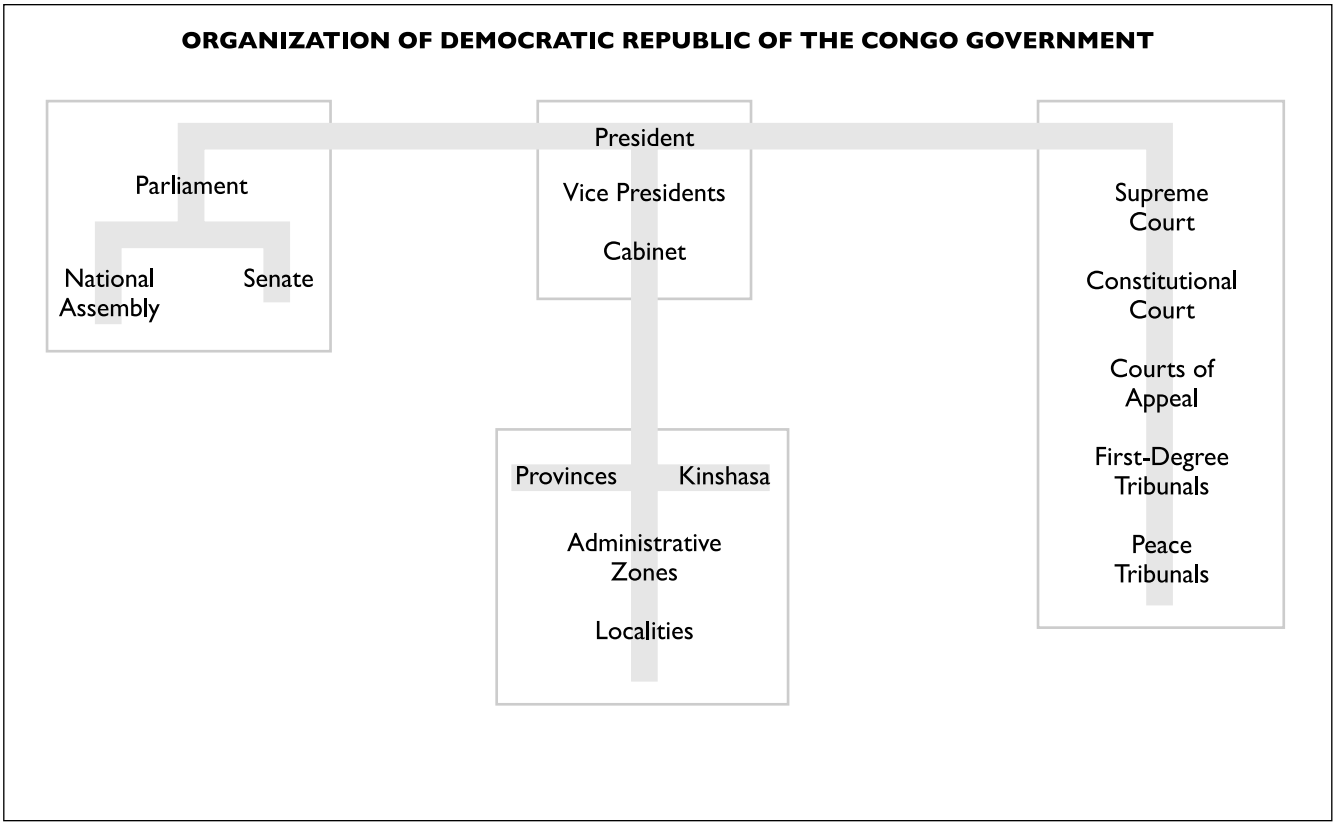
JUDICIARY

Under Mobutu, the judiciary almost entirely lacked autonomy. Mobutu appointed judges to the Supreme Court and other courts based on his personal political interests and harassed any who demonstrated independence. After taking power, Joseph Kabila left the judiciary institutions—including the Constitutional Court, courts of appeals, first-degree tribunals, and peace tribunals—in place, but their activities have been seriously circumvented. The 22 justices of the Supreme Court presided at the elder Kabila's inauguration but have played little subsequent role. In many locations, military and government administrators have taken on many of the functions that were traditionally the domain of the judiciary, such as judging people accused of crimes and determining punishments.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The DRC is divided into 10 provinces and Kinshasa, each of which is subdivided into administrative zones, which in turn are subdivided into localities. Although the elder Kabila returned several provinces to the names they had used in the 1960s—Shaba is once again Katanga, and Haut-Zaire is Orientale—he retained the provincial organization instituted by Mobutu rather than reverting to the system of 21 provinces used prior to Mobutu's coup.

As the AFDL advanced across Congo in 1996 and 1997, it held public meetings, shortly after capturing territory, in which the population was allowed to select new governors, commissioners for the zones, and mayors. Since then vacancies in regional and local posts have been filled by appointment, mostly to the advantage of members of Katangese. In those regions that fell under the control of rebel movements during the 1998 war, key officials have been removed by newly appointed administrators loyal to



the rebel leaderships. In 2004 the transitional government appointed new provincial governors. While most of the regional and local government officials are civilians, many observers claim that regional military officers represent the real centers of power in the provinces. The chief officers in each province continue to dictate most policy.

The Electoral System

As concluded in the constitution of transition and the peace agreements of 2002 and 2003, the Independent Electoral Commission is charged with the preparation of transparent and democratic elections and a national referendum on the new constitution. This commission was signed into law by President Kabila on June 6, 2004, and is composed of 21 members chosen by the different parties to the transition process. One of the main tasks facing this commission is the preparation of the electoral register. Elections are scheduled for 2006 (the official end of the transition period).

The Party System

Mobutu founded the Popular Movement of the Revolution (Mouvement Populaire de la Révolution, or MPR) as Congo's only legal political party in 1967, and for two decades the MPR dominated Congolese politics. In the last decade of Mobutu's rule, however, a number of political parties rose up to challenge the dominance of the MPR, and some of them received wide public support. As the AFDL advanced toward Kinshasa, a number of these parties expressed support for the AFDL and organized strikes to urge Mobutu to enter negotiations with Laurent-Désiré Kabila. Nevertheless, Kabila made little effort to bring the parties into the AFDL. Shortly after naming himself president, Kabila banned all party activity, and although he named a few Mobutu opponents to his cabinet, he did not include the most prominent opposition politicians. In May 2001 President Joseph Kabila lifted the official ban on political parties. In addition to the political party opposition, since the start of the 1998 war a number of rebel movements have emerged, primarily in the eastern provinces. After the signing of the peace agreements, most of these movements have turned into political parties and officially support the peace process. Nevertheless, a number of armed actors reject the transitional government and continue their military campaigns.

Major Political Parties

UNION FOR DEMOCRACY AND SOCIAL PROGRESS

(Union pour la Démocratie et le Progés Social; UDPS)

The UDPS is the oldest and most prominent opposition political party in Congo. The UDPS was founded by a group of dissident members of the Legislative Council in 1982, despite the MPR's official monopoly. Because the party's formation was in violation of the law banning other parties, the leaders of the UDPS were imprisoned, and several served lengthy terms. Nevertheless, the party persisted, and Etienne Tshisekedi, the most outspoken critic of the Mobutu regime, emerged as its leader.

The UDPS played a major role in organizing the Sovereign National Conference in 1990. The UDPS joined with other parties opposed to Mobutu to form a party coalition called the Sacred Union (Union Sacré), with Tshisekedi as its leader. The National Conference appointed Tshisekedi as prime minister in 1992, in a challenge to Mobutu's authority. Many opposition activists hoped that Tshisekedi would oversee a transition to democracy, but Mobutu managed to hang on to power, in part by dividing the opposition. In 1993 Mobutu appointed his own prime minister, but Tshisekedi refused to accept his dismissal, claiming that Mobutu did not have the authority to dismiss him. In 1994 the HCR–PT, the legislative body that combined the National Conference and the Legislative Council, named Kengo wa Dondo as prime minister, but Tshisekedi continued to claim that he was the rightful prime minister. The party became divided, as some members of the UDPS and the Sacred Union agreed to serve in the Kengo Cabinet.

In April 1997 Mobutu dismissed Kengo and named Tshisekedi as prime minister. The latter accepted the position only on condition that he could use it to negotiate a peaceful end to the civil war. One week after the appointment, however, Mobutu dismissed him and named his hard-line army chief of staff as prime minister. Many people, particularly in Kinshasa, where Tshisekedi is very popular, were distressed that Kabila did not name him to be prime minister or to another prominent post in his government. Tshisekedi voiced strong criticisms of Kabila and organized rallies calling for a rapid move toward democracy. At least two other UDPS politicians, however, were included in the cabinet.

Although the UDPS recognizes the legitimacy of the transitional institutions, it has refused to participate in them. Even if Tshisekedi can claim international recognition for his role as opponent to Mobutu's dictatorship and his attempts to safeguard the Inter-Congolese Dialogue, he has been criticized and lost much of his influence after his solicitation of Rwandese support. Tshisekedi is a Luba from Kasai, his main power base.

UNITED LUMUMBIST PARTY

(Parti Lumumbist Unifié; PALU)

PALU is another party that challenged the elder Kabila's regime to diversify the government, move rapidly toward democracy, and respect human rights. PALU organized numerous public protests after the AFDL victory, and a number of its members were arrested. PALU is led by Antoine Gizenga.

RALLY FOR CONGOLESE DEMOCRACY

(Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie; RCD)

Previously unknown, the RCD burst onto the Congolese political scene spectacularly with an attack on Kivu on August 2, 1998. With extensive support from the AFDL's former allies, Rwanda and Uganda, the RCD quickly took control of much of eastern Congo, following the AFDL's own route to power. In a dramatic move, hundreds of RCD troops were airlifted more than 1,000 miles across Congo in September to the port city of Matadi, from which they launched an offensive on the capital, Kinshasa. Despite initial success, the RCD offensive in the west was eventually crushed by the intervention of troops from Angola, Zimbabwe, and Namibia. The RCD occupied a large portion of the east, including the third-largest city, Kisangani, and it was advancing slowly on several fronts.

Politically and militarily, the movement continued to be dependent on Rwanda and Uganda, until in 1999 it split into two groups. This split was the result of a lack of cohesion within the movement and growing tension between Rwanda and Uganda. After this split, the main part of the movement came to be called RCD-Goma (RCD-G), referring to the location of its headquarters and power base. The other faction took the name RCD-Kisangani (RCD-K), which it later changed to RCD–Mouvement de Libération (RCD–Movement for Liberation, RCD-ML). During the war the RCD-G had the support of an armed wing, the National Congolese Army (Armée Nationale Congolaise, or ANC). After the signing of the Global and Inclusive Agreement, the RCD-G became a political party. Its president, Azarias Ruberwa, a Munyamulenge, is one of the four vice presidents of the transitional government. In August 2004 Ruberwa announced the withdrawal of his party from the transitional institutions, after about 160 Banyamulenge were brutally killed at a refugee camp in Burundi. This withdrawal posed a serious threat to the transition process. After mediation talks with South Africa's president, the RCD-G decided to return to the transition. Among the other RCD factions is the RCD-National (RCD-N), a Ugandan-backed group led by Roger Lumbala.

RALLY FOR CONGOLESE DEMOCRACY–MOVEMENT FOR LIBERATION

(Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie–Mouvement de Libération; RCD-ML)

Born out of the RCD split in March 1999, this movement was founded by the former RCD head Wamba-dia-Wamba and is now led by Mbusa Nyamwisi. Originally known as the RCD-Kisangani (RCD-K), the group allied itself with the MLC and received military and political support from Uganda to prevent the RCD-G from increasing its influence in the northern parts of North Kivu. In 2001 the group turned to Kinshasa and received military support from Kabila's armed forces. Its stronghold is Beni. It is considered to be a movement dominated by members of the Nande ethnic community. The RCD-ML participated in the Inter-Congolese Dialogue and as one of the signatories of the peace agreements gained the right to participate in the transitional institutions.

RALLY FOR CONGOLESE DEMOCRACY–NATIONAL

(Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie–National; RCD-N)

This small movement, led by Roger Lumbala, split off from the RCD-ML when Mbusa Nyamwisi turned to Kinshasa and abandoned his alliance with Uganda. The RCD-N remained loyal to Uganda and depended on the MLC for its military activities. This movement

was allowed access to the transitional institutions and since then has become a political party.

MOVEMENT FOR THE LIBERATION OF THE CONGO

(Mouvement de Libération du Congo; MLC)

The MLC was created in February 1999 and is led by Jean-Pierre Bemba, an influential businessman. The MLC has some support from former Mobutists and is a close ally of Uganda. Before the transition process the MLC was in control of large parts of the northern Congo, with the Equateur province as its stronghold. At the start of the transition process, the MLC was converted into a political party and since then has participated in transitional institutions. Jean-Pierre Bemba is one of the four vice presidents of the transitional government.

PEOPLE'S PARTY FOR RECONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT

(Parti du Peuple pour la Réconstruction et le Développement; PPRD)

The PPRD was founded in March 2002 and represents the supporters of President Joseph Kabila and his late father. Vital Kamerhe, a close ally of Kabila and a former minister, is the secretary-general of the PPRD. Prior to the formation of this party, Laurent-Désiré Kabila had encouraged the formation of "people's power committees" throughout the country to act as a link between the government and the people, similar to the National Resistance Committees in Uganda.

Minor Political Parties

Because of the change from the predominant party system, it is unclear which parties will emerge from the transition as "major" and "minor" players in future politics. For the present, all Congolese parties and militias are recorded as major parties.

Other Political Forces

MAI-MAI

In the province of North Kivu, speakers of the Rwandan language, both Tutsi and Hutu, known collectively as "Banyarwanda," constitute more than 50 percent of the population. While many Banyarwanda families have been in the Congo for centuries, others immigrated during the colonial period, when the Belgian colonial government moved people out of overpopulated Rwanda, or, more recently, fleeing ethnic violence. While the Banyarwanda have prospered economically, members of ethnic groups that consider themselves the region's original inhabitants, particularly the Hunde and Nyanga, have dominated political offices. But with a transition to democracy becoming increasingly likely, Hunde and Nyanga feared losing their influence. The Mobutu regime sought to exploit these fears and encouraged Hunde and Nyanga and, to a lesser extent, other groups, such as Nande and Tembo, to form militias, which came to be known collectively as the Mai-Mai. In 1993 the Mai-Mai sought to expel Banyarwanda from the zones of Masisi, Walikale, and Rutshuru and killed several thousand. In 1995 and 1996 fighting broke out again, as Hutu refugees from Rwanda, whose Interahamwe militia had carried out genocide in Rwanda, joined with Congolese Hutu to fight both the Mai-Mai and the Congolese Tutsi.

When the AFDL advanced on North Kivu in late 1996, the Mai-Mai lent their support to the fight against the Zairian army and its Rwandan Hutu allies, but the alliance between the AFDL and the militias was always tenuous. The Mai-Mai remained as distinct groups, with few of their fighters integrated into the ranks of the AFDL, and, from the first, AFDL officers had difficulty exercising control over the Mai-Mai. After the AFDL came to power, the non-Rwandan groups in North and South Kivu resented the continuing presence of Rwandan soldiers in the region and the dominance of Tutsi in the new local and regional governments. After the outbreak of the second war in 1998, Mai-Mai leaders also started recruiting better educated and disenchanted urban youth, who were attracted to the alleged objective of fighting the "Rwandan occupation." Shared feelings of antipathy toward the "Tutsi aggressors," however, also facilitated the creation of stronger links between these diverse local groupings and Burundian and Rwandan militias that were operating from Congolese soil. In addition, these militias also became an attractive force for several political and economic actors as well as social movements. After the signing of the Lusaka Peace Agreement in 1999, in which the Mai-Mai groups were not officially included, the Kinshasa government started providing these groups with arms, which led to a serious progression of their military activity and to their subsequent control over large parts of the countryside.

Although the Mai-Mai remained a loose coalition of militias with decentralized command structures, some of these groups structured themselves into a genuine political movement and were represented as an entity at the 2002–03 peace talks, which led to their participation in the transitional institutions.

RELIGIOUS GROUPS

The Congo is a heavily Christian country, with nearly 90 percent of the population claiming membership in a Catholic, Protestant, or syncretic Christian church. The Catholic Church alone counts more than 50 percent of the population in its ranks, making it the largest nonstate organization in the Congo. Mobutu viewed churches as a threat to his authority and implemented policies in the 1970s intended to limit their power and influence. In 1971 the government passed a law regulating churches, which recognized as legal only the Catholic Church, the Church of Christ in Zaire (Eglise du Christ au Zaire; ECZ, an association that united mainstream Protestant churches), and the Kimbanguist Church (the largest syncretic church). In subsequent years the government forbade the use of Christian names as part of an attempt to limit the cultural influences of the churches, banned a number of church publications, and nationalized church-run schools. These policies led to a severe conflict with the Catholic Church, which forced Cardinal Malula briefly into exile. In the 1980s the Catholic Church served as a major source of opposition to the regime, and in 1990 Malula's successor, Cardinal Mosengwo, served as head of the Sovereign National Conference. A number of Catholic clergy were active in the National Conference and in the new political parties that formed. Following the AFDL victory the Catholic Church continued to speak out prophetically, calling for greater democracy and condemning the massacre of refugees in the eastern Congo.

During the Mobutu era both the Kimbanguist Church and the united Protestant body, the ECZ, were closely allied with the regime. Bishop Bokeleale, the head of the ECZ, was from Mobutu's home region of Equateur and was a close associate of the president. Because of these associations with Mobutu, the Kimbanguist Church and ECZ were in a precarious position under the new regime and have remained largely silent during the period of transition. Since all Protestant churches were forced into the ECZ by Mobutu's regulations, the very future of the united body, which brings together some 30 different church communities, is in doubt. Various independent Protestant churches and syncretic churches banned under Mobutu could become a more important political force.

CIVIL SOCIETY GROUPS

During the 1980s and 1990s a large number of independent associations emerged in the Congo outside the auspices of Mobutu's officially all-encompassing party, the MPR. The most significant of these groups, from a political perspective, were the new human rights groups. The largest human rights group, the Zairian Association for the Defense of Human Rights (Association Zairoise pour la Défense des Droits de l'Homme) became a major thorn in the side of Mobutu during the 1990s, as it regularly denounced human rights violations by the armed forces, police, and government officials. Numerous regional human rights groups also played a role in monitoring government and military abuse. Members of these groups were regularly harassed and arrested, but the number of groups and the extent of their critiques nevertheless continued to proliferate. Under the AFDL, many of the groups continued to speak out, and their members faced harassment. The civil society took part as an entity in the Inter-Congolese Dialogue. Its representatives are now participating in the transitional institutions.

THE MEDIA

In the final years of the Mobutu regime, a vibrant print media emerged in Zaire, above all in the capital, Kinshasa. The papers publicized information regarding the actual conditions in the country, official corruption, and moves toward democratization. As opposition political parties emerged, many of them created newspapers or received backing from existing papers. The Mobutu regime regularly arrested journalists, but attempts to subdue the press were largely unsuccessful.

Since the AFDL victory, the press has remained relatively circumspect. Several major newspapers, such as *La Tempete des Tropiques*, *Umoja*, and *Le Phare*, continue to provide frank news coverage. Both President Kabila and his father, however, regularly ordered arrests of journalists who have been too critical. One of the transitional institutions is the media authority.

National Prospects

The DRC has great potential to become a prosperous nation, because in contrast to many African countries

the Congo is very rich in natural resources, with substantial reserves of diamonds, gold, cobalt, and copper; vast tropical forests; and a large area of fertile land, only a portion of which is currently under cultivation. More than 30 years of bad economic management, however, have reduced Congo's economy to ruins. The Mobutu regime has been characterized as a "kleptocracy," because of the remarkable extent of official corruption. By funneling profits from mineral exploitation, public taxation, and international development assistance into their own pockets, government officials were able to live lavish lifestyles while the vast majority of the population found themselves struggling to get by. Despite Congo's vast wealth, the country's infrastructure has almost entirely collapsed, with few roads remaining passable, the systems of education and health care in disarray, and the mining and agricultural industries functioning at only a portion of their capacity. Much of the rural population has reverted to subsistence farming, while urban populations struggle to survive.

The corruption and violence of the Mobutu regime also left a troubling social and political legacy. Government offices were regarded not as a public trust but as opportunities for personal enrichment. Much of the Congolese population came to view the state as a threat to be avoided, and this legacy of alienation from the state is difficult to overcome. Furthermore, to serve their personal interests, government officials have exploited ethnic and regional differences and created a legacy of deep division that continues to foster conflict. The army and police under Mobutu showed a deep disregard for human rights, widely practicing arbitrary arrest, torture, and summary execution and extorting money from the population, while almost entirely neglecting the task of stopping crime and maintaining order. The resultant criminality and disregard for the law have created a culture of impunity that cannot be quickly eliminated.

The fall of Mobutu after more than 30 years of authoritarian rule created a general hope that the country will emerge from the crisis. However, soon after its arrival to power, the Kabila regime was faced with armed resistance, turning the country into a war that ravaged large parts of the east and that caused, directly or indirectly, the death of more than three million people.

The power-sharing transitional government, which was instituted in June 2003 as the result of negotiations between the different warring parties and nonarmed political actors, is due to lead the country to the national elections in 2006 and to hand power to a democratically elected government. However, a number of events in 2004 and 2005 have caused pessimism about the near future of the DRC. The transitional government is faced with mistrust between its members, while the military situation in parts of eastern Congo remains very tense. One of the failures of the transition process is to proceed with restructuring the Congolese armed forces, which demonstrates the unwillingness of some of the parties to give up their own military power. The lack of progress of the transition process delayed the organization of general elections, originally scheduled for 2005.

In the eastern parts of the country, a number of Congolese militias continue to control parts of the territory, and Rwandan and Burundian Hutu militias remain present and are building up their military activities. In addition, growing animosity toward the Banyamulenge community, which is blamed for the dissident behavior of the former RCD military, risks provoking further ethnic violence in the Kivus. If the transitional government cannot deal with this heightened insecurity in the east, Rwanda may regard this insecurity as a threat to its own stability and redeploy troops in the DRC. After rebels clashed with Congolese armed forces in December 2004, Rwanda denied that it was behind the rebel attacks. In March 2005 UN peacekeepers killed more than 50 rebel fighters. The adoption by the National Assembly of a new constitution in May 2005 offered a new glimmer of hope that the country could make its way toward a unified, peaceful future.

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REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

(République du Congo)

By Christopher J. Lee, Ph.D.



The Republic of the Congo is a unitary republic located in western Central Africa and bordered by Cabinda (a discontiguous province of Angola) to the south, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (formerly Zaire) to the south and east, the Central African Republic and Cameroon to the north, and Gabon to the west. Its capital is Brazzaville. It has a section of coastline to the southwest on the Atlantic Ocean. Is has an area of approximately 342,000 square kilometers and a population estimated at just over 3 million (mid-2005). The main ethnic groups include the Kongon, the Téké, the M'Bochi, and the Sanga. Roughly half of the population practices indigenous religious beliefs. Christianity follows next in popularity, with Islam being third.

HISTORY

The Republic of the Congo achieved autonomy within the French colonial community in November 1958, with full independence following on August 15, 1960. Abbé Fulbert Youlou was elected the first president of the Congo in March 1961. The new constitution granted extensive executive power. Youlou's policies generated ethnic tension and labor unrest. He resigned in August 1963, and a transitional government was created under the leadership of Alphonse Massamba-Débat. Massamba-Débat was elected president in December 1963 shortly after the establishment of a new constitution. Beginning in 1964 with the establishment of the leftist National Movement of Revolution (MNR), the sole political party, tensions developed between the army and government. In August 1968 Captain Marien Ngouabi seized power in a military coup. He officially became president in January 1969. The leftist Congolese Labor Party (PCT) replaced the MNR. Despite coup attempts in 1972 and 1973, Ngouabi remained in power. After approval of a new constitution in June 1973, a new government was formed in August, complete with a National Assembly. Political instability persisted, however, and after a series of power struggles, Ngouabi was assassinated in March 1977. Colonel Jacques-Joachim Yhombi-Opango was appointed president. Despite efforts at improving social conditions, Yhombi-Opango gradually lost support and relinquished control in February 1979. In March, with approval of the PCT, Colonel Denis Sassou-Nguesso became president.

With his leftist political background helping facilitate the adoption of a Socialist constitution, Sassou-Nguesso's term was influenced by liberal elements. In 1984 Sassou-Nguesso was elected president for another five years. He also consolidated his power through a new constitutional amendment and obtained further control over the military. Despite these attempts at establishing firmer political control, Sassou-Nguesso faced increasing opposition, fueled by economic discontent and ethnic tension. In July 1989 he was again elected president for another five years. The new government implemented policies to further liberalize the economy. In December 1990 the PCT officially

dropped Marxism-Leninism and advocated the creation of a multiparty political system. In early 1991, at a national conference intended to reform the political system, the constitution was suspended and the government dissolved. General Louis-Sylvain Goma, who was prime minister, became head of state. In December 1991 a draft constitution was completed that called for an elected National Assembly and a nationally elected president. This constitution was approved in March 1992.

NEW ELECTIONS

In June and July 1992 elections to the new National Assembly and Senate took place. The Pan-African Union for Social Democracy (UPADS) won a majority of seats in both bodies. In August, Pascal Lissouba, leader of the UPADS, won the two-round presidential election. Lissouba promised economic reform and a decentralization of power from the national to the regional level. Although plans existed for a coalition between the UPADS and the PCT, they were discarded by the PCT after Lissouba failed to appoint a cabinet that met the PCT's expectations. The PCT went on to form a coalition with the Union for Democratic Renewal (URD), a group of seven parties. This URD–PCT coalition gave a no-confidence vote to the new administration. Lissouba refused to resign, however, and dissolved the parliament. As tensions mounted, the military stepped in to encourage the formation of a transitional government until elections could be held.

Legislative elections in May 1993 brought victory to the UPADS and its allies. The URD–PCT contested the results, with violence eventually erupting. In June the Supreme Court ruled that the elections had been corrupted. A state of emergency existed from July until August, with a truce being negotiated. With new elections, the UPADS and its allies again won a majority. The URD–PCT, having won more seats than before, accepted the election. Violence erupted again, however. Over 2,000 deaths resulted by the end of 1993. A truce was negotiated in January 1994, though violent incidents did continue to occur.

In December 1994 a new attempt at forming a coalition government was pursued. Lissouba signed a truce with opposition leaders Bernard Kolelas, head of the Congolese Movement for Democracy and Comprehensive Development (MCDDI), and Sassou-Nguesso, head of the newly created United Democratic Forces (FDU). A new government was formed in January 1995 with attempts at integrating opposition members, though the FDU refused to participate. In August and September, Lissouba introduced measures to repress union activity and the freedom of the press. In December 1995 an agreement was signed to facilitate the disarmament of opposition militias and the representation of opposition members in the military. Despite efforts at reconciliation that continued into 1996, opposition forces, particularly those associated with the FDU, kept their distance and continued to criticize the government.

Presidential elections to be held in August 1997 were postponed due to political conflict between Lissouba and opposition forces led by Sassou-Nguesso. After an attempt by Lissouba to form a government of national unity, Sassou-Nguesso forcefully deposed Lissouba in October 1997 after taking control of Brazzaville. Sassou-Nguesso was sworn in as president and established a transitional government.

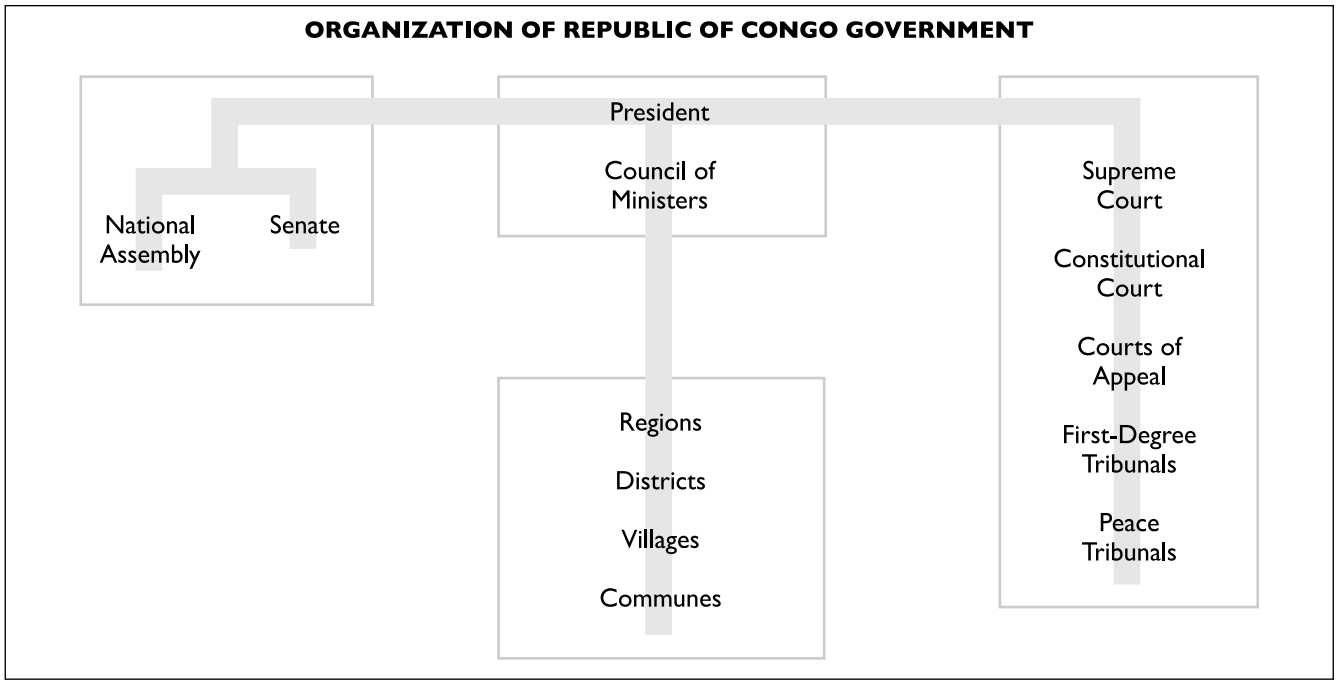
Following the adoption of a new constitution in January 2002, Sassou-Nguesso won the presidency in elections held in March. He has retained power since that point. Armed rebel groups agreed to a final peace accord in March 2003, but the peace remains tenuous.

The System of Government

The Republic of the Congo is a fragile democracy that rests on a constitution approved on January 20, 2002. It has a strong executive branch, led by the president, and a bicameral parliament.

EXECUTIVE

The Congo's political history has been defined by a strong executive branch, and recent developments continue to bear out this legacy. General Denis Sassou-Nguesso became president on October 25, 1997, having forcefully ousted President Pascal Lissouba from power. In a context of ongoing political violence between forces loyal to Sassou-Nguesso and those loyal to Lissouba, a new constitution was approved in January 2002 that provided for a presidential term of seven years, with a limit of two terms. Sassou-Nguesso was officially elected president for the first time in March 2002 in an election that lacked any effective opposition. Since the approval of the 2002 constitution, power has remained in the hands of Sassou-Nguesso and his appointed government. Below him is the Council of Ministers.



LEGISLATURE

The 2002 constitution provides for a bicameral parliament with a Senate of 66 seats and a National Assembly of 137 seats. Members in both bodies are elected by universal suffrage for five-year terms. Despite the strength of the executive branch, by law the president may not dissolve the parliament. The Democratic and Patriotic Forces (FDP) alliance led by President Sassou-Nguesso currently holds a majority of seats. The next elections are scheduled for 2007.

JUDICIARY

In October 1997 the judiciary system established by the 1992 constitution was suspended. Prior to this suspension the court system consisted of two main courts, the Supreme Court and the Revolutionary Court of Justice. The Supreme Court handled cases of civil dispute. The Revolutionary Court of Justice adjudicated cases involving matters of state security. The 2002 constitution has sought to reestablish the previous rule of law through strengthening the powers of the Supreme Court as the highest court in the country. The legal system as a whole is based on both French civil law and African customary law at the local level. Below the Supreme Court are a Constitutional Court, courts of appeals, first-degree tribunals, and peace tribunals.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The Republic of the Congo is divided into 10 regions as well a commune represented by the capital of Brazzaville. These sections are further divided into 76 districts, each of which has a governing council; in addition, there are six urban councils.

The Electoral System

The 2002 constitution has sought to reestablish the electoral system that was suspended with the coup of 1997. Universal suffrage for those over the age of 18 is constitutionally guaranteed. However, the presidential and parliamentary elections of 2002 only buttressed the political base of President Sassou-Nguesso and his alliance, the FDP. Political opposition and violence consequently remain threats to political stability. The next elections are scheduled for 2007.

The Party System

Since the establishment of a multiparty system in 1992, political tensions that have escalated to violence have developed between parties. In the 1992 elections to the new National Assembly and the Senate, UPADS

won a majority of seats in both bodies. Plans existed for a coalition between the UPADS and the previously powerful PCT. Founded in 1969, the PCT was the sole political party until 1990. Coalition plans were discarded by the PCT when President Lissouba of the UPADS failed to appoint a cabinet that met the approval of the PCT. The PCT instead went on to create a coalition with URD, a group of seven parties.

Tensions between the URD–PCT coalition and UPADS led to Lissouba's dissolving the parliament. New legislative elections in May 1993 again brought victory to UPADS and its allies. The URD–PCT challenged these results, with the Supreme Court eventually ruling in their favor. With new elections, UPADS and its allies again won a majority. The URD–PCT, having won more seats than previously, accepted the results. Politically influenced violence did occur between both groups, however.

In December 1994 a new attempt at forming a coalition government was pursued, with truces being signed with opposition leaders Bernard Kolelas, head of the MCDDI, and Sassou-Nguesso, head of the FDU. A new government was formed in January 1995, with attempts at integrating opposition members, though the FDU refused to participate. In order to curb the violence that threatened political instability, an agreement was signed in December 1995 to facilitate the disarmament of opposition militias and to increase the representation of opposition members in the military. Despite efforts at reconciliation, opposition forces kept their distance and continued to criticize. In October 1997 Sassou-Nguesso forcefully took power, suspending the 1992 constitution and the electoral system. The 2002 constitution has since reestablished an electoral party system in principle, though Sassou-Nguesso remains in power with the possibility of political instability remaining.

Major Political Parties

DEMOCRATIC AND PATRIOTIC FORCES

(Forces Démocratiques et Patriotiques; FDP)

Formerly known as the United Democratic Forces, this group, founded in 1994 and renamed in 1996, is the umbrella organization for six allied political parties supporting President Sassou-Nguesso. These include the Congolese Labor Party (Parti Congolais du Travail), the Convention for a Democratic Alternative (Convention pour l'Alternative Démocratique), the National Union for Democracy and Progress, the Liberal Republican Party (Parti Libéral Républicain), the Union for National Renewal (Union pour le Renouveau Nationale), and the Patriotic Union for National Reconstruction (Union Patriotique pour la Réconstruction Nationale).

Minor Political Parties

PAN-AFRICAN UNION FOR SOCIAL DEMOCRACY

(Union Panafricaine pour la Démocratie Sociale; UPADS)

This social democratic party is the party of the former president Pascal Lissouba and forms his main basis of support. It is currently led by Martin Mberi.

OPPOSITION COORDINATION FOR DEMOCRATIC ALTERNATION

(CODE-A)

In August 2004, 20 opposition parties formed a coalition known as the Opposition Coordination for Democratic Alternation (CODE-A), consisting of the MCDDI and other groups. CODE-A has called for a more inclusive national dialogue to address Congo's problems as well election reform under the supervision of the United Nations.

Other Political Forces

Remnants of the civil war militias remain active in the southern region of the country. Known as Ninjas, some of these militias have refused to give up their arms, although others did sign the peace accord in 2003. In April 2005 the government announced that a group of army officers arrested in January for theft had been planning a coup.

National Prospects

The Republic of the Congo remains in political transition, despite the establishment of a new constitution in January 2002. Political tensions and the possibility of violence continue. Peace agreements with rebel groups in 2003 promised an end to further conflict, though the permanence of such accords awaits the passage of time.

The spread of HIV/AIDS poses a new problem for social instability. However, a key strength of the country is its status as one of Africa's leading oil producers. Such economic potential could help the Congo achieve much-needed growth and stability in the near future.

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REPUBLIC OF COSTA RICA

(República de Costa Rica)

By Kirk Bowman, Ph.D.



Costa Rica is located on the Central American isthmus between Nicaragua and Panama. At 19,575 square miles, the land mass is somewhat smaller than that of West Virginia. The population of four million is largely Mestizo (although many Costa Ricans erroneously consider themselves to be of pure European descent) and the indigenous population is quite small (about 1 percent). The other ethnic group is composed of descendants of black Jamaicans who were brought to build the railroads or work on banana plantations. Blacks are concentrated on the Caribbean coast and make up roughly 2 percent of the population.

The System of Government

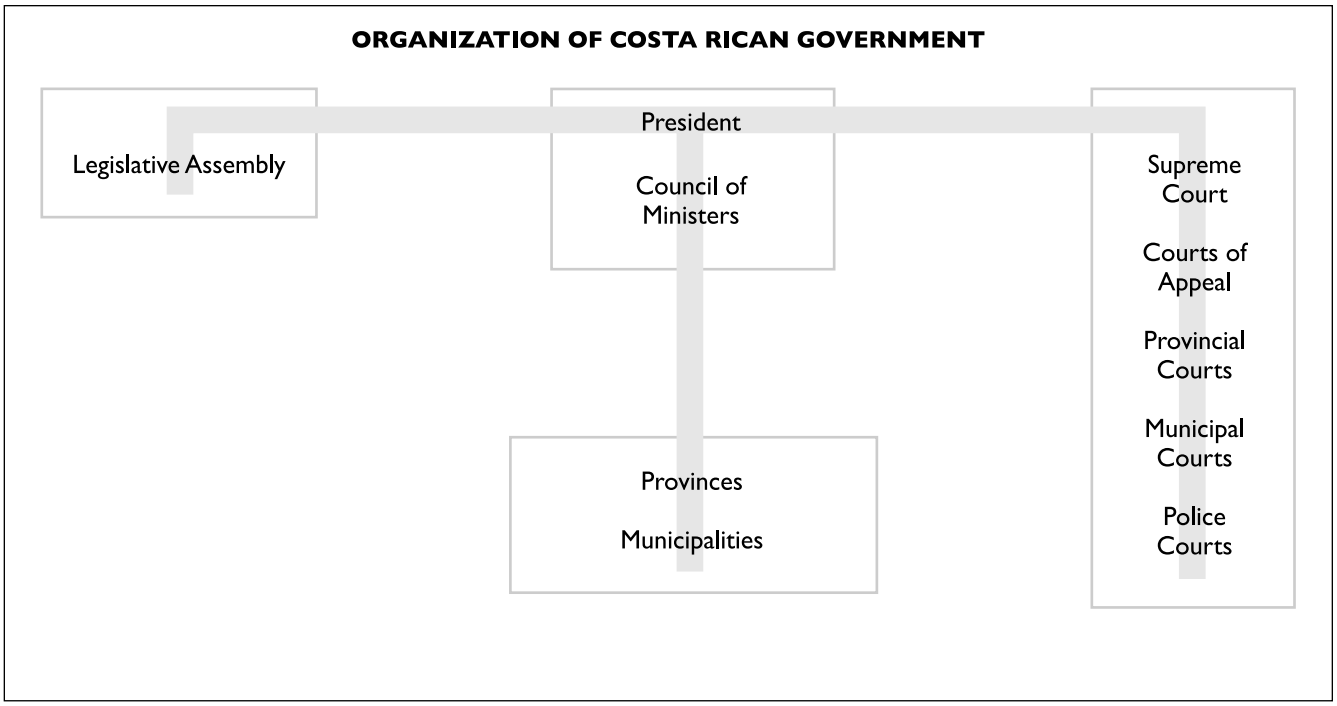
Costa Rica is a presidential system with a strong unicameral legislature and an independent judiciary and has been a vigorous and stable democracy since the 1950s. One of the immediate results of the Civil War of 1948 was the permanent and constitutional abolition of the military, which has been a blessing for this small country. With no military, the state has been able to focus on the well-being of the citizenry; health, education, and living standards are well above what would be expected given the country's level of economic development. Elections in the country resemble great celebrations, and voter turnout is about 80 percent.

EXECUTIVE

The president is elected every four years by a national secret ballot. The winning candidate must receive a plurality and at least 40 percent of the vote. If the 40 percent threshold is not reached, a runoff, which has never been necessary, must be held. A constitutional reform from 1969 that limited the president to a single four-year term was overturned in 2004. Presidents can now run for a second nonconsecutive term. In comparison with other presidential systems, the Costa Rican president has limited powers. The president cannot call referenda or issue decrees or control budget writing, although he or she can appoint and dismiss quite powerful ministers (in the Council of Ministers) without legislative approval. The president has veto power on all legislation except the annual budget, but the veto can be overruled by a two-thirds vote in the Assembly. In 1998 Miguel Ángel Rodríguez Echeverría, an economist and cattle rancher, was elected president on the Social Christian Unity Party (PUSC) ticket, with 46.9 percent of the vote. In May 2002 President Abel Pacheco of the PUSC defeated the National Liberation Party (PLN) candidate in the first-ever second-round runoff election. His achievements include successful negotiation of a U.S.–Central American Free Trade Agreement (U.S.–CAFTA) and an improved economy.

LEGISLATURE

The Legislative Assembly (Asamblea Legislativa) is a unicameral body of 57 members who serve four-year



terms concurrently with the president. Due to the simultaneous elections, the controlling party in the Assembly and the party of the president are generally the same. Costa Rica uses proportional representation at the provincial level (seven multimember provinces) to select legislators. Therefore, regional parties can gain seats with a very small percentage of the national vote and wield significant powers when no party has an absolute majority.

The currently ruling PUSC does not have a majority of seats and relies on coalitions with minority parties to push through budgets and tax bills. A simple majority is needed to pass all legislation except amendments to the constitution, which require a two-thirds vote. The national budget sets aside 2 percent for pork-barrel projects, such as sewage treatment, bridges, and sports facilities. These *partidas específicas* are distributed by the majority party in the Legislative Assembly and are used to build coalitions when no party has an absolute majority. As the ruling PUSC holds only a 19-seat plurality in the Legislative Assembly, legislative action has been slow.

JUDICIARY

There are four chambers of the Supreme Court of Justice. The 22 members are chosen by the Assembly to serve eight-year staggered terms that are automatically renewed unless two-thirds of Assembly members vote against. The first chamber (Sala 1) reviews commercial, civil, and family matters. The second chamber (Sala 2) deals with labor issues. The third chamber (Sala 3) judges penal cases. The newly created and controversial fourth chamber (Sala 4) addresses constitutional issues. The Supreme Court selects the judges and magistrates of all the lower courts. These courts include the courts of appeal, provincial courts, municipal courts, and police courts.

RESULTS OF THE 2002 ELECTIONS FOR LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Party	Percent of Vote	Number of Seats
Social Christian Unity Party	29.8	19
National Liberation Party	27.1	17
Citizen Action Party	21.9	14
Libertarian Movement	9.3	6
Costa Rican Renovation	3.6	1
Democratic Force	2.0	0
National Integration	1.7	0

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Costa Rica is divided into seven provinces, which are further divided into 81 cantons or municipalities. Provincial governors are appointed by the president, and municipal boards (*municipalidades*) are elected every four years. Almost all funds spent at the local and provincial level originate from the central government in San José, the capital. Regional and local autonomy, budgets, and efficacy are limited. Costa Rica held its first mayoral elections in December 2002 wherein mayors were elected by popular vote through general elections. Prior to 2002 the office of mayor did not exist, and the president of the municipal council was responsible for the administration of each municipality.

The Electoral System

In the aftermath of the 1948 civil war, a Supreme Electoral Tribunal (Tribunal Supremo de Elecciones) was created to instill confidence in elections. The Tribunal has proved to be so highly effective and publicly popular that it is often referred to as the fourth branch of government. The Tribunal is composed of three magistrates and three alternates selected by the Supreme Court of Justice for staggered six-year terms. The Tribunal has complete autonomy and final authority to oversee and rule on all aspects of elections. During election season, in a largely symbolic gesture, the Tribunal is handed control of the police. Elections are held the first Sunday of February every four years (1994, 1998, 2002), although there has been a movement to change elections to every five years both to save campaign and election expenses and to give the government an extra year to initiate programs and policies. There is universal suffrage in Costa Rica, and at the voting age, 18, one is automatically registered to vote and given a voter identity card (*cédula*). Voting is technically compulsory, but there is no punishment for noncompliance. Polling stations are open from 6 A.M. to 6 P.M., and each voter has two minutes to mark a ballot. In the past, the voter marked the party of choice with a fingerprint, but in 1998 a special pen began to be used. In 2005 plans were being made to switch entirely to electronic voting in future elections; the government hoped to have the system ready by the municipal elections in December 2006. People who work on election day are given one hour off to vote. Turnout since the 1960s had averaged about 80 percent, and the low turnout of only 70 percent for the 1998 elections raised alarms of public apathy and cynicism toward politics.

Members of the Legislative Assembly cannot be reelected but must sit out one four-year term. Members of the Assembly are elected by proportional representation at the provincial level, and party leaders have traditionally selected the list.

The Party System

ORIGINS OF THE PARTIES

The modern Costa Rican political system began with the revolution of 1948, which ushered in the Second Republic. Sectors of society allied around Rafael Ángel Calderón on one side and José Figueres on the other. Calderón had won the presidency in the 1940 elections as the candidate of the then-dominant National Republican Party. During his tenure, Calderón forged an alliance with the Catholic Church and the Communist Vanguard Party, which together pushed through significant social reforms. Calderón's party won the 1944 elections, which were criticized as fraudulent, and the 1948 elections were flawed and disputed as well. A civil war broke out, and Figueres, assisted by the Guatemalan government and Dominican and Nicaraguan fighters, took control of the country after the war had cost some 2,000 lives. Figueres quickly oversaw the creation of a new constitution, the abolition of the military, and the nationalization of utilities and the banks. He then turned power over to the conservative Otilio Ulate, who had, in reality, won the 1948 elections.

Figueres, Calderón, Ulate, and their political heirs and sons have dominated Costa Rican politics since 1948. José "Don Pepe" Figueres has twice been elected president and is a near-mythic figure to Costa Ricans. A charismatic and gifted politician, Figueres founded the social democratic PLN in 1951. It has been the dominant political party for nearly a half century.

In 1948 Calderón was exiled from Costa Rica. He subsequently attempted two invasions from neighboring Nicaragua to recapture political power. After years of demonization, Calderonism has been largely rehabilitated, and a second competitive party (PUSC) led by Calderón's son now challenges the PLN. The Unity Party, which was originally formed in 1978 as a product of four smaller parties, evolved into the Social Christian Unity Party in 1983. It appears to be a solid and lasting political organization. Costa

Rica currently exhibits a highly competitive two-party system.

PARTY ORGANIZATION

Parties are organized in a highly hierarchical fashion, with factions at the top battling for control. The Electoral Code mandates that each national party must have an assembly at the district level, an assembly at the canton level constituted of five delegates elected from each district assembly, a provincial assembly composed of five delegates elected in cantonal assemblies, and a National Assembly with 10 delegates from each of the seven provinces. In reality, a small number of national leaders run the two major parties. Since candidates to the Assembly are elected in proportional representation by province, many provincial parties have emerged. Provincial parties must have similar district, cantonal, and provincial assemblies. They are often controlled by a few people or even a single family.

There has been movement toward a more direct selection of the party lists. The PLN began holding primaries in the late 1970s, and the PUSC held its first primary in 1997 to help determine candidates for the 1998 election. However, party leaders still largely control the selection of candidates and positions on the party lists. The Supreme Election Tribunal mandated in December 1996 that all party assemblies include at least 40 percent women. Both major parties are discussing mechanisms to ensure a quota of women in the Legislative Assembly; as of 2005 there were 19 women deputies in the 57-seat Legislative Assembly, up from 11 in the previous period.

CAMPAIGNING

The Supreme Electoral Tribunal limits the amount of advertising and public manifestations in the months leading up to the elections. Individuals can contribute up to about $6,000 to a party. With recent revelations of drug money affecting politics throughout the hemisphere, the Tribunal has outlawed contributions from foreigners and requires itemized bimonthly reports of contributors. Party paraphernalia, such as visors, flags, and T-shirts, proliferate throughout the country during the election season.

INDEPENDENT VOTERS

Research has indicated that about 40 percent of the population are PLN supporters and an equal number are opposed to the PLN. The remaining 20 percent are the swing voters who largely determine electoral outcomes. There is evidence that both the number of independent voters and the degree of dissatisfaction with the status quo are on the rise. It is easy to form new parties in an attempt to capture the independent voter, but up to now these parties have had limited success on the national stage.

Major Political Parties

NATIONAL LIBERATION PARTY

(Partido de Liberación Nacional; PLN)

In 1940 a group of progressive intellectuals and students formed the Center for the Study of National Problems and began a dialogue on political and economic challenges facing the country. From this group, the leadership core for the PLN in the post–civil war era emerged; the Center started the Social Democratic Party, which became the PLN in 1951. The party belongs to the Socialist International and is nominally a social democratic party. Under PLN control, the role of the government in economic affairs has grown dramatically, as has social welfare provisions, such as universal education and health programs.

In the first post–civil war elections, the party founder, José Figueres Ferrer, was elected in a landslide, and he served from 1953 to 1958. Control of the presidency was lost in the 1958 elections, but the PLN rebounded with a victory in 1962. After the opposition victory in 1966, Figueres won the presidency again in 1970 and has been the only president in modern times to serve two terms. Daniel Oduber, another founding member of the PLN, won the presidency in 1974, thus giving the party its first consecutive terms in office. After losing the 1978 elections, the PLN again won consecutive elections in 1982 (Luis Alberto Monge) and 1986 (Óscar Arias Sánchez).

Óscar Arias Sánchez was the first PLN presidential candidate not associated with the founding of the party. Arias gained international fame and the wrath of the United States for pursuing a peaceful and negotiated settlement of the Central American crises that rocked the region in the late 1970s and 1980s. Largely through Arias's persistence and skilled leadership, peace plans were signed, and Arias won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1987. He is still a popular leader, with a 90 percent favorable rating in public-opinion surveys.

The 1994 PLN presidential primary featured Margarita Peñon (the wife of Arias) and José Figueres Olsen (the son of José Figueres Ferrer). In a bruising primary, Figueres captured the nomination and subsequently won the national election with 48.5 percent of the vote. Going into the primary season for the 1998 elections, the PLN was facing a serious identity crisis. The left-wing faction of the party called for the social welfare policies that were so successful in the past, while the conservative faction countered that the country must accept neoliberal economic prescriptions to succeed in the post–cold war world. The party nominated José Miguel Corrales as its presidential candidate. While Corrales was generally acknowledged as honest, the party was damaged by revelations of fraud in the primary process. The PLN lost the presidency, earning 44.6 percent of the presidential vote. The PLN currently appears rudderless and factionalized and is deeply in need of ideological coherence and leadership.

Two recent developments may return the PLN to the presidency in 2006. The constitutional change that allows nonconsecutive presidential reelection paves the way for the candidacy of Óscar Arias, the most popular political figure in the country. In addition, the PUSC is suffering massive fallout from the largest corruption scandal in recent history. Since the scandal also touches a PLN party leader (former president José Figueres Olsen), however, it remains to be seen whether anticorruption backlash will help the PLN.

SOCIAL CHRISTIAN UNITY PARTY

(Partido de Unidad Social Cristiana; PUSC)

This party appears to be the stable and united successor to the host of factionalized opposition parties that have existed since the 1950s, and, indeed, it has strong links to 1940s Calderónism. For many years the opposition was able to occasionally win the presidency but, without a united opposition party, was unable to capture the Legislative Assembly. In 1978 the Unity coalition of parties successfully won the presidency with the candidacy of Rodrigo Carazo Odio. The coalition changed its name for the 1982 election to Social Christian Unity and ran Rafael Calderón Fournier, the son and namesake of the 1940s president, but it lost the election. The winner of the election, the PLN's Monge, gave the coalition a tremendous boost when he supported changes in electoral laws that allowed four parties to merge into the new PUSC and keep all government campaign financing earned in the previous election. Calderón lost the elections in 1986 to Arias in a campaign in which the PUSC was backed by the United States and the National Endowment for Democracy.

In 1990 Calderón won, and for the first time in modern history the PUSC controlled the legislature. The government implemented drastic International Monetary Fund–designed economic measures in June 1990, causing widespread protest. During his tenure, Calderón successfully rehabilitated the image of his father as the founder of social policies in the country. Today, Calderón is the second-most-popular political figure in the country and the undisputed leader of the PUSC party.

In 1994 the PUSC lost the election by less than 1 percent and reran its candidate Miguel Ángel Rodríguez in the 1998 elections. Rodríguez ran a defensive and cautious campaign, winning the presidency with 46.9 percent of the vote and outpacing Corrales by 33,326 votes. In an attempt to capture the women's vote, Rodríguez named two women for the vice presidential posts, a move that was countered by Corrales, who also named a pair of women.

In 2002 the maverick political commentator and psychologist Abel Pacheco gained the nomination against the wishes of party leaders and won the presidency. In October 2004 Pacheco and the PUSC were involved in a major corruption scandal that has linked former PUSC presidents Rafael Calderón and Miguel Ángel Rodriguéz to kickbacks from French and Finnish corporations. Rodriguéz was forced to resign from his prestigious position as the head of the Organization of American States after a mere two weeks in office. Some commentators believe that the scandal will eliminate the PUSC as a major force in Costa Rican politics. However, news later the same month that the former president José Figueras Olsen of the PLN had accepted a similar payment may serve to spread the blame.

Minor Political Parties

Electoral rules that mandate one ballot for the president and a separate ballot for the Legislative Assembly have led to significant ballot splitting and an increase in minor party deputies. The two major parties, the PLN and the PUSC, received 219,269 fewer combined votes for the legislature than for the presidency in 1998. The number of minor parties with legislative representation has grown from three in 1994 to five in 1998, and the number of deputies has grown from four to seven in 1998 and to 21 in 2004. There are a total of 12 minor parties at the national level and nine minor parties at the provincial level. There is occasional talk

of minor parties running in a coalition, but prospects remain dim.

CITIZEN ACTION PARTY (PAC) AND LIBERTARIAN MOVEMENT

The 2002 elections witnessed the emergence of a new political party, the PAC. PAC ran on a platform of political renovation and anticorruption. The standard bearer was Ottón Solís, a former minister of the PLN and developmental economist. Solís won 26.2 percent of the national vote in the first round of presidential polling and the party won 14 seats in the 57-seat legislature. The party suffered from many challenges of organization and cohesiveness in its first two years, and the Solís family business has been publicly criticized for some of its business practices. However, the fallout from the historic corruption scandal inside the PUSC gives the PAC an opportunity to regroup and consolidate as a major party in the 2006 elections. The corruption scandal may also benefit the Libertarian Movement, a traditional libertarian party that has been growing in recent years and that has six seats in the 2002 legislature.

THE LEFT

The left plays a very limited role in Costa Rican politics. The Communist Party was banned after the Civil War and was not permitted to participate again until 1974. Various parties of the left have emerged since, the latest being Democratic Force (Fuerza Democrática), which won two Assembly seats in the 1994 elections and three seats in the 1998 elections, making it the strongest of the minor parties. Democratic Force has since shown signs of splintering, so it is unclear how stable a force it can be in politics. It did not win any seats in 2002.

Other Political Forces

LA NACIÓN

The Nation has been a powerful anti-PLN force since the 1950s and is the only major daily newspaper in the country. The newspaper has a strong neoliberal, pro-free-market slant. This media organization also sponsors forums, speakers, and seminars on issues of importance in the country.

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

The vast majority of the population is Catholic, and the Catholic Church is an important symbol. It has not been the dominant force that it has been in other Latin American countries. Its symbolic power is best exemplified by the need for José Figueres Olsen to convert to Catholicism before the 1994 elections. Unlike many other Catholic countries, Costa Rica has legalized divorce, and contraception is widely practiced.

National Prospects

With the civil wars and uprisings of Central America at least temporarily resolved, Costa Rican democracy and stability seem assured. The greatest national problems the country now faces are economic, in particular a very high domestic debt. To pay off the debt, numerous former politicians, such as Oscar Arias, have proposed the sale of many of the institutions (banks, insurance companies, refineries, alcohol distillers, utilities) that were nationalized after the Civil War and that are still owned by the state. Others argue that a one-time sale of often-profitable entities is not a long-term solution and is a betrayal of Costa Rica's social democratic exceptionalism. This is the major debate in the country, and its resolution will have important consequences.

Costa Rica, like many other countries, also faces the challenges of opening the country to a free flow of goods and services while simultaneously trying to control the flow of illicit drugs and drug money through the country. Finally, polls have identified an increase in dissatisfaction with the political system in Costa Rica and public support for a third national political force. Many are calling for a new constitution. The PLN is factionalized, and many claim it is in decline. The PUSC's corruption scandal threatens the very viability of the party. The political system of Costa Rica, while remaining highly democratic, may undergo substantial change in the decade ahead.

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REPUBLIC OF CROATIA

(Republika Hrvatska)

By Stephen C. Markovich, Ph.D.
Revised by Nadine Akhund



The Republic of Croatia was born out of the disintegration of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. The federation comprised the six republics of Serbia, Montenegro, Slovenia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Macedonia, and Croatia. The latter seceded from Yugoslavia and declared independence on June 25, 1991.

During the wars of 1991–95 that raged throughout Yugoslavia, Croatia fought against federal troops (mostly Serbs) on several fronts. By the time a ceasefire was mediated in January 1992 by the United Nations, Croatia had lost one-third of its territories. Three years later, however, the Croats regained most of this territory through counterattacks that drove Serbs not only out of their newly acquired lands but also out of the Croatian Krajina, a region that Serbs had inhabited for centuries. What lands the Croats did not regain by force, they regained by negotiations with the Serbian leaders of the Republic of Yugoslavia. In 1998, under UN supervision, the last Serb-held enclave in eastern Slavonia was returned to Croatia.

In addition to restoring their territory, the Croatian military and diplomatic offensives forced about 300,000 Serbs out of the country and thereby further increased the domination of the Croats within the nation. When Croatia declared independence in 1991, the total population was 4.8 million. Of this total, over 3.7 million, or 78 percent, were Croatian, nearly all of them Roman Catholic; 581,000, or 12 percent, were Serb, nearly all of them Orthodox; and the remaining 10 percent were "Yugoslavs," Muslims, Hungarians, Italians, Albanians, Czechs, Jews, and others. By 2001 estimates indicated that the number of Serbian inhabitants had dropped to about 4.5 percent of the total population. What had been a substantial and vociferous minority had been marginalized and what had been a minority problem, as far as the Croats were concerned, had been eliminated. With the Serbs diminished and the Croats inflated, Croats now made up 89.6 percent of the population. Essentially, the new Croatia has become a homogeneous nation.

The System of Government

According to the 1990 constitution, the government of Croatia is a mixed presidential-parliamentary system (since modified to a straight parliamentary system) that is framed in a unitary structure and based on the separation of powers, and these powers accordingly are divided among three branches—executive, legislative, and judicial. The constitution, adopted on December 22, 1990, set forth the fundamental principles that provide the foundation for the political system. Among the most fundamental of these principles are those dealing with individual rights, the electoral system, the party system, and the governmental system. Individual rights are specifically asserted in more than 50 articles and list practically every conceivable right—personal, political, economic, social, and cultural. Provisions for free and periodic elections are also laid out in several

articles, and the right to form political parties is guaranteed in Article 6. Should Croatia ever begin to live up to these articles, its status as a democracy will be emphatically affirmed.

EXECUTIVE

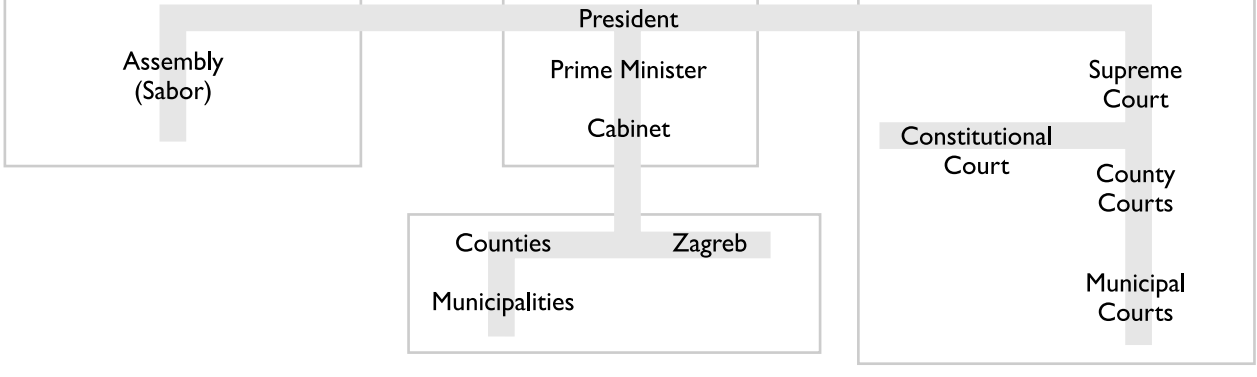
The Republic of Croatia has a dual executive comprising the president of the republic, who is constitutionally the head of state, and the prime minister, who is constitutionally the head of government.

The president of the republic is elected by direct popular vote for a term of five years and is limited to serving no more than two terms. In addition to being the commander in chief of the armed forces, the president appoints the prime minister and cabinet members with the consent of the parliament. Following the death of President Franjo Tuđman in December 1999, the powers of the presidency were curtailed and greater responsibility was vested in the parliament. On September 11, 2000, an amendment modified the constitution and the semipresidential system became a parliamentary system of government. The role of the president is now largely ceremonial.

The prime minister, who is nominated by the president, assumes office following a parliamentary vote of confidence in the new government. The prime minister and the government are responsible for proposing legislation and a state budget, executing the laws, and guiding the foreign and internal policies of the republic. The government passes decrees to enforce laws and other regulations enacted by the parliament. Within the scope of its powers, the government also passes decrees, administrative acts, and orders on appointments and relief of appointed officials and civil servants. The government decides in cases of conflict of jurisdiction between government institutions, gives answers to representatives' questions, prepares proposals of laws and other regulations, offers opinion on laws and other regulations, and adopts strategies of economic and social development. Finally, the government answers to the parliament. The prime minister and the members of the government are jointly responsible for decisions passed by the government and individually responsible for their respective portfolios.

Franjo Tuđman governed Croatia from 1990 to his death in 1999, a transitional and troubled time that was dominated by the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina (1992–95). For almost a decade he alienated Croatians with his authoritarian leadership, out-of-touch nationalism, and disastrous handling of the war-shattered economy. In 1999 he proclaimed on television that "national issues are more important than democracy." Tuđman's autocratic rule and failure to cooperate on Bosnian issues led to Croatia's international isolation in the late 1990s. His death brought significant changes to Croatia. Parliamentary elections held in January 2000 resulted in a victory for a six-party, center-left opposition coalition, and on February 7, Stjepan Mesić, an opposition candidate, became president. The government, under the leadership of Prime Minister Ivica Račan, progressed in implementation of the Dayton Peace Accords, regional cooperation, refugee returns, national reconciliation, and democratization. However, the coalition failed to improve Croatia's stagnant economic situation, and on November 23, 2003, following parliamentary elections, the conservative nationalist party, the Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ) founded by Tuđman, won a plurality of the seats. The HDZ formed a minority government the following month, headed by the new leader of the party, Ivo Sanader, who became prime minister. Mesić won a second term as president in January 2005.

ORGANIZATION OF CROATIAN GOVERNMENT



LEGISLATURE

Croatia presents an old tradition in legislature that can be dated from 1848. During the time of the disintegration of Yugoslavia, the first democratic multiparty elections were held in Croatia on May 30, 1990, and a first multiparty parliament was constituted. According to the constitution promulgated in December, the parliament, or Sabor, was composed of two chambers: the chamber of deputies with legislative authority and the chamber of counties with an advisory role and the right to lodge so-called suspension votes. In 2000, following the enactment of constitutional amendments, the parliament acquired a new, more important role in Croatia's political system of government. Finally, on March 28, 2001, the chamber of counties was abolished; the Sabor became unicameral.

The Croatian parliament (Hrvatski Sabor) is a legislative body that can have between 100 and 160 deputies. All representatives are elected by secret ballot, based on universal suffrage, to serve a term of four years. As of 2005 the Sabor had 152 members, all of whom were elected on November 23, 2003. The Sabor convenes regular sessions twice annually: the first session runs between January 15 and July 15 and the second session from September 15 to December 15. The Sabor can also hold extraordinary sessions at the request of the president, the government, or a majority of parliamentary deputies. Extraordinary sessions may be convened by the speaker of the Sabor after obtaining the opinion of the clubs of parliamentary parties.

The Sabor decides on the enactment and amendment of the constitution, enacts laws and the national budget, declares war and proclaims peace, passes declarations that express its policies, adopts the national security and defense strategy for the Republic of Croatia, conducts civilian oversight of the armed forces and security services of the republic and decides on changes to the borders of the country. The Sabor calls referendums and, pursuant to the constitution it elects, appoints and dismisses and oversees the work of the government and other bodies vested with public authority accountable to the parliament. Finally, the parliament also grants amnesty in cases of criminal acts and engages in other activities, as stipulated by the constitution. The Sabor is authorized to make decisions if a majority of members are present at sessions, except in cases of national rights and constitutional issues.

JUDICIARY

The government in the Republic of Croatia is organized on the principle of separation of powers into legislative, executive, and judicial branches. Judicial power is exercised by the courts. The judiciary is autonomous and independent. The courts administer justice according to the constitution and law as well as according to international agreements and treaties in force. Judges and law assessors participate in the administration of justice in conformity with the law. Croatia has a three-tiered judicial system—the Supreme Court, county courts, and municipal courts.

With respect to regular judicial matters, the constitution provides for a Supreme Court of the Republic, for the establishment of inferior courts, and for the organization of public prosecutors. For constitutional matters, the constitution provides for a Constitutional Court of the Republic of Croatia.

Cases involving regular matters, civil and criminal matters, among others, normally are introduced at lower-level inferior courts by plaintiffs and public prosecutors and rise through the judicial hierarchy only when vital points of law are at stake. In such cases it is the role of the Supreme Court to see that laws are interpreted in a consistent manner and that they are applied uniformly throughout the country and equally to all citizens. Croatia's Supreme Court is the highest court in the republic. Courts hearings are open, and judgments are made publicly, except on issues of privacy of the accused. Judges of the Supreme Court are appointed by the State Judiciary Council of the republic for a term of eight years. This is a body consisting of a president and 14 members proposed and elected by the Sabor for an eight-year term. The competencies of the Supreme Court also include hearing appeals against decisions of county courts rendered in the first instance as well as appeals against decisions of the high commercial court and of the administrative court.

The Constitutional Court is composed of 13 judges appointed by the parliament for an eight-year term from among outstanding jurists, especially judges, public prosecutors, lawyers, and university professors of law. Judges of the Constitutional Court may not perform any other public or professional duty. They enjoy the same immunity as members of the Sabor. The president of the Constitutional Court is elected by the court for a four-year term. Once elected, these judges are independent of the legislature that selected them. According to the constitution, they determine the conformity of laws with the constitution, decide jurisdictional disputes between the branches of government, oversee the constitutionality of programs and activities of political parties, supervise the legality of elections and referenda, and protect the constitutional freedoms and rights of individuals. With this array of powers, the Constitutional Court is in a strong position to defend the constitutional fabric

of the country and to play an important role in the stable growth of the nation's legal system and democratic evolution. It can also impeach the president of the republic.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Below the national level, the country is divided into 21 regional units—20 counties and the city of Zagreb—that function as regional governments for their respective areas and as regional offices for the national administration. Apart from Zagreb with its population of nearly one million, the counties vary in size from 70,000 to 470,000. And where Zagreb is governed by a mayor and a council, each of the counties is run by a prefect and a council. Below the county level, the units of local government are municipalities and towns, nearly 400 of them for the entire country. They are responsible for covering community needs and interests such as utilities, housing, welfare, culture, and recreation.

The Electoral System

All Croatian citizens, inside and outside the country, who have reached the age of 18 years have the right to vote. On the national level, this vote may be exercised in elections for the president and for members of the parliament. In the elections that have been held since the break from Communism, voter turnouts have been high, though uneven; they have ranged from 85 percent in the 1990 elections to 69 percent in 1995, 62.5 percent (parliamentary elections) and 72 percent (presidential elections) in 2000, and 61 percent (parliamentary election) in 2003. To be elected, a candidate must receive a majority of the votes cast; if no candidate receives a majority in the initial election, a runoff election between the top two candidates is held two weeks later.

The Party System

In many countries that suddenly gained independence and sought rapid transformation from one-party Socialism to pluralist democracy, the number of political parties rose dramatically, often soaring to large and cumbersome numbers. Such was the case in Yugoslavia before it disintegrated and in Croatia after it declared independence; by 1990 there were some 240 parties in Yugoslavia, and by 1992 there were about 60 parties in independent Croatia. Of course, this number began to diminish once the political system started to operate and elections became competitive. Of the 60 parties in 1992, less than half participated in the elections of that year, only 11 of them won seats in the lower house, and only two of the 11 got more than 10 seats each. In the 1995 elections, 12 parties won seats and only four got 10 seats or more. Thus, by the time the electoral smoke cleared from these initial elections, there were but a handful of political parties seriously contending for power and influence in Croatia. In the 2000 and 2003 elections only three parties got 10 seats or more.

Even these contending parties, it should be stressed, are still adapting and adjusting to the new political system; all of them are still finding their way in the democratic experiment. For the most part, they are parties that were created or reorganized in 1989 and the early 1990s, that are seeking broader political manifestos to attract wider support, and that are heavily dependent on their respective leaders, who typically were the founders of the parties. For many of these parties the circumstances are difficult and their futures uncertain; some will endure, but others will falter and vanish on their own or be subsumed in yet another coalition and emerge under a new name.

ELECTIONS FOR THE CROATIAN PARLIAMENT (NOVEMBER 23, 2003)

Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ):	62
Social Democratic Party of Croatia (SDP):	34
Croatian People's Party (HNS):	10
Croatian Peasant Party (HSS):	9
Croatian Party of Rights (HSP):	8
Istrian Democratic Assembly (IDS):	4
Party of Liberal Democrats (Libra):	3
Croatian Party of Pensioners (HSU):	3
Liberal Party (LS):	2
Croatian Social Liberal Party (HSLS):	2
Alliance of Primorje–Gorski Kotar (PGS):	1
Democratic Centre (DC):	1
Croatian Democratic Peasants Party (HDSS):	1

Major Political Parties

The Croatian Communist Party was the only authorized party of Socialist Yugoslavia (1945–90). After the first multiparty elections the right-wing HDZ came to power and remained until 2000.

In the parliamentary elections of January 2000, six parties united to form a winning coalition: the Social Democratic Party of Croatia (SDP), the Croatian Social Liberal Party (HSLS), the Croatian Peasant Party (HSS), the Croatian People's Party (HNS), the Liberal Party of Croatia (LS), and the Istrian Democratic Assembly (IDS). The six-party left-center coalition was in power until June 2001, when IDS left the governing coalition over its inability to win greater autonomy for the region of Istria. The following year, in July 2002, the HSLS also left the coalition, after which it split into two parties, Libra and the HSLS. Libra remained in the coalition. The SDP-led coalition remained in power until the legislative elections of 2003, when it narrowly lost the majority to HDZ and other right-center parties. HDZ formed a government in December 2003.

CROATIAN DEMOCRATIC UNION

(Hrvatska Demokratska Zajednica; HDZ)

The Croatian Democratic Union was organized in the spring of 1989 by Franjo Tuđman in opposition to the Communist Party of Croatia. At this time the old Yugoslavia was still in existence, but the Communist Parties in the country's six republics were deprived of their power monopolies, and competing parties were allowed to organize. Tuđman, who had gone from being a member of the Communist Party and supporter of the regime of Josip Broz Tito to a critic of the existing system and a voice for Croatian autonomy, quickly took advantage of the situation and forged ahead of other groups in establishing the HDZ. By the time the first free election was held in the former Socialist Republic of Croatia in the spring of 1990, Tuđman's party was a solid challenger to the incumbent Communist leaders and impressively defeated them in the election—winning over 40 percent of the votes and over 60 percent of the seats, earning majority control in the legislative chambers, and gaining the office of president for Tuđman himself. What had begun as a new organization in 1989, just a short time before competitive elections, had rapidly grown into a formidable political party. It owed its popularity chiefly to renewed patriotism in Croatia; some have described it as a popular, nationalist movement rather than a political party. The Serbs living in the region of Krajina usually saw HDZ as a chauvinist party and accused it of orchestrating ethnic cleansing during the Yugoslav wars.

After 1991 the party program of the HDZ also pushed for a democratic political system, a free-market economy, and an orientation toward the West, especially toward Central Europe and Germany. Major reasons that the HDZ was able to forge ahead of its competition were its early opportunistic start and its efficient organizational structure. As noted, Tuđman quickly jumped into the fray when pluralism became accepted and led his party to power. He did so by spreading his party network throughout the nation; before the first election was called, he already had party offices in over a hundred townships in Croatia and several in neighboring republics as well. He even went beyond his own country and established branches among the Croatian diaspora in various parts of the world; in the United States alone Tuđman claimed that the HDZ had 35 branches varying in size from 50 to 2,000 members.

As the general enthusiasm for independence gradually disappeared and harsh economic conditions started to sink in, the HDZ lost the 2000 elections to the Social Democratic Party of Croatia and its coalition partners, despite remaining the strongest single party in the country. Several major personalities of the party were tried and incarcerated for various abuses; in general, however, the privatization process implemented by the HDZ, which many consider suboptimal, was not significantly altered. The party consolidated under a new leader, Ivo Sanader, and in 2003 it used the still troubled economic conditions to its advantage. After winning the parliamentary elections, the party formed a government with only one minister from another party (Democratic Centre), under Sanader as the prime minister. It appears that the HDZ, under the leadership of Sanader, is positioned significantly more in the center than HDZ was earlier. In 2005 the HDZ had 66 representatives in the Sabor.

SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF CROATIA

(SocijalDemokratska Partija Hrvatske; SDP)

The Social Democratic Party is the successor to the Communist Party in Croatia. As such, it inherited the

structural network of the old party that should have given it some advantages in the pluralist electoral campaigns. On the other hand, if there were such advantages, they were more than offset by the burdens of the Communist record; the baggage from the past was a heavy load, and, claims of genuine reform notwithstanding, the SDP could not shake this load in the beginning. Thus, though the party espoused commitments to democracy, free enterprise, and a fair deal for workers, the voters did not respond positively in the 1992 and 1993 elections; the party won only six seats in the lower house and one seat in the upper house, and its presidential candidate came in eighth in a field of eight, with less than 1 percent of the vote. Overall, this weak electoral performance was indicative of the difficult times that Communists had in the new republic.

Yet the SDP persevered and has slowly crept back and bettered its position. In the next elections, in 1995 and 1997, the party increased its representation in the lower house to 10 seats and in the upper house to four seats, and in the presidential election its candidate came in second to Tuđman—though a distant second, with 21 percent of the vote. In 2000 the SDP led the coalition of the six parties, and its leader, Ivica Račan, became prime minister. The SDP won 44 seats in the Sabor. Since 2003 the SDP, a stable organization, has been the second-largest party, behind the HDZ, and represents a solid opposition force. As of 2005 the SDP had 34 representatives in the Sabor.

CROATIAN PEOPLE'S PARTY

(Hrvatska Narodna Stranka; HNS)

The HNS was organized after the 1990 election by Savka Dabčević-Kučar, a dynamic and popular leader in Croatia, popular even when she served in the Communist regime. Because of her popularity, there were great expectations for her, but in the late 1990s the party was fading. In 1997 the party found a second impetus when a majority of the Independent Croatian Democrats, the party founded by Stjepan Mesić, entered the HNS. Mesić held the post of executive vice president of the party until 2000. The HNS participated in the 2000–03 government of Ivica Račan through the minister of public work, construction, and rebuilding, Radimir Čačić, previously president of the party. As of 2005 the party was led by Vesna Pusić, and it had 10 representatives in the Sabor.

CROATIAN PEASANT PARTY

(Hrvatska Seljačka Stranka; HSS)

The Croatian Peasant Party has assumed the name and also attempted to assume the mantle of its popular prewar predecessor. The original Peasant Party, founded in 1904 by the Radić brothers, promoted political democracy and economic practices that served human values. While Croatia was part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, the HSS fought for greater autonomy, peasants' rights, and land reform. After 1918 the HSS gained significant popular and electoral support for its advocacy of an independent state and its opposition to the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes, which the party claimed was dominated by Serbia.

In 1990, with the advent of multiparty elections, the HSS was reconstituted and won several seats in the parliament. It remained in opposition until the 2000 elections, when it received three ministerial portfolios as part of its participation in the winning SDP of the Croatia-led coalition. The HSS advocates representative democracy and a market economy that relates to human needs and personal betterment. In sum, it sees itself as a moderate party of the people. Assuming the party's traditional name and mantle has been the easy part; attempting to match the success and support of its namesake has been more difficult. Most of the party's support has come from the older generation. Support from young people has been hard to attract. For many young Croats the party's very name is an anachronism, since there are fewer and fewer peasants working the land today, less than 10 percent of the population. The party has an uphill climb in generating fresh sources of support.

Nevertheless, despite this difficulty, its overall status with the people seems to be steady. Whereas the party won only three seats in the House of Representatives in 1992, it won 10 seats in 1995; in the 2000 elections the HSS won 16 seats. The HSS considers itself among other left-wing European political parties that advocate pro-agrarian policies and greater economic interventionism by the state. On social matters the HSS is largely conservative, supporting a Christian-based morality in public life. As of 2005 the HSS had 10 representatives in the Sabor.

CROATIAN PARTY OF RIGHTS

(Hrvatska Stranka Prava; HSP)

The Croatia Party of Rights, the oldest political party in the country, is a right-wing political party. It is

considered to be extremist, although it views itself as neoconservative. The "Rights" in the party's name is a reference to the idea of Croatian national and ethnic rights, which the party has vowed to protect since the time of its founding in the 19th century. While the HSP has retained its old name, today it is a right-wing party with an ethnocentric platform. The HSP traces its founding to June 26, 1861, when Ante Starčvić and Eugen Kvaternik first presented the policies of the "Party of Rights" to the Croatian Parliament, calling for greater Croatian autonomy and self-rule at a time when Croatia was divided into several crown lands within the Hapsburg Empire. Like the HSS, in 1918 the party opposed the creation of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes. During World War II, HSP's affiliation with the Ustace movement, which sought to establish a pure Croatian nation and committed atrocities, severely damaged the party's reputation.

After the fall of Communism in the early 1990s, the Party of Rights was restored, but it was a minor nationalist party. During the war (1991–95) the party was involved in the creation of the so-called Croatian Defense Forces, one of the first paramilitary units, whose members were suspected of being responsible for several war crimes. Although the party received some support at home and abroad (about 5 percent in the 1995 election), most of the voters found its jingoistic positions unacceptable. However, while the support was light, it was also deep, and this has enabled the HSP to advance its nationalistic agenda. In the 2000 elections the HDP won four seats. Its leadership attempts to distance the party from comparisons or references with the war era, in order to attract more moderate voters. As of 2005 the HSP had eight representatives in the Sabor.

Minor Political Parties

In addition to the political parties described, there are twelve other parties (out of the seventeen that participated in the 2003 elections), which have four seats or fewer in the parliament. Three of them, the IDS, the HSLS, and the LS, have between two and four seats each. Despite their small size, these parties have some significance in the system of government, as they play a role in the formation of political coalition.

ISTRIAN DEMOCRATIC ASSEMBLY

(Istarski Demokratski Sabor; IDS. In Italian: Dieta Democratica Istriana)

The party is a viable regional political party with a stable base of support on the Istrian peninsula of the Adriatic coast. It is primarily a Croatian party arguing for more regional autonomy and less centralization in the country and equal status of Italians with Croatians in Istria. The party is led by Ivan Jakovčić and has four representatives in the Sabor. It has been the biggest party in Istria County since 1990, and it normally attracts over 60 percent of the Istrian vote, which assures the party of some national representation.

CROATIAN SOCIAL LIBERAL PARTY

(Hrvatska socijalno liberalna stranka; HSLS)

The HSLS was the first Croatian political party formed after the reintroduction of a multiparty system in 1989. The party offered a social liberal alternative to the Communist Party, emphasizing the need for parliamentary democracy and free enterprise. After the first free elections in 1990 HSLS became the main opposition party and remained such until 2000. In the 1992 presidential elections its leader, Dražen Budiša, came in second position with 22 percent of the vote.

By the end of the 1990s the party had slipped. Its initial rise and success had rested more on the personalities and charisma of the two leaders, Dražen Budiša and Vlado Gotovac, than on any distinctive policy. Although the two men have been personal friends and political allies for years, differences between them surfaced and escalated in 1997. Budiša favored cooperating with Tuđman's government, and Gotovac wanted to follow a separate path. He left the party to form the Liberal Party. In the 2000 elections the HSLS participated in the coalition with the SDP and formed the government together with four other parties. However, in 2002 the party split again. The HSLS left the government, while the dissenting faction, a new party called Libra, remained in power. Since the 2003 elections, the party has had two representatives in the parliament. Ivan Čehok was the president of the party as of 2005.

LIBERAL PARTY

(Liberalna stranka; LS)

The LS was formed in 1997 by Vladimir Gotovac after his faction split off from the Croatian Social Liberal Party. In 2000 the party had two representatives in the Croatian Parliament and one minister in a coalition government with the much larger SDP. The LS is currently led by Ivo Banac. LS confirmed their two representatives in the Croatian Parliament in the 2003 elections but became part of the opposition.

INDEPENDENT DEMOCRATIC SERBIAN PARTY

(Samostalna demokratska srpska stranka; SDSS)

The SDSS represents and defends the interests of Serbs living in Croatia. It was formed in 1997 as a liberal and social-democrat party said to be based on the doctrine of Svetozar Pribičević, leader of the Independent Democratic Party that existed in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. The party is led by Vojislav Stanimirović and aims to speed up the process of returning the Serb population that left Croatia in 1995, when the Croat forces abolished the self-proclaimed Republic of Serbian Krajina and put that territory under Croatian control. In November 2003 it beat its main rival, the Serb Popular Party, taking all three seats destined for Serb representatives in the parliament. After the elections the SDSS made an agreement with the HDZ in which they agreed to fulfill several demands, such as refugee return, strengthening of national equality, judicial reform, and cooperation with neighboring countries.

Other Political Forces

It is possible that some of the vanishing parties may reemerge as interest groups or work through traditional institutions. Just what role and influence groups and institutions may have in the new Croatia will depend on the evolution of the political system, more specifically, on the democratic evolution of that system. Should groups and institutions become important, those individuals and organizations that are not satisfied with their influence in political parties may turn to lobbying and critiquing as a political avenue. In this scenario, one can expect business, labor, agricultural, professional, intellectual, ethnic, religious, military, media, and other organizations and groups to join the political scene. Some are already increasing their activities; the Roman Catholic Church, in particular, is becoming more vocal and seeking more influence in the system. The media, after being tightly controlled by Tuđman's government, has become much more independent in the early 2000s. In 2003 the country applied for membership in the European Union; accession talks were set to begin in 2005 but were delayed when the country refused to hand over General Ante Gotovina, who was wanted by the International War Tribunal in The Hague for questioning about war crimes from the 1991–95 war.

National Prospects

Since the declaration of independence on June 25, 1991, the status of the Republic of Croatia as a nation-state has been internationally and domestically affirmed. Croatia has focused on greater Euro-Atlantic integration, mainly by entering the European Union and NATO. In order to gain access to European and transatlantic institutions, it has had to undo many negative effects of the breakup of Yugoslavia and improve relations with its neighbors.

Key issues since 1995 have been the implementation of the Dayton Accords and the return of refugees and displaced persons from the 1991–95 war, including property restitution for ethnic Serbs; resolution of border disputes with Slovenia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and Serbia and Montenegro; and general democratization. Croatia had an uneven record in these areas between 1996 and 1999, during the HDZ government, inhibiting its relations with the European Union and the United States. Improvements in the areas of the Dayton Accords and refugee returns were evident in 1998, but progress has been slow.

Over the past several years Croats have learned just how difficult and costly the transition from Communism to capitalism is. For many of them the transition has been a negative experience; they have seen their standard of living slip considerably and have watched a new class of rich rise rapidly, primarily through blatant corruption in the privatization process and through political connections with Tuđman's party and government. Rather than benefit from the transition, therefore, most Croats have suffered through it. This negative experience has undermined their confidence in the new economy and

thereby retarded and possibly even precluded its proper development. Thus, for the young nation to get back on the capitalistic track, the confidence of the people in the economic system has to be restored.

Croatia was admitted into the World Trade Organization in July 2000, became part of NATO's Membership Action Program in May 2002, and became a member of the Central European Free Trade Agreement in December 2002. Foreign relations were severely affected by the government's hesitance and stalling of the extradition of the Croatian general Janko Bobetko to the International Criminal Tribunal in The Hague, as well as their inability to take General Ante Gotovina into custody for questioning by the Court.

Refugee returns accelerated in 1999, reached a peak in 2000, but then slightly decreased in 2001 and 2002. The Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe mission in Croatia has continued to monitor the return of refugees and is still recording civil rights violations. Croatian Serbs continue to have problems with restitution of property and acceptance into reconstruction assistance programs. Combined with a lack of economic opportunities in the rural areas of former Krajina, the return process is highly troubled.

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REPUBLIC OF CUBA

(República de Cuba)

By Juan M. del Aguila, Ph.D.



Cuba is a nation of 11.4 million people situated approximately 90 miles from the southernmost part of the United States. Cuba is the largest of the Caribbean islands, located at the entrance to the Gulf of Mexico with Haiti and the Dominican Republic to the east and Mexico and Central America to the west and southwest. The island was discovered by Columbus in 1492 during his first trip to the New World, and it remained a Spanish colony until 1898. The United States occupied Cuba between 1898 and 1902 following its defeat of Spain in the Spanish-American War. During its occupation, the United States helped to rebuild Cuba's economy and infrastructure, and it established the foundation of public administration and a national political system.

Subsequently, Cuba and the United States became closely related economically, with approximately $1 billion investment going into Cuba's telecommunications, agriculture, industry, and commerce by the late 1950s. Cuba's economic development was substantially dependent on the United States, where Cuba's sugar and other exports found an expanding market. One of the positive aspects of that relationship was the fact that some Cuban products like sugar received preferential treatment in the United States, and U.S. consumer goods were widely available in Cuba.

On the other hand, a close political and economic relationship with the United States was viewed by many Cubans as limiting Cuba's sovereignty and distorting its economic development. While anti-Americanism was not a widespread feeling, U.S. interventions in Cuba in 1906 and 1917 fueled nationalist feelings and a growing desire for greater economic freedom, particularly among the educated elites and some intellectuals. On the whole, U.S. society and culture appealed to many middle- and upper-class Cubans, though others had reservations about the scope of American cultural penetration.

The triumph of Fidel Castro's guerrillas in 1959 over the authoritarian regime of President Fulgencio Batista led to Cuba's change from a capitalist to a Socialist country, with the society undergoing major transformations in its political, economic, social, and cultural systems. Castro and the revolutionaries formed a nondemocratic government that relied on Castro's dynamic and charismatic leadership for much of its legitimacy, but the government soon implemented redistributive measures that improved the standard of living of Cuba's marginal urban and rural classes.

The revolutionary government confiscated approximately $1 billion of U.S. assets as part of a radical nationalization program in 1960, which led to a break in relations with the United States during President Dwight Eisenhower's last days in office. Subsequently, Castro proclaimed the revolution to be a Socialist one, proceeding to establish a command economy in which all production and practically all property were nationalized. As a result, the state took over the sugar industry, the transportation system, banking, and foreign trade, effectively ending capitalism and prohibiting the

individual accumulation of wealth. The commitment to Socialism meant that collective values and goals would take precedence over those of private individuals, with the state developing the coercive capability to see that its brand of radical egalitarianism was enforced.

In addition, Cuba became a member of the Socialist bloc and a close ally of the former Soviet Union until the latter collapsed in 1991. During the cold war, Cuba received billions of dollars in technical and economic assistance from former Communist countries, and its economy was closely integrated into the Communist world's trading and commercial systems. Aiming to extend Communist control over parts of Africa and in keeping with (then) Soviet geopolitical goals, Cuban troops fought in several African countries in the 1970s and 1980s. Cuba was also heavily involved in regional politics, providing technical and military assistance to revolutionary forces and governments in Central America in the 1980s.

President Castro has remained Cuba's dominant political leader, extending his personal influence over the most significant aspects of Cuba's domestic and foreign policies. At the center of power in Cuba for over 45 years, Castro is a highly intelligent, experienced, and skillful leader committed to his own and the revolution's survival at almost any cost. He combines cunning and ruthlessness with a charismatic temperament and ability to adapt, at times suppressing disputes among Cuba's ruling elites while maintaining legitimacy in the eyes of many Cubans. As president, commander in chief of the armed forces, first secretary of the Communist Party, and chairman of the Council of Ministers, Castro exercises direct influence over Cuba's leading institutions. In sum, Castro personifies the revolution and his decisions are final on critical domestic and foreign policy matters.

The System of Government

EXECUTIVE

Cuba's highest executive and administrative institution is the Council of Ministers (CM), composed of the head of government, all the major ministers, and "others that the law determines." President Castro presides over the Council while his brother Raúl Castro is minister of the armed forces and vice president of the Council. Individual ministers are responsible for sectors of the economy and society and are in fact top policymakers in their respective areas. For example, the minister of agriculture (Alfredo Jordán) is responsible for that sector, while the minister of higher education (Fernando Vecino) is responsible for the university system and other institutes of higher learning and training. The minister of labor has overall responsibility for working conditions, seeing to it that Cuba's labor movement remains loyal to the revolution and that workers improve their productivity and efficiency.

The Council is accountable to the National Assembly and can "organize and conduct the political, social, cultural, economic and defense activities outlined by the Assembly." The Council is empowered to conduct foreign relations and trade, maintain internal security, and draft bills for legislative consideration. Ministers are selected for their competence and political loyalty to the revolution and can be dismissed when recurring deficiencies occur that indicate either negligence or failure to discharge ministerial duties properly; for instance, in the 2000s new ministers have been named for basic industry, tourism, and health.

In short, the Council centralizes top administrative authority in a cabinetlike structure that provides for ministerial leadership of individual areas while remaining subordinate to the will of top political leaders. It is the executive's central bureaucracy, responsible for managing a command economy and integrating social, cultural, and educational tasks.

LEGISLATURE

Elected for a period of five years (1976–81, 1981–86, 1986–91, 1993–98, 1998–2003, 2003–08) with one exception in the early 1990s, the National Assembly of People's Power is the only national body invested with constituent and legislative authority. During the 1993–98 tenure its 589 deputies were elected directly following nominations closely supervised by the Communist Party. Top government officials, including the Castro brothers, were elected to the Assembly, and a former foreign minister, Raúl Alarcón, became its president.

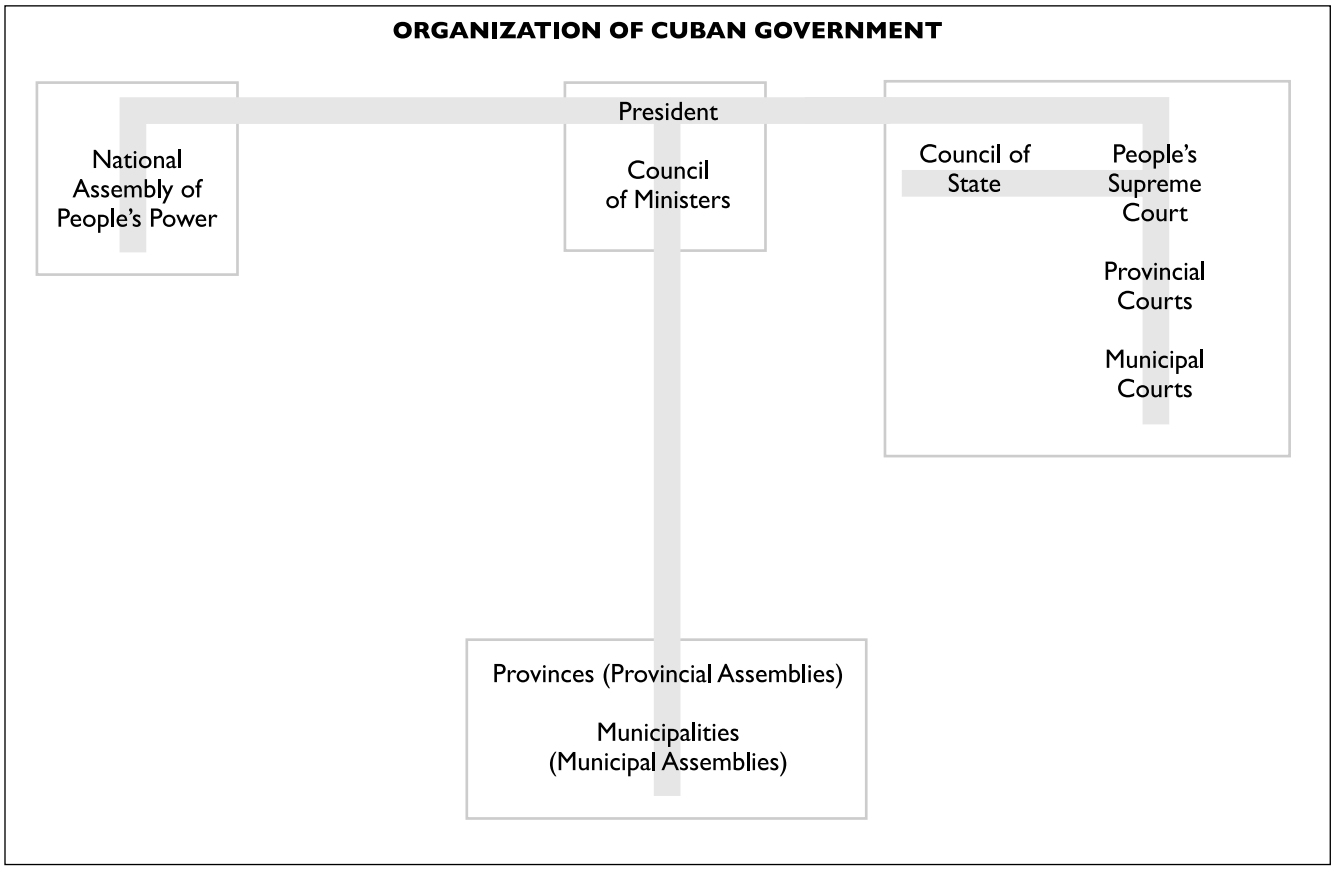
Following changes to the constitution approved in 1992, deputies are elected directly through secret ballot; citizens 16 years of age or older without legal difficulties or mental handicaps are eligible to vote. The government reported a 99 percent turnout for the 2003 elections from a total pool of 7.9 million eligible voters. President Castro's "unity slate" was approved by 88 percent of voters, 5 percent voted for specific candidates, and 7 percent cast null, void, or blank ballots.

On the other hand, these were not competitive elections because, although candidates are not required to belong to the Communist Party in order to be nominated, the process is in fact closely supervised by the party at all times. Second, no parties other than the Communist Party are allowed to nominate candidates for the Assembly, so that all 609 deputies elected were regime supporters. Third, campaigning is highly restricted to publishing individual biographies or discussing a candidate's personal merits and service to the community and the revolution. The mass media are controlled by the state and cannot be used for individual campaigns; in contrast, the government uses the media to encourage participation and to provide "political orientation." Because President Castro believes that campaigns are a sign of "divisiveness, when what the country needs is unity," appealing to voters directly as is common in Western democracies is not permitted.

The composition of the Assembly does not reflect the society's racial, gender, or occupational makeup, making the institution quite elitist. For instance, 23 percent of the deputies were women and only 3 percent were peasants. Full-time party functionaries make up a large bloc, as do members of the armed forces and Ministry of Interior. The 48 doctors elected constituted the largest single bloc, with scientists, researchers in various areas, and workers in the sugar, transportation, and construction industries also gaining significant representation. University graduates made up 75 percent of the deputies, and the average age was 43; overall, 78 percent of the deputies were under 50 years of age.

Among its powers, the Assembly decides on constitutional reforms, approval of the national budget, declarations of war, and election of the attorney general and judges to the Supreme Court. However, the Assembly fails to exercise legislative initiative and routinely approves measures placed before it by top political leaders. Votes are unanimous or nearly so, and diverging or opposing points of view on substantive issues of domestic and foreign policy are not expressed. Since all deputies either belong to the Communist Party or were approved by the party prior to their election, one cannot expect the Assembly to act as a forum where top political leaders are held accountable.

On the other hand, the Assembly offers a sense of participation to its members and a very limited, somewhat symbolic sense of representation to the masses. Notions of democratic representation com-



mon in Western democracies are out of the question, but individual deputies render constituent services and at times demand that government ministers explain problems in a particular area or sector. In sum, the Assembly is neither a policymaking institution nor an equal branch of government; it is inconceivable that it would reverse or disapprove of policies initiated by the political leadership. Deputies are not full-time legislators, and the Assembly as a whole meets only briefly twice a year.

The Council of State (CS) functions as the Executive Committee of the Assembly between sessions. Fidel Castro is the president of the Council and therefore president of the nation; Raúl Castro is the first vice president. Several top officials of the Communist Party are members of the Council, including Carlos Lage, who is in charge of the economy; the foreign minister, Felipe Pérez, the minister of interior, Abelardo Colomé; and José R. Machado, an official with extremely important responsibilities in the ideological sphere. In short, the Council reflects quite clearly the continuation of interlocking directorates as a central feature of Cuba's executive, legislative, and party organs.

The CS can issue decrees on its own, exercise legislative initiative, order general mobilization, remove ministers, and issue general instructions to the courts. In times of crisis, it can be called into action by President Castro in order to put its stamp of approval on decisions urged by the political leadership. For example, as the ultimate court of appeal, the Council approved the death sentence and execution of a former division general, Arnaldo Ochoa, and three others in 1989, following their conviction on drug charges and trafficking in stolen property.

Not much is well known of the Council's inner workings, but it is probable that routine decisions are reached through consensus, that is, following some discussion of issues under consideration. As the first among equals, President Castro carries the day once he has made his choices known, particularly in matters of critical domestic importance or involving foreign and security policy. Members do not explain their decisions, nor is accountability something they worry about. Discussions are largely secret; that is, brief reports of Council meetings may be published, but neither the public nor other institutions have the means to force disclosure.

JUDICIARY

The People's Supreme Court is the top judicial institution; its decisions can be appealed only to the Council of State. Justices are elected by the National Assembly, as are its president and vice president following their respective nominations by Cuba's president. Under the constitution of 1976, revised in 1992, the Court's objectives are to maintain and strengthen Socialist legality and to safeguard the legitimate interests of the state, other institutions, and the masses.

Cuba has 169 municipal courts and 14 provincial courts with jurisdiction over criminal and civil matters; the latter act as appellate courts. Military courts have privileged jurisdiction over some cases, and labor councils provide some quasi-judicial functions. Professional and lay judges are elected to the provincial and municipal courts by the respective assemblies following nominations from the Ministry of Justice.

Courts do not constitute an independent branch of government that could presumably check abuses of executive, legislative, or party authority. Under Article 121 of the constitution, the "courts constitute a system of state organs, structured independently and subordinated to the National Assembly and the Council of State." In other words, the courts are subject to political authority and are not a coequal branch of government.

Neither are the courts charged with protecting rights and freedoms. Citizens are afforded procedural guarantees and have legal recourse when brought before tribunals, but in practice these guarantees are often violated and do not constitute protection against the overwhelming power of the state. Article 62 of the constitution establishes that none of the rights or freedoms (assembly, speech, movement) can be exercised "against the existence or goals of the Socialist State," effectively prohibiting all forms of legal dissent and opposition to the government. In short, Cuban courts do not rule against the government or the party on political issues and offer no relief to citizens charged with political crimes.

For instance, in 1996 the Interamerican Commission on Human Rights (an organ of the Organization of American States) found that "the subordination of the administration of justice to political power creates great insecurity and fear among citizens, and that is reinforced by the weaknesses of the procedural guarantees, especially in trials that directly or indirectly could affect the political system." Overall, the commission reported that the Communist Party is in a position to decide which liberties are exercised and which are prohibited, "effectively eliminating an individual's defense against the state."

In sum, courts sanction criminal behavior but are severely constrained when it comes to performing

fairly and impartially in "political trials." Citizens with political grievances cannot use the courts to redress those grievances, nor do courts provide relief from manifestly political abuses by the state. The judicial system is not immune from interference by either the Communist Party or the political authorities and is therefore incapable of rendering judgments that would hold the government accountable for violations of basic civil and political rights.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Since 1976 Cuba has been divided into 14 provinces. The capital city of Havana is a separate province with over 2 million residents. Each province is governed by a provincial assembly, and each one of Cuba's 169 municipalities is governed by a local organ of people's power (OPP). Delegates to municipal assemblies serve for 2 1/2 years.

Local governments assume various administrative tasks and are mostly involved in solving local problems and providing some social services. Since the 1970s local assemblies have supervised schools, clinics, some small industries, and recreational centers. It is also part of their mission to promote cultural, educational, or health-related campaigns intended to mobilize the public toward a specific goal.

Efforts are made by local and provincial assemblies to coordinate some activities with mass organizations like the committees for the defense of the revolution (CDRs) in order to minimize redundancy and duplication of efforts, but these are not always successful. The fact that they are dependent on the central government for some resources means that local assemblies often fail in their tasks because resources are scarce. Operating under severe austerity measures enacted in the 1990s during what the government calls "a special period in times of peace" only makes the situation worse for local assemblies, reducing their overall capability to deliver quality services. Public dissatisfaction with OPP members is evident in some municipalities, and some studies indicate that a significant proportion of OPP delegates are not reelected for second or third terms.

The Electoral System

Changes in the electoral system approved in 1992 call for the mass organizations and party assemblies to nominate candidates to OPP, who need not belong to the party as such in order to be eligible. On the other hand, the party closely monitors the nominating process and informally lets it be known who is acceptable and who is not. Dissenters or opponents need not apply: they will simply not be recognized. A nominee's political behavior, his or her standing in the community, loyalty and service to the revolution, and moral attributes are factors that assemblies take into account when nominating someone.

No campaigning is allowed, much less are alternatives to the system of government or to major domestic or foreign policies articulated. Nominees must get 50 percent of the vote or higher in order to be elected; if they fail that, a second round follows. Once elected, OPP delegates provide 50 percent of the delegates to the provincial assemblies, with the balance in turn nominated by the mass organizations.

Elections are not meant for citizens to choose among competing policy alternatives, nor can voters choose candidates from several parties. Information reaching the public is tightly controlled and rather than presenting competing points of view tends to emphasize voting as a moral duty of revolutionaries. On election day, activists go from house to house rousing citizens and reminding them of their duty to vote; the government's image is enhanced if it can show a high turnout. In short, the propaganda machine and activist cadres are mobilized around election time, but many citizens have heard it all before and do not take the messages seriously.

The process ensures that only prosystem candidates are elected, that is, persons who are loyal to the system and the political leadership. Not surprisingly, such practices are inherently antidemocratic, limiting choices and preferences to only those within the system. In addition, pressures to vote are substantial, because not voting is seen as a sign of political disaffection or apathy, values contrary to those in the dominant political culture. A revolutionary society urges political participation even in electoral rituals, where voting is one more test of one's political commitment. This is not to suggest that a great majority of Cubans vote against their will or are forcibly coerced into supporting prosystem candidates; rather, it is simply to point out that the costs of nonparticipation are substantial.

The Party System

Political power in Cuba rests entirely with the Cuban Communist Party.

Major Political Parties

CUBAN COMMUNIST PARTY

(Partido Comunista Cubano; PCC)

Castro came to power in Cuba as the charismatic leader of a political movement with substantial popular and middle-class support; for all practical purposes, his guerrilla forces assisted by an urban underground overthrew the Batista regime without the participation of the Communist Party. Subsequently, the party subordinated itself to Castro's leadership, putting aside some of its orthodox views and endorsing his policies and governing style.

The PCC is today a Castroite party that occupies the central role in Cuba's state and governmental institutions. Its primacy is recognized in the constitution, which refers to it as "the organized Marxist-Leninist vanguard of the working class." Presumably inspired by the ideas of José Martí and the example of Fidel Castro, the party constitutes "the highest leading force of the society and the state." Castro himself stated in 1997 that "today the party is the soul of the Revolution," indicating that for him the party is immortal.

HISTORY

Founded in 1925 by Julio A. Mella, Carlos Baliño, and others, the party participated in the nationalistic and anti-imperialistic struggles of the 1920s and 1930s, alongside other social forces. Its activities were often outlawed by governments in the 1930s; by then the party was closely aligned with the Soviet Comintern and espoused ideological orthodoxy. During Cuba's democratic period in the 1940s, the party changed its name to Partido Socialista Popular (PSP) and collaborated with Batista's democratically elected government of 1940–44.

The party enjoyed some electoral success in the late 1940s, recruiting from the urban working class and from a growing number of intellectuals disaffected by the growing violence and corruption of the times. On the other hand, party leaders never reached positions of governmental influence after the 1940s; on balance, the PSP had never been a strong electoral competitor for the more traditional parties by the time Castro came to power.

In fact, the PSP denounced Castro's first attack on the Batista dictatorship, namely, his assault on the Moncada barracks in 1953. Characterizing the act as "putschist," the party viewed Castro's 26th of July Movement as a failed bourgeois organization unable to tap the revolutionary potential of the working class. During Batista's government, the party played an ambivalent role, taking advantage of the climate of relative freedom to strengthen itself, all the while avoiding political confrontations.

MEMBERS OF THE POLITICAL BUREAU OF THE CUBAN COMMUNIST PARTY (2003)

Member(s)	Office(s) Held
Fidel Castro	President, Council of State President, Council of Ministers Commander in Chief, Armed Forces First Secretary, PCC
Raúl Castro	First Vice President, Council of State First Vice President, Council of Ministers Minister, Armed Forces Second Secretary, PCC
Juan Almeida	Vice President, Council of State
Concepción Campa	Director, Finlay General Institute
Julio Casas	Division General Vice Minister, Armed Forces
José R. Machaco	Vice President, Council of State
Abelardo Colomé	Corps General Minister of Interior Vice President, Council of State
Ricardo Alarcón	President, National Assembly Member, Council of State
Carlos Lage	Vice President, Council of State Executive Secretary, Council of Ministers
Felipe Pérez	Member, Council of State Minister of Foreign Relations
Esteban Lazo	Vice President, Council of State
Jorge Lezcano	Member, Council of State
Ulises Rosales	Division General First Vice Minister, Armed Forces Minister of Sugar Industry Member, Council of State
Pedro Ross	General Secretary, Cuban Workers' Confederation
Abel Prieto	Minister of Culture

MEMBERS OF THE POLITICAL BUREAU OF THE CUBAN COMMUNIST PARTY (2003) ***(continued)***

Member(s)	Office(s) Held
Alfredo Jordán	Minister of Agriculture
Leopoldo Cintra	Division General Chief, Western Army
Ramón Espinosa	Division General Chief, Eastern Army
Yadira García	Member, President Castro's staff Minister of Basic Industry (2004)
Pedro Saez	PCC First Secretary, Havana
Juan C. Robinson	PCC First Secretary, Santiago de Cuba
Jorge L. Sierra	PCC First Secretary, Holguín
Misael Enamorado	PCC First Secretary, Las Tunas
Miguel Díaz Canel	PCC First Secretary, Villa Clara

Sources: Granma International. Havana, Cuba. Members of the Council of State. March 2003; Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs. U.S. Department of State. Washington, D.C. Background Note: Cuba. August 2004.

Fidel Castro himself was not a party member at the time, though he had several personal friends who were in fact Communists. His brother Raúl did have open sympathies for the Communists and had traveled to Communist countries. Subsequently, in an effort to move to the winning side, the party sent emissaries to the mountains and established contact with Castro; still, the PSP did not play any significant role in Batista's overthrow and in fact played second fiddle to Castro's guerrillas.

Tactical imperatives rather than ideological commitment or revolutionary comradeship led Castro and the Communists into a political alliance in the early 1960s, as liberal, democratic, and pro-American forces in Castro's own movement were purged, exiled, incarcerated, or killed. There is some evidence that the alliance between Castro and the Communists was forged in secret prior to 1959, but what is clear is that the party accepted Castro's leadership and provided him with a solid organization through which to assert political control.

In addition, the party facilitated contacts between Castro and the (former) Soviet Union that in time led to Castro's formal embrace of Marxist-Leninist ideology and to Cuba's alignment with the Communist bloc. Party leaders and militants began to assume political roles in the 1960s as the transition to Socialism was achieved, and Communists acquired influence over education, the mass media, culture, and the mass organizations.

On the other hand, the party's old guard did not respect Castro's ideological conversion, or his anarchistic governing methods and personalization of the revolutionary process. In fact, the party mounted unsuccessful challenges to Castro's leadership in 1962, 1964, and 1968, losing out in the end and suffering purges and humiliation. Still, the party would not break with the revolution, surviving due to the resilience of its cadres and its relationship with the Soviet Union.

Since the late 1960s the party has assumed a major role in political and state affairs, with its position legitimated in the 1976 constitution. It is the only party allowed in Cuba, and its members enjoy privileged status and access to power. The party remains the faithful custodian and interpreter of Marxist-Leninist ideology and still articulates a view of a future Communist society that has little credibility left. In sum, the PCC as one of only four ruling Communist parties left in the world following the collapse of the Soviet empire can claim some continuity with the revolution itself; that is part of the explanation for its longevity.

ORGANIZATION

As is the case with other ruling Communist parties and in keeping with the Leninist method, the principle of democratic centralism governs intraparty affairs. Top organs and leaders decide crucial policy matters, make critical appointments, assess domestic and foreign trends, and then solicit and obtain approval for their decisions from lower party bodies. Structurally, the PCC's top organs are its political bureau, with 24 members, and the central committee, with 150 members. The secretariat was abolished in 1991.

The PCC's first congress was held in 1975 following its cancellation in 1967 and 1969. A second congress was held in December 1980, and a third one in December 1986. The fourth and fifth congresses were held in 1991 and 1997, respectively. (The sixth one had not been held as of mid-2005.) At each congress, Fidel Castro delivered the main report to the assembled delegates, usually several hundred men and women elected at the grass roots by the mass organizations and

local party bodies. Deliberations at these congresses are largely secret, with the foreign press not allowed to cover them.

Members of the political bureau occupy high positions in government, the armed forces, and the party bureaucracy itself, maintaining the interlocking nature of governance typical of past and present Communist regimes. The political bureau is the "elite of the elite," with its members assuming major roles due to their expertise and their loyalty to President Castro. Membership in the political bureau is not permanent, that is, it changes according to circumstances and the will of top political leaders; for instance, following the 1997 party congress, several provincial party secretaries were promoted to the political bureau and four others were dropped.

The central committee is also an important party organ, charged with "electing" top party leaders and representing the overall interest of the party as such. It meets infrequently and on occasion serves as a deliberative body; its primary function is to serve as a channel through which party policy is announced and disseminated to provincial and local party organs. Its work involves internal party organization, economic matters, ideology, and religious affairs. It is organized in several departments, e.g., the department of religious affairs, the department of ideology and revolutionary orientation, and others.

Following the 1997 congress, membership was reduced from 225 to 150 to increase efficiency, reduce costs, and get rid of some "deadwood." A preliminary review of its members indicates that 13 percent are women and that a minority are black or mulatto. Overall membership is drawn from the party bureaucracy, provincial party leaders, the armed and security forces, and from the ranks of specialists and technocrats involved in economic, financial, and managerial jobs. All of the top ministers are members of the committee, and several are the leaders of the mass organizations.

Election to the central committee indicates high political status and is in fact something of a prized reward; as is the case with the political bureau, membership is not necessarily permanent. With a few exceptions for top leaders, membership will rotate as younger cadres are promoted and others are shuffled out or given new assignments. Women and blacks are heavily underrepresented at the party's highest levels, and their promotion rates to high positions appear to have leveled off. Finally, the military's representation in the committee is around 17 percent, a 5 percent increase from the 1991 congress.

MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY

Party membership has risen dramatically since the 1960s. In 1965 total membership stood at 70,000, but it declined to 55,000 by 1969. Membership stood at 202,807 in 1975, reaching some 770,000 in 1997, or roughly 7 percent of the total population. From 1992 to 1997 membership increased by 232,000, meaning that 30 percent of all members joined the party in that period. Party documents indicate that the members are drawn "from the mass of manual and intellectual workers, civilian and military, from the city and the rural areas"; in all likelihood, many members belonged at one point to organizations like the Communist Youth Union and others.

In his study of the Cuban Communist party, Professor LeoGrande writes that during very difficult circumstances of the Special Period in Peacetime (1993–2003), "the party has grown rapidly, at almost double the rate of the decade before. In a time of serious economic dislocation, the Cuban leadership tried to bolster the main instrument of ideological mobilization and motivation by widening its nationalist appeal as the party of the Cuban nation."

Members are urged to "apply Party policy in the workplace and in society, and despite the most difficult and unusual circumstances" set an example of what a good and competent Communist is like. In addition, the party reminds members that "there should be no privilege, only greater discipline and sacrifice, more tasks and responsibilities, motivated by love of country and a limitless loyalty to its people." In short, party membership is defined as a kind of high-minded public service and as a reward for demonstrating loyalty and commitment to revolutionary principles.

On the other hand, membership constitutes an avenue of social mobility for those politically ambitious cadres seeking to move up the political ladder. There is no doubt that members enjoy some privileges unavailable to ordinary citizens and have access to goods and services that would otherwise be more difficult if not impossible to obtain. This is particularly important in a society like Cuba, where austerity, sacrifice, and hardship are the order of the day for millions of people.

Studies from other Communist countries show that party membership opens the way to higher status and facilitates entry into the nomenklatura, a special class of functionaries and officials largely immune from the hardships of daily life. In other words, party members and leaders may be urged to live modestly, set an example, and face the same difficulties of ordinary people, but in point of fact membership lifts one to a higher status and allows one to circumvent the rigors

of the ration card or other limitations. And for top leaders like the Castro brothers, enjoying a life of opulence and luxury is nothing new.

LEADERSHIP

The party is ruled by Fidel Castro Ruz (born August 13, 1926), who was trained as a lawyer at the University of Havana in the 1940s before he became a professional revolutionary and politician. Second in command and designated successor is Raúl Castro Ruz, minister of armed forces and increasingly active in political and economic affairs. Speculation about who would be third in line often centers on Ricardo Alarcón, the president of the National Assembly and a member of the political bureau, or on younger men like economics czar Carlos Lage or Foreign Minister Felipe Pérez. In any event, there is no good reason to expect Fidel Castro's abdication anytime soon, though (usually false) reports of his declining health surface from time to time.

Following the fifth party congress, 24 individuals make up the political bureau, with the Castro brothers as the first and second secretaries. Candidate membership was eliminated in 1991, so all are full members. In the 1986–91 period the political bureau had 14 full members and several candidate members, but it appears that membership has stabilized at present levels. Only two of the 24 members are women, suggesting that women continue to lag well behind men when it comes to reaching the party's highest organ; the 2 women have been in the political bureau since 1991. There are 3 black members (Almeida, Lazo, and Robinson), indicating that black Cubans also fail to reach the top in proportion to their numbers in the general population.

Only the Castro brothers and Juan Almeida, commander of the revolution, are left from the original political bureau of 1965, showing that rotation at the top is a characteristic of Cuba's ruling elite. Increased participation by the military is noteworthy, with the addition of General Ramón Espinosa to the bureau. High-ranking military officers remain loyal to the revolution and the Castro brothers, and several of them joined the political bureau in the 1980s. General Abelardo Colomé, for example, was named minister of interior in 1989, effectively bringing the security and domestic intelligence services under the control of the regular armed forces.

The military's support would be crucial if any major change in government were to come in the next few years, but what remains clear is that the military, as a strategic elite, continues to play a major role in the system. Active and retired military officers are involved in some of the economic changes approved in the 1990s and are running quasi-private enterprises in tourism and transportation.

In sum, the political bureau includes "foundational" leaders like the Castro brothers, loyal military officers, some of whom have governmental responsibilities, party secretaries whose turn came up, and younger cadres with major responsibilities in culture, foreign affairs, and the economy. As far as one knows, they are united and committed to the preservation of "the revolution and Socialism," and would hardly think of challenging the Castro brothers. Younger members in their 40s or 50s are very much a product of the Communist system, show no inclination of leading a process that would dismantle it, and remain fervently loyal to their mentor(s).

Minor Political Parties

There are no recognized minor parties in Cuba.

Other Political Forces

OPPOSITION

There is no organized opposition to the Castro regime in Cuba. The party and government effectively isolate and often repress most manifestations of opposition, using force if necessary to get their message across. Violations of human rights occur frequently in Cuba, particularly against those who oppose the one-party system and Castro's leadership. For instance, in its 2003 World Report, the respected human rights organization Human Rights Watch (HRW) indicated that "the government frequently silenced its critics by using short-term detentions, house arrests, travel restrictions, threats, surveillance, politically motivated dismissals from employment, and other forms of harassment." And HRW pointed out that Cuba's legal and institutional structures were at the root of rights violations. "The rights to freedom of expression, association, assembly, movement, and the press were strictly limited under Cuban law."

Neither the institutions nor the mass media serve as outlets for opponents, and the party itself constantly sees to it that "counterrevolutionaries" stay out of its ranks. For instance, the party warns against the rise of "small groups of annexationists [those allegedly calling for annexation to the United States] financed from

abroad" and calls upon the masses to "remain united and show their moral courage" in defense of the revolution and the fatherland.

On the other hand, there is irrefutable evidence not only of growing discontent at the grass roots and massive disaffection among members of the cultural, professional, and educational elites but also of political dissidence itself. Some estimates indicate that there are some 150 active dissident groups in Cuba calling for the rule of law, democracy, constitutional government, and respect for human rights. Second, these organizations form part of a growing national network that includes independent journalists, lawyers, doctors, and other professionals who are completely disillusioned with Communism and are organizing grassroots efforts to bring about political change.

In a powerful document released in 1997, leaders of a dissident social democratic movement denounced the regime's violation of human rights and called for a restoration of democracy through internationally supervised free elections. The document, *La Patria es de Todos* (The nation belongs to all), noted that "the State does not serve the citizen, rather, the citizen serves the State," something which explicitly contradicts the allegedly egalitarian principles justifying Cuban Communism. And the document goes on to say that "the laws fail to respect the rights inherent in a human being, something that is demonstrated by the denunciations of human rights violations that the United Nations has issued against Cuba."

Simply stated, political dissidence is rapidly growing in Cuba, fueled by the near collapse of the economy, by a manifest repudiation of one-party politics and Communism itself, and by a sense that a national holocaust is inevitable unless a genuine process of economic and political liberalization takes place. In other words, the regime's and the party's call for "unity" appears to fall on deaf ears; calls for the salvation of "the nation, the revolution and Socialism" are increasingly seen as empty slogans designed to deceive and disinform.

THE VARELA PROJECT

The most dramatic challenge to Castro's government emerged in the 2000s with the Varela Project, led by Cuba's most prominent dissident, Osvaldo Payá, and hundreds of pro-democracy activists throughout the country. The Varela Project calls for (1) the restoration of freedom of the press, assembly, and association; (2) economic freedom so that individuals may establish small and medium-sized businesses; (3) a new electoral law that respects political competition and pluralism, and (4) submission of the project to a national referendum in order to gauge its support from the population.

Some 25,000 signatures were collected supporting the Varela Project, and it was delivered to the National Assembly of People's Power in 2001, where it has been ignored by the government. Payá himself continues his struggle for freedom and democracy and has received support for his project from major European and Latin American governments, such as Spain, Costa Rica, and others. For Payá and a growing number of dissidents working to bring about political change, the project "exists because there is a movement inside the country that paves the way for something that is moving ahead, and the Varela Project creates a convergence that could lead to concrete results," so that the people regain control of their country.

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

Finally, the Catholic Church is out of the shadows and visibly involved more and more in propagating the faith among a new generation of believers. Under the leadership of Jaime Cardinal Ortega, archbishop of Havana, the church at times speaks out against violations of human rights, calling for religious and political freedom. For example, the church has alluded to the "long silence about God" that existed in Cuba for many years, something that "permeated everything, including family life."

Open-air masses are now permitted, and the church has documented a rise in "popular religiosity," namely, the interest shown by many Cubans in religious and spiritual matters. Second, Catholic activists are selectively engaged in leadership training, providing moral and ethical interpretations of life that challenge the atheistic postulates of Marxism. Independent publications are distributed in study circles and to a small but highly committed community of religious activists throughout the country, moving debates away from the state-controlled media.

During his five-day visit in January 1998, Pope John Paul II awakened a long-suppressed feeling of religious freedom among the hundreds of thousands of Catholics, believers, and nonbelievers who attended his four public Masses and listened to his homilies. In his messages, the pope denounced Communist oppression and called for greater religious freedom, insisting that governments should neither violate human rights nor reserve for themselves the education of the young or the provision of basic social services. At the same time, in criticizing the U.S. embargo on Cuba, the pope

restated the church's traditional view that embargoes are "ethically unacceptable." In short, the pope's visit clearly strengthened the Cuban Catholic Church, placing the Communist government on the defensive while urging everyone "not to be afraid."

National Prospects

Cuba's Communist system has been unable to solve major problems in the 2000s and is mired in a permanent crisis from which it cannot extricate itself. Some problems are rooted in the collapse of Soviet Communism in the 1990s, but others stem from the government's failure to sustain badly needed economic and social reforms. The political system remains highly authoritarian, and the political class is working to retain control and forestall a move to a more open and democratic system when Fidel Castro is gone.

The economy has never fully recovered from the collapse of its (former) major trading partners in the 1990s, when it lost nearly 40 percent of its output between 1989 and 1993. For instance, the pace of economic recovery has been erratic and uneven, with real annual growth rates of 6.2 percent in 1999, 3.0 percent in 2001, 1.1 percent in 2002, and 1.3 percent in 2003; it was estimated to grow at around 2.5 percent in 2004.

The sugar industry has been devastated, and production has averaged a paltry 2.5 to 3.0 million metric tons, less than 50 percent of output in the late 1980s; sugar exports are no longer the principal source of hard currency. In 2003 the government permanently closed 75 sugar mills due to mounting losses and falling production, causing severe hardship among thousands of workers and families dependent on the mills for a living.

With its abysmal economic record, Cuba is one of the countries with the highest credit risk in the world, making it practically impossible for the government to attract adequate levels of foreign capital, much less raise new financing for consumption or development. Cuba's external debt to the former Soviet Union (now owed to Russia) is approximately $12.5 billion, and its debt to Western governments and private creditors is approximately $12 billion. In 1986 Cuba stopped servicing its debt to Western countries so that a virtual moratorium remains and is the main reason for Cuba's failure to raise fresh credits.

The standard of living of the average Cuban is substantially worse in the 2000s than in the late 1980s, and the Communist Party itself concedes that "the list of problems is enormous." For political reasons, Castro and the Communist Party refuse to introduce major economic reforms, such as legalizing the establishment of small and mid-sized businesses, for fear that they will create an independent class of entrepreneurs able to make money and raise their standard of living on their own.

In still another abrupt reversal of policy, Castro announced in late 2004 that purchases and transactions in dollars would be prohibited, ending a policy that to some extent alleviated the hardships of daily life for millions of Cuban families, especially those that depend on dollar-denominated remittances from abroad to supplement their incomes.

A period of deepening austerity and decline in the standard of living is almost certain and is in fact consistent with the party's dictum that "in Cuba there will not be a return to capitalism because the Revolution will never be defeated. The Fatherland will survive and will continue to be Socialist." For the government and the political elites that remain loyal to it, market forces are to be feared, and the idea of sanctioning private property on a wide scale is simply inconceivable.

In Castro's Cuba, Communist ideology and Castro's reckless policy choices trump managerial sense and economic logic, so that major reforms cannot be expected as long as the Maximum Leader is in charge. There is little hope of authentic reconciliation between the two million Cubans in exile and the 11 million living under totalitarianism, until there are fundamental and permanent changes in the nature of governance and respect for human rights is restored. Those prospects are remote until the current generation of revolutionary leaders is gone.

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REPUBLIC OF CYPRUS

(Kipriakí Dimokratía [Greek]; Kibris Cumhuriyeti [Turkish])

By Keith Legg, Ph.D.
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The Republic of Cyprus is an island country of roughly 800,000 people in the eastern Mediterranean. It gained its independence from the United Kingdom in 1960. Both the constitution and the international status of Cyprus derived from a series of accords known as the Zurich-London agreements reached by Britain, Greece, and Turkey in 1959. They were designed as a compromise solution to conflicting aspirations between the Greek and Turkish communities.

The bicommunal 1960 constitution devised by the Zurich-London agreements was never submitted to a referendum by the Cypriots or to ratification by an elected Cypriot legislature. Its complexity and rigidity inevitably led to an impasse in the implementation process. According to the 1960 constitution Cyprus should have a Greek president and a Turkish vice president elected by their respective communities. Both were granted the power of final veto over any decision of the Council of Ministers or the House of Representatives in matters concerning foreign affairs, defense, and security. Since the president appointed 70 percent of the ministers, who served at his pleasure, he faced no problems with the Council of Ministers. The veto, therefore, became in essence a vice presidential prerogative. The president recommended in his constitutional proposals of 1963 that the veto power be abolished. He also recommended that the vice president assume the duties of the president in the case of the latter's temporary incapacity or absence. The 1960 constitution provides that it is the president of the House of Representatives (a Greek) who should assume the president's duties. All the constitutional proposals were turned down by the Turkish community. The vice president's post has been vacant since 1964 when the Turks withdrew from the government and established their own representation.

The Greek Cypriots once sought to unite the island with Greece. When the British rejected this demand, they fought a guerrilla war in the mid-1950s in order to unite with Greece. The Turkish Cypriots opposed unification with Greece. They preferred either the status quo or partition of the island between the two communities. The 1959–60 Zurich-London Agreement expressly prohibits both *enosis* (union) with Greece and *taksim* (partition).

Since independence most Greek Cypriots (a small right-wing faction excepted) have shifted away from the idea of *enosis* for a variety of reasons. First, they thought it was not feasible even if it was desirable. Second, as Cyprus began to modernize and prosper as an independent state, they realized the advantages of independence. The feeling was that given the small size of Cyprus, the central government was more immediately and directly involved with problems that would have to wait if Cyprus were part of Greece and only one of many districts of another country. Greek Cypriots realized that it was not absolutely essential for them to be part of the state of Greece in order to be Greeks. Thus, a more sophisticated definition of Greekness began to emerge that distinguished between cultural and political identities. Finally, the military junta that

ruled Greece from 1967 to 1974 was not attractive to the democratic Cypriots.

The Turkish Cypriots never believed that the Greeks had abandoned the idea of *enosis*, and their suspicion played a major role in shaping their policies. The Turkish Cypriots interpreted the constitution as guaranteeing them the status of an equal partner in the government. They regard themselves as one of two communities in the island with equal claim to political power. The constitution was indeed bicommunal and gave the Turks disproportionate power relative to their numbers. The Greeks felt they were discriminated against. After the constitutional crisis and the intercommunal violence of the 1960s, both sides recognized the need for revising the 1960 constitution. That was the purpose of intercommunal talks held in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Although no concrete, final agreements were reached, substantial progress was made on various important issues. Everything changed in 1974, however, when the ruling junta of Greece attempted a coup in Cyprus and then Turkey invaded Cyprus.

Unlike the Greek Cypriots, who were independent of Greece in their policymaking, the Turkish community depended heavily on Ankara for political direction and economic aid, illustrated by the history of the intercommunal talks of 1968–74. In January 1974, when the Turkish prime minister in Ankara announced that the new structure in Cyprus should be along federal lines, talks were disrupted severely.

In mid-1974 the military junta that ruled Greece instigated a coup against the Cypriot government of Makarios III, archbishop and primate of the Orthodox Church of Cyprus. The Turkish government responded to the apparent move toward *enosis* by invading the island and occupying the northern third of it. It then instituted a massive population transfer in which all Greeks in the Turkish occupied area were forced to move south, while Turks in the south fled north to escape the possibility of a Greek backlash. Although the attempted coup failed, the island has remained rigidly partitioned since then.

The two states are divided by a "Green Line" patrolled by United Nations (UN) troops. Despite strong efforts by the international community—particularly the UN and the European Union (EU)—to negotiate a settlement between the two, the Greek and Turkish portions of Cyprus remain separate. Indeed, in 2004, following negotiations led by UN secretary-general Kofi Annan, a referendum that would have united Cyprus as an independent state with membership in the EU failed in the Greek portion of the island, though it was supported by both Turkey and a majority of Turkish Cypriots.

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Referendum on Reunification, April 21, 2004	
Republic of Cyprus	
Yes	24.2%
No	75.8%
Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus	
Yes	64.9%
No	35.1%

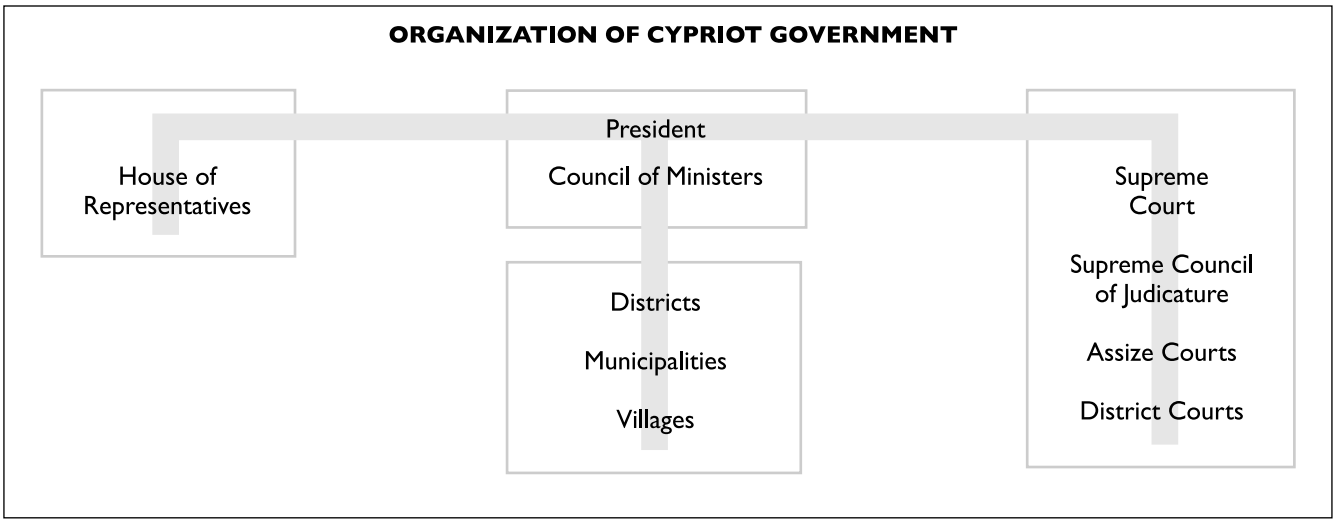
The System of Government

Cyprus's constitution provides for a democratic presidential form of government. Both the constitution and the international status of Cyprus derived from a series of accords known as the Zurich-London agreements reached by the United Kingdom, Greece, and Turkey in 1959. They were designed as a compromise solution to conflicting aspirations between the Greek and Turkish communities.

Since 1974 the island has been de facto divided into two separate states, the Republic of Cyprus, governing two-thirds of the island, and the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (called the Turkish Federated State of Cyprus from 1974 to 1983), which has control over the northeastern one-third of the country. Though the Turkish Republic claims sovereign independence, it is not officially recognized by the international community. Indeed, it is only recognized as an independent state by the Turkish government.

EXECUTIVE

The 1960 constitution calls for a joint administration of the affairs of Cyprus, but since the creation of a separate Turkish Cyprus in the northern part of the island in 1974, each community has administered its own affairs. The Greek Cypriot government claims to be the government of Cyprus, and it is generally recognized as such without the approval of Turkey. The northern area is controlled by the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, and each side has its own president and Council of Ministers.



The president of the republic is the head of state and government. He is elected by universal suffrage for a five-year term; there is no limit on the number of terms he may serve. Executive powers are exercised by the president through a Council of Ministers appointed by him and serving at his pleasure. There is no vice president, since the constitution calls for the post to be occupied by a Turkish Cypriot. The Council has executive power on all matters except those expressly reserved for the president, i.e., appointment of ministers, the attorney general, and other high officials and the granting of pardons and clemency. The president may convene meetings of the Council, set the agenda, and preside over them. He does not have the right to vote in such meetings.

The Council's powers include the general direction and control of the government; direction of general policy; defense and security; foreign affairs; the coordination and supervision of all public services; consideration of bills to be introduced in the legislature; consideration of the budget, and so on. The decisions of the Council are taken by absolute majority. The decisions of the Council are binding, unless the president exercises his right of final veto or return.

Makarios III was president from 1960 until his death in 1977. He dominated the political life of the country and commanded widespread support. Makarios III was succeeded by Spyros Kyprianou, leader of the Democratic Party (DIKO). In 1988 George Vassiliou, who was officially an independent but unofficially supported by the Communist Party, won the presidency. In 1993 Glafcos Clerides, the leader of Democratic Rally (Dimokratikos Synagermos; DISY) won the presidency; he was elected again in 1998. In 2003 Clerides was defeated by the DIKO's Tassos Papadopoulos, who won 51.5 percent of the vote.

LEGISLATURE

The legislative body of the republic is a unicameral House of Representatives, elected for a term of five years. The 1960 constitution provided for a House of Representatives of 50 members, 35 elected by the Greek Cypriots and 15 by the Turkish Cypriots. In 1964 Turkish Cypriot representatives withdrew from the assembly. In 1985 the number of representatives was increased to 80, with 24 reserved for Turkish Cypriots. However, with Turkish Cypriots continuing to boycott the House, only the 56 seats reserved for Greek Cypriots are filled.

In addition, religious representatives elected by the Maronite Christian, Latin (Roman Catholic), and Armenian communities on Cyprus may participate in discussions when legislation affecting those communities is under consideration. According to the constitution, the president (Speaker) of the House is elected by the Greek legislators.

A simple majority vote of those members present and voting is required for all laws and decisions to pass. The power to veto or return for consideration any law or decision is vested in the president with regard to foreign affairs, security, and defense. Although this limits the power of the House, the independence of the legislature is expressly recognized and protected by the constitution. For example, the president of the republic does not have the power to dissolve the legislature.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES ELECTIONS, MAY 27, 2001

Party	% of total	Seats
Progressive Party of the Working People (AKEL)	34.7	20
Democratic Rally (DISY)	34.0	19
Democratic Party (DIKO)	14.8	9
Movement of Social Democrats (KISOS)	6.5	4
New Horizons (NEO)	3.0	1
United Democrats (EDI)	2.6	1
Fighting Democratic Movement (ADIK)	2.2	1
Movement of Ecologists and Environmentalists (KOP)	2.0	1

JUDICIARY

The 13-member Supreme Court is the highest appellate court for all criminal and civil matters. It also adjudicates exclusively and finally on all matters of constitutionality. The judges are appointed by the president. The assize courts have unlimited criminal jurisdiction. The district courts exercise original civil and criminal jurisdiction. The Supreme Council of Judicature (the president and the judges of the Supreme Court) is entrusted with appointment, promotion, transfers, termination, and disciplinary control over all judicial officers, other than the judges of the Supreme Court.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Administratively, Cyprus is divided into six districts: Nicosia (the capital and seat of government), Paphos, Larnaca, Limassol, Famagusta, and Kyrenia. All of Kyrenia, most of Famagusta, and small parts of Nicosia and Larnaca have been under Turkish military occupation since 1974. The administrative center for each district is the principal city of the district and has the same name. Most of the departments of the central government have offices in these cities. Each district is administered by a district officer appointed by the Ministry of Interior. He is the coordinator of all government activities in his district, including the supervision of all elections. His general duties include advice and guidance to local authorities, i.e., municipal corporations, village improvement boards, and village commissions.

Below the district level are municipalities and villages. Municipalities are governed by a mayor, who is directly elected to serve a five-year term. Voters also elect representatives to a municipal council. The functions of the municipal governments include issuing licenses, providing health, social, and medical services, and disposing of waste. There are also village authorities and improvement boards, both of which have similar functions to that of municipalities.

THE TURKISH REPUBLIC OF NORTHERN CYPRUS

The Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, made up of all of Kyrenia, most of Famagusta, and parts of Nicosia and Larnaca, was proclaimed on November 15, 1983. From February 13, 1975, to November 15, 1983, the area was known as the Turkish Federated State of Cyprus, which was proclaimed following the Turkish invasion of July 1974. Only Turkey has recognized the proclamation; other states view the action as illegal. In 1975 a Constituent Assembly drafted a constitution that was endorsed by voters. This constitution provided for a democratic, secular republic. It also provided for a directly elected president (who was limited to two terms in office), a Council of Ministers, a legislative assembly, and an independent judiciary. Following the establishment of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, a new, slightly different constitution was drafted and approved by voters on May 5, 1985. Presidential balloting occurs over two rounds. If a candidate wins a majority in the first round, he is elected; otherwise a runoff is held between the top two candidates from the first round. Rauf Denktash led the Turkish Cypriot area between 1975 and 2005, consistently winning reelection until he finally announced his retirement. His successor, Mehmet Ali Talat of the Republican Turkish Party (CTP), won a convincing victory in the presidential elections of April 2005.

The Legislative Assembly (Temsilciler Meclisi) has 50 members, elected for a five-year term. To secure representation in the assembly, parties must win at least 5 percent of the vote.

Despite its nominal independence, the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus relies upon Turkey for support. Indeed, Turkish military forces are still stationed on its territory. The Turkish government has

resettled some Turks from less affluent parts of Turkey on Cyprus as well.

There are several important political parties in the Turkish Republic. The leading party has generally been the Party of National Unity (Ulusal Birlik Partisi, UBP), which was founded in 1975 by Rauf Denktash. The UBP is a conservative party that favors the formation of a bicommunal confederal state on Cyprus. It is committed to the secular principles enshrined in Atatürk's Turkish constitution. The Republican Turkish Party (CumhuriyetciTurk Partisi, CTP), founded in 1970, is a Socialist party that takes an anti-imperialist stance. The Democratic Party (Demokrat Parti, DP) was founded in 1992 by UBP members disenchanted with Denktash's policies. It maintains a centrist position. The Peace and Democracy Movement (Baris ve Demokrasi Hareketi, BDH) was formed in 2003 from the merger of the Communal Liberation Party (established in 1976), which favored the establishment of an independent, nonaligned, bizonal federal state on Cyprus, with two smaller democratic left-of-center parties.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS, TURKISH REPUBLIC OF NORTHERN CYPRUS, DECEMBER 14, 2003

Party	% of Total	Of 50 Seats
Republican Turkish Party (CTP)	35.2	19
Party of National Unity (UBP)	32.9	18
Democratic Party (DP)	12.9	7
Peace and Democracy Movement (BDH)	13.1	6

The Electoral System

Voter registration and voting are compulsory for all citizens 18 years of age and older (lowered from 21 in 1996). Failure to vote can result in a fine or imprisonment. Voter turnout is usually high, averaging about 75 to 80 percent. Voting is by secret ballot. The president is elected through universal suffrage by an absolute majority. If no candidate receives more than 50 percent of the vote, a second round of elections takes place between the top contestants.

For legislative elections Cyprus is divided into six electoral districts: Nicosia, Famagusta, Limassol, Paphos, Larnaca, and Kyrenia. Each is allocated a number of seats based on population. Greeks who formerly lived in Famagusta and Kyrenia vote for the representatives from those districts.

Elections to the legislature are by a system called reinforced proportional representation. In the first distribution of seats, parties are allocated seats based upon surpassing a minimum threshold. The threshold is determined by the quotient of the number of votes cast divided by the number of seats in a district. Parties are awarded a seat for each time it passes the threshold. For example, if the threshold is 6,000 and a party wins 18,000 votes, it is awarded three seats. After all the seats are awarded in this manner, a second distribution allocates seats on an islandwide basis by adding together the surplus votes. Seats won on this basis are accorded to parties in the district in which they had the highest number of surplus votes, ensuring that all elected legislators represent the districts in which they ran as candidates.

The Party System

All parties are essentially the creatures of their founders and reflect the personality and orientation of their leaders. They are supported by membership dues and donations. Although regional and local branches exist, they are centrally controlled. Reliable data on party membership and finances are scarce.

Party rallies in the squares of the big cities and extensive speechmaking by the party leader and candidates are the major modes of political campaigning. While there is no political advertising on television or radio, party leaders are invited to debate their views through these media. Most newspapers are party instruments and promote their party's candidates.

Major Political Parties

DEMOCRATIC RALLY

(Dimokratikos Synagermos; DISY)

DISY was organized by Glafcos Clerides (born 1919) in 1976 after a disagreement with Archbishop Makarios III. It is a center-right party with some extremist members in its ranks. It favors a pro-Western policy and strongly supported Cyprus's accession to the European Union.

It calls for the EU to play a major role in solving the island's political crisis with Turkey and the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. It supports a free-enterprise system and is favored by the business community.

PROGRESSIVE PARTY OF THE WORKING PEOPLE

(Anorthotiko Komma Ergazomenou Laou; AKEL)

The oldest and most effectively organized party, AKEL succeeded the Communist Party of Cyprus in 1941. The party's program is based on Marxist-Leninist principles, but it has adapted these ideals in pursuing a pragmatic domestic agenda. It has traditionally supported nonalignment and prefers welfare reformism within the free-enterprise system rather than revolutionary transformation of society. AKEL supports a demilitarized, nonaligned, and independent Cyprus. It claims the support of more than half of organized labor, and its following is fairly evenly distributed geographically.

It supported accession to the EU, though with some reservations. Until the fall of the USSR, AKEL participated in international Communist conferences and promoted cultural exchanges between Eastern bloc countries and Cyprus.

Minor Political Parties

DEMOCRATIC PARTY

(Dimokratico Komma; DIKO)

The DIKO was founded by former president Spyros Kyprianou in 1976 and follows the policies of Makarios III. The moderate party has worked closely with Greece on questions of policy for solving the problem of partition. It has supported the settlement of Cyprus's political divisions based on United Nations resolutions. Though it attracts only about 15 percent of the vote, its president, Tassos Papadopoulos, supported by AKEL and several minor parties, was elected president of Cyprus in 2003.

MOVEMENT OF SOCIAL DEMOCRATS

(Kinima Sosialdimokraten; KISOS)

KISOS was formed in 2000 as the successor to the Socialist Party of Cyprus, which had been founded in 1969 and was later renamed the Unified Democratic Union of the Center. It supports a demilitarized and nonaligned Cyprus and favored membership in the European Union. Socialist in orientation, it opposed the interference of the Greek junta (1969–74) in Cyprus's affairs. It generally favors nationalization of industry and strong government intervention in all elements of society. It is a member of the Socialist International.

Other Political Forces

ETHNIC GROUPS

Turks and Greeks lived in partially intermingled communities for years under the British with little ethnic tension but without ever developing a distinct Cypriot identity. Each group retained a primary identification with its homeland and culture.

The Greek community may be roughly characterized as urban and cosmopolitan with extensive business dealings throughout the Mediterranean. Greek Cypriots have generally been more prosperous, better educated, and more inclined to expend the energy and take the risks required by entrepreneurship. Nearly all the Greeks have an Orthodox Christian background.

The Turkish community, once associated with the Turkish rulers of the island until it was ceded to Britain in 1878, has traditionally been more rural, less prosperous, and less educated than the Greeks. Conservative in lifestyle and inclined to fatalism, they have not been as self-assertive as the Greeks. The Turks are generally Sunni Muslim.

About 5 percent of the population is made up of three other ethnoreligious groupsúArmenians, Maronites, and Latins, all Christians. Most Maronites are of Lebanese Arab descent, while the Latins are largely of Italian origin. All three groups have harmonious relations with the Greek community.

UNITED NATIONS

Following Turkey's invasion in 1974, the Cyprus government worked through the United Nations peacekeeping forces to restore the unity of the country and free the northern third from Turkish control. General Assembly Resolution 3212, the basic document, was adopted unanimously (including Turkey) on November 5, 1974. It called for the withdrawal of all foreign troops and the safe return of all refugees to their homes. Neither this nor any other UN resolution on Cyprus has been implemented. A UN peacekeeping force controls a buffer zone of about 3 percent of the

island between the two communities. With Cyprus's accession to the European Union in 2004, the UN's role is expected to be supplemented by the EU.

National Prospects

Cyprus's problems defy an easy solution. Fundamentally, they involve balancing the rights of the majority (Greeks) with the rights of a minority (Turks). However, it is not merely a question of political power but of economic power as well. Before partition, wealth was largely concentrated in the hands of Greek Cypriots. In addition, the historical animosity between Greece and Turkey has carried over into Cyprus, though both Greece and Turkey are now members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation.

Several rounds of intercommunal negotiations in the 1970s and 1980s under United Nations auspices failed to produce a settlement. In the early 21st century, with the European Union's offer to extend membership to Cyprus, there was a concerted effort on the part of the European Union and the United Nations to broker a settlement that would make a unified Cyprus a member of the European Union on May 1, 2004. Signs pointed to an agreement. In 2003 the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus eased restrictions along the "Green Line," enabling citizens to cross the border for the first time in 30 years, and Turkey's government strongly supported reunification, viewing it as a way to enhance its chances of joining the European Union itself. In February 2004 Greek and Turkish Cypriot leaders accepted UN secretary-general Kofi Annan's call for fast-track negotiations that would allow for a referendum on unification before Cyprus's accession to the EU. Under the deal, if Greek and Turkish Cypriot leaders were unable to negotiate a final agreement, Annan would fill in the blanks and organize a referendum in both parts of Cyprus.

Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus president Rauf Denktash and Greek Cypriot leader Tassos Papadopoulos failed to compromise, prompting Annan to put forward his plan to unify the country as a confederation. Turkish Cypriot–controlled land would be returned to the Greek Cypriots, reducing Turkish Cypriot control from 37 percent of the island to about 29 percent, and many refugees would be able to return to their old homes. The two components of the country, to be called the United Cyprus Republic, would largely be autonomous, but Turkey would be allowed to maintain troops on the island. Denktash and Papadopoulos urged their supporters to reject the plan. On April 24, 2004, the Turkish Cypriots defied their president and endorsed reunification, but the Greek Cypriots overwhelmingly opposed the proposal. On May 1, 2004, the Greek Cypriot portion of Cyprus entered the European Union. Despite the setback, the international community pledged to reward the Turkish Republic's acceptance of the proposal, promising economic assistance. The failure of the referendum left many international observers lamenting that this was the last best opportunity for a peaceful resolution of the conflict and that it was likely that the "Cyprus problem" would continue indefinitely.

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CZECH REPUBLIC

(Česká Republika)

By William D. Pederson, Ph.D.
Revised by Vasilis Margaras



The Czech Republic, with a population 10.2 million, is located at the heart of Europe, with Poland to the north, Germany to the west, Austria to the south, and Slovakia to the east. Five phases may be identified in the Czech historical development from medieval to modern times: (1) the incorporation into the Austro-Hungarian Empire from the 16th and 17th centuries until the early 20th century; (2) the establishment of the independent Republic of Czechoslovakia after World War I until World War II; (3) the occupation under Nazi Germany; (4) the Communist takeover shortly after World War II that lasted until the "velvet revolution" in late 1989; and (5) the transition from a restored free Czechoslovakia republic until the "velvet divorce" in 1992. Each of these phases in the country's past contributes to understanding its present situation.

In 1620 the medieval Czech state was incorporated into Austria and remained a part of the Hapsburg Empire for more than 300 years. The area benefited from a moderate form of Austrian rule during the second half of the 19th century while it served as the center of the Austro-Hungarian Empire's industrialization. Economic development led to urbanization and a subsequent flowering of Czech culture in the late 19th century.

After the fall of the Austro-Hungarian Empire in World War I, Czech philosopher Thomas G. Masaryk visited the United States and proclaimed the Republic of Czechoslovakia through the support of President Woodrow Wilson and the Allies. The new nation became the most industrialized and prosperous economy in Eastern Europe.

However, the new republic was short-lived after Adolf Hitler's rise to power in 1933. Agitation in the Sudetenland (an area in northern Bohemia inhabited by some 3 million German-speaking people) offered an excuse for Hitler to pressure the major European leaders to cede him Czech land. The remainder of Czechoslovakia was invaded in 1939 and the Nazis established a protectorate in Bohemia and Moravia. After Nazi Germany's defeat, the pre-1938 frontiers of Czechoslovakia were restored and nearly all the German-speaking inhabitants were expelled.

Soon after World War II, the Communist Party gained control of Czechoslovakia, and the country became a rigid Stalinist state. It was renamed the Czechoslovakia Socialist Republic in July 1960. Only after Joseph Stalin's death in 1953 did the country see the beginnings of some relaxation. Post-Stalin moderation was evident by January 1968 when Alexander Dubček became the secretary of the party. Yet the more independent and moderate policies adopted during the "Prague Spring" were crushed soon after invasion by Warsaw Pact forces. Gustav Husák replaced Dubček as the last head of the country during the 20-year period before the demise of Communist rule.

Only one reform from the Prague Spring was continued. In January 1969 the Czechoslovak unitary state was transformed into a federation, with separate Czech and Slovak republics, each having a National Council and government. A federal government was

established and the legislature was restructured into a bicameral Federal Assembly. The implementation of this single reform from the Prague Spring may be explained partially by the fact that both Dubček and Husák were Slovaks.

Both the fall of the Communist regime and the velvet divorce were accomplished rapidly. Demonstrations against the Communist government, triggered by reforms in the Soviet Union, began in 1988. The "velvet revolution" took place from November 17 to 28, 1989, signaling a dramatic, yet primarily peaceful political change. An informal alliance known as Civil Forum, in the Czech Republic, and the Public against Violence, its Slovak counterpart, emerged at this time. A month later Václav Havel replaced Husák as the president of Czechoslovakia. Alexander Dubček was elected chairman of the Federal Assembly, and the Communist Party lost its majority in the legislature.

The Czech Republic became an independent nation on January 1, 1993, when the former Czechoslovakia separated peacefully into two sovereign parts (see Slovakia). The new republic consists of the Czech Lands of Bohemia and Moravia and part of Silesia.

The System of Government

Under the constitution adopted on December 16, 1992, the Czech Republic is a parliamentary democracy with a bicameral legislature, a presidency, and a Supreme Court.

EXECUTIVE

The executive branch of the government includes the president, the prime minister, the deputy prime ministers, and other ministers within the Council of Ministers. The administration (or government) is the supreme executive power of the Czech Republic. The president appoints the prime minister and other members of the administration, which is accountable only to the Chamber of Deputies. Yet the key governmental figure is the prime minister. While the constitution empowers the president to appoint members of the government, it assumes that the presidential appointments are made only at the suggestion of the prime minister, who actually determines the government's composition.

The president of the republic is the head of state. A candidate for the position must be at least 40 years old and be nominated by a minimum of 10 deputies or senators from the legislature; election requires approval by a simple majority of deputies and senators in a joint session of the legislature. The president is elected for a five-year term and may be reelected for a second consecutive term.

The president represents the republic in foreign affairs, receives the heads of diplomatic missions, and serves as the supreme commander of the armed forces. The president also appoints the members of the council of the Czech National Bank.

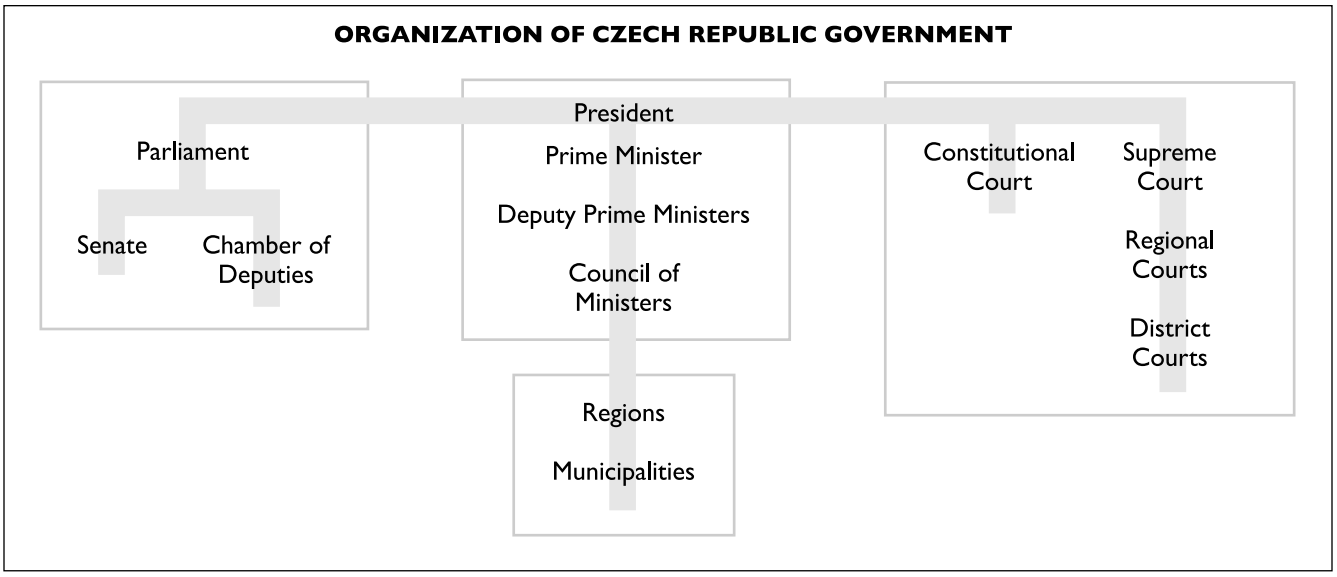
In terms of legislative powers, the president appoints, dismisses, and accepts the resignation of the prime minister and other members of the Council of Ministers. As noted, the president appoints the members of the Council of Ministers based on the recommendation of the prime minister. The president convenes sessions of the Chamber of Deputies and calls legislative elections. The president has the power to return adopted constitutional laws to the legislature as well as to initiate laws. For example, after a public outcry, President Václav Havel vetoed an amendment to the customs law that exempted custom officials from searching the personal belongings of legislative deputies at the border.

The president's quasi-judicial powers include naming judges of the Constitutional Court, its chairman, and deputy chairman. The president also had the right to grant amnesty.

The first president of the Czech Republic was Václav Havel, the leader of the 1989 "velvet revolution" that freed Czechoslovakia from the Soviet bloc. He had served as the president of Czechoslovakia beginning in late December 1989. Though he was reconfirmed for another term in July 1990, Havel resigned his post two years later in an effort to forestall the breakup of the 74-year-old nation founded by Thomas G. Masaryk, the president of the Czechoslovak Republic from 1918 to 1937. The Czech parliament elected Havel president on January 26, 1993. He was reelected on January 20, 1998. Havel was succeeded by Václav Klaus in 2003.

LEGISLATURE

The Czech constitution, adopted on December 16, 1992, by a vote of 172 to 16 with 10 abstentions, provides for a bicameral legislature as the highest organ of state authority in the republic. The parliament enacts the constitutions and the laws, approves the budget, supervises the activities of the government (administration), approves the electoral laws and international agreements, and decides upon the declaration of war.



At a joint session of both legislative chambers, it elects the president of the republic.

The lower house, which has 200 members, is called the Chamber of Deputies, and members must be at least 21 years old. They serve four-year terms. Elections to the Chamber of Deputies are based on a system of proportional representation. Political parties must receive 5 percent of the electoral vote to achieve parliamentary representation.

The 81-member upper house of parliament is called the Senate. Former prime minister Václav Klaus was reluctant to have a Senate for fear his party might not control it. Moreover, a group of 21 leftist deputies (Czech Social Democratic Party, Liberal Social Union, and Left Block) and the extreme right-wing Republican Party wanted the Senate abolished, while President Havel and others remained committed to it. Nonetheless the Czech Republic's legislature includes the Senate, and the constitution describes its powers in great detail. Every two years one-third of the Senate is up for election. Senators must be at least 40 years old. They serve six-year terms. Unlike the lower Chamber of Deputies, the Senate cannot be dissolved, and it is designed to perform some of the legislative tasks of the Chamber when the latter has been dissolved or is not in session. The Senate is empowered to debate laws by the Chamber and has the right to return a law to the Chamber if a majority of the senators vote against it.

JUDICIARY

Judicial power in the Czech Republic is exercised by independent civilian courts under the Ministry of Justice and military courts under the minister of defense. The civilian court system consists of several levels in the tradition of the first Czechoslovak Republic. The Supreme Court interprets law to serve as a guide to other courts and acts as a court of appeal. Decisions are made by a panel of three judges who are appointed for life. The Supreme Administrative Court is concerned with administrative regulations and mediates jurisdictional conflicts; the Constitutional Court decides broad constitutional issues.

Regional courts handle serious cases and act as appellate courts for the district courts. Cases are usually decided by a five-member panel, two judges and three associate judges.

The district court cases are decided by panels usually comprising a judge and two associate judges. Qualifications for the associate positions include citizenship and a minimum age of 25. They are elected to four-year terms.

The Constitutional Court is a judicial body charged with upholding the constitution of the Czech Republic. It consists of 15 judges each appointed to 10-year terms by the president of the republic with the consent of the Senate. The court has broad powers to rule on the constitutionality of proposed laws and disputes among levels of government, as well as on electoral laws. The parliament established the court in June 1993.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Though the Czech constitution does not specify the number of regions for administrative purposes, the

republic is divided into eight lands (*Kraj*): central, southern, western, northern, eastern Bohemia; southern, northern Moravia; and the capital Prague (Praha). These units are governed by elected representative bodies that promulgate ordinances. The lands or regions are further subdivided into municipalities empowered to raise local taxes for roads, schools, utilities, and public health. The issue of territorial division remains sensitive. Deputies from Moravia and Silesia have demanded that both regions be given the status of a "land" and the right to establish their own representative bodies.

In June 1994 the government agreed to establish 17 "higher administrative" units (similar to county councils) at the local level. Though the prime minister and deputy prime minister (Jan Kalvoda) were reluctant to accept this approach and favored having fewer units to dilute possible minority opposition, the parliament approved the plan for greater representation.

The Electoral System

The electoral system emerged from its Czechoslovakian history. The constitution provides for universal suffrage and a secret ballot. Citizens 18 years of age or older are eligible to vote. In February 1990 the Czechoslovakia Federal Assembly passed a new electoral law based on the principle of proportional representation. Only registered parties were permitted to compete in the June 8–9, 1990, elections, which were the first free elections held since 1946. The Communist Party and its former allies (the Czechoslovak People's Party, the Czechoslovak Socialist Party, and the Slovak Freedom Party—formerly the Slovak Renaissance Party) were considered formal parties and therefore were not required to register. The same applied to the Civic Forum and its Slovak counterpart, Public against Violence. The electoral law stipulated that lists of candidates could be presented only by parties and movements composed of at least 10,000 members. Candidacy requirements were citizenship and a minimum age of 20. The parties had to poll a minimum of 5 percent of the total vote to achieve representation in the legislature. State financial assistance encouraged a proliferation of parties; any party that obtained at least 2 percent of the vote received .15 crowns per vote. More than 20 parties finally competed in the June 1990 elections. The 5 percent electoral threshold necessary to obtain parliamentary representation tended to stabilize later election results.

Plans promoted by the two major parties (Social Democrats and Civic Democrats) to establish a less proportional electoral system have been rejected as anti-constitutional.

The Party System

One of the legacies of Communist Party rule was that it gave the name "party" a bad connotation. Its bureaucratic mindlessness perpetuated by a cadre of self-serving careerists resulted in a reluctance by new politically affiliated groups to call themselves a party. Some political organizations use synonyms, such as *hnuta*, loosely translated as a "movement," "tendency," or "group." Nonetheless, the Czech Republic has developed a multiparty system as it had during the interwar period.

The June and November 1990 elections confirmed the transformation from a Communist regime to one with free elections. The elections served more as a referendum and social consensus to reject the Communist past than to stress partisanship. More than 60 parties and groups were registered by the end of February 1990; some 20 fulfilled the conditions to participate in the June 8–9, 1990, election. At the federal level, Civil Forum–Public against Violence emerged as the dominant political force with about half of the total vote. Seven parties or movements exceeded the 5 percent threshold necessary for parliamentary representation. The November local elections further confirmed the mass rejection of the Communists.

During the next two years Civic Forum and Public against Violence began disintegrating into competing parliamentary factions. The initial seven parties in parliament had splintered into 19 parliamentary factions by the eve of the June 1992 elections. The future of the federal Czechoslovakian state became a major theme throughout the election campaign. The breakup of the dual republic is linked to the parties opposing each other after their common enemy, the Communist state, was vanquished. Though polling data suggest that the majority of the people favored the old union, inexperienced politicians were not capable of dealing with their common problems.

In early April 1997 the Constitutional Court supported the election law requirement that parties must obtain 5 percent of the electoral vote to be represented in the Chamber of Deputies. Without this requirement, 16 political parties would have been represented in the Chamber as a result of the 1996 election. However, the Czech party system is still a fragmented and volatile one. It is a common phenomenon for parties to emerge and disappear between elections.

ELECTION RESULTS 1992–2002 (%)

Political party	1992	1996	1998	2002
Civic Democratic Party (ODS)	28	27	28	24.5
Czech Social Democratic Party (CSSD)	6	26	32	30.2
Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia (KSCM)	14	10	11	18.5
Christian and Democratic Union–Czechoslovak People's Party (KDU-CSL)	6	8	10	—
Freedom Union (US)	—	—	9	—
Civic Democratic Alliance (ODA)	—	6	6	—
Coalition (KDU-CSL, US-DU)	—	—	—	14.3

Major Political Parties

CIVIC DEMOCRATIC PARTY

(Občanská demokratická strana; ODS)

The Civic Democratic Party grew out of the fall 1991 split within the Civic Forum (Občanské forum), which had formed two years earlier as an informal alliance in opposition to the Communist regime. The ODS is a center-right party that advocates continuation of the move toward a free-market economy and a limited role for the state.

In the June 5–6, 1992, parliamentary elections, the CDP won nearly one-third of the Czech vote in coalition with the small Christian Democratic Party. The Civic Democratic Party was part of the party coalition in control of the Czech Parliament. After the June 1996 Chamber of Deputies elections, the Christian Democratic Party (KDS) merged into the ODS. It controlled 68 of the 200-seat Chamber and a majority of the positions in the Cabinet. In the November 1996 Senate elections, it also became the strongest party with 32 seats. Yet in the June 1998 parliamentary elections the ODS lost to the CSSD, a result that was repeated in the 2002 elections. The party has 35,000 members.

The Civic Democratic Party has been dominated by Václav Klaus, who served as prime minister between 1992 and 1997 and was chairman of the party until 2002. Many of Klaus's ideas come close to those of former British prime minister Margaret Thatcher. The ODS instigated many of the economic reforms of the early and mid-1990s. While in government the party promoted a voucher privatization scheme and also tried to cut down on state bureaucracy. One of the party's main electoral pledges was a set rate of income tax at 15 percent. ODS campaigned for limited role of the state and a more liberal economy. Although the party supported the country's accession to the EU, it also feared that moves toward a stronger federal Europe might put further limits to the state's autonomy. The party is also very supportive of the trans-Atlantic link. Its electorate consists mostly of the middle class, the entrepreneurs, and the youth. ODS enjoys considerable support in some of the larger cities such as Prague and Brno and is particularly popular with women.

While serving as prime minister, Klaus imposed austerity measures that led to popular discontent. The sudden resignation of the foreign minister, Jozef Zieleniec, led the government close to collapse. However, the final blow came when a row broke out inside the ODS in late 1997 following a dispute over the party's funding. The actual cause of Klaus's resignation, when it came, was the allegation that his party—and allegedly he personally—took money from donors in return for favorable privatization deals. The scandal led to the collapse of the coalition government, and some leading party figures seceded from the ODS to establish the Freedom Union. A complex deal involving parliamentary votes of confidence was agreed by the main political parties, which had failed to agree on a constitutional way of holding early elections. The government of the caretaker prime minister, Josef Tosovsky—a former head of the Czech Central Bank—took over until the new elections were called. However, this was not the end of Klaus's political career. He was elected president in 2003, succeeding Havel.

COMMUNIST PARTY OF BOHEMIA AND MORAVIA—LEFT BLOCK

(Komunistická strana Čech a Moravy; KSCM)

In 1921 the left wing of the Social Democratic Party formed the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia. Though it called for the revolutionary overthrow of the democratic government, it was the only Communist Party in Central and Eastern Europe openly allowed during the interwar period. It became the strongest

Communist Party outside the Soviet Union. After gaining control of the country in 1948, it remained a totalitarian force until 1968, when for the first time in world history a ruling Communist Party was challenged from within by reformers, a short-lived challenge crushed by the Warsaw Pact invasion in August 1968. The party's peaceful demise occurred quickly in 1990 after the "velvet revolution."

The Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia (CPBM) emerged in 1991 as a result of the reorganization of the former Communist Party of Czechoslovakia. The Left Block (a coalition of the CPBM and a small group called the Democratic Left) obtained 14 percent of the vote in the 1992 election; 10 percent of the vote in the 1996 election; 11 percent of the vote in the 1998 election; and 18 percent in the 2002 election. The party accommodates several factions among its 380,000 members.

Its former leader was Jiří Svoboda, a relative moderate who was less ideological than some party leaders and willing to enter into coalitions with other leftists. He had to contend with several factions within the party. There were a number of hard-line Stalinists who formed the "Platform for Socialism" in January 1993 and who opposed any party reforms, and there were other conservative factions both within the parliamentary delegation and the party's leadership. At the June 1993 party congress Svoboda was replaced by his former conservative deputy chairman, Miroslav Grebenicek, who had refused to cooperate with him. The reform-minded members of the party split from the neo-Stalinist core to form the Party of the Democratic Left.

Several groups splintered from the party in the early 1990s and founded their own parties—such as Left Block and later the Party of Czechoslovak Communists, but while they have faded into obscurity, the KSCM is the only credible force of the Communist left. The party attracts mainly older people who feel alienated by the current system. KSCM also gets good electoral results in depressed industrial areas that are facing major unemployment problems. In terms of membership, the party has a large base of grass-roots members who outnumber by far the members of other political formations. In 2002 the Communists came third in the election with 41 seats, scoring by far their best result since the "velvet revolution."

The KSCM is a Socialist party, and most of its ideas revolve around a strong state-led economy. The party also opposed Czech NATO membership and remained divided over Czech EU accession. The party had a good electoral performance but, although it is proving popular among certain sectors of the population, it is still out of power. KSCM needs to reconfirm its democratic credentials and promote a moderate image in order to gain power. In addition, although it claims to support the working class, it has failed to get the support of many mainstream trade union leaders who distance themselves from the party. All other parties in the Czech parliament have ruled out any kind of coalition deal with the KSCM because of the fear of a new totalitarian wave of Communism sweeping the country.

CZECH SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY

(Čseká strana sociálne demokratická; CSSD)

Formed in 1878, the Czechoslovak Social Democratic Party has a long history. Its heyday was in 1918 when it won electoral victory and the leader of the party was made prime minister. Within the ruling governmental coalition the party was left wing on the political spectrum. Its electoral success was short-lived. After World War II, the party eliminated its conservative wing and adopted a Marxist-Leninist ideology. In June 1948 it merged with the Communist Party. Twenty years later some Social Democrats tried to reactivate the party during the Prague Spring.

The party finally was fully revived in November 1989, after more than 40 years of underground existence. Its newly elected leader, Slavomír Klaban, was critical of the Civic Form, claiming it was too broad a coalition and lacked a clear political program. In 1990 the party had more than 10,000 members. In the June 1992 election the CSSD obtained 7 percent of the vote, but in subsequent elections it emerged as one of the strongest parties in the country, winning 26 percent in 1996, 32 percent in 1998, and 30 percent in 2002. The CSSD has a commitment to social welfare, and as do other Czech leftist parties, it advocates close relations with Slovakia.

The parliamentary elections of 1998 brought no clear winner and the Social Democrats, as the party with the most seats in the Chamber of Deputies, signed the so-called opposition agreement with the second strongest political force, the right-of-center Civic Democratic Party of Václav Klaus, under which the Civic Democrats agreed to tolerate the minority Social Democrat government. The opposition agreement ensured a full term for the government of Social Democrat leader Miloš Zeman in return for key parlia-

mentary posts going to the CDP. Havel, who was president at the time, was highly critical of the opposition agreement and argued that it undermined democracy and destroyed competition. Zeman was later accused of selling political influence to foreign businessmen but won a vote of confidence in parliament on the issue. In April 2001 Vladimír Špidla was elected the new chairman of the ruling Social Democrats and led the party in the elections in 2002. Although the party won the highest percentage of votes, it won only 70 seats in the 200-seat parliament. As a result, Špidla formed a coalition with a centrist alliance of Christian Democrats and the Freedom Union. The coalition held only the slimmest of majorities in parliament and often looked fragile. Špidla asked three cabinet members from the Freedom Union to leave the government when a Freedom Union member of parliament voted with the opposition against plans to raise taxes to help pay for the worst flood damage in the country's recent history. Špidla also pressed ahead with unpopular fiscal reforms designed to prepare the country for membership in the European Union and had to resign as premier on July 1, 2004, following disastrous results for his party in the first Czech European elections. Špidla also stood down as party leader. Stanislav Gross succeeded Špidla as leader of the Social Democrats and reached agreement with two other party leaders on the makeup of a new coalition. The 34-year-old Gross, a deputy premier under Špidla, became the country's and Europe's youngest-ever prime minister. However, his government was brought down in scandal related to the financing of a luxury apartment, and in April 2005 Jiří Paroubek became prime minister.

The party tries to promote itself as a modern social democratic European party. In terms of ideas and relations it identifies closely with German Social Democrats and the British Labour Party. The Social Democratic Party is an active member of the Socialist International. The party tries to promote a "social market economy," and it led a major privatization process along with measures to encourage foreign investment. However, the liberalization of the economy has not proved a popular measure, and by January 2001 the country experienced the biggest protests since the overthrow of Communism. The party has not avoided the ideological-political divisions that characterize much of current social democracy. It traditionally draws working-class voters and trade union members in industrial towns. A share of its votes also comes from public service employees.

Minor Political Parties

CHRISTIAN AND DEMOCRATIC UNION–CZECHOSLOVAK PEOPLE'S PARTY

(Krestanská a demokratická unie–Československá strana lidova; KDU-CSL)

The Christian and Democratic Union-Czechoslovak People's Party, formed in 1992, is composed of two small center-right parties: the Christian Democratic Party (KDS) and the Czech People's Party (CSL). It was part of the ruling coalition in the Czech Republic and was rewarded with posts in the government until the CSSD won in 1998.

The KDU-CSL is a traditional, conservative, Roman Catholic–based party. It defines itself as right of center, but in many respects it is closer to the Social Democrats than the other right-wing parties. Like the Freedom Union–Democratic Union, the party is pro–European Union and is strongly in favor of direct presidential elections. On some social issues, such as the question of legalizing homosexual partnerships, it is conservative, consistent with its Catholic tradition. The KDU-CSL and the Freedom Union–Democratic Union have put forward a common right-of-center manifesto with a strong focus on the battle against corruption and on the rule of law. The party appeals particularly to Catholic voters and to conservative voters in small towns and rural areas. It enjoys strong and stable support in rural parts of Moravia, which is the eastern part of the Czech Republic. The KDU-CSL has been part of the ruling coalition led by the Social Democrats since 2002.

FREEDOM UNION–DEMOCRATIC UNION

(Unie Svobody–Demokratická unie; US-DU)

A small center-right party committed to free-market liberalism, the US-DU was founded by former members of the Civic Democratic Party after Klaus's government resigned in 1997 following a political funding scandal. The Freedom Union members accused the party leadership of not being willing to investigate and answer serious questions about party sponsors. Several members of the emerging Freedom Union served in the interim government of Josef Tosovsky prior to the early elections held in June 1998. In September 1999, the Freedom Union, along with three other right-of-center parties (the Christian Democratic Union–People's

Party, the Democratic Union, and the Civic Democratic Alliance), signed a pact, committing them to close cooperation in the run-up to the next parliamentary elections and in the period to follow. From then on they were known as the "Four Coalition." The Freedom Union merged with the Democratic Union (a small right-of-center party that came well short of gaining the 5 percent of votes needed to enter parliament in the 1998 election) at the end of 2001. The Four Coalition collapsed at the end of January 2002, after a row over how to solve the debt crisis of its smallest member, the Civic Democratic Alliance (another party that had failed to enter parliament in the 1998 election). Since then the US-DU has been a member of the governing coalition led by the Social Democrats. The party advocates classic right-wing policies, such as tax reductions and the introduction of tuition fees for university students, but also stresses the importance of the environment and minority rights. A further frequent theme in the party's rhetoric is the battle against economic and political corruption. The party is strongly pro–European Union. The US-DU is popular among people with higher education and appeals to young people and to those disillusioned with the larger parties. Its support is mainly urban.

Other Political Forces

The Czech military does not interfere in the political affairs of the country. About one-quarter of the country's workers are members of labor unions; the largest trade umbrella organization is the Czech-Moravian Chamber of Trade Unions. In general, the labor movement's influence in the political system is not as great in the Czech Republic as it is in some other former Communist nations in Eastern Europe. By law, political parties are prevented from organizational activities on college campuses.

In terms of international forces, the country's membership in the European Union will play an important role in domestic political affairs in the coming years. The country's low-cost, skilled labor force as well as its central location have made it an attractive source of foreign capital investment.

National Prospects

Economics and political tradition suggest a bright future for the Czech Republic. As expected, the "velvet revolution" was conducted peacefully while the subsequent division of Czechoslovakia is often described as the "velvet divorce." Though data suggest that the public was against the separation, in retrospect it is apparent that the inexperience of newly emerged political leaders made the change almost inevitable. Most of the new leaders were political unknowns prior to 1993.

Overall, the economy remains strong, despite trade deficits and investment scandals. There is a skilled labor force with a strong industrial tradition. The government inherited a low level of external debt and has cushioned the transition to a free economy. The Czech Republic enjoys one of the highest standards of living in Eastern Europe.

In foreign affairs the firing up of the Temelin nuclear power plant in 2000 sparked a major row with Austria. By 2001 the two nations tried to settle the dispute by agreeing to tough measures to improve safety and monitor the impact on the environment. The Czech government also bowed to national and international pressures in order to proceed with the demolition of a controversial wall in the northern town of Usti nad Labem built to segregate the homes of Gypsies from those of other residents. However, not all was compromised: in 2000 the parliament voted unanimously to reject calls by neighboring countries for the repeal of the postwar Beneš decrees, which led to the expulsion of over two and a half million ethnic Germans.

The country consolidated its democratic credentials by joining multilateral organizations. In 1999 the Czech Republic became a full member of NATO and in 2003 the Czech people voted in a referendum in favor of entering the European Union (EU); the latter accession occurred in 2004. Although liberalization continued to dominate the economic agenda, problems persisted: the fuel distributor Unipetrol could not be sold at the expected price; it was finally sold for a much lower price to a domestic bidder. In addition, the sale of power utility CEZ had to be postponed because of the low quality of bids. In 2002 the Czech Republic also suffered its worst flooding in 200 years. Despite problems, economic and political changes have paved the way for a better future. Although capitalism has proved a less rosy system than expected, the Czechs are looking toward the future with optimism.

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KINGDOM OF DENMARK

(Kongeriget Danmark)

By Alastair H. Thomas
Revised by Chris Palazzolo



Denmark, as one of the Nordic countries, has close linguistic and historical affinities to Norway and Sweden. Its main territory is a geological extension of the North German Plain. The unitary constitution applies to Denmark itself—the Jutland (Jylland) peninsula and numerous islands of which Funen (Fyn) and Zealand (Sjaelland) are the two largest—and also to "North Atlantic Denmark": the Faroe Islands and Greenland. Denmark has a culturally homogeneous population of 5.4 million (2004). The Faroe Islands north of Britain (with 47,000 inhabitants) have been a "self-governing community within the Danish realm" since 1948, with a distinctive Nordic language. Greenland (56,000 inhabitants), with a mainly Inuit people and language, has been "an equal part of the kingdom" since 1953, with home rule since 1979. Their sparse populations depend heavily on fishing.

The oldest kingdom in Europe, Denmark dates from well before the Viking King Knud I (Canute) united Denmark and England in 1018–35. The national flag, Dannebrog, a white cross on a red ground, dates from 1219. Their Viking-age link ended with Iceland's independence in 1944. Earlier Danish kings were elected, but the 1665 constitution introduced hereditary absolute monarchy. King Frederik VII conceded constitutional monarchy in 1848. After the second Schleswig-Holstein War of 1864 ended in disastrous loss of territory to Prussia, Christian IX reverted to monarchy, choosing politicians of the right for his advisers despite rising liberal strength. With the right reduced to 7 percent of the Folketing seats, the "Change of System" was made to parliamentary democracy and constitutional monarchy in 1901. This principle survived the Easter Crisis of 1920 and Nazi German occupation in 1940–45 and has flourished since.

The System of Government

Supreme authority is vested formally with the queen but is exercised through ministers who are politically responsible to parliament. The constitution of 1953 remains unchanged. With broad agreement it created a single-chamber parliament, the Folketing, by abolishing the upper house, and it introduced referendums in specified circumstances. An ombudsman investigates citizen complaints of maladministration. As the result of a change in the law of succession in 1953, Queen Margrethe II succeeded her father, King Frederik IX, in 1972.

In recent years there has been much discussion about revising the 1953 constitution to reflect changes in parliamentary and governmental practices enacted in the last 50 years. Many of these changes are directly related to Danish involvement in the European Union (EU) and newer issues of immigration and cultural diversity. At the turn of the 21st century, public debates were held throughout the country to address constitutional issues. In March 2004 the debate was formally opened in the Folketing; however, a date for a formal

constitutional convention was put on hold pending the 2005 Folketing elections, and it was unclear when such a convention would occur.

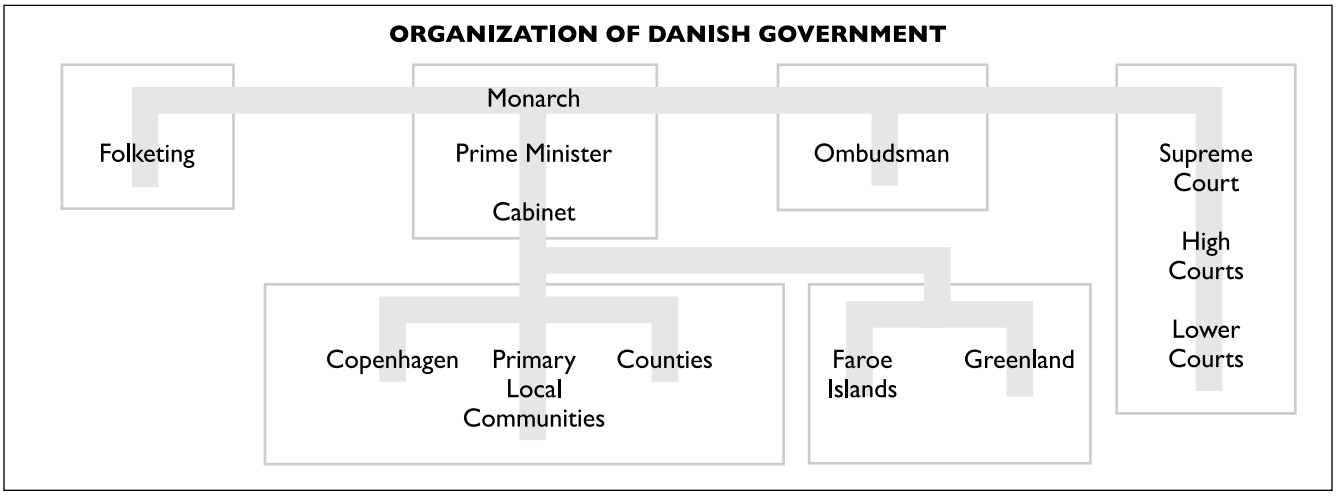
EXECUTIVE

The cabinet of about 20 ministers is headed by the prime minister (*statsminister*). It is officially appointed by the monarch after hearing the views of all parties in the Folketing. Party groups make recommendations based on the prospects of forming a government that will include themselves and their allies. After assessing their advice, the queen commissions a party leader to try to form a majority government. If this proves impossible in the prevailing complex multiparty relationships, the commission may be amended. A minority or single-party government may finally be accepted as the only real possibility. The constitution requires that "No Minister shall continue in office after the Folketing has expressed no confidence in him." This negative formulation does not require a vote of confidence before a government takes office and permits the many minority governments to continue without challenge.

Politically the main limit on a government is imposed by the multiparty system, which has given no single party a majority since 1906. Cabinets usually include two or more parties, and on most issues they seek wider support in parliamentary committees and plenary votes. Since 1945 there have been majority governments only in 1957–64 (Social Democrats, SD; Radical Liberals, RV; and Justice Party), in 1968–71 (RV, Venstre, and Conservatives), and in 1993–94 (an SD-led center-left coalition). Minority coalitions were formed in 1950–53 (Venstre and KF), 1978–79 (SD and Venstre), 1982–2001 (SD-center left coalition), and 2001–present (Venstre and KF). Otherwise, single-party minority cabinets have been formed. Most minority cabinets have support arrangements with other parties for specified policies.

Additional limits on executive power involve the referendum provisions in the 1953 constitution. These come into play if any sovereignty is ceded to an international authority unless there is a five-sixths majority in the Folketing; to change the voting age; as a legislative veto, on the request of one-third of Folketing members, to oppose a bill after its third reading; and to amend the constitution, when the amendment must be passed twice by the Folketing in the same form with an intervening election. A referendum is then held requiring a "Yes" vote by a majority of voters that must also constitute at least 40 percent of the electorate. During 1953–2000, 16 referendum votes were held: six on issues of European integration; six lowering the voting age from 25 in 1963 to 18 in 1978; and four in 1963 to veto laws on landholding. Financial and nationality legislation is excluded from this referendum procedure.

One of the most controversial referenda was the narrow rejection of the Maastricht Treaty of European Union in 1992, which required ratification by all of the then 12 member states for the treaty to take effect. A "national compromise" was agreed upon by seven parties ranging from the Socialist People's Party (SF) to the Conservatives (but excluding the Progress Party) and opt-outs (specifically concerning joint defense, legal cooperation, European citizenship, and European Monetary Union). This compromise, which was reached at the European Council (EC) summit in December 1996, proved sufficient to secure a referendum majority in 1993. Another contentious referendum in 2000 considered the adoption of the single



DANISH GOVERNMENTS 1968–2005

Years	Cabinet Parties	Support %[a]	Prime Minister
1968–71	Radical Liberals, Liberals (Venstre), Conservatives	56	Hilmar Baunsgaard (RV)
1971–72	Social Democrats	40	Jens Otto Krag (SD)
1972–73	Social Democrats	40	Anker Jørgensen I (SD)
1973–75	Liberals (Venstre)	13	Poul Hartling (V)
1975–78	Social Democrats	30	Anker Jørgensen II (SD)
1978–79	Social Democrats, Liberals	49	Anker Jørgensen III (SD)
1979–81	Social Democrats	39	Anker Jørgensen IV (SD)
1981–82	Social Democrats	34	Anker Jørgensen V (SD)
1982–84	Conservatives, Liberals (Venstre), Center Democrats, Christian People's Party	34	Poul Schlüter I (KF)
1984–87	Conservatives, Liberals (Venstre), Center Democrats, Christian People's Party	44	Poul Schlüter II (KF)
1987–89	Conservatives, Liberals (Venstre), Center Democrats, Christian People's Party	40	Poul Schlüter III (KF)
1989–90	Conservatives, Liberals (Venstre), Radical Liberals	38	Poul Schlüter IV (KF)
1990–93	Conservatives, Liberals (Venstre)	34	Poul Schlüter V (KF)
1993–94	Social Democrats, Radicals, Center Democrats, Christian People's Party	51	Poul N. Rasmussen I (SD)
1994–96	Social Democrats, Radicals, Center Democrats	43	Poul N. Rasmussen II (SD)
1996–98	Social Democrats, Radicals	39	Poul N. Rasmussen III (SD)
1998–2001	Social Democrats, Radicals	40	Poul N. Rasmussen IV (SD)
2001–05	Conservatives, Liberals (Venstre)	40	Anders F. Rasmussen I (V)
2005–present	Conservatives, Liberals	39	Anders F. Rasmussen II (V)

[a]*Cabinet support is the percentage of parliamentary mandates held by the parties represented in the Cabinet. From this it is clear that since 1968 there were majority governments only in 1968–71 and 1993–94.*

European currency. Although supported by most of the mainstream parties, the referendum failed. The failure of the referendum particularly hurt the ruling Social Democrats, who had been the strongest and most vocal proponents of the Euro. A referendum on the European constitution was scheduled for 2005 but was put on hold indefinitely following rejection of the constitution by voters in The Netherlands and in France.

In addition to overseeing cabinet formations, Queen Margrethe II presides over the Council of

State, a formal meeting of the cabinet that assents to legislation. Her other functions are ceremonial and representational, but she enjoys great popularity and respect, both as monarch and as an accomplished artist and designer. Constitutionally, legislative power is vested jointly in the monarch and the Folketing, executive power in the monarch, and judicial power in the courts. In legal reality, executive power is exercised by civil servants acting within laws signed by the queen, countersigned by a minister, and authorized by a cabinet responsible to the elected parliament. The judiciary act independently of legislature and executive.

LEGISLATURE

Denmark has a unicameral legislature, the Folketing. The maximum Folketing term is four years, but elections have been held about every three years. The 179 members include two each from the Faroes and Greenland. Its presidium of a chairman and four deputies is elected from the five largest parties. It convenes autonomously on the first Tuesday in October and following each election. It normally sits until the end of May with recesses at Christmas and Easter and for sessions of the transnational Nordic Council, which meets in rotation in one of the five Nordic parliaments. About one-third of the members are women. The largest category of members comes from public-sector, white-collar occupations. Less than 10 percent were law graduates, and a qualification in political science was more likely.

JUDICIARY

The highest court in Denmark is the Supreme Court, followed by various High Courts, which in turn are followed by lower courts. Judicial review of legislation is a logical consequence of the codified constitution, but in each of about ten 20th-century cases the Supreme Court found the law to be constitutional. This happened in 1998 when a group of citizens failed in their challenge to the authority of the prime minister to sign the Maastricht Treaty. Executive orders that do not conform to the enabling legislation have been struck down, but the courts cannot override discretionary executive decisions unless the influence of extraneous considerations can be shown. The judiciary assert its independence by maintaining an apolitical stance.

The constitution includes an impeachment procedure under which a minister may be tried before the High Court of the Realm (Rigsret) on a charge of "maladministration of office" brought by the Crown or the Folketing.

The most effective remedy available to citizens in dispute with the administration is through the ombudsman, whose opinions are usually accepted. An official with legal training, he has extensive powers to investigate administrative decisions at the national and local levels and reports to the Folketing Justice Committee. Most cases concern the Ministries of Justice or Social Policy and their attached agencies.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Although Denmark is constitutionally a unitary state, it is relatively decentralized. Local government revenue accounts for around 35 percent of total government revenue, and local government spending accounts for around 45 percent of total government spending. However, it is questionable how politically autonomous the local units are, particularly when one considers their level of dependence on funding from the state (see below).

Following an extensive amalgamation of small administrative units in 1970, Denmark is administered by 275 communities or municipalities (*kommuner*). In population they range from 2,700 to 500,000 but average 18,500. They run most local services, including primary schools, social security, primary health care, children's day care, assistance to the elderly including care homes, local roads, and the environment. They keep a population and electoral register and raise property taxes. They receive block grants from the state and are fully reimbursed by the state for the pensions they pay to the elderly and the early retired.

Fourteen second-tier counties (*amtskommuner*) range in population from about 50,000 to more than 600,000, but half have between 200,000 and 300,000. They run major roads, secondary schools, and hospitals, except for a few specialized facilities run by the state (there are no private hospitals). Primary health care is funded mainly by the counties, while doctors work as private practitioners paid on a fee-for-service basis. Health insurance is compulsory, and all hospital treatment and most other health services are free of charge to the patient.

Local government collectively spends funds equivalent to one-third of gross national product and employs around one-fifth of the workforce. Elections for county and municipal councils take place every four years. Occasionally national elections and local elections (both municipal and county) are held concurrently. Typically, local elections are viewed as national "barometers" for national party support

between elections, rather than as independent contests. These elections are not contested by many of the smaller parties. A mayor (*borgmester*) chairs the council and leads its work but is not the chief executive. The large cities have collective leadership, with mayors chairing each of the major departmental committees. There have recently been some controversial changes to local government. In particular, reforms have centered on the collection and distribution of local taxes and the management of hospitals.

The Faroe Islands have had home rule since 1948, while the Danish government retains authority over foreign policy, defense, justice, police, and the church. There is an elected Løgting of 32 members and an executive body (Landsstyr) headed by a Lagmand. In 1998 an independence majority was elected favoring a more clearly defined relationship to Denmark. In 2001 the pro-independence government pushed for a referendum. Under the referendum, the Queen would remain as the head of state, and the monetary union with Denmark would remain unchanged. Danish subsidies would be phased out over a 15-year period. However, once the Danish government threatened to halt aid within four years if the referendum passed, plans for the referendum were shelved. The Danish state is represented by the *rigsombudsmand,* exercising prefectorial powers. The islands have two representatives in the Folketing. Similar arrangements have applied in Greenland since 1979, with powers transferred progressively. Greenland possesses its own 31-member legislative assembly, elected by proportional representation, known as the Landsting. Greenland also elects two members to the Danish Folketing, as do the Faroe Islands.

The Electoral System

The Folketing is directly elected using a complex party-list proportional method. The threshold for representation is 2 percent. Parties may use three types of lists and can use different types in different districts. Voters can cast a personal vote for a candidate, and this allowed the rare election in 1994 of an independent (nonparty) candidate on a "nonsense" program. Since 1953 Sainte Laguë rules (but with a first divisor of 1.4) have been used to allocate 135 mandates in 17 voting districts, averaging 7.9 representatives per district. A further 40 supplementary seats are allocated by largest remainder, based on each party's total national vote, taking into account the 135 mandates previously allocated. The results score 99 on a proportionality index that rates perfect proportionality at 100. Casual vacancies are filled by the next candidate on the list, so the Folketing party balance remains fixed between elections unless a party splits.

The ballot shows a list of candidates grouped under party names. The lists are lettered for identification (*A* for Social Democrats through *Z* for the Progress Party). Parties use these letters when campaigning. Candidates are nominated from one of 103 nomination districts within the 17 electoral districts, so candidates keep a territorial link. Nonparty candidates can also be nominated. Blank or invalid votes are no more than 0.6 percent of the poll. The electoral register is renewed every January and includes all qualified residents known to the *folkeregister* (almost all the eligible population). Turnout ranges between 80 and 90 percent.

There has been universal adult suffrage since 1915. The voting age has been 18 since 1978. All permanently resident Danes may vote unless declared incapable of managing their affairs. Since 1981, foreigners resident in Denmark for three years before a local election may vote or run as a candidate in these elections. The three-year limit does not apply to citizens of the EU, Iceland, or Norway.

The Party System

The Danish party system dates from 1848. Initially the Right and National Liberals shared office, then they alternated it between them. From 1905 there was a four-party system: Social Democrats, Radical Liberals, Venstre Liberals, and Conservatives, with the Social Democrats the largest party from 1924. In 1959 the Socialist People's Party became the fifth significant party in the system. Since the 1973 "earthquake" election at least 10 parties have been represented in the Folketing, with a broad central core of "responsible" parties forming governments, criticized by a periphery of noncoalitionable parties. On a left/right scale, the parties in the 1990s can be ordered: Red-Green Unity List, Socialist People's Party (SF), Social Democrats (SD), Radical Liberals (RV), Center Democrats (CD), Venstre Liberals (V), Christian Democrats (KD; formerly Christian People's Party), Conservatives, and Progress Party (FP). Refugees and immigration have been sensitive issues since the mid-1980s, and on a pluralism/assimilation scale the order is similar except that RV and CD are more pluralist than SD. The Progress Party and its successor, the Danish People's Party, are most opposed to "foreigners."

DENMARK: FOLKETING ELECTIONS 1994–2005

	1994	1998	2001	2005
	Percent of votes (seats)			
Center Democrats	2.8 (5)	4.3 (8)	1.8	1.0
Danish People's Party	—	7.4 (13)	12.0 (22)	13.3 (24)
Red-Greens Unity List	3.1 (6)	2.7 (5)	2.4 (4)	3.4 (6)
Progress Party	6.4 (11)	2.4 (4)	0.6	—
Conservative Party	15.0 (27)	8.9 (16)	9.1 (16)	10.3 (18)
Christian Democrats	1.9	2.5 (4)	2.3 (4)	1.7
Radical Liberals	4.6 (8)	3.9 (7)	5.2 (9)	9.2 (17)
Social Democrats	34.0 (62)	36.0 (63)	29.0 (52)	25.9 (47)
Socialist People's Party	7.3 (13)	7.5 (13)	6.4 (12)	6.0 (11)
Liberal Party	23.0 (42)	24.0 (42)	31.0 (56)	29.0 (52)
Turnout	84.3	86.0	87.1	84.5

THE PARTIES IN LAW

The 1953 constitution requires Folketing members to be bound solely by their own consciences and not by any directions given by their electors. Parties are not mentioned in the constitution but are regarded as voluntary and private associations. There is a constitutional right to form associations for any legal purpose without prior permission. Political associations can be dissolved only by Supreme Court decision. Their voluntary character ensures the absence of obligations on members beyond payment of dues and the requirements not to join another party and to support their own party's policies. SD members are additionally expected to join a trade union, and officers must subscribe to the affiliated newspaper.

Parties may contest elections if they obtained parliamentary representation at the previous election and continue to be represented when the election is called, or if they give notice to the Interior Ministry 15 days before the election. The latter parties require nominations on an official form from a number of electors equal to 1/175th of the total of valid votes at the previous election. Following the 1994 election, this required 19,015 valid signatures for a new party. A candidate must consent to nomination and requires party approval. A nonparty candidate requires the nomination of between 150 and 200 voters from the nomination district. Parties have substantial freedom to determine their own structures and regulations.

Although state subventions were initially intended to support Folketing activity, in practice they become general party income to a party secretariat. SF, FP, and RV locate their central party offices in the Folketing, and it is impossible to distinguish money spent by the parliamentary group from spending by the party headquarters. Parties also receive donations, but these do not attract tax concessions, so personal donations are usually not large. Another 1995 law required publication of party accounts and the names of donors of 20,000 kroner or more per year to party funds. Special-interest organizations are important donors: trade unions to SD, industry and employers to the Conservatives, and agrarian organizations to Liberals. Donations are usually specifically for an election or publicity campaign. The possibility that, for example, union donations might go to SF rather than to SD may be a significant sanction in the hands of organizations.

Membership dues are fixed locally and vary between areas. The financial significance of individual members

has declined drastically, and the importance of direct state subventions has increased correspondingly.

PARTY ORGANIZATION

Parliamentary groups actively negotiate and compromise with their counterparts, especially in parliamentary committees, and policy support arrangements extend well beyond the span of the parties represented in cabinet. In these daily interactions it is impractical to take orders from or even consult national party organizations, so the national committee is briefed only after an agreement is reached. Parliamentary groups keep party discipline generally high by a strongly held norm of party solidarity. This requires dissident views to be reported and justified to the group meeting held before each day's parliamentary session.

Direct party membership totals have continued to decline in recent years. The greater number of parties after 1973 did little to counter the trend.

CAMPAIGNING

Voters rate television as the most important channel of political communication, followed by newspapers. Radio, personal communication, and books or magazines together account for less than 30 percent of election information. Some public election meetings are held, and politicians seek to meet the people in public places, but there is no canvassing door to door.

Television time for each party is strictly allocated in equal shares to each party, even in the final evening-long broadcast before the poll. This favors the smaller parties. There is extensive newspaper coverage and advertising, and leaflets are also delivered to households. The "four old parties" used to publish their own daily newspapers in most large towns, but concentration of ownership has greatly reduced their number.

Major Political Parties

CENTER DEMOCRATS

(Centrum-Demokraterne; CD)

CD was formed when Erhard Jakobsen, mayor of the Copenhagen suburb of Gladsaxe and a member of the Folketing since 1953, broke from SD and precipitated the 1973 election. CD is a nonsocialist party of the center that seeks cooperation between nonsocialists and SD to secure the stability of a Danish society of high quality, both for those who can work and for those who need help. CD was in the Conservative-led coalitions of 1982–88, where it saw itself as the social guarantor in a center-right government. In 1993–96 CD participated in SD-led governments, rationalizing its role as retaining decision making in the center and acting as a bridge to the other nonsocialist parties.

From the start CD gave the parliamentary party predominance and independence from the national organization. Erhard Jakobsen, its public persona, was its effective leader as national chairman, able to overrule the chairmen of the national party and the parliamentary group. The chairman and secretary are elected from the national conference of branch delegates, and these two constitute the presidium together with members of parliament (MPs), members of the European Parliament (MEPs), and the national executive. Local branches, 150 initially, declining to 118 in 1989, send voting delegates to regional organizations and the national conference, which also includes MPs and MEPs plus candidates for both these offices, along with representatives from county and municipal councils. Parliamentary candidates are chosen within a year after each election by a procedure that makes it easy to include new nominees. The structure encourages members to participate in choosing representatives and discussing issues but imposes few constraints on MPs or the leader.

The party locates decision-making authority with its parliamentary group, the better to negotiate policy agreements with other parties. It supports a mixed economy of private capitalism and initiative together with a well-functioning public sector, and it considers that Danish private commerce is better served by the welfare state than is its counterparts in other countries. CD opposes the trade union influence exerted through SD and wants a balance between the rights of employers and employees. It wishes to replace competitive provision of hospital specialty services by state planning.

CD argues that Danish freedom and democracy, together with the vital interests that the country shares with other countries, must be defended. But to build security, defense policy must be supplemented by economic, trade, and aid policies and an active role in the European Union, the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), the United Nations (UN), and other international organizations. Denmark has a major obligation to aid developing countries, which is best done by investment and freer trade. CD supports the European Union unconditionally as the best means of securing European economic and foreign policy. It supports the Maastricht Treaty but regrets the 1992

reservations and hopes to see them removed. It would like a stronger European foreign and security policy.

As a splinter party CD was not expected to survive long, but in the 1980s and 1990s it established itself as one that could form coalitions; it also managed the transfer of leadership from its charismatic founder. As a nonsocialist party of the center it is in contest with RV but has outrun the Christian Democrats. It transferred support from Conservative-led cabinets in the l980s to the SD-led cabinets of 1993–96 but withdrew to give higher priority to the party's survival than to its retention of cabinet office. The Center Democrats reached a peak of support in 1998, winning eight seats. However, as it fell below the 2 percent threshold in 2001, it lost all these seats, and it also failed to win any seats in 2005.

CONSERVATIVE PEOPLE'S PARTY

(Det konservative Folkeparti; KF)

The Right (Højre) originated in 1876 as a parliamentary group to counter the liberal party, Venstre. It lost power in 1901 and re-formed as the Conservative People's Party in 1915 but had to wait until 1950 to enter government. In minority coalition with the Liberals (Venstre) and with conditional parliamentary support from SD, this government successfully carried through major constitutional reforms in 1953, including abolition of the upper house. KF returned to the cabinet in 1968–71, when the party served with Venstre in a majority cabinet led by the Radicals. But Poul Schlüter, prime minister from 1982 to 1993, was the first Conservative to head a cabinet since 1901. In 2001 the Conservatives regained power and formed a minority government along with Venstre, whose leader, Anders Fogh Rasmussen, became prime minister; this situation held after the 2005 election. The Conservatives have rivaled Venstre for leadership of the nonsocialist block since the 1940s.

KF is branch based, but the direction of its affairs is centralized. Local branches elect constituency organizations and send delegates to the national conference. Branches are intended as meeting places for conservatives and as bases for spreading the party's policy. The large national council (*repræsentantskab*) comprises representatives from branches, regional organizations, the youth and women's organizations, Folketing members and candidates, the conservative press, and the conservative foundation. The parliamentary group proposes lines of party policy for debate by the national council, which is the party's highest authority. It elects its own director and the party chairman. The national committee (*hovedbestyrelsen*) implements party policy and is the highest authority between meetings of the national council. This body, approaching 100 in size, appoints the party secretary and is chaired by the party chairman.

As one of only a small number of European parties named Conservative, KF has tried to avoid the reactionary label this implies. Aiming to attract SD voters at the 1984 election, Schlüter admitted to being Conservative, "but not so much that it mattered." Although there were signs of Thatcherite influence in the party's rhetoric, initial ambitions to reduce the scope of the public sector met little success. Instead, KF's aim became a modernized and effective public sector, with bureaucracy abolished wherever possible and decision making decentralized.

With its close links to business and industry, KF favors individual enterprise but sees an important role for the state in improving education and research. Education should develop knowledge, insights, and skills that can be measured against standards of achievement. Effective production helps to resource a fine-meshed social security net and to secure a welfare society that has the needs of the individual at its center. KF defends the values of the nuclear family, the country's Lutheran Church, and its national Christian-humanist cultural heritage. KF has always favored strong Western European collaboration in the EU, squaring this with national sovereignty by emphasizing the subsidiarity principle to ensure that only decisions of international importance are taken at the EU level. KF has always favored strong national defense, wants an active part for Denmark in the UN and NATO, and seeks to raise the country's status within the Western European Union (WEU) from observer to full member.

The Conservatives have rivaled Venstre for leadership of the nonsocialist bloc since the 1940s. KF is strongly supported by urban employers, professionals, the self-employed, and office workers, especially those in the better-paid private-sector jobs. Supporters once were better educated than average, but this distinction has almost disappeared. They are still likely to have above-average income and own a house on its own land. Supporters are probably aged over 40.

Poul Schlüter became leader in 1974 and reunited the party after damaging leadership disputes since 1968. As prime minister from 1982 he effectively brought together the center-right parties. His enforced resignation in January 1993 left his successors a major task of recovery.

The Conservatives made a generational change of leadership in 1993–97 and repaired their relations

with Venstre, the largest of the nonsocialist parties. The Conservatives returned to government in 2001, forming a minority government with its right-wing rival, Venstre. The coalition formed a new government in 2005.

DANISH PEOPLE'S PARTY

(Dansk Folkeparti; DF)

In October 1995 Pia Kjærsgaard and three colleagues left the Progress Party (FP) and formed the Danish People's Party in reaction to the organizational and policy chaos of FP's autumn national conference. With an SD government in office they were confined to opposition but made a significant impact at the 1998 election. The party almost doubled its Folketing presence in 2001, winning 22 seats (compared to 13 in 1998), and in 2005 it increased its representation to 24.

DF's leader is strongly placed to exert a firm grip on the party. Its central body, the party executive, chose the leading election candidates in 1998, decided the districts where they would be nominated, and used a hierarchical party list to ensure a parliamentary group committed to Kjærsgaard as leader. A small staff included her husband, Henrik Thorup, in charge of presentation and Kristian Thulesen Dahl as chief ideologue and chairman of the election committee. As organizer, Peter Skaarup led DF's successful assault on the Copenhagen city council, and he was elected to the Folketing in 1998. Søren Espersen, previously a tabloid journalist, was in charge of publicity. The party is organized at the county level and has a youth organization. This well-oiled and professional machine contrasted with FP's anarchy. Its origin as a breakaway from FP gave it a Folketing presence and base for its office.

DF is a party of nationalist protest, especially against the small population of refugees and immigrants in Denmark. In almost every year since 1960 there have been more immigrants than emigrants, mostly Europeans, but the biggest visible groups include Turks, Iranians, Pakistanis, Sri Lankans, and Somali refugees. Yet all foreigners constitute only 4.5 percent of the population, and less than about one in five Danes consider foreign residents a problem. The party insists it is not racist or fascist, but it sees Muslims as a problem and wants to return immigrants to where they came from. Its views on foreigners relate to its opposition to "the foreign," represented by the European Union, which it equally opposes, and to the open borders of the Schengen and Amsterdam Treaties. On other issues it looks back to the "old virtues" of 1960s conservatism, for example, supporting parents' right to beat their children. Its economic policies promise to combine dramatic tax reductions with more money for pensioners and hospitals but omit to say where the cuts will be made to finance these. Its "anxiety" about a multiethnic society is the basis of its electoral appeal. Its name allows the slogan "Vote Danish."

The November 1997 local elections showed that DF was especially attractive to men over 50 in skilled or unskilled manual occupations, previously traditional supporters of SD. DF became the fourth-largest party in the Copenhagen city council. It probably draws much of its support from disillusioned Conservatives.

DF influenced the anti-EU referendum vote in May 1998 and the 1999 European Parliament (EP) vote. In domestic politics its xenophobic protest is more successful than FP's, but both parties remain peripheral on the right wing. In 2000 the party was extremely successful in swaying public opinion in the rejection of the Euro. The party made its best showing in the 2005 Folketing, winning 13.2 percent of the popular vote and 24 seats. In recent years it has played the pivotal role in passing immigration legislation and local government reform bills put forth by the minority Liberal-Conservative government.

RED-GREEN UNITY LIST

(Enhedslisten-De rød-grønne)

The List advocates policies to the left of the Socialist People's Party. Formed in 1989, its sponsors were the Left Socialists, the dwindling Danish Communist Party, and the Socialist Labor Party. It has attracted unattached left wingers and developed its own momentum with some local election successes, including four on the Copenhagen city council. Its first parliamentary success was in 1994, with six Folketing representatives. Its leaders supported Poul Nyrup Rasmussen to form a government, implying qualified parliamentary support for the SD government. It claims not to be an "all-or-nothing" party and is willing to support policies that will improve conditions for ordinary people and their environment.

Not a conventional party, the List uses the electoral law to present candidates prepared to support a set of democratic socialist policies. It claimed more than 3,000 members in 2005. Members in local branches elect an annual conference, which is the List's highest authority. It chooses an executive and the candidates to lead the electoral list.

Too small to have a distinctive constituency, the List appeals to voters who share its postmaterialist values.

They are mostly in the capital city and are young and well educated.

The List opposes the European Union, especially for its external tariffs against trade with developing countries and its support of capital against the interests of ordinary people in Europe and abroad. Instead it wants interstate cooperation among all European states, East and West, while allowing each to retain its independence. It opposes NATO and the Western European Union, attributing "security problems" to social and economic inequalities that are best solved by disarmament, democracy, social development, and conflict prevention. It seeks a socialist society but considers that the defunct Eastern European regimes were neither democratic nor socialist. A significant reason for contesting elections is to qualify for the state subventions to parties achieving representation.

Occupying a peripheral space on the left of Danish politics, the List's prospects are threatened by the 2 percent representational threshold. Nevertheless, in 2005 it scored its best success, winning 3.4 percent of the vote and 6 seats. The List depends on a Social Democratic government that it can criticize and on not being outflanked by the Socialist People's Party, especially on the issue of the European Union.

RADICAL LIBERALS

(Det radikale Venstre; RV)

One of the "four old parties," RV split from the Venstre Liberals in 1905 with three objectives: abolition of vested interests, a more just distribution of land and taxes, and lower military expenditure. Although one of the smaller parties, from its central position RV has influenced both SD and the parties of the moderate right. It has succeeded in maintaining a center-based consensus.

Constituency organizations elect regional organizations and send voting delegates to the national conference. The national committee is elected from regional and national levels and, in turn, elects a national executive and a standing committee. The parliamentary group sends voting delegates to the national committee and the national executive, whose chairman is chosen by the standing committee. Local branches and links to affiliated organizations were abolished in 1970, but the youth organization was revived in 1994. RV has retained a national chairman who is generally not a member of the parliamentary party.

Electoral support comes from the population broadly but fluctuates quite widely. It has attracted a significant "green" vote.

RV is a social-liberal party, equidistant from socialism and unrestrained liberalism and striving for the interests of society as a whole. Radicals stand for intellectual, personal, and political freedom and oppose vested interests. Radicals emphasize cooperative democratic values and the practical approach to policymaking that has contributed much to modern Denmark. The results it claims include people's active involvement in their social care, a well-balanced economy, and secure individual rights. Educational reforms aim to develop individual competencies, both in children and adults. RV has supported action plans and taxes to conserve resources and reduce environmental damage. Its cultural policy encourages variety. In foreign policy RV aims for closer cooperation in a wider post–Warsaw Pact Europe, with greater use of the defense budget for peacekeeping and humanitarian purposes.

Radical leaders have been adept at using their central placing to maintain the cooperative style of politics that is their ideal. This strategy has been emulated by the Christians and CD. In 2005 the party won 5.2 percent of the vote and nine seats in parliament.

SOCIAL DEMOCRATS

(Socialdemokratiet; SD)

The party was founded in 1871 on Marxist principles, although with little initial contact with other socialist parties. It achieved its first parliamentary representation in 1884. By 1913, SD had more votes than any other party. Observer status in the cabinet in 1916–20 and the predominance of the parliamentary over the union wing from the 1920s attracted voters more widely than from just industrial workers. These developments made it the largest Folketing party since 1924 and the only significant socialist party until the 1960s. SD formed its first cabinet in 1924–26, but the coalition with the Radical Liberals of 1929–40 carried through extensive social reforms and the foundation of the welfare state. Collaboration of RV and SD lasted to the mid-1960s and was revived in 1993. SD has given Denmark eight of its 15 prime ministers, from Thorvald Stauning (1929–42) to Poul Nyrup Rasmussen (1993–2001).

Throughout that period it has been the predominant government party and has shaped the country's political culture. It claims credit for reducing class-based social divisions and building a society with equal access to publicly provided education, health, and social services. These achievements rest on center-oriented pragmatism, not dogmatic ideology.

SD's highly developed organization builds on some 600 local branches throughout the country, with approximately 100,000 direct members. It also has close links with the trade union movement (Landsorganisationen i Danmark; LO), the Workers' Radio and Television Association, and a youth sports association. SD is represented on the trade union, cooperative, youth, arts, leisure, press, and workers' educational wings of the labor movement. The national congress meets every fourth year and is the party's highest authority, electing the president, the party chairman, two vice chairmen, and the party secretary. After debate in branches, it approves the party's program of principles. A national committee (hovedbestyrelsen) is the highest authority between congresses and includes representatives of regions and linked organizations, plus the 11-member national executive (forretningsudvalg). The latter meets twice a month. Party members may not hold mandates simultaneously in the Folketing, the European Parliament, or county or local councils.

Party membership has declined nationally. This trend has especially affected SD because of its membership-based structure. Growing union membership does not fully compensate, since less than half of union members vote SD. In 1977, 52 percent of SD voters were blue-collar workers, 43 percent were white-collar workers, and 4 percent were professionals, and the breakdown has remained very similar since. SD voters are likely to have only a secondary education, include a high proportion of the elderly, and live in provincial towns.

The core of SD policies has been to develop a secure welfare society resting on equal opportunities achieved through equal and free access to well-functioning health, education, and social services. This involves effective measures against unemployment, including leave for training or parenting, in turn creating short-term vacancies for work experience for the young or long-term unemployed. SD gives high priority to environmental protection in all its policies and planning.

The cornerstones of SD foreign policy have been membership in NATO and the European Union, through which a small country such as Denmark can best exercise influence. The EU is seen as a peace project capable of resolving shared economic and political problems, and SD therefore wishes to see the EU extended eastward, with priority given to employment and the protection of consumers and the environment. But SD has opposed the "ever-closer union" of a single European currency and wishes to see greater clarity in the allocation of functions between national and European levels of decision making.

As the party with the largest representation at all levels, SD benefits most from state subventions. Members' subscriptions are indexed to inflation, with a reduction for pensioners. They are higher than those of any of the bourgeois parties, making SD the best-financed party in the country.

Electoral volatility has decreased since 1973, but no party can be complacent. After opposition in the 1980s, SD returned to government in 1993, but its vote has eroded. The SD's vote declined significantly in 2001, not least due to issues of immigration and its support of the Euro in the 2000 referendum. The 2001 election, when SD won 29.1 percent of the vote and 52 seats marked the first time since 1920 that the Social Democrats were not the largest party in the legislature. This trend continued in 2005, with SD capturing 25.9 percent of the vote and 47 seats, placing it behind the Liberal Party in both categories.

SOCIALIST PEOPLE'S PARTY

(Socialistisk Folkeparti; SF)

The party was founded in 1959 by Aksel Larsen (1897–1972). He had led the Danish Communist Party (DKP) for 26 years, but he and others who formed SF were expelled for advocating socialism on Danish lines rather than as laid down from Moscow. The new party eclipsed the DKP and has won substantial Folketing representation ever since. After the 1992 referendum result opposing the Treaty of European Union, SF helped to broker the "national compromise" of exceptions, which paved the way for the "Yes" referendum vote in 1993. SF also helped to keep SD in office during 1996–98. These are reasons to see SF as part of the responsible "core" of parties in the 1990s, rather than part of the anticonsensual periphery.

SF achieved far greater electoral success with a mass party structure that allowed real democratic participation than did its Communist predecessor. One cost was factionalism: The Left Socialists broke away in 1967, and in 1974 and 1976 disagreements between the parliamentary group and the membership led to leadership changes. Whereas the 1960 structure gave no distinct status to the parliamentary group, the 1990 structure makes the chairman of the parliamentary group ex officio chairman of the national executive. The parliamentary group has been highly disciplined.

SF membership stood at about 7,800 in 1967 but then declined sharply as the party split that year. There was further decline to 4,400 in 1979. Conservative government in the 1980s brought substantial growth, to over 9,000 by the late 1980s, but by the early 21st

century its membership slid to roughly 7,500. SF appeals more successfully than SD to white-collar and service employees and has attracted young and well-educated voters, including public-sector professionals. SF recruitment of trade unionists increased in the late 1980s. Its strength is concentrated in the Copenhagen area. Its environmental policies have made a significant "green" appeal to voters inclined toward postmaterialist values.

SF aims to achieve democratic socialism within Danish realities and only with active majority participation. Although drawing on Marxist theory, SF specifically rejects the Communist idea of an elite avant-garde seizing power on behalf of the working class and argues that the application of theory must constantly be revised to serve the best interests of wage earners. Since the mid-1970s SF has successfully integrated green and environmental values into its program; consequently no Green party has gained representation. SF has also made effective links to the women's movement and hopes for a red-green majority with SD.

SF is antimilitaristic, argues for disarmament and freedom from alliances, and opposes block politics. Specifically it opposed U.S. intervention in Vietnam and Nicaragua and Soviet invasions of Czechoslovakia and Afghanistan. SF opposed Danish membership in the European Community (EC; now European Union, EU) in 1972 and since then has worked for Danish sovereignty and greater social and environmental justice within the EU. Thus SF opposed economic and monetary union, common EU defense, union citizenship, and supranational legal and police cooperation, securing broad agreement for these reservations as the "national compromise" that was accepted at the EU summit in December 1992 and by the "Yes" majority in the 1993 referendum. While opposing a "united states of Europe," SF supports cooperation across the whole of Europe on environmental improvement and wants countries to choose the level of their commitment.

In domestic policies SF gives priority to reducing unemployment by, for example, shorter working hours; environmental improvement, with tax incentives and collective transportation; energy saving; and democracy extended to the economy, investment, and workplaces, with more influence for consumers and employers.

Unusually among Danish parties, SF sets its subscriptions in three bands related to the member's income. A party tax is levied on representatives' salaries. Other major sources of income are state subventions and subscriptions.

Positioned on the left, SF can only achieve influence through cooperation with SD, an aim that the parties of the center (especially RV) and right are dedicated to prevent. SF also risks being outflanked by formations like the Red-Green Unity List. In the 1980s SF achieved center-left agreement on several more stringent environmental standards, and in 1992 it brokered the "national compromise" on European integration. In 1993–2001 the SD governments relied on SF support at times. In 2005 it won 6 percent of the vote and 11 seats in parliament.

VENSTRE, THE DANISH LIBERAL PARTY

(Venstre, Danmarks liberale Parti)

Venstre (meaning Left) originated in 1870 when liberal and agrarian individuals and groups, but not the National Liberals, joined to form the United Left. Its aims included responsible parliamentary government and universal franchise. Until the 1970s a strong agrarian element was a vital feature of the party.

Venstre maintains local, constituency, regional, and national levels of organization. Representatives in the Folketing and, since 1980, the European Parliament and candidates for both parliaments are members ex officio of the national conference, which is otherwise composed of voting delegates from constituency organizations. It elects a national executive and a national committee, which also includes the chairmen of elected standing committees. The national committee discusses and negotiates policy with the parliamentary group. It can also expel party organizations or members. The annual national conference, as the party's highest authority, debates policy and passes the party's program. A youth organization is based in Copenhagen, as is a parliamentary secretariat.

Venstre retains a large and loyal individual membership, second only to SD. Until the 1970s this was based on its representing farmers' interests. Venstre has broadened its base to include rural communities generally and significant urban support from white-collar and business sectors, but these votes are more volatile. Previously labeled agrarian liberal, Venstre is the Danish counterpart of the agrarian parties in Finland, Norway, and Sweden. While those parties changed their names to Center Party, Venstre added Denmark's Liberal Party to its name in 1970. Venstre

retains close links to the large agricultural and food industry organizations and still has important support from provincial newspapers.

During the 1980s, in cabinet with the Conservatives, Venstre developed clearer free-market positions and influenced its coalition partners in this direction. Venstre has always been interested in education policy and emphasized the values of personal development and initiative in the 1994 School Law. Venstre's guiding principles begin with the personal freedom to think, believe, and speak and to choose one's own way of life and work. The right to private property should be shared as widely as possible.

These freedoms imply personal responsibility for the consequences of choice. The individual exists in a community of family, friends, and work colleagues, for whom he or she is coresponsible. An open society works for human rights for all, open borders, and free trade. But environmental problems know no borders and are best resolved by international cooperation. The EU environmental policy should therefore be strengthened.

Venstre became the second-largest party (after SD) in 1994 despite a declining rural constituency. It scored its largest victory in 2001 with 31 percent of the vote and formed a coalition with the Conservatives. Its leader, Anders Fogh Rasmussen, was chosen as prime minister. Rasmussen was reelected prime minister in 2005, when Venstre won 29 percent of the vote and 52 seats and formed a government again with the Conservatives. The coalition has been dependent on support from the more right-wing forces in the Danish People's Party to push legislation on immigration and local government reforms.

Minor Political Parties

CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS

(Kristendemokraterne; KD)

Founded in 1970 as the Christian People's Party (Kristeligt Folkeparti; KRF), KD is a party of religious and moral protest and cultural defense, more like Christian parties in Norway, Finland, and Sweden than the catchall Christian Democrats that form a large moderate right in Germany. Initial support came from the evangelical Inner Mission, but the party draws on other wings of the national Lutheran Church as well as Catholics and the free churches, and on rural voters. KD policies emphasize respect for life, peace, and property in a just society that recognizes the importance of the family. Its three basic principles are the Christian perspective, which gives unlimited value to each person; a good-neighborliness, which requires each person to care for family, society, and especially its weaker members in illness and poverty; and stewardship of the environment, resources, and animal life, for the good of all humankind and future generations.

In 1994 it failed to surmount the 2 percent threshold, but it regained representation in 1998. KD was a junior partner in the Conservative-led coalitions of 1982–88, holding portfolios for Environment, Nordic Affairs, and Housing. It was also in the SD-led cabinet of 1993–94 with responsibilities for Energy, Housing, Nordic Cooperation and Baltic Affairs, and Church Affairs.

With a greater emphasis on individualism and responsibility than when KD was formed, and with 86 percent (1998) of the population in the national church, KD's prospects are marginal. In October 2003 the Christian People's Party officially changed its name to the Christian Democrats. The name change, it is argued, came about as a result of a need to gain more public support and because of a renewed youth movement in the party. The name change was not without controversy, as it led to the resignation of the party's leader. KD fell below the 2 percent threshold in the 2005 election.

PEOPLE'S MOVEMENT AGAINST THE EUROPEAN UNION

(Folkebevægelsen mod EF) and JUNE MOVEMENT (Junibevægelsen)

Not strictly parties, these organizations attract cross-party support for anti-European opinion at referendums and European Parliament elections. The People's Movement was formed in April 1972 to oppose Danish membership in the European Community in the October referendum. Although the result was a "Yes" majority, the organization continued to exist and has campaigned in subsequent referendums. In each of the 1979, 1984, and 1989 EP elections it obtained four of Denmark's 16 seats.

The June Movement was formed for the June 1992 referendum on the Maastricht Treaty by those who accepted membership in the economic EC but opposed the objectives of political union in the treaty. The treaty was narrowly rejected in 1992 and passed in 1993. In the most recent European Parliament elections (2004), only the June Movement secured a seat.

FAROE ISLANDS PARTIES

A nationalist movement was led by Jóannes Patursson (1866–1946), and after his electoral defeat in 1906, the Home Rule Party was formed to oppose the Unionist Party, which was in power until World War II. In 1936, however, the Home Rule Party lost heavily to SD. After the war agitation grew for outright independence, and a referendum on the issue was held in September 1946. The result was so indecisive that fresh Løgting (assembly) elections were called. Those favoring independence were defeated, but the Faroes were granted home rule in March 1948 with the Løgting wholly responsible for internal affairs and a *rigsombudsmand* to represent the state. Since 1953 the islands have had two representatives in the Danish Folketing.

Lavish investment in the fishing industry in the 1980s brought heavy indebtedness. Then a decline in the catch and depressed prices resulted in an economic recession in 1989. In 1992 the Danish government made a large loan to prevent the collapse of the Faroese banks, conditional on a reduction in the fishing fleet and higher taxes. In 1993 unemployment rose to 20 percent, setting off emigration, often to Denmark. Despite an improving economy, the 1998 election indicated a wish for greater independence from Denmark.

In the 1998 Løgting elections a majority (Republicans, People's Party, and Independence Party) favored a more sharply defined relationship with Denmark. In 2001 a referendum was planned regarding complete Faroese independence from Denmark. Such plans were subsequently shelved when Danish authorities threatened to cut off aid in four years if a "Yes" result emerged from such a referendum. The 2004 elections led to a Løgting equally divided between pro-secessionist and pro-Denmark forces.

FAROESE UNIONIST PARTY (SAMBANDSFLOKKURIN)

Founded in 1906, this liberal party pursues progressive policies based on Christian cultural values. It wishes to retain the link with the Danish kingdom and, within this, to work for the stable development of the Faroese people constitutionally, economically, and culturally.

HOME RULE PARTY (SJÁLVSTYRISFLOKKURIN)

The Home Rule Party was founded under the leadership of Jóannes Patursson in 1906 to oppose the Unionist Party. It has advocated the greatest autonomy for the islands and equal status for the Faroese language with Danish.

FAROESE SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY (JAVNAÐARFLOKKURIN)

This party was founded in 1925. The party believes that the Islands and their resources belong to their people. It wishes to keep the link with Denmark, but with full freedom on either side to decide on the transfer of policy responsibility to the Faroes home government. It supports national self-determination and Nordic cooperation.

PEOPLE'S PARTY (FOLKÁFLOKKURIN)

The People's Party, founded in 1940, is a conservative party formed by the leading Faroese nationalist Jóannes Patursson after breaking with the Home Rule Party, largely over economic policy. It won one-quarter of the seats in the Løgting in 1940 on a program of full independence. The party stands for a Christian culture, a just society, and democracy and seeks independence for the Faroes with legislative authority to the Løgting on all policies and membership in NATO independently of Denmark.

REPUBLICAN PARTY (TJÓDVELDISFLOKKURIN)

The Republican Party, founded in 1948, wants a republican constitution for the Islands, arguing that no foreign power should have the right to own or dispose of the country's resources.

CHRISTIAN PEOPLE'S PARTY AND FISHING INDUSTRY PARTY (KRISTLIGI FÓLKAFLOKKURIN–FØROYA FRAMBURÐS OG FISKIVINNUFLOKKURIN)

Formerly the Progressive and Fishermen's Party, it changed its name for the 1984 elections. It argues for cooperation with the EU based on trading and fishery agreements. It supports NATO membership, which it sees as "securing peace and freedom for the Western world."

CENTER PARTY (MIÐFLOKKURIN)

The Center Party was formed in 1991 following internal dissent in the Christian People's Party and Fishing Industry Party, with which it shares much, including a Christian perspective and active support for the family.

LABOR FRONT (VERKMANNAFYLKINGIN)

This party first contested an election in 1994. In its view the old parties have lost all connection with or respect for the trade unions and wage earners. It argues that the exceptional difficulties (recession and low catches) facing the Faroes require broad political cooperation to get their society functioning again, since

social cohesion is threatened by current social changes. The party seeks to secure the people's rights economically, politically, socially, and generally.

2004 ELECTIONS TO THE LØGTING (FAROE ISLANDS)

Party	Percent of Vote	Seats
Sambandsflokkurin	23.7	7
Javnaðarflokkurin	21.8	7
Tjóðveldisflokkurin	21.7	8
Fólkaflokkurin	20.6	7
Sjálvstýrusflokkurin	4.6	1
Miðflokkurin	5.2	2

GREENLAND PARTIES

AKULLIIT PARTIIAT

This Center Party, formed in 1991, aims to privatize the large enterprises owned by the Greenlandic home rule authority. It has two seats in the Landsting.

ATASSUT (SOLIDARITY, OR THE LINK)

Atussut is a liberal group that was founded as a movement in 1978; in 1981 it became a political party and has since been the main opposition. It favored home rule, wished Greenland to remain in the European Community, and advocates constitutional unity with Denmark. Its economic policy favors greater privatization of commerce, in contrast to the prevalent extensive public control of the economy. Its representative in the Folketing works with Venstre.

INUIT ATAQATIGIIT (INUIT BROTHERHOOD, OR HUMAN FELLOWSHIP)

Inuit Ataqatigiit is a socialist party. Founded in 1978, it wants to confine Greenland citizenship to people of Inuit parentage. It opposes the 1979 Home Rule Law, wants complete independence from Denmark by 2000, and stands for a progressive tax system. It also opposes European Union membership.

SIUMUT (FORWARD)

Siumut is a social democratic party dating from 1971. It became a party in 1977 with the long-term aim of maximum autonomy for Greenland, although in the 1990s it has supported the Home Rule Law of 1979. In 1979 it won 13 of the 21 Landsting seats and formed a government under its chairman, the Lutheran pastor Jonathan Motzfeldt. In 1982 it successfully campaigned for Greenland to leave the European Community in 1985. Its Folketing representative works with SD.

2002 GREENLAND ELECTIONS TO THE LANDSTING

Party	Percent of Vote	Seats
Siumut	28.7	10
Inuit Ataqatgiit	25.5	8
Atassut Party	20.4	7
Demokratit	15.6	5
Katusseqatigiit	5.3	1

Other Political Forces

Trade unions are important players in Danish politics. These unions often play a significant role in drafting and advising legislation on various labor market issues and activities. Many other grassroots groups have been influential in policymaking over the last 30 or 40 years. Such groups have organized around issues like women's rights, nuclear power, the environment, and Denmark's relationship with the European Union. Anti-EU forces have become relatively strong in the political system.

The People's Movement against the European Union and the June Movement are two parties that have only contested European Parliament (EP) elections. Both parties have advocated removing Denmark from the EU or at least limiting Danish involvement in EU social, economic, and political initiatives and programs. Only the June Movement participated in the 2004 elections, winning one seat, down from three in the 1999 elections.

The right-wing government of Anders Fogh Rasmussen has waxed and waned in terms of support, but it was able to win reelection in 2005, its tax-cutting programs proving popular. The Dansk Folkpartei has proved to be an influential player in the Folketing, providing the necessary support (balance of power) for certain pieces of controversial legislation on immigration and local government reform. The "foreigner" issue continues to be rather dominant in Danish affairs. In 2002, with the help of the DF, Rasmussen's

center-right government passed some of the strictest immigration laws in Europe.

NATIONAL PROSPECTS

Although support for the Euro has increased among the public since rejecting it in a referendum in 2000, there are still many skeptics. The Danes have traditionally been wary of a "federal" European structure, as has been demonstrated by their refusal to participate in programs that may challenge their sovereignty. They and other smaller members of the EU also fear that smaller countries will lose their influence in the new European institutional arrangements under the proposed constitution. A new referendum will likely be held for the reversal of Danish opt-outs in the Maastricht Treaty (in particular, the exclusion of participation in the single currency), and a potential referendum on a European constitution—shelved in 2005 following its rejection in France and The Netherlands—may prove divisive. There also have been proposed reforms and changes to the 1953 constitution that may be taken up over the next several years. In particular, questions of sovereignty, immigration, and human rights may play a large role in such discussions.

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REPUBLIC OF DJIBOUTI

(Jumhuriyaa Jibuti; République de Djibouti)

By Yomi Durotoye, Ph.D.
Revised by Leon Newton, Ph.D.



The Republic of Djibouti, which became independent on June 27, 1977, was formerly known as French Somaliland and later the French Territory of the Afars and the Issas. The official languages are Arabic and French. This small and semiarid country by the coast occupies 23,200 square kilometers (8,950 square miles) and is strategically located at the southern entrance of the Red Sea. Ethiopia bounds it on the west and southwest, while Somalia lies to the southeast and the Republic of Eritrea to the north. There are two main ethnic groups in the country: The Issa, who are a Somali clan, constitute about three-fifths of the Djibouti's population of about 475,000 (2005 estimate), while the Afar, who are of Ethiopian origin, constitute about one-third. The remaining inhabitants are the Arab, Issaq, and Gadabursi minorities. The Issa and Afar, who are Muslims, both speak related Cushitic dialects.

At independence Djibouti adopted the French presidential system of government. Hassan Gouled Aptidon, an Issa and the leader of the interethnic political movement that spearheaded the demands for independence, the African People's League for Independence (Ligue Populaire Africaine pour l'Independence; LPAI), became the first president of the republic on June 27, 1977. The hopes that Djibouti would remain a competitive democracy and that the LPAI would continue to serve as a unifying force for all ethnic groups were dashed when Gouled replaced the LPAI with the Popular Rally for Progress (RPP), which he personally dominated. Within months most senior Afar ministers resigned. After this, violence between the Afar and Issa erupted.

In October 1981, after Gouled, running unopposed, won another six-year term in a presidential election, the RPP was officially declared the sole legal party. Opposition to Gouled led to years of fighting, and by April 1991 Afar resistance movements had coalesced into a more powerful armed opposition group called the Front for the Restoration of Unity and Democracy (FRUD), which signaled the beginning of a civil war in earnest.

Attempts at reconciliation yielded mixed results. In September 1992 the government accepted the results of a referendum, which was boycotted by the opposition, in which 96 percent of the voters were said to have ratified a new constitution. By March 1994 military pressures on the FRUD resulted in its split. Subsequently a branch led by Ougoureh Kifleh Ahmed and Ali Mohamed Daoud entered into a rapprochement with the Gouled regime. The two won cabinet positions, and the FRUD was officially recognized in March 1996.

Nevertheless, opposition to the regime grew. Between May 1995 and May 1996 the regime had to contend with several union-inspired demonstrations against government economic policies. Some of these were violently repressed. In 1996 the struggle for succession among leading members of the government, such as President Gouled's nephew Ismael Omar Guelleh and the justice minister, Moumin Farrah, led to a split in the ruling party. To contain this crisis, President Gouled sacked some of the ambitious offi-

cials and announced that he intended to remain in office until 1999.

In elections held in 1999, Ismael Omar Guelleh won the presidency. In 2000 a formal peace process began, and in 2001 the government and the FRUD announced an end to their hostilities. Opposition parties boycotted the 2005 presidential election, leaving Guelleh as the only candidate. He won reelection with 100 percent of the vote and was sworn in for a second and final six-year term.

The System of Government

Djibouti is formally a democratic republic with a strong presidency and a unicameral legislature. The constitution was approved by a referendum in 1992.

EXECUTIVE

The head of state is the president. The president holds executive authority and is nationally elected. The constitution allows for two consecutive six-year terms. Hassan Gouled Aptidon occupied the position from 1977 until 1999, when his nephew, Ismael Omar Guelleh took office. The head of government is the prime minister, who heads the Council of Ministers, which has 15 other members. The prime minister is appointed by the president and responsible to him. As of 2005 the prime minister was Dileita Mohamed Dileita.

LEGISLATURE

Djibouti has a unicameral Chamber of Deputies with 65 member seats. Members are elected to five-year terms. The prime minister and the Council of Ministers are all members of the Chamber of Deputies, chosen by popular vote.

JUDICIARY

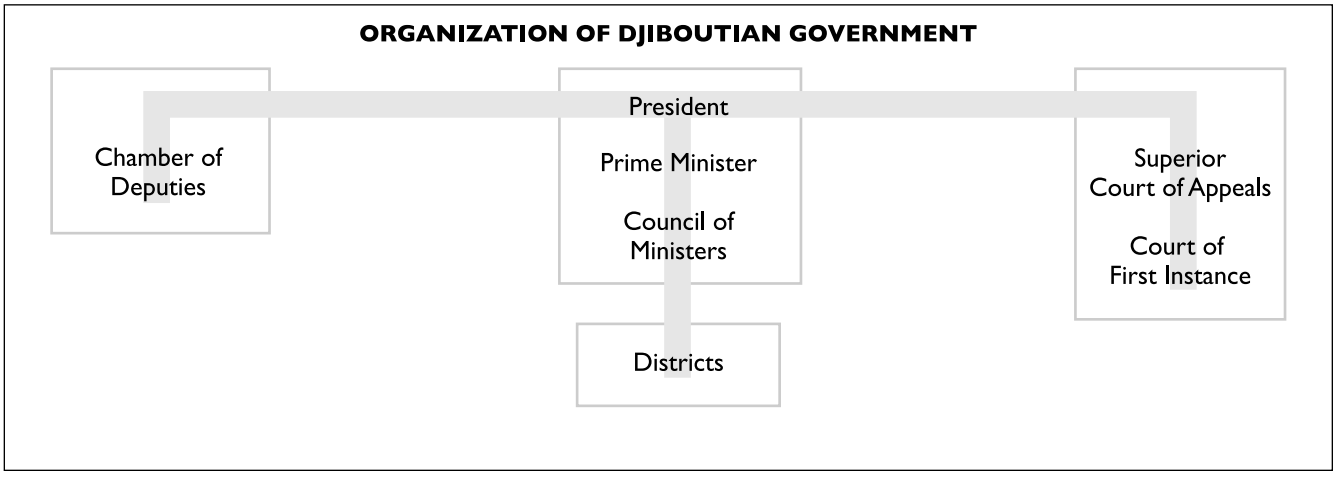
The judicial system is based on both French civil and Islamic law. There are two courts. The Court of First Instance handles civil cases, while the Superior Court of Appeals hears criminal cases. Women in Djibouti have more rights than those in other Islamic nations; the right to own property is respected by the courts.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The country is divided into six districts, or *cercles*: Arta, Ali Sabih, Dikhil, Djibouti, Obock, and Tadjoura. Each district has approximately the same representation in the Chamber of Deputies.

The Electoral System

Universal suffrage applies to all adults more than 18 years old. The president is elected by popular vote to a term of six years. The most recent presidential election took place in April 2005; Guelleh, the only candidate, won with 100 percent of the vote. The members of the Chamber of Deputies are also elected by popular vote, but to five-year terms. In the legislative elections held in 2003, a coalition led by the RPP won 62.7 percent of the popular vote and all 65 seats in the Chamber of Deputies. The next legislative election is due in 2008.



The Party System

A 1981 constitutional amendment established Djibouti as a single-party state, that party being the RPP of President Gouled. A 1992 constitutional amendment authorized the addition of up to four more parties as long as they were "ethnically balanced." For the next decade only the RPP, the FRUD, the Party of Democratic Renewal (PRD), and the National Democratic Party (PND) were the only legal parties. The law restricting parties expired in 2002, paving the way for full multiparty elections in 2003. Nonetheless, the ruling RDD remains far and away the most dominant party in the country.

Major Political Parties

POPULAR RALLY FOR PROGRESS

(Rassemblement populaire pour le progres; RPP)

RPP is the ruling party; until 1992 it was the sole party in the country. Formed in March 1979 in an attempt by LPAI to broaden its popular support, the RPP is socialist in its programs and organization. The party is run by a political bureau selected by the party chairman, who also happens to be the state president. Its leader, Guelleh, has been the country's president since 1999. In the 2003 legislative elections the party led a coalition known as the Union for a Presidential Majority. The coalition won 62.7 percent of the popular vote and all 65 Chamber seats.

FRONT FOR THE RESTORATION OF UNITY AND DEMOCRACY

(Front pour la restauration de l'unite et de la democratie; FRUD)

Composed mainly of the Afar, FRUD is a political and military organization that was founded in 1991 as an armed group against the government. It is dedicated to promoting multipartism and democracy as well as vigorously resisting ethnic domination of national politics. It has since split over strategy. In 2003 it joined the winning legislative coalition, the Union for a Presidential Majority.

NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY

(Parti national democratique; PND)

Founded in 1992 by Aden Awalleh, the PND joined the winning coalition in the 2003 legislative elections.

MOVEMENT FOR DEMOCRATIC RENEWAL AND DEVELOPMENT

(Mouvement pour le Renouveau Démocratique et le Développement; MRDD)

Founded in 1992 as the Party for Democratic Renewal (Parti de renouveau democratique; PRD), the MRDD was originally led by Mohamed Djama Elabe. It was the first official opposition party recognized by the government and the only party to contest the ruling RPP party in the legislative elections of December 1992. It won 25 percent of the vote but was allocated no seats. In the 2003 elections it led the opposition coalition known as the Union for a Democratic Change, which won 37 percent of the popular vote but no seats in the Chamber of Deputies. As of 2005 it was led by Abdillani Hamariteha.

Minor Political Parties

In 2002, following the expiration of the law allowing only four legal parties, several new parties were established. These included the Djibouti Development Party (Parti Djiboutien pour le Développement; PDD); the Peoples Social Democratic Party (Parti Populaire Social Démocrate; PPSD); the Republican Alliance for Democracy (Alliance Républicaine pour la Démocratie; ARD); and the Union for Democracy and Justice (Union Djiboutienne pour la Démocratie et la Justice; UDJ). The PPSD joined the winning coalition in the 2003 legislative elections, while the UDJ, PDD, and ARD joined the losing coalition and thus have no representation in the Chamber of Deputies.

Other Political Forces

The ethnic composition and geographic location of this small country have made it of strategic interest to powerful neighbors and extracontinental powers. Since shortly after independence the Afar and Issa have engaged in conflicts that were largely generated by the Cold War–inspired tensions in the Horn of Africa, discriminatory French colonial policies, and the struggle for power by the Issa and Afar political elite. The former colony was important to France because of its port at Djibouti on the Gulf of Tadjoura. Exports from surrounding countries were fed through

this port. France still serves an important function in independent Djibouti by policing and securing the country with 4,500 French troops stationed there.

Neighboring countries also coveted the port. Ethiopia, with ties to the Afar, and Somalia, with ties to the Issa, both shipped through Djibouti and wanted more control. Djibouti's political stability is balanced on the relations between its two major ethnic groups as well as the military inclinations of its neighbors.

Djibouti supported the U.S.-led war in Iraq beginning in 2003 and has allowed U.S. troops to station troops on its soil.

National Prospects

The civil wars have left the economy bankrupt, and recent changes in French policy toward Africa have led to a decline in foreign aid. The country maintains fairly positive ties with the United States, hosting the only U.S. military base in sub-Saharan Africa. It is reasonable to predict that in the long run, a combination of domestic political, military, and economic pressures as well as political changes in the region will force political liberalization on the country.

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COMMONWEALTH OF DOMINICA

By Thomas D. Anderson, Ph.D.
Revised by Soeren Kern



Dominica is a volcanic island country of 750 square kilometers (290 square miles) that lies in the Windward Islands of the Caribbean between Guadeloupe and Martinique. Its population of roughly 70,000 (2004 estimate) is largely black, English-speaking, and literate (94 percent). It is a parliamentary democracy that became independent from Britain in 1978, after more than a decade of self-rule as an Associated State. At independence it became a member of the British Commonwealth. Bananas are the chief export, and its major trading partners include the United Kingdom, United States, Jamaica, and Trinidad and Tobago.

The System of Government

Dominica is a parliamentary democracy with a unicameral legislature.

EXECUTIVE

The head of government is a president elected to a five-year term by the House of Assembly after being jointly nominated by the leaders of the majority and opposition parties. The powers of the president are largely formal. Real executive power belongs to the prime minister, who is the leader of the House majority and the leader of the cabinet.

LEGISLATURE

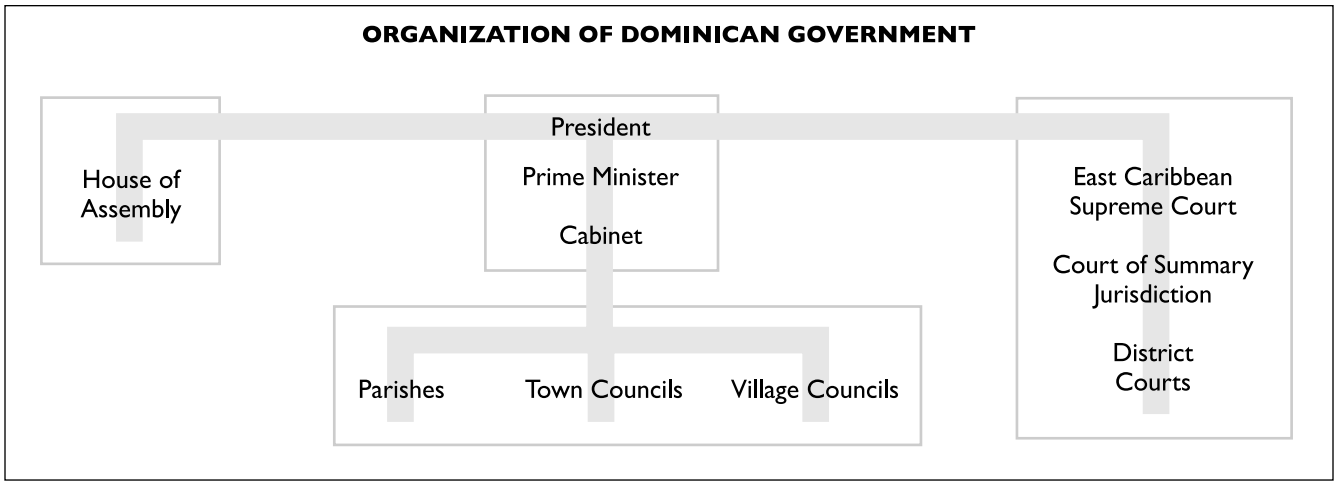
The legislature is unicameral, with a House of Assembly that has 21 regional representatives elected to five-year terms and nine senators. Five of the latter are appointed by the prime minister and four by the leader of the opposition. The number of elected members can be changed by an independent Constituency Boundaries Commission. Party discipline is strict, and government bills in the House seldom are voted down. Elections for representatives and senators must be held at least every five years, although the prime minister can call elections any time. The last elections were held in May 2005.

JUDICIARY

The judicial system is based on English common law and is part of the East Caribbean Supreme Court, one of whose judges sits in Dominica. Ultimate appeals are made to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council in London. Below the East Caribbean Supreme Court is a Court of Summary Jurisdiction, and below this are district courts.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The only subnational governments are partially elected town and village councils that manage local affairs. Supported largely by property taxation, the councils are responsible for the regulation of markets and sanitation and the maintenance of secondary roads and



other municipal amenities. The island is also divided into 10 parishes, whose governance is unrelated to the town governments.

The Electoral System

Elections must be held every five years, although early elections may be called by the prime minister. All citizens 18 years or older are eligible to vote. Elected members of the House of Assembly serve one of 21 single-member districts. Education Minister Roosevelt Skerrit was sworn in as Dominica's prime minister two days after the sudden death of the former premier, Pierre Charles, in January 2004. In legislative elections held in May 2005, Skerrit's Dominica Labour Party won 52 percent of the vote and 12 seats in the House, retaining its status as the ruling party.

The Party System

The first election to be contested by political parties was in 1961. The oldest party, the Dominica Labor Party (DLP), had its origins in the organized labor movement. The Democratic Freedom Party (DFP) developed largely in reaction to the policies of the DLP, particularly advocacy of land reform and independence. Party organization has been relatively loose, and parties do not have formal membership. This casual approach appears to be changing, at least within the DFP. Images, if not the realities, of the two oldest parties are that the DLP is more sympathetic to Communist governments (read Cuba), whereas the DFP has been criticized for "slavish" ties to Washington.

Major Political Parties

DOMINICA LABOUR PARTY (DLP)

The DLP was founded by Phyllis Shand Allfrey, a Fabian socialist who drew considerable inspiration from the British Labour Party. Its initial electoral success was based on promises of land reform and improvement of conditions on banana plantations and docks. Two other of its charismatic leaders were Edward O. LeBlanc (1970–75) and Patrick John (1975–80). In 1981 John was arrested on charges of conspiring to overthrow the government, a coup that was to be carried out by hired American soldiers of fortune. He was replaced as party leader by Michael Douglas. Following his arrest, John founded the United Dominica Labour Party (UDLP) as a vehicle of his personal ambition and was its sole candidate in the 1985 elections. Even though he won a seat in the House, he later was sentenced to 12 years in jail on the charge of conspiracy to overthrow the government. The DLP returned to power after winning the January 2000 elections. The party was led to victory by Roosevelt P. "Rosie" Douglas. Douglas died after only a few months in office and was replaced by Pierre Charles, who died in office in January 2004. Roosevelt Skerrit succeeded Charles and led the DLP to victory in the 2005 elections, when it won 52 percent of the vote and 12 of the 21 contested seats.

DEMOCRATIC FREEDOM PARTY (DFP)

The DFP draws its leadership from the middle classes and traditionally has represented landowners. In the 1980 election it successfully appealed to the rural

poor with promises to improve the economy. Founded in 1970, it consistently supported pro-Western, anti-Communist policies. As the first female prime minister in the Caribbean, Eugenia Charles (1919–2005), nicknamed the "Iron Lady of the Caribbean," was a leader in organizing the 1983 armed overthrow of the Marxist government of Grenada, welcoming U.S. intervention. Early in 1995 Charles turned over party leadership. Despite its historical success, it won no seats in the May 2005 elections and won only 3.2 percent of the vote.

UNITED WORKERS PARTY (UWP)

The UWP, a comparatively recent party, is headed by Edison James, whose policies lie somewhat between the two traditional parties. His party swept to power in the June 1995 general elections, ending 15 years of rule by Eugenia Charles and the DFP. The UWP was defeated by the DLP in the January 2000 elections, and after the 2005 elections it continued in opposition, winning 44 percent of the vote and eight seats.

Minor Political Parties

There are few political parties in Dominica, aside from the DFP, DLP, and UWP. One minor party is the Dominica Liberation Movement, a small left-wing party.

Other Political Forces

Politics is mostly channelled through the country's three main political parties. The country's several thousand Carib Indians have little clout. The International Monetary Fund has played a significant role in providing credits. The country long recognized Taiwan as the official representative of China, but in 2004 Prime Minister Skerrit reversed course, recognizing China, after which the country received a $112 million aid package from China. The policy was opposed by the UWP.

National Prospects

Dominica is facing the challenge of reducing its reliance on bananas, its main export earner. Banana production employs, directly or indirectly, upwards of one-third of the workforce, but this sector is highly vulnerable to weather conditions and to external events affecting commodity prices. Dominican bananas now face stiffer competition because the European Union was forced by the World Trade Organisation in 1999 to phase out preferential treatment for producers from former colonies.

Dominica is mostly volcanic and has few beaches; therefore, development of tourism has been slow compared with that on neighboring islands. In addition, a poorly developed road network and lack of a large modern airport have hampered expansion of a competitive tourist industry.

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DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

(República Dominicana)

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The Caribbean nation of the Dominican Republic has some 8.8 million inhabitants (2004 estimate) and occupies the eastern two-thirds (48,671 square kilometers, or 18,792 square miles) of the island of Hispaniola, which it shares with the Republic of Haiti. Across the Mona Passage to the east lies Puerto Rico. Some 70 percent of the population is of mixed descent; about 17 percent are Caucasian and 11 percent are black. Approximately nine-tenths of the population is Roman Catholic, and there are other Christian denominations such as Evangelical and Adventist Churches, as well as Jewish synagogues. Some Dominicans practice African religions, often simultaneously with these other religions.

HISTORY

The Dominican Republic has had a history of political instability, undergoing foreign domination and invasions, native dictatorships, civil wars, and revolutions. Despite remarkable stability and social and economic development achieved between the mid-1960s and the mid-1980s, more recently the country has experienced difficulties, with pent-up internal pressures stemming from more than 60 years of fairly continuous political rule, running from Rafael Trujillo (1930–61) through Joaquín Balaguer (1960–62, 1966–78, 1986–96).

The United States occupied the Dominican Republic from 1916 to 1924. Six years of relatively democratic experimentation followed, until Rafael Trujillo, an army officer of humble origins, took power in 1930 with the support of the army and a coalition of political forces. Trujillo, while preserving a facade of constitutional legitimacy, ruled with an iron fist for 31 years with a single political party, the Dominican Party (several people, including Balaguer and Trujillo himself, served as president in the period from 1930 to 1961). In May 1961 Trujillo was assassinated by underground opposition forces.

Trujillo's dictatorship was followed by a succession of temporary governments, notably the election of left-of-center Juan Bosch in 1962 and various provisional civilian-military juntas until April 1965, when a new coup triggered a civil war that was largely limited to the capital city of Santo Domingo on the southern coast. The fratricidal conflict ended when joint military forces of the Organization of American States (OAS) and the United States intervened.

In new elections held in 1966 under close international supervision, Balaguer, head of the Reformist Party (Partido Reformista; PRef) and an intellectual and Trujillo protégé, defeated Bosch by a margin of 2 to 1, thus inaugurating the 12-year "pax Balagueriana." Balaguer was reelected in 1970 and 1974 but lost in 1978 to a renewed Dominican Revolutionary Party (Partido Revolucionario Dominicano; PRD), which also won the 1982 elections. During his tenure Balaguer was a staunch anti-Communist ally of the United States.

In 1978 Antonio Guzmán became the first presidential candidate of the PRD to gain the presidency

since Juan Bosch. Guzmán's administration suffered the international financial crisis of the late 1970s that forced his administration, as well as that of his successor, Salvador Jorge Blanco, to adopt strict measures that led to popular unrest. Guzmán pledged not to seek reelection, and shortly before leaving office he committed suicide. Jacobo Majluta served briefly as president, handing the office over to Salvador Jorge Blanco, also of the PRD, in 1982. Blanco's administration was plagued by corruption, and after leaving office he was convicted of corruption; in 1992 he was sentenced to 20 years in prison.

Balaguer returned to power in 1986 as the candidate of the reorganized Reformist Social Christian Party (Partido Reformista Social Cristiano; PRSC) and remained president until 1996. Leonel Fernández, representing the Party of Dominican Liberation (PLD) that was formed by Bosch in 1973 after his split from the PRD, was elected in 1996, defeating PRD candidate José Francisco Peña Gómez in a runoff. During his term in office the U.S.-educated Fernández implemented pro-investment policies and privatized state monopolies, which contributed to economic growth of 7 percent in 1998–2000 but failed to lift most Dominicans out of poverty.

Rafael Hipólito Mejía Domínguez (PRD) became president in August 2000. Mejía won by promising the nation's poor that he would create social programs to be funded by increased taxes and fuel prices. His administration, however, was plagued by rampant inflation, a plummeting currency, and high unemployment. Moreover, a major bank scandal in 2003 scared off foreign investors after a reckless government bailout of the nation's third-largest bank cost the equivalent of 20 percent of the country's GDP. At the same time, shortages of gasoline and propane laid up many automobiles, and electricity blackouts lasting as long as 20 hours blanketed much of Santo Domingo in darkness at nightfall.

Fernández returned to power in August 2004 after defeating Mejía in democratic elections that were widely hailed as being the most fair in the country's history. Fernández, under pressure from international creditors to rapidly come up with a plan for dealing with a string of costly bank failures and soaring prices for imported oil and natural gas, pledged to reduce inflation, stabilize the exchange rate, and restore investor confidence. Upon taking office, he announced the start of a period of austerity, to include cuts to state spending.

The System of Government

The Dominican Republic is a unitary, multiparty, democratic state with a strong president and a bicameral legislature.

EXECUTIVE

The idea of a strong president is deeply ingrained in the society. This reflects the enormous concentration of power traditionally vested on the executive, as well as the failure of the legislature and judiciary to make effective use of the controls available to them.

Executive power is exercised by the president with the assistance of a vice president and various secretaries of state (cabinet), the latter named by the president. These secretaries of state, however, are defined by law and therefore may change in number and identity over time. Typically, there are about 15 secretaries of state.

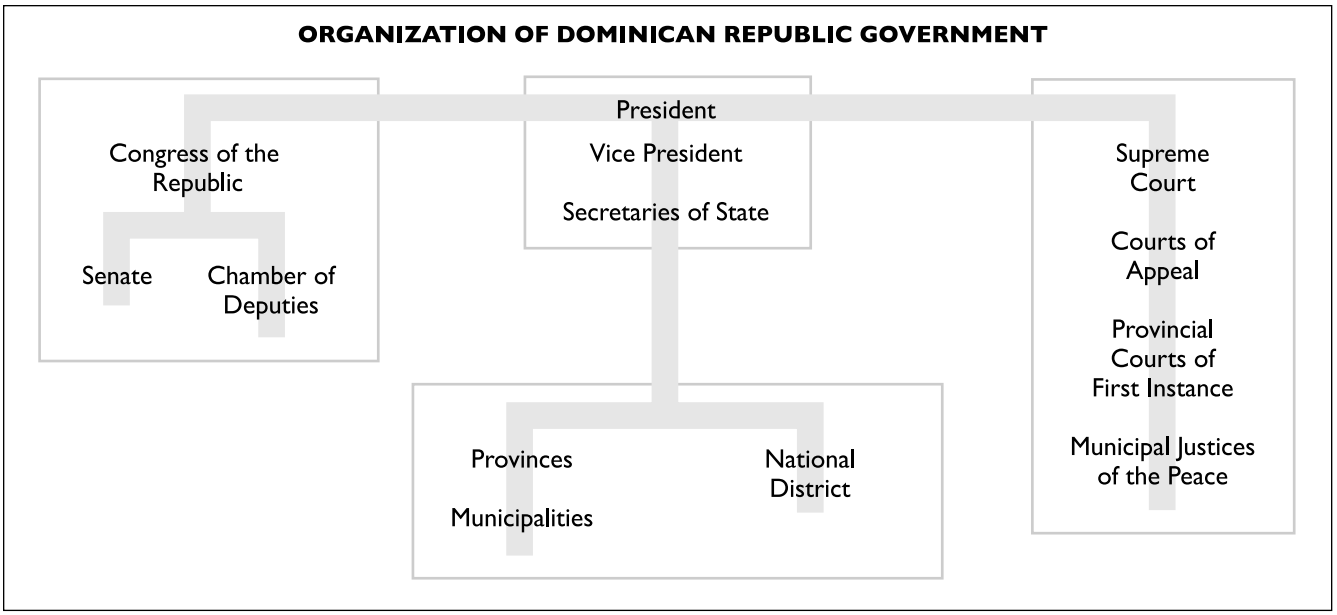
The president is head of public administration and commander in chief of the armed forces and police corps. The president wields a great deal of power, in part through the initiative of proposing the budget but also due to the heritage of the Trujillo-Balaguer years. Balaguer, for example, directly controlled about half the national budget.

Since 1996 a candidate must win a majority of the popular vote (over 50 percent) to win the presidency. If no candidate captures a majority in the first round of balloting, a runoff is held between the top two candidates. In practice, the second-round voting system institutionalizes a strong presidency because it strengthens the winner's legitimacy, even though that system does not guarantee the victor a parliamentary majority.

The president is elected by popular vote every four years on May 16 and is inaugurated on August 16. The president may not run for consecutive terms.

LEGISLATURE

Legislative power is exercised by a bicameral Congress of the Republic, which consists of a Senate and a Chamber of Deputies. Legislators are elected by popular vote for four-year terms and may not simultaneously hold any other public office. The Senate has 32 members, one for each province and the National District. The 150 deputies are elected from the provinces, based on population with at least two from each province. Both chambers convene on February 27 and August 16, both



national holidays, for legislative periods of 90 days, which may be extended for an additional 60 days.

Senators elect the president and other members of the Central Electoral Board (Junta Central Electoral), as well as members of the Chamber of Accounts (Cámara de Cuentas). They must act on diplomatic nominations from the executive branch and on accusations formulated in the Chamber of Deputies against public officials.

Proposed laws can be introduced by senators, deputies, the president, the Supreme Court (in judicial affairs), and the Central Electoral Board (in electoral affairs). In general, however, the legislature is weak and ineffectual.

JUDICIARY

The Supreme Court consists of 16 judges named by the National Judicial Council, which is presided over by the president with representatives from the Senate and Chamber of Deputies and the Supreme Court itself. The Supreme Court elects its own president. As noted above, the Supreme Court may initiate legislation in judicial matters. In addition, there are nine Courts of Appeal, a Land Tribunal, courts of first instance in each judicial district, and judges of the peace.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Each of the provinces is headed by a governor appointed by the president. There are no provincial legislatures, and the provinces have little financial independence. The provinces are subdivided into more than 100 municipalities, each headed by a mayor and a municipal council, both elected every four years.

The National District, which has almost 30 percent of the national population, is a separate entity, also headed by an elected mayor. It has great influence in national affairs, as evidenced by the prominence of Jorge Blanco and Jacobo Majluta as senators who became president and vice president, respectively, of the republic and by José Francisco Peña Gómez, who served as mayor of Santo Domingo and in several campaigns stood as the presidential candidate of the PRD.

The Electoral System

Presidential elections are separated from congressional and municipal polls. On May 16 every two years, elections are held on a rotating basis for the presidency and for the congress and cities. In years divisible by four, presidential elections are held; in other even years, congressional and municipal elections take place. All citizens 18 years of age or over (regardless of age if married) are eligible to vote. It is estimated that at least 90 percent of eligible voters are registered, a high proportion by Latin American standards. According to the constitution, voting is compulsory, but this provision is not strictly enforced. Turnout commonly runs about 75 percent of eligible voters.

Election days are national holidays, and the people treat the event as a festive occasion. Selected police and military personnel are assigned to safeguard the poll-

ing places and the ballots; all other military personnel are confined to barracks. Active members of the armed forces may not vote.

Voters are presented with color-coded ballots to indicate the party. The president and vice president are elected on the same ticket for four-year terms. Senators and deputies are also elected by direct vote.

The current electoral system was implemented following the bitter 1994 presidential election, which was widely regarded by international observers as having been won by fraud (Balaguer was running for a third consecutive four-year term). As a result of compromise, the constitution was amended, prohibiting consecutive presidential terms (shortening Balaguer's term by two years and separating congressional and municipal elections from presidential ones by holding by-year elections. Consequently, a new president was elected in 1996, but congressional elections were held in 1998. In the early 21st century the constitution was amended to allow for a president to serve successive terms in office.

The Party System

ORIGINS OF THE PARTIES

Political parties began to develop in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, but foreign intervention and Trujillo's one-party system prevented the full development of other political parties. Although some of the contemporary parties claim to have roots in pre-Trujillo times or were founded during the Trujillo period, none became effectively functioning entities until after the Trujillo dictatorship. Furthermore, most have gone through sweeping changes in leadership and cadre so that, with the partial exception of the PRD, the present parties cannot be clearly associated with those existing before 1961. In the 1980s the Dominican Republic seemed headed toward a two-party system (PRef and PRD), but in the 1990s the PLD established itself as a contender, winning the presidency in 1996.

THE PARTIES IN LAW

The constitution declares that the organization of political parties shall not be restricted. A party may register with the government and appear on the ballot by the relatively simple process of filing a petition with a minimal number of signatures of qualified voters. A party must win at least 10 percent of the popular vote or repeat the petitioning process. These parties may appear, disappear, and reappear at four-year intervals.

PARTY ORGANIZATION

The major parties are effectively organized, with dues-paying members in localities nationwide, and run candidates in local elections. Most parties also have a formal structure with democratic procedures for the naming of delegates to the national conventions and for choosing candidates for office. In practice, the parties have been dominated for significant periods by individual leaders—the PRef and PRSC by Balaguer, the PLD by Bosch. All parties have suffered internal dissension that has sometimes resulted in public scandals or the creation of new parties.

Another feature of the Dominican system is the appearance in election years of alliance parties and of parties established as the independent personal vehicles of politicians usually associated with one of the major parties. In the 1982 elections, for example, six leftist parties established the Unified Left (Izquierda Unida) with Rafael Tavares as their presidential candidate. José Rafael Abinader, normally associated with the PRD, used the Social Democratic Alliance (Alianza Social Democrática) to support his presidential candidacy; after the election he was appointed finance minister in the new PRD government.

In recent years the political parties have moved away from their earlier formulations, in which ideology remained vague and the personal views of their leaders, rather than the formal party platform, determined the parties' positions along the left-right spectrum. Members of the national elite may be found in the top leadership of all the parties, no matter how radical. All social classes are represented in all the parties.

CAMPAIGNING

Campaigning has become strident, expensive, and professionalized. Vast amounts are spent on marketing strategies based on polling. Radio and rallies constitute the primary means for reaching voters. Caravans, posters, and party decorations make campaigning quite colorful. In recent decades Dominican parties have sought the prestige of political figures from abroad to support their campaigns. Most campaigns and elections have been marked by violence and judicial and electoral irregularities, although these appeared in decline after the late 1970s until the contentious 1994 presidential election.

Major Political Parties

DOMINICAN LIBERATION PARTY

(Partido de la Liberación Dominicana; PLD)

Bosch founded the PLD after abandoning the PRD in 1973. For much of its history, Bosch dominated the PLD. Because the party seemed a personalistic organization, it was given little chance of achieving major status in Dominican politics. The party received only 18,000 votes in the 1978 election and had to go through the registration process again to reestablish its legal status. In the 1982 elections, however, the PLD won nearly 10 percent of the vote and emerged as a third force in Dominican politics. In 1986 the PLD received 18 percent of the popular vote for president, and in 1990 it did very well, but it fell to 13 percent in 1994. New party leadership brought the PLD to its victory in the 1996 presidential election.

The 1996 election was the first in Dominican history in which the winner had to receive at least 50 percent plus one vote. Since the PRD's Peña Gómez failed to achieve that number in the first round, a second round was held, also for the first time in Dominican history. Leonel Fernández, who was the PLD's vice presidential candidate in 1994, won the presidency in 1996 with 51 percent of the popular vote.

Fernández provided the Dominican Republic with a new model of leadership. Not only did he inherit a party created in the old personalistic mode, but he spent part of his early years in the United States and was fluent in English. His priorities—to modernize and globalize the Dominican Republic—established him as a technocrat. His leadership emphasized the need for the government to collect the taxes it was due—not an issue that appealed to the general voting public. Although he was besieged in Congress by opposition parties, his international participation suggested that he would collaborate with other leaders in the Caribbean and Latin America more than was the case with Balaguer.

In 2000 the party's candidate, Danilo Medina, lost the presidential election to PRD candidate Hipolito Mejía. But the party rebounded in 2004, when Fernández won the elections with 57 percent of the popular vote.

Like the PRD, the PLD created a strong hierarchical organization that demands a great deal of its members. The party offers study circles (*círculos de estudio*) to provide political education for members and has base committees and intermediate committees, as well as a political committee of 11 members and a central committee of 105 members. Its congress meets every four years to select members of the central committee.

REFORMIST SOCIAL CHRISTIAN PARTY

(Partido Reformista Social Cristiano; PRSC)

The PRSC is the result of the amalgamation of the old Reformist Party (PRef), which Balaguer represented as president in the 1960s and 1970s, and the Revolutionary Social Christian Party. The net result in name was to substitute "reformist" for "revolutionary." To comprehend this political entity, it is necessary to know something about the histories of the respective parties that came together to form the PRSC.

The Reformist Party was founded in 1963 by Balaguer while in exile in the United States. The party grew rapidly, won the 1966 elections, and increasingly consolidated its power during the 12 years of Balaguer's rule, leading up to 1978. Nevertheless, rampant corruption and ostentation, neglect of the needs of the countryside, police and military heavy-handedness, and Balaguer's dominating style, age, and ill health caused party support to decline before 1978 and to diminish still further in 1982.

Although the party has maintained a representative democratic structure rising from local party organizations to the national conference, for most of its history it was effectively dominated by Balaguer, whose personality and political astuteness held the party factions together. Balaguer's dominant position was clearly illustrated in 1978, when Fernando Alvarez Boegart was nominated as the party's vice presidential candidate by democratic processes, only to be later replaced at Balaguer's order. In 1982 Alvarez Boegart again won the party's nomination, but Balaguer was not able to unseat him a second time.

The PRef's ideology was vaguely centrist and democratic. In 1981 Balaguer declared the party to be Christian Democrat, which facilitated the merger with the old PRSC. Intra-party factions included former Trujillo supporters as well as democratic socialists, although moderates were the strongest force. Balaguer's administrations emphasized rapid economic development, which was largely based on foreign aid and investment. The program benefited urban areas but neglected crucial rural interests.

The PRef's greatest liability was the unwillingness of Balaguer to permit the development of a capable

leadership to succeed him. The merger with the old PRSC provided new options for leadership, but the party's 1996 presidential candidate, Jacinto Peyando, ran a poor third behind Fernández and Peña Gómez.

The Revolutionary Social Christian Party emerged after Trujillo's assassination in 1961. Heavily influenced by the most progressive elements of Catholicism, the party's ideology was a complex center-left doctrine that rejected the excesses of both capitalism and Marxism-Leninism. The party developed close ties with the Autonomous Confederation of Christian Syndicates (CASC), which controls the all-important unions of sugar workers. A multiclass party, the PRSC also had great appeal to intellectuals and students, and it was noted for the efforts it made to impart its ideology to youth. In spite of its strong Catholic background, many of the PRSC leaders were Protestants.

In the 1960s it appeared that the PRSC was going to become a significant force in Dominican politics. However, from a solid third place in the 1962 elections, it slipped to a poor fourth place in 1978 as the electorate polarized behind the PRD and the PRef. During Balaguer's last term in the 1970s some PRSC leaders accepted government positions, especially in the diplomatic corps, and Balaguer then proposed a merger of the PRef and PRSC. Although the party supported Balaguer in the 1982 elections, the merger did not occur until the 1986 elections. The political marriage brought the ideology and international connections of the old PRSC together with the voting support of the PRef.

Balaguer obviously benefited from this merger in the 1986 and 1990 elections, but the party did not develop visible successors to Balaguer. A costly and controversial symbol of his declining years was Columbus Lighthouse in Santo Domingo, built to attract visitors to the island in 1992 in commemoration of the Columbian Quincentenary. Although Balaguer again won for the PRSC in 1994, this election was so controversial, with widely believed accusations of fraud, that Balaguer was forced to accept an abbreviated term of office, with a new election in 1996 under a new constitution and electoral rules.

In this election Balaguer withheld his support of Jacinto Peyando, the PRSC candidate, so that the latter ran a distant third in the first round of the election in May and was eliminated from the second round. Subsequently, Balaguer worked out an alliance with the PLD, called the National Patriotic Front, in which the PRSC supported the PLD's candidate, Leonel Fernández, in the second round. This campaign featured joint appearances of Balaguer and Bosch with Fernández, with the old bitter rivals embracing at the end of the program. Although some have questioned Balaguer's motives and strategy, it is clear that his actions kept José Francisco Peña Gómez from reaching the nation's highest office. In addition, the PRSC had 50 deputies and 14 senators, so that the National Patriotic Front had a majority in the Chamber of Deputies and exactly half the membership of the Senate.

In contrast, the PRD had the same number of deputies as the PRSC, and two fewer senators, but with its allies came close to matching the National Patriotic Front. The congressional elections of May 1998 tested the alliance between the PRSC and the PLD. In that election the PRD won clear majorities of seats in the Chamber of Deputies (83 of 149) and the Senate (24 of 30), while the PRSC was reduced to a poorly performing third party. Fernández's party, the PLD, won almost one-third of the deputies (49) but only four senatorial seats. In 2002 the party remained in third place, winning less than 25 percent of the vote and only 36 seats.

In the May 2004 presidential elections PRSC candidate Eduardo Estrella received only 8.65 percent of the vote.

DOMINICAN REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

(Partido Revolucionario Dominicano; PRD)

The PRD was founded in Havana in 1939 by a group of anti-Trujillo exiles, among whom was Juan Bosch. It was in more than one way a copy of the populist Cuban Revolutionary Party (PRC), better known as the Auténticos, which reached power in 1944. The PRD became the PRC's protégé until Batista's coup in 1952. When Rómulo Betancourt won the presidency of Venezuela in 1959, most of the PRD leadership went there.

The PRD did not become active on Dominican soil until after Trujillo's demise. In the first free elections (1962) Bosch won the presidency against the candidate of the National Civic Union (Union Cívica Nacional; UCN). His administration received the enthusiastic support of President John F. Kennedy of the United States. Bosch imported foreign talent from among his Latin American friends, including Cubans exiled by Fidel Castro. After the military coup that deposed him in 1963, Bosch went to Puerto Rico as a guest of Governor Muñoz Marin. Bosch returned after the civil war of 1965, in which the PRD was an active participant, and ran unsuccessfully against Balaguer in 1966.

In 1970 the PRD abstained from the elections, claiming lack of civil liberties. By then Bosch had repudiated the traditional idea of representative democracy and proposed a "dictatorship with popular support." This policy alienated many PRD members, especially the founders. In 1973 Bosch finally walked out of the PRD, founding the PLD. The PRD leadership fell to its secretary-general, José Francisco Peña Gómez.

For the 1974 elections the PRD organized an opposition coalition called the Acuerdo [Accord] de Santiago, embracing seven parties. Guzmán was the candidate for the presidency and General Elías Wessin for the vice presidency. Wessin had been the leader of the anti-Bosch coup in 1963 and of the anticonstitutionalist and anti-Bosch forces in the 1965 civil war. At the last minute the coalition, with the exception of one group, withdrew from the elections, charging Balaguer with "colossal fraud." In 1978 the party finally defeated Balaguer by itself with a wide margin that elected Guzmán president.

The PRD that came to power in 1978 was very different from the earlier party. The well-dressed *Perredeistas* (PRDers) who paraded or drove expensive cars along Santo Domingo's ocean drive, waving the PRD's symbolic white flag in celebration, little resembled the *campesinos* who followed Bosch in 1962 or the students who revolted in 1965.

After the return of Balaguer to the presidency in 1986, PRD's opposition focused on Dr. José Francisco Peña Gómez, the "Dominican Horatio Alger." Peña Gómez rose from humble roots to become a radio commentator, first on sports and later for the PRD. After following Bosch into exile in 1963, Peña Gómez returned to Santo Domingo as secretary-general of the PRD. Active in the rebellion in 1965, Peña Gómez again went into exile in 1966, when Balaguer was elected, and did graduate work in France.

Peña Gómez was elected mayor of Santo Domingo in 1982 and served in the 1980s as a vice president of the Socialist International. He seemed to have a bright future in Dominican politics, in spite of the fact that he is black. Rumors of Haitian ancestry and even of a desire to unite Haiti and the Dominican Republic politically have been particularly damaging in a society in which fear and distrust of Haitians have been a major theme.

In 1994 Peña Gómez ran for the presidency of the Dominican Republic, losing to Balaguer, now representing the PRSC. This election was marked by irregularities that led to a congressional ruling limiting Balaguer's term to two years. Peña Gómez again was the PRD candidate in 1996 and won more votes than any other candidate in the first round of the election, but he failed to obtain the required majority. In the runoff or second round, the alliance of the PRCS and the PLD gave the election to Leonel Fernández.

Late in 1996 Peña Gómez became seriously ill and was hospitalized in the United States. In order to prepare his party for the 1998 congressional elections, Peña Gómez decided not to seek further public office, thus opening the way for other PRD candidates to make themselves better known across the country. He died in May 1998.

In the May 2000 elections Hipolito Mejía, the PRD candidate, was elected president. Although Mejía championed the cause of free trade and Central American and Caribbean economic integration, he faced mounting domestic problems as a deteriorating economy emerged, caused in part by massive bank fraud. Mejía was easily defeated in his bid for reelection in 2004.

Minor Political Parties

The 1994 and 1996 elections established the PRSC, PLD, and PRD as the primary parties of Dominican politics, and the rules of the game have made it difficult for minor parties to have much influence.

INDEPENDENT REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

(Partido Revolucionario Independiente; PRI)

The PRI is a splinter party from the PRD, founded by Jacobo Majluta in 1985. Majluta was Guzmán's vice president and served briefly as president after Guzmán's suicide. The PRI has no deputies or senators, and its candidate in the 2004 election captured well under 1 percent of the vote.

Other Political Forces

Considering the fairly late development of political parties in the Dominican Republic, perhaps it is not surprising that other political forces have also been late in emerging. The Roman Catholic Church has not been as powerful as in other Latin American countries. The military, of course, is remembered for its role in the downfall of Juan Bosch and the subsequent civil war. More recently, nongovernmental organizations have been established, such as the Institute for Research,

Documentation and Human Rights (Instituto del Investigación, Documentación y Derechos Humanos; IDH-RD) and the Action Group for Democracy (Grupo de Acción por la Democracia; GAD). The growth of nongovernmental organizations, as elsewhere in the region, reflects the search for alternatives that do not depend exclusively on the political process.

In 2004 the country formally joined the negotiations between the United States and Central American countries toward a free trade agreement, known as the Dominican Republic–Central America Free Trade Agreement (DR-CAFTA). The U.S. and Dominican legislatures subsequently signed the agreement, as did several of the other countries.

National Prospects

Since 1966 the Dominican people have shown themselves capable of using their democratic freedom effectively to regularly elect governments by popular vote according to their own perceptions of their best interests. The principal parties seem to be committed to democratic procedures, civil rights, and peaceable alternation in power. While military figures and radical leftist groups have stood ready to take advantage of any serious crisis, the stability of the present system appears to be secure.

Much of the country's future depends upon the economy. The republic has been self-sufficient in basic needs and is potentially rich, but it suffers seriously when the prices of its export products decline. The worldwide recession of the early 1980s slowed the country's ability to deal with its social problems: illiteracy, poor public health facilities, substandard housing and housing shortages, unemployment, and the like. Sugar continues to dominate agriculture. U.S. president Ronald Reagan's Caribbean Basin Initiative offered little hope. Street riots in 1984 were replicated in neighboring Haiti, where it led to the demise of the Duvalier regime.

The early 1990s represented a prolongation of the transition from dictatorship to democracy, with aging and infirm Joaquín Balaguer holding tenaciously onto power until 1996. But like the period between 1978 and 1986, the current situation seems to offer manifold opportunities for change. The signing of DR-CAFTA is one such example.

Of course, there are other dangers that are peculiar to Dominican politics. In order to force Balaguer from office, the Dominican Congress adopted a policy of no reelection for presidents, but the constitution has since been amended to allow an incumbent president to seek a second successive term. It is still too early to tell how this change will affect the peaceful alternation of power as vested in the presidency of the republic.

Another danger involves drug trafficking that uses the island for transshipment to markets in the United States and elsewhere. In an affront to Dominican sovereignty, the United States has sought to extradite drug dealers who, facing arrest on the mainland, have fled to the island. Thus the Dominican Republic faces both internal and external threats that will have a great deal to do with its progress in the early 21st century.

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REPUBLIC OF ECUADOR

(La República del Ecuador)

by David W. Schodt, Ph.D.



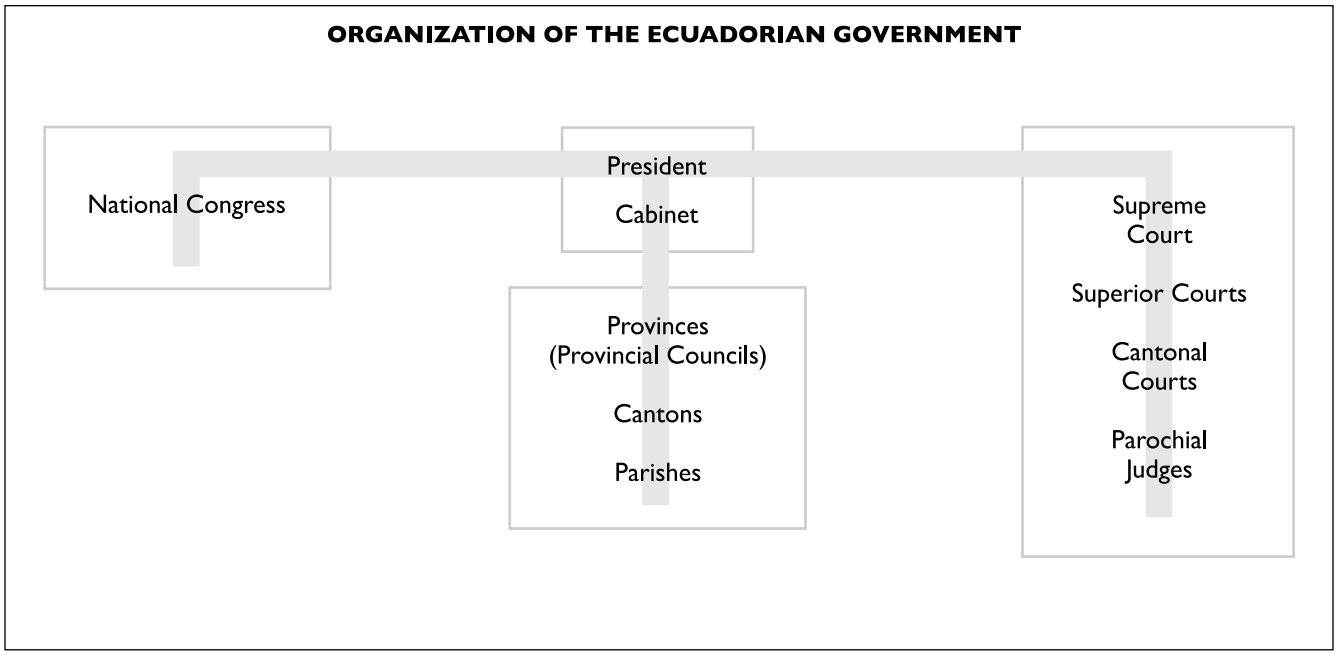
Ecuador is a nation of 13 million people. Traditionally politics has been characterized by chronic instability and strong regional antagonisms. Since independence in 1830 Ecuador has had 18 constitutions; the most recent version was adopted in 1998. (The 1978 constitution was modified significantly in 1984, 1996, and 1998. These are referred to here as the 1984, 1996, and 1998 constitutions.) Prior to the 1970s Ecuador's weak political institutions and the generally low regard for democratic process among its elites led to a situation in which the average president served less than three years of what was a nominal four-year term. The petroleum boom of the 1970s dramatically transformed Ecuador's economy and ushered in a democratically elected government after nine years of nonconstitutional rule. Per capita incomes rose dramatically, and political participation broadened. In 1984, in spite of severe economic stress, this government presided over the first constitutional transfer of power from one democratically elected government to another since 1960. Subsequently Ecuador has successfully navigated several successive democratic transitions. Nevertheless, the persistent weakness of Ecuador's democratic institutions, particularly of its party system, and the continuously elusive goal of sustainable economic growth pose considerable challenges for the country's political leaders. Beginning in 1997 Ecuador experienced increased political instability, with seven different presidents holding office in the period from that year to 2005. In 1997 elected president Assad Bucaram was removed from office and the country thrown into a consititutional crisis of succession. In 2000 deteriorating economic conditions led to President Jamil Mahuad's proposal to replace the sucre with the U.S. dollar as Ecuador's official currency, a move that contributed to his overthrow by indigenous groups and military officers in a short-lived coup that ended with his vice president, Lucio Gutiérrez, replacing him in office. Gutiérrez ran into trouble himself in late 2004, when he replaced the entire Supreme Court with his own handpicked judges. Public protests eventually led the congress to impeach Gutiérrez in April 2005 and replace him with his vice president, Alfredo Palacio. Palacio ordered Gutiérrez's arrest, but the latter was granted asylum by Colombia.

The System of Government

Ecuador is a republican, presidential democracy and a unitary state divided administratively into provinces, cantons, and parishes. There are separate executive, legislative, and judicial branches of government.

EXECUTIVE

The president of Ecuador is chosen by majority vote in direct popular elections for a four-year term and can be reelected only after a lapse of one term. Presidents must be Ecuadorian by birth, in full possession of citizenship



rights, and at least 35 years of age at the time of election. The vice president is elected simultaneously with the president and is subject to the same requirements. Following the adoption of the 1998 constitution, the presidents assume office on January 15 of the year following their election, a change from the traditional date of August 10.

Jamil Mahuad Witt (Popular Democracy; DP) was sworn into office on August 10, 1998, following a period of deep political crisis precipitated by the removal from office in 1997 of Assad Bucaram (Roldosista Party of Ecuador; PRE). Bucaram had been sworn into office on August 10, 1996, along with his vice president, Rosalía Arteaga. He served less than a year, until February 1997, when his erratic personal behavior, escalating levels of administrative corruption, and sharp policies of economic austerity led to his removal following public protests from virtually all sectors of society. Congress invoked an obscure provision in the constitution allowing for removal of a president on grounds of "physical or mental incapacity" declared by a simple majority vote of its members. A formal impeachment vote would have required a two-thirds majority vote by congress.

The vote by congress to remove Bucaram from office set off a constitutional crisis over succession, severely threatening Ecuador's democratic institutions. While the 1984 constitution had identified a line of succession that included the vice president, the president of congress, and the president of the Supreme Court (although the order was not clearly specified), the 1996 constitution was strangely mute on the subject. The latter document specified a clear line of succession only in the event that a president is temporarily unable to perform his or her duties but said nothing about a situation in which a president leaves office permanently before completing the term. As a consequence, Ecuador experienced a brief period following Bucaram's removal when three individuals Bucaram, Vice President Arteaga, and the president of congress, Fabián Alarcón each claimed to be the country's legal president. In the end Arteaga served three days as Ecuador's first female president, after which congress appointed Alarcón, a member of the Radical Alfarist Front (FRA), to serve as interim president until August 1998. A national referendum held in June 1987 showed 75 percent of voters confirming Bucaram's dismissal and 68 percent ratifying Alarcón's appointment as interim president and initiated a process for reform of the 1996 constitution. A National Constituent Assembly (Asemblea Nacional Constituyente), headed by former president Osvaldo Hurtado, drafted a new constitution, which was approved on June 5, 1998, in Riobamba. This constitution introduced a number of important changes, among which was the specification of a clear line of presidential succession. If the president is unable to complete his term of office, the vice president succeeds him. If the vice president is unable to assume the office, the president of the congress assumes power for a maximum of 10 days, during which time the congress must elect a new president of the republic.

As of mid-2005 the president was Alfredo Palacio, who was installed following the ouster by congress of Lucio Gutiérrez in April 2005.

LEGISLATURE

The National Congress (Congreso Nacional) is unicameral. (It was bicameral until the constitution of 1978.) Its 100 members (deputies) are elected by province in direct popular elections for four-year terms. To be elegible for election, deputies must be natives of the province or have resided in the province for the preceding three years, and they must be 25 years of age. They are chosen from lists of candidates presented by legally recognized parties in proportion to the number of votes earned. Elections for congressional deputies are held concurrently with the first round of the presidential elections. The newly elected congress begins its session on January 5 of the year in which the president assumes office. Since the 1996 constitution, deputies may be reelected.

In an effort to reduce the disproportionate influence of small parties in the congress, the 1998 constitution changed the procedures for selecting the president of the congress. Each two years, the congress elects a president and two vice presidents. For the first two years following the national election, its president is elected from the party with the largest representation and its first vice president from the party with the second-largest representation. The second vice president is elected from among the minority parties and movements. For the next two years, the president and first vice president are elected from the parties with the second- and first-largest majorities, respectively.

Until the 1998 constitution the legislature met each year from August 1 to October 9. When the legislature was not in session the Plenary of Legislative Commissions (Plenario de las Comisiones Legislativos; PCL) functioned in its stead. The 1998 constitution attempts to professionalize the legislature by stipulating that it meet for the entire year with only two periods of recess, each one month long.

Until 1998 any member of the legislature had the authority, through a process called *interpelación* (censure), to call a government official before congress for questioning and censure, after which a majority vote could result in the official's dismissal. This tactic was used with increasing frequency by congress in recent years to block and show disagreement with presidential initiatives. During the presidency of Rodrigo Borja (1988–92) congress dismissed six government ministers using *interpelación*. Borja's minister of agriculture, Marcos Espinel, had to appear before congress 28 times in 24 months to defend himself against censure initiatives. The constitution of 1998 restrains congressional recourse to *interpelación* by requiring approval by at least one-quarter of the members of congress to initiate the process. A successful vote of censure, requiring a majority, still results in the immediate removal of the official from office, except in the case of ministers of state, who may continue in office at the discretion of the president. In 2005 the congress successfully impeached and ousted President Lucio Gutiérrez.

Women have been underrepresented in congress. Following the elections in 1988 only 3 out of 71 deputies were women. In 1996 the number of women who were deputies remained the same, although the number of deputies had increased to 82. The 2000 reforms to the Law of Elections (*Ley de Elecciones*) stipulates that at least 30 percent of the candidates for congress be women, and that in each subsequent election an additional 5 percent of the candidates be women until 50 percent are women. In the 2002 elections for congress, women won 17 of the 100 seats.

CONGRESSIONAL SEAT DISTRIBUTION, OCTOBER 2005

Political Party	Seats
Social Christian Party (PSC)	24
Democratic Left (ID)	15
Ecuadorian Roldosista Party (PRE)	12
Independents	11
Movimiento Unidad Plurinacional Pachakutik-Nuevo Pais (MUPP-NP)	10
National Action Institutional Renewal Party (PRIAN)	9
Patriotic Society Party (PSP)	5

Political Party	Seats
Popular Democracy (DP)	4
Socialist Party (PS)	4
Popular Democratic Movement (MPD)	3
Others	3
Total	100

Source: Congreso Nacional del Ecuador

JUDICIARY

The highest court is the Supreme Court of Justice, which presides over the judiciary. At the province level there are superior courts (intermediate appellate courts) and penal tribunals (trial courts for all serious crimes); at the subprovince level there are criminal courts (*juzgados*) as well as courts for civil, landlord-tenant, labor, and traffic cases. Another set of officials (*tenientes políticos*, *comisarios de policía*, *intendentes*, and *subintendentes*), whose duties include processing minor infractions, had been responsible to the executive branch but, with the adoption of the 1998 constitution, have been moved to the judicial branch.

The Constitutional Tribunal (Tribunal Constitucional; formerly the Tribunal of Constitutional Guarantees, TGC) established by the 1996 constitution monitors compliance with the constitution. It consists of nine members, appointed by the congress, who serve four-year terms and may be reelected. Its members must meet the same requirements as those for Supreme Court justices. In practice, the TGC has been a weak institution, frequently accused of becoming overtly politicized.

The judicial branch of government has been relatively weak and, in recent years, has become increasingly politicized as the Supreme Court became part of the political spoils to be distributed following the election of a new congress. In an effort to provide the Court some insulation from political pressures, the 1996 constitution restored the terms of Supreme Court justices to six years from the four years that had prevailed since the constitutional reforms of 1983. The 1998 constitution continues the movement toward increased judicial independence by mandating that the Supreme Court justices be appointed for lifetime terms. Congress selects the 32 Supreme Court justices from nomination lists presented by electoral colleges and civic groups. Appointments of new justices to fill vacancies on the Supreme Court are made by a two-thirds vote of the sitting justices.

The 1996 constitution also created a judicial oversight body, the National Judiciary Council (Consejo Nacional de la Judicatura), an institution that is preserved in the 1998 constitution.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

There are three subnational levels of government: 22 provinces including the Galapagos Islands and, at the subprovince level, municipalities (*cantons*) and parishes (*parroquias*). According to the 2001 Census of Population there were 220 cantons and 995 parroquias. Government is a mixture of appointed and elected officials. Officially the president appoints provincial governors, canton political chiefs (*jefes politicos*), and parish political lieutenants (*tenientes politicos*). In practice provincial governors normally make appointments to the last two offices.

In rural areas the appointed officials, especially the *tenientes politicos*, are important sources of authority. In urban areas, elected officials play a more important role. All provincial capitals have an elected mayor who presides over an elected council (*consejo*) whose members are called *consejales*. The mayors of Quito and Guayaquil exercise considerable national as well as local power. Each province also has an elected council made up of provincial councilors (*consejeros*), presided over by the provincial governor.

Except for Quito and Guayaquil, local government plays a clearly subsidiary role in the Ecuadorian political system. Yet regional interests, as expressed through organizations such as the chambers of production (Cámaras de la Producción) and congress, continue to exert a profound influence on national politics. Regionalism has contributed to the lack of national vision in Ecuadorian politics. Presidential candidates rarely exhibit broad national appeal, drawing their support primarily from either the coast or the sierra. Regional demands on the public budget lead to multiplication, and duplication, of local public-works projects.

The Electoral System

The Supreme Electoral Tribunal (Tribunal Supremo Electoral; TSE) is charged with directing and overseeing the electoral process. Its seven members represent the parties that have received the largest number of votes in the most recent national election. Its members are elected by a majority vote of the congress. Administratively beneath the TSE are the provincial electoral tribunals (Tribunales Provinciales Electorales; TPE) and the vote-receiving committees (Juntas Receptoras del Voto; JRV). The TPEs are formed by the TSE in each province to oversee and direct the electoral process. The JRVs, whose members are selected by the respective TPEs, manage the actual polling process on election days.

The president and vice president are chosen directly in popular elections. A candidate must

secure an absolute majority of the vote to win. If no candidate is able to win an absolute majority in the first round of voting (held on the third Sunday in October), a runoff election between the top two candidates is required. The second-round election is held on the last Sunday in November of the same year.

The 1998 constitution adds the proviso that there will be no second-round election if the first-place candidate wins greater than 50 percent of the total valid vote, or if the leading candidate wins more than 40 percent of the valid vote and that vote total is more than 10 percentage points greater than the total won by the second-place candidate. For example, in the 2002 presidential elections, no candidate won an absolute majority: the two leading candidates, Lucio Gutiérrez and Alvaro Noboa, won 20.4 and 17.4 percent of the first-round vote, respectively. Since neither candidate amassed 40 percent of the valid vote and the difference (6.0 percent) was less than 10 percent, a second-round election was required. In the runoff election held on November 24, 2002, Lucio Gutiérrez won with 54.8 percent of the valid vote.

Representatives to the National Congress are chosen in the following way: At least two are elected from each province, with an additional representative elected for each 200,000 provincial residents or fraction greater than 150,000 residents. A province of 555,000 people would, for example, have five representatives. Voters choose among ranked lists of candidates presented by legally recognized parties. Where more than two seats are to be filled, they are allocated by a simple proportional system.

PARTICIPATION RATES IN PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS

(Percent of Population)

Year	Percent
1888	3.0
1924	11.0
1931	3.1
1932	4.2
1933	3.1
1948	9.1
1956	15.8
1960	17.8
1966	11.0
1968	14.7
1979	21.0
1984	31.0
1996	42.0
2002	45.4

All Ecuadorians 18 years of age or over have the right to vote; literates under age 65 are required to vote. Illiterates were given the vote for the first time in the constitution of 1978 and exercised that right for the first time in the municipal and provincial elections in 1980. Qualified voters must register to vote and can vote only in the parish in which they register. A change in residence must be communicated to the Electoral Tribunal 30 days prior to an election in which the individual wishes to vote.

A significant feature of Ecuadorian politics has been historically low levels of political participation. The low levels of the past could be traced to the literacy requirement (in a country where, as recently as 1974, national rates of illiteracy were in excess of 25 percent), the low level of economic development, and various other legal restrictions that effectively disenfranchised large sectors of the population. However, the abolition of the literacy requirement in the 1978 constitution, together with rising income levels, wider access to education, and increasing urbanization have contributed to growing rates of electoral participation.

Historically poverty, language differences, low levels of education, and discrimination have contributed to the political marginalization of indigenous groups. In recent years, however, the level of organization and political participation of indigenous groups has increased markedly. Organizations have arisen such as the Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of the Amazon (CONFENIAE) and the Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador (CONAIE), formed in 1980 and 1986, respectively. Although early political participation by indigenous groups took place largely outside of electoral politics, in the 1996 presidential and congressional elections a new party, the Movimiento Nuevo País–Pachakutik (MNPP), emerged as a vehicle for indigenous interests. Its presidential candidate won 11 out of 21 provinces to secure

third place in the first-round voting. In May 1996 the party captured seven seats in congress. In 1998 the party, now named Moviemiento Unidad Plurinacional Pachakutik/Nuevo Pais (MUPP-NP), captured five seats. In 2003 it again won seven seats.

The Party System

ORIGINS OF THE PARTIES

Ecuador's traditional parties emerged in the latter half of the 19th century. Their ideological orientations reflected the theocratic debates of the period and the regional conflicts that have continued to characterize Ecuadorian politics. The Conservative Party represented the interests of the sierra landowning aristocracy, supporting close relationships between the Catholic Church and the state, centralized government, and state regulation of economic activity. The Liberal Party drew its primary support from coastal (*costa*) commercial and financial interests, particularly those of Guayaquil. It was anticlerical and advocated decentralized government along with laissez-faire economic policies. By the end of World War II anticlericalism had ceased to be an important issue. Differences between the two parties were drawn largely along regional lines. The coast was the center of economic activity; most imports and exports passed through Guayaquil. The sierra produced primarily for the domestic market; the national government in Quito drew its resources principally from taxes on foreign trade.

Politics in the latter half of the 20th century saw the progressive displacement of traditional parties by emerging populist movements and an increased fragmentation of parties as numerous splinter parties appeared at the left and right ends of the political spectrum. Neither Conservative nor Liberal candidates have won the presidency since the 1956 victory of Conservative Camilo Ponce Enríquez. Highly personalistic politics, always a feature of Ecuadorian political competition, became even more prominent. No one better exemplified this characteristic than José María Velasco Ibarra (1893–1979), who held the presidency five times between 1933 and 1972. Velasco was a spellbinding orator with a charismatic appeal for the masses but with little ability to govern once elected, as evidenced by his successful completion of only one of his five terms in office. Although supported by the Conservative Party during his early career, he resisted formal party affiliation until he formed the Federación Nacional Velasquista, a party that served only as a vehicle for its leader's personality.

Ecuador's second major populist movement also casts a long shadow over the country's political life. The Concentration of Popular Forces (Concentración de Fuerzas Populares; CFP) was established in Guayaquil under Carlos Guevara Moreno in 1949. The CFP firmly controlled Guayaquil politics, but it was never able to compete successfully in national elections. Guevara Moreno ran for the presidency in 1953 but was defeated by the rightist candidate, Camilo Ponce. With this defeat Guevara Moreno gradually withdrew from active political life. Unlike *Velasquismo*, however, the CFP survived its founder's political demise.

Assad Bucaram assumed control of the CFP in 1960 and was elected mayor of Guayaquil in 1962. Under Bucaram the CFP began to emerge as a significant national political force. One indication of the CFP's growing national strength was its capture of 5 of the 16 provincial seats in the National Congress in 1968. Bucaram was widely regarded as a certain victor in the presidential elections of 1978, but he was disqualified by the military on the grounds that neither of his parents was born in Ecuador. The CFP selected Jaime Roldós Aguilera (nephew-in-law of Assad Bucaram), the ultimate victor, as its candidate, and Bucaram was elected president of the National Congress. However, feuding between the two men that split the party into rival factions, Jaime Roldós's untimely death in an airplane accident in May 1981, and Assad Bucaram's demise six months later dealt a severe blow to the party's aspirations.

Following Roldós's death in 1982 his brother-in-law, Abdalá Bucaram, took some members of the CFP to form a new party, the Roldosista Party of Ecuador (PRE). In the 1992 legislative elections the PRE won 15 of 77 seats; in the 1996 elections the party won 21 of 82 seats, and its leader, Abdalá Bucaram, was elected president. Following his removal from office in 1997, Bucaram fled to exile in Panama, from which country he continues to exert control over the PRE.

The return to democracy in 1978 saw the emergence of center-left parties, such as Popular Democracy (DP) and the Democratic Left (ID). Emphasizing issues-oriented, responsible politics, these parties have their strongest support among public-sector workers, the new middle class, and professionals, groups whose electoral importance increased greatly with the socioeconomic changes accompanying the petroleum boom. Both parties draw their support disproportionately from the sierra, reflecting the continuing regional divisions of the country's politics.

With the virtual disappearance of the traditional parties of the political right, the Conservatives and the Liberals, the Social Christian Party (PSC) emerged as the standard bearer for these interests. In congress the conservatives have been joined at opportunistic moments by the populist right. In 1978 PSC candidate Sixto Durán Ballén, a former mayor of Quito, ran second in the presidential elections, and the party took 3 out of 69 seats in the legislature. In 1984 PSC candidate León Febres Cordero won the presidency, and the party captured 29 out of 71 seats in the legislature. Sixto Durán again ran unsuccessfully for president in 1988 but finally emerged victorious in 1992, when he ran at the head of his own party, the Republican Union (PUR), a splinter from the PSC, against PSC candidate Jaime Nebot. Although both candidates represented conservative interests, they differed in both personality and the regional bases of their support: Durán Ballén was strongest in the sierra and the Amazon; Nebot drew his strength from the coast. In 1996 PSC candidate Jaime Nebot won the first-round vote but came in second to Abdalá Bucaram in the second round. In 2002 Xavier Neira ran as the PSC candidate for president when former president León Febres Cordero decided not to run.

THE PARTIES IN LAW

The Law of Parties establishes the conditions under which a party will be recognized. A party wishing to compete in elections must submit information to the Supreme Electoral Tribunal, the most important of which includes the following: a declaration of ideological principles; a detailed government plan indicating the policies the party would undertake if successful in the presidential elections; certification of membership equal to at least 1.5 percent of the registered voters in the last elections; and evidence of national support demonstrating the existence of the party in at least 10 provinces, including two of the three most populous provinces, which are dominated by the cities of Guayaquil, Quito, and Portoviejo. A party must submit this information and be qualified six months prior to an election it wishes to contest. This requirement does not apply to coalitions formed within six months of an election.

The 1978 constitution and the accompanying Laws of Parties and Elections took steps to restrict the growth of splinter parties and to increase their accountability in an effort to reduce the role of individual personalities, such as Velasco Ibarra. Among other measures, independent candidates were explicitly barred from running for office. However, the 1996 constitution allowed candidates for office to run as independents for the first time since 1978, a provision that was sustained in the 1998 constitution. For example, León Roldos, who finished third in the first round of the 2002 presidential elections, ran as an independent after his party (Partido Socialista) decided to back the candidacy of Lucio Gutiérrez. The 2003 congress has 10 independent deputies.

According to the 1998 constitution, parties or political movements that fail to earn a minimum of 5 percent of the valid votes cast in two successive national elections are eliminated from the electoral register. In 2002 the president's own party, Sociedad Patriótica (PSP), the CFP, and the DP all failed to win the required 5 percent of the valid vote and would face extinction in the next national election if they failed to obtain that percentage again. In practice, however, the Supreme Electoral Tribunal has rarely applied this provision.

Despite legal efforts to reduce the number of small and personalistic parties, no fewer than 12 parties registered for the 1996 elections, 18 parties contested the 1998 elections, and approximately 13 parties registered for the 2002 elections.

PARTY ORGANIZATION

Party organization in Ecuador has traditionally been weak, reflecting the elite character of politics and the lack of articulation between party leaders and voters. Personalistic domination of many parties has hindered the development of programmatic policies, and parties are not characterized by consistent ideological positions. Parties tend to appear before elections, campaign furiously, and disappear until the next round of elections, if not forever. Party membership is limited. Until the 1980s there had been virtually no effort to create mass-based organizations. The party with the strongest mass base prior to this time was the Concentration of Popular Forces, which sought to build an organization among lower-class voters in Guayaquil. More recently the Democratic Left, the Popular Democracy, and the Social Christians (PSC) have invested heavily in party building. Yet, despite these efforts, voter identification with parties remains weak. Although party activity is intense, it takes place among small groups of elites and tends to involve Byzantine political maneuvering for short-term advantage. This tendency, when combined with the large number of parties, sets the stage for constantly shifting coalitions and alliances. The continuing fragmentation of parties points to the persistent weakness of the party system.

CAMPAIGNING

Campaigns are characterized by intense periods of political activity and traditionally have relied heavily on the oratorical skills of the candidates. Velasco Ibarra, an unparalleled performer in this arena, is said to have boasted: "Give me a balcony and the people are mine." Beginning in the 1950s with the rise of populist leaders like Velasco Ibarra, the campaign tour became a feature of campaigns. Personality and the sweeping promises of populist rhetoric continue to characterize most campaigns, although some parties, notably those of the center-left, have endeavored to emphasize issues. Television has begun to play an increasingly important role, with the advantage this expensive medium gives to well-financed candidates, traditionally those of the Ecuadorian political right. In the 1996 and 1998 presidential elections, however, television personality Freddy Ehlers made a strong showing as the head of a loose coalition of indigenous, labor, and environmental groups. Lucio Gutierréz, who was backed by a similar coalition of progressive and populist groups, won the presidency in 2002.

INDEPENDENT VOTERS

Party identification in Ecuador is weak. The majority of voters have learned that no matter which party holds office, it has little concrete impact on their lives. Most of these voters tend to vote for personality rather than party, or for patronage opportunities. For the small group of elites who stand to gain or lose from the policies of different parties, there is somewhat greater party identification, but even this is largely opportunistic.

Major Political Parties

SOCIAL CHRISTIAN PARTY

(Partido Social Cristiano; PSC)

The PSC is a right-wing party that is unabashedly free-market oriented, advocating a restricted role for government in the economy and economic liberalization.

The PSC was established in 1951 as the Social Christian Movement (MSC), an organization intended to further the political ambitions of its founder and leader, Camilo Ponce Enríquez, a leading rightist politician. In 1956 Ponce Enríquez was elected president of Ecuador, the first conservative president in more than 60 years. His administration was distinguished by fiscal conservatism and increased foreign investment. In the 1960s the MSC endeavored unsuccessfully to affiliate with Christian Democracy. Dissident members left to help form the Christian Democratic Party in 1964, denouncing what they viewed as Ponce's efforts to cloak his basic conservatism in Christian Democratic clothing. In 1976 Ponce Enríquez died. His movement became the party of Ecuador's conservative business elites, drawing its support principally from the coast. In the 1978 presidential elections the PSC candidate, Sixto Durán Ballén, finished second. In 1984 the party's candidate, the former Guayas chamber of industry president León Febres Cordero, was elected president of Ecuador. He ran as the candidate of an alliance of right-wing parties called the National Reconstruction Front (FNR). In 1998 the party chose not to run a presidential candidate, but it did win 27 seats in the congress, the second-largest block.

The party has become the principal electoral vehicle for Ecuador's political right wing. Unlike the center-left of the political spectrum, where a number of parties compete for voter allegiance, the PSC has no significant challengers on the right. Its electoral strength is reflected in the 24 seats it held in congress as of October 2005. Febres Cordero was elected to congress as one of the PSC's deputies.

DEMOCRATIC LEFT PARTY

(Izquierda Democratica; ID)

The ID is a moderate left-wing, social democratic party that is affiliated with the Socialist International. The ID was formed in 1970 after dissatisfaction within the Liberal Party over its support of Velasco Ibarra in 1969 and later disagreement over candidates for mayor and municipal council of Quito in 1970, which led to the defection of the bulk of the Liberals' Quito leadership. The ID fielded its own candidates for the first time in the 1970 elections for congress and won strong representation. Following the return to democracy, the ID won 12 seats in the congressional elections of 1979, making it the second-largest delegation. The ID's main base of support is the province of Pichincha (Quito), but its influence has grown in other parts of the country, as witnessed by its strong showing in the 1984 and 1988 presidential and congressional elections. In 1984 ID candidate Rodrigo Borja Cevallos won the first round of the presidential elections, only to lose narrowly in the second round to Leon Febres Cordero. In the first round of the presidential elections Rodrigo Borja won 18 of the 20 provinces, failing to carry only the coastal provinces of Guayas (Guayaquil) and Los Rios, where the ID has traditionally been weak. The party won 24 seats in the congressional elections that

year. In 1988 Rodrigo Borja was elected president, and his party took 20 of the 71 seats in congress. In 1992, with Rodrigo Borja constitutionally barred from running for reelection, the ID took 8 out of 21 seats.

Rodrigo Borja's decision not to contest the 1996 presidential elections (possible under the recent constitutional reforms allowing reelection after a lapse of one term) caused divisions to develop within the party. The ID won only three seats in the 1996 congressional elections, but in 1998 the ID improved its position, winning 18 seats. As of October 2005 it held 15 seats in congress.

MOVIMIENTO UNIDAD PLURINACIONAL PACHAKUTIK/ NUEVO PAIS (MUPP-NP)

This movement emerged for the first time in the 1996 elections, taking advantage of the change in the electoral laws allowing individuals to stand for election without being nominated by a legally recognized political party. Freddy Ehlers, a television journalist who had earned a reputation for investigating issues such as official corruption, the environment, and social problems, ran as its candidate for president, winning a surprising 21 percent of the first-round vote to place third. Ehlers was a former member of ID and media adviser to Rodrigo Borja during the latter's 1988 presidential campaign. Labor, environmental, and indigenous groups, which had organized earlier as the Coordinadora de Movimientos Sociales to protest the political establishment in general and the economic policies of Durán Ballén in particular, supported his campaign. Of these groups, the most important member was the 2.5 million–member Confederación de Nacionalidades Indígenas del Ecuador (CONAIE), which represents indigenous groups and had been assembling a list of indigenous candidates for the upcoming elections. The MUPP-NP showed considerable electoral strength in the 2002 elections when it partnered with the Partido Sociedad Patriótica, providing this personalistic party with much of its popular base. The party also ran its own candidates for congress, securing seven seats. The party's ability to mobilize large numbers of its supporters in popular protest has given it considerable strength outside formal electoral channels. It was, for example, a major force behind the 2000 coup against President Jamil Mahuad.

The durability of this political movement may be limited as it seeks to contend with the divergent interests of the 11 different ethnic groups it represents. For example, although CONAIE, in which indigenous groups from the sierra are disproportionately represented, withdrew its support for the Gutiérrez government in August 2003, it was not until May 2004 that CONFENAIE (Confederación Nacional Amazónica de Ecuador), a part of CONAIE representing Amazonian indigenous groups, followed suit. Whatever problems confront this political organization, however, what is unlikely to disappear is the new political voice of Ecuador's previously marginalized indigenous communities. As of October 2005 it held 10 seats in congress.

POPULAR DEMOCRACY

(Democracia Popular; DP)

The DP is a center-left party that is affiliated with the Christian Democratic International. The DP claims as its fundamental objective that of serving as a means of political expression for rural and urban popular organizations. It advocates "popular democracy" as opposed to "formal democracy": in the latter the people choose from an agenda presented to them by the dominant groups in society, while in the former the agenda presumably rises from the grass roots. The DP is the most committed to programmatic politics of any of the parties.

The DP was formed from an alliance of the Christian Democratic Party and the Progressive Conservative Party in early 1978. The former was originally organized in 1964 by reform-oriented university students, faculty, and young professionals who had become disillusioned with the conservative Social Christian Party. At the time of the alliance it was led by Osvaldo Hurtado, who was elected vice president in 1979 and became president on Roldós's death in 1981. The DP has established itself as a national force in a remarkably short time, due largely to the recognition it achieved under Osvaldo Hurtado, although since the end of his presidency the party has been without strong, nationally recognized leadership. In 1984 the DP won four seats in the National Congress. Its presidential candidate, Julio César Trujillo, ran seventh out of a field of nine, earning 4.7 percent of the valid vote. In 1996 the DP made its largest electoral gains when its candidate, Rodrigo Paz, captured 13.5 percent of the first-round vote and the DP won 12 out of 82 seats in congress. The DP made a very strong showing in the 1998 elections when its candidate, Jamil Mahuad, the former mayor of Quito, captured the presidency and the party took 32 seats in the congress. However, Mahuad's overthrow in 2000, along with subsequent charges of financial impropriety, damaged the party, as

did Osvaldo Hurtado's defection in 2002 to run at the head of the Patria Solidaria ticket.

The DP has its base in the sierra urban professional class, whose numbers greatly increased during the petroleum boom. The party has had difficulty reaching beyond this constituency and is particularly weak on the coast. In 1996 Rodrigo Paz won more than 25 percent of the first-round vote only in Pichincha province (Quito); in no coastal province did he win more than 10 percent. As of October 2005 the DP held only four seats in the congress.

ROLDOSISTA PARTY OF ECUADOR

(Partido Roldosista del Ecuador; PRE)

The PRE is a populist party with little ideological consistency. A highly personalistic creation, it was formed in 1982 by Abdalá Bucaram, nephew of CFP leader Assad Bucaram, and became the principal vehicle for the political fortunes of the Bucaram family. Abdalá Bucaram drew on the old CFP organization and on the patronage resources available to him while he was mayor of Guayaquil to create an organization that allowed him to capture the presidency in 1996. As with the CFP, the PRE's electoral base is on the coast, particularly among lower-class voters in Guayaquil.

The PRE's prospects for the future are, at best, uncertain. Abdalá Bucaram's removal from the presidency in 1997 and his subsequent flight to Panama left this personalistic party without its charismatic leader and the pivotal lower-class Guayaquil vote up for grabs. Nevertheless, the party's second-place showing in the 1998 presidential elections under standard bearer Alvaro Noboa, a wealthy coastal businessman, and its capture of 24 seats in the congress pointed to the enduring appeal of populist candidates among Ecuadorian voters. In 2002 the PRE presidential candidate, Jacobo Bucarám, a stand-in for his brother, Abdalá Bucaram, won 12 percent of the vote, and the party took 14 seats in congress. As of October 2005 it retained 12 seats in congress.

PATRIOTIC SOCIETY PARTY

(Partido Sociedad Patriótica; PSP)

This party was formed as the 2002 electoral vehicle for Lucio Gutiérrez's successful bid for the presidency. A former army colonel, Gutiérrez led the coup that brought down President Jamil Mahuad in January 2000. It is dominated by the president's former army colleagues and relatives. The party is strongest in the sierra and the oriente but has limited electoral appeal on its own. The party formed an alliance with the Movimiento Unidad Plurinacional Pachakutik/Nuevo Pais (MUPP-NP) to contest the 2002 presidential elections. As of October 2005 the PSP had five seats in congress.

NATIONAL ACTION INSTITUTIONAL RENEWAL PARTY

(Partido Renovador Institucionalista Acción Nacional; PRIAN)

The PRIAN is another personalistic party, formed in 2002 to support the presidential bid of Alvaro Noboa, who had run for president in 1998 as the candidate of Partido Roldosita del Ecuador. Noboa is a wealthy coastal businessman who ran a highly populist campaign to take second place in the 2002 elections. The party's electoral strength is greatest on the coast. The party's political fortunes are likely to rise and fall with those of its founder and leader. The PRIAN held nine congressional seats as of October 2005.

DEMOCRATIC POPULAR MOVEMENT

(Movimiento Popular Democrático; MPD)

This far-left party is the electoral vehicle for the Maoist Marxist-Leninist Communist Party (PCML), a breakaway from the official Ecuadorian Communist Party. In the first round of the 1984 presidential elections MPD candidate Jaime Hurtado Gonzalez finished a surprising fourth with 7.3 percent of the valid vote, but generally the party has only limited, and declining, electoral appeal. In 1996 MPD candidate Juan José Castello ran a distant seventh out of a field of nine in the first round. The party captured two seats in congress in the 1998 elections. As of October 2005 it had three seats in congress.

Minor Political Parties

Minor political parties include the Alfarist Radical Front (Frente Radical Alfarista; FRA), the Concentration of Popular Forces (Concentración de Fuerzas Populares; CFP), the Conservative Party (Partido Conservador del Ecuador; PC), the Liberty Party (Partido Libertad; PL), the Liberal Party (Partido Liberal Radical del Ecuador; PLRE), the Socialist Party of Ecuador (Partido Socialista Ecuatoriano; PSE), and the Solidarity Party (Patria Solidaria; PS).

Other Political Forces

MILITARY

Historically the military has played an active role in Ecuadorian politics; prior to the 1960s more than 30 percent of Ecuador's presidents had been army officers. About six times as many military officers are from the sierra as from the coast, and they tend to come from middle-class families. Typically the military has remained in power only briefly, viewing its role as caretaker and defender of the constitutional order. Even without direct involvement, the military plays a significant role since the threat of military intervention does much to shape the course of politics.

Since 1960, however, military juntas have ruled Ecuador for longer periods on two separate occasions. The first military junta took power in 1963, using the threat of Cuban Communist intervention to justify its action. Its proposed policies were reformist. Its most notable achievement was the establishment of Ecuador's first land-reform legislation, although little reform was actually realized. The military withdrew from power in 1966 under heavy criticism from nearly all sectors of society. In 1972 the military again entered politics, this time in response to its perception of threats of destabilization created by Ecuador's new petroleum wealth and the almost certain victory of the populist leader, Assad Bucaram, in that year's presidential elections. The second junta proclaimed itself reformist and nationalist in the style of the Peruvian military at that time. Severe internal disagreements over the proper political model for the military and strong opposition from civilian elites prevented the realization of any significant reforms. Again under heavy criticism, the military withdrew from power in 1979.

Badly tarnished after its two recent episodes in power, the military's reputation within Ecuadorian society was given new luster by its performance in the 1995 border war with Peru. Public enthusiasm for the military's conduct during that conflict led the defense minister, General José Gallardo, to resign in order to run as an independent candidate in the 1996 presidential elections. He won only 1.2 percent of the first-round vote to finish in next-to-last place.

The military's commitment to democracy was severely tested in the constitutional crisis surrounding President Abdalá Bucaram's removal from office in 1997. As public order broke down and massive protests swept Quito, the military high command eschewed its interventionist past in favor of supporting democratic process. The military withdrew its support for Bucaram, refused to name the next president, and brokered a solution to the ensuing succession dilemma by insisting that congress pass changes to the constitution that would allow the transition to take place according to the rule of law.

In recent years the military's most serious break with democracy occurred in January 2000 when middle-ranking military officers, in collaboration with indigenous groups, led a successful coup against President Jamil Mahuad. A group of colonels, in which Lucio Gutiérrez played a leading role, joined with CONAIE supporters who had marched on the congress to demand the resignation of the president; together they seized power to form a short-lived "junta of national salvation." Higher-ranking military officials quickly took over from the colonels and their indigenous allies to declare a military "junta de *gobierno*" and, shortly thereafter, to engineer a transition of power to Mahuad's vice president, Gustavo Noboa.

INDIGENOUS GROUPS

After centuries of marginalization indigenous groups have become a significant political force in Ecuador, initially through mass political protest and more recently via the electoral process. Accurate estimates of the size of Ecuador's indigenous population are hard to come by, but most put this at 20 to 40 percent. While indigenous groups are united in their desire for increased political representation, they differ significantly in their demands for specific public policies. One broad division is that between indigenous groups in the sierra and in the oriente. Aside from regional differences, these groups are also divided by language and cultural differences. Sierra indigenous groups mostly speak Quechua, while those in the oriente speak a number of different languages.

The Confederación Nacionalidades de Indígenas del Ecuador (CONAIE), the first national organization of Ecuador's indigenous peoples, was formed in 1986. The organization's political power first came to national attention in 1990, when it organized thousands of indigenous peoples to block roads and to march on Quito in support of indigenous demands. In 2000 CONAIE's mobilization of its members formed the popular base of successful protests calling for the overthrow of President Jamil Mahuad. By 2004, however, the movement was showing a diminished ability to turn out its supporters in mass political demonstrations.

In 1995 Pachakutik (Movimiento Unidad Plurinacional Pachakutik; MUPP) was formed as the electoral vehicle for CONAIE. The movement successfully

fielded candidates for congress in 1996 and 2002. In 2002 President Gutiérrez selected two indigenous leaders to head the Ministries of Foreign Relations and Agriculture, a first for Ecuador.

STUDENTS

Students in Ecuador, while not well organized, have mounted major demonstrations that served as the catalysts for nonconstitutional changes of government. Both secondary and university students are highly political and generally leftist in their political orientation. The two major student organizations are the Federation of University Students of Ecuador (Federación de Estudiantes Universitarios del Ecuador; FEUE) and the Federation of Secondary Students of Ecuador (Federación de Estudiantes Secundarios del Ecuador; FESE). Students at the Central University, which has several public campuses, tend to be the most radical and active.

ORGANIZED LABOR

Labor unions in Ecuador have traditionally been weak, owing in large part to the low level of industrialization and the fragmentation of organized labor along both regional and ideological lines. Union membership represents less than 18 percent of all workers and is divided among three competing national organizations and numerous local ones. An important development during the 1970s was the emergence of an alliance of the three major unions, the Unitary Workers Front (FUT), which successfully organized a series of national strikes. However, organized labor has not yet been particularly important either in deciding the agenda of politics or in supporting parties.

National Prospects

The successful navigation of several democratic transitions since the late 1970s and the recently demonstrated military support for democracy are encouraging signs in a country that has suffered from a long history of political instability. Nevertheless, the persistent weakness of the party system, the high degree of conflict between the legislature and the executive, and the constraints imposed on public spending by the need for policies of economic adjustment contribute to a highly volatile political environment. Expanded political participation has placed increased demands on the state at a time when it must implement policies that, at least in the short run, impose costs on large sectors of society. Ecuador's highly fragmented party system will be severely challenged to mediate the ensuing distributive conflicts, as has been evidenced by the recent period of renewed political instability.

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ARAB REPUBLIC OF EGYPT

(Gumhuriyat Misr al-Arabiya)

By Joel Gordon, Ph.D.
Revised by Curtis R. Ryan, Ph.D.



With 77 million people (2005 est.), Egypt is the most populous nation in the Arab world and commands the largest military force in the region. Located in the northeast corner of Africa, the country has historically been a crossroads for commerce, ideas, and conquerors. The Nile Valley, stretching for 750 miles north to south, is one of the cradles of ancient civilization. The great pharaonic dynasties of antiquity consolidated control over both the upper and lower capitals of Thebes and Memphis, creating a unified power base from which they exerted authority over the eastern Mediterranean and Red Seas. Egypt's fortunes have risen and fallen ever since, but the Nile Valley has fostered a sense of common identity that laid strong foundations for modern nationalism in the late 19th and 20th centuries.

Egypt covers 385,000 square miles, of which only 3.5 percent is arable. The overwhelming majority of the population thus lives in the Nile Valley, which in parts of Upper Egypt is only 1.5 miles wide. The population is slightly less than half urban. One-third of all Egyptians, some 16 million, live in the Cairo metropolitan area. The population is also predominantly young: 44 percent of Egyptians are 15 years old or younger. A majority of Egyptians are Muslim, and Islam is the state religion. A significant Coptic Christian minority (8 to 10 percent) has played an important social and political role, and national symbols have often included both crescent and cross.

MODERN HISTORY

Muhammad Ali (1805–48), the maverick Ottoman governor, established a semiautonomous state and a hereditary line that would last until 1953. Embarking upon ambitious development projects, including the Suez Canal, which was completed in 1869, his successors found themselves saddled with enormous foreign debts. Increasing European economic domination sparked an independence movement that heralded the cry, "Egypt for the Egyptians." The Khedive Ismail (1863–79) allowed a consultative assembly to sit but was dismissed by the Ottoman sultan under European pressure. In 1882 Britain defeated nationalist forces and occupied the country. At the same time, Egypt became a haven for Arab intellectuals and artists and a center of Arab cultural production. The Arab League, promoted by King Farouk (1936–53) and backed by the British during World War II, was originally headquartered in Cairo, and in the postcolonial era Egypt has remained an axis of regional leadership.

Egypt has been a republic since June 18, 1953, when the Revolutionary Command Council (RCC), the military junta that had seized power a year earlier on July 23, 1952, abolished the monarchy and appointed its figurehead leader, Muhammad Nagib, Egypt's first president. The July Revolution was the culmination of the independence struggle against British occupation. Britain declared a protectorate in 1914, formally severing Egypt's links to the Ottoman Empire. Following the 1919 nationalist uprising Britain granted Egypt

nominal independence, reserving the right to intervene in domestic affairs, and oversaw the establishment of a constitutional monarchy. Under the yoke of a monarchy with unbridled power to dismiss parliament and a British residency loath to accede to nationalist demands for total independence, Egyptian liberalism foundered. Between 1924, when Egyptians first held elections, and 1952 the leading nationalist party, the Wafd, was allowed to rule only four times, for a total of less than seven years. In 1936 Britain granted Egypt formal independence but retained treaty rights to maintain a military presence in the Suez Canal zone and to intervene to preserve internal and external security. With the outbreak of World War II the British reoccupied Egypt and in 1942 imposed a Wafdist government upon Farouk. In such a dispirited political culture, extraparliamentary antiestablishment forces emerged that further undercut democratic idealism and promoted aspirations for a benevolent dictatorship.

The secret Free Officers movement led by Gamal Abdel Nasser was an outgrowth of this political malaise. The movement seized power on July 23, 1952. The junior officers intended to institute sweeping reforms and restore sound democracy. But resistance to land reform, the hesitancy of political parties to purge their ranks, and the encouragement of civilian allies who feared a return to politics as usual persuaded the officers to consolidate their authority over the state. In December 1952 they abrogated the 1923 constitution. A month later they abolished all political parties and formed a single mass party. In June 1953 the RCC proclaimed a republic. In March 1954 the regime weathered its most significant challenge when the ouster of Muhammad Nagib provoked a massive outcry for the military rulers to step aside. The RCC marshaled street forces and successfully cast its opposition as reactionary. Thereafter the regime acted to bring labor unions, the press, professional organizations, and the universities under rigid control. In 1956 a new constitution was acclaimed by popular referendum, and Nasser was elected president. He held this office until his death in September 1970.

Under Nasser the state experimented with three mass parties (Liberation Rally, 1954; National Union, 1958; Arab Socialist Union, 1961) and in the 1960s embarked on a series of Socialist reforms, creating a large public sector and nationalizing finance, heavy industry, and the media. Few Egyptians today would dispute that Nasser ruled with dictatorial powers, yet many recall the era with fondness as one of national unity, hope, and prestige and as a golden age of popular and fine arts. Socialist reforms remain highly debated. Many supported the dramatic turn toward privatization engineered by Nasser's successor, Anwar Sadat (1970–81). Nasserist foreign policy produced a similarly mixed legacy. The nationalization of the Suez Canal in July 1956, a move lauded by virtually all Egyptians, provoked the tripartite Anglo-French-Israeli invasion. Despite suffering enormous military setbacks, Nasser was able to parlay the Suez War into a diplomatic triumph and emerged a regional superstar. His call for Arab unity led to union with Syria—the United Arab Republic—between 1958 and 1961. A decade of escalating tension with Israel culminated in the disastrous June 1967 Six-Day War in which Israeli forces captured Gaza and the Sinai Peninsula. A subsequent War of Attrition (1968–70) kept Egypt militarized, but Nasser's death in September 1970 left his successor with the immense burden of restoring Egyptian territory and national pride.

Anwar Sadat set out quickly to fashion his own identity and distance himself from Nasserist "centers of power" that sought to dominate him. In his May 1971 "corrective revolution" he purged Nasserist loyalists from the Arab Socialist Union (ASU) and high state offices. In the 1973 October War the Egyptian army restored a substantial amount of national pride and Sadat won great public acclaim, after which he set out to liberalize the economy. His open-door policy (*infitah*), proclaimed in October 1974, was followed by a sincere but wavering desire to open the political process. In 1976 Sadat promoted the division of the ASU into three platforms (*minabar*) representing a left, center, and right. After the formal legalization of political parties in 1977 these platforms were refashioned into a new ruling party, the Egyptian Arab Socialist Union (later the National Democratic Party, or NDP), the leftist National Progressive Unionist Party (NPUP, or Tagammu), and the conservative Liberal Socialist Party. The new election law sanctioned the formation of any party that could muster 20 representatives within the People's Assembly.

In a stunning move in 1978 Sadat permitted the rebirth of the Wafd under the leadership of Fuad Sirag al-Din, heir apparent to party leadership in the early 1950s and scion of one of Egypt's largest prerevolutionary landowning families. Sirag al-Din's aggressive challenge to the legitimacy of the July Revolution, however, led the government to pass legislation barring from politics anyone who had held a ministerial post prior to July 23, 1952. With its leader disqualified, the New Wafd disbanded in protest.

Sadat's final years were marked both by great diplomatic success, highlighted by the 1978 Camp David

accords and subsequent Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty, and by increasing instability at home, largely the result of economic travails. Losing his grip on power, Sadat retreated from his political reforms, ordering sweeping arrests of opponents across the political spectrum. In September 1981 security forces detained 1,500 political prisoners. On October 6 Sadat was assassinated by Islamist militants at the ceremony marking the crossing by Egyptian troops of the Suez Canal eight years earlier in the October 1973 war against Israel.

Hosni Mubarak, Sadat's vice president, was sworn in as president on October 13, 1981. Mubarak, who has ruled ever since, has overseen a march toward limited democratization. He has done so in the shadow of emergency measures decreed in the wake of Sadat's murder and extended by parliamentary approval thereafter. Nonetheless, Mubarak has allowed a greater number of parties to emerge, has honored judicial rulings invalidating electoral procedure, and has fostered a press—official and opposition—that is far freer, despite restrictions, than it had been since the 1952 revolution. Since taking office in 1981, Mubarak has overseen several rounds of parliamentary elections and tolerated opposition calls for curbs on presidential powers. In September 2005 he allowed multi-candidate presidential elections to be held. However, the constitutional amendment that created the direct election stacked the system in favor of the ruling NDP. Mubarak easily won reelection to what would be his fifth consecutive six-year term.

The System of Government

Egypt today is a "socialist democratic" republic ruled by an authoritarian president, Hosni Mubarak, who has governed since 1981. Since 1990 Egyptians have undertaken a dramatic reevaluation of the 1952 military coup that ushered in a social revolution and put the present political structures in place. Since the late 1970s the country has experimented with greater democratization, but facing challenges from an Islamist current that rejects key foundations of the state, it has yet to truly open up the political process.

EXECUTIVE

Ultimate power in Egypt resides in the president, who is chief executive and leader of the ruling National Democratic Party (NDP). Until 2005 the president was not elected by popular vote but rather was nominated by two-thirds of the People's Assembly (Majlis al-Shaab), then approved by popular referendum. However, this changed with the presidential elections held in September 2005, which were the first to allow multiple candidates and the first to allow for direct popular vote. The president must be of Egyptian parentage and at least 40 years old. The 1971 constitution promulgated by Sadat set the presidential term at six years and made provisions for another term. A 1980 constitutional amendment stated that the president may serve additional terms. Mubarak has subsequently been reapproved four times: in 1987, 1993, 1999, and 2005 (when he won the first direct election).

The issue of succession has surfaced increasingly in recent years. Mubarak's two predecessors died in office, one at assassins' hands. Sadat's killing was intended to spark nationwide insurrection, but the only manifestation of this, an attack on police cadets in the Upper Egyptian city of Asyut, was contained. While the relatively peaceful transition underscored for many a fundamental institutional stability, cynics despair at ever seeing a standing president retire. As Mubarak's second term ended, opposition forces put forth proposals for a popularly elected chief executive. Supporters argued that Mubarak needed a third term to carry out his political agenda and maintain stability. Generally speaking, the president remains above and beyond the scope of official and unofficially expressed public criticism. While government ministers up to and including the prime minister are constant targets of a lively press, even the opposition press exercises self-censorship by refraining from any critique of the president.

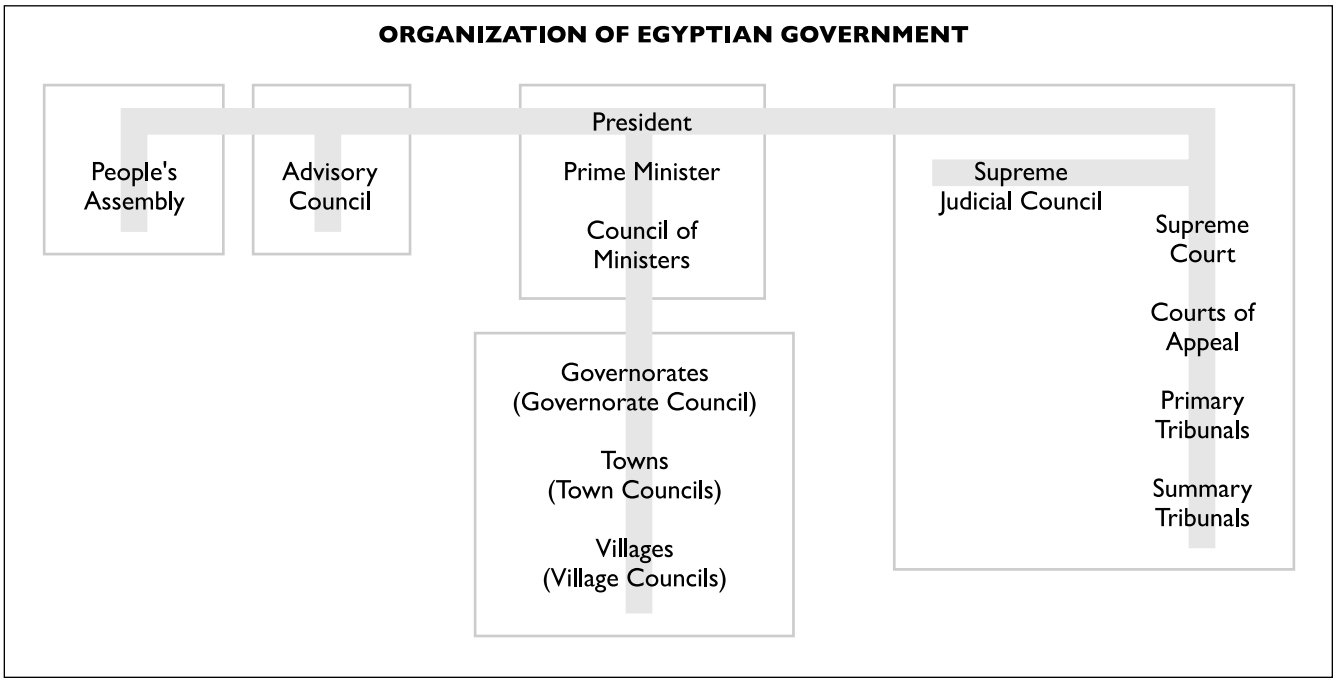
By 2005 Mubarak had been president for 24 years, far longer than either Nasser or Sadat before him. By that time the president was 77 years old, and the speculation regarding his political longevity and eventual successor had lasted as long as his tenure in office. But the president adamantly refused to appoint a vice president and hence a clear constitutional successor. As vice president himself, Mubarak had ascended to Egypt's highest office upon the assassination of President Sadat by Islamist militants. Yet since that day in October 1981, the next succession remained vague. By avoiding a clear successor the president also avoided establishing a rival to his own political power, leaving many observers of Egyptian politics to assume that succession might occur through a struggle within the ruling party the National Democratic Party or perhaps through intervention by the Egyptian military, which remains the backbone of the regime despite its officially civilian orientation.

Beginning in the late 1990s speculation also centered increasingly on the president's son, Gamal Mubarak. Thus a succession similar to the one in Syria in 2000, from Hafiz al-Asad to his son Bishar al-Asad, was not necessarily likely but neither was it impossible. Gamal Mubarak has been a successful member of the Egyptian business community, but he had no military experience (unlike Nasser, Sadat, or Hosni Mubarak). Unlike the case in Syria or even in Iraq before the collapse of Saddam Hussein's regime, President Mubarak was doing little to groom his son for the succession. Speculation nonetheless persisted especially after 2000, when Gamal was appointed by his father to be a member of the inner circle of the ruling party: the secretariat of the National Democratic Party. In that capacity Gamal Mubarak increasingly acted as a spokesperson for the party, crisscrossing the country to make speeches on its behalf during the 2000 national parliamentary elections. But despite his high profile role in the campaign, Gamal Mubarak did not run for a parliamentary seat himself, preferring his more influential role as public speaker and member of the party's 25-member ruling secretariat. For all the speculation regarding civilian, military, or dynastic succession or even of more radical change through Islamist insurgency the question of succession in 2005 remained no clearer than it had been when Hosni Mubarak ascended to power in 1981.

LEGISLATIVE

The People's Assembly (National Assembly before 1971) approves general policy, the national budget, and development plans. Until 2005 it also nominated the president. It may vote no confidence in any government minister, deputy minister, or deputy prime minister but has no power to vote no confidence in the prime minister. It may bring complaints against the prime minister before the president, who may then put the issue to a popular referendum. If the referendum fails, the president may dismiss the Assembly. This prerogative may be exercised at any time but must be followed by a popular referendum within 60 days.

The People's Assembly is composed of 454 deputies (numbers have fluctuated slightly since the 1980s). Each of Egypt's 222 legislative districts is represented by two deputies. The legislative term is five years, and polling occurs in two stages with provisions for runoffs. Voters cast ballots for a party list divided between professional and worker/peasant candidates. Each district must be represented by one from each category. The outgrowth of Nasser-era striving for social justice and broad representation, this last feature is today a cause for cynicism. A cartoon in an opposition paper after the 1995 elections depicted the parking lot designated for worker/peasant representatives full of luxury vehicles. The remaining 10 members of the Assembly are appointed by the president, who usually uses this



prerogative to ensure greater representation by women and Coptic delegates.

In 1980 the Shura Council (Advisory Council) was established to replace the former ASU central committee. The Council oversees and approves broad matters of policy but has no legislative authority. At present 140 of its 210 members are elected; the remaining members are presidential appointees. Elections to the Shura Council, held every three years, closely mirror elections to the People's Assembly.

JUDICIARY

According to the 1971 constitution, Islam is the state religion and the Sharia (Islamic legal code) the principal source of legislation. As in other parts of the former Ottoman Empire, however, the judicial and legal system has been modeled on European lines since the late 19th century. The jurisdiction of Sharia judges was curtailed as new criminal, civil, and commercial codes were drafted and a new legal establishment was trained along Western lines.

The judiciary in Egypt is divided between courts of general jurisdiction and administrative courts. Sitting atop the system is the Supreme Constitutional Court that reviews the constitutionality of legal measures and resolves constitutional disputes. Courts of general jurisdiction begin at the district level. At least one tribunal of first instance, with civil and criminal chambers, is located in each of Egypt's 26 governorates. Appellate courts, also with separate civil and criminal chambers, have jurisdiction over one or more governorates. Topping the system is the Court of Cassation in Cairo, which hears petitions from criminal and civil appellate courts. Administrative courts hear cases involving governmental agencies. The State Council, an independent judicial body, is empowered to render decisions in administrative disputes and cases within the legal system. The Supreme Judicial Council, abolished in 1969, then reinstated in 1984, is consulted with regard to draft laws that organize the affairs of other judicial bodies.

The high court has on numerous occasions rendered decisions curbing executive and legislative authority. In 1985 the court overturned key provisions of the "Jihan" personal status laws, passed in 1979 and named for Sadat's wife. In rescinding the laws, which granted women greater rights in matters of divorce and child custody, the court accepted arguments raised by Islamist lawyers that the legislation had been illegally promulgated. The decision proved a pyrrhic victory for democratic forces that championed the court's exertion of power over the executive, yet bemoaned the rescinding of legislation they supported in principle. The court has played a particularly influential role in the realm of political participation.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Until the mid-1970s regional and local affairs were heavily dominated by the national government. In accord with the Sadatist program of political liberalization, the government in 1975 passed legislation promoting administrative decentralization. Further laws have augmented the powers of Egypt's 26 governorates, and popularly elected local councils have been allowed greater policymaking authority.

The Electoral System

All citizens aged 18 or more can vote, with the exception of those serving in the armed forces or working overseas. Women gained the vote in 1956 and have served in parliament and the cabinet ever since. Egyptians are not required to register to vote, and somewhat more than half have not. Literacy is not required to vote; individual candidates are assigned one of 100 licensed symbols in order to facilitate electoral participation. Cynics note that progovernment officials are assigned symbols with positive connotations such as a crescent, camel, or palm tree, while opposition candidates are often assigned unsavory symbols such as pistols and swords.

Under Hosni Mubarak elections have been energetically contested, and a true opposition has emerged. That opposition, despite philosophical differences, has often stood as a bloc on behalf of greater democratization and civil liberties. Although the NDP has retained a consistent majority and nominates the Speaker of Parliament, who has broad powers to guide and at times constrict discussion, parliamentary debate is lively and is widely covered in the print media.

The process has undergone dramatic developments since the early 1980s. The May 1984 elections, the first since Sadat's killing, were held under provisions of a new electoral law passed the previous July that rescinded the ban on prerevolutionary cabinet ministers but stipulated that a party must receive 8 percent of the popular vote in order to seat representatives in the Assembly. The number of representatives was also increased from 392 to 448, and 48 large constituencies replaced the earlier 175. Parties wishing to stand for election were required to offer lists in every constituency. Prior to the elections

the New Wafd had been recertified and allowed to stand for office.

In an election with an estimated 43 percent turnout, the NDP captured 73 percent of the vote, good for 389 seats. The Wafd polled 15 percent and sat 59 delegates, constituting a sizable opposition. Fueling controversy, the Wafd had aligned with the illegal but officially tolerated Muslim Brotherhood. Due to fundamental philosophical differences the pact did not survive. Many, in fact, speculated the alliance cost the Wafd votes among some secularist and Coptic voters who otherwise harbored great sympathy for the party's prerevolutionary liberal legacy and looked to the party as a credible opposition force.

Opposition outcry against the inability of independents to stand for election and speculation that the Supreme Court would rule the 1984 elections illegal led to promulgation of a new electoral law in December 1986. The new law provided for 48 seats to be held by independent candidates, one per electoral district. By overwhelming margin in a popular referendum, the Assembly was dissolved in February 1987, and elections were held in April. For this round the Muslim Brotherhood struck an alliance with the Socialist Labor Party (SLP) and the Liberal Socialist Party (LSP). With a 54 percent turnout, the NDP won 346 seats. The alliance won 17 percent, good for 60 seats, 37 of which went to Muslim Brotherhood candidates (in 1984 the SLP had scored 7 percent, too low to gain any seats). The Wafd polled 11 percent to control 35 seats. Independent candidates landed 7 seats. Overall, opposition candidates made up approximately 20 percent of the chamber. In July 1987 President Mubarak was nominated for a second term, for which he was approved by referendum in October.

Despite significant gains by the opposition, its leaders raised new challenges, and in May 1990 the Supreme Court ruled the 1986 law unconstitutional, again on grounds of discriminating against independents. The new election law invalidated the 8 percent threshold for party representation in parliament and established the current structure of 222 constituencies with 2 representatives each, and 10 presidential appointees. In October 1990 voters elected to dissolve the Assembly (57 percent turnout; 94 percent support). Elections were held in the shadow of the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait and the assassination in October of the controversial Speaker of the Assembly, Rifat al-Mahgub, who had run the Assembly with an iron fist, provoking an unprecedented number of walkouts by opposition delegates.

Subsequently, despite greater opening of the process—the abolition of the 8 percent requirement in particular—most opposition parties determined to boycott the elections, protesting the extension of emergency measures. Voter turnout reached only 20 to 30 percent, down significantly from the prior two elections. The Wafd, SLP, LSP, and Muslim Brotherhood did not contest; several members who ran as independents were dismissed by their parties. The NDP captured 77 percent and 348 seats. The Tagammu polled 1.5 percent to win 6 seats and lead the parliamentary opposition. In addition, 83 independents won seats. Of these 56 were affiliated with the NDP, 14 with the Wafd, 8 with the SLP, and 1 with the LSP. Election to 7 seats was suspended, and the president for the first time appointed 10 additional delegates.

Egypt's next recent elections were held in November–December 1995. The background to these elections was the intensification of the confrontation between state security forces and militant Islamists. In January 1995, 87 people died in clashes in Upper Egypt, the highest monthly total in three years. The government lashed out at the Muslim Brotherhood, accusing it of aiding and abetting political violence. In addition, the government gave the judiciary wide powers to intervene in elections to professional associations that had come under Brotherhood control and to prevent Brotherhood members from standing for office. In June, Mubarak survived an assassination attempt in Addis Ababa, where he was attending the Organization of African Unity (OAU) summit. In September the government announced that Brotherhood leaders arrested earlier in the year would be tried before special military tribunals.

The 1995 elections, therefore, while offering great promise—4,109 candidates contested seats, compared with 2,681 in 1990—were held at a time of increased tension. Earlier that month Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin of Israel had been assassinated. After the first round no opposition candidates had secured their constituencies, including individuals who had been consistently elected since the 1980s. In the second round a small opposition emerged, but many cried foul, and it seemed as if the regime had determined to punish any and all critics. The focal point of controversy remained the Islamist opposition. Still not recognized as a legal party, the Muslim Brotherhood nonetheless ran a large list of independents. Several days prior to the polling many on the list were arrested, throwing their candidacy into disarray. In the end the NDP won 316 seats, down significantly from prior rounds. This number was bolstered, however, by the victories of 115 independents, most of whom proved to be surrogate NDP candidates (most immediately joined or rejoined

the party). The true opposition controlled far fewer seats than has become the standard: the Wafd netted six, the Tagammu five, the Liberals and Nasserists one each. Leading opposition parties raised a legal suit in the courts contesting the results; the Tagammu, however, holding down a small opposition in parliament, refused to back the challenge, further splintering the opposition.

In 2000 the new round of national parliamentary elections began with new rules (dictated by the Supreme Constitutional Court) designed to increase transparency and to cut back on government-opposition clashes. Just prior to the polls the government cracked down on the Labor Party, which was allied at the time with the Muslim Brotherhood. Mubarak's government closed the party newspaper, *al-Sha'b*, and prevented the party from contesting the 2000 elections. Ironically, the Muslim Brotherhood fared better going it alone, as independents, than it had following its previous strategy of allying with one or another legal party. The Brotherhood gained 17 seats in the parliament of 454, certainly not constituting a sea change in Egyptian politics but nonetheless creating an opposition bloc that was as large as all other opposition parties combined. The New Wafd Party gained seven seats, the leftist Tagammu gained six seats, the Nasserists three, and the conservative Liberal Party (Hizb al-Ahrar) gained one seat. This made the Muslim Brotherhood the largest single opposition bloc in parliament, a status it had not seen since the elections of 1984 and 1987.

The ruling party, therefore, naturally received the overwhelming majority of seats, accounting for perhaps as many as 408 seats. The accounts vary because as few as 175 seats were won by candidates running for the National Democratic Party, but well over 200 who ran as independents then joined the NDP after the election. It is clear, therefore, that the NDP managed to get its usual overwhelming majority. Yet of those individual members of parliament, more than half ran as independents, meaning they defeated the official NDP candidates in order to secure their own seat, and only thereafter joined or rejoined the party. Indeed, even some of the senior party leaders lost their seats in the elections. While the numbers of truly independent and opposition MPs remained small, they were nonetheless higher than previous elections had allowed, thereby permitting a modicum of pluralism while in no way threatening the dominance of the NDP in parliament and throughout the government.

The Party System

The current political party system is the outgrowth of electoral reform initiated by the Sadat regime and advanced much more forthrightly under Mubarak. Since the early 1980s Egyptians have witnessed a proliferation of parties that constitute a credible opposition, if not one that can command enough electoral support to form a government. In order to be licensed and contest elections, parties must be certified by the quasi-governmental Political Parties Commission, although most opposition parties have been certified only after appealing negative decisions to the judiciary. In addition to standing for election, most parties publish newspapers, mostly weeklies, that constitute a lively, if at times quasi-tabloid, opposition press. The opposition press serves as gadfly, printing stories that will not be covered in the official media, at times stretching the truth in a system where libel is loosely defined. Still, Egyptians who follow politics read all the major opposition papers as a matter of course.

In addition to widening printed political discourse, announcing scandals, and decrying state authority, opposition papers serve as platforms to advance the political agenda of non-NDP candidates and their parties, as well as to announce and cover campaign appearances and rallies. Political campaigning is restricted by law; demonstrations or marches are illegal, and campaign rallies must be approved by authorities. Campaign activities are not covered by the mainstream press. There is no paid political advertising in the print or broadcast media. Recent campaigns have, however, been marked by lively displays of hand-painted banners and a proliferation of campaign posters (candidates prepay the municipality a cleanup fee). Private vehicles festooned with campaign placards cruise the streets, and campaign volunteers distribute leaflets in the streets. Those more savvy to American tactics have in recent years distributed wallet-sized calendars and bumper stickers.

Voting irregularities have been endemic, and charges of hooliganism and vote fraud resound afterward. In 1987 opposition forces charged that three-quarters of the polling stations lacked proper observers. In 1995 an independent Egyptian commission oversaw polling and condemned irregularities by both government and opposition campaign workers. In earlier years elections had been marred by instances of violence that occasionally resulted in several deaths. Government officials have held that in such cases elections served as a cover to mask the settling of scores unrelated to the elections.

In an attempt to avoid the irregularities and violence that marred the polls in 1995, Egypt's Supreme Constitutional Court in 2000 ruled that the judiciary would directly supervise the next round of elections. Previous elections had been overseen by officials of the Ministry of the Interior and by police officers. But since there were literally not enough judges to supervise every polling station in the country, the elections were staggered in three phases. Each phase covered different governates in the country, and each phase was itself broken up into two parts: the first-round elections and the second round of runoff elections (for those that did not receive 50 percent of the vote outright). The new procedure did seem to cut down on complaints of irregularities. The elections also saw a decline in violence, although some clashes did still occur between Islamists and police, resulting in 10 deaths and perhaps 60 injured nationwide. But this compared favorably to 87 deaths and more than 1,500 injured in the more contentious 1995 polls.

Major Political Parties

NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY (NDP)

(Hizb al-Watani al-Dimuqrati)

The ruling NDP is the outgrowth of the Nasser-era Arab Socialist Union. Consistently dominating parliament, the NDP has controlled the highest offices of state, from Speaker of Parliament to the presidency. NDP ideology is reflected in state policy, which speaks to the legacy of the July Revolution—Revolution Day, July 23, remains a government holiday and the occasion for a major presidential address—even while furthering many of the economic reforms initiated by Sadat.

NEW WAFD PARTY

(Hizb al-Wafd al-Jadid)

The New Wafd is the reincarnation of the leading prerevolutionary nationalist party. In terms of social and economic policy, particularly its support for greater privatization, the party has at times been labeled a pro-regime opposition party; in terms of promoting a more open electoral process and greater civil liberties and decrying the emergency measures still in force, however, the Wafd clearly fits an opposition bill. An early electoral alliance with the Muslim Brotherhood collapsed after the 1984 vote, and the party returned to its traditional secular-nationalist orientation. Its newspaper, *Al-Wafd,* quickly gained national attention and succeeded in transforming itself into a widely read daily. As of 2005 it was led by Numan Gumaa, who also participated in the multiple candidate presidential elections held in September 2005.

NATIONAL PROGRESSIVE UNIONIST PARTY (NPUP)

(Hizb al-Tagammu al-Watani al-Taqaddami al-Wahdawi)

The NPUP, or Tagammu, is the outgrowth of the leftist strand within the ASU. Its members, many of whom served the Nasserist state, describe themselves alternatively as Nasserists and Marxists. The party has remained the most outspoken champion of social reform, labor rights, and preserving the foundations of the Socialist state. It has gained support among industrial workers, yet its influence has always far outweighed its electoral base. In recent years it has thrown itself in league with the government in combating religious extremism.

NASSERIST ARAB DEMOCRATIC PARTY

(Hizb al-Arabi al-Dimuqrati al-Nasiri)

The Nasserist Democratic Arab Party is a more recent arrival, having been certified, after nearly two decades of denial, in April 1992. The party, which first constituted itself as the Nasserist Arab Socialist Party pursuant to Sadat's 1976 electoral reforms, seeks to promote the legacy of the Nasser era with a much less critical reevaluation than Tagammu counterparts, who also claim Nasserist credentials. The party's stated challenge—and the challenge of critics—is to find relevance in the policies of an earlier era, particularly one characterized by a lack of democracy, and in an individual who remains an icon but with contested legacies. The Nasserist Party has consistently faced internal factionalism.

LIBERAL SOCIALIST PARTY (LSP)

(Hizb al-Ahrar al-Ishtiraki)

The LSP, heir to the right-wing platform of the ASU, is viewed largely as a shadow of the NDP, supporting privatization and foreign policy initiatives. Neither it nor its paper, *Al-Ahrar* (The Liberal), are accorded much interest.

TOMORROW PARTY

(Hizb Al-Ghad)

The Tomorrow Party is one of the newest in Egypt, having received its license in October 2004. It is considered a centrist, secular party and was founded by former members of the New Wafd Party. As of 2005 it was led by Ayman Nour, who made a strong showing in the September 2005 presidential elections, winning perhaps 12 percent of the popular vote.

Minor Political Parties

A variety of smaller parties have been licensed in recent years, none as yet exerting any significant influence on the polity. These include the Green Party, the Democratic Unionist Party, and a revived Young Egypt. A reconstituted Liberal Constitutionalist Party has been envisioned by descendants of the prerevolutionary minority party.

Other Political Forces

THE MILITARY

Since the 1952 revolution the military has remained the ultimate guarantor of state power. Shortly after the July 23 coup junta leaders acted to distance the Free Officers movement from direct political activity, arresting former comrades who continued to meet and attempt to influence policy. In 1953 the military high command was reshuffled. An RCC member and close Nasser confidant, Abdel Hakim Amer, was appointed commander in chief. During the March 1954 crisis triggered by Muhammad Nagib's dismissal, dissident members of the armor corps were arrested and further dismissals effected. In 1956 members of the RCC, Amer excepted, resigned their commissions and joined civilian ranks. Nevertheless, during the Nasser era the military emerged as a new elite, garnering special privileges and a fast track to high office. In the aftermath of the 1967 war the military lost much of its prestige. Students demonstrated when senior officers escaped blame for the debacle and official responsibility fell on more junior colleagues. Fearing a military coup, Nasser ordered Amer placed under house arrest, and the field marshall died under mysterious circumstances.

The army regained popular acclaim in the October 1973 war, during which it first demonstrated a great degree of professionalism and battlefield competency. The Egyptian-Israeli peace led some to speculate that the military would lose political influence and social privilege. Combined maneuvers with Western alliance nations in regional strategic initiatives (Bright Star) and participation in the 1991 Gulf War (Desert Storm) have helped to ensure an important place for the military. In 1986 the army had to be called in to quell riots by cadets in the central security forces (a branch of the Interior Ministry) provoked by rumors of extended service requirements. The rising tide of militant Islamic activism has led many to reassert the importance of the military as the ultimate foundation of state authority.

The military has kept its distance from direct political activity but remains the training ground for attaining the highest state offices. Hosni Mubarak, a flight instructor in 1952, represents the ascension of a second generation of military men to wield power. He rose to command the air force prior to the October War, and Sadat subsequently appointed him vice president. Many of his chief ministers and advisers hail from the officer corps. His defense minister, Abdel Hamid Abu Ghazala, a man long held to be the second most powerful individual in the country, was forced to resign in 1989 after being implicated in a scheme to smuggle U.S. missile technology to Egypt, yet remained a close adviser to the president. Safwat al-Sharif, Mubarak's minister of information since 1982 and one of his most prominent associates, rose from the ranks of military intelligence, as have many of Egypt's prime ministers.

MUSLIM BROTHERHOOD AND ISLAMIST OPPOSITION

The Muslim Brotherhood (al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun) was founded in 1928 by the Islamist thinker and activist Hasan al-Banna. The Brotherhood had originally welcomed the 1952 Free Officers coup d'etat and the Nasserist revolution as a blow against Western imperialism. But when Nasser appeared to remain too secular and too Socialist, in the views of the Islamists, the Brotherhood unsuccessfully turned against the regime. The government then turned on them, arresting large numbers of Islamists particularly after a failed assassination attempt against Nasser. Hasan al-Banna was himself assassinated, and later more militant leaders such as Sayyid Qutb were arrested and executed for advocating the overthrow of the regime. In the 1970s Sadat released many Brotherhood members in an attempt to counter the many secular Nasserists within the regime and society. But

by 1981, in the midst of economic difficulties and regional hostility due to Egypt's separate peace with Israel, Sadat reversed his stand and struck out against the increasingly hostile Islamist movement. In October of that year Sadat was assassinated by Islamist militants within his own army.

President Mubarak has maintained the state-of-emergency laws ever since and has shown no quarter to militant Islamism in particular, while attempting simultaneously to co-opt the more moderate and mainstream wing represented by the contemporary Muslim Brotherhood. More militant Islamists broke off from the Brotherhood, intending to topple the regime by force. The 1990s saw particularly violent Islamist attacks against police officers, government officials, and tourists, with correspondingly severe counterattacks by Egypt's security services against Islamists, particularly groups such as Egyptian Islamic Jihad and the Gama'at al-Islamiyya (both of which gradually established ties to Osama bin Laden's al-Qaeda organization). By 2000 the militant side of the movement was by no means dead, but it was decidedly lower in profile. The regime's declarations of having conclusively won the struggle against militant Islamist opposition were premature, but certainly acts of violence had declined since the early and mid-1990s.

Unlike the more militant splinter groups, the Muslim Brotherhood continued its reformist approach to achieving a more Islamist state in Egypt by participating in the political process and especially in elections. In the 2000 elections the Brotherhood secured 17 parliamentary seats by having its members run as independents. Despite its continuing illegal status, the Muslim Brotherhood remains a powerful and influential opposition force in Egyptian politics.

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Given the steps taken since the 1980s to open the political process and liberalize the economy, the role of professional organizations, once strictly supervised by the state, has grown in importance. The bar association, press syndicate, doctors' association, and other professional organizations have become centers of political opposition and vocal exponents of civil society. By the early 1990s they also became heavily influenced by Islamist elements with links to the Muslim Brotherhood. The state has acted in recent years to curb this influence through legal means, but the constitutionality of such measures remains questionable. In 1996 the government declared elections to the bar association illegal and placed the organization under judicial sequestration. Student government associations on the major campuses in Cairo, Alexandria, and provincial capitals became dominated by Islamists during Sadat's reign. The universities remain sites of frequent protests, most often relating to foreign affairs (such as the Gulf War or Palestinian-Israeli negotiations), but have not erupted in the kind of turmoil that characterized the campuses prior to the July Revolution of 1952.

PRINT AND BROADCAST MEDIA

The official print media and all broadcast media are state owned, funded, and directed. The *Al-Ahram* publications in particular are viewed as authoritative organs of government policy and are widely read throughout the region. A host of weekly news/arts magazines such as *Ruz al-Yusuf, Al-Musawwar,* and *October* express varying degrees of political criticism, but always within the fold of regime approval. Political opposition has received greater coverage in recent years, but this coverage remains minimal and highly selective. The print media include an opposition press, primarily affiliated with opposition parties, but they, too, are inextricably linked to the state. Opposition newspapers use government-owned presses to print their products. This reliance on state institutions, in addition to restrictions on expression, promotes self-censorship as a survival strategy, curbing the extent to which the opposition papers will speak out against state policy or individuals in government. Nonetheless, opposition papers are read by people who follow political, economic, and social developments, and readership is not limited to a partisan audience. There have been efforts in recent years to establish privately funded newspapers without links to political parties or state institutions, but these have not been approved.

Yet in a country known for its plethora of newspapers and journals, the primary contest for influence is engaged in broadcast media, television in particular. Television programming in Egypt is fully produced by the state. News broadcasts are characterized by a protocol that runs the presidential calendar of events as the lead. Opposition viewpoints are rarely expressed. All of this has become increasingly complicated with the advent and spread of cable and satellite television in the 1990s and early 2000s. Unlike some other Middle Eastern governments, the Egyptian government has not banned satellite dishes, but the control of information and the rampant pirating of state-produced products are of paramount concern.

With the formation of the Egyptian Radio and Television Union (ERTU) in 1970, all broadcasting

duties, from writing to production, fell under the auspices of the Ministry of Information. Prior to that it had shifted between the ministries of Communication and Culture. In the early 1990s the government established as ERTU subsidiaries two satellite channels and a cable network, CNE, which subcontracts other Arab cable channels. In April 1998 Egypt launched its first telecommunications satellite, Nilesat. This is in part an effort to maintain Egypt's dominance over broadcast production throughout the Arab world. A new $300 million Media Production City outside Cairo was intended to bolster a sagging film industry and to lure Arab television producers back into Egyptian studios.

Certain non-news programming, dramatic serials especially, have increasingly become stages upon which state policy is articulated. While state-produced dramas have been allowed to criticize social and economic trends, often couched in historical settings but sometimes set in the present, television drama has focused increasingly on the contest between the state and the religious opposition. Most social dramas now include Islamist characters who are generally misguided if not outright evil and who pay a heavy price when they attempt to quit their brotherhood. Such figures are the only outwardly devout characters portrayed. In this way television plays an active role in promoting a secular-oriented public culture, and television producers and writers seem to be trying to shape a public consensus with regard to the most serious issue facing the state.

National Prospects

The Sadat government attempted to use Islamist movements to offset the power of more rooted Nasserist organizations on campuses, in professional organizations, and in the bureaucracy. This proved a dangerous gambit, particularly as Sadat embarked upon closer relations with the West, peace with Israel, and economic policies that promoted a previously unseen consumerism replete with foreign/Western trappings well out of the financial reach of most Egyptians. Islamist activists were among the many arrested in September 1981. Followers of Muhammad Islambuli, leader of the militant Jihad movement and one of those detained, assassinated Sadat in 1981.

The Mubarak regime has approached the Islamist current with a carrot-and-stick policy, allowing the Muslim Brotherhood to participate in the political process under the auspices of legal parties and striking with force against radical splinter movements. Brotherhood figures have sat in parliament and promoted greater civil liberties along with an Islamist social agenda. At the same time they have spoken out consistently against the repression of more radical Islamist counterparts, blaming the state for fomenting violence.

Islamism remains an issue that sorely divides the body politic. Popular sentiment runs strongly against both state security forces and Islamist militancy. Yet the ability of Islamist organizations to provide basic services, often more efficiently than the state, garners public support in poorer neighborhoods. Since the early 1990s the Islamist current has made great inroads into basic organs of civil society, winning control over trade unions and professional organizations. The state has responded by confronting Islamism in popular media: print, television, cinema, and theatrical drama. Many champions of greater political liberalism find themselves supporting the government crackdown on Islamist forces, even to the extent of election engineering that successfully kept Islamist candidates, along with other opposition forces, from sitting in the earlier parliaments. Others argue that the regime should allow the Muslim Brotherhood more voice in governing in order to bolster mainstream nonmilitant Islamist confidence in the political process and foster a greater stake in promoting civil order.

The decentralization of radical Islamist movements has stymied government efforts to decisively eliminate them. In 1997 imprisoned leaders called for a halt to violent acts, but the extent of their authority over operatives at large is uncertain.

In part because of its domestic security concerns and its battles with militant Islamists, the Mubarak regime showed signs of de-liberalization throughout the 1990s, particularly in the form of sporadic crackdowns on dissent and civil liberties. Economic liberalization, similarly, seemed to increase in inverse proportion to political liberalization. The latter process remains a lower priority for the regime than the former as Egypt continues its economic reform and privatization programs in its attempt to adjust to economic globalization and the demands of its international creditors. This trend toward political de-liberalization only intensified in the aftermath of the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on the United States and the George W. Bush administration's declaration of a "war on terror."

As a close regional ally of the United States, Egypt supported the U.S. efforts in a broad sense, including sharing intelligence on militant Islamist organizations. Like most other countries in the Middle East, however, Egypt did not join the United States in its war against

Iraq. Egypt had joined the U.S.-led coalition in the Gulf War of 1990–91. In that earlier conflict Egypt had sent 30,000 troops and more than 400 tanks to help defend Saudi Arabia and support the coalition effort against Iraq. But in 2003 the coalition was rooted primarily in U.S. and British forces, with no Arab armies joining the fight. President Mubarak and other Arab leaders warned that Iraq was already contained and that United Nations weapons inspectors could take care of any concerns regarding the development of nuclear, chemical, or biological weapons. Amr Mousa, the secretary-general of the Arab League and former foreign minister of Egypt, summarized the feelings of many across Egypt and the Arab world when he warned that an essentially unprovoked invasion would, in his words, "open up the gates of hell."

Following the 2003 U.S. invasion and occupation of Iraq, insurgency and violence did indeed spread across the country, and terrorist groups—both Iraqi and foreign—began to use Iraq as a base to strike against U.S. forces, foreign guest-workers, and officials of the new Iraqi government. The Mubarak regime seemed to reflect the views of most Egyptians when it argued that the Iraqi conflict was not necessary and that the real core issue for the region remained the plight of the Palestinians. In November 2004, following the death of Palestinian president and PLO chairman Yasir Arafat, Egypt hosted the military and state funeral for the late PLO leader. As Arab heads of state converged on Cairo, the funeral underscored once again the geographic and political centrality of Egypt in Middle East politics.

Egypt remains the center of the Arab world and the land bridge between Africa and Asia. Under Mubarak, as under Nasser and Sadat before him, Egypt has continued to play a major leadership role in Arab and Middle East politics. But the political successions in nearby Jordan, Syria, and Palestine each served to remind Egyptians that their own succession crisis loomed near. By mid-2005 Mubarak had still refused to appoint a vice president and hence a designated successor. In the absence of a clear line of succession speculation differed widely, from military intervention to Islamist takeover. But perhaps just as likely, successors might come from within the top echelons of the president's ruling party, the NDP, including even the president's son, Gamal. For a civilian bureaucratic succession to occur, it would have to be with the approval of Egypt's powerful armed forces. Whatever occurs, and whenever the succession takes place, Egypt has survived greater challenges in its tumultuous history since independence.

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REPUBLIC OF EL SALVADOR

(República de El Salvador)

By Kristin Marsh, Ph.D.

El Salvador is a small Central American country bordering Guatemala to the northwest and Honduras to the northeast. With its high population density, El Salvador's 21,041 square kilometers sustain more than 6.7 million people. Approximately 90 percent of Salvadorans are mestizo, 1 percent are Indian, and 9 percent are white. Reflecting the region as a whole, Roman Catholicism is the dominant religion (83 percent), although evangelical groups maintain a viable Protestant presence.

Traditionally the majority of Salvadorans lived in rural areas dominated by export agriculture; however, recent employment changes are reflected in a growing service sector (55 percent of employment), a modest decline in agriculture (30 percent), and a modest industrial sector (15 percent). Today El Salvador's population is concentrated in the basins of the central highlands, with more than half the population living in the central cities. The 20-year civil war (1972–92) devastated the country, causing approximately 20 percent of the population to flee the country and shaping extensive internal migration to urban areas. More recently the country suffered ecological blows and devastating human loss from Hurricane Mitch (October 1998) and the January 2001 earthquake. In spite of slow population growth and continuing emigration, the country remains overcrowded. Persisting economic strain keeps Salvadorans dependent on the approximately $2 billion sent home each year from family members living in the United States.

Much of El Salvador's recent political history has been dominated by social unrest and political conflict, escalating in the 20th century to a series of revolts, military dictatorships, heightened repression, and protracted civil war. Beginning in the mid-1800s the Salvadoran government supported and directed the development of an export-oriented agricultural economy based predominantly on coffee and increasingly controlled by a few wealthy families. Heightened levels of poverty and inequality fueled a climate of rebellion, which culminated in Agustin Farabundo Martí's organized revolt at the beginning of the Depression in 1931. The landed oligarchy, supported by the military government, met rebellion with repression and managed to force reformists either underground or into quietude. Approximately 25,000 Indian peasants were massacred, and Martí was executed. Because most of the victims of the 1932 government-directed peasant massacre were Indians, the indigenous population was drastically reduced. Since public officials were usually members of the aristocracy, the landed oligarchy (popularly known as *los catorce*) traditionally held political as well as socioeconomic power. But the 1930s marked a transition in the character of Salvadoran power sharing. The military co-opted political power in its 1931 coup and justified its position by achieving the necessary social stability to see the economy and the country through the Depression. The resulting uneasy alliance characterized the Salvadoran power structure for 50

years; while the landholders retained their economic position, the military ruled politically.

Nevertheless, a strengthening guerrilla opposition worked to unite peasants, workers, and students; it also heightened instability in the traditional power structure. In a military coup staged by junior officers, General Carlos Romero was overthrown in October 1979, but the resulting military-civilian junta was no more successful in achieving real reform or restoring stability. Civil war escalated dramatically in the early 1980s and continued virtually unabated until 1992 when negotiated settlement finally brought the stalemated civil war to a close.

The two major parties to the civil war—the Salvadoran government/armed forces and the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN)—signed the Peace Accords on January 12, 1992, in Chapultepec, Mexico, agreeing to a series of changes in the constitution that guided later reforms in the armed forces, the judiciary, and the electoral system. The settlement, made possible by a persisting stalemate in the intransigent conflict, represented a compromise on both sides. The government conceded points on political procedure and security concerns, agreeing to simultaneous demilitarization of the government and democratization of the political process. The FMLN, on the other hand, conceded its demands for socioeconomic restructuring, thereby postponing battles over land distribution, income inequality, and development. The period between 1992 and the 1994 elections was dedicated to the transition from civil war to stable republic, and the period since 1994 has helped consolidate the fragile peace.

The System of Government

According to the 1983 constitution, El Salvador is a democratic republic made up of the executive, the legislative, and the judicial branches of government.

EXECUTIVE

Most political and economic matters in El Salvador fall under the jurisdiction of the executive office, which is made up of the president, vice president, and cabinet (or Council of Ministers). The president, who holds the authority of chief of state and head of government, selects cabinet members and serves a single five-year term. Elías Antonio Saca (Nationalist Republican Alliance; ARENA) won the 2004 election, and Carlos Quintanilla Schmidt is vice president.

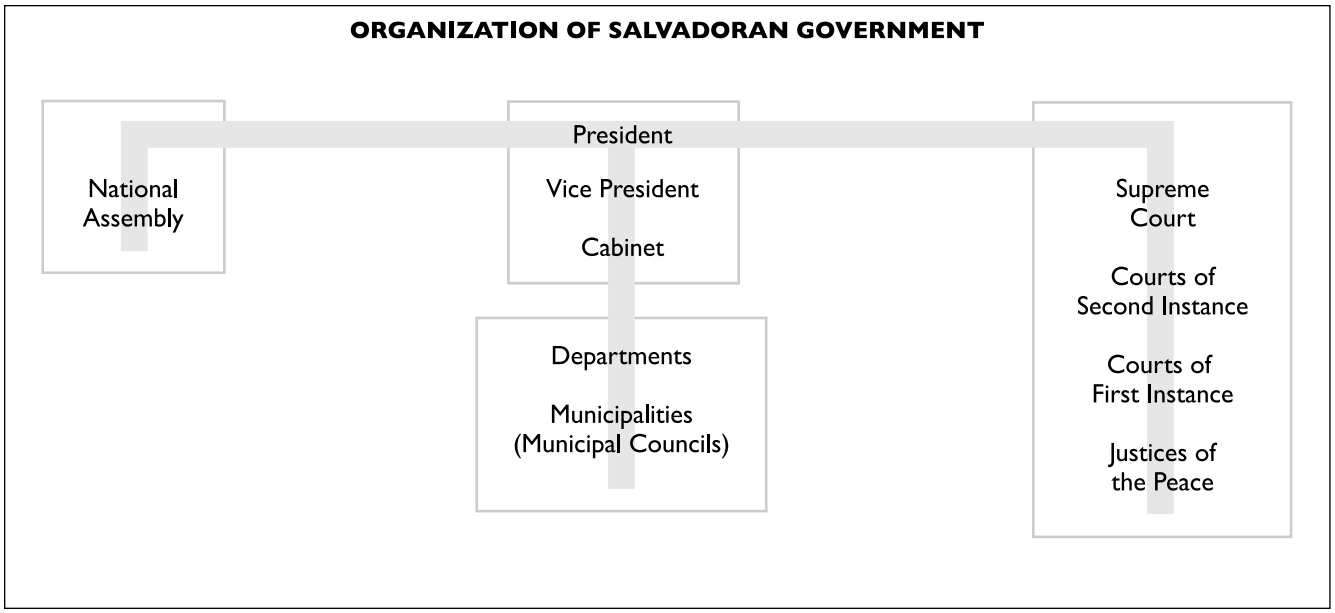
LEGISLATURE

The legislative branch of the national government is comprised of a unicameral, popularly elected National Assembly. National parliamentary and municipal elections are held every three years, and the 84 seats of the National Assembly are filled by proportional representation. Because neither of the two strongest parties (ARENA on the right; FMLN on the left) dominates the Assembly, both sides have been forced to seek alliances and work toward consensus on legislative issues. Following the 1994 elections, for example, the split legislature came to an impasse over the election of Supreme Court justices. The country went for a month without a Supreme Court before a political compromise allowing the necessary two-thirds majority could be obtained. In the legislative elections of March 2003 the FMLN took 31 seats (34 percent of the vote). ARENA came in a close second, earning 27 seats with 32 percent of the vote. The Party of National Reconciliation (PCN) earned 16 seats, and the Christian Democratic Party (PDC) and United Democratic Center (CDU) earned 5 seats each.

JUDICIARY

Because human rights abuses and judicial scandal were highly entrenched problems in El Salvador prior to and throughout the civil war period, reform of the justice system has been one of the most important and problematic concerns of the peace process. The Supreme Court, El Salvador's highest judicial authority, determines the constitutionality of laws and regulations. It encompasses the divisions of constitutional law, civil law, penal law, and litigation. Lower courts include courts of the second instance, courts of the first instance, and courts of peace. Fourteen Supreme Court magistrates are elected to staggered nine-year terms by a two-thirds majority in the Legislative Assembly. Historically the Court was often selected on the basis of suggestions of the executive, with little debate within the legislature. With greater political diversity introduced in the 1994 elections, the makeup of the Court has come to reflect legislative debate and compromise. The Court has a more balanced makeup and greater independence from partisan politics.

The power of the judiciary remains highly concentrated in the Supreme Court despite attempts at reform. For example, the National Council of the Judiciary (Consejo Nacional de la Judicatura; CNJ)



nominates and evaluates Supreme Court magistrates, lower judges, and justices of the peace. Theoretically independent, the relationship between the CNJ and the Supreme Court contributes to its vulnerability to Supreme Court control.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

El Salvador is divided into 14 departments and 262 municipalities. Each department has a governor and substitute governor. Unlike the proportional representation at the national level, the simple majority electoral system gives the winning party 100 percent representation on each municipal council (mayor, secretary, and aldermen). During the early post–civil war period ARENA dominated local elections, controlling more than 207 municipalities in 1994 and 161 in 1997. By 2000, however, the electorate had further polarized, and ARENA's dominance declined further. Nationwide ARENA held onto 127 mayoral seats, while the FMLN won 77 mayoralties, including the influential San Salvador post. In 2003 the FMLN again won San Salvador but only 74 municipalities. ARENA also lost further ground in local elections, winning 106 municipalities.

The Electoral System

The electoral system in El Salvador is based on universal suffrage for all citizens 18 years of age or older. Because illiteracy is high the secret ballot uses party symbols and colored ballots to facilitate broad participation. The presidential election is held every five years, while national legislative, department, and local elections are held every third year. Historically elections were so consistently fraudulent that the left and center-left parties refused to participate. One of the central accomplishments of the 1992 Peace Accords has been the opening up of the electoral system. The FMLN participated for the first time in 1994 and has gained in electoral support every year since. While elections continue to be problematic in some respects, they have been recognized internationally as generally free and fair.

For the 1994 elections the Supreme Electoral Tribunal (TSE) was established to head the electoral process, replacing the Central Elections Council (CCE). The TSE, made up of one magistrate from each of the four main parties in the General Assembly and one president elected by the General Assembly, was overseen by a board composed of representatives from all parties. Local elections boards were also set up to represent all political parties.

Reform of the electoral system has contributed directly to increases in registration, although voter turnout has not improved since the 1980s. Voter turnout in 1994 was 55 percent in the first round; in 1999 it dropped to 39 percent; but in 2004 a heated election season ended with a high turnout: 63 percent of registered voters.

The Party System

Historically El Salvador's political party system has been characteristically exclusionary. Leftist opposition parties were often banned (the constitution disallows armed political parties), and their members and leaders became victims of violent repression. Moreover, government parties stayed in power even against centrist parties such as the PDC through political repression and fraudulent elections.

The general elections of March 1994 marked the opening of the electoral system to include political parties of the left. Nine parties participated: three parties representing the ideological right (ARENA; Christian Authentic Movement, or MAC; and PCN), three representing the center-right (including the PDC), and three representing the left (including the FMLN). This expanded inclusiveness has allowed for the formation of alliances and greater political polarization, with considerable support for both the left and right and decreasing support for moderate and center-right parties.

Major Political Parties

NATIONALIST REPUBLICAN ALLIANCE

(Alianza Republicana Nacionalista; ARENA)

ARENA emerged in 1981 as the rightist party, led by Major Roberto D'Aubuisson. D'Aubuisson, former chief of intelligence for the National Guard, has been implicated in the 1980 killing of Archbishop Oscar Romero and other human rights abuses. Under D'Aubuisson, ARENA supported a military solution to the civil war and opposed the reform program sought by the United States. As the main rival of the PDC throughout the civil war period, the majority of ARENA's support came from big business, the military, and various segments of the rural population.

Responding to political defeat in the 1985 legislative elections, ARENA's political strategy took a more moderate tack. Under the leadership of Alfredo Cristiani and Armando Calderón Sol, the new platform emphasized neoliberal economic reform and played down the importance of political solutions to the conflict. The strategy paid off electorally in 1988, when ARENA's Alfredo Cristiani took the presidency with 55 percent of the vote. Once in office Cristiani put a new emphasis on the problem of civil war and initiated negotiations with the FMLN.

Remaining the leading political party on the right, ARENA has continued to hold onto the presidency. In 1994 ARENA's Armando Calderón Sol won the presidency, and ARENA took 39 seats in the National Assembly race. Although the party's National Assembly representation declined somewhat in 1997, ARENA came back in 1999 when Francisco Flores Pérez closely defeated the FMLN's candidate with 51 percent of the vote. Elections remain heatedly contested, and campaigning for the 2004 race illustrated the extent to which Salvadorans are still deeply affected by the civil war legacy. In place of political debate regarding current governmental policy, campaign rhetoric focused on each party's responsibility for the war's devastation. In the end, ARENA's Antonio Saca won the presidency with a solid 57 percent of the vote.

FARABUNDO MARTÍ NATIONAL LIBERATION FRONT

(Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional; FMLN)

The FMLN was established in 1980 as a Sandinista-style guerrilla fighting arm of the leftist opposition, whose political wing at the time was the once-legal Democratic Revolutionary Front (FDR). The FMLN served to coordinate the several leftist parties and emerged as the leading leftist opposition party, both during and in the aftermath of the civil war. When the FMLN was formed, it was thought that the civil war could be quickly brought to a close militarily. Even with considerable regional support, however, the guerrillas were not strong enough to overpower the military forces.

Citing electoral fraud and repressive political conditions, the FMLN refused to participate in any of the elections of the 1980s. Although the electoral system went through formal reforms, the FMLN's abstention undermined the legitimacy of the elections. The Democratic Convergence, a coalition of leftist parties, participated in 1989 but had considerable difficulty mobilizing without the active support of the FMLN.

During the first post-war elections in 1994 the FMLN had a new, legitimate political role, and the party's participation since then has illustrated at least a formal openness to the electoral system and the institutionalization of oppositional politics in El Salvador. The FMLN had a strong showing in 1994,

and the legislative elections of March 1997 marked the left's first victory at the polls. In 1999, however, the FMLN earned only 29 percent of presidential vote, squandering a potentially strong showing by engaging in factional in-fighting during the year leading up to the elections. In the March 2004 presidential elections, FMLN's Schafik Handal came in second with 36 percent of the vote.

PARTY OF NATIONAL RECONCILIATION

(Partido de Conciliación Nacional; PCN)

Colonel Julio Adalberto Rivera created the PCN in the 1960s as the official government party. The PCN ran official candidates and controlled elections, thereby ensuring victory for its presidential candidates through 1979, including Colonel Fidel Sanchez Hernandez (1967), Colonel Arturo Armando Molina (1972), and General Carlos Humberto Romero (1977). Although the PCN is widely recognized as having resorted to election fraud to achieve its solid foothold, at first the system was relatively open to participation by opposition parties, particularly in local and National Assembly races. After the 1979 military coup the PCN lost its influence among the armed forces. Support for the PCN waned beginning in the 1980s as the Christian Democrats and ARENA took center stage. In the 2003 legislative elections PCN candidates had a strong showing, earning 13 percent of the vote and 16 parliamentary seats. PCN's results in the polarized 2004 presidential election were much weaker, however, and the party's candidate, José Rafael Machuca Zelaya, came in fourth with 2.7 percent of the vote.

CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY

(Partido Demócrata Cristiano; PDC)

Under the leadership of the mayor of San Salvador, Jose Napoleon Duarte, the PDC emerged in the 1960s as the major opposition party to the PCN regime. In the aftermath of the highly fraudulent 1970 National Assembly elections and in anticipation of the 1972 presidential elections, the PDC, the Socialist National Revolutionary Movement (MNR), and the Communist National Democratic Union (UDN) formed a leftist alliance party, the Union Nacional Opositora (UNO). Duarte ran for president under the UNO and clearly won the 1972 elections. But the military declared victory for Molina, the PCN candidate. After a defeated coup attempt that Duarte had been persuaded to support, he was forced into exile by the Molina government.

The continuation of electoral fraud through the 1970s, coupled with worsening economic conditions and continued rigidity in the government (especially repression of the peasantry), led to increasing popular discontent. To avoid the possibility of a leftist revolutionary overthrow similar to that experienced in Nicaragua, a group of junior army officers staged a coup in 1980 against General Romero that was intended to be progressive and achieve moderate reform. The new government was highly divided, however, and collapsed within months. Almost immediately a new government was announced that represented an agreement between the military and the PDC, whereby the PDC would reorganize the new government and the security forces would retain their autonomy.

Duarte returned from exile in December 1980 as the newly appointed president. In 1985 the presidential elections resulted in a PDC majority in the National Assembly (after a poor showing in 1982) and a victory for Duarte's presidency. As a centrist party, the PDC has suffered a decreasing constituency since the 1990s. With the political system increasingly open, voters are polarizing in their party alignment. In 2003 the PDC earned only five national legislative seats (with 7.3 percent of the vote), and one of these seats represents a PDC alliance with two smaller parties. In the March 2004 presidential elections the PDC/CDU candidate, Héctor Silva Argüello, came in a distant third, with only 3.9 percent of the vote.

Minor Political Parties

Major opposition parties in El Salvador frequently strengthen their voting bloc through strategic alliances with one or more ideologically compatible minor parties, such as the PDC's alliance with the United Democratic Center (CDU). As the political landscape has become more polarized, however, fewer minor parties are holding sway even in coalition-building. The 2003 municipal and legislative elections provide a telling example. Although 11-plus parties participated countrywide, only the top four parties claimed any significant proportion of the electorate. And in the National Assembly, where the FMLN won a plurality of the vote, ARENA attempted to align with the conservative PCN in order to gain a majority voting bloc. Instead, the PCN allied loosely with the FMLN, which further

weakened ARENA's efficacy. Minor parties besides the CDU include the Republican People's Party (PPR) and the Social Democratic Party (PSD).

Other Political Forces

THE MILITARY

One of the most striking aspects of the post–civil war transition has been the largely successful demilitarization of Salvadoran society. Under the constitution the elected president, as head of the executive branch and commander in chief, has complete discretion to appoint and remove top military leaders. The central role of the military is to provide external defense, although the president can ask for assistance domestically. And while the legislature does have an oversight role, particularly with military expenditures, in practice the military has had nearly total autonomy and independence regarding internal policy.

This military/civilian separation is in stark contrast with previous institutional relations. As a central political actor, the military in El Salvador controlled the state administration for much of the 20th century. Rather than establish an open military dictatorship as was more common in South America, the military in El Salvador sought a facade of legitimacy by setting up the PCN as its political party and holding formally open elections. Military generals held the position of president until the 1979 coup.

Operating under a strongman *caudillo* system, the military controlled the country through high levels of repression by the security forces. During the 1980s the United States influenced a measure of reform by supporting Duarte's civilian presidency and emphasizing human rights. The number of political disappearances and the use of torture against political opponents declined somewhat. But the military remained powerful, its personnel retained impunity, and the level of general violence against the civilian population increased. Salvadoran society was highly militarized.

The 1992 Peace Accords outlined the demobilization process for both parties to the conflict, the Salvadoran armed forces and the FMLN. It also called for far-reaching structural changes in the military: the complete demobilization and disarmament of the FMLN and reintegration of its members into civilian society; the separation of the armed forces and civilian police, involving the establishment of a new police force; the dismantling of the security forces and the army's "shock troops"; an overall cut in the number of enlisted military personnel; and the replacement of military intelligence by a civilian intelligence service. Army personnel lost impunity through the establishment of the Salvadoran Ad Hoc Commission and the non-Salvadoran Truth Commission, both of which were charged with investigating human rights abuses. Agreeing to complete demilitarization of the government and of civilian society was one of the state's biggest compromises of the negotiations. In short, the military, once at the center of El Salvador's protection racket state, is now virtually excluded from the internal security arena.

ORGANIZED LABOR

The labor movement in El Salvador benefited from the strong economy of the 1950s and 1960s. Both membership and numbers of organizations grew during this period. But starting in the late 1970s and continuing through the civil war, repression hit the labor unions particularly hard.

The peace process afforded organized labor an institutionalized voice in economic policy through representation on the Forum for Economic and Social Consultation. Despite resistance from the business sector, initial success in achieving individual worker rights was followed eventually by the adoption of gains in trade union rights, which were formalized in Labor Code reform in April 1994. Still, these protections are not always met in practice. For example, children are routinely subjected to difficult and dangerous work in the sugar cane fields. Although the labor movement within El Salvador is weakened as of 2005, international free trade agreements (such as the Central American Free Trade Agreement, or CAFTA) provide the opportunity for external actors, such as the United Nations' International Labor Organization and Human Rights Watch, to influence labor relations.

EXTERNAL FORCES

Various external parties have exerted substantial influence on El Salvador's political events, although none has played a decisive role. The U.S. government's interest in El Salvador increased with escalation of the civil war in the 1980s. Fearing an FMLN takeover, the United States strongly supported the Duarte presidency and the military, but it also pressed for reforms. As human rights abuses continued, the civil war stalemated, and the cold war receded globally, the U.S. position shifted in support of a cease-fire.

More recently, U.S. influence has focused on economic relations. In 2003 the United States initiated free-trade negotiations with El Salvador and other Central American countries. The Salvadoran parliament signed the agreement in May 2004, and U.S. ratification followed in 2005.

Regionally El Salvador's external relations have been mixed. El Salvador has periodically struggled with Honduras over border issues. Conflict escalated into a brief war in 1969, and the issue was not resolved until a 1980 peace treaty led to international adjudication by the International Court of Justice (ICJ). In 1999 the two countries finally set forth a plan for border delineation. During the civil war the FMLN received considerable support from neighbors, particularly Nicaragua, Honduras, and Cuba. Regional support was not decisive, however; the FMLN neither won when support was forthcoming, nor lost when it waned in the late 1980s. When stalemate persisted, the UN played a major role in mediating the negotiations and aiding in the transition. The UN Observer Mission in El Salvador (ONUSAL) initially deployed as a verification mission for human rights reforms, but ONUSAL's mandate expanded with the signing of the final Chapultepec Agreement in 1992.

As of 2005 the weightiest external forces come from trade partnerships. El Salvador is a member of the World Trade Organization (WTO), has entered into regional trade agreements, and is a signatory to CAFTA. The impact of this economic influence remains to be seen.

National Prospects

Twelve years of civil war cost 75,000 Salvadoran lives, devastated the fragile economy, and depleted or destroyed core natural resources such as soil and water. The 1992 Peace Accords brought a welcome end to the violent conflict. It also set the stage for free elections, a general democratization of politics, an end to human rights abuses, and reform of the military and police forces. The years since have been dedicated to the process of peace consolidation, including implementation of the terms of agreement within a peaceful transition period.

How stable is post–civil war El Salvador? What are the prospects for a lasting peace? The compromising nature of the accords and continuing economic hardship point to unmitigated grievance that may or may not flare up in conflict in the future. Further, peace is a relative concept, and the record points to an uncertain future. It is true that stability marks the civilian government and democratic electoral system. With the autonomy to handle its own affairs internally, the military no longer pervades civil society. The judiciary has been slower to reform in some districts but has made considerable progress at the national level.

Still, the most immediate problems are related to the pervasive violence in the face of poverty. Economic reforms were not a condition of the final peace agreement, and the situation for most Salvadorans has not improved or has worsened since the end of the war. The strategy of the left has been to bring about socioeconomic change through institutionalized political power. However, the specter of CAFTA and the antiregulatory stance that has historically accompanied free trade arrangements has complicated the debate, even as much of the electorate is against CAFTA. With a divided FMLN, it remains to be seen how successful the left will be in achieving greater equality and improved living standards, even in the medium to long run.

Whether or not political democracy and civil rights are strong enough advantages to allow this small state to eventually prosper, it is clear that peace and political stability have provided a significant move in the right direction.

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REPUBLIC OF EQUATORIAL GUINEA

(República de Guinea Ecuatorial)

By T. Bruce Fryer, Ph.D.



Equatorial Guinea, whose official language is Spanish, is separated into two geographical divisions. The first, Río Muni on the coast of central West Africa, is bounded by Cameroon on the north and Gabon on the east and south. The second division consists of two major islands, the larger of which is Bioko, where the country's capital of Malabo is located. The republic officially gained its independence from Spain on October 12, 1968. The first president, Francisco Macías Nguema Negúe, created a single-party state through the elimination of opposition leaders, and by 1972 he had assumed the title of president for life. The country was converted into a military-dominated police state, an unknown number of people (perhaps as many as 35,000) were killed, and an estimated 100,000 went into political exile. Eventually Macías's personally established party, the National Workers' Party (PUNT), had eliminated all other political parties within the country. He was overthrown in a palace revolt led by his nephew in 1979. The coup leader, Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo, is currently the head of state. Most of the nation's leaders are from the Fang, the dominant mainland ethnic group.

The System of Government

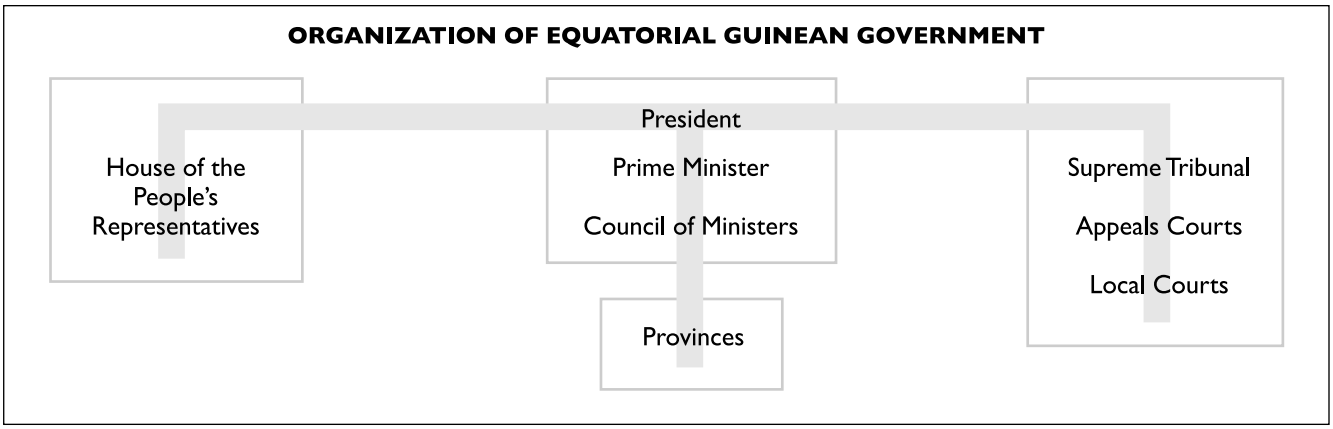
Equatorial Guinea is a republic with a very strong executive and a weak unicameral legislature.

EXECUTIVE

The chief of state, the president, has extraordinary powers since the constitution of 1982, rewritten and approved by referendum in 1991 and amended in 1995, such as the ability to name and dismiss cabinet members, make laws by decree, dissolve the Chamber of Representatives, negotiate and ratify treaties, and call for special elections of the legislature. Elections are to be held every seven years, with the last in 2002 and the next due in 2009. The president is in charge of the armed forces and is the defense minister. The head of government is the prime minister, who is appointed by the president and retains his powers as outlined by the president. The prime minister controls governmental activities with the exception of foreign affairs, national defense, and security.

LEGISLATURE

The unicameral House of the People's Representatives (Cámara de Representantes del Pueblo) consists of 100 members elected by direct suffrage. All serve for a term of five years. The House of People's Representatives is not independent since it is unable to act without the approval or direction of the president. In the 2004 elections the Democratic Party of Equatorial Guinea (PDGE) won 98 of the 100 seats, and Convergencia para la Democracia Social (CPDS) took two seats.



JUDICIARY

The highest judiciary level is the Supreme Court (Corte Suprema), consisting of the judicial advisers to the president. Below this structure in descending order are the appeals courts, chief judges for the divisions, and local magistrates. Traditional, civil, and military justices operate in combination with customary law in an ad hoc fashion since there are few established procedures and judicial personnel are largely inexperienced.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Equatorial Guinea is divided into seven provinces (Annobon, Bioko Norte, Bioko Sur, Centro Sur, Kie-Ntem, Litoral, and Wele-Nzas) who is appointed by the president.

The Electoral System

In all branches of government there is a preponderance of power and authority vested in the office of the president. The constitution of 1991 permits the formation of multiple parties, but elections are marred by allegations of fraud and late withdrawal by opposition candidates. Both presidents since independence in 1968 have been from the Nguema family, which is part of the Esangui subclan of the Fang.

The Party System

Equatorial Guinea is for all practical purposes a one-party state, with the PDGE utterly dominant in all areas of government.

Major Political Parties

DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF EQUATORIAL GUINEA

(Partido Democrático de Guinea Ecuatorial; PDGE)

The PDGE is the ruling party and the overwhelmingly dominant party, with major decisions influenced by the presidential administration. It was organized in 1987 by President Obiang.

CONVERGENCE FOR SOCIAL DEMOCRACY

(Convergencia para la Democracia Social; CPDS)

A member of the Socialist International, CPDS was organized in 1984. It is the only opposition party of any size or influence in Equatorial Guinea. As of 2005 its leader was Plácido Micó Abogo. In the 2004 elections it won two of the 100 legislative seats.

Minor Political Parties

The Progress Party of Equatorial Guinea (Partido para el Progreso de Guinea Ecuatorial; PPGE) has been accused frequently by the ruling party of fomenting unrest and antigovernment activities and has been banned. There have been executions of some associated with these activities. The party was organized in 1983.

Other minor parties include Acción Popular de Guinea Ecuatorial (APGE), Alianza Democrática Progresiva (ADP), and Partido Liberal (PL).

Other Political Forces

Ethnic divisions reflecting the geographic separation of the Bubi and the *playero* groups on the islands versus the continentally based Fang have marked the political divisions since independence. A government in exile was constituted in Madrid in 2003 representing a coalition of most of the major opposition groups including the PPGE, the APGE, and the Partido Liberal. These groups boycotted the 2004 legislative elections.

In March 2004 the government arrested numerous people and charged them with attempting to overthrow the government. In addition, Zimbabwe and South Africa also arrested several suspected coup members; among those arrested in South Africa was Mark Thatcher, the son of former British prime minister Margaret Thatcher.

National Prospects

Since the discoveries of petroleum resources near the coastal areas of Bioko and Corisco in the late 1990s, there have been increased international interests and internal pressures for improvements in human rights issues and political transparency. The foiled 2004 coup attempt illustrated that external forces were attempting to influence the political system, perhaps ultimately for their own financial gain. As of mid-2005 President Obiang retained full dictatorial power in the country.

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STATE OF ERITREA

(Hagere Ertra)

By Jon Abbink, Ph.D.
Revised by Daniel G. Ogbaharya, Ph.D.



Eritrea is situated in northeast Africa. It shares borders with Sudan to the west, Ethiopia to the south, and Djibouti to the east. With a surface area of roughly 125,000 square kilometers, ranging in altitude from below sea level in the Denakil Depression to more than 2,000 meters in the central highlands, and a coastline of 1,000 kilometers along the Red Sea, Eritrea has a variable annual rainfall that varies from 100 millimeters in the arid coastal areas to more than 700 millimeters in the eastern escarpment and central highlands. Eritrea's population is estimated at 4.5 million, and most of the population lives in the rural areas. The dominant economy in Eritrea is agriculture and pastoralism.

The political history of Eritrea in the 20th century cannot be understood apart from that of Ethiopia. Eritrea—the name and the territory—was created as an Italian colony in 1889, after the Italians gained a foothold on northern Ethiopian territory in 1869 around the port city of Assäb, then extended it in 1885 to Mis'iwa. Emperors Yohannis and Minilik II did not succeed in dislodging the Italians from the coastal area despite the resounding military victory of Ethiopia over expansionist Italian troops in 1896 at Adua.

In 1941 Eritrea was liberated by the British and became a UN-mandated territory until 1952. It saw political reforms and the beginnings of a more democratic political culture. From 1952 to 1962 Eritrea was federated with Ethiopia. Eritrea's autonomy, however, was accepted neither by Emperor Haile Selassie nor by Eritrean leaders of the reigning Unionist Party, and in 1962, through a controversial vote in the Eritrean parliament, Eritrea was "integrated" with Ethiopia as a province.

Around that date an armed struggle was taken up to regain autonomy, and later independence, by the mainly Muslim-supported Eritrean Liberation Front (ELF) and later the Eritrean Peoples' Liberation Front (EPLF; supported by Muslim and Christian groups). After the Ethiopian revolution of 1974, the struggle continued because of the increasingly rigid unitary standpoint of the Ethiopian Provisional Military Administrative Council (PMAC). A peaceful opening made by the chairman of the PMAC, General Aman Andom, in December 1974 was sabotaged by a faction in the PMAC that supported Ethiopian leader Mengistu Haile Mariam; this led to the assassination of General Aman and to the death of the peace option.

Due to its strong internal organization and high morale, the EPLF—with some foreign support—held its ground in the war even in critical times, captured sizable quantities of enemy weapons, and instituted a new social, medical, and economic infrastructure behind the frontlines while keeping strict political discipline. This experience was essential in preparing the EPLF for the exercise of political control in the period after May 1991. The rival ELF had been decimated by internal fighting during the 1970s and 1980s and did not play a major role in the later years of the armed struggle or in the postliberation period after May 1991. In May 1993, after two years of "provisional" rule, Eritrea was declared an independent state following a referendum in which 99.81 percent voted "Yes" to independence

after a vote in which saying "No" (i.e., maintaining a bond with Ethiopia) would mean being ostracized.

Following the vote for independence, Eritrea struggled through wars with Yemen (1995–1998) and Ethiopia (1998–2000) that severely weakened the economy. The dispute with Ethiopia was especially destructive, claiming 100,000 lives on both sides and resulting in widespread destruction and massive social dislocation and internal displacement in Eritrea. In the early 2000s the country began the enormous task of trying to rebuild its infrastructure in the aftermath of the conflict.

The System of Government

Eritrea is a virtual one-party state led by the Popular Front for Democracy and Justice (PFDJ), which is the political successor party to the EPLF. After a unilaterally proclaimed four-year transition period (1993–97), Eritrea was scheduled to be transformed into a multiparty state. However, the 1997 elections were cancelled. The government is made up of an executive State Council, supervised by a National Assembly. The role of the president (chairman of the party, of the Council, and of the Assembly) is dominant.

EXECUTIVE

After the declaration of independence on May 25, 1993, a "transitional administration" was installed, replacing the provisional government. The postindependence political structure that was valid for the period 1993–97 was defined by Government Decree No. 37.

A nonelected 130-member National Assembly (Baito) was created, consisting of the 70-member Central Committee of the EPLF and 60 other representatives from various regions, groups, and walks of life. Apart from the National Assembly, the government in 1994 appointed a 50-member National Constitution Commission to prepare a draft constitution. In mid-1996 the commission finished its work, and the constitution was adopted in May 1997.

The leader of the provisional government and chairman of the EPLF, Issaias Afäwärk'i, became president of Eritrea on June 8, 1993. He has retained power since that point. He also acts as commander in chief of the armed forces.

The government is formed by the Consultative or State Council of Eritrea, which consists of the 14 cabinet ministers, 11 heads of government commissions and authorities, and the provincial governors. The Consultative Council is the replacement for the Executive Council of the provisional period, which consisted of the president, the 10 regional administrators, the 5 top military and naval commanders, and secretaries for 12 government departments. In all these political organs, the PFDJ is the dominant political force, while key posts such as defense, foreign affairs, interior, finance, and information are occupied by its politbureau members.

LEGISLATURE

The National Assembly was seen as the supreme legal authority in the four-year transitional period up to 1997 and also thereafter. It holds sessions only with large intervals, during which the State Council runs daily business, led by the president. This Council has 35 members, among them the 14 cabinet members. The National Assembly was not elected in democratic elections but appointed, and it is dominated by the Central Committee of the PFDJ, which firmly leads the building of Eritrean state structures. Policy is prepared and submitted to the Assembly for discussion, amendment, and ratification by the party leadership according to its ideological guidelines.

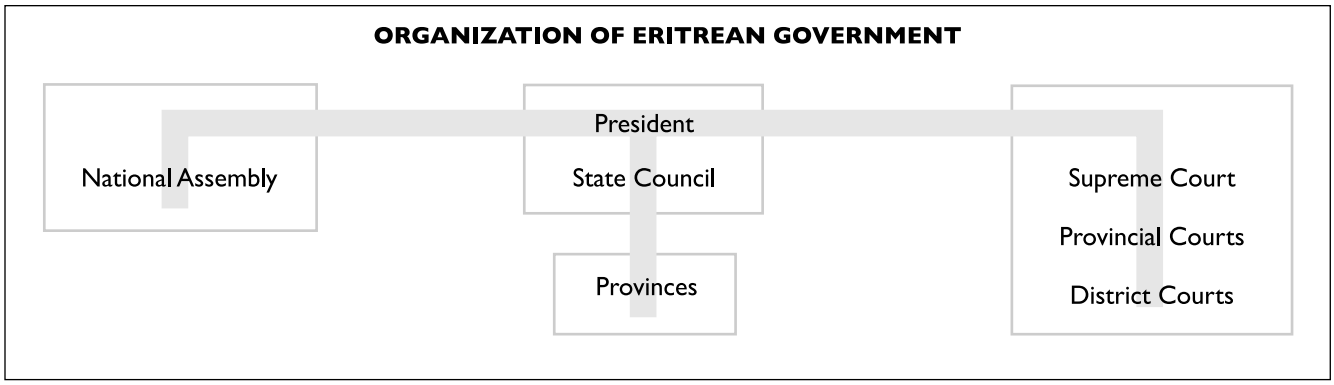
JUDICIARY

The Eritrean constitution guarantees the independence of the judiciary. In reality, however, the Eritrean judiciary remains weak and is subject to formal and informal executive control. This is compounded by the creation of the special court system. The special courts were established to address corruption and ease the backlog of cases in the poorly equipped civilian courts. By prohibiting the rights of legal counsel and appeal, the special courts effectively undermined the rule of law and due process of law. The judges in the special courts are poorly qualified military officers who are handpicked by the president, which makes them highly susceptible to political manipulation.

The highest court in Eritrea is the Supreme Court. Below that are provincial courts and district courts.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The Ministry of Local Government (MOLG) is the government structure that directly oversees local government. The premise for the Eritrean government structure is enshrined in the 1997 Eritrean constitution,



which states: "Eritrea is a unitary State divided into units of local government. The powers and duties of these units shall be determined by law."

The Government of the State of Eritrea (GoSE) enacted Proclamation No. 86 for the Establishment of Regional Administrations (PERA) in 1996, which divided the country into six *Zobas* (regions). The six *Zobas* were in turn made up of sub-*Zobas*, in turn made up of *Kebabis* (villages or areas). PERA abolished the former administrative structure that divided the country into 10 provinces. Each *Zoba* or *Kebabi* contains its own legislative or representative bodies. The elected legislative bodies for the *Zobas* are called *Baitos* (regional assemblies), and the legislative bodies for *Kebabis* are called *Megabaayas*. There are also executive bodies at each level of local government: regional administrations, sub-regional administrations, and village/area administration.

PERA also defines the functions, powers, and duties of the central and local government. Generally, the central government retains specific powers in areas of defense and national security, foreign policy, economic policy, higher education, justice, citizenship issues, and national infrastructure. The tasks and responsibilities of regional administrations include the preparation and implementation of regional development plans, social programs, and the preparation and allocation of regional budgets.

The Electoral System

No national elections have been held in the transitional phase or thereafter (since June 1997) for the National Assembly. Citing issues of national security and postwar conditions, the PFDJ postponed elections indefinitely in December 2001. Elections for local and regional assemblies have been conducted recently. However, observers question the viability of these elections. Candidates had to be approved by PFDJ, and no political parties except the PFDJ were allowed to participate in these local and regional elections. Details about electoral procedure and the nature and number of parties are not known yet but are to be determined by the present PFDJ government. The constitution is silent about multiparty elections. To assess the performance of administrators, periodic judgmental meetings are held during which people failing to meet their duties can be removed.

The Party System

Eritrea is a one-party dictatorship. Aside from the ruling Popular Front for Democracy and Justice (PFDJ), all other parties and opposition groups are outlawed.

Major Political Parties

POPULAR FRONT FOR DEMOCRACY AND JUSTICE (PFDJ)

The reigning and only legal party in Eritrea is the PFDJ. It is well rooted in the wider Eritrean population. The original rebel movement, the Eritrean Liberation Front (ELF), was founded in 1962; supported primarily by Muslims, it started as a group inspired by Marxist ideology. In 1970 the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) split off from this parent organization. It was also Marxist-Socialist in orientation and drew support from both Tigrinya highlanders and Muslim lowlanders (Beni Amer, Tigré) and other groups. The ELF and its various split-offs still exist. They do not take part in the government, although many former ELF leaders joined the EPLF.

The EPLF had a Communist party structure, with a central committee, a politbureau, and local cells. This structure is being transformed because of the group's new role as the broad, leading political party in an independent Eritrea. A third and last EPLF conference was held in February 1994, during which the conversion of the EPLF into a civil political party with a national unity and development program took place. The new Popular Front for Democracy and Justice, though similar to the EPLF in personnel and policy, has drawn up a charter distinguishing its program from the government's. It is thus formally separated from the government in terms of leadership, policy, and financing. The new party has offices in five designated regions of the country. Although it is officially not part of the governmental system, it intends to act as a "catalyst" in national policy. The PFDJ's program emphasizes nation building, economic development, social justice, and political restructuring.

Political organization (apart from the PFDJ) is tightly controlled, and any future party based on ethnicity or religion will be prohibited. Violent opposition, including the incursions from several small Islamic fundamentalist groups (such as Ansar-el-Sunna or the Eritrean Islamic Jihad movement) operating from Sudan is quelled with force. There have also been reports of political assassinations and disappearances of other declared opponents or of collaborators with the previous Ethiopian regime. Calls from opposition groups, such as the Eritrean Liberation Front–Revolutionary Council (ELF-RC), to broaden the composition of the national government have not been accepted. Eritrea thus has remained in effect a one-party state.

Minor Political Parties

There are no minor political parties in Eritrea.

Other Political Forces

Eritrea is essentially a one-party dictatorship. All opposition groups and political parties (aside from the PFDJ) are outlawed, so Eritrean opposition groups agitate from exile through short-wave radio programs and the Internet. A key opposition group emerged from within the ruling PFDJ. Known as the Group of 15, or G-15, these critics—all prominent members of the PFDJ Central Council—lashed out at the government for its dictatorial ways and brutality. In 2001, however, 11 of these 15 members were arrested and charged with treason.

Exiled members of the G-15 formed the EPLF–Democratic Party (EPLF-DP), which changed its name to Eritrean Democratic Party (EDP) in February 2004. Another armed political group, the Eritrean National Alliance (ENA), formerly the Alliance of Eritrean National Forces, is on the verge of launching armed political resistance. Other smaller opposition groups in exile include the Eritrean Public Forum (Washington, D.C.), Eritrean Independent Democratic Movement (Canada), Eritrean Movement for Democratic Change (EMDC), and Eritrean Islamic Jihad.

National Prospects

Eritrea is at a crossroads of peace and war, democracy and dictatorship, national unity and civil war. With its long border with Ethiopia manned by peacekeepers from the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) since 2000, the prospects for peace with its southern neighbor remain bleak. The PFDJ-dominated government of Eritrea continues to suppress political dissent in the name of protecting Eritrea's national sovereignty and security.

Since the summer of 2001 Eritrea has witnessed massive human rights violations against political dissidents, journalists, religious minorities like Jehovah's Witnesses and Pentecostal churches, and students as well as faculty of the University of Asmara. The government continues to deny these cases of gross human rights violations, and it dismisses calls from human rights organizations, international organizations, and Western governments to release political prisoners, respect the rule of law, and safeguard the constitutional rights of Eritreans.

Aside from the September 2001 arrest of 11 members of the G-15 (and in some cases their family members as well), the government has also cracked down on other forms of dissent. Immediately after the G-15 suppression the government shut down the nascent private newspapers of the country, whose reports and editorials criticized the president for conduct of the border war, lack of transparency and accountability, and stalling the democratization of the country. Established in 1998 with limited resources and professional background, the Eritrean private newspapers found their voice at the height of the war and the emergence of the G-15. The government arrested 11 journalists, accusing them of collaborating with foreign interests and dissidents and of violating the journalistic stan-

dards of the Eritrean Press Proclamation of 1994. Ten journalists remain in custody without formal charges or court appearances. The president has been defiant to criticisms of his government and calls by international organizations and governments for greater human rights protection.

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REPUBLIC OF ESTONIA

(Eesti Vabariik)

By Jeffrey K. Hass, Ph.D.



Estonia is the northernmost of the three former Baltic republics of the Soviet Union, with a 2005 population of 1.32 million people. It is not a homogeneous country: While ethnic Estonians make up 67.5 percent of the overall population, Russians come in a strong second with 25.6 percent. Estonian is the official language, but Russian, Latvian, and Lithuanian are significant as well. Despite some ethnic issues, Estonia has enjoyed a relatively stable transition to democracy and a market economy. While political parties have yet to tap deep roots into society and some scandals have marred political life, Estonia is further on the way to a Western-style political and economic system than most of the former Soviet republics.

Economically, Estonia has been the *wunderkind* of the former Soviet republics since its economy reached bottom in 1993. Experts suggest this is due to economic discipline and strong adherence to orthodox economic reform. While unemployment has been rising (9.6 percent in 2004) and wages in many sectors have not risen with inflation, privatization of small and medium-sized firms is complete, and large-scale privatization is proceeding apace. Further, Estonia has oriented its economy to trade with the West, solidifying this link by obtaining membership both in the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) and the European Union (EU) in 2004.

The System of Government

Estonia is a parliamentary republic with a unicameral legislature. Its constitution was adopted in 1992.

EXECUTIVE

The executive branch is made up of the president, the prime minister, and the deputy ministers who head the state bureaucracy.

Estonia's president is a weak one, essentially a figurehead who represents Estonia in international forums. Another of his major duties is appointing and recalling diplomatic personnel. The president does enjoy some formal powers over internal policy and legislation. While the president is expected to proclaim as law those bills that pass the parliament, he can exercise a weak veto, which involves sending back to the parliament legislation he considers faulty. If the parliament passes the bill a second time (by simple majority vote), the president can bring the law to the attention of the National Court, the highest court of the land, to rule on its constitutionality. Further, in moments when the parliament cannot convene, the president may issue decrees that have the force of law; these decrees must be confirmed when the parliament is able to convene if they are to remain in force. Finally, the president presents candidates for high governmental positions (e.g., prime minister), who must then be confirmed by the parliament.

Lennart Meri, the first president of the Estonian republic, tried to make the presidency a more forceful office, partially through use of the position as a bully pulpit and partially through his own initiatives in the international arena. For example, without prior approval of the parliament and at his own initiative, Meri negotiated and signed an agreement with Russia

over removal of the latter's troops from Estonian soil. However, such acts are the exception rather than the rule, due to constitutional restrictions.

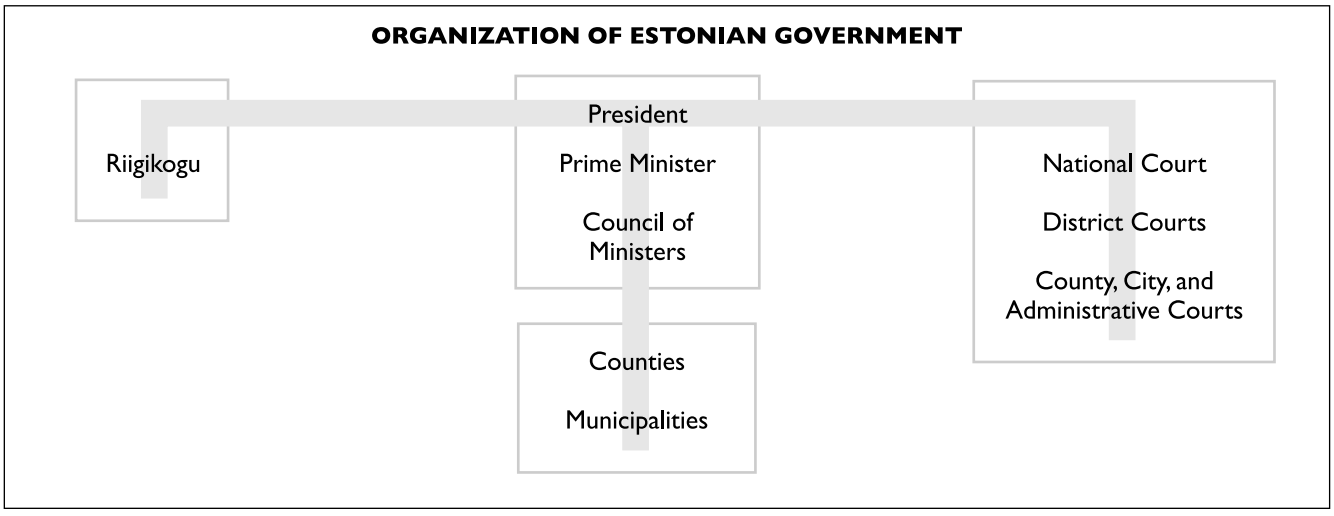
The prime minister and his deputy ministers are the heads of the government bureaucracy. The prime minister and the Council of Ministers are thus as important as, if not more important than, the president within the executive branch. In fact, by the constitution, the prime minister is the chief executive. The biggest responsibilities of the prime minister and the Council of Ministers are the day-to-day operations of government and implementation of policy. The prime minister and the Council of Ministers answer for their actions to the parliament rather than to the president; when called upon they have to appear before parliament to answer questions and provide requested information.

While Estonia's post-Socialist democracy has been fairly stable, its top leadership has not; nearly all prime ministers have served for two years or less. The first prime minister, Mart Laar, held office from October 1992 (after the presidential and parliamentary elections) to October 1994, when two scandals (involving a transfer of a large sum of money to Chechnya and arms sales to Israel) forced him out of office. Laar's government enacted tax cuts and fiscal discipline that made Estonia the economic miracle of the former Soviet republics. An economics minister resigned after it became apparent he could not handle his responsibilities, the defense minister in 1993 allowed Russian troops to enter the country during negotiations with Russia over troop withdrawals, and a law on noncitizens provoked severe criticism from Russians in Estonia and from Western countries (the law would have required noncitizens, such as ethnic Russians, to reapply every two years for residency permits without guarantee of reacceptance).

In 1994 Laar was replaced by Andres Tarand, who held the office until the March 1995 parliamentary elections. At that point Meri proposed Tiit Vahi as prime minister. Vahi's tenure was marked by problems with parliament: lack of confidence in the economics minister, Liina Tonisson, and a scandal involving bugged telephone conversations between prominent politicians. Vahi resigned but was soon reappointed by Meri and remained in office until 1997. Märt Siimann took over as prime minister but in 1999 was replaced by Laar at the head of a center-right coalition in the parliament. In 2002 Laar resigned, and Siim Kallas of the Reform Party took over for one year, after which Juhan Parts became prime minister at the head of the major electoral victory of the new Res Publica party. In April 2005 Parts resigned following a no-confidence vote in parliament. Andrus Ansip, who had been economics minister in the Parts government, became prime minister.

LEGISLATURE

In Estonia the parliament (Riigikogu) is the supreme political power. A unicameral body composed of 101 delegates, parliament wields the power of legislation. Policymaking is delegated to the prime minister and government, but the government is beholden to parliament and must account for its actions and results before the legislative branch. Passing legislation requires a majority of 51 votes; legislation may be introduced by the president or through the parliament. The parliament also controls the purse strings, as the state budget requires majority support within



the Riigikogu before it is official. Members are directly elected and serve four-year terms.

The Riigikogu exercises control over the prime minister through votes of no confidence. However, if the parliament is too strongly taken to infighting and cannot pass a state budget or cannot approve a prime minister after "prolonged delay," the president can dissolve the parliament and call for new elections. Further, the president can also dissolve the parliament after a vote of no confidence in the prime minister and cabinet. However, because the parliament elects the president, the president must take care that the incoming parliament will not be inclined to seek revenge in the next presidential "election."

JUDICIARY

As for all former Soviet republics, the Estonian judicial system is undergoing change, which is not surprising considering the judiciary was subordinate to the Communist Party and requires the laws and procedures of an independent court in a democracy. The court system currently follows a continental, rather than an Anglo-American, model: Courts are arbitrators between parties rather than interpreters. Legal interpretations are not set by courts, and precedent does not play an important role in Estonian jurisprudence. This means every case has to be argued from the basis of the law and context of conflict, rather than on the basis of past decisions.

Estonia has three levels of courts. The first level is local, for cities and rural regions. The next level, the district courts, is for appeals from the local level. Both levels decide on criminal cases and on legal conflicts between parties. Appeals may be made up the hierarchy. At the top of the pyramid is the National Court, which decides on constitutional issues and has the final say on appeals that have worked their way up from the local and district levels.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

With its capital in Tallinn, Estonia is comprised of 15 counties (*maakonnad*), each of which is run by county councils elected for three-year terms.

The Electoral System

According to the constitution, the president is chosen by the parliament. To win, a presidential candidate must receive two-thirds of the votes cast by parliamentary deputies (that is, 68 votes). Parliament has three rounds to select a president; if no candidate receives the necessary two-thirds support, then an electoral college decides. This electoral college is composed of the 101 parliamentary delegates plus 273 representatives of local governments.

The exception to this procedure was in 1992, when the first post-Soviet Estonian president was to be selected by popular vote. In this case a candidate had to receive more than 50 percent of votes cast on the first ballot; otherwise the top two vote getters would face a runoff in the parliament. In 1992 none of the four candidates received a majority; Arnold Ruutel (a former Communist and head of the party Secure Home, the successors to the Communist Party) and Lennart Meri (a former writer) received 42.7 percent and 28.8 percent of votes cast. Hence, both candidates went to the parliament, which proceeded to select Meri (the second-place candidate) as president; Meri received 59 votes in parliament to Ruutel's 31. (Apparently, several parliamentary groups had agreed ahead of time to select any candidate except the Communist candidate, Ruutel.)

In August 1996 Ruutel and Meri squared off again for the presidency, with the vote this time within the parliament. After three rounds, neither candidate could reach the required 68-vote threshold, and the electoral college convened and eventually chose Meri. In the 2001 presidential race Arnold Ruutel returned and won. A former Communist elite as president did not disturb the public much, however, as Estonia's leftist parties had, like those in Eastern Europe, moved from Communism toward social democracy.

The Party System

Political parties in Estonia, as in the other Baltic states, have had a more difficult time in forming than in other post-Soviet states. Parties have been forming and reforming, creating and breaking coalitions and parliamentary factions, making solidification of a small number of parties difficult. Few parties have any history and thus any legacies, nostalgia, or party apparatus to organize and maintain both image and discipline. Even the parties that had some history, such as the Pro Patria and the Estonian National Independence (ENIP) parties, which were active in anti-Soviet mobilization in the late 1980s, suffered in local elections in 1993 and parliamentary elections in 1995. This reduced any impetus to solidification

or hegemony these parties may have had. The Communist Party did not try to be a direct descendant, as in other post-Communist nations; further, former Communist functionaries are spread throughout other parties as well.

Another reason parties have not solidified in Estonia is that voters in Estonia do not readily identify with parties; they instead identify more closely with candidates who have a "clean" past, meaning untainted by Soviet history. Voting is for individual candidates rather than for parties; while the electoral system does favor party formation through elections by rewarding parties whose candidates do well, the individual basis of voting does not appear to impress party identification on voters' minds. Finally, as in the United States, Estonian parties do not appear to differ strongly in their political platforms, so that promarket reforms, independence, and integration into Europe (through NATO and the EU) have been common goals among most platforms.

Major Political Parties

Estonia's parties, like post-Socialist parties generally, have been developing. Grassroots structures are weak, and parties continually merge or emerge from splits, so the landscape is not entirely stable. However, the vast majority of parties are not radical: even ethnic or nationalist sentiments are more muted than in radical nationalist parties elsewhere. The more important parties have Estonian members and orientation; a few minor Russian-oriented parties exist, supported by segments of the Russian-Estonian population, but their representation is insignificant.

REFORM PARTY

(Eesti Reformierakond)

The Reform Party is a pro-reform liberal party supported by entrepreneurs. In 2003 it joined with the Union for the Republic Party and the Estonian People's Party to form the ruling coalition. Following the resignation of Prime Minister Juhan Parts in 2005, Andrus Ansip of the Reform Party formed a new coalition government with the Estonian People's Party and the Center Party.

UNION FOR THE REPUBLIC PARTY

(Res Publica)

The 2003 parliamentary elections saw the rise of a new party, Union for the Republic (Res Publica). Res Publica has conservative and populist leanings. In 2003 the party received 24.6 percent of the vote and 28 seats (equal to Center Party) in parliament. It joined with two other parties of different views, the Reform Party and the Estonian People's Party, to form the ruling coalition. It had dropped out of the ruling coalition by 2005, however.

ESTONIAN PEOPLE'S PARTY

(Eestimaa Rahvaliit)

The Estonian People's Party is a moderately leftist party supported by directors of state farms. In 2003 it joined with the Union for the Republic and the Reform Party to form the ruling coalition. It remained part of the ruling coalition following the formation of a new coalition government by Andrus Ansip in 2005.

CENTER PARTY

(Eesti Keskerakond)

Another centrist party is the populist Center Party, created by a merger of social and liberal democrats trying to legitimize their left-leaning ideology by appearing moderate. Center Party ran into troubles in the middle 1990s when Edgar Savisaar became party chairman after personal scandals, a move that caused many party elites to abandon the party. Nonetheless, the Center Party has returned to prominence. It has more than 2,000 members and received the most votes in the 2003 parliamentary elections (25.4 percent). Their moderate image is as much from their mix of left-wing and right-wing ideas as from moderation in economic change. In 2005 the party joined the ruling coalition along with the Reform Party and the Estonian People's Party.

PRO PATRIA

(Isamaaliit)

The most important group within Mart Laar's right-wing ruling coalition in the early 1990s formed Pro Patria (Isamaaliit, "Fatherland Union") in 1995, with participation from the Estonian National Independence Party. While Pro Patria maintained the semi-nationalist rhetoric of its roots, it was hurt by the severe economic reform policies its members had enacted in the early 1990s. They have had better success recently in local-level elections. At present the party has less than 1,400 members. It won 7.3 percent of the vote and seven seats in parliament in the 2003 elections.

MODERATES PARTY

(Mõõdukad)

In 1992 the Social Democrats and Rural Center Party merged to form the Moderates Party (Mõõdukad). Their platform generally calls for moderate economic reform with some support for agriculture. Their electoral and popular support has dropped in recent years. The party won 7 percent of the vote and six seats in parliament in the 2003 elections.

Minor Political Parties

The strength of Estonian nationalist opposition to Soviet occupation fairly well guaranteed that a formal Communist party would not exist in Estonia, and Communist, Socialist, and labor parties are weak to nonexistent. However, Communist politicians toned down their rhetoric and adapted social democratic rhetoric. Leftist parties had some electoral success in the 1990s, but recently they have received no representation in parliament. Among the smaller leftist parties are the agricultural party Rural Union (Eesti maalit) and the Estonian Democratic Justice Union (Eesti Demokraatlik Õigluslitt).

Smaller parties on the right include the Estonian National Independence Party (Eesti Rahvusliku Sõltumatuse Partei, ENIP). This party was formed in 1988 as a popular movement against Soviet occupation and domination. Factionalism plagued ENIP, and its electoral success flagged in the 1990s.

Other Political Forces

In the coming years, Estonia's nascent membership in the European Union will likely come to play an important role in the country's political system and culture. However, it is too soon yet to know how the EU's influence will impact the country.

The military does not interfere in the country's political system.

National Prospects

Estonia's economy is strong, and most political parties appear to hover around a middle ground, sharing the conviction that Estonia needs economic reform and should be part of Europe; differences involve the means to these ends, political conflict being more a function of political ambition and normal politics than of ideological differences. A major triumph for Estonian politics and diplomacy was acceptance into NATO and the EU in 2004. While this has annoyed Russia, no major diplomatic tensions between the two countries have emerged as a result. The opening of new markets to Estonia will further enhance trade and help its economic development. While citizenship and ethnic problems, particularly concerning Russians living in Estonia, remain a sore spot, the government does not purposely antagonize the Russian population; while there have been moments of intolerance or prejudice, these have been minor and rare. With practices of democracy institutionalizing and with market recovery under way, Estonia may serve as the textbook case of how to build democracy and a market.

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FEDERAL DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF ETHIOPIA

(Ityopp'ya Federalawi Demokrasiyawi Ripeblik)

By Jon Abbink, Ph.D.
Revised by Daniel G. Ogbaharya, Ph.D.



Ethiopia is the oldest independent state in Africa; save only for an Italian occupation from 1936 to 1941, it was never a colony. It was an autocratic monarchy under Haile Selassie until he was deposed by military rebels in September 1974. Although much respected as an elder statesman by other African leaders, Haile Selassie had lost much of his support because of his failure to deal with the Eritrean and Somali secessionist movements and with the country's chronic economic underdevelopment and rural exploitation. Ethiopia suffered under periodic centrifugal (regional or sometimes ethnic) tendencies. Haile Selassie's two constitutions (of 1931 and of 1955), while creating a first legal framework of a country in dire need of modernization and reform, did not create an adequate basis for the construction of a stable national state or of democratic representation of the population at large.

Ethiopia's history over the last 30 years, especially since the military came to power in 1974, has been marked by violence. This has been evidenced not only by armed struggle against the attempted secession of the province of Eritrea (1961–91) and against Somalian irredentism in the west (in the 1977–78 war), but also by local revolts, rebellions, and urban terror.

The revolution erupting in February 1974 was based on widespread civil discontent. But hopes for a democratic process of change were dashed when the military "hijacked" the revolution in September 1974. After this date, and especially since December 1974, when the first serious shootout within the rural provisional military council (Derg) occurred, the revolutionary process became dictatorial and violent. Civilian political parties and occupational organizations were prohibited or suppressed. Political opponents from other leftist revolutionary parties such as the All-Ethiopian Socialist Movement and the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Party were ruthlessly eliminated in a "Red Terror" period (1977–79), during which arbitrary arrests, torture, and executions were the order of the day. This period caused deep and still-unhealed wounds in Ethiopian society.

The regime of Mengistu Haile Mariam had its international allies in the "Socialist" camp, especially Cuba, North Korea, and the Soviet Union, which supplied arms, experts, and ideological advice on party building and administration. In the course of years, Mengistu increasingly became a dogmatic Marxist-Leninist out of touch with Ethiopian realities. The villagization effort, the collectivization of agriculture, and the "nationalities" policy all were copied from the Soviet model. The change in ideological orientation in March 1990, under the pressure of the domestic economic and military crises, came too late to prevent the demise of a thoroughly discredited regime.

The Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF)—whose core party, Tigrayan People's Liberation Front (TPLF), was also a carrier of Communist ideals in the 1970s—had abandoned this ideology (especially in the economic sense) in the year before its entry into Addis Ababa, although there is still a

leadership core of the TPLF nominally referred to as the Marxist-Leninist League of Tigray.

Ethiopia was proclaimed a federal democratic republic on August 21, 1995, after a four-year transitional phase that followed the overthrow of the Marxist-Leninist dictatorship of Mengistu Haile Mariam on May 28, 1991. During the phase of transition, which took more than four years instead of the originally declared period of two and a half years, the groundwork for a new political system was laid. The Transitional Government of Ethiopia (TGE) active in that period was led by the EPRDF, the dominant resistance movement emanating from the northern Tigray region.

After its takeover of power (coinciding with that of its ally, the Eritrean Peoples' Liberation Front [EPLF], in Eritrea), the EPRDF initiated the transition by calling a National Conference of Peace and Stability in June 1991 in Addis Ababa. Most major rebel movements and ethnoregional groups were represented. The conference led to a Transitional Charter, which became the supreme law for the period of transition, and to the appointment of a president, a Council of Ministers, and a (nonelected) Council of Representatives with 87 members taken from the various ethnic and political movements. Groups said to oppose the EPRDF (those accused of planning "violent opposition") were excluded. During this period, the president, the EPRDF leadership, and the Council of Ministers were the dominant players.

Meles Zenawi, the president of the Tigrayan People's Liberation Front within the EPRDF, became the first prime minister of Ethiopia in 1995, following the adoption of a new constitution in 1994. He subsequently won reelection to the post in 2000 and 2005.

The System of Government

The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia is formally a parliamentary system with periodic elections. The government structure was outlined in the constitution of 1994.

EXECUTIVE

Executive power lies not in the hands of the Council of Ministers but in those of the prime minister and his important body of advisers and special committees within the prime minister's office. The executive branch has the authority to appoint and ban members of the judiciary and the legislature. In practice, it also can overrule decisions and proposals of the Council of Ministers. There is also a president, although this position is weak compared to the prime minister.

LEGISLATURE

The bicameral legislature includes the House of People's Representatives (535 seats) and the House of Federation (117 seats). Members of the former are directly elected and serve five-year terms, while members of the latter are appointed by the regional assemblies of the nine regional states. The House of Federation is a largely ceremonial body with little lawmaking capacity, and it meets infrequently. Ethnic groups are represented here on the basis of their numerical strength nationwide.

The last national elections for the House of People's Representatives were held in May 2005, and gave the EPRDF the majority of the seats (360) and the opposition 175. The elections were marred by violence and charges of fraud, and in fact several electoral districts re-ran their elections.

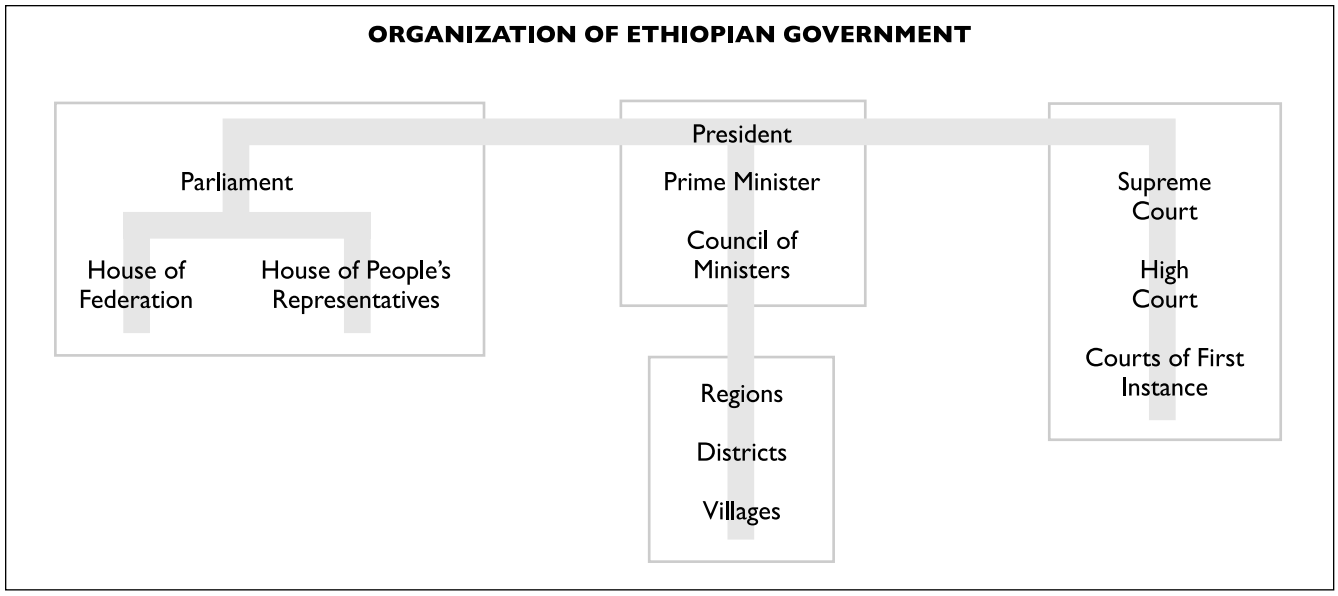
JUDICIARY

The legal system has also been reformed, mainly in its personnel, but it still functions partly on the basis of structures of the previous regimes. There are local courts (*woreda*), courts of first instance, a High Court, and a Supreme Court consisting of a president and two other judges. The Supreme Court has appellate jurisdiction but also supervises juridical proceedings throughout the country.

The judiciary in general is susceptible to informal political pressure and cannot be considered fully independent of the government. The prime minister appoints ranking members of the Federal Supreme Court, namely the president and vice president, with the approval of the House of People's Representatives. The Federal Judicial Administrative Council selects other federal judges.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The Mengistu regime had reorganized Ethiopia in 1987 into 24 new regions and five autonomous regions, but the FDRE has again rearranged the map in line with its intention to make regions predominantly inhabited by one majority ethnic group the basis of administration. The first map, which was drawn in October 1991 and only slightly amended by the Council of Representatives in June 1992, became effective that same year.



It designated 14 new regions, called *killils,* including the "special status" cities of Harar and Addis Ababa. In 1994 five southern *killils* were merged, yielding the present nine regions. A new special region was the city of Dire Dawa. Within the *killils,* zones were distinguished, in turn divided into districts (*woredas*), many of which again have the old boundaries that were abolished in the 1987 reform.

In urban areas, the EPRDF government has worked through the existing structure of the urban dwellers' associations (*k'ebeles*), of which there are several thousand. They have also changed all personnel of the old regime. The *k'ebeles* were initially under the authority of the newly instituted "peace and stability committees," but they have now merged with them. In the countryside (housing 85 percent of the population) the existing peasants' associations, which were state conduits of administrative and judicial authority, were also kept in place, but again with new, loyal appointees. In addition, on the local and regional levels many ethnic political associations have been created, meant to become representative organs of the ethnic groups.

The Electoral System

Ethiopia has put in place an electoral system under which parties and independent candidates are in principle allowed to run for office. The system is, however, not to be compared with a Western liberal democracy. Ethiopia's system is very intricate. Broad national parties are not registered, and elections are held in every ethnoregion, where only parties that have an ethnic basis there can run. This means that an Oromo party could not run in the Tigray region. Thus, the system is not nationwide with proportional representation but is based on district or regional parties that are allied to the existing EPRDF power and party structure. This system, at one remove, tends to secure the reproduction of the dominant power structure.

Ethiopia's democratic system and civic culture have not yet taken root. Moreover, they are kept in check by the government's frequent action against trade unions, the teacher's association, and the independent press. Non-EPRDF parties and candidates are often actively discouraged from running, and several important opposition groups have opted out of the elections, complaining of violent intimidation of activists and voters and interference with party activities, especially in the rural areas.

The Party System

Under the dictatorial, one-party system of the previous regime, two parties dominated Ethiopian politics. From 1984 to 1990 it was the Workers' Party of Ethiopia (WPE), and from 1990 to 1991, the Ethiopian Democratic Unity Party. After the regime was overthrown in 1991 a plethora of ethnoregional groups emerged.

Some of these already existed, and several, such as the parties, or "self-organizations," of various ethnic groups like the Gurage, Hadiya, Kämbata, Gedeo, and Käfa, were founded after 1991. There were at least 100

groups in existence in 1994. Since that time some parties have disappeared or become dormant, while others have tried to build up their organizational structure. However, opposition groups have been hampered by obstruction from the government. They are also prohibited from receiving financial support from outside Ethiopia. Those that are EPRDF allies are partly funded by the government and/or the EPRDF.

Major Political Parties

ETHIOPIAN PEOPLE'S REVOLUTIONARY DEMOCRATIC FRONT (EPRDF)

The EPRDF is by far the dominant party in Ethiopia. It was the dominant resistance group prior to independence, and it has been the dominant party since that point. It is essentially a coalition driven by one dominant faction, the Tigrayan People's Liberation Front (TPLF).

Within the EPRDF there are the coalition partners of the TPLF as well as EPRDF-affiliated parties. The coalition parties within the EPRDF include the TPLF, the Amhara National Democratic Movement (ANDM), the Oromo People's Democratic Organization (OPDO), and the Southern Ethiopian People's Democratic Front (SEPDF).

The EPRDF-affiliated parties refer to the regional ethnic-based parties whose establishment was facilitated by EPRDF to consolidate its position within the federal power structure. These parties include Afar National Democratic Front (ANDF), Somali People's Democratic Party (SPDP), Harari National League (HNL), Benishangul/Gumuz People's Democratic Unity Front (BGPDUF), and Gambella People's Democratic Party (GPDP).

In 2001 the TPLF faced serious divisions within its top leadership concerning the handling of the border dispute with Eritrea. A dissent faction composed of 12 senior members of the central committee of TPLF emerged, advocating a tougher policy toward Eritrea, while the party chairman and his group resorted to negotiations as opposed to military engagement in resolving the border dispute. However, observers believe that the primary cause of the split was the growing ideological divergence within the TPLF itself. This internal division might have undermined the power base of the TPLF and its overall influence within the EPRDF.

Despite this internal friction, the EPRDF and its allies won 360 seats in parliament in the May 2005 elections, paving the way for Meles Zenawi of the EPRDF to serve his third consecutive term as prime minister.

Minor Political Parties

The opposition parties include the Southern Ethiopian People's Democratic Coalition (SEPDC), Council of Alternative Forces for Peace and Democracy in Ethiopia (CAFPDE), All-Amhara People's Organization (AAPO), All-Ethiopia Unity Party (AEUP), Oromo National Congress (ONC), and Ethiopian Democratic Party (EDP). The main difference on political program between the EPRDF and the opposition parties revolves around issues of land and ethnic federalism. Some of the opposition parties vehemently criticize the ethnic-based federal system and call for geographical federal arrangement, while most denounce the EPRDF land policy that prohibits private land ownership.

Other Political Forces

ARMED GROUPS AND PARTIES IN EXILE

Ethiopian political parties also include parties in exile and armed resistance groups operating within the country. They claim the EPRDF government is illegitimate and mobilize the people against what they think is the ethnic dictatorship of EPRDF. The famous Diaspora political party is the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Party (EPRP). The armed opposition groups include the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF), the Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF), and the Ethiopian People's Patriotic Front (EPPF). The most significant of these armed groups is the OLF. Since the early months of 2002 the OLF has intensified its violent struggle against the government through frequent infiltration into the southern regions of Ethiopia from the Sudan and erratic bombings in the capital, Addis Ababa.

RELIGIOUS GROUPS

The country is nearly equally divided between Ethiopian Orthodox Christians (about 40 percent) and Muslims (about 45 percent), with smaller groups of other religions (Catholics, Evangelical Protestants, and traditional religions, mainly in the south and west).

While Amharic-speaking Christians of various backgrounds have dominated the Ethiopian government for a long period (as exemplified in the Haile Selassie era, when Ethiopian identity was projected as a largely Christian one), religion as such has never played a major organizing role in politics. No parties or pressure groups were based on an exclusively religious constituency. This was due in part to suppression of religion (alongside regional or ethnic identity) as a political force by both Haile Selassie and the Derg, but also to an emphasis on political programs of development and modernization held to apply to the country as a whole. In the final phases of the anti-Derg military struggle (1987–91), ethnic and religious elements became stronger as ideologies of opposition.

National Prospects

Ethiopia remains mired in poverty and beset by political and ethnic divisions. Its border war with Eritrea between 1998 and 2000 caused many deaths and seriously damaged the already weak economy. Since the fragile peace agreement was signed in 2000, the government has been trying to rebuild the country's infrastructure and find long-term solutions to the chronic problem of food shortages. In 2004 the government began a program of moving some two million people out of the dry agricultural highlands in the eastern part the country.

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REPUBLIC OF THE FIJI ISLANDS

(Matanitu Tu-Vaka-i-koya ko Viti)

By Eugene Ogan, Ph.D.
Revised by Michael Levy, Ph.D.



The Republic of the Fiji Islands consists of some 330 islands, about 100 of which are inhabited. Slightly more than half of Fiji's population of some 850,000 people (2005 estimate) are indigenous Fijians, and about two-fifths are Indians. This represents a shift since 1987 because many Indians chose to emigrate after the coups.

In 1987 Fiji experienced two coups, which were the first in the history of the Pacific Islands. Since 1987 there has been political uncertainty in Fiji, with another attempted coup in 2000 (during which the government was held hostage for several weeks) and political conflict common. All of these developments were related to conflict between ethnic Fijians (*Taukei*) and the descendants of indentured laborers who had come from India to work in sugar plantations. A constitution was adopted in 1990 that established the dominance of the Fijians, but in 1997, under international pressure, it was amended to establish a new multiracial system.

The System of Government

In theory Fiji is a parliamentary republic with a bicameral legislature. The political conflicts that have developed since independence was gained in 1970, most particularly the coups, have been triggered by Fijian fears of losing their political preeminence in the face of a growing Indian population. A Constitution Review Commission was established in 1995 to create a system that would deal with these issues appropriately. Their recommendations were adopted unanimously by parliament in July 1997. The structure described here is based on these recommendations, although the provisions have yet to be made completely operational.

EXECUTIVE

The president is head of state and must be an indigenous Fijian. The vice president must be from a different ethnic community. The Great Council of Chiefs nominates three to five candidates for president; each nominee is required in turn to nominate a running mate. An electoral college consisting of the Great Council and members of the upper house of parliament selects one of the pairs for a term of five years. They may be reelected for a second term, but no more. The president's role is parallel to that fulfilled in the past by the governor-general.

LEGISLATURE

Parliament consists of two houses, a lower house known as the House of Representatives (Vale) and an upper house called the Senate (Seniti). The lower house, where all legislation must originate, has 71 members: 46 seats are reserved on a communal basis for Fijians (23)and Indians (19), and a seat is seat is set aside for a representative from the island of Rotuma (whose inhabitants are culturally distinct

from other Fijians), as well as three others for other ethnicities. Only members of the relevant ethnic communities can vote in the reserved-seat contests. There are also 26 seats contested on "open rolls." The upper house is appointed and comprises roughly 32 members, about two-fifths of whom are appointed by the president on the advice of the Great Council, about one-fourth each on the advice of the prime minister and the leader of the opposition, and one appointed on the advice of the Council of the Rotuma. Members of the Senate serve five-year terms, although the body can be dissolved by the president acting on the advice of the prime minister.

Effective power of government lies in the lower house. The president is to appoint a prime minister from that house who appears to command the support of a majority of its members. In turn the prime minister recommends to the president a cabinet drawn from elected members of parliament. The cabinet is expected to be multiracial and to reflect the political composition of the legislature, with the prime minister inviting into the cabinet any party that has at least one-tenth of the seats in the House of Representatives; though the prime minister in 2001, Laisenia Qarase, did invite the opposition into the cabinet, there was disagreement over the constitutional provisions that have required judicial intervention (with the Supreme Court ruling in 2003 that the government had to include ethnic Indians from the Fiji Labour Party in the cabinet, though the following year the Labour Party refused cabinet seats, instead favoring opposition). Not more than one-quarter of the cabinet should be from the upper house.

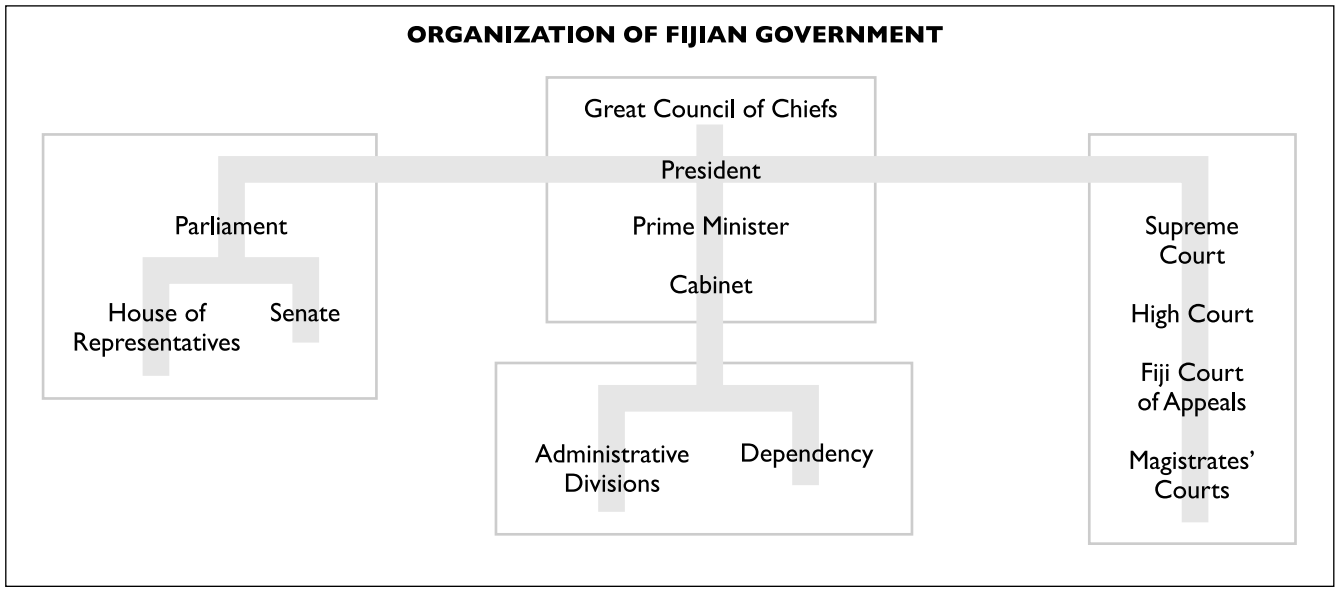
The Great Council of Chiefs is a distinctive feature of Fijian government that acknowledges both tradition and Fijian ethnic identity. It consists of more than 50 members, with three each from the country's 14 provinces, three from Rotuma, and others appointed by the Minister for Fijian affairs. The president, the heads of three traditionally recognized confederate communities of indigenous Fijians, and the minister for Fijian affairs serve ex officio. Elected and appointed members serve for three years. The Council has particular responsibility for all matters relating to ethnic Fijians.

JUDICIARY

Judicial power in the republic is independent of other government authority and is vested in a Supreme Court, a Court of Appeal, and a High Court. Appointment to these courts is by the president, following the recommendations of an independent Judicial Services Commission. Parliament may establish other courts by law.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Fiji is divided into four administrative divisions, each of which is headed by a commissioner. The island of Rotuma is a dependency and has a degree of autonomy that the administrative divisions do not. Eight cities also have their own city councils or boards. There are also 14 provinces, each of which is divided into smaller units, including the village, which is the lowest level of governance.



The Electoral System

All citizens age 21 or older may vote. Voter registration and voting are both compulsory. Failure to do either may result in a fine. About four-fifths of Fijians regularly participate in national elections. Fiji uses an alternative vote (AV) system in which voters cast ballots show their preferences, by rank ordering their choices.

The Party System

Political parties in Fiji have traditionally been divided along ethnic or racial lines.

Major Political Parties

Fiji has four major political parties. The Fiji Labour Party, which headed the opposition in the early 21st century, was the largest party, winning more than one-third of the first preference votes, though it captured fewer seats than the second-largest party, the United Fiji Party, which won 26 percent of the first preference votes in 2001 but 45 percent of the overall seats in the House of Representatives. The Fiji Labour Party is a multiracial party with support primarily from Indians and Fijians. The United Fiji Party draws its strength almost exclusively from ethnic Fijians. The Conservative Alliance (Matanitu Vanua), which generally wins votes only from among Fijians, and the National Federation Party each won about 10 percent of the vote in recent national elections. After the 2001 election the government was formed by the United Fiji Party and the Conservative Alliance.

Minor Political Parties

Minor parties in Fiji include the Fijian Political Party (an ethnic Fijian party that governed Fiji from 1992 to 1999 but has since been relegated to minor party status), the New Labour Unity Party (multiracial), and the United General Party (a centrist multiracial party).

Other Political Forces

The conflict between ethnic Fijians and Indo-Fijians continues to exert a major influence on the country's political system. Also important is the country's association with the British Commonwealth. After the 1987 coups Fiji was expelled from the Commonwealth, and major benefactors suspended aid. With the introduction of the multiracial constitution in 1997, Fiji was readmitted to the Commonwealth. Australia is the country's leading trading partner. The country has also received increasing assistance from China.

National Prospects

Although the new constitution was designed to meet the problems of the past decades, the first elections in May 1999 precipitated yet another coup just a year later. Like the early uprisings, this was carried out in the name of indigenous Fijian interest, against those of Indo-Fijians. A year of political and social unrest followed, and leaders of the coup were imprisoned. Laisinia Qarase of the United Fiji Party became prime minister, replacing the coalition led by the Fiji Labor Party that had been overthrown by the coup. The next election is due by 2006, but it is clear that Fiji's political problems are not over.

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REPUBLIC OF FINLAND

(Suomen Tasavalta)

By Martin F. Farrell, Ph.D.
Revised by Vasilis Margaras



The Republic of Finland occupies about 130,000 square miles and has a population exceeding 5 million people. Finns make up about nine-tenths of the population; the largest ethnolinguistic minority group are Swedes, who comprise about 6 percent of the population. There are also several thousand Sami (Lapps) living in the far north of the country. The vast majority of the population, nearly seven-eights of the population, adheres to the Evangelical Lutheran Church, while most of the rest who consider themselves religious are affiliated with the Greek Orthodox Church of Finland. About one-eight of the population is nonreligious.

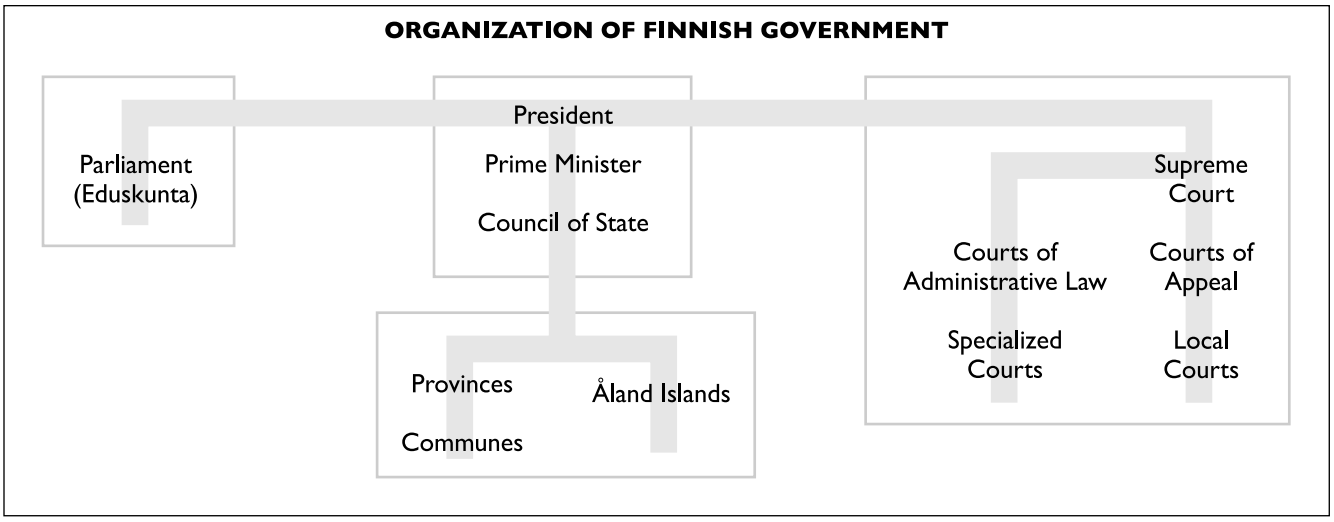
The System of Government

Finland is a presidential-parliamentary republic and a unitary state with limited local self-government and one autonomous province, the Åland Islands. Finland's present constitution was adopted in 1919, establishing the country as a constitutional republic, and it includes several subsequent Fundamental Laws and Amendments. Finland was ruled as a colony of Sweden between 1368 and 1809, when the Treaty of Tilsit resulting from the Napoleanic Wars made Finland a Grand Duchy of Russia. Finland was granted independence from Russia following the Bolshevik revolution, but this was immediately followed by a bloody, class-based civil war between Red and White forces. With German intervention on the side of the Whites in 1918, the bulk of the Reds fled to the Soviet Union, and the Finnish Republic was established the following year.

EXECUTIVE

Primary executive authority is vested in the president of the republic, who also serves as head of state. The president's broad powers include the appointment and dismissal of the State Council (cabinet), including the prime minister, as well as other important executive, judicial, and even clerical officers; the dissolution of parliament; the presentation of most bills for parliamentary consideration; the ratification or veto of all legislation; significant decree powers; supreme command of the armed forces; and leadership of the nation's foreign policy.

Although the Finnish presidency is among the most powerful in Europe, the Finnish system does attempt to place some checks on presidential power. All presidential decisions are supposed to be made in State Council meetings, emerging as council decisions and linked to parliamentary approval by the requirement that the cabinet retain parliamentary confidence. Presidential decisions made in the face of cabinet opposition have been quite rare. Also, presidential decree powers are limited largely to administrative matters and cannot involve a change in law, except in emergency conditions, when parliament may vastly



expand these powers. Even then, however, parliament retains the authority to overturn such decrees, and it has granted such powers only for limited periods, generally one year. Similarly, parliament can override a presidential veto by a simple majority vote, but only after an intervening general election. Such overrides have only rarely occurred, fewer than 10 times between 1919 and the early 21st century.

Despite these checks, the president retains far more authority than other heads of state in parliamentary systems. Of crucial importance is his or her power to form and dismiss governments. These governments need not receive a parliamentary vote of confidence at their inception, and they may be dismissed by the president even if they enjoy the support of a parliamentary majority. The president is not bound by election results. During the 1970s President Urho Kekkonen continued to appoint center-left coalition governments even though those parties steadily lost ground to the conservative parties in Eduskunta (parliament) elections.

The strength of the individuals who have held the office has also contributed to the development of its authority. Several of Finland's presidents, including K. J. Stahlberg (1919–25), Carl Gustaf Mannerheim (1944–46), Juho Paasikivi (1946–56), Urho Kekkonen (1956–82), and Mauno Koivisto (1982–94), were towering political figures of their respective eras. Through the 1960s and 1970s, for example, Kekkonen's leadership of domestic policy, especially in overseeing rapid industrial growth, so enhanced his prestige that by 1978 all six of Finland's largest parties endorsed his reelection for a fifth term. The popularity of his successor, Social Democrat Mauno Koivisto, was initially so great that commentators in the mid-1980s spoke of a "Koivisto phenomenon."

The only constitutional qualification for the office is that the Finnish president must be a native-born citizen of Finland. He or she can be nominated by any political party holding at least one seat in the parliament or by a petition signed by 20,000 eligible voters. Until 1988 the president was elected to a six-year term by a 300-member electoral college, which itself was selected by popular vote based upon proportional representation. During this period, the electors were not legally bound to support any particular candidate, and while no formal discussion was allowed, tough and extended negotiations between ballots frequently occurred. This process, in turn, made it difficult to defeat incumbent presidents. Since there were no limits on the number of terms a president could serve, relatively long tenure in the office has been the rule. Regular constitutional procedures for the election of the president have sometimes been bypassed. Most recently, in January 1973, the parliament voted 170 to 28 (just over the five-sixths majority needed) to postpone the 1974 presidential contest, giving Kekkonen a four-year extension in office to allow him to conduct lengthy economic negotiations with the European Community. Earlier, in 1919, 1944, and 1946, the president was elected by the parliament, and in 1940 and 1943 the president was chosen by the same electoral college that had convened in 1937.

In 1987 a two-stage election procedure was enacted, but it was applied only in the 1988 election. In the first stage, voters chose directly among the legally nominated candidates but at the same time selected 301 electors, who would elect the president if none of the candidates won a majority of the popular vote.

The current election procedure took effect in 1991 and was used for the first time in the 1994 election. If only one presidential candidate is designated, that candidate becomes president without an election. If there are competing candidates, the first round of voting takes place on the third Sunday in January of an election year. If one of the candidates receives a majority of the popular vote, that candidate is elected president. Otherwise, a second round is held on the third Sunday after the first round between the two candidates; whoever receives the most votes is elected president. In the event of a tie, the election is resolved by lot. The Council of State confirms the outcome of the election and, if necessary, conducts the drawing of lots. In the same electoral reform of 1991, the president is limited to two consecutive terms.

The State Council (Valtioneuvosto), or cabinet, consists of a prime minister, deputy prime minister, and no more than 15 other ministers. Its primary functions are to prepare legislation for submission to the parliament and to supervise the implementation and administration of policies by the civil service. More than 90 percent of Finland's enacted bills originate with the State Council, whose legislative program is worked out in cooperation with the president. The State Council occupies a precarious position: it is appointed and dismissed by the president but also needs the confidence of the fractious, multiparty parliament. As a result Finland averaged about one government per year over the first 65 years of the republic. However, government durability has seen marked improvement in recent years; the non-Socialist coalition that left office after the 1995 elections was the third consecutive coalition to complete its four-year term. The abolition in 1992 of several antiquated supermajority voting rules in favor of simple majoritarianism should further contribute to this trend.

Nearly all Finnish governments have been coalitions of three or more parties. Between the end of World War II and 1966 center-right coalitions prevailed. Between 1966 and 1983 governments became almost exclusively center-left in composition (the "Red-Green Alliance"). The right-wing Finnish Rural Party was brought into the government in 1983, and in 1987 the center-right coalition reasserted itself for two terms.

Due to the strength of the presidency and the principle of collegiality (equality of all ministers) the Finnish prime ministry is weaker than that of most parliamentary systems. The prime minister leads the day-to-day work of the State Council and serves as the government's spokesperson in parliamentary debates and interpellations but does not have the authority to command his or her ministers, that power being reserved to the president.

Martti Ahtisaari, the nominee of the Social Democratic Party (SDP), was a diplomat and negotiator with the United Nations and won considerable acclaim for his successful mediation of Namibian independence. Of the 11 candidates running in the first round on January 16, 1994, seven were nominated by parties and four by voters' association (VA) petitions, Ahtisaari won 25.9 percent of the vote. In the ensuing runoff election held three weeks later, Ahtisaari won with 53.9 percent over Elisabeth Rehn, the sitting defense minister and nominee of the Swedish People's Party, who received 46.6 percent.

In 2000 Ahtisaari did not run for reelection. In the first round of that election Tarja Halonen received 40 percent of the vote, while Esko Aho of the Finnish Center won 34 percent. The runoff was quite close, with Halonen narrowly edging Aho to become Finland's first woman president.

LEGISLATURE

Legislative power is vested in a 200-member unicameral parliament known as the Eduskunta. Since 1955 its maximum term has been set at four years. In recent years it has met virtually throughout the year. Members are chosen by direct, secret election based on proportional representation. The president of the republic opens the parliamentary session. There are also formal ceremonies at the end of the parliamentary term. The body selects its own speaker, who is then expected to drop his or her partisan role and cannot vote. The Eduskunta usually convenes for its annual regular session at the beginning of February. The annual session is divided into a spring term and an autumn term. At the beginning of the parliamentary term the committees of parliament are appointed to deal with the preparation of parliamentary business. Committee meetings are not normally open to the public. The committees meet from one to four times per week, depending on the volume of work to be done. The Speaker of Parliament and deputy speakers, together with the chairpersons of the parliamentary committees, constitute the Speaker's Council. The main task of the Speaker's Council is the planning of parliamentary business.

The ordinary plenary sittings are chaired by the Speaker of Parliament or by one of the deputy speakers. The chair neither contributes to the debate nor casts a vote. The plenary session debates are open to the public unless parliament decides otherwise. A voting machine

is usually used during the plenary sessions, except in the case of the election of functionaries, which is always conducted by secret ballot.

Exceptions to a Fundamental Law can be enacted, as in the 1973 extension of President Kekkonen's term in office. However, the procedure required is the same as for enacting a Fundamental Law: namely, a two-thirds majority after a five-sixths declaration of an "urgent question" or two successive two-thirds majority votes with an intervening general election. Such exceptions have been much more common than formal amendment of a Fundamental Law. Other than the limits of Fundamental Laws, there are in principle no restrictions on the powers of the Eduskunta, but in practice its powers are exercised primarily at the behest of the president and State Council. Individual members may introduce legislation, but in recent years only 7 percent of members' bills have been approved, compared with 80 percent of those submitted by the government.

Eduskunta: 16 March 2003 (66.6%)		**%**	**200**
Suomen Keskusta (Finnish Center)	KESK	24.7	55 (+7)
Suomen Sosialidemokraatinen Puolue (Social Democrats)	SDP	22.9	53 (+2)
Kansallinen Kokoomus (National Coalition Party)	KOK	18.5	40 (–6)
Vasemmistoliitto (Leftist Alliance)	VAS	9.9	19 (–1)
Vihreä Liitto (Green League)	VIHR	8.0	14 (+3)
Soumen Kristillisdemokraatit (Christian Democrats)	KD	5.3	7(–3)
Svenska Folkpartiet i Finland (Swedish People's Party)	SFP	4.6	8 (–4)
Perussuomalaiset (True Finns)	PeruS/ SannF	1.6	3
För Åland i riksdagen (Åland Constituency)		0.2	1

Current representation in the Eduskunta is based on the March 2003 elections, presented in the accompanying table, with changes from the 1999 elections in parentheses. The results constituted a narrow victory for the Center Party.

JUDICIARY

Finland's legal system finds the bulk of its heritage in its 700-year history as a province of Sweden. Sweden's first written codes were compiled in the Middle Ages. The ethical and judicial rules compiled by Olaus Petri in the 16th century can still be found in Finnish law books, and some parts of the Swedish Codification of 1734, the first of its kind in Europe, remain in force in Finland today.

The "Russification period," which lasted from 1809 until 1917, was marked by czarist efforts to impose royal absolutism on Finland. However, these attempts were countered in Finland with a steadfast reliance on the law and the rule of law. The saying "*Maa on lailla rakennettava*" ("By law shall this country be built") crystallizes one of the basic principles of Finnish history, reflected in the constitutional provision that "there shall be strict compliance with the law in all official functions."

Judicial authority today is exercised through a system of general courts, special courts, and administrative courts. The Finnish constitution guarantees to everyone the right to have his or her case heard appropriately and without undue delay by a court or other public authority. Everyone also has the right to have a decision affecting his rights and duties reviewed by a court or other judicial organ. The constitution also contains the basic provision on good government. The main principles guaranteeing good government are the publicity of proceedings, the right to be heard, the right to receive a decision on stated grounds, and the right to appeal against the decision. The independence of the judiciary is constitutionally guaranteed. The courts are under the sole obligation of applying the law in force, without further restrictions. The judges are appointed by the president of the republic. Most appointments are made upon a nomination from within the judiciary. A judge cannot be dismissed except by court order (e.g., if he has been convicted for an offense). The compulsory retirement age for judges is 70.

The decisions of the Courts of Appeal usually remain final, as appeal to the Supreme Court must be granted by the Supreme Court itself. However, the cases that a Court of Appeal hears in first instance are subject to appeal in the Supreme Court without restrictions. An appeal must be lodged within 60 days of the decision of the Court of Appeal. The Supreme Court is the court of final instance in the country and grants appeals in cases where a precedent is necessary for purposes of the correct application of the law, where

a serious error has been committed in proceedings before a lower court, or where there is another special reason in law. Its most important task is to hand down precedents, thus giving directions to the lower courts on the application of the law. The procedure in the Supreme Court is usually written. Oral hearings can, however, be held if this is deemed necessary.

The Supreme Court consists of a president and 21 permanent justices. As vacancies arise, they are filled by the president from among legally trained and experienced candidates. The Supreme Court fulfills its ordinary duties in sections. Only matters considered to be of highest principle or the trial of a sitting president for treason are heard in plenary session. Most notable of the rights and duties not granted to the Supreme Court is the judicial review of the constitutionality of legislation, which is left to the Eduskunta's constitutional committee to decide.

District court judgments are subject to appeal in a Court of Appeal. There are six Courts of Appeal in Finland: those of Turku, Vaasa, eastern Finland (located in Kuopio), Helsinki, Kouvola, and Rovaniemi. When a district court hands down its judgment, it at the same time gives appeal instructions to the parties. An appeal must be lodged within 30 days of the judgment. The procedure in a Court of Appeal has until recently been predominantly written. It is, however, undergoing changes that will considerably increase the use of oral hearings. Since 1998 the Court of Appeal, in order to ensure a fair trial, has to arrange an oral hearing when a party so requests.

There is a general right of administrative appeal in Finland. It can only be restricted by a specific legislative provision to that effect. The administrative courts hear the appeals of private individuals and corporate bodies against the acts of the authorities. In certain cases the state and municipal authorities also have a right of appeal. An appeal is usually heard first by a County Administrative Court; there are 11 such courts in Finland. In the autonomous province of Åland there is no county administrative court, but instead an administrative court attached to the Åland district court. These courts hear tax, municipal, construction, social welfare, health care, and other administrative cases. In certain of these, the appeal must be preceded by a complaint to a separate lower appellate body. The procedure in a county administrative court has thus far been predominantly written. Oral hearings are, however, increasing. An oral hearing must be held whenever it is necessary for the resolution of the case. In addition, an oral hearing must generally be held when a party so requests.

The Supreme Administrative Court is the final arbiter of the legality of the acts of the authorities. The bulk of its caseload consists of appeals against the decisions of the county administrative courts. Usually no leave to appeal is required. The main exception to this rule is an appeal against a decision in a tax case, for which the Supreme Administrative Court must grant a leave. The Supreme Administrative Court consists of a president and 20 justices of the Court. In addition, expert members participate in the hearing of water and patent cases. The procedure is usually written. The Court may also hold oral hearings and conduct inspections. The new Act on Administrative Judicial Procedure will also increase the number of oral hearings in the Supreme Administrative Court. In addition to its purely judicial tasks, the Supreme Administrative Court supervises the lower judicial authorities in the field of administrative law and participates in the development of the administrative court system.

There are four land courts in Finland: those of southern Finland, eastern Finland, northern Finland, and Vaasa. They hear disputes and appeals relating to the demarcation of plots of real estate. The decisions of the land courts are subject to appeal in the Supreme Court. The decision-making power in permits concerning water legislation is vested in the specific water courts (three in all). The water courts are competent also in private law suits and a few criminal suits. The appellate courts for the permit procedures are the superior water court (in Vaasa) and ultimately the Supreme Administrative Court. The Supreme Court is the highest instance in some matters of private or criminal law nature. The market court can prohibit misleading or improper advertising and unreasonable contract terms. Its decisions are not subject to appeal. The labor court hears disputes relating to collective agreements on employment relationships and on civil service relationships. Its decisions are not subject to appeal. Disputes relating to individual employment relationships are heard by the general courts, and those relating to individual civil service relationships by the general administrative courts. The insurance court considers certain cases falling within the field of social insurance, e.g., accident insurance and pensions. Such cases are usually first heard by an appellate board, whose decisions are then subject to appeal in the insurance court. Its decisions are not subject to appeal. The prison court considers the incarceration of dangerous recidivists and the enforcement of sentences involving the deprivation of the liberty of young offenders. The High Court of Impeachment, which has been convened only a few times, hears criminal cases relating

to offenses in office allegedly committed by a member of the Council of State, the chancellor of justice, or a member of either the Supreme Court or the Supreme Administrative Court. In such cases the prosecution is handled either by the chancellor of justice or the parliamentary ombudsman.

There is no special constitutional court in Finland, but the Constitutional Committee of parliament has been entrusted with the advance supervision of the compatibility of new legislation with the constitution. In addition, the courts and other authorities are under an obligation to interpret legislation in such a way as to adhere to the constitution and to respect human rights.

In 1995 Finland acceded to the European Union (EU). This has naturally brought new elements into the Finnish legal system, but as a member of the European Union Finland is able to participate in the enactment of new European legislation. The Finnish judiciary now applies not only Finnish but also European law.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Although Finland is essentially a unitary state, its constitution recognizes a certain measure of local self-government, in accordance with practices extending back many centuries. Today there are three such basic units, collectively known as communes: some 50 cities (*kaupungi*), some 30 towns (*kaupplat*), and nearly 450 rural communes (*maalaiskunnat*). Communal authority is vested primarily in a communal council, directly elected by proportional representation every fourth year. This council selects an executive body, the communal board. The commune's authority is exercised in matters delegated to it by the Eduskunta or not specifically assigned to other bodies: maintenance of order, local highways and transportation, primary and special schools, public health, social welfare, public works employment, and land settlement. Communes are permitted to levy local taxes, primarily income taxes, to finance their activities. In recent years total communal revenues have equaled about one-half of state revenues. Party identification has been less clear-cut in communal elections than in national elections but is becoming increasingly apparent. In recent years about one-third of the communes have been led by Socialists, with two-thirds ruled by non-Socialists. Finland's five provinces (cut by more than half during the 1990s) of eastern Finland, Lapland, Oulu, southern Finland, and western Finland also have their own provincial governments, each headed by a governor. These function essentially as administrative units operating under the direction of the State Council. Since 1951 the Åland Islands have constituted an autonomous province, which, while still subject to overall state control, enjoys broader self-governing authority than any other area in Finland.

The Electoral System

All three types of elections (presidential, parliamentary, and communal) are conducted in much the same way. All begin as direct, secret ballots based on proportional representation. For the two national elections, Finland is divided into 15 electoral districts. These districts vary considerably in population, so that before each election the State Council apportions the number of seats in each according to census figures, rather than size of the electorate. For the 200-member Eduskunta, the number of seats per district ranges from 9 to 21, except for the Åland Islands, a separate district electing just one representative. Two or more parties may join together to form an election bloc, but they still present separate lists. The voter casts his or her ballot for an individual candidate, but it is also tallied for the party list on which it appears. The number of votes for each list and/or bloc is recorded. Each candidate of a unified voting group (list or bloc) is then assigned a "comparison number" based on the following formula: the person who garners the most votes in each bloc is assigned the total vote of that bloc, the second-leading individual is assigned one-half the total vote of that bloc, the third receives one-third, and so on. Once these computations are made for each bloc, all candidates are ranked according to these figures, and the available seats are assigned on the basis of this ranking.

In effect, then, the vote for the individual candidate helps determine his ranking within the bloc, while the simultaneous vote for the party list helps determine the party's proportion of the available seats. This system does discriminate somewhat against the very small parties, but it has not prevented 8 to 10 or even more parties from being represented in the Eduskunta in recent years.

All citizens who have reached age 18 before the election year may vote. Registration is conducted by local election boards on the basis of the previous year's census. Voter turnout as a proportion of those eligible has been declining, especially in parliamentary elections. Advance voting in post offices has become quite common, accounting for over 40 percent of the votes

cast in recent elections. About two-thirds of Finns have participated in recent parliamentary elections.

The Party System

ORIGINS OF THE PARTIES

Modern party organizations date from the mid-19th century. The original impetus was provided by ethnolinguistic divisions between Finnish- and Swedish-speaking Finns. Later, class and urban-rural cleavages also emerged, so that a distinct multiparty system was evident with Finland's first modern elections in 1906. This pattern has persisted until today, with many Finns believing that this multiplicity of parties is preferable to what they would consider an "unhealthy" polarization of politics.

THE PARTIES IN LAW

Political parties are not mentioned in any of the Fundamental Laws and thus are generally considered civil organizations with the same legal status as other associations. There are no special state restrictions, except when extreme parties have been banned, as with the Communist Party in 1928 and the profascist People's Patriotic League (IKL) in 1944. Since 1970 nomination of candidates for the Eduskunta has been a legally recognized function of registered political parties. Legally defined seating in the parliament is also by party grouping. Overall there is a minimum of legal apparatuses surrounding party formation or activity.

PARTY ORGANIZATION

Today all the major parties in Finland are considered mass parties, with large dues-paying memberships. However, they have not evolved into catchall parties on the American, British, or German models. Rather, they remain rather narrowly based. For the most part Finnish parties share the same basic pyramidal structure, with a large number of local base units, district (provincial) units, and the national party congress, executive organs, and central bureaus. The local units, usually defined residentially rather than functionally, have as their main tasks the recruitment of new members; the organization of meetings, entertainment events, and study clubs and courses; and the distribution of party literature. Local activities peak at the time of communal or national elections. The district or provincial organization serves to coordinate and support the work of the base units and to link the base units with the party's central leadership. Authority is vested in district meetings, to which each base unit sends one representative. This meeting elects a district executive committee of 10 to 20 members to direct the day-to-day work of the district organization.

The national party congress is the primary source of the party's program, rules, and finances. The delegates are chosen at the local and district levels either at meetings or by membership vote, the latter being more characteristic of the Socialist parties. The congress also elects the executive council or board that exercises authority between congresses and that, in turn, chooses an even smaller committee to handle day-to-day affairs.

The left parties tend toward a more centralized administration coupled with emphasis on democratic participation by the rank and file. The non-Socialist parties lean more toward territorial decentralization, but with greater passivity of members and reliance on party officials at various levels. Each party also sponsors parallel women's, youth, and auxiliary organizations. The relationship between a party's members and its parliamentary bloc also tends to vary along the ideological spectrum, with the independence of the member of parliament (MP) being greatest in the rightist parties and least on the left. Overall, it is safe to say that the MPs represent their party organizations more than their electoral constituencies. Candidate lists are drawn up by the district party organizations, with the left parties seeking more and the center and right parties less rank-and-file participation.

Party leadership dominated by outstanding individuals is relatively rare in Finland. It is unusual for anyone to become the undisputed leader of a Finnish party. Thus, in the case of a cabinet crisis, a given party may well have several candidates of near-equal stature for prime minister.

CAMPAIGNING

Campaign activity is centered on the permanent party organization, supplemented by special election committees and support organizations. Propaganda for candidates is conducted at all levels, but with a recent tendency toward centralized, uniform party propaganda. The shift to single-name candidate lists in 1965, however, led to a significant growth in separate electioneering by individual candidates and voters' associations. Campaign activities include speeches, rallies, newspaper and journal articles, mass mailings, door-to-door canvassing, posters, print media advertising, and broadcast debates.

INDEPENDENT VOTERS

The number of independent voters, those not identifying with one particular party, is estimated at about one-sixth of the electorate. Even in the least-partisan elections, those for the communal councils, the party affiliation of most candidates can be discerned and voted upon. Given conditions of partisan stability and multipartism, elections are now often effectively won or lost with these floating independents, found disproportionately within the urban upper middle class.

PARTY FINANCING

As largely unregulated civil associations, Finnish parties were not required to divulge their sources of funds until changes in the campaign laws in 1986 required the parties to itemize campaign expenses in their statements of accounts. Data presented since then indicate that campaign spending by the major parties has approximately quadrupled since 1975. The leftist parties rely more heavily on membership dues than do the others, but even here dues make up less than 10 percent of revenues. Private contributions, raffles, entertainment, business activities, and income from publications and auxiliary organizations supplement state financing.

Major Political Parties

FINNISH CENTER

(Suomen Keskustapouloe)

Although the Finnish Center was the biggest loser in the 1995 elections, dropping 4.9 percent in its share of the popular vote and 11 seats in parliament, its showing was still the second-strongest posted since it changed its name from the Agrarian Party in 1965. It also regained in 1995 its position as the strongest non-Socialist party in the Eduskunta, a position it had ceded to the National Coalition Party through most of the 1970s and 1980s. With by far the largest formal membership of any Finnish party (about 300,000 members), the Center is the strongest party in the four western and northern constituencies of Vaasa, Kuopio, Oulu, and Lapland. Its electoral support today is about evenly divided among farmers and white-collar and blue-collar workers. Since 1976 it has markedly increased its support among younger (18–40) white-collar workers. The Center Party does better with female voters than the Socialist parties but not as well as the more conservative parties. Significantly, in 1995 it lost its only MP from Helsinki, which it had gained in 1983.

The party was founded as the Agrarian Union in 1906 and adopted its present name in 1965. Until the 1970s it was consistently the leading non-Socialist party, with Eduskunta representation ranging from 60 seats in 1929 to 35 in 1972. It has also served as the nearly indispensable pivot in coalition formation, having served in over 90 percent of the noncaretaker governments since 1918. Similarly, it has supplied more presidents and prime ministers than any other party. However, with the sharp demographic decline of the farming population following World War II, the party's change of name in 1965 signaled its awareness of the need to broaden its appeal, which has been at least reasonably successful, although the party's center of gravity remains in rural Finland.

The Finnish Center is a liberal centrist party. It is a member of Liberal International and the group of European Liberal Democrat and Reform Parties. The Finnish Center was quite divided over the issue of European Union membership at the time of the presidential election in 1994. The Association for a Free Finland (Vapaan Suomen Liitto), registered in May 1994, was a breakaway movement among supporters of the Center Party. However, the party's fortune changed in 2003 when Anneli Jaatteenmaki won the elections and led a coalition of her own Finnish Center, the Social Democrats, and the Swedish People's Party. The party took 55 seats, just two more than the Social Democrats. It was agreed that the Finnish Center and Social Democrats would hold eight cabinet posts, and the People's Party two. In 2003 Prime Minister Jaatteenmaki had to resign over the issue of obtaining secret documents about the Iraq war while she was opposition leader. Matti Vanhanen, also of the Finnish Center, took over as prime minister in June 2003.

LEFTIST ALLIANCE (LA)

(Vasemmistoliitto)

After going through a difficult period of rancor and division surrounding the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Finland's leftists (a coalition of Communists and Radical Socialists) rebounded in 1995 to record their best result since 1983. As before, the LA's major strength was among older blue-collar voters and the three rural districts of central northern Finland, characterized by economic marginality and high levels of long-term unemployment. Although the LA bitterly opposed Finland's entry into the European Union, its

backwoods stronghold is a major recipient of EU "Zone Six" economic support.

The Leftist Alliance, formed in 1990, is the successor to several other groups and coalitions dating back to the founding of the Finnish Communist Party by a revolutionary group in exile in 1918. Its adherents returned to Finland with the general amnesty of 1922. By 1929 its militancy had helped arouse the fascist Lapua Movement, which, through legal pressure and illegal terror, crushed the Communist Party and eliminated it as an institutional force until 1944. In that year dissident Social Democrats, independent Socialists, and Communists formed the Finnish People's Democratic League (SKDL), which served as an umbrella electoral vehicle for these groups until 1990. The Finnish Communist Party (Suomen Puolu; SKP) was the leading group within the SKDL, but a significant role was given to non-Communists and to the League's other two constituent organizations, the Democratic League of Finnish Women and the Socialist League of Students. The SKDL enjoyed considerable electoral success between 1944 and 1966, receiving between 23.5 and 20 percent of the vote in seven consecutive elections. Between 1966 and 1983 the SKDL participated in all but two of the noncaretaker governments of that period. Starting in 1970, however, SKDL popularity declined, and its Eduskunta representation fell steadily, from a peak of 50 in 1958 to 20 in 1987. Deep ideological divisions led to the dissolution of the SKDL in 1990 and its replacement by the new alliance, based on the model of the Danish Socialist People's Party. While the 1995 vote was encouraging to the Alliance, it has yet to achieve its desired "red-green" image and faces a severe challenge of generational renewal, as fully 76 percent of its 1995 voters reported being over 40 years old.

The Leftist Alliance participated in Paavo Lipponen's Rainbow Coalition and had three portfolios in the two Lipponen cabinets (1995 and 1999). In 2003 the Leftist Alliance won about 10 percent of the vote and 19 seats.

NATIONAL COALITION PARTY (NCP)

(Kansallinen Kokoomus)

In 1995 the Kokoomus was included in a historic coalition along with the winning Social Democrats, the Swedish People's Party, the Leftist League, and the Greens. This marks the first time in Finnish history that the conservative Kokoomus and the Leftist League have served in the same government. Still, the Kokoomus share of the 1995 vote was down 5.2 percent from its all-time high of 23.1 in 1987. In 1995 the coalition also failed to regain its position as the leading non-Socialist party, a position it had held continuously between 1971 and 1991. The NCP has been losing some ground to the Social Democrats, Greens, and Young Finns among the growing urban-based service sector (the "new middle class") of southern Finland that had recently served as the core of its electoral base. Indeed, in 1995 the NCP conceded to the Social Democrats the position of leading party in Helsinki and Uusimaa.

The Kokoomus was founded in 1918 as a continuation of the preindependence "Old Finns," a Finnish-language group less hostile to Russification than the Young Finns. For decades its electoral support was limited to less than 20 percent by its image as a rather extreme right-wing party. This image was reinforced by its support for the Lapua Movement, stopping just short of endorsing the attempted Lapuan coup d'état of 1932. However, other sources of strength gave it power far beyond that indicated by the election results. With its leader, P. E. Svinhufvud, serving as president from 1931 to 1937, the Kokoomus was largely able to implement its pro-business program for meeting the Great Depression. It participated in most governments between 1925 and 1946, supplying 10 prime ministers. It was also included in three governments between 1953 and 1966, but then was shut out of government until its smashing victory of 1987.

Historically, membership and voting support came from big business, large landowners, and portions of the upper middle class (e.g., top bureaucrats). Since 1987 the party has made gains in the new middle class of the larger southern cities and towns. Many first-time voters and disgruntled supporters of the smaller non-Socialist parties have also rallied to the Kokoomus. Traditionally, interest-group support was a more significant contributor to Kokoomus power than membership or voters. As the party has become more mass-based and catchall in nature, this balance has shifted. Still, the Federation of Finnish Industries, the Confederation of Finnish Employers, the Central Chamber of Commerce, the Confederation of Agricultural Producers, and various university alumni and veterans organizations maintain close, if informal, financial and political ties to the Kokoomus.

The party's politics are characterized by a rightist/conservative framework. The party consists of several currents of thought that include ideas of social reformism, conservatism, and liberalism. The party wants to promote a more entrepreneurial spirit in Finnish society. Some of its more liberal members are not so happy with the party's tough stance on issues of law

and order and also do not feel represented by the traditional family values that the party supports. In 2003 the party finished in third place, winning 18.5 percent of the vote and 40 seats in the Eduskunta.

SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY (SDP)

(Suomen Socialidemokraattinen Puolue)

The Social Democrats scored a resounding victory in 1995, gaining their largest proportion of the vote (28.3 percent) and number of seats (63) in any election since World War II. They also regained from the Finnish Center their historic position as the largest party in the Eduskunta. Gaining 15 seats over 1991, the SDP profited from a rare "national swing" to win a plurality in 10 of the 14 mainland constituencies. Traditionally strong among the more prosperous and secure blue-collar workers and increasingly attractive to the white-collar segments, the SDP did especially well in the Helsinki hinterland of Uusimaa and eastern and southeastern Finland. Especially in the south, there is evidence that the SDP benefited from a crossover vote from disgruntled Finnish Center voters. With the victory in 1995, the SDP held both the presidency and the prime ministership for the first time since 1987.

The SDP was founded in 1899 as a direct outgrowth of the nascent labor movement. It rejected a reformist approach in favor of an uncompromising commitment to class struggle, as reflected in the radical Forssa Program of 1903. When the czar allowed elections to the 200-member Finnish Diet to be conducted by universal adult suffrage in 1907, the Social Democrats astonished nearly everyone by winning 80 seats, 21 more than any other party. In 1916 it won 103 seats, an absolute majority not nearly matched by any party since. (The czar refused to convene the Diet following this election.)

With the collapse of the Russian Empire in 1917 the highly polarized Finnish political system erupted in civil war, with the Social Democrats leading the nearly victorious Red forces. With their defeat, the most radical Social Democrats were forced into exile, where they formed the Finnish Communist Party. The more moderate remnants of the Social Democratic Party reconstituted themselves under the control of its reformist wing, led by Vaino Tanner. In the first postindependence elections the party again won 80 seats, almost twice as many as any other party. Since World War II the SDP has had to face renewed competition on its left, first from the SKDL and now from the Leftist Alliance. A period of intraparty tension culminated in 1958 when a group of more radical dissidents was expelled from the party. They formed the Social Democratic League of Workers and Small Farmers (TPSL), which was able to win seven Eduskunta seats in 1966 before fading away in the early 1970s. From its all-time low of 38 seats in 1962, the SDP quickly rebounded and headed most governments between 1966 and 1987. In the 1970s and 1980s the SDP profited from the popularity of its leader, Mauno Koivisto, who became prime minister in 1979 and served two terms as president between 1982 and 1994. From 1991 until its major victory in 1995, however, the SDP was in opposition.

In 1995 the elections resulted in the relegation of the Finnish Center to the opposition. The new "rainbow coalition" of Prime Minister Paavo Lipponen was based primarily on Lipponen's own SDP and the National Coalition Party, with additional support from the Leftist Alliance, the Greens, and the Swedish People's Party. In 1999 Paavo Lipponen's Social Democrats returned to power, and in February 2000 Tarja Halonen, a party candidate, was elected as Finland's first female president. In 2002 the parliament narrowly approved the construction of a fifth nuclear reactor, the first in Western Europe since 1991 and the first in the country for 30 years. As a result, the Green Party withdrew from the government coalition in protest.

In 2003 the SDP finished second to the Finnish Center. The Finnish Center captured 24.7 percent of votes, securing 55 seats in the new parliament, increasing its number of deputies by seven. The Social Democratic Party won 53 seats, two more than at the last election. Only 6,300 votes separated the two main parties. The Finnish Center had seized on the failure of the outgoing SDP-led government to achieve its target of halving unemployment, which is among the highest in Europe. The main election issue was how to revive the economy. During the campaign the Finnish Center also accused the government of not doing enough to support a peaceful solution to the Iraqi crisis.

The SDP's influence is so extensive that other political parties have to cooperate with it regardless of whether they hold more seats. The party can be seen as one of the major formative powers of Finnish politics. The Social Democratic Party has about 60,000 members. Although the party finished second in 2003, it joined in a coalition government with the Finnish Center.

SWEDISH PEOPLE'S PARTY

(Ruotsalainen Kansanpuolue)

Standing in the first instance for the defense of the cultural and linguistic interests of the 6 percent of the population of Swedish language and heritage, this

party seemed on the decline when its proportion of the vote dropped below 5 percent in 1979 and 1983. Since then, however, it has rebounded by constructing a disparate coalition of anti–European Union farmers in the northwest, southwestern fishermen, and progressive economic liberals in Helsinki and environs. While some portions of its electoral base are aging (71 percent report being age 40 or above), it has recently attracted support from younger "bilinguals": mixed Finnish- and Swedish-speaking couples. Of its voters in 1991, 77 percent reported being white-collar workers, with the remainder composed primarily of Swedish-speaking farmers, fishermen, and blue-collar workers.

During the period of Swedish rule of Finland (1323–1809) thousands of Swedes became residents in Finland and established themselves as an elite class. By the mid-19th century the language and culture of this group had become dominant at the top of Finland's upper class. The party was founded in 1906 as the institutional continuation of the Swedish interest group (Svecomen) in the Diet and was aimed explicitly at promoting the interests of the Swedish-speaking minority. Even by the time of its founding, however, the language issue had been largely settled in favor of Finnish. Nevertheless, the Swedish People's Party was able consistently to obtain between 10 percent and 14 percent of the vote through the 1930s. After the war its popularity declined steadily, reaching the lowest total in its history in 1979. Since then, by broadening its appeal as described above, the party has been able to stabilize its support at around 5.5 percent of the electorate. Swedish-speaking Finns, if still somewhat privileged, are no longer considered a threat by the Finnish majority. The party has been included in almost all the ruling coalitions since 1968. It has never contributed a prime minister or president, however.

FINNISH GREEN LEAGUE

(Vihreä Liitto)

The party is one of the most successful parties of its type in the world. Unique not only in winning continuous parliamentary representation since 1983, its inclusion in the 1995 "rainbow" coalition made it the first Green party ever to be included in a European government. Clearly a youth-oriented party, three-quarters of its voters report being under 40, and more than half live in Helsinki or neighboring Uusimaa, where it is now the third-largest party. The challenge for the Greens will be to use their representation in government to retain current supporters as they age and perhaps lose some of their youthful idealism, while continuing to attract new generations of young voters.

The Green League of Finland grew out of the environmental movement of the 1970s as it merged with kindred movements promoting alternative ideas in social policy and rejuvenating grassroots democracy. The Green League first took part in parliamentary elections in 1983, running a handful of independent candidates. Contrary to most forecasts, two Green MPs were elected. In the 1987 elections the number of Green MPs doubled to four. In the local elections of 1984 and 1988, Green candidates still ran as independents, gaining council seats mainly in the larger cities. The Green League was finally registered as a political party in 1988 after a lengthy debate about the pros and cons of a formal electoral vehicle. The first comprehensive Green Manifesto was drafted and approved in 1990, and the successful 1991 parliamentary elections brought the number of Green MPs to 10 with 6.8 percent of the vote. The upward trend continued in the 1992 local elections. Public opinion polls taken in the run-up to the 1995 elections were extremely favorable to the Greens, and though the actual vote was disappointing, with the League chairman, Pekka Haavisto, losing the seat, a subsequent two-thirds vote in the National Council confirmed Haavisto as minister for environment and development cooperation.

In 2003 the party won 8 percent of the votes and secured 14 seats.

FINNISH CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS

(Suomen Kristillisdemokratit)

Winning Eduskunta representation for over a quarter century, the Finnish Christian Democrats (originally the Finnish Christian League) is the second-most-durable party of its type in the Nordic region. The League's pledge "to restore respect for basic values" and "to strengthen the values of the traditional family and its restoration as a God-fearing institution" appeals to farmers and blue-collar and white-collar workers in roughly the same proportions they represent in the general population. Geographically, its strongest representation is in the pietist strongholds of Vaasa and Mikkeli. The Christian Democrats faces perhaps the most acute challenge of all the parties from an aging electoral base; some five-sixths of its voters are age 40 or older.

The party was founded in 1958 in an attempt to give partisan expression to the Lutheran pietist tradition. It gained its first Eduskunta representative in 1970, expanding to four seats in 1972 and nine

in 1976. In the 1979 election the party increased its popular vote but still won just nine seats. In 1983 it was outflanked on the right by the Finnish Rural Party in the 1983 elections, losing six of its nine seats. It rebounded in 1987 and in 1991, back up to eight seats, and was included in the Finnish Center–led government. The Christian Democrats have never aspired to be a permanent fixture on the political scene, stating that a more overt Christian orientation in the Center or National Coalition parties would render its existence superfluous.

In the 2003 elections the party gained seven seats (5.3 percent)

FINNISH RURAL PARTY (TRUE FINNS)

(Suomen Maaseudun Puolue)

Born in 1956 as a protest party of the Poujadist variety, the Rural Party has seen its fortunes wax and wane in volatile fashion ever since. However, its disastrous showing in 1995, when it lost three-fourths of its voters and six of its seven Eduskunta seats, may finally signal the end of its turbulent but colorful history. The party's program always sought to combine seemingly incongruous Socialist and non-Socialist elements accompanied by constant reference to rooting out the misuse, abuse, and corruption of public power by the older parties. Its voters were generally small-business people and impoverished smallholders geographically centered in the eastern provinces, especially Kuopio and Pohjois-Karjala. In times of economic hardship or perceived corruption by the established parties, voters from all walks of life turned to the Rural Party as a protest vehicle. But this pattern changed in 1991 and 1995, when protest was channeled through one of the established parties, the Finnish Center in 1991 and the Social Democrats in 1995.

The Finnish Rural Party was founded in 1956 by a group of dissident Agrarian (Center) Party members led by the colorful and outspoken Veikko Vennamo, who charged that the Agrarians were selling out the interest of the small farmers, laborers, and small-business people, especially in the remote areas. The Rural Party achieved a stunning breakthrough in the Eduskunta elections of 1970, winning 10.5 percent of the vote and 18 seats. It held this total in the 1972 poll. In 1975, however, it fell dramatically to 3.6 percent and two seats. The 1979 elections represented something of a comeback for the party, paving the way for another major breakthrough in 1983, when the party was included in the government for the first time. When the party leadership passed to Vennamo's son, Pekka, policy positions became more moderate and predictable but may have lost some of their flair as well.

The Finnish Rural Party proved unable to exploit the opportunity provided by the recession and opposition to EU membership, instead becoming embroiled in internal disputes. It has since changed its name to True Finns (Perussuomalaiset)/SMP-True Finns. The party underwent a period of crisis. The waning electoral support made party leader Pekko Vennamo resign. Some of the members of parliament joined the Center Party, whereas others retired along with their former leader Veikko Vennamo. The party tried to promote an alternative image and promote a more anti-establishment and populist agenda. In 2003 the party gained three seats, thus gaining some more ground.

Minor Political Parties

The Liberal People's Party, the Joint Responsibility Party, the Women's Party, For Peace and Socialism—Communist Workers' Party, Pensioners for the People, Finnish Pensioners' Party, and the Natural Law Party are all parties that fielded candidates but failed to win Eduskunta representation. Many of these parties—such as the Natural Law Party, the Women's Party, the Ecology Party, and the Pensioners' Party—could not really be situated anywhere along the traditional axis of left-right politics.

Other Political Forces

Those forces usually outside the political system but influencing it have been subsumed in Finland into political parties, as evidenced by the minor political parties listed above. No other groups have much support.

National Prospects

The fall of Communism in Eastern Europe and the dissolution of the Soviet Union marked the end of an extremely perilous era for Finland. Whether one agrees or disagrees with the pejorative connotations of the concept of "Finlandization," and there is a deeply searching debate over it taking place in Finland, there can be no doubt that Finland's control of its own destiny is much greater than at any time since World War

II. Perhaps paradoxically, one of the first exercises of its new-found sovereignty was to vote fairly comfortably (57 percent to 43 percent) in 1994 to apply for membership in the European Union.

At the same time, the collapse of the Soviet Union and its East European satellites had a devastating effect on Finland's economy, which had relied on those countries as its biggest customers. The resulting downturn, which saw unemployment skyrocket to 20 percent, was the primary cause of the defeat of the Center Party in 1995; a similar event occurred in 2003 with the defeat of the SDP.

The economy appeared to be recovering well in by 2005. The country has developed a modern, competitive economy, adding to the traditional timber and metals industries a substantial telecommunications sector. In 2003 Finland became the only country in Europe to have women as both prime minister and president. In addition, the new parliament had 75 female members—37.5 percent of the total—which demonstrates that equality of opportunity is a real fact. It is worth mentioning that the continuity of the Finnish political system is a characteristic of Finnish politics. Neither war nor economic recession has been able to radically alter the political party system. While the country still faces certain challenges, with the major threat to Finland's sovereignty (the Soviet Union) removed and with the country firmly enmeshed in the institutions of democratic Europe, the Finnish people have every right to face the future with cautious optimism.

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REPUBLIC OF FRANCE
(République Française)

By William G. Andrews, Ph.D.
Revised by Tom Michael



The Republic of France is a nation of 60.6 million people (2005 est.) located in western Europe. Its borders touch on seven other nations: Belgium, Luxembourg, Germany, Switzerland, Italy, Andorra, and Spain.

The System of Government

France is a democratic republic with a unitary system that combines features of presidential and parliamentary government. The present regime is the Fifth Republic, based on a constitution drafted under the leadership of Premier Charles de Gaulle and ratified by popular referendum in 1958.

The Fifth Republic has been one of the most durable French regimes since the monarchy fell in 1789. The long-standing Third (1875–1940) and short-lived Fourth (1946–58) Republics were parliamentary systems with weak, unstable coalition governments and divided, indecisive assemblies. The Fourth Republic collapsed in part because its leaders were unable to suppress the insurrection in Algeria that nearly brought civil war to France itself. De Gaulle reclaimed a leadership role in 1958 and guided the Algerian crisis to its conclusion, which was independence in 1962. De Gaulle—a national hero of the French resistance during World War II and a leader of the postwar provisional government in 1944–46—set about creating the Fifth Republic.

EXECUTIVE

The Fifth Republic has a dual executive. The president of the republic is the chief of state, elected by popular vote for five-year renewable terms. The 1958 constitution had established a presidential term of seven years, but it was reduced, effective in 2002, as the result of a popular referendum held in 2000. The prime minister, appointed by the president, heads the government; he or she must have the confidence of a majority in the National Assembly. Most formal business of the executive is transacted in a Council of Ministers, composed of the prime minister and other senior members of the government and chaired by the president. When the president and the National Assembly share the same political orientation, the president lays down general policy guidelines for the executive branch. Otherwise, they are negotiated by the president and the prime minister. The president has special constitutional powers in foreign affairs, defense, and preserving the integrity of the national territory and institutions. Also, he has played a leading role in other policy areas, depending on his interests, the circumstances, and the character of the parliamentary majority. For instance, President Georges Pompidou (1969–74) was more involved in economic affairs than de Gaulle (1959–69).

The president has ample powers to carry out his duties. He can dissolve the National Assembly and call new elections anytime, except not twice in one year. He can call popular referenda, in certain circumstances, on laws or constitutional amendments, and he can

invoke broad emergency powers in crises. During exercise of these powers, the Assembly can meet without threat of dissolution, which proved so embarrassing the first time an emergency was invoked (during the Algerian crisis of 1961) that the experiment has not been repeated. Also, the president has the rarely used right to withhold his signature from decrees adopted by the Council of Ministers and thereby to prevent the measures from taking effect.

In addition, the president has all the usual powers of a chief of state. He commands the armed forces, sends and receives diplomatic envoys, makes high-level civil and military governments, promulgates laws, negotiates and ratifies treaties, and exercises the pardoning power. However, those powers require the countersignature of the prime minister and, in most cases, the minister responsible for implementing the decision.

In practice, the president's power derives mainly from a claim to democratic legitimacy through popular election, consequent influence over the prime minister and government, and the constitutional powers of the executive branch.

From 1958 until 1986 the National Assembly and the president were of the same political bloc. In 1986, however, France has a Socialist president, Francois Mitterrand, and a conservative majority in the national legislature, led by Jacques Chirac. As a result, Mitterrand was forced to appoint Chirac as prime minister, a characteristic known in France as "cohabitation." This describes the sharing of power required in government when the president and prime minister are from different political blocs. Cohabitation occurred in 1986 to 1988, 1993 to 1995, and 1997 to 2002.

The prime minister leads and supervises the government on a day-to-day basis and manages the parliamentary majority. Much of the work of the government in defining and implementing policy is performed within the framework of legislation through executive decrees and similar texts and oral decisions. The constitution delineates a "domain of law" that assigns the most important policy areas to parliamentary enactments. All other areas, mainly the specification of detail and implementation measures, are reserved for governmental action.

In addition to routine exercise of regulatory powers through executive decrees, the government may ask parliament for special legislative authority in a specified area of policy for an explicitly limited period of time subject to subsequent veto by parliament.

Also, the government has substantial authority to lead parliament in the legislative process. The government's general policy declaration gives parliament its overall orientation. It introduces almost all important legislation. Only a small percentage of laws promulgated were originated as private members' bills.

The government can prevent members of parliament (MPs) from even introducing certain kinds of bills: those that would increase expenditures, reduce revenues, or trespass in the domain reserved for government regulations. When the government dislikes an MP's bill that it cannot exclude, it can kill it by keeping it off the agenda, a power that governments use ruthlessly.

Ministers may speak but not vote in parliamentary committee and floor proceedings. Ministers make formal statements to the Assembly and lead and manage most parliamentary debates. Ministers also appear before committees to explain the government's position, respond to questions and criticism, and resolve disagreements. On a few occasions, the government has made a "declaration of general policy" the basis for a vote of confidence by the Assembly, which the governments have always won.

The government may propose amendments to bills, require "blocked votes," and exclude certain types of amendments proposed by members of parliament. A blocked vote requires that the Assembly or Senate "take a single vote on all or part of the bill under discussion, retaining only the amendments proposed or accepted by the government." It has been used much more freely by conservative governments than by their Socialist counterparts. The government has rarely been defeated on such votes, and when it has been, it has usually been over budgetary matters.

In exceptional circumstances, the government may declare bills urgent and require accelerated consideration. If the Assembly and Senate disagree on a bill, the government may refer it to a special committee for reconciliation and can force adoption of the version it prefers if the Assembly agrees, despite the opposition of the Senate. Conservative governments have enacted far fewer bills through this procedure than have those of the left.

The government's most powerful special weapon is passive enactment. It can "engage its responsibility" on a bill. If no motion of censure is submitted within 24 hours and passed by an absolute majority of the Assembly, the bill has been adopted passively. Governments in the early decades of the Fifth Republic passed bills in that manner once every four or five years, but recently they have done so as often as a dozen times in a single session and some 40 times in a five-year parliament. No government has been defeated on such a vote. Finally, the government may enact the annual budget by decree if parliament fails to act on it in the

allotted time. This has never happened because parliament has always met its deadline.

The success of these devices has rested on the relationship of confidence between parliament and government. Although individual deputies may disagree with the government on particulars, the majority expects to benefit in the next elections from the overall success of the government's efforts. The parliamentary weapons are the government's means to ensure that the MPs act consistently in their own long-term general interest.

Through 2004 there have been no woman presidents of France and one woman prime minister (Edith Cresson, who served as prime minister in 1991–92). Jacques Chirac, who was elected president in 1995 and reelected in 2002, served two separate terms as prime minister (1974–76; 1986–88). All of those who had left office did so because they had lacked the confidence of the president who had appointed them or of his successor. These prime ministers averaged two- to three-year terms. Under the constitution, individual ministers are appointed by the president upon nomination of the prime minister. In practice, the composition of the governments is negotiated between the president and prospective prime minister and between the prime minister and the leaders of the parties in the majority. Coalition governments have been the norm, though the orthodox Gaullists (1968–73) and the Socialists (1981–86) secured single-party majorities.

POPULAR PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS UNDER THE FIFTH REPUBLIC

1965	1st Round	2nd Round
de Gaulle (G.)	10,828,523 (44.6)	13,085,407 (55.2)
Mitterrand (S.)	7,694,003 (31.7)	10,623,247 (44.8)
Lecanuet (Cen.)	3,777,119 (15.6)	
Others	1,954,909 (8.1)	

1969	1st Round	2nd Round
Pompidou (G.)	9,763,428 (44.0)	10,686,498 (57.6)
Poher (Cons.)	5,202,271 (23.4)	7,870,601 (42.4)
Duclos (Comm.)	4,781,838 (21.5)	
Defferre (S.)	1,128,049 (5.1)	
Others	1,335,136 (6.0)	

1974	1st Round	2nd Round
Giscard d'Estaing (Cons.)	8,326,774 (32.6)	13,396,203 (50.8)
Mitterrand (S.)	11,044,373 (43.2)	12,971,604 (49.2)
Chaban-Delmas (G.)	3,857,728	(15.1)
Others	2,309,761 (9.0)	

1981	1st Round	2nd Round
Mitterrand (S.)	7,505,960 (25.8)	15,714,598 (51.8)
Giscard d'Estaing (Cons.)	8,222,432 (28.3)	14,647,787 (48.2)
Chirac (G.)	5,225,846 (18.0)	
Marchais (Comm.)	4,456,922 (15.3)	
Others	3,626,876 (12.5)	

1988	1st Round	2nd Round
Mitterrand (S.)	10,367,220 (34.1)	16,704,279 (54.0)
Chirac (G.)	6,063,514 (19.9)	14,218,970 (46.0)
Barre (Cons.)	5,031,849 (16.5)	
Le Pen (NF)	4,375,894 (14.4)	
Others	4,567,561 (15.0)	

1995	1st Round	2nd Round
Chirac (G.)	6,278,557 (20.7)	15,654,234 (52.6)
Jospin (S.)	7,061,300 (23.3)	14,114,715 (47.4)
Balladur (Cons.)	5,616,885 (18.5)	
Le Pen (NF)	4,564,776 (15.1)	
Hué (Comm.)	2,631,173 (8.7)	
Others	4,141,626 (13.7)	
2002	**1st Round**	**2nd Round**
Chirac (G.)	5,666,440 (19.9)	25,540,873 (82.2)
Le Pen (NF)	4,805,307 (16.9)	5,525,906 (17.8)
Jospin (S.)	4,610,749 (16.2)	
Bayrou (Cons.)	1,949,436 (6.8)	
Others	10,003,523 (40.2)	

G. = Gaullist, S. = Socialist, Cons. = Conservative, Cen. = Centrist, Comm. = Communist, NF = National Front.

LEGISLATURE

Parliament consists of two chambers: the National Assembly and the Senate. Governments give most of their attention to the Assembly and are responsible to it, not to the Senate. Although the executive is the more powerful branch of government in the Fifth Republic, parliament remains important.

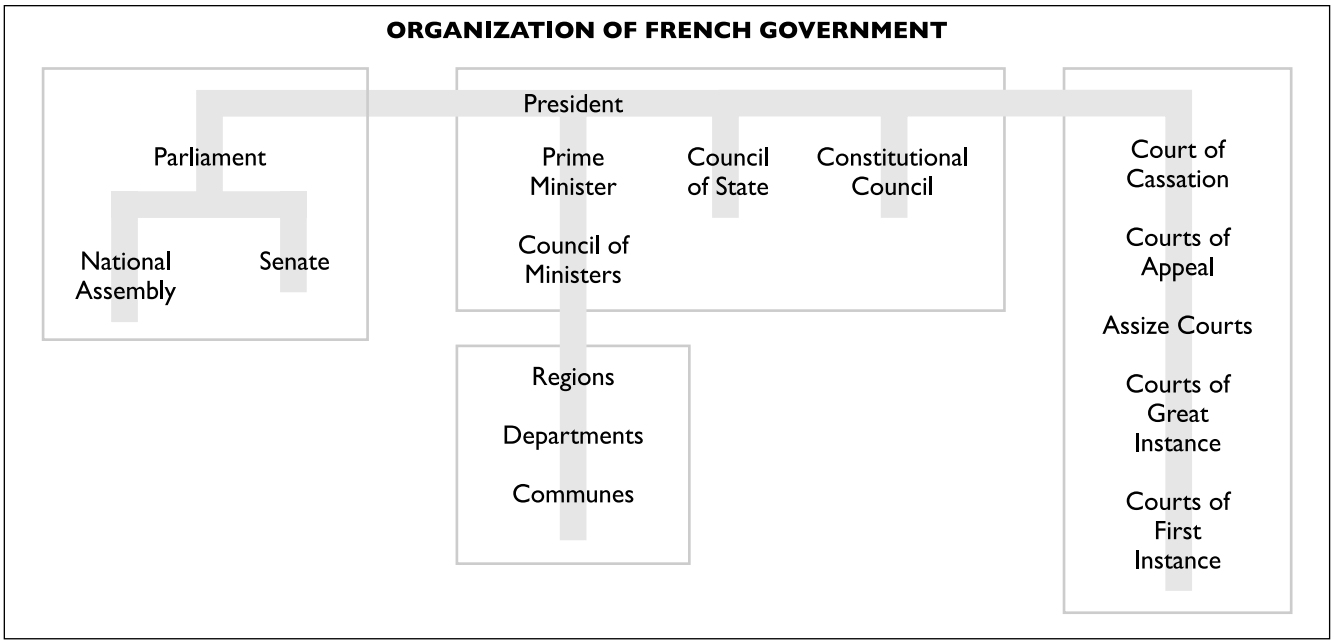
The National Assembly, the lower house, has 577 members. By occupational background, the largest category of MPs is government workers of one sort or another. About one-eighth of the 2002 Assembly were women.

The official leadership organ of the Assembly is the Steering Committee (*bureau*), which administers its business, facilities, and resources but does not make major policy or political decisions. It consists of the president of the National Assembly, six vice presidents, three *questeurs* (financial officers), and 12 secretaries, all of whom are deputies elected to their Assembly offices by its membership. The constitution requires that the Assembly president be "elected for the duration of the legislative." That officer is chosen from the chamber's political majority and ensures the orderly conduct of its business, as well as performing other important functions. The vice presidents represent the major parties in the governance of the Assembly. The Assembly's agenda is prepared by the Conference of Presidents, which includes the president of the Assembly, its vice presidents, the committee chairs, the party caucus chairs, and the member of the Finance Committee responsible for reporting bills. A representative of the government may attend its meetings. In fact, under the constitution, the government controls the agenda by requiring priority consideration of its bills.

The Assembly meets for no more than 120 plenary sessions on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays during nine months each year beginning the first Monday of October. One meeting each month is reserved for private members' bills. Most legislative work of the Assembly is prepared by six standing committees, a number specified by the constitution. Their subjects are culture, family, and social affairs; production and exchange; constitutional law, legislation, and general administration; foreign affairs; finance, the economy, and planning; and national defense and the armed forces. They range in size from 70 to 140 members and usually are chaired by the government's supporters. Most bills are referred to those committees.

Partisan affairs in the Assembly are managed by caucuses, called parliamentary groups. Caucuses require at least 20 members. Five caucuses have formed in all recent parliaments: Communist, Socialist, Gaullist (RPR), Conservative (UDF), and Centrist or Radical. Some independent deputies affiliate with these caucuses. The caucuses are represented proportionately on the committees and other Assembly organs and in the distribution of debating time.

Parliament controls the government formally by defeating it on votes of confidence or motions of censure, by committee work, and through debates and questions. The National Assembly of the Fifth



Republic has voted out a government only once. In October 1962 the Assembly censured the Pompidou government over President de Gaulle's plan to revise the constitution by popular referendum. De Gaulle dissolved the rebellious Assembly, and his supporters won a record majority in the new one. Since then, MPs have grumbled, groaned, and occasionally defected, but they have not censured any government. An average of one to two censure motions are submitted each year to the National Assembly, but, with the exception of the 1962 motion, none was adopted and very few have come close. The motion that most nearly achieved success failed by three votes in 1989.

Parliamentary questions take several forms. Some 20,000 written questions are posed some years and about 90 percent are answered, also in writing. The Thursday afternoon sitting is reserved for oral questions—mainly on parish pump issues—to which the ministers must respond immediately. Also, during the two first hours of each Tuesday and Wednesday sitting, deputies quiz ministers with brief, spontaneous questions to which the ministers respond. The Tuesday and Wednesday sessions are televised. Several hundred oral questions of all types are posed and answered each year.

The French upper house, the Senate, is principally a "chamber of reflection" and a means of ensuring representation of the provinces. It has somewhat less legislative authority than the lower house and no direct power to vote down governments. In 1958 de Gaulle and Michel Debré (a senator in the Fourth Republic) conceived of the Senate as one means to protect governments from the National Assembly. In fact, throughout the Fifth Republic, whatever the partisan orientation of the governments, the Senate has tended to be less favorable to the governments than has the Assembly and thus has not served its intended purpose.

The internal structure of the Senate resembles that of the Assembly. The subject areas of the standing committees are slightly different, and neither special committees nor investigative committees have been used as much as those in the Assembly. Usually, six party caucuses are formed: Communist, Socialist, Radical, Centrist, Conservative, and Gaullist.

Because of its higher age requirement (35), its less political character, and the longer terms of its members, the Senate tends to attract local "notables" rather than more active, ambitious politicians. Also, the partisan lineup in the Senate has differed considerably from that in the Assembly. Neither the Gaullists nor the Socialists have ever held as many as 30 percent of the Senate seats, despite their clear majorities in the Assembly. Rather, the Senate's composition has remained remarkably similar to that of its Fourth Republic predecessor.

Members of the Senate serve six-year terms. Before 2004, terms lasted nine years. At the beginning of the 21st century there were 321 seats in the Senate. In

NUMBER OF SENATORS, BY PARTY, AFTER EACH ELECTION, 1986–2004

	1986	1989	1992	1995	1998	2001	2004
COMMUNISTS	15	16	15	15	16	16	23
SOCIALISTS	64	66	70	75	78	68	97
RADICALS	35	23	22	24	22	16	15
MRP/CENTER	70	68	67	59	52	37	33
INDEPENDENTS	54	52	47	47	47	35	–
GAULLISTS	77	91	90	94	99	83	156
OTHER	–	–	12	7	7	66	7
TOTAL	319	321	321	321	323	321	331

2004 the Senate chamber was enlarged to 331 seats; in 2007 there will be 341 seats; and in 2010 there will be 346 seats.

At the call of the president of the republic, the Assembly and Senate meet together, as "the Congress," to adopt constitutional amendments approved by the chambers separately. Their most significant amendment authorized 60 deputies or 60 senators to bring cases to the Constitutional Council (1974). Also, the constitution was amended by popular referendum to introduce direct popular election of the president (1962) and limit the presidential term from seven to five years (2000), and, by a separate amending process involving the former French overseas possessions, to facilitate their decolonization (1960).

JUDICIARY

The 1958 constitution created, for the first time in France, a quasi-judicial institution—the Constitutional Council—that can invalidate legislative and executive acts on grounds of unconstitutionality. Its authority is much more closely prescribed than is that of the Supreme Court of the United States, but it has become somewhat more important than expected as a result of some of its decisions and a constitutional revision.

The Council is composed of nine appointed members. The president of the republic, the president of the Senate, and the president of the National Assembly each makes one appointment every three years. Members serve nine-year nonrenewable terms. Former presidents of the republic are ex officio members, though none has chosen to serve so far. The president of the Council is appointed by the president of the republic from among its members.

The Council has several functions. It reviews organic laws and parliamentary rules of procedure for constitutionality and adjudicates complaints of election and referendum irregularities. At the request of the government, it may determine whether specified laws contain provisions that belong in decrees (and, therefore, can be modified by decree). It may review new laws and international agreements for constitutionality at the request of the president of the republic, the prime minister, the president of a parliamentary chamber, 60 deputies, or 60 senators. The last two categories were added by constitutional amendment in 1974. Finally, it enforces constitutional provisions on the ineligibility of MPs.

The French legal system differs from the American system in several ways. It is based on codes of law enacted by parliament, rather than on judge-made case law. Also, French trials are organized on an inquisitorial, rather than adversarial, basis. Finally, French courts lack the power to review legislative and executive action for constitutionality.

The French have three main court systems: civil, criminal, and administrative. The civil-court structure has 471 *tribunaux d'instance* at the lowest level and 181 *tribunaux de grande instance* at the departmental level. The criminal-court structure has police courts at the

bottom, correctional courts at the next level, and an assize court for each department. Appeals from both civil and criminal courts go to the 27 courts of appeal, then to the Court of Cassation. The administrative-court system adjudicates complaints against the state administration (though not the police). Thirty-one regional courts of general jurisdiction and several specialized administrative tribunals hear the cases initially. The Council of State receives them on appeal.

A High Council of the Judiciary reviews all nominations of judges and public prosecutors and serves as the disciplinary body for the judiciary. Five of its members are elected by the judges and one each is appointed by the prosecutors, the Council of State, and the presidents of the republic, the National Assembly, and the Senate. A High Court of Justice appointed by parliament from among its members, with equal numbers from the two chambers, would try a president for treason upon indictment by an absolute majority of the members of the chambers. A Court of Justice of the Republic, composed of six senators, six deputies, and three members of the Court of Cassation, may try members of the government accused of crimes and misdemeanors in office.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The structure of French government below the national level has three main tiers. At the base are more than 36,500 municipalities, called communes. They form 94 departments (*departements*), plus the City of Paris and the Territory of Belfort. Also, there are four overseas departments, to bring the total to 100. There are 22 regions (*régions*). The communes and departments date to the French Revolution, but the regions have developed gradually only since World War II. Traditionally, the territorial units were less governmental than administrative, as their discretionary powers and budgetary authority were limited narrowly. Since 1981 they have acquired greater political importance. Elective councils with six-year terms exercise legislative powers at each level. They elect executives: mayors for communes, presidents for departments and regions. Appointive prefects, who are high civil servants, represent the national government in the regions and departments. They remain powerful officials although they can no longer veto council decisions on their own authority. The state remains very highly centralized, although recent reforms have enlarged the power of lower-level governments.

The Electoral System

Members of the National Assembly are chosen by direct, popular vote for five-year terms, all seats being filled at the same election. Except for 1986, when proportional representation was used, all general elections under the Fifth Republic have used single-member constituencies and the majority double-ballot system. If no candidate wins an absolute majority of the votes in the first round of balloting in a district, a second is held a week later with a simple plurality winning. Candidates polling less than 12.5 percent of the first-round vote may not compete in the second round, except that if only one candidate has crossed the 12.5 percent threshold, the candidate with the second-largest number of votes remains in the running, and if no candidate wins 12.5 percent, the two highest candidates are eligible. Often, candidates with no prospect of success withdraw, regardless of their first-round percentages. For instance, in 1997 about 50 legally eligible candidates withdrew from the second round.

In each election in a few districts, only one candidate enters the second round. Most second-round contests are duels between two rivals. For instance, in 1997, 12 seats were filled on the first ballot, 12 were uncontested in the second round, 70 had three candidates, and 383 were "duels," more than 90 percent of them contests between one candidate of the right and one of the left.

As many as one-fourth of the seats may be "safe," with one candidate virtually assured of easy election in the first round. In most of the rest, the first ballot amounts to a primary election. Usually, the parties of the left run candidates freely in the first round and withdraw for the "best-placed" left-wing candidates in the second round. The conservatives tend to negotiate their first-round candidacies.

The French constitution requires each parliamentary candidate to designate a running mate (*suppléant*) who will represent the district if the candidate is elected and later dies or resigns to serve as a minister, a senator, or a member of the Constitutional Council. The provision was designed mainly to prevent MPs from also holding ministerial office and to avoid a rash of by-elections after the formation of a government.

In practice, an MP appointed to the government uses his "*suppléant,*" the new deputy, as a parliamentary assistant and continues to function as a deputy in all but name. In spite of the *suppléant* system, by-elections are sometimes necessary, averaging more than three per year.

Half of the Senate is elected every three years for six-year terms by electoral colleges in each department and overseas possession. Each college consists of the municipal and departmental councilors and deputies of that department. The councils of all municipalities with more than 30,000 inhabitants choose additional delegates roughly proportionate to their population. The allocation of electoral votes tends to favor small, conservative, rural municipalities. Municipalities under 3,500 inhabitants had half the votes but only 35 percent of the population. Communes under 500 residents had more electors than those over 30,000 inhabitants, yet they had barely one-fourth the population. Rural departments tend to vote less for Communists, Centrists, and Gaullists and more for Conservatives, Moderates, and Radicals. One Senate seat is allocated to each department for the first 150,000 residents in a population or fraction thereof, and one additional seat for each additional 250,000 or fraction thereof. This also favors smaller departments.

Four electoral systems are used for senatorial elections. The 13 departments and territories with 1 seat each choose senators by the majority system, with single-member districts and a runoff ballot the same day if no candidate wins a majority in the first round. The 15 most populous departments with at least 5 seats each (a total of 98 seats) use proportional representation. The remaining departments with 2 to 4 seats each (198 seats) use the majority system with multimember districts and a runoff ballot. Finally, the 12 senators who represent French citizens living abroad are nominated by an official governmental advisory council composed of representatives of their local associations. Its choices are ratified routinely by the Senate. *Suppléants* for the candidates in the departments using the majority electoral systems are nominated as their running mates. In the departments that use proportional representation, the highest-ranking unsuccessful candidate on the senator's party list is the replacement.

The original 1958 constitution provided that the president be elected by an electoral college dominated by local elective officials. A 1962 constitutional amendment replaced the electoral college with direct popular election. A majority of the votes cast is required for election on the first ballot. If no candidate receives a majority, a second round of balloting is held two weeks later. Only the two top first-round candidates who choose to remain in the running are eligible for the second balloting.

Another form of national popular consultation is the referendum. De Gaulle introduced this institution after World War II, but the Fourth Republic dropped it. De Gaulle revived it in the 1958 constitution. Referenda played an important role in the early Fifth Republic. De Gaulle held five referenda, giving each a plebiscitary character by threatening to resign if his proposal was defeated. The fifth time (1969), the voters said "No," and de Gaulle retired. Since then the referendum has suffered from low voter turnout. It was used in 1972 on expansion of the European Community, in 1988 on eventual independence for New Caledonia, in 1992 on the Maastricht Treaty, in 2000 to shorten the presidential term, and in 2005 on the European constitution. The 1969 and 2005 referendums were defeated.

All French citizens at least 18 years old are eligible to vote. The government registers all voters by mail. Registration lists are available for public perusal, verification, and correction well in advance of each election campaign. Voting turnout is usually high, often about four-fifths of eligible voters in presidential elections (though fewer participate in parliamentary elections).

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY ELECTION RESULTS, SEATS

	1993	1997	2002
Communist	24	37	21
Socialist	245	—	140
Radical	13	—	7
Other Left	16	—	6
Giscardians/UDF	207	109	29
Gaullists (UMP after 2002)	242	140	357
Other Right	37	8	9
National Front	—	1	—
Greens	—	8	3

The Party System

ORIGINS OF THE PARTIES

Organized political parties appeared in France after the 1789 revolution. However, today's party system evolved from one that emerged about 1900. The Third Republic

had an extreme multiparty system with no party ever winning as many as one-quarter of the votes cast. The centrist Radical Socialist Party was the most important during the period. Hardly a government could be formed without support from a substantial part of that faction-ridden and undisciplined, but strategically placed, party. Multipartism was less extreme during the Fourth Republic, but the general configuration of the system survived, and the Radicals remained pivotal.

The ideological character of the party system underwent substantial change from the Third to the Fourth Republic. The Marxist Socialists and Communists were the only Third Republic parties to profess anything approaching systems of doctrine. The Radical Socialists rarely united on anything except resistance to the church and the state, and the rest of the political landscape was occupied by pragmatic, personalist cliques. The ideological parties were joined in the Fourth Republic by the Christian democratic Popular Republican Movement (Mouvement Républicain Populaire; MRP) and the nationalist Gaullists. Those four parties held 65 percent to 75 percent of the Assembly seats in the first three postwar parliaments (1945–56), but their strength and ideological commitment waned late in the Fourth Republic.

THE PARTIES IN LAW

Parties are virtually extralegal institutions. The 1958 constitution departed from French tradition by dealing explicitly with parties. Article 4 reads: "Parties and groups take part in the exercise of the suffrage. They may form and engage in their activities freely. They must respect the principles of national sovereignty and democracy."

The clause has been almost a dead letter. The last sentence was directed at the Communist Party because of its close ties to the Soviet Union and its authoritarian internal structure. However, neither the Communists nor any other party has been required to abide by its terms. In fact, the only application of Article 4 yet made was a Constitutional Council ruling that struck down parliamentary rules of order restricting the freedom of MPs to form party caucuses. No laws or decrees rest on the authority of Article 4, nor has the Constitutional Council applied that provision to parties outside parliament.

Few laws deal expressly with parties as organizations. However, parties are covered by a 1901 statute that governs all associations. Also, legislation regulating campaigns and elections refers to parties. For instance, certain types of parties are recognized as organizations eligible to receive governmental support in campaigns such as controlled access to radio and television and free mailings of candidates' flyers. Neither the associations' laws nor the campaign laws restrict the behavior of parties significantly. The former are very permissive, and the latter are easily and frequently evaded. An exception is a 1994 law requiring parties to submit their financial records to a national governmental commission, which publishes them but cannot verify their accuracy. The same law forbade corporate contributions to parties.

Political parties receive state subsidies. Half of the available fund was distributed among the parties that fielded at least 50 candidates in proportion to their share of the popular vote in the preceding parliamentary elections. The other half was distributed among the parties in parliament in proportion to their share of the seats. These subsidies stimulated the rapid formation of new parties. Also, in common with nonparty associations, parties have some tax advantages as nonprofit associations, their candidates get electoral campaign subsidies, and their newspapers benefit from press subventions. However, the amount of this aid to the parties is quite modest.

Candidates for the National Assembly file declarations at the prefecture of the appropriate department and pay small deposits, which are refunded to all candidates receiving at least 5 percent of the vote. A presidential nomination requires the signatures of 500 elected officeholders from at least 30 different departments. Political parties face penalties if they do not show an adequate level of parity between male and female candidates.

PARTY ORGANIZATION

Historically, French political parties followed two basic patterns of organization: the center and right were loosely organized and based on committees of leaders. The left had well-articulated, mass-membership parties.

That dichotomous structural pattern was broken in the early Fourth Republic by the Christian democratic MRP and the Gaullist Rally of the French People (RPF). Both were center or right parties that built mass-membership organizations somewhat similar to those of the left. As they declined late in the Fourth Republic, both movements adopted committee structures. Nevertheless, when Gaullism rebounded in the Fifth Republic, it resumed its mass-membership orientation. Also, after 1977 that model was followed, though less successfully, by what was the

largest component of the UDF, the Republican Party (PR; now Liberal Democracy). Thus, all three major parties today are, more or less successfully, mass-membership organizations, although the minor parties—except the Communists—tend to remain in the committee mold.

The activities of all French political parties center on elections. They spend most of their organizational time and effort working in local, parliamentary, and presidential campaigns to prepare for them or raise money to pay for them. Other activities, such as regular business meetings, conventions, and discussion sessions, have the primary purpose of keeping the organization in shape for the next election. The Communist Party engages in a somewhat broader range of activities.

The parties vary considerably in the relationship between the membership organizations and the parliamentary caucuses. The Communists see their MPs as infiltrators into enemy territory and treat them like potential defectors. Communist MPs are strictly accountable to the membership organization. Party policies and strategies are decided by the national committee and national bureau, and the MPs are expected to put them into effect loyally.

The Socialists subscribe to the same principle of authority, but usually Socialist MPs control the leading organs of the membership party. Thus, membership-party decisions differ little from those that the parliamentary caucus would make on its own. When the two branches conflict, the caucus prevails. The relationship is complicated by the faction-ridden character of the party. The resultant struggle for party unity leads to compromises that modify parliamentary dominance.

The highly authoritarian structure of the Gaullist Rally for the Republic (RPR; renamed the Union for a Popular Movement in the early 21st century) determines the relationship between its membership and parliamentary wings. Party founder Jacques Chirac dominates both the membership organization and the parliamentary caucus. A similar situation existed in the Republican Party, when Giscard d'Estaing was president of the republic. The Centrist and Radical membership parties have little say in the behavior of their caucuses.

Most parliamentary candidates are nominated by political parties. In all parties the decisions on parliamentary candidates are made through consultations within the local party, among local and national party leaders, and by negotiations among the parties. The amount of influence of the local party in the nominating process is roughly proportionate to its strength. In a party's weakest districts its main task is finding suitable candidates willing to run, and the national party often takes the initiative. At the other extreme, a strong local party with a well-entrenched incumbent deputy who wants reelection is virtually immune to national party intervention. Also, the parties vary greatly in the degree of centralization of the nomination process. The national headquarters of the Communist Party maintains an iron grip on all nominations, although it usually ratifies the recommendations of the departmental federations. The national office of the Socialist Party decides, in negotiation with the Left Radical Party, which seats to contest but defers to the local federations on the choice of candidates. The center-right parties engage in a delicate process of analysis and bargaining to agree on where they will hold first-round "primaries," where they will back a single candidate, and whom to nominate. The status and preferences of the local parties are considered, but the decisions are made nationally. In every election, some local leaders defy national headquarters and run as mavericks, a few winning. Most nominations, however, are uncontested, especially those sought by incumbent deputies.

In the early Fifth Republic major presidential candidacies were launched independently of parties, although they were endorsed and supported by parties later. De Gaulle had intended that presidential aspirants would be required to renounce party affiliation, but that intention did not survive the drafting of the constitution. As the republic has evolved, parties play a more prominent role in presidential nominations. Since 1974 the top leader of each party had its nomination for the asking. Nominations have been made with increasing uniformity by special delegate conventions at the national level.

CAMPAIGNING

Election campaigns in France are regulated by the designation of permissible activities and the prohibition of all others. Among those permitted are posters that may be mounted only on official billboards, circulars that conform to government rules and are sent to all voters in official mailings, radio and television broadcasts on the state network, and meetings with voters in public buildings. Most candidates evade the prohibitions through a variety of subterfuges. For instance, they print and distribute posters that advertise their parties and themselves but make no direct reference to the election. Also, they publish ephemeral "newspapers" and mail printed "letters" appealing for votes under

cover of constitutional guarantees of a free press and mail communications.

Campaigns are also regulated by financial controls. Individual contributions to parliamentary campaigns may not exceed an established limit. Donations by corporations and other organizations (except political parties) are forbidden. Assembly candidates must also abide by spending limits, depending on the population of the district being contested.

Broadcasting is free but tightly controlled. All candidates winning at least 5 percent of the votes cast are reimbursed for the costs of the paper and printing of their official ballots, posters, and circulars. Postage for those circulars and meeting space in public buildings are provided without charge. The state also reimburses them for half of all their other legal campaign expenses.

Since 1965 national party leaders have campaigned across the country in both presidential and parliamentary elections. Campaign rallies may draw 100,000 people or more in large population centers. However, very little local campaigning is conducted for presidential elections. Parliamentary elections are expensive, and presidential elections are even more costly, though there are legal limits on how much candidates can spend in each round of balloting.

The Gaullist and Communist national parties control local campaigning quite closely through direct instructions and subsidies. In the other parties, supervision is looser and less direct and results mainly from the campaign materials provided by the national organizations.

INDEPENDENT VOTERS

Generally speaking, voter loyalty to parties is strong, and there is a high level of consistency of partisanship between local and national elections. A prominent local personality, however, can overcome this pattern in local elections.

Major Political Parties

FRENCH COMMUNIST PARTY

(Parti communiste français; PCF)

HISTORY

The PCF was founded as the result of a split in 1920 in the Socialist Party. A three-to-one majority at its congress accepted Lenin's "twenty-one conditions" to join the Third Communist International. They included adopting the name "Communist," an intransigent revolutionary stance, an internal organization based on Lenin's "democratic centralism," unquestioning obedience to Moscow, and supporting the "socialist motherland" of the Soviet Union above French patriotism.

The general secretary, Maurice Thorez, ruled the party with an iron hand from 1930 until his death in 1964. Leaders since then have been Waldeck Rochet (1964–72), Georges Marchais (1972–94), Robert Hué (1994–2002), and Marie-George Buffet (2002–). The PCF was among those Communist Parties most loyal to the Soviet Union. Since the collapse of international Communism, the PCF has searched for a new orientation but continues to present itself as the champion of the "workers." It has changed less in name, structure, and policies than any other European Communist Party. That ideological recalcitrance has not, however, prevented it from forming tactical alliances with other leftist parties in most elections and joining Socialist-dominated governments.

ORGANIZATION

The PCF has the most elaborate structure among French political parties. Its base units are 23,000 to 25,000 cells at workplaces, in neighborhoods, or in rural villages. They are grouped into 2,500 "sections." All sections in a department form a federation. Each unit in that structure has a bureau with a secretary and a treasurer. The sovereign organ is the national congress, which meets every three years with some 1,200 delegates from the federations, roughly in proportion to their size. The congress elects the national secretary (formerly general secretary) and the national committee (formerly central committee) of some 150 members. The national committee elects the secretariat (seven or eight secretaries) and the other 15 members of the national bureau (formerly politburo). The secretaries are professional managers who run the party under the supervision of the national committee, to which the authority of the congress is delegated between its meetings. In practice, the national secretary is virtually unassailable.

For decades, the party appeared monolithic. However, in recent years, open dissent and minority factions have been permitted. Hué's majority faction is now flanked by an "ultraorthodox" group on the right and a "reconstructive" wing on the left.

L'Humanité, the party's flagship daily in Paris (circ. some 48,000), is the only major newspaper to serve as an organ of a political party. The PCF holds 40 percent ownership in the newspaper, with sympathetic individuals and companies rounding out the remaining 60 percent. More than a century old, the newspaper was

founded in 1904 and once claimed a daily circulation of 400,000. Despite this prominence, *L'Humanité* has survived on a regular infusion of party funds. Two small provincial dailies maintain a similarly tenuous existence, as do a few local weeklies. Party periodicals are *Regards* and *La Terre* (for farmers).

Communist auxiliaries include youth, student, and women's associations. Also, the party has a Marxist Research Institute and an elaborate program to train and indoctrinate its prospective leaders.

Communist militants control or influence significantly a wide range of leftist organizations. The largest and most important is the General Confederation of Labor (Confédération Génerale de Travail; CGT), which claims about 700,000 members. The power of the CGT depends on its ability to attract the votes of non-Communists in representational elections. Therefore, if it serves the PFC contrary to the interests of the workers as perceived by those non-Communists, it loses support. PCF domination of the CGT has declined, and in 1996 official ties between the two organizations were severed.

POLICY

Historically, the party's policies were rooted in Marxist-Leninist ideology. However, the general disarray of international Communism has badly shaken that connection. Since 1976 it has gradually abandoned such basic tenets of Marxism as the dictatorship of the proletariat, democratic centralism, and a one-party state. Nevertheless, the party continues to oppose traditional capitalism and favors nationalization of productive property, except peasant-owned farmland. It advocates the redistribution of wealth through confiscatory taxation and generous social welfare programs. The disappearance of the Soviet Union has left it disoriented on foreign policy questions, though it continues to maintain an anti-American and anti–European Union (EU) agenda.

MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY

The PCF membership has fluctuated greatly over the decades. It trailed the Section Française de l'Internationale Ouvrière (SFIO) badly throughout the interwar period but grew rapidly after 1944. By 1947 it was the largest party in France, claiming over 900,000 members, three times its prewar peak. That figure fell steadily through the cold war period until it hit 250,000 in 1956. It claimed a recovery in membership rolls in the late 20th century but now probably represents no more than 150,000–200,000 active, dues-paying members.

Because Communist voting strength has declined proportionately to its claimed membership rise, the gap between them has narrowed substantially since 1956. In that year it had 22 voters for every member claimed. In 1997 it had 8.3. Historically, Communist strength was greatest among industrial workers, and they still account for about half of the party's members and constitute its largest bloc of voters. However, both the Socialists and conservatives draw more than twice as many votes from that source as does the PCF, and even the right-wing National Front has a larger working-class vote. The party's voters are concentrated in industrialized regions, especially Paris and its working-class suburbs. Other strongholds include the industrial north and some of the poorer rural areas in the south.

FINANCING

At the end of the Communist era the PCF was receiving a subsidy of some $2 million a year from the Soviet Union. Today about one-third of the annual PCF budget comes from membership dues, while another third comes from regular fund drives and donations. The remainder is based on the salaries of party officials and miscellaneous profits from publishing and other commercial ventures. The PCF budget is spent primarily on publicity (about one-half) and operational expenses and salaries (about one-fourth).

PROSPECTS

Long-term prospects for the PCF seem bleak, though the failure of the Socialists to win an absolute majority of the National Assembly seats in 1997 gave the PCF a glimpse of potential political leverage. Still, the PCF share of the vote remained below 10 percent at the end of the 20th century, and in the early 21st century, below 5 percent, leaving it consistently in about fifth place. Membership hasn't rebounded after falling in the late 20th century. The Socialists dominate the French left, and even the right-wing National Front regularly outpolls the PCF. The once-great party seems doomed to remain marginalized, more likely to survive as an historical artifact than as an important political force.

SOCIALIST PARTY

(Parti socialiste; PS)

HISTORY

Modern French Socialism dates to 1905, when most of the movement united as the Section Française de l'Internationale Ouvrière. Although the party was reformist in practice, its policy program proclaimed

it a "class party whose goal is to transform capitalist society into a collectivist or communist society." That split between action and rhetoric marked the SFIO for the next 64 years.

From 1920 until 1969, the SFIO was dominated by Leon Blum (1920–46) and Guy Mollet (1946–69). During that time the party withered in membership, voting strength, and doctrinal integrity, despite brief periods of government leadership (1936–38; 1946). By the time Mollet ascended to the post of premier (1956–57), the SFIO had become so "bourgeois" that the government's policies were virtually indistinguishable from those of the conservatives.

The Socialist revival began in 1969 when Alain Savary became general secretary and changed its name to the French Socialist Party. Most party leaders at all levels were replaced by 1971 when François Mitterrand brought his confederation of political clubs into the PS, became first secretary, and reoriented French Socialism decisively leftward. Mitterrand pursued the "Union of the Left" strategy he had followed consistently since 1958 to unite the traditional parties of the left (Socialist, Radical, Communist) against Gaullism.

By 1972 he had negotiated a Common Program with the PCF and the Left Radical Party. That alliance increased leftist strength in the 1973 parliamentary and 1974 presidential elections but fell apart in the 1978 parliamentary elections. His strategy finally triumphed in 1981. Mitterrand won the presidency with the essential help of Communist votes, and the PS outvoted the PCF more than two to one in the parliamentary elections. Socialists received a larger share of the poll than any left party in French history. The PS, with the PCF in harness, drove the right from all the bastions of power.

Since then the Socialist record has been mixed. Excessive zeal in socializing the economy in 1981–83 produced high inflation, high unemployment, and low growth, costing them their parliamentary majority in 1986. They recovered in 1988 but slumped by the mid-1990s. In 1995, when Mitterand retired, the Socialists lost the presidency as Socialist Lionel Jospin was defeated by Jacques Chirac. Two years later, however, the Socialists, in alliance with the Communists, won the parliamentary elections and formed a government under Jospin. When Jospin was again defeated by Chirac in the 2002 elections, he retired, handing the party leadership to François Hollande.

ORGANIZATION

The French Socialist movement has always been highly factionalized. For instance, in 1995 the 19 "political" members of the national secretariat represented 11 factions. The factions are represented in the leadership organs in numbers proportionate to their support among the party members.

The basic units of the PS are 1,500 local sections. They require at least five members and may be formed by residence, workplace, or university. Sections send delegates to the 102 departmental federations in proportion to the size of their membership. Federation representation in the regional coordinating committees, national congresses, and national conventions has similar bases. Traditionally, the four largest federations (Nord, Bouches-du-Rhone, Pas-de-Calais, and Paris) have dominated the national party. The members of the federations elect some 600 delegates and an equal number of alternates to the national congresses that meet biennially as the sovereign decision-making body of the party and to the conventions that meet at least twice a year on specific policy issues. The congresses elect a first secretary and 204 members of the national council. The federation secretaries, who are elected in each department by the rank-and-file members, join the national council by right. The council makes the major decisions between congresses and elects from among its members by proportional representation a national bureau of 59 members that meets weekly and supervises the day-to-day management of the party. The first secretary appoints from the majority faction or coalition the national secretariat, with which he runs the party. The secretariat numbers 15 to 20 members, each with specified policy or administrative responsibilities. The PS is a member of the Socialist International.

The PS has no official national party daily newspaper, although *Libération* tends to be sympathetic to it. *Le Provençal* in Marseilles and *Nord-Martin* in Lille are the leading (unofficial) Socialist dailies in the provinces.

The largest organization associated with the PS is the Confédération Française Démocratique du Travail (CFDT), a trade union with some 900,000 members. Such affinities bind the PS to other trade unions, including the general labor confederation Force Ouvrière (FO), or "Workers' Force." Also, the party sponsors youth, women's, and farm associations.

POLICY

The PS has moved away from the radical Socialist reformism of the early 1980s, with its stress on nationalization and major changes in labor-management legislation, and has renounced Marxism in favor of a "mixed economy." It proposed to

ease unemployment by reducing the work week without loss of purchasing power, a policy it was able to introduce while in government in the late 1990s. The party is a fierce protector of social welfare programs and of the public education system. It resists privatization but advocates no further nationalization. Internationally, it supports a European approach to protection, both economically and militarily. It prides itself on its commitments to civil liberties and to aid to the Third World.

MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY

The party claimed about 120,000 members in the early 21st century. It declined steadily from a peak of about 355,000 in 1945 to a low of perhaps 15,000 in the late 1960s (although it never admitted to fewer than 75,000). Under Mitterrand's leadership, it recovered to about 250,000 members shortly after its 1981 election victory.

Support for the PS remains most solid among certain categories of state employees (teachers, postal employees, railroad workers), industrial workers in some regions (the north and Provence) and sectors (light and medium manufacturing), and farmers in the center and south. Overall, it is weakest among farmers and small-business owners. However, the party has been successful in recent years in broadening its appeal to some categories of the French, especially practicing Catholics. The party is strongest in the north, parts of the east, and Provence. It does better south of the Loire River than north of it. It draws less than its share of women and more than its share of the young.

FINANCING

The annual PS budget comes mainly from state subsidies, membership dues, and levies on its MPs. Finally, the party collects considerable sums in special fund drives and individual contributions. The amounts received from each source depend on electoral success and size of membership.

PROSPECTS

The 1981 triumph of the Socialists had been pyrrhic. The economic program on which they had been elected failed, forcing an embarrassing about-face. Their mission was complicated by bitter infighting under Mitterrand and the challenge of an emerging environmental movement. In 1997, despite Jospin's lackluster public persona, the parliamentary elections gave the Socialists an almost miraculous second chance. Despite the setback of 2002, the Socialists remained relevant, making gains in the 2004 regional elections. The party signaled a move to the center in the early 21st century, one example being their support of the European Union constitution in 2004.

LEFT RADICAL PARTY

(Parti Radical du Gauche; PRG)

This minor party is a junior partner of the PS in electoral alliances, in parliament, and in left-wing governments. It began in 1972, with the name Left Radical Movement (MRG), as a band of Radical Socialists disgruntled by the decision of their party to form an alliance with centrists. It signed the Common Program with the Communists and Socialists in July 1972, fought the 1973 parliamentary elections allied with both groups, and fought the 1978 elections in concert with the Socialists. Its delegation to the National Assembly since that time has hovered between 5 and 15 elected seats.

NATIONAL FRONT

(Front national; FN)

This nationalist party was founded in 1972 by Jean-Marie Le Pen (1928–), who remains its president. Le Pen was a paratrooper in the Algerian war and briefly a deputy late in the Fourth Republic. The Front entered parliament in 1986 with 2.7 million votes (9.7 percent) and 35 deputies. However, when the proportional representation electoral system was dropped, it retained only one seat in 1988 and made few gains in subsequent elections. Le Pen won 15.3 percent of the presidential vote in 1995 but made a serious bid for power during the presidential elections of 2002. In first-round voting that year Le Pen won 16.9 percent, sending Lionel Jospin into retirement and forcing a second-round runoff against Jacques Chirac. Le Pen was soundly defeated, gaining only 17.8 percent of the final vote, but winning worldwide attention for his surprising first-round showing. The Front has more than 2,200 members in regional and local councils and 11 in the European Parliament.

The party structure includes a quadrennial congress open to all members; a 100-member central committee elected by the congress as the main decision-making body between congresses; a 40-member political bureau, appointed by the president from the central committee, that manages the party through monthly meetings; and a national council composed of the central committee, the political bureau, the national and regional elected officials, and departmental secre-

taries, and appointed "personalities" that meets two or three times a year to debate the general orientation of the party. Finally, the president, four vice presidents, delegate general, treasurer, and general secretary form an executive bureau that manages the party on a day-to-day basis.

The National Front attracts support mainly for its anti-immigrant stance, although its policies also include tough anticrime positions, suspicion of European integration, tax reform, ultranationalism, and trade protectionism. The party is widely known for a populist form of social conservatism that has polarized the nation. It claims 80,000 members. Its strongholds are in the east, especially the southeast, and among repatriated Algerian settlers, workers in areas with large numbers of immigrants, and the unemployed. Its voters are less Catholic and less well educated than the electorate as a whole.

FN auxiliary organizations include a national youth front that claims 15,000 members, a student renewal organization for university students, more than 20 special-interest "circles," and several small labor unions. It also has a "security service" of 3,000 to 7,000 members trained to use firearms. It publishes a bimonthly "Letter" from Le Pen. Publications close to the FN include the daily *Présent* and the weekly *National Hebdo and Rivarol*. The FN is largely financed by annual dues, a levy on its members who win elective office, and an annual state subsidy.

UNION FOR A POPULAR MOVEMENT

(Union pour Mouvement Populaire; UMP)

HISTORY

The UMP is the "orthodox" Gaullist party. It was created in 2002 under the title Union for a Presidential Majority (Union pour la Majorité Présidentielle), and it arose out of the merger of Rally for the Republic (Rassemblement pour la République; RPR) and Liberal Democracy (Démocratie Libérale; DL). The main branch of the party originated in the program of democratic nationalism and strong central leadership of General Charles de Gaulle. The Gaullist movement's first party, the Gaullist Union (1946), was soon absorbed by de Gaulle's own Rally of the French People (RPF), which quickly became the largest party in France with one million members and 120 deputies in 1951. Nevertheless, the party failed to effect constitutional reform and declined precipitously in the early 1950s. When de Gaulle retired from politics in 1955, only 80 deputies remained faithful to him.

With de Gaulle's return to power, the party revived as the Union for the New Republic and won 188 seats in the 1958 elections. It led the Assembly for the next 20 years. In 1974, after the party's candidate lost the presidential election, Prime Minister Jacques Chirac took over the party, now called the Union of Democrats for the Republic (UDR), to make it more aggressive. After Chirac resigned as premier in 1976 he assumed the party's presidency, changed its name to the RPR, centralized its structure, and launched a massive membership drive. Nevertheless, the party lost its leadership of the Assembly in 1978 and was reduced to an opposition role in 1981. Since then it has alternated between being the largest opposition party and the largest ruling party. Prior to its reorganization as the UMP in the early 21st century, the RPR regularly fought elections in alliance with the parties of Liberal Democracy and the Union for French Democracy.

ORGANIZATION

The UMP is a mass organization, claiming about 150,000 members. The president is elected for three-year terms by general vote of the membership. He chairs its national bodies and appoints the general secretary and executive committee, who assist him in managing the organization. He sets the size of the executive committee and the task assignments of its members.

National conventions (*assises rationales*), composed of several thousand delegates, meet biennially to define policy and choose 100 national councilors. Each constituency federation elects a number of delegates proportionate to the size of its membership. National councilors, MPs, and economic and social councilors are ex officio members.

Between conventions, management of the party is reviewed by a national council that must meet at least annually. Its members are the policy committee members, MPs, departmental secretaries and presidents, and the 100 members elected by the convention. The policy committee may add constituency secretaries to the council.

The main party units below the national level are departmental federations and constituency associations. The former are headed by secretaries appointed by the party's president and ratified by the departmental committee and by presidents, who are in turn elected

by the departmental committees. At least two-thirds of a departmental committee's members are elected by the constituency members plus, ex officio, the main UMP elected officials. The constituency associations are led by a secretary who is elected by the membership and by a committee composed in the same way as the departmental committees.

The party publishes *Le magazine de l'Union* and *Bulletin des élus locaux*.

POLICY

The UMP professes to advocate policies in line with those pursued by de Gaulle. He pursued foreign policies intended to promote national independence and "grandeur." That meant a defense policy based on a French nuclear striking force, aversion to NATO's military system or any international organization not controlled by France, and special ties with former French colonies and other French-speaking areas. It meant commitment to a strong, centralized state and domestic policies designed to cement French unity and strength, such as "participation" of workers in management, economic modernization, and hostility to ethnic particularism. The party has modified some traditional Gaullist policy positions. It now favors sweeping privatizations, including enterprises nationalized by de Gaulle, and it advocates closer integration in the European Union and NATO and greater decentralization of the French state than did de Gaulle. Its economic policies resemble those of the monetarists in the United States and Great Britain more closely than those of de Gaulle. Also, it has toughened its stand on immigration restrictions, apparently responding to the challenge on the right from the National Front.

MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY

The Gaullists made good use of its opposition interlude to strengthen its internal organization, raising its membership total to about 850,000 in 1985, but it fell again to about 150,000 in the late 1990s.

RPR supporters are predominantly middle-aged, middle-class, northern, and Catholic. The largest occupational category is "businessmen, tradesmen, and members of the fee-earning professions," followed by white-collar workers, middle management, workers, farmers, and upper management. The party is strongest north of the Loire Valley, especially in Paris and its middle-class suburbs. Other areas of strength are such traditional Catholic regions as Alsace, Lorraine, and Brittany. Throughout France, practicing Catholics support Gaullism disproportionately.

FINANCING

The UMP is very well financed. Given the size and relative affluence of its membership, it also receives a substantial income in members' dues and contributions. In addition, it can call on many prosperous French who choose not to join the party. Finally, its supporters are well able to donate time, effort, and physical resources. The 1994 law banning corporate contributions hit the Gaullists the hardest, costing it nearly $10 million in income. Nevertheless, the movement does not suffer from lack of funds. Especially when it holds national office, its regular income is supplemented through the diversion of state resources such as staff time.

PROSPECTS

The Union for a Popular Movement is the largest, best-organized, and most well-financed party on the right. The party generally followed Chirac's lead but also showed independence in recent years.

UNION FOR FRENCH DEMOCRACY

(Union pour la démocratie francaise; UDF)

Centrist and right-center parties have formed electoral alliances as the UDF for every national election since 1978, though now it is considered a single party rather than an alliance of parties. The UDF was founded in 1974 by Valéry Giscard d'Estaing. The UDF faced challenges in 1998 when the party lost the support of the DL, and in 2002 when many members fled to the newly formed UMP. As a result, the party won less than 5 percent of the vote in 2002 and only 29 seats. Most UDF deputies join a parliamentary caucus of the same name. The sovereign decision-making body is the national council of some 1,700 delegates elected by the departmental federations of the constituent parties, proportionately to their respective membership sizes. The council chooses 18 members of the political bureau, the main factions represented proportionately. The political bureau also includes two persons selected by each constituent unit, the current and former UDF presidents, the general secretary, and the presidents of the parliamentary caucuses. The political bureau runs the UDF between national council meetings. It advocates a federalist agenda for the European Union.

Minor Political Parties

CITIZENS' MOVEMENT

(Mouvement des Citoyens; MDC)

This party was founded in December 1993 by PS defector Jean-Pierre Chevènement (1939–). Its members come mainly from the CERES, formerly the left-wing faction of the PS. He is a deputy, was defense minister under Mitterrand until he resigned over the Gulf War, and is interior minister in the Jospin government. The party's structure includes a sovereign congress open to all 800 or so party members that elects a president, seven vice presidents, a general secretary, and 14 members and three alternates of a national secretariat that also has five ex officio members.

REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST LEAGUE

(Ligue communiste révolutionnaire; LCR)

The LCR is a Trotskyite Communist party, led by Alain Krivine, Olivier Besancenot, and Roseline Vachetto.

Other Political Forces

ENVIRONMENTALISTS

The environmentalist movement came late to France and is badly divided. For example, the eight "ecologists" elected to parliament in 1997 had four different party affiliations. The most important of the political parties are the Greens (Verts) and Ecological Generation (Génération Ecologiste; GE).

The Greens are a militant, leftist movement of more than 5,000 members, based on environmentalism but with other left-wing causes on their agenda. The GE is more moderate, with a sharper focus on environmental issues. The Greens formed an electoral alliance with GE in 1993 and with the Socialists in 1997 and 2002.

The "sovereign body" of the Greens is the biennial ordinary general assembly. It meets first in regional sections open to all party members. They elect delegates to the second-phase federal assembly that meets the following month. The general assembly decides the general policy orientation of the party and elects for two-year terms the members of the interregional national council (CNIR), 90 by the regional sections and 30 by the federal assembly. The CNIR is the governing body of the national party with responsibility for implementing the decisions of the general assemblies. Noèl Mamère was the Green Party candidate for president in 2002.

The GE organization consists of a national council of 64 members and a small executive council appointed by the president. Brice Lalonde, who founded the party in 1990, remains its leader.

UNIONS

Union organizations include the large Confédération Générale du Travail (CGT), which was long associated with the French Communist Party. The Confédération Française Démocratique du Travail (CFDT) is tied to the French Socialist Party. Other unions include the Force Ouvrière (FO), Confédération Générale des Cadres, and Mouvement des Entreprises de France (MEDEF).

National Prospects

Politically, France approaches the near future in better shape than at any time in its modern history. Its governmental institutions are anchored solidly in a consensus that includes all significant political movements. The last remaining institutional question mark was erased by the willingness of all major parties—right and left—to accept the "cohabitation" of a president of one political orientation with a government and parliament of the opposite persuasion in 1986–88, 1993–95, and 1997–2002.

The political parties have shown similar adaptability, easing much of the traditional ideological tension in French politics. The Gaullists have softened the edges of their nationalism, and the Socialists have abandoned their revolutionary rhetoric—including their commitments to nationalization of industry and to a secular monopoly on education. The PCF has been marginalized, and the National Front seems locked in a single-issue stance. Recent accommodations of the parties reflect a rising consensus in the general public.

In short, France is in the mainstream of Western democracy. While French politics is, in no sense, a carbon copy of the American, British, German, or Scandinavian models, it shares their basic managerial, pragmatic, consensual orientation.

However, French confidence in their governmental system is undermined by the pervasive political-financial corruption. Major political figures have been deeply implicated in serious scandals.

Mitterrand left behind a very mixed record. His early Socialist economic programs engendered high unemployment and low growth rates that seem to have become endemic. Much more successful and durable was the decentralization program of his interior minister, Gaston Defferre. His sweeping transfer of functions, authority, and resources from the national to the regional and local levels of government has transformed the French state irreversibly and was accepted loyally by his conservative successors.

The French state has also yielded authority to the European Union. As with its partners in that enterprise, its national prospects are bound up very tightly with those of the EU. Despite recent expansions of the EU, France and Germany continue to dominate its affairs. The times, under de Gaulle, when France blocked progress toward integration are long past. France now benefits too greatly from the EU to sabotage it. Because economic protectionism continues to hold sway in French political economic circles, French influence often works to the detriment of world trade and, inevitably, the long-term health of the French economy.

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GABONESE REPUBLIC

(La République Gabonaise)

By Lauren Yoder, Ph.D.
Revised by Dora Ioveva



Gabon is a nation in Central Africa on the equator with a population of approximately 1.38 million (2005 est.). At Gabon's independence in 1960, the government was modeled after the French Fifth Republic. There were two principal parties, the Gabonese Democratic Group (BDG) led by Léon M'Ba and the Gabonese Democratic and Social Union (UDSG) led by J. H. Aubame. In 1966 M'Ba was reelected president and Albert-Bernard (later Omar) Bongo was elected vice president. M'Ba's death later that year elevated Bongo to the presidency. He has been reelected every five years since 1973. The most recent presidential election, in 1993, was marred somewhat by the lack of transparency, but Bongo, one of nine candidates, was declared the winner with 51 percent of the vote. The strongest opposition candidate, Paul M'Ba Abessole of the Movement for National Regeneration–Woodcutters (MORENA-B) received just over 26 percent.

Throughout his years as president, Bongo has attempted to maintain the stability of the political system while submerging rivalries and broadening participation. In 1968 he dissolved all existing political parties and announced the formation of a single party, the Gabonese Democratic Party (Parti Démocratique Gabonais; PDG). In 1975 the office of vice president was abolished along with the right of automatic succession and the office of prime minister was created. Following demands for reform by the Second Extraordinary Congress of the PDG in 1979, Bongo announced several democratizing measures within the party and reshuffled top government officials.

Opposition to the PDG continued throughout the 1980s, however. Student and worker unrest led finally to the convening of a national conference in 1990. Those discussions brought about major changes in the political system, nationwide multiparty parliamentary elections, and a new constitution. The constitution of 1991 and its 1994 revision demonstrate a commitment to liberal democracy and to the guarantee of civil liberties, including the freedom to organize political parties. Among the constitution's provisions are a bill of rights, the guarantee of an independent judiciary, and the establishment of a bicameral legislature. However, in 2003 the PDG-dominated legislature passed a constitutional amendment that eliminated presidential term limits, thus clearing the way for Bongo to serve for life.

The System of Government

Gabon is a multiparty republic with a presidential form of government. It has a bicameral legislature consisting of the National Assembly and the Senate.

EXECUTIVE

The president of Gabon is head of state and the commander in chief of the armed forces. The presidency is by far the most powerful political office in the Gabonese political system. According to the constitution, the primary powers of the president are the determination of

national policy and the exercise of exclusive executive power. As head of the executive branch, the president may propose legislation as well as execute laws passed by the legislature.

The president appoints the prime minister, cabinet members proposed by the prime minister, three of the nine judges who sit on the Constitutional Court, and many other officials. The president has the authority to dissolve the National Assembly, to declare a state of emergency (which gives him additional powers), to delay legislation, to submit proposals for vote by referendum, and to appoint and dismiss the prime minister and cabinet members. A 2003 constitutional amendment removed presidential term limits and facilitated a presidency for life.

The prime minister as head of government selects the members of the cabinet or Council of Ministers (Conseil des Ministres), most of whom are members of the National Assembly. In 2005 the prime minister was Jean-François Ntoutoume-Emane.

LEGISLATURE

Legislative power in Gabon is vested in a bicameral parliament. The National Assembly has 120 members: 111 are directly elected by their constituents for five-year terms in single-seat constituencies, and nine are appointed by the president. The 91 members of the Senate are elected indirectly and represent local governments. Senators serve six-year terms.

The legislature's role is to make laws and approve taxes, though bills may be initiated by either parliament or the executive branch. Any bill related to finances or constitutional revision must first be considered by the National Assembly. Any bill related to local government is presented first in the Senate. If the two houses fail to agree on the provisions or the wording of a bill, the prime minister has the authority to call a joint committee to work out an agreement.

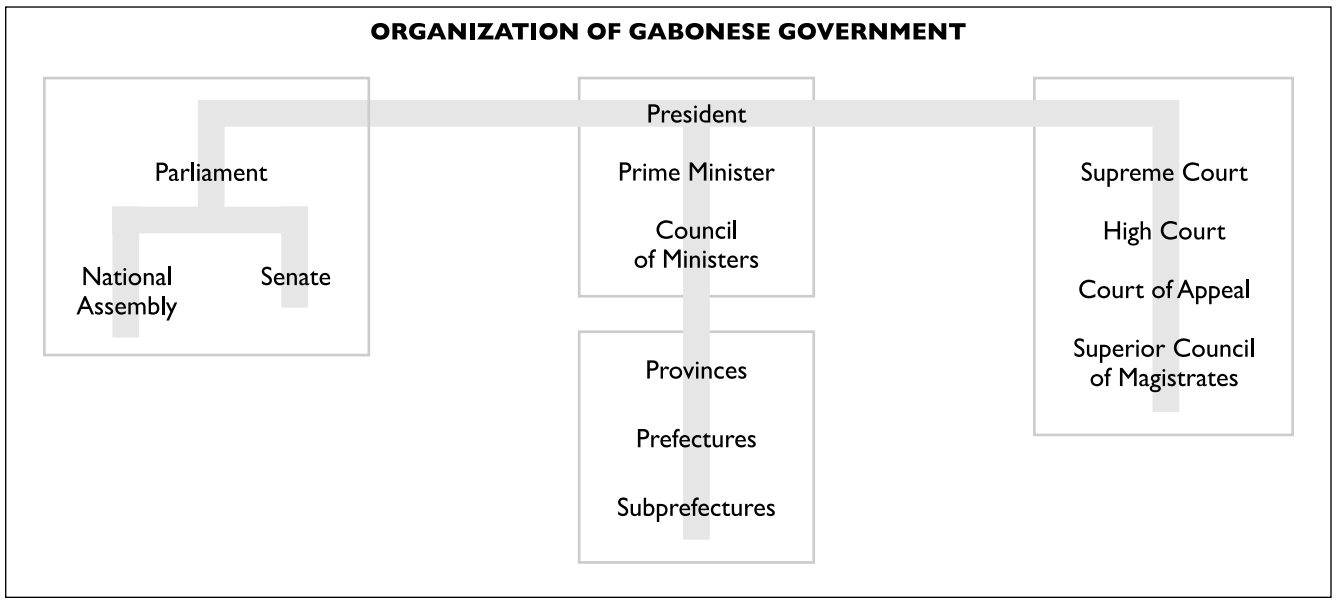
Should the president of the republic dissolve the National Assembly, which action is limited to once during any 12-month period, new elections must be held between 30 and 45 days later. The National Assembly may censure or withdraw its confidence from the government, precipitating the resignation of the prime minister.

The first parliamentary elections under the new constitution were held in December 1996 for the National Assembly and in January and February 1997 for the Senate. The 2001 and 2003 legislative elections were boycotted by many opposition parties and were widely criticized by international observers. The elections resulted in a National Assembly dominated by the PDG.

JUDICIARY

The judiciary is based on the French civil code and customary law. It ranges from local courts ruling on issues of tribal law to the high courts created by the 1991/94 constitution. The judiciary is unequivocally coequal with the executive and legislative branches, and its independence is guaranteed by the constitution.

The highest court in Gabon is the Supreme Court, as well as a Court of Appeals and Superior Council of the Magistrates below it. The constitution also provides



for a High Court that would be convened to judge the president of the republic in the event that parliament, by a two-thirds majority, should accuse the president of treason or of failing to uphold his oath of office. The 2003 constitutional amendment that removed presidential term limits appears to have stripped power from the High Court and further consolidated it in the presidency.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Gabon is divided into nine provinces, which are further divided into 36 prefectures and eight separate subprefectures. Until 1996, all provincial governors, prefects, and subprefects were appointed by the president. A 1996 law provides for the election of municipal and provincial councils on a proportional partisan basis.

The Electoral System

Suffrage in Gabon is universal. All Gabonese nationals 21 years of age or older are eligible electors, and voting is by secret ballot. Elections for local and provincial councils as well as national elections are administered by the newly created (1996) independent National Election Commission.

The Party System

Between 1968 and 1990 Gabon was a single-party state under the control of the Gabonese Democratic Party (PDG). President Bongo was also the head of the PDG. The 1980s witnessed the formation of illegal opposition parties as well as pressure from the reform wing of the PDG to open the political arena to include opposition parties. After the 1990 conference that addressed the concerns of labor unions and students, Bongo agreed to resign as party head (replaced by Jacques Adiahenot).

In May 1990 opposition parties were legalized, and later that year multiparty parliamentary elections were held. The primary opposition party was the Mouvement pour le Redressement National (MORENA), which later split into MORENA-Bûcherons and MORENA-originel. Nevertheless, despite the advent of legalized opposition parties, Gabon remains essentially a one-party state as of 2005.

Major Political Parties

GABONESE DEMOCRATIC PARTY

(Parti Démocratique Gabonais; PDG)

PDG, the party of President Bongo, was founded in 1968 when he convinced the members of the Bloc Démocratique Gabonais (BDG) and the Union Démocratique et Sociale Gabonaise (UDSG) to merge into a single party in the interest of preventing ethnic and regional conflict. It is still the dominant political party in Gabon. In the National Assembly elections of 2001 the PDG won 88 of the 120 seats. In the Senate elections of 2003 the PDG won 54 of the 91 seats.

Minor Political Parties

The two opposition parties with the most substantial representation in Parliament are the National Woodcutters Rally (Rassemblement National des Bûcherons; RNB), the former MORENA-B; and the Gabonese Progress Party (Parti gabonais du progrès; PGP). The leader of the RNB is Paul M'Ba Abessole, who received 13.4 percent of the popular vote during the presidential elections of 1998. The leader of the PGP is Pierre Louis Agondjo-Okawé. The RNB won eight seats in the 2001 National Assembly elections, while the PGP won three seats.

Other opposition parties with representation in parliament include the Convention of Reformist Liberals (Convention des Libéraux Réformateurs; CLR), the Democratic and Republican Alliance (Alliance Démocratique et Républicaine; ADERE), and the Social Democrat Party (Parti Social-Démocrate; PSD).

Other Political Forces

The military does not typically intervene in the country's political system. A significant external force is France, which maintains close ties with Gabon and has long exerted a stabilizing influence on the country's political system.

National Prospects

International observers were encouraged by Gabon's opening of the political process during the 1990s after the authoritarian regime of the 1970s and 1980s. In

spite of some criticism of undue governmental influence during the presidential elections of 1993 on the side of the PDG, most observers felt that substantial progress had been made toward transparency and openness. The elimination of presidential term limits in 2003 was not welcomed by observers, however.

Two potential sources of instability need to be addressed. The considerable petroleum-based wealth of the country must be distributed more equitably, and leaders must remain vigilant to the danger of conflict between ethnic groups.

An additional perennial question is the nature of Gabon's relationship with France. Close economic and military ties between the two countries have been a stabilizing force since independence (though some would say that more pressure from France could have brought about multiparty democracy much earlier). Prospects seem good for Gabon to maintain a reasonably open and progressive political system.

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REPUBLIC OF THE GAMBIA

By Steven Metz, M.A.
Revised by Mohamed Mbodj, Ph.D.
Further revision by Abdul Karim Bangura, Ph.D.



Gambia is a country of 11,295 square kilometers in western Africa. Its main ethnic groups are the Mandinka, 42 percent; Fula, 18 percent; Wolof, 16 percent, Joola, 10 percent, and Serahuli, 9 percent. The vast majority of the 1.59 million people (90 percent) are Muslim, and approximately 10 percent are Christian.

From 1965, when the nation became independent, until 1970, Gambia was a constitutional monarchy under the British sovereign. The Gambian Republic was declared and the present constitution promulgated in 1970. David Jawara, who was then prime minister, became the first president. The People's Progressive Party (PPP), which Jawara founded in 1959, exercised absolute domination over the new state's politics from 1962 until 1981.

Following an attempt by Marxist rebels to overthrow the government in 1981, a loose confederation was formed with Senegal, which dwarfs Gambia in size and surrounds it geographically. While both nations remained sovereign under this plan, there was a limited integration of security functions, communications, and monetary and economic systems and coordination of foreign policy. The confederation collapsed in 1989 due mainly to Gambia's reluctance to further integrate.

In 1994 an army lieutenant, Yaya Jammeh, staged a successful coup deposing President Jawara. The young officers wanted to rid the country of widespread corruption and the ubiquitous sex tourism, and they hoped to upgrade the country's derelict infrastructure. They saw the PPP as a syndicate of corrupt leaders who had enriched themselves at the expense of their people. After almost two years of military rule, which was marred by several failed coups by former close associates, Jammeh lifted the ban on political activity in August 1996. A new constitution was adopted at the same time.

The new constitution provided for a presidential system and a 49-seat parliament (the number of seats has since been increased to 53). Since that time, despite the banning of some of the precoup parties and many setbacks, the country has enjoyed a fairly democratic system, which largely protects freedom of the press and respects most human and political rights. However, the passage of a law in December 2004 that makes all press offenses punishable by imprisonment has eroded these liberties. Also in December 2004 Deyda Hydara, managing editor and co-owner of the private weekly *The Point,* was assassinated. Hydara had been a critic of Jammeh's policies, especially the five-fold increase in the cost of operating licenses for newspaper owners.

The System of Government

Gambia is a democratic republic with a strong president and a unicameral legislature. The constitution was adopted in 1996.

EXECUTIVE

The primary executive officer in Gambia is the president, who is head of government, head of state, and commander in chief of the security forces. In addition to the usual executive functions dealing with the application of law, the president also has the power to dissolve the legislature and call new elections. Candidates for the presidency must be at least 30 years old and registered voters. The president is chosen by direct election with universal suffrage. A vice president is chosen at the same time as the president. The term of office is five years.

The most recent presidential election was held on October 18, 2001, under relatively calm conditions. A reported relaxation in voter identification requirements sparked controversy, and a turnout of approximately 90 percent was reported. Jammeh was reelected to the presidency, with 52.9 percent of the vote cast, and his major challenger, Ousainou Darboe, received 32.7 percent of the votes. Although Darboe conceded defeat, members of the opposition disputed the legitimacy of the results because of the incorrect method of distributing voting credentials and the counting of the ballots.

LEGISLATURE

The unicameral legislature of Gambia is composed of the House of Representatives, with 53 members. Of these, 48 are selected by direct election from single-member districts and five are appointed by the president. The president of the republic sets the legislative sessions; however, according to the constitution, they may be no more than 12 months apart. The president may also call extraordinary sessions of the legislature.

All laws must be passed by a majority vote in the House of Representatives. A bill that receives majority support is then sent to the president for his signature. If the president chooses not to sign a bill, it can be resubmitted to him within six months if approved by a two-thirds vote of the House. If a bill receives the necessary support and is resubmitted, the president must either sign the bill or dissolve the legislature. The normal term for the House of Representatives is five years.

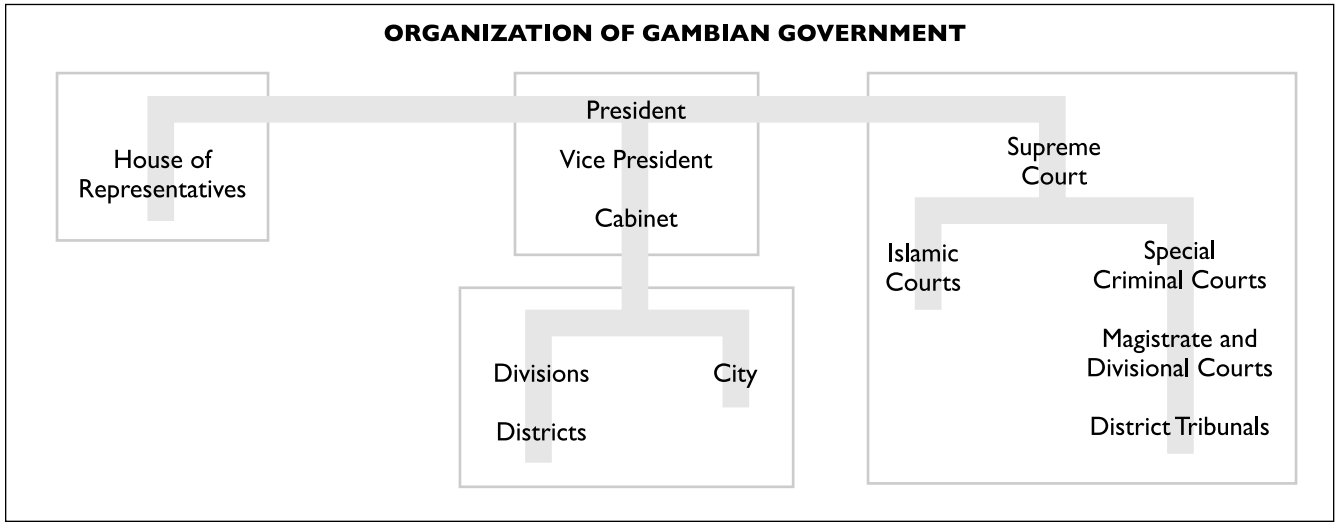
In the legislative elections of 2002 the ruling Alliance for Patriotic Reorientation and Construction (APRC) won 45 of the eligible 48 seats. The People's Democratic Organization for Independence and Socialism (PDOIS) won the other three seats. The United Democratic Party (UDP) boycotted the elections.

JUDICIARY

The highest court in Gambia is the Supreme Court. Although the president appoints the judges, the constitution gives the courts an independent role. The judiciary is usually strong and independent. Besides lower courts operating under Anglo-Saxon legal rules, indigenous courts have both civil and criminal jurisdictions among the different ethnic groups. Civil actions between Muslims may be heard by special Muslim courts if both parties agree.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The form of local government in Gambia varies. Banjul, the capital and largest city, has an elected council. Many of the rural areas have ruling councils appointed



by the head of state. Tribal chiefs retain some authority in these councils, while community leaders representing mostly youth and women hold most of the power.

The Electoral System

Elections in Gambia are direct. Suffrage is universal for Gambian citizens who are at least 18 years old, and secret ballots are used. While voter turnout in local elections is often under 50 percent of those registered, turnout for national elections is significantly higher (for instance, it was 90 percent in the October 2001 presidential elections; turnout for the legislative elections in 2002 was reported to be low due to the boycott by the major opposition parties). The current Gambian electoral system is widely recognized as one of the most open and honest in Africa, with results seldom contested or questioned. This is a change from the 1982 elections when the Progressive People's Party (PPP) was regularly charged with unfair practices, as was the military regime after 1994. A lingering issue remains the use of government resources during electoral campaigns and the heavily pro-government coverage by the state-owned media, especially by the only television channel.

The Party System

Gambia has been a working multiparty system throughout its history, except during a brief moment in the wake of the 1994 coup, between late 1994 and mid-1995. However, the exclusive rule of a single party (PPP until 1994, and APRC thereafter) and the overwhelming powers of the head of state have frustrated the opponents' hope to win elections. But despite these frustrations, active and vigorous opposition parties seek power within constitutional bounds. Most political parties originally polarize around rural-urban splits, which also have ethnic overtones.

Major Political Parties

ALLIANCE FOR PATRIOTIC REORIENTATION AND CONSTRUCTION (APRC)

In the wake of the 1994 coup, Jammeh accused the old elite of having colluded to deny power to the people while squandering the country's wealth and betraying African moral values. He then disbanded all the existing parties, saying that he considered them partners in the same plot of deceit. In 1995, following his decision to return to a civilian regime, Jammeh set up the APRC. Since the legislative elections of January 1997, the APRC has dominated the political scene. As of 2005 it had 45 seats out of 48 in parliament (not counting the five appointed seats) and all 99 local government seats. Its membership crosses all sections of Gambian society, but it is particularly popular among the youth, who are attracted by Jammeh's patriotic, populist, and reform-minded approach.

Party propaganda combined with real achievements make APRC's presence felt everywhere in the country. For example, it was the only party capable of presenting candidates in all the districts during the last elections. Jammeh is part of the small Joola group, but his popularity is deeply rooted among the Mandinka, Wolof, and Fula, the three main ethnic groups. In fact, he seems to represent the neutral figure on a political scene where there is some tension, especially between the Wolof and Mandinka peoples.

Minor Political Parties

The United Democratic Party (UDP), which had seven seats in parliament prior to 2002, and the National Reconciliation Party (NRP), which had two seats, are the two main opposition parties. However, both parties boycotted the 2002 elections. Along with Jammeh's APRC, Ousainou Darbo's UDP is represented throughout the country. The UDP recruits among the moderate and opponents of Jawara and Jammeh, mainly Mandinka who follow Ousainou Darbo, a successful Mandinka lawyer. The UDP is also the watchdog for all who cherish the civil and democratic liberties upheld, however formally, by the previous regime of Jawara. In the 2001 presidential election Darbo mustered 32.7 percent of the votes against 52.9 percent for Jammeh, failing to garner significant support outside the Mandinka, who felt the loss of the supremacy they had enjoyed under Jawara. Following the 2002 legislative elections the smaller People's Democratic Organization for Independence and Socialism (PDOIS) has three seats in parliament. (Those parties that existed prior to the 1994 coup remain proscribed and their leaders excluded from any political participation.) Young politicians, who often have some radical sympathies, created most of the new parties. Hamat Bah's NRP and Sidia Jatta's PDOIS are more active in the Banjul area,

the NRP being more populist while the PDOIS recruits mainly among left-wing radicals.

Other Political Forces

The military has played a key role in Gambian politics; Jammeh, for instance, came to power via a military coup, and his support from the military remains an important source of power. It is hoped that the advent of multiparty elections will entrench civilian control of the country and that the military's role in the political system will decline.

National Prospects

Gambia's political system, which was previously based on compromise, bargaining, and open elections, has evolved into a more polarized and less liberal system. Jammeh has avoided being a dictator, but many see him as a kind of despot. However, his patriotism, a real commitment to reform, and his crusade against corruption and social vices keep his support strong enough to allow him to win over his foes. His achievements in upgrading the infrastructure and social services are real.

One area in which many feared Jammeh would take a more radical approach than previous leaders is foreign relations. After an initial flirtation with Libya, Jammeh has restored a more traditional approach, establishing very good relations with Senegal and Guinea-Bissau. For example, despite being a Joola, he has distanced himself from the Joola-led Casamance separatist rebellion that persists in southwestern Senegal. In fact, his friendly relations with Senegal emphasize security matters and mutual support. Senegal has spearheaded recent efforts to elect a Gambian head of the World Health Organization.

In November 2002 Jammeh dismissed a number of members of his cabinet, accusing them of lacking seriousness. Notably, Jammeh took over the agricultural portfolio himself, despite the opposition voicing doubts about his qualification for the position. Meanwhile, Gambia's already weak economy is suffering from reduced revenues from tourism and foreign donors. These economic and social conditions will continue to embolden the opposition to Jammeh's rule. Gambia has traditionally had no important, commercially exploitable mineral resources, and it has a limited agricultural base. However, in 2004 Jammeh announced that large reserves of oil had been discovered in the country. If and when this oil is extracted, it could provide Gambia with an important new source of wealth.

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GEORGIA

(Sakartvelo)

By Stephen F. Jones, Ph.D.



Georgia, known to its inhabitants as Sakartvelo (Land of the Georgians), is situated in the western half of the Caucasian isthmus. It occupies 27,657 square miles and is approximately twice the size of Belgium. On its northern border lies the Russian Federation. To the south are Turkey and the Republic of Armenia, and to the west and east are the Black Sea and the Republic of Azerbaijan, respectively. The total population of Georgia in 2005 was estimated as 4.67 million.

Most of Georgia's current territory was annexed by Russia between 1801 and 1811, although Georgia briefly regained its independence in 1918–21 during the Russian civil war. In 1921 it was forcibly incorporated into Soviet Russia (subsequently the USSR) and became one of the Soviet Union's 15 union republics in 1936.

Georgia regained its independence in 1991. Since that time it has undergone a number of political transformations. In January 1992 newly elected Georgian president Zviad Gamsakhurdia was ousted by a coup, and, after a brief interregnum under an unelected State Council led by Eduard Shevardnadze, elections in October 1992 established a new republic. It was a cross between a parliamentary and presidential system, with the head of state (there was no president) sharing his considerable powers with the prime minister and parliament. Shevardnadze, as head of state, was both chairman of parliament and head of the executive. A new constitution in 1995 established a presidential system.

Within Soviet Georgia (1921–91) there were two autonomous republics and an autonomous region that recognized the special needs of religious and ethnic minorities. They were the Abkhazian Autonomous Socialist Republic, the Adjarian Autonomous Socialist Republic, and the South Ossetian Autonomous Region. The autonomous republics, while subject to Georgian central control, had, in theory, significant powers, including their own constitutions, parliaments, and budgets. In reality, almost all political decisions were made in Moscow.

Since Georgian independence both the Abkhazians—a non-Georgian but indigenous Caucasian people related to the North Caucasian Adyghe and Circassian peoples—and the South Ossetians—a non-Georgian people who speak an Iranian language—have led armed secessionist struggles against the Georgian government. As a result Georgia has approximately 260,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs), and many more Georgian citizens of Armenian, Greek, Abkhazian, and Russian nationality have fled the conflict zones to Russia, Armenia, and other neighboring states. The status of both Abkhazia and South Ossetia are currently under negotiation. The Adjarian Autonomous Republic, which is ethnically Georgian (82.8 percent of the republic's population are Georgian) but contains a significant Muslim minority, avoided open conflict with Tbilisi. But in May 2004, under pressure from the new Georgian government of President Misha Saakashvili and public opposition at home, the president of Adjara, Aslan Abashidze, fled to Moscow. Adjara, while retaining its autonomous status, was reintegrated into the Georgian administrative system.

The System of Government

The current constitution describes Georgia as a democratic republic (Article 1.2). It has a strong presidency and a unicameral parliament (the constitution allows for a second body, but it has never been convened). Economic and political reform, the growth of organized interest groups, a free press, improved parliamentary competence, and a significant indigenous nongovernmental sector have led to what can be fairly described as a democratic system in Georgia.

EXECUTIVE

Georgia is a presidential system. The president is head of state and appoints the prime minister. He has the right to dismiss the ministers of defense, interior, and state security and, under certain conditions, can also dismiss parliament. The president's powers include approval of the government's budget, the setting of parliamentary elections, the convocation of extraordinary parliamentary sittings, and the right to introduce legislation "out of turn." He can call a referendum and in certain cases suspend regional legislative bodies. He has wide powers of nomination or appointment to the Supreme Court, Constitutional Court, armed forces, National Bank, and Chamber of Control (the country's supreme financial supervisory body). He has the power to veto parliamentary bills, although this can be overridden by a parliamentary majority of three-fifths (two-thirds in the case of constitutional laws). The president guides the activity of the National Security Council, and the government is accountable to both the president and the parliament. Through his powers of appointment and dismissal, the president controls the government and its legislative program. The government consists of 14 ministers and five state ministers. The president is served by his own apparatus known as the State Chancellery and has additional legal powers through his ability to issue national decrees and orders.

Despite significant powers, the president's authority is subject to checks from parliament, the judiciary (in particular, the Constitutional Court), and extraparliamentary organizations such as the press and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). Parliament, for example, can impeach the president by a two-thirds majority if the Supreme Court or Constitutional Court concludes he has committed a crime or violated the constitution. Parliament has to ratify many presidential decrees, appointments, and treaties and can formally question government ministers and members of other executive bodies about their actions.

LEGISLATURE

The legislature is essentially unicameral, represented by the 235-member Umaghiesi Sabcho, commonly known as the parliament. The constitution allows for the creation of a second chamber, the Senate. The Senate is designed to represent 12 historical-cultural regions in the country, including the autonomous republics of Abkhazia and Adjaria. Due to the unsettled status of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, the Senate has never been convened, and its role and powers are not yet clear.

Members of current parliament have immunity and wide powers of interrogation of officials; they confirm the most important judicial, military, and executive appointments (with the right to remove those who have violated the constitution). They also ratify major agreements and can reject presidential bills. The president, however, provided he has a majority in parliament, dominates legislative activity. He has enormous powers of patronage, which he uses effectively to maintain political support.

There have been six democratically elected parliaments since 1990. The first (1990–92) was dominated by the Round Table–Free Georgia bloc. Under the authoritarian influence of its newly elected parliamentary chairman (and subsequently president), Zviad Gamsakhurdia, it was little more than a rubber-stamp body. The second parliament (1992–95) was better, but fragmented and unfamiliar with the rules of parliamentary procedure. Capable of frustrating executive power, it was unable to consolidate parliamentary control over the executive, which took advantage of an ambiguous constitution and an almost constant state of war in the country. The third parliament, elected in October 1995 (on a 68 percent turnout), proved more effective and disciplined. It passed many significant laws, including vital provisions on the privatization and leasing of land and on antimonopoly activities. The most important factor in its increased effectiveness is the creation of 14 powerful parliamentary committees that initiate many, and discuss all, legislative bills. The fourth parliament was in session from 1999 to 2003 and was dominated by the presidential party known as the Citizens' Union of Georgia (CUG). The fifth parliament, elected in November 2003, never functioned as a legislature. A popular revolt against the government's manipulation of the vote brought its activity to an end at its first session. This popular revolt, known as the Rose Revo-

lution, led to new and fair elections in March 2004 and to the victory of the former oppositionist National Movement–Democrats bloc.

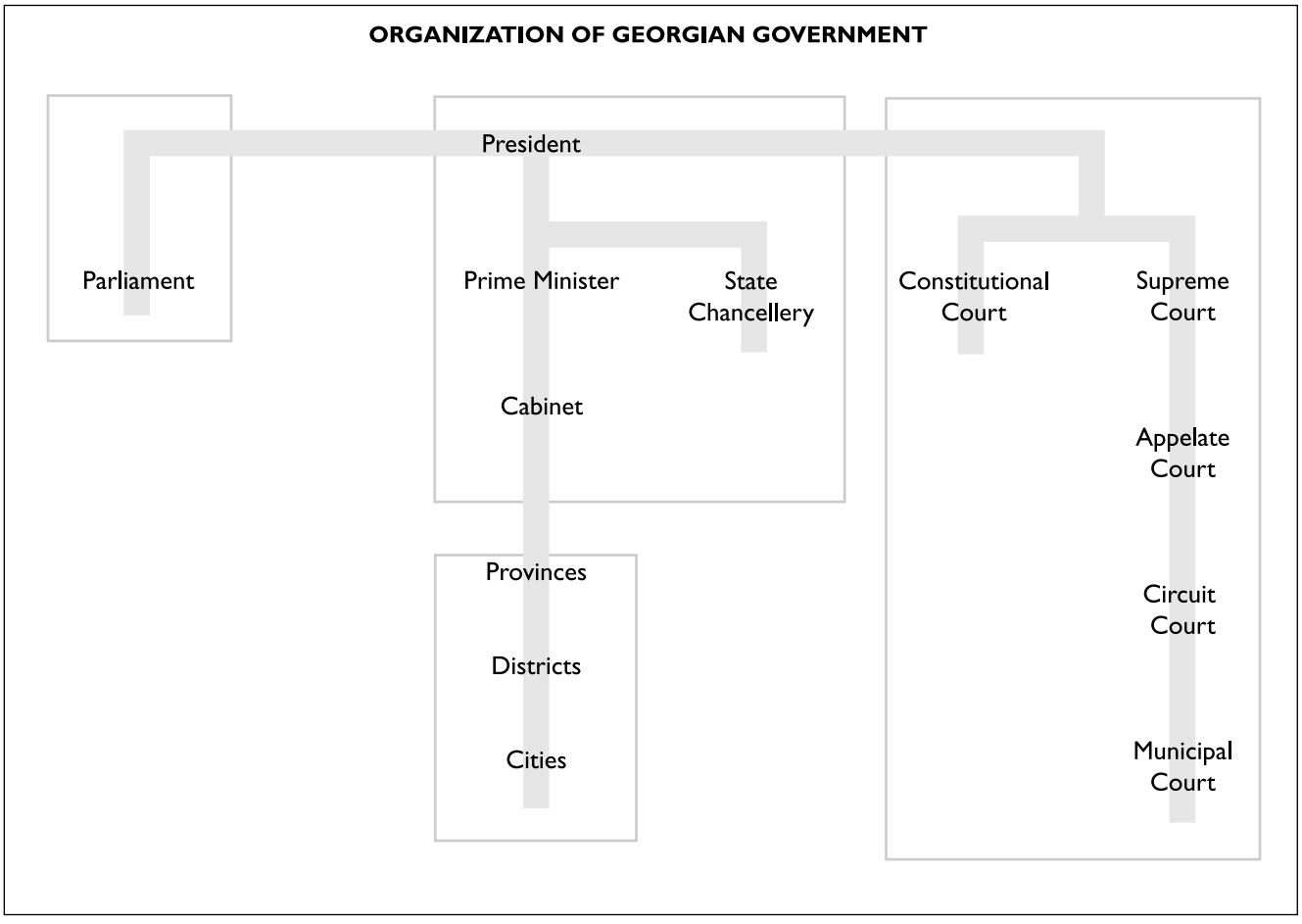
In the current parliament of 235 seats, there are two main parliamentary factions. The largest is the president's own National Movement–Democrats with 135 seats. In opposition is the Rightist Opposition, which has 17 seats. The parties and blocs are poorly disciplined and have little organization among the grass roots.

The current parliament is elected, like its predecessor, on the basis of party lists (150 members) and single-member districts (85 members). The 7 percent threshold excluded the overwhelming majority of the 18 parties and blocs that competed. Elections did not take place in Abkhazia and South Ossetian districts, which are still in conflict zones.

JUDICIARY

After the defeat of the Georgian Communists in October 1990, the criminal and civil codes, court structures and procedures, and the constitution were changed in favor of judicial independence. The Supreme Court remained the highest judicial body, although members were now elected for 10 years. The rights of both defense lawyers and defendants were increased; the accusatory bias of court procedure was reduced. Judges were not permitted to belong to any political organization or occupy any state post. Judicial independence remained problematic under President Gamsakhurdia with both the Supreme Court and the Constitutional Advisory Commission under his control.

Under Shevardnadze, the situation improved although the judicial system was corrupt. The new constitution advocates the separation of powers and has divided supreme judicial power among a Constitutional Court, Supreme Court, and the Procuracy. Constitutional Court judges are appointed by the president, parliament, and Supreme Court for 10 years. The new Constitutional Court has supreme and final decision-making power on all constitutional issues, including questions of civil and human rights. It has reversed a number of government decisions due to their unconstitutionality.



A law on General Courts, which was passed in 1997 despite strong resistance from incumbent judges, restructured the court system, added a new layer of appellate courts, abolished arbitration courts, and removed the whole system from supervision by the Ministry of Justice. A self-regulatory judicial council was established, which administers exams, appoints judges, and disciplines judicial employees. It transformed judges from appendages of the state to powerful and independent officials. A new law on the legal profession followed in 2001, which strengthened the qualification for legal practice, including exams and a one-year internship (there were none before). A generation of young lawyers, often trained in elite Western universities, has emerged who are active in the drafting of new legislation and lobbying for stronger protections of civil rights. Law has become the most popular subject in higher education.

The Supreme Court is the final court of appeal in civil and criminal cases and oversees an extensive system of regional courts. Supreme Court judges and the procurator general are nominated by the president but confirmed by parliament. Constitutional changes introduced in February 2004 permit the president to chair the judicial council. This gives him increased powers over judicial appointments. Judges have personal immunity and are appointed for not less than 10 years. A jury system is not yet in place. Most cases are still tried by a judge and two assistants.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Before the October 1990 elections local government in Georgia was administered jointly by elected local councils (*soviets*) and centrally approved Communist Party committees. The councils, organized on city, regional, district, settlement, and village levels, were elected every three years. The councils were not genuine reflections of local democratic control, and after the October 1990 elections a prefecture system replaced them. Prefects, appointed by the president and jointly responsible to him and to parliament, had considerable authority over new local electoral assemblies known as *sakrebuloebi*.

Since President Gamsakhurdia's overthrow, the *sakrebuloebi* have remained, but they are weak compared with the power held by the district governors and provincial prefects (*gamgeblebi* and *rtsmuneblebi*) appointed by the president. Essentially, the 12 provinces created by presidential decree in 1995, which are subdivided into a further 63 districts, are ruled by decree from the center or through the president's prefects. Under Shevardnadze local government remained in the hands of superficially transformed Communist Party officials who inherited the new structures. There are few institutional checks on local officials in the regions, and regional elites exert enormous power through networks of patronage and kinship. New laws on local self-government and administration in 1997 and 2001 improved the situation. The laws led to better definition of competencies and separated the functions of the state from those of local self-government. They also gave local self-government bodies exclusive competencies that only courts could override. Citizens' rights to obtain public information from local government, to demand public discussions, and to participate in consultations before an important local government decision were explicitly recognized. The number of cities granted self-government was increased, and budget independence was strengthened by giving elected councils the use of locally derived income, more flexibility in income allocation from transfers, and the ability to set up their own businesses. The president can now only appoint district governors from among members of the district council. Local government elections are held every four years.

The Electoral System

The electoral system for parliament consists of 85 single-mandate electoral districts where elections are "first past the post." The remaining 150 seats are distributed to parties and blocs depending on their total proportion of the national vote. Since its declaration of independence in April 1991, Georgia has had five elected parliaments: 1990–91; 1992–95; 1995–99; 1999–2003; and 2004–present. The constitution describes parliament as the country's "supreme representative body," which "exercises legislative power" and "determines the main directions of domestic and foreign policy." Georgia's parliaments have established the legislative basis of a democratic state.

Electoral formula and rules have been changed at every parliamentary election since 1990. The threshold for representation has been changed four times and is currently at 7 percent. The large number of votes wasted on parties that failed to cross the new 7 percent threshold in 1999 was an indication not only of multiple parties but also of confused calculations among Georgian voters as to who was likely to win. Raising the threshold from 5 percent to 7 percent was generously interpreted as an attempt to consolidate parties,

but in fact it restricted political access and diminished representation. Georgia's elections, due to systemic weaknesses and corruption, have excluded significant groups of citizens from representation—the loss of South Ossetia and Abkhazia has contributed significantly to the lack of proper national elections—and have been poorly conducted, often in a context of violence or intimidation (the March 2004 elections were better in that regard). Electoral laws, which guarantee equal access to the press, funding from the state, publication of voting lists 30 days before the elections, and free access for election monitors, were often ignored. Voting lists were inaccurate—this was a major issue in the November 2003 elections that disenfranchised vast numbers of citizens. The first two parliamentary elections were characterized by significant boycotts; the next two gave establishment parties unfair control of the count. The pattern since 1992 has been one of declining electoral credibility, although the January 2004 presidential elections and the March 2004 parliamentary elections reversed that trend. A significant change in 2004 was fair administration of the elections by reformed electoral commissions. International electoral observers were given greater access and had greater credibility.

Parliamentary elections take place once every four years and presidential elections every five years. The latest presidential and parliamentary elections took place in January and March 2004, respectively. The turnout in the presidential elections was 83 percent (1,963,556 of 2,231,986 registered voters). Of the six presidential candidates, Mikheil Saakashvili received an overwhelming 96.3 percent of the vote. The parliamentary election on March 28 was equally one-sided. The opposition was unable to overcome the 7 percent threshold for parliamentary representation. Altogether, 18 political organizations took part. President Saakashvili's National Movement–Democrats bloc won 66.2 percent. Only one other electoral bloc, the Rightist Opposition, cleared the 7 percent threshold. The president can run for a maximum of two terms. The next parliamentary elections will take place in 2008.

The Party System

Georgian parties first emerged in the late 19th century. The most significant was the Georgian Social Democratic Labor Party, a Marxist party that ruled independent Georgia from 1918 to 1921. With the annexation of Georgia by Soviet Russia in 1921, all parties apart from the Communist Party were banned. Until the October 1990 elections, no other Georgian party could function, except in the political underground. In 1987–88, with the onset of Gorbachev's perestroika, Georgian parties, many of which traced their roots to political antecedents of the 19th and 20th centuries, emerged. They included the Ilia Chavchavadze Society, the Helsinki Union, the National Democratic Party, and the Georgian National Independence Party.

In the October 1990 elections, for the first time since Georgia's annexation, the Communist Party monopoly was ended. Of the six parties and five electoral blocs that took part, the radical-nationalist Round Table–Free Georgia coalition, led by the former dissident Zviad Gamsakhurdia and his Helsinki Union, gained 54 percent of the vote and 155 of the 250 parliamentary seats. The Georgian Communist Party came second with 29.6 percent. The Popular Front was third with 1.93 percent.

The 1992 elections, which followed the forcible ouster of President Gamsakhurdia, led to a much more fractionalized parliament. Of the 26 parties that gained parliamentary representation, the most influential (although "influential" did not necessarily reflect electoral support) were the National Democratic Party (with 15 seats, the single largest party), the Republican Party, the Democratic Union, the Greens, the Georgian Popular Front, and the Union of Traditionalists.

There was not much to distinguish party programs, although liberal reformism was best represented by the National Democrats, the Republicans, the Greens, and the Democratic Union. A radical opposition to Shevardnadze's moderate stance toward Russia (negotiation rather than confrontation) formed around the Union of Traditionalists, the National Independence Party, Charter '91, the Merab Kostava Society, and the Ilya Chavchavadze Society. Except possibly for the National Democratic Party, none of the parties had effective national organizations and were essentially parliamentary groups debating among themselves with almost no contact with the voters. Both leadership and financing were erratic as a consequence.

The 1995 elections sent most of these parties to the political wilderness. Of the three largest parties that emerged from the 1995 elections, the Citizen's Union of Georgia (CUG) was the most influential. Led astutely by Zurab Zhvania, who was also speaker of the parliament, it became an "establishment party," although party identity and discipline remained poor. The party was made up of a mixture of Greens, former Communist Party officials, new entrepreneurs,

and lawyers. It became corrupted by its domination of the political system and collapsed in 2001. Transformed into a leading faction in an unpopular coalition—"For a New Georgia"—the CUG still managed to secure first place in the falsified November 2003 elections with 21.3 percent of the vote (57 MPs). The Union of Democratic Revival, led by Aslan Abashidze, came second with 18.8 percent (39 MPs), and the National Movement–Democrats, led by the youthful and popular Mikheil Saakashvili, came in third with 18.1 percent (36 MPs) despite leading in the exit polls and in the parallel tabulation of votes. These elections were declared null and void by the Georgian Supreme Court, and the new parliament elected in March 2004 changed the political landscape by creating a massive majority for the National Movement–Democrats.

Major Political Parties

By 2004 Georgia's major political parties, which had dominated the 1990s, had either disappeared or become marginalized. The National Democratic Party (NDP) of Georgia, the largest political party in the 1992 elections, split. Conservative and mildly theocratic, part of the NDP became absorbed by the "For a New Georgia" coalition. The CUG, the "establishment" party under President Shevardnadze, fractured into myriad parties and groups in 2001–02. The All-Georgian Revival Union of Aslan Abashidze imploded after his sudden departure for Moscow in May 2004 following the collapse of his regime in Adjara. The Labor Party, which had done well in the 1998 and 2002 local elections, was discredited by its opposition to the Rose Revolution and gained only 6.02 percent in the March 2004 parliamentary election. The new political force that dominates Georgian politics is the National Movement–Democrats. The opposition is led by the Rightist Opposition bloc.

NATIONAL MOVEMENT–DEMOCRATS

(Natshhionakhuri Modraoba–Demokrathebi)

This is a coalition of the United National Movement founded in October 2001 by Mikheil Saakashvili, the United Democrats led by Zurab Zhvania and Nino Burjunadze, the Union of National Solidarity, and members of the youth movement "Kmara." The bloc, though represented by a single faction in parliament, consists of two separate parliamentary parties, the United National Movement and the United Democrats. It is liberal and centrist, pro-European, pro-market, and reformist. The bloc played a major role in the peaceful overthrow of President Shevardnadze in November 2003 and is the largest and best organized of all Georgia's political alliances. In the March 2004 elections it took a strong stand against corruption and urged increased pensions and radical reform of the state structures. Its platform focused on the "improvement of social welfare" and promised to address urgent social issues (pensions, minimum salaries, health care reform) that "are of vital importance for our population." Saakashvili as president and head of the party has made Georgian territorial integrity a priority.

RIGHTIST OPPOSITION

(Memarjvene Opozicia)

The core of this bloc, the only other party alliance apart from the National Movement–Democrats to pass the 7 percent barrier in the March 2004 elections, consists of the New Rights Party and the "Industry Will Save Georgia" Party (IWSG). Together, they have 17 seats in parliament. The New Rightists, led by David Gamkrelidze, founder of the Georgian Insurance Company Aldagi, emerged from the CUG after its collapse. It takes a consistently pro-business line. Industry Will Save Georgia, led by beer magnate Gogi Topadze, grew out of the Industrialists Union. Between them, these two parties have significant financial resources. Their programs are similar, although IWSG is more protectionist and highly critical of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and Western imposed economic models. Both parties urge the liberalization of taxes, the protection of businesses (especially from the president's threats of renationalization) and Georgia's integration into Euro-Atlantic structures. Their popularity significantly waned due to their opposition to the Rose Revolution. They are unable to present an effective opposition in the parliament.

Minor Political Parties

Many political parties have little or no representation in parliament. Among the smaller parties of note are the Democratic Union for Revival, which obtained 6.0 percent in the March 2004 elections; the Labor Party, which obtained 5.8 percent of the vote; and the Freedom Movement, which obtained

4.8 percent. The Communists have been eliminated from the political scene.

Other Political Forces

The lack of organized political opposition in the new parliament is compensated for by a lively nongovernmental sector. Nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) are overwhelmingly concentrated in the capital and are financially weak—dependent in most cases on grants from international foundations—but nevertheless play a significant role in shaping legislation and in changing government policies. Bills have been initiated, reviewed, or written by individuals working in the NGO sector. The laws on Grants (1996), on Granted Goods and Income (1996), Patients' Rights, and Freedom of Information were all the initiative of NGOs such as the International Center for the Reformation and Development of the Georgian Economy (ICRDGE), the Georgian Young Lawyer's Association (GYLA), and the Liberty Institute. NGOs are closely involved in the legislative activities of the parliamentary committees of Judicial, Legal and Constitutional Issues and of Economic Policy and Reforms, as well as in the legislative departments in the Ministries of Justice and Education.

National Prospects

In the fall of 1994 Eduard Shevardnadze introduced, under IMF supervision, systematic economic reform. The lari, a new currency, was introduced in 1994, and in 1996 sectors of the Georgian economy, in particular, agriculture, transport, communications, and trade, registered growth for the first time. In 1997–98 there was promising GDP growth of 10–11 percent. Despite the fact that by the government's own statistics, 50 percent of the population is hovering around the poverty line, public opinion surveys suggest that Georgians are among the most positive in Central and Eastern Europe about economic reform and their own financial future. This paradox probably reflects other factors such as a declining rate of crime, the elimination of uncontrolled private militias, an end to secessionist wars, and increasing Western investment following the decision to lay an oil pipeline across Georgia that will link up the oil-rich republic of Azerbaijan with Western European and North American markets.

The biggest problems faced by Georgia are potential ethnic conflict and relations with Russia, both of which are interrelated. Despite the extraordinary political and economic turnaround in the country since 1994–95, Georgia's newfound stability and growth could be upset by a breakdown in negotiations with the Abkhazians and South Ossetians, as was demonstrated in the summer of 2004 when hostilities broke out once more between the South Ossetian secessionists and the Georgian government. Currently Georgia's economic and political prospects are fair. The country is geographically central to the increasingly important trade route that crosses from the Caspian Sea to the Black Sea (known as the Eurasian Corridor), and it has established good relations with most of its neighbors, including Turkey, Armenia, and Iran. Georgia, at this time, can properly be described as the most democratic in the CIS (Commonwealth of Independent States), especially after the most recent presidential and parliamentary elections in 2004, which were universally acclaimed as free and fair. The new government continues to face serious domestic problems and great economic difficulties, but reforms, a decisive attack on corruption, and increased government legitimacy give reason for hope that life for ordinary Georgians will improve.

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FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY

(Bundesrepublik Deutschland)

By Gordon Smith, Ph.D.
Revised by Tamar Gablinger



The Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) came into being in 1949 as a consequence of the division of Germany in 1945. The three western zones of the occupying powers (American, British, and French) made up the new state, with the later addition of the Saarland in 1957. The Basic Law (constitution) established a federal system of 10 states (*Länder*) with a parliamentary system of government.

At the same time as the Federal Republic was founded, a new East German state was created, the German Democratic Republic (GDR). The GDR was formed from the Soviet zone of occupation, and it soon became modeled on the pattern of other Communist states. A Marxist-Leninist party, the Socialist Unity Party of Germany (SED), came to wield sole political and state power in the GDR. The Communist dictatorship was successful in exercising a tight control for a long period, but popular unrest grew with the weakening of Soviet power over eastern Central Europe. In the latter part of 1989 the authority and legitimacy of the Communist regime crumbled and the SED was forced to share power with other parties. Free elections were held in March 1990, resulting in the formation of a non-Communist government that was committed to German unification. The *Länder* in the GDR that had earlier been abolished were reestablished, and unification was achieved in October 1990. The process of unification was effected by means of Article 23 of the Basic Law that provided for "other parts" of Germany to accede to the Federal Republic. The enlarged Federal Republic has a population of 82 million (area: 357,000 square kilometers).

As a result of unification, the number of constituent *Länder* rose from 10 to 16, that is, with the addition of the five new East German *Länder* plus Berlin; the latter also became the new capital city in place of Bonn.

The West German political system had always shown an impressive stability, and this stability persisted after unification. Three parties have been dominant throughout the life of the Federal Republic: the Christian Democrats (CDU/CSU), the Social Democrats (SPD), and the Free Democrats (FDP). The outcome of the first all-German elections in December 1990 confirmed their dominance. Their success in both parts of Germany (with 88.3 percent of the total vote) was evidence of the overwhelming approval of unification by the electorate throughout Germany. In essence, therefore, both the constitutional order and the political system were unchanged by unification.

The extent of continuity was underlined by the CDU/CSU coalition with the FDP that held office continuously from 1982 until 1998. Helmut Kohl was federal chancellor for the whole period; he was the longest-serving chancellor in the history of the Federal Republic. However, the SPD in coalition with the Greens finally ousted Kohl following the 1998 federal election; the CDU/CSU vote fell to its lowest level since 1949. The shift to a leftist coalition, headed by Gerhard Schröder, signaled a decisive change of course for Germany. This coalition held power until

2005, when new elections saw a split vote between the CDU/CSU and the SPD. In 2005 a new "Grand Coalition" between the two parties took power, with the role of chancellor going to CDU/CSU candidate Angela Merkel, who became the first female chancellor in Germany's history.

The System of Government

EXECUTIVE

Executive authority rests with the federal chancellor, who heads the federal government and appoints and dismisses the federal ministers. The chancellor is elected by the members of a new legislative term, and his/her dismissal can be effected only by the process of electing a successor. The head of state, the federal president, is elected for a five-year term by a Federal Assembly, consisting of the Bundestag and an equal number of representatives from the states. No president may serve more than two consecutive terms of office. The president's powers are very limited and his function is largely ceremonial. As of October 2005 the president was Horst Köhler (born 1943), who was previously the head of the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

LEGISLATURE

Legislative authority is shared between the directly elected Bundestag and a second body, the Bundesrat, which represents the interests of the state (*Länder*) governments. All constitutional changes have to be approved by a two-thirds majority in both houses, and the Bundesrat has a power of veto over legislation that affects the powers of the states.

The Bundestag is elected for a maximum life of four years, and because calling new elections is difficult, it has only three times been dissolved early (in 1972, 1982, and 2005). The Bundestag consists of 598 representatives, but because of the operation of the electoral system its size may be increased, as it was in the 15th electoral term (2002–05) with a total of 603 seats, and the 16th electoral term (beginning 2005) with a total of 614 seats.

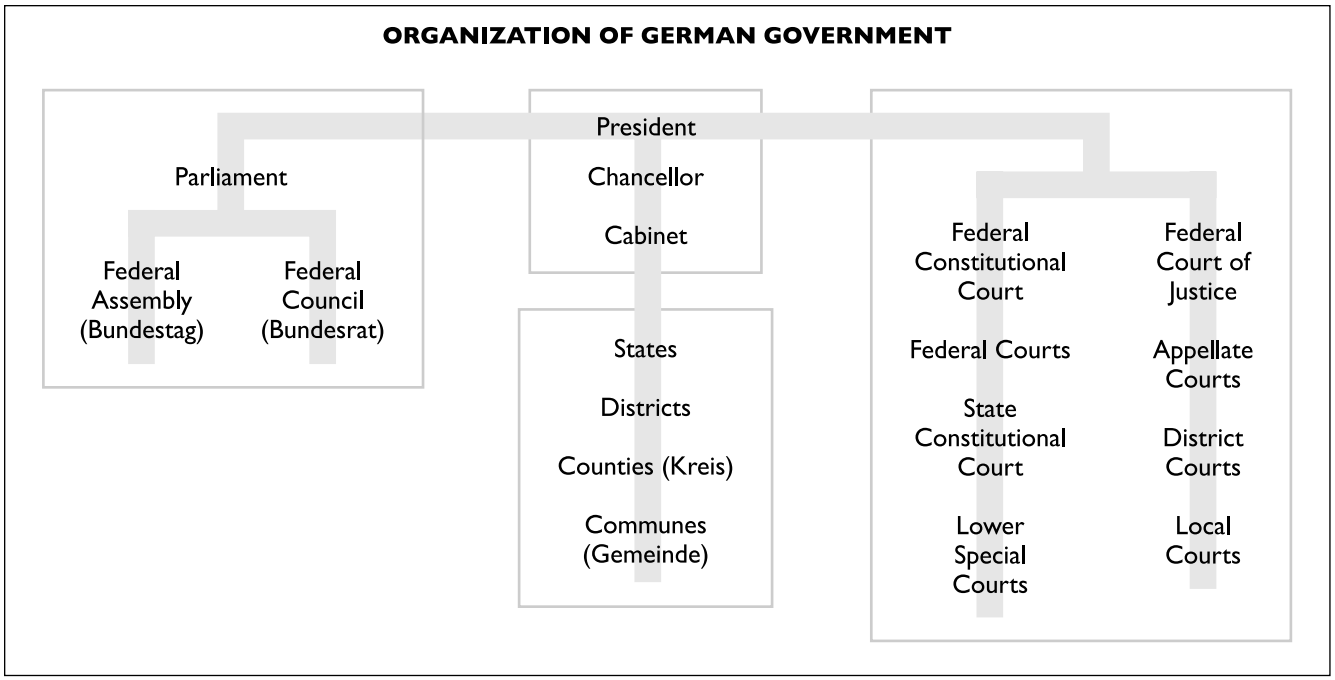
The Bundestag at its first meeting of the legislative term elects a chancellor by secret ballot on the proposal of the president, although the latter has to nominate the person who is likely to secure an absolute majority in the Bundestag, that is, the "chancellor candidate" of the party able to secure a majority by itself or in coalition with another party.

Party discipline in the Bundestag is strong, each party being organized as a party group, or *Fraktion*. The president and four vice presidents of the Bundestag are usually members of the majority coalition. This presidium, together with a further 23 members of the Bundestag selected according to the size of the party groups, make up the Council of Elders (Ältestenrat). The Council determines the business agenda of the house and appoints the chairpersons of some 20 specialist committees. The great bulk of legislation is initiated by the federal government, and since the government has a disciplined party majority, its bills invariably pass the Bundestag, although frequently in amended form.

The Bundesrat has a unique composition in that it is not elected directly but consists of government delegations from the individual *Länder* that act on instructions from those governments. *Land* representation varies roughly according to the size of the population. The Bundesrat has a total of 69 seats. Baden-Württemberg, Bavaria, Lower Saxony, and North Rhine–Westphalia each has 6 seats. Berlin, Brandenburg, Hesse, Rhineland-Palatinate, Saxony, Saxony-Anhalt, Schleswig-Holstein, and Thuringia each has 4 seats. The smallest *Länder,* Bremen, Hamburg, Mecklenburg–West Pomerania, and the Saarland, each has 3 seats.

Votes of the delegations must be cast en bloc. The individual delegation—led by the *Land* head of government, the minister-president—is composed of *Land* members of government, although in practice, and especially in committees, they may be replaced by senior civil servants. Unlike the Bundestag, the Bundesrat cannot be dissolved, and its composition alters only with changes of government within the *Länder.*

In the early years of the republic, *Land* governments were controlled by a variety of parties so that clear party blocs did not exist in the Bundesrat. Gradually, the party composition of the Bundesrat has become of leading significance. This was particularly important during the period of CDU/CSU government (1982–98). Because the SPD controlled most *Land* governments, it had a majority in the Bundesrat. In some cases the Bundesrat has been used to block government legislation or to secure important amendments. However, around 90 percent of all federal legislation is uncontested by the Bundesrat. Compromises on legislative variations between the two houses are made in a conciliation committee that consists of equal numbers of members from the Bundestag and Bundesrat.



JUDICIARY

In addition to the system of federal and *Länder* courts and standing apart from the structure of the ordinary courts, West Germany has a Federal Constitutional Court. The Bundesrat and the Bundestag each appoint half its 16 judges on the nomination of the parties. To be elected a judge requires a two-thirds vote in the Bundestag or in the appropriate Bundesrat committee. A number of appointments are reserved for serving members of the highest federal courts, but otherwise it is only necessary that candidates should have the standard legal qualification. Once appointed for the 12-year term, none of the judges may be removed, except on the motion of the Court itself.

The Federal Constitutional Court, established by the 1949 Basic Law, has unlimited powers of constitutional interpretation. Its ruling on the constitutionality of federal legislation is final. Cases may be referred directly to the Court by the Land governments, one-third of the Bundestag deputies, the federal president, or the federal government itself if it is in dispute with a Land government. If federal legislation is thought to be in conflict with the constitution, the Court may rule on the issue even before the legislation goes into effect, although it often hears cases from the federal courts where a constitutional issue claimed to be integral to the case. The Constitutional Court also rules on constitutional complaints brought to it by individual citizens who hold that their basic rights have been infringed.

The powers of the Constitutional Court are such that it is bound to become involved in contentious issues, but it has avoided becoming the subject of political controversy. Nor has the mode of appointment of the judges led to an overt political bias in its rulings. The Court's high standing is due, in large part, to the general respect that legal norms enjoy in Germany, a respect that extends to the Basic Law and to the Constitutional Court.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Each *Land* has its own constitution, establishing parliamentary systems very similar to that of the federal government. A *Land* government is headed by a minister-president who is elected by and responsible to the *Land* assembly (Landtag). With the exception of Bavaria, the *Land* assemblies are all unicameral. Landtag elections take place at four- or five-year intervals. These elections do not coincide with the federal legislative period. As a result, the elections in the *Länder* are taken to be important tests of the federal government's standing with the electorate. They are also significant in altering the party balance in the Bundesrat.

Below the level of the *Länder*, counties, districts, and towns each elect their councils. The local party organizations are very active in these elections. The

councils elect the chairpersons or mayors, which means that the parties put forward and promote their best candidates for the job in very much the same manner as the national parties put forward a chancellor candidate. Towns and counties are entitled to set and collect property taxes and also receive a proportion of national and *Land* taxes. Generally, however, these revenues are insufficient to cover the costs of local responsibilities. The localities are thus forced to rely on *Land* revenues with the consequent *Land* control of key elements in local planning and development.

The Electoral System

The electoral system used in the Federal Republic is best described as a form of "personalized" proportional representation. Half of the 598 members of the Bundestag are elected as individuals in local districts by plurality vote and the other half from lists presented by the parties in each *Land*. Each voter has two votes, one to choose the constituency representative and the other, the second vote, or *Zweitstimme*, for the party list.

The second vote is decisive for determining a party's total number of seats in the Bundestag, while the first vote partly influences which members of the party will have seats. The distribution of seats is made on a *Land* basis, and there is no provision for securing overall national proportionality. A small party, such as the Free Democrats (FDP), may not win any district election outright, in which case all its members elected will be drawn from the party list. If, as occasionally happens, a party wins more district seats than it is entitled to on a proportional basis, it keeps the additional seats and the size of the Bundestag is increased accordingly. In that case, of course, none of the party's elected members in that *Land* come from the party list.

Although the electoral system is proportional, a fairly high electoral threshold operates: a party that fails to win 5 percent of the federal vote (or three district seats) does not share in the proportional distribution at *Land* level (although if it won one or two district seats it would keep them). The 5 percent barrier operates strongly against small parties; from 1961 until 1983 only three parties were represented in the Bundestag, but since 1990 there have been between five and six. Those that do surpass the barrier benefit from the exclusion of those that do not, so that there is a further distortion of the proportionality principle.

All German citizens 18 years of age and over are eligible to vote, and registration is virtually automatic. Voting is not compulsory, but there are high levels of participation, now usually approaching 80 percent. However, there is some ignorance as to how the electoral system works: polls show that up to a fifth of all voters are not aware that it is the "second vote" that is decisive in determining party strength in the Bundestag.

BUNDESTAG ELECTIONS, 2005

	%	Seats
CDU/CSU	36.8	226
SPD	36.2	222
FDP	9.9	61
Left Party	8.8	54
Greens	8.3	51
Total	100	614

The Party System

ORIGINS OF THE PARTIES

Following the defeat of Germany in May 1945, the occupying forces at first banned all political activity, but from August 1945 those parties judged to be "democratic" (i.e., anti-Nazi) were allowed to operate at a local level. Each party had to be licensed individually, giving rise to the description "democracy under license." Initially, only four party groupings were allowed: the Christian Democrats, Social Democrats, Liberals, and Communists (who were later outlawed in West Germany). These parties dominated the first series of *Land* elections within each of the western zones of occupation in 1946 and 1947. As a result, these parties were also the ones to devise the constitutions of the *Länder* and later to be responsible for drawing up the Basic Law, since the Parliamentary Council responsible for that task was composed of representatives from the *Länder* parties. The Christian Democrats—with their Bavarian affiliate, the Christian Social Union (CSU) —and the Social Democrats (SPD) emerged as the most popular parties by far; in the first round of *Land* elections they won some 70 percent of the total vote.

Although the parties were newly established in 1945, they all drew on important German political traditions; only Christian Democrats represented an

entirely new political formation. The SPD and the Communists (KPD) were direct successors of the SPD and KPD in the Weimar Republic (1919–33); the Liberals (later to become the Free Democrats) corresponded to the Liberal parties in the Weimar Republic.

Yet the postwar parties had changed radically from their Weimar counterparts. Whereas in the first republic the parties were strongly ideological in character, in the second they have become pragmatic and much more attuned to the needs of parliamentary government. Whereas in the Weimar Republic the party system had been unstable and fragmented, the new party system was characterized by its stability and by a trend away from multiple parties. The impetus for the change came partly from the Allies' method of licensing, but it was reinforced by the imposition of the 5 percent rule brought in at the insistence of the Allies. Subsequently, it was made more stringent: in the first federal election of 1949 a party was required to obtain only 5 percent in any one *Land*, but thereafter the threshold was raised to 5 percent of the national vote.

Eleven parties were represented in the first Bundestag, but the number rapidly declined in the 1950s to three in 1961. The CDU-CSU, SPD, and FDP together won over 99 percent of the vote in 1976 (as against 72 percent in 1949), although that aggregate declined in the 1980s because of the rise of the Greens. After unification the former Communists (Party of Democratic Socialism or PDS, later the Left Party) further eroded the position of the established parties, and the Greens also became an established party. However, in the 2005 elections the two major parties (the SPD and the CDU-CSU) still won a combined 73 percent of the vote.

THE PARTIES IN LAW

As a reaction to the political extremism of the Weimar Republic, the Basic Law was concerned to regulate the position of the parties. Article 21 of the Basic Law declares: "The political parties shall participate in forming the political will of the people." It also places restrictions on their freedom. "Parties which, by reasons of their aims or the behavior of their adherents, seek to impair or abolish the free democratic basis order or to endanger the existence of the Federal Republic shall be unconstitutional." The question of constitutionality is decided by the Constitutional Court, which banned the right-wing Socialist Reich Party in 1952 and the KPD in 1956. However, the clause has not been invoked since then: extreme right-wing parties, such as the Republicans, still compete at elections as does the Left Party, which is in a direct line of succession to the old KPD. A further attempt to outlaw the extreme right-wing NPD failed in the Constitutional Court.

The full implementation of Article 21 had to await the passing of a Party Law that was delayed until 1967. The Party Law recognized that since the parties have a public function to perform, they are entitled to financial support from the state. Moreover, it is possible for parties to draw on their state subsidy in advance, although if their vote is lower than expected, the difference has to be repaid.

With the revised Party Law that came into force in 1994, the scale of state subsidy has been reduced, putting greater emphasis on parties raising funds from members' contributions. Previously they received DM 5 for every vote they won. Now they receive EUR 0.85 for each vote up to 4 million and EUR 0.70 for each extra vote. In addition they are allocated EUR 0.38 from public funds for every mark they receive in the form of members' contributions or from other donations. In any event, there is also an upper limit set on the total of state subsidy of 133 million euros in any year, and contributions made by firms are no longer tax-deductible.

The Party Law also seeks to control the internal organization of the parties to ensure that they are democratically run. It requires the parties to publish accounts and disclose the sources of their income; it provides that there should be a democratic election of officers and that the process of selecting candidates for elections should be open to members, either through a responsible selection committee or by holding a representative party convention.

PARTY ORGANIZATION

German parties lay emphasis on securing large mass memberships, but in fact the ratio of members to voters for all parties taken together prior to unification was about 5 per 100, and only a small percentage of members take any active part beyond paying their party dues. Subsequent to unification, the situation has changed: the three "western" parties (CDU, SPD, and FDP) have found it difficult to build up party membership in the new *Länder* of eastern Germany. The SPD has been the worst affected, because both the CDU and FDP benefited to an extent from the existence of similar parties that had been allowed to operate under the Communist regime. The Left Party used to have a substantial membership base (about 120,000), relying heavily on the old party cadres of the SED. However, the number of members gradually declined, standing as of 2004 at about 70,000. Membership dues are an important source of party finance, but the advent

of state financing of the parties has made them less reliant on membership support. Just as for federal elections, the parties in the *Länder* receive financial support from the *Länder* governments, so they are able to maintain a strong local presence.

A major activity of party members at the local and *Land* level is the selection of candidates for elections to the municipal and district representative body and the *Land* assembly. Candidates are chose either by conferences of local party members or by a delegate conference. The procedures usually ensure that only party activists will exercise any direct voice.

The parties maintain *Länder* organizations that in many respects function quite independently of the national organizations. This independence arises for two reasons. In the first place, each *Land* is a governing entity in its own right, so that the *Land* parties are geared to winning *Land* office and supplying the ruling minister-president. Delegates from regional organizations, meeting in convention, elect *Land* party chairpersons and also decide on the selection of candidates for the Landtag elections. In the second place, the *Länder* parties are responsible for selecting the candidates for the federal elections, and the national party can use influence and persuasion only in the question of the choice of candidates. The selection of candidates for federal elections and, especially, the order in which they appear on the party list are hotly contested. Major party personages will be placed high on the list, and they may also appear as district candidates as well (if successful in the district election, their names will be deleted from the list). While a candidate may be reasonably sure of election if his or her name appears near the head of the list, uncertainty increases the lower down it is, especially since the number of seats the party wins in the districts, an unknown factor until the results are counted, will determine the number of successful list candidates. The voter is not able to change the order in the party list, so that the *Land* convention is the all-important arena for this decision. The party will also seek to place qualified "experts" on its list, since the German political tradition relies heavily on expert knowledge.

Party organization at the federal level is concerned with securing national publicity for the party, with well-endowed research departments in a range of policy areas, with the coordination of the *Länder* parties, and with the formulation of strategy and policy. Party policy itself is decided by national delegate conventions, usually held every other year, with the national party leadership typically in a strong position to carry the convention vote. The convention also elects the party chairperson and an executive committee. For the two major parties, there is also the question of choosing the party's chancellor candidate for the next federal election. While the candidate may be the national party chairperson, that is not necessarily the case. The party convention is a major feature in preparing for a federal election and, in other years, for mobilizing activists and publicity for the party's efforts in *Land* elections.

The national executive elected by the convention is responsible for party organization and policy between conventions. Parties have executives of about 30 members, half of whom will normally be Bundestag deputies, thus facilitating coordination between the membership party and the parliamentary bloc. There is also a smaller party presidium, consisting of a third of the executive. This body makes all the important day-to-day decisions. The relationship between the national leadership and *Länder* parties varies. While the SPD has strong centralist traditions, the *Länder* parties of the CDU and FDP have more independence. For all three parties it is desirable that coalitions at the *Land* level should reflect the lineup of the federal coalition. In the first place, this consideration is important if a party is to put its case convincingly to voters. But also, the nature of *Land* coalitions directly affects the composition of the Bundesrat: A party in federal government naturally wants to see that federal government's policies are supported strongly in the Bundesrat, and this will not be the case if the *Land* party opts to go into coalition with a party in federal opposition. However, the arithmetic of coalition building in the *Länder* may force these so-called cross-coalitions: in several *Länder*, grand coalitions between the CDU and SPD have been formed, since there was no acceptable alternative combination. Such was the case in the aftermath of the 2005 elections.

For none of the parties would it be correct to regard *Länder* politicians as purely subordinate figures, since recruitment to federal politics takes place principally through the *Länder*. The path to national leadership is most frequently by way of becoming minister-president of a *Land* government. This was the case for Helmut Kohl, who was previously minister-president of the Rhineland-Palatinate. The SPD's successful chancellor candidate in 1998, Gerhard Schröder, was also the minister-president of Lower Saxony.

CAMPAIGNING

The frequency and importance of *Länder* elections, interspersed as they are throughout the four-year life of the Bundestag, ensures that an atmosphere of

continuous election campaigning is maintained. The significance of *Länder* elections means that they will be treated as federal elections in miniature, especially when they directly precede the federal election or when party balance is about equal. There has been a considerable "nationalization" of *Länder* politics as a result, and the elections are usually dominated by national issues with the party leaders actively engaging in the *Länder* campaigns. The normal four-year Bundestag term means that the parties are fairly certain long in advance when the federal election will occur. Campaigning is fairly extensive, although intense activity is restricted to the last four weeks prior to election day.

Two factors dominate the buildup to the election. One is the question of the coalition lineup: since one party rarely wins an absolute majority in the Bundestag, it is important to secure a coalition partner. In recent years it has become the practice for the parties to make known their coalition intentions before the election takes place. The consequence is that the campaign is dominated by the claims of the two rival groups for office. After the coalition switch of the FDP to the CDU in 1982, the choice has been between these two parties and the SPD, with the latter looking to the Greens as possible coalition partners on the federal stage. Previously, from 1972 to 1982, the choice was between the CDU-CSU on the one side and the SPD with the FDP on the other.

The Greens increasingly gained recognition as a legitimate coalition partner, with their 1998 participation in the first Schröder government. This signified a final transformation of the political system, from a triangular system of two large parties and a small one (the FDP) aligning with one of them to a bipolar system of two large parties, each aligning with a smaller potential coalition partner of the two smaller parties, the Greens for the SPD and the FPD for the CDU-CSU.

The second dominant factor relates to this bipolarity: the contest is highly personalized since both of the major parties, the CDU-CSU and the SPD, must produce convincing chancellor candidates. An incumbent chancellor is, of course, already a convincing candidate, unless his government has appeared to fail seriously. The candidates' personalities and electoral appeal are major factors affecting the outcome of the campaign. Television coverage of the party leaders is intensive, and the culmination of the campaign is marked by a marathon television program in which all four major party leaders (SPD, FDP, CDU, and CSU) as well as the Greens discuss and argue their records and policies. Since the parties in the western part of Germany are well endowed with money, they are able to swamp the electorate with posters and campaign literature. The effect of the new Party Law has been to make the share paid by the parties greater than that paid by the state. As a consequence the parties have cut their campaign expenditures from between 10 percent and 15 percent compared with 1990. Although the electorate remains largely passive, interest is keen, as shown by the turnout. Even though in actual policy terms not too much separates the parties, partisan commitment is high and the rhetoric of intense conflict is maintained, often accompanied by smear campaigns and personal vilification. That climate quickly changes once the election is over.

INDEPENDENT VOTERS

The lack of marked ideological and programmatic differences between the established parties means that party identification is not nearly as strong as it was in the Weimar Republic or in the early postwar years. Increasingly, the parties have to compete for the "middle ground" in the electorate, which means taking account of the changing social-class composition of the electorate and the altering occupational structure. Both types of change were particularly in evidence for West Germany, since the country enjoyed exceptionally long periods of almost uninterrupted economic growth. The parties therefore have had to make inroads into the new middle-class and white-collar workers who have no pronounced political affiliation. It is difficult to secure their long-term allegiance, so there is a degree of electoral volatility evident from one election to another. The easterners lack many of the traditional or habitual links that influence voting patterns and party loyalty in western Germany, and their party identification is fluid.

Unlike the two largest parties, the Free Democrats do not have a reliable "core" vote, and the central position of the FDP in the party system makes the party an acceptable alternative to both the CDU and SPD, attracting better educated and professional people, rather than trade unionists or active church members. This is also the situation of the Greens, relying on their traditional "New Left" grassroots constituency but also on other constituencies: the urban dwellers, the better educated, and the higher paid. The role of the FDP and of the Greens is best exemplified by considering the extent of "ticket splitting" that the German electoral system allows. Since the voter has two votes, one district and one party list, it is possible to vote for the candidate of one party on the first (district)

vote but for another party on the second (list) vote. The great majority opt for the same party with both votes, but there is a minority of ticket splitting that predominantly favors the FDP or the Greens. The high marginal vote the parties attract can be seen from the difference between the first and second votes. The size of the loyal core vote is gauged from the percentage on the first ballot, and in some years there has been a significant difference between the two percentages. Thus, although the parties have benefited in terms of Bundestag seats through ticket splitting, it does not represent a stable position. The general point to be made is that the electoral system allows a relatively weak party identification to be shown and without forcing the voter to make a complete shift in party preference.

Major Political Parties

CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC UNION

(Christlich-Demokratische Union; CDU)

HISTORY

Although the Christian Democratic Union drew on various political traditions of the pre-Nazi period, the formation of the party in 1945 represented a new departure for German politics, and it proved to have an enormous impact on the party system. In the early period of occupation, political activity was restricted, and the CDU came into existence as a loose grouping of independent zonal parties. Nevertheless, they all had a common orientation is seeking to achieve a broadly based party of Christian unity that would bring together Catholics and Protestants into one political organization. It was made easier to achieve after the experience of the Nazi dictatorship, and the pre-Nazi Catholic Center Party provided an organizational model.

In the Weimar Republic, the Catholic population had been a minority, but the division of Germany and the loss of the eastern territories brought about an approximate parity of Catholics and Protestants in western Germany. Parity made it possible for the two camps to base their cooperation on equality, and strenuous attempts were made to ensure that officeholders in the party represented both confessions. As the party increasingly became detached from the CDU in Berlin and the Soviet Zone, so it became more conservative in its outlook and quickly shed its transient flirtation with Christian socialism.

By 1949 the CDU—already the strongest party in many of the *Länder*—was in a position to promote its own brand of economic policy under the title of a "social market economy." The party's later electoral successes can be attributed largely to the prolonged period of economic prosperity in West Germany and the public's perception that CDU policies were responsible. The CDU was also fortunate in having a strong leader, Konrad Adenauer (1876–1967), who became the first West German chancellor in 1949, a post he retained without a break until 1963. Throughout the Adenauer era, the CDU was the dominant party, and in the 1957 election the CDU-CSU won an absolute majority of votes. However, CDU fortunes became too dependent on Adenauer's standing, and as Adenauer's authority declined in the early 1960s, the party's fortunes began to wane. In 1969 the CDU-CSU was forced into opposition for the first time in 20 years. The party had to adapt itself to the role of opposition, and, despite all its efforts, the government coalition of SPD and FDP remained intact until 1982. Only then was the CDU able to get back into office with the aid of the FDP. However, the coalition with the FDP proved exceptionally stable. The CDU-CSU lineup was successful in four successive federal elections (1983, 1987, 1990, and 1994). Nevertheless, in 1994 the coalition only just survived with a narrow margin of 10 seats for an overall majority.

ORGANIZATION

A feature of the CDU since its foundation has been the loose structuring of the party: the CDU still bears the impress of its origins, beginning life in the individual *Länder* rather than as a national party. As long as Adenauer was securely in power as chancellor, the underlying problems were masked, and Adenauer himself saw no reason to create a strong national organization. It is also significant that a federal CDU was not established until 1950, after Adenauer had become chancellor. The long-term consequence has been that CDU leaders in the 16 *Länder* organizations have been able to carve out positions of independent power for themselves, most strikingly in Bavaria where the Christian Social Union exists as a distinct party.

The federal convention of the party is the supreme authority, but in practice the *Land* parties enjoy considerable freedom. This freedom reflects traditional differences, such as between the mainly Protestant northern *Länder* and the Catholic south and west. The new *Länder* of the former GDR are in a different category, since they have no real connection with Christian democratic politics. As a consequence, they have been far more dependent both on the federal CDU organization and on western *Länder* for help and expertise.

POLICY

Despite its "Christian" title, the CDU has many of the traits of an orthodox conservative party. The party stands for the rights of private property and is against state intervention. Its belief in the virtues of the "social market economy" is an article of faith, as was its implacable hostility toward communism.

The CDU, of all European parties, is the foremost proponent of European integration. It has favored the rapid enlargement of the European Union to include several of the East European states. It supported the creation of a single European currency and moves toward a full political union of a federal nature.

Given its interconfessional character, the Christian emphasis of the party does not mean that the CDU stands particularly close to organized religion, but it does support religious values, stresses the special place of the family in society, and is generally opposed to the further liberalization of abortion laws. The CDU supports the continuation of the "church tax," that is, the collection by the state of contributions by church members (levied as a proportion of income tax) for distribution to the relevant denomination without any cost to the church bodies themselves. The CDU also staunchly defends confessional schooling.

There is no single ideological trend within the CDU. Also the nature of Christian democracy implies that it is an interclass party, which means that the CDU has to avoid siding too openly with the interests of private capital at the expense of organized labor. However, the CDU is opposed to the expansion of social welfare programs, especially since such schemes increase public indebtedness or raise taxation. In fact, the strains of dealing with German unification forced the CDU government to increase both taxation and public borrowing. Because of these pressures rather than from ideological conviction the CDU is also committed to large-scale privatization of public enterprises, such as Lufthansa, the Bundesbahn, and Telecom.

MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY

During its long period in government in the 1950s, the CDU paid relatively little attention to securing a wide mass membership, since its governmental position seemed sufficient to win electoral support. During the 1970s, however, much more effort was made to build up membership. Thus in 1970 membership was only 300,000, but by 2004 it was around 600,000. If CSU membership is added, this total exceeds that of the SPD—historically the mass membership party par excellence.

Electoral support for the CDU is concentrated in the older age groups and in smaller communities. The party is characterized, too, by support from people who are not trade union members and by those, especially Catholics, who are regular churchgoers. On other variables—such as sex, schooling, and occupation—there are no great variations from the SPD, except that the CDU gains more support from farmers, the self-employed, and the professionals.

Organized business interests—employers' associations, the Federation of German Industry, and the extremely well organized chambers of commerce and industry operating at local levels—all tend to favor the CDU.

FINANCING

The generous state financing of the parties combined with the size of party membership has meant that the CDU is relatively affluent, and its income has increased at an appreciably faster rate than for the SPD and FDP. Of its current annual income of around €110 million (about $100 million), some 50 percent comes from membership dues, 20 percent from private contributions (mainly from business), and about 30 percent from the state subsidy. Reliance on membership dues is lower for the CDU than the SPD because of the scale of business funding. Dues are fixed on a sliding scale related to income with a basic annual contribution of €5 and an average payment of €30 (about $27). The growth in membership and state subsidization has had a beneficial effect in reducing the party's dependence on the paymasters of industry, historically a sinister force in German politics.

LEADERSHIP

After Adenauer's departure, the CDU long failed to produce a cohesive leadership. Helmut Kohl (born 1930), who served as chancellor from 1982 to1998, was formerly minister-president of the Rhineland-Palatinate and became party chairman in 1973. After the 1976 election he led the CDU's parliamentary group in the Bundestag. But his position was undermined by his failure to win in 1976 and further weakened prior to the 1980 election when the party opted for Franz-Josef Strauss (CSU) as the CDU/CSU joint chancellor candidate. Strauss's failure to win again opened the question of who would lead the party into the next federal election. The sharp political shift of late 1982, which made Kohl chancellor by a vote in the Bundestag, was confirmed by the outcome of the 1983 election. However, although Kohl won a popular mandate, his performance in government subsequently

led to a sharp fall in his political standing. Kohl was anything but a convincing party leader or chancellor, and he was successful in both elections, 1983 and 1987, largely because of the weakness of the SPD.

Kohl's reputation underwent a dramatic transformation from 1989 to 1990 in the course of German unification. He was the first to grasp the possibilities in the collapse of Soviet power and was ideally placed to exploit the opportunity of pushing for unification with eastern Germany (the GDR). As a result, he won the first all-German election of 1990. By the time of the 1994 election he had achieved the status of "the chancellor of German unification" as well as being the foremost statesman promoting European integration.

The post-Kohl CDU still suffered from a lack of charismatic and stable leadership that would be widely accepted within and outside the party. In the 2002 election campaign this instability in the party led to its support of Edmund Stoiber, the leader of the CSU sister party, as its joint candidate. After the elections, the struggle for leadership within the party resumed. The 2005 party leader, Angela Merkel (born 1954), originally from the former GDR, is the first woman to hold such a position in Germany. Following the 2005 elections, she became the country's first female chancellor.

PROSPECTS

Despite being (with the CSU) the largest political party, the CDU was in opposition for an exceptionally long period (1969–82). In this situation the party tried various strategies to win back power, but without success. After 1982 the CDU under Chancellor Kohl became the natural party of government, in part because of Kohl's formidable leadership but also because of the inability of the SPD to present a convincing alternative. That all changed with the CDU's crushing defeat in 1998. However, the party righted itself in time for the 2005 elections. While its coalition with the CSU did not win a majority of votes, it did perform well enough to enter a grand coalition with the SPD and to have its leader, Merkel, elected chancellor.

CHRISTIAN SOCIAL UNION

(Christlich-Soziale Union; CSU)

HISTORY

The Bavarian CSU, the sister party of the CDU, reflects the particularistic traditions of Bavaria, which (along with Saxony) is exceptional in having a direct continuity with a previously independent state, the kingdom of Bavaria. Like its forerunner in the Weimar Republic, the Bayerische Volkspartei, which was quite separate from the Catholic Center Party, the CSU has consistently emphasized its independence from the CDU.

The success of the CSU in identifying itself with Bavarian values was shown as early as 1946 when the party won 52.3 percent of the vote in the first Landtag election. However, it experienced strong competition from the anticlerical Bavarian Party for some years, losing its absolute majority for a time. The failure of the Bavarian Party to maintain a presence in the Bundestag (it was excluded in 1953 when the 5 percent requirement was extended from a *Land* to a federal base) led to its decline, and from the early 1960s the CSU became the dominant party, controlling an absolute majority from 1962 until the present time. It won an unprecedented 62.1 percent of the vote in the 1974 Landtag election. Effectively, the CSU has become the "state party" of Bavaria, and consistently wins over 50 percent of the vote.

ORGANIZATION

Within Bavaria, the CSU is completely free of any obligation to the CDU. Federally, however, there are important constraints. First, the CDU and CSU form a common parliamentary group in the Bundestag, although from 1976 onward the CSU has enjoyed concessions giving the CSU deputies freedom of action. Second, the two parties present a joint chancellor candidate at federal elections (prior to the 1980 election the chancellor candidate had invariably come from the CDU). Third, the CSU is restricted to competing within Bavaria, while the CDU competes in all *Länder* except Bavaria.

The CSU is one of the best organized of all West German parties. There are no fewer than 2,800 local CSU associations, and above these the party is organized at district, provincial, and *Land* levels. The party convention is the party's supreme authority, from which are elected an executive and a party president. The party has its own newspaper, the *Bayernkurier*.

POLICY

The outlook of the CSU can best be described as "Christian-conservative." Although generally it subscribes to the main planks of the CDU platform, especially those of an economic nature, the CSU is marked by its clericalism, its virulent antisocialism, and—paradoxically for Bavaria—its uncompromising nationalistic line. Naturally, the CSU is also in the forefront in the defense of *Länder* rights, and it appeals to Bavarian patriotism.

Party policies put the CSU well to the right on the political spectrum, but its confrontational style is just as important in assessing the importance of the CSU in German politics. That style was largely determined by the character of the party's long-term leader and chancellor candidate in the 1980 election, Franz-Josef Strauss (died 1988), a national rather than a merely Bavarian politician whose impact gave the CSU a lasting federal significance.

MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY

CSU party membership stands at 180,000, a total that, considering its restriction to Bavaria, compares favorably with other parties. The social makeup of membership differs from the CDU in the much larger proportion of farmers and in the active participation of Catholic priests, who make no secret of their political loyalties. In addition, there are a number of organizations that are closely related to the party and help it to permeate society: the youth movement (Junge Union), the women's movement, the Christian Workers' Association, and several others.

The CSU is strongest in the heartland of Upper Bavaria and in the predominantly Catholic areas of Swabia and the Upper Palatinate. It is less powerful in Protestant regions (Upper and Middle Franconia) and in some of the larger cities, such as Munich.

If a party is able to average over 50 percent of the vote, it is clear that it has considerable interclass appeal, and the CSU—chiefly, though not exclusively, through the Catholic vote—is able to count on support from all sections of the population. It is particularly strong in rural areas, but it also combines urban middle-class support with that of employees. The wide attraction of the CSU in Bavaria is reflected in the weakness of the SPD. In 2003 the SPD won only 19 percent of the Bavarian vote for the Landtag. Moreover, the CSU has considerable following among young voters, so that its continued hegemony appears assured.

FINANCING

Even though the CSU is an active-membership party, it does not rely disproportionately on membership dues, and its subscription rates are lower than those of other parties, averaging €16 per member. The principal source of party funds, about half of an annual income of €28 million, comes from state subsidies, federal and *Land*, although this share is falling because of the effects of the 1994 Party Law. In the latter case, the CSU is the major beneficiary of the support provided by the CSU government of Bavaria. The other source of income (somewhat less than 20 percent) comes under the heading of contributions, a large part of which represents financing from commercial and industrial interests, which are closer to the CSU in Bavaria than they are to the CDU elsewhere.

LEADERSHIP

For many years the fortunes of the CSU were closely identified with the person of Franz-Josef Strauss, who first became party leader in 1961. When the CDU-CSU formed the government in 1982 with the Free Democrats, Helmut Kohl became chancellor. Despite the prominence of Strauss, Kohl refused to give him a ministerial portfolio. Nevertheless, Strauss continued to be a strong influence in federal politics besides being minister-president of Bavaria. The death of Strauss in 1988 left a vacuum in the Bavarian CSU. However, his legacy is still a potent force. Edmund Stoiber, minister-president of Bavaria and the CDU/CSU joint chancellor candidate in the 2002 elections, has also earned a reputation for upholding traditional Bavarian values.

PROSPECTS

After the 1976 election the CSU made a serious attempt to achieve full freedom from the CDU by declaring the independence of the party group in the Bundestag. That "revolt" failed, and (especially after the departure of Strauss) the party no longer aspires to be an independent force in German politics. Its position has also been weakened as a result of German unification: in the enlarged Federal Republic, Bavaria takes a smaller place, since the CSU is restricted to competing within its own *Land*. Its attempt to establish a sister party (the German Social Union) in the new *Länder* failed. However, the CSU, with 7.5 percent of the vote in the 2005 federal elections, can reasonably be sure of preserving a Bavarian identity at the federal level.

SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF GERMANY

(Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands; SPD)

HISTORY

The SPD was founded in 1875 as a merger between Ferdinand Lassalle's General German Workers' Association (formed in 1863 as a moderate, non-Marxist party) and the strongly Marxist Social Democratic Party of August Bebel and Wilhelm Liebknecht. Despite discrimination against it, the SPD became the largest party in the Reichstag in 1912. It formed the new provisional government upon the collapse of

the monarchy in 1918. At that time, the left wing of the party split off to become the KPD, and the two parties were mortal enemies throughout the life of the Weimar Republic: the SPD wishing to preserve parliamentary democracy and the KPD dedicated to its destruction. After the collapse of the Third Reich, the SPD was quickly reestablished, since many former party workers enthusiastically rallied to the party. Kurt Schumacher, who had been incarcerated by the Nazis, emerged as the undisputed leader in the western zones, but it soon became apparent that the SPD in the Soviet Zone was to be subject to Soviet pressure. The USSR was not prepared to see the KPD take second place to the SPD. In April 1946 the SPD in East Germany was merged forcibly with the KPD to form the Socialist Unity Party (SED).

The SPD under Schumacher at first appeared to have a claim to undisputed leadership in western Germany, but the rise of the CDU meant that the two parties ran neck and neck in the first *Land* elections as well as in the first federal election in 1949. Excluded from federal government then, the SPD commenced a long spell in opposition. While the CDU went from strength to strength, the SPD stagnated, and its traditional socialism seemed to have little relevance during the period of the "economic miracle" of the 1950s. The SPD reacted by drastically changing the nature of the party with the adoption of the Godesberg Program in 1959. The party committed itself to becoming a party of the whole people rather than a class party and explicitly supported the successful market system. It claimed to be a party with no specific attachment to Marxism and to find its roots in "the Christian ethic, humanism, and classical philosophy." Subsequent to these reforms, the SPD's vote rose gratifyingly in successive elections, but its progress was also due to the personality of Willy Brandt, who in the early 1960s became party leader as well as chancellor candidate. In 1966 the SPD joined the CDU in government, with Brandt as vice chancellor and foreign minister. In 1969 it became the senior governing party in coalition with the FDP, and Brandt was the first SPD chancellor in the postwar period.

Brandt's important contribution was to implement a new *Ostpolitik*. He also appealed to the idealism of younger voters, but without actually bringing about substantial reforms. His resignation in 1974 (over a spy scandal) led to Helmut Schmidt's replacing him as chancellor. Schmidt remained chancellor until he was defeated in the Bundestag in 1982. Brandt retained the party leadership after resigning as chancellor in 1974 and remained the undisputed leader of the party.

The SPD became the largest party in 1972, but subsequently (in 1976 and 1980) the party again had to take second place to the CDU-CSU. For party loyalists, the satisfaction of still having the SPD in government was tempered by the party's stagnating vote and its loss of reforming zeal. Loss of office in 1982 was bitter for the party, but the period of opposition gave the SPD an opportunity to rethink its policies.

ORGANIZATION

The SPD is a centralized party, with authority securely vested in the national leadership, the party convention, and the party's parliamentary group (*Fraktion*) in the Bundestag. Thus although the *Land* leaders and minister-presidents enjoy considerable prestige, there is never any question of their challenging the national leaders.

Each *Land* has a single party organization (except Hesse, which is divided into two). The SPD also emphasizes the contribution of suborganizations. By far the most important is the party's youth movement, the Jungsozialisten (Jusos), open to all party members up to the age of 35, although in fact only a small fraction of eligible members participate. The Jungsozialisten represented the major ideological challenge to the party leadership, but their influence has declined since the mid-1970s. Over time the significance of the party's ancillary organizations has declined as a means of integration and mobilization, and consequently the SPD's organization is stronger on paper than it is in practice. Since the German unified trade union movement is by choice (officially) politically neutral, the trade unions do not exist as a suborganization of the party, unlike the situation in the Weimar Republic.

POLICY

The fount of party policy continues to be the Godesberg Program, although that document is more a statement of principles than a detailed guide to action. It has been supplemented at various times, most notably by the middle-range working programs, which have, among other things, advocated a larger role for the government in steering and planning the economy. The party also stands for greater social welfare provision, educational reform, and an extension of codetermination in industry. Three policy areas were subject to increasing intraparty conflict when the party was last in government: the position of the Federal Republic with regard to increasing the scale of nuclear armament on its territory; the nuclear power program; and the measures necessary to counter the economic recession, especially the growth in long-term unemployment. The conflicts

came to a head in the final years of Schmidt's chancellorship. After years of preparation, a supplement to the Godesberg Program was adopted in 1989 (Berlin Basic Program), but this effort was quickly outdated by German unification and proved to be too vague, seeking to please all viewpoints in the party. The 1994 election gave a better idea of the SPD's priorities. On taxation, the SPD proposed to shift the burden to higher income earners and to raise taxes on the use of energy. It also committed an SPD government to "phase out" nuclear energy. The party has sought to improve the status of and chances for women by legislation, and the SPD adopted a women's quota (40 percent) for all its elected offices and candidates. Although the SPD favors closer European integration, it is against the development of a "hard core" led by France and Germany at the expense of other members of the European Union. The Schröder government was highly influenced by the "Third Way" (between socialism and capitalism) ideas and attempted to implement economic reforms that could be seen as opposing the spirit of the Godesberg Program. Prior to the 2005 elections the party advocated an additional tax on wealthy Germans and called for larger state control over the economy in order to increase social justice.

MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY

The SPD traditionally has been a mass-membership party; even before 1914 it had no fewer than a million members. Soon after 1945 it reached 800,000, but then declined until the early 1970s, when there was a large influx of young people, topping the million mark before declining once more to about 755,000 in the late 1990s. Compared with the early postwar years there has been a massive decline in the proportion of manual workers in the party, only partially reflecting the changing occupational distribution of the labor force: manual workers now account for 25 percent of members. Members under the age of 30 used to constitute half the total, but the SPD has found it increasingly difficult to attract young voters, many of whom now count themselves as Greens.

Voting support is greatest in the industrial areas and large cities, with a strong concentration among trade union members and among those who are not church members. The SPD benefited from the lowering of the voting age to 18 in 1972 and was then generally attractive to younger voters. This support subsequently declined somewhat, and the Green Party has made serious inroads into first-time and young voters. By far the most important single constituency for the SPD is still the trade union movement, which, despite its formally neutral position in politics, nevertheless has strong links with the party chiefly through personal connections and overlapping membership. However, German trade union membership, at around 20 percent of all employees, is on the low side compared with other industrial countries.

FINANCING

The SPD relies heavily on membership dues as a source of party income (36 percent). There has been a steady rise in personal income and party dues are fixed on a sliding scale according to declared income, an average of €23. State subsidies, *Land* and federal, amount to about 50 percent of income, while the extent of voluntary contributions (10 percent) is lower than for the CDU and FDP. Annual party income approaches €7.5 million and is comparable with that of the CDU. The inability of the party to rely on contributions makes it especially sensitive to variations in electoral performance (which affect the state subsidy) and to fluctuations in party membership. However, the revised Party Law has benefited large-membership parties such as the SPD, as the state subsidy now tops up members' contributions by 50 percent.

LEADERSHIP

During the late 1960s and up to the early 1980s, the SPD was fortunate in its strong leadership, marked especially by the chancellorships of Brandt (1969–74) and Schmidt (1974–82). Subsequently, however, the SPD failed to produce a convincing chancellor candidate and lost four successive federal elections up to 1994. Rudolf Scharping was selected as chancellor candidate for this election by a direct vote of the party membership, and he combined this with the position of party leader. Subsequently, two minister-presidents, Gerhard Schröder (Lower Saxony) and Oskar Lafontaine (Saarland) became contenders for power, with Schröder winning the chancellorship and Lafontaine elected SPD party leader. Lafontaine was dismissed in 1999, with Schröder serving as chairman until 2004. In that year Franz Münterfering became party chairman.

PROSPECTS

Success in the 1998 and 2002 elections gave the SPD a choice of coalition partners between the center-right and the left. Its choice of the Greens represented a new departure for the Federal Republic. After the 2002 elections its reliance on the Greens grew, with the relative change in the power balance between the two coalition partners. The coalition was unable to last through the full electoral period, and in the new federal elections

in 2005, the country split its vote between the SPD and the CDU/CSU. The two parties agreed on a grand coalition, with Angela Merkel of the CDU likely to become the country's first female chancellor.

FREE DEMOCRATIC PARTY

(Freie Demokratische Partei; FDP)

HISTORY

The FDP, formed from several liberal parties in the *Länder* of the western zones of occupation in 1948, draws on two types of German liberal tradition: one conservative, nationalist, and close to heavy industry; the other radical, favoring individual liberty and committed to liberal democracy. Both were represented in different parties in imperial Germany and in the Weimar Republic, but the formation of the FDP brought the two streams together, although the internal politics of the party showed a continuing tension between the conservative and radical wings.

For a long period in the 1950s and 1960s, the FDP was in coalition with the CDU, until the formation of the "grand coalition" between the CDU and SPD in 1966. In 1969 the party joined forces with the SPD, an extremely stable coalition that lasted until 1982. In one sense, the FDP has always been a marginal party compared with the CDU and SPD, since it has never gained more than 12.7 percent of the vote. On occasion the FDP has been perilously close to the 5 percent barrier. On the other hand, the FDP has a remarkable record of holding a place in government: its total period in office since 1949 exceeds that of the CDU or SPD. The FDP is therefore very much a government-oriented party, and its position between the CDU and SPD makes it an eligible partner for both. Yet it would be incorrect to think of the FDP as being able arbitrarily to switch from one to the other and effectively to be in a position always to determine the nature of the federal government.

In the early years of the republic, the Free Democrats' conservative tradition predominated, and the CDU was their natural ally. Gradually, the outlook of the party changed as a new generation of leaders came to the fore, and a more radical element won control when the party was in opposition from 1966 to 1969. The new leaders saw alliance with the SPD as preferable to a renewal of a CDU-FDP coalition. The shift can be related to changing FDP attitudes toward the *Ostpolitik* and to a greater concern with social and political liberties rather than to any change in thinking about the role of the state in the economy and social welfare.

Once the change in the FDP became evident, the party lost much of its traditional voting support. The continuation of the social-liberal coalition meant that the FDP had to build a new voting base, a fact that may explain the party's modest showing in subsequent elections when it depended on ticket splitting by SPD voters to top the 5 percent hurdle. The party's switch to the CDU in 1982 alienated support the party had built up in the years of coalition with the SPD. Only ticket splitting by CDU supporters in subsequent elections has ensured its survival in the Bundestag. That was the case for the elections of 1983 and 1987. However, in 1990 (the "unification" election) the fact that the foreign minister, Hans-Dietrich Genscher, was held in high regard in both parts of Germany helped the party win 11 percent of the vote. In the 1998 elections the FDP vote fell to 6.2 percent.

Approaching the 2002 elections, the party's leader, Guido Westerwelle (born 1961) announced that the party's ambition would be to achieve 18 percent of the votes, much more than ever gained before. As part of this campaign, Westerwelle presented himself, for the first time in FPD history, as a chancellor candidate. However, despite a populist campaign, appealing to the "New Right" (with Jürgen Möllemann, one of the party's main figures at that time, praising the success of Jörg Haider's FPÖ in neighboring Austria), the party achieved only 7.4 percent of the votes, alienating some of its traditional voters and angering the Jewish community. In 2005 the party saw its support increased somewhat, to 9.9 percent of the vote.

ORGANIZATION

As a small, nationwide party, the FDP's organization tends to be weak, especially in *Länder* where the party's support is low, such as Bavaria and all the new *Länder* of eastern Germany. Each *Land* has its own organization, which has a measure of independence from the federal party, especially in the matter of coalition formation. The party convention, meeting yearly, is the supreme organ. Its composition is decided on the basis of two variables: half of the 400 delegates are allocated according to size of party membership in the *Länder* and the other half according to size of the FDP vote in the *Länder* at the previous federal election. All members have a right to attend the convention, though not necessarily to speak. The federal executive, which has been strengthened in recent years, is composed of leading party officials together with members elected by the convention, federal ministers, and the leader of the parliamentary party.

The FDP's youth wing, the Young Democrats (Jungdemokraten), was decidedly radical in its orientation, and its membership was quite separate from the parent party. However, it did not survive the rupture of the coalition in 1982. Subsequently a new youth organization, the Young Liberals (Jungliberalen), took over. Its outlook is much more in keeping with that of the FDP leadership and the party as a whole.

POLICY

Although in the 1970s the FDP moved toward being a progressive party, its commitments to free enterprise, individual liberties, and historical anticlericalism remain leading traits of the party. In 1971 a new party program was approved that was social-liberal in character and spoke of the "reform of capitalism," without, however, indicating the lines on which reform should proceed. The party was the first to recognize the need for a conciliatory *Ostpolitik*, but its flexibility on this score did not imply any weakening of Western commitments.

Many of the FDP's policy concerns are related to the practical questions of coalition government. Its "moderate" stance between the CDU and SPD implies that the party has had constantly to adjust its policies to harmonize with the coalition partner. It realizes that it will never have a free rein, but is concerned that the "extreme" elements of its coalition partner should be kept in check. In the past the FDP was able to achieve a distinctive policy profile in foreign policy and the *Ostpolitik*, especially with Genscher as the long-serving foreign minister. But since unification, the FDP has been unable to emphasize this aspect. Its main thrust of policy is the prominence it gives to market liberalism, the privatization of state-owned businesses, cut backs in social welfare provision, and efforts to contain the escalating public debt caused by financing German unification.

At one time the coalition policies pursued by the FDP in the *Länder* were geared to its national coalition lineup. However, in recent years the FDP has been eliminated from most *Land* assemblies, and coalition strategy in the *Länder* has given way to a simple struggle for survival. The FDP now has a significant presence only at the national level, and its choice of federal coalition strategy is critical in deciding the party's fate.

MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY

For many years the FDP reported a membership of around 80,000, which was probably well on the optimistic side. (In 2004 it reported a membership of 67,000.) Immediately after unification, it received a large but temporary boost to its membership in eastern Germany. That happened because the FDP at first had the benefit of the so-called liberal parties inherited from the GDR, but in fact liberalism in the new *Länder* had no recognizable social base, and support quickly evaporated. There is a striking contrast to membership in the other parties in the FDP's small percentage of manual workers and larger proportion of white-collar workers and public servants. About one-fifth of the members are women. Support for the FDP comes from Protestants, mainly from larger cities, and from professionals and the self-employed. By far the most important distinguishing feature is the higher level of education of the typical FDP voter. The FDP has always defended the interests of agriculture and industry; the party identifies closely with a variety of organized industrial and agricultural groups and professional associations. The FDP's almost permanent presence in government has been an attraction for organized economic interests that also work with the CDU.

Yet the FDP is unable to rely on the consistent support of any one social category. The various groups mentioned are far more likely to make the CDU their first choice. It has been estimated that in 1994, for example, less than a third of the party's vote of 7 percent came from committed FDP supporters.

FINANCING

As a federal party, the FDP fares poorly in comparison with the CDU and SPD because its share of the public subsidy is much smaller; the same applies to subsidies in the *Länder*. Nor is the party able to rely on membership dues, partly because its membership is low but also because each *Land* party organization is free to set its own dues, a system that tends to depress them. Contributions to the party help fill the gap, accounting for some 40 percent of the annual budget, relatively much larger than for the other parties. Most such contributions are modest amounts from individual firms or organized groups.

LEADERSHIP

The FDP has relied heavily on the quality of a small group of federal ministers to enhance its national standing. It was fortunate in being able to supply two presidents of the republic: Theodor Heuss was the first president in 1949 and Walter Scheel from 1974 to 1979. Scheel was the architect of the first SPD-FDP coalition, formed in 1969, and he served as foreign minister and vice chancellor until elected president in 1974. From then on the leading person, and foreign

minister continuously from 1974 until 1990, was Hans-Dietrich Genscher. He was replaced as foreign minister by Klaus Kinkel, who also assumed the party leadership. Kinkel, who had worked alongside Genscher in the foreign office, had only shortly beforehand joined the FDP, and he had difficulty in maintaining the party's strong foreign policy reputation. The leadership struggles continued also under the leadership of Guido Westerwelle, who became party leader in 2001.

PROSPECTS

The prospects for the continuing survival of the FDP were seen as not good prior to the 2005 elections. However, with a jump in support from 7.4 percent of the vote in 2002 to nearly 10 percent in 2005, the FDP has been reinvigorated. It remains to be seen whether it can build on this newfound support in future elections.

THE GREENS

(Die Grünen)

The ecological movement in the Federal Republic is possibly the strongest organized political force of its kind in Western Europe. Although the Green Party was only formed as a federal party in 1980, it has had a considerable impact on German politics, especially in putting controversial issues on the political agenda. The Greens arose as a merger of some 250 smaller ecological and related groups that had already been active in *Länder* and communal politics. Prior to the 1980 federal election the "Green" lists (or the associated "colored" and "alternative" lists) obtained an average of 3.4 percent of the vote in *Land* elections, winning representation in Bremen and Baden-Württemburg. In the 1980 federal election the new Green party scored only 1.5 percent. But subsequent *Land* elections showed its underlying strength in mobilizing local support on specific issues (siting of nuclear power stations, housing conditions in Berlin). At the federal level, the party's support has been more diffuse, but the party achieved a breakthrough in 1983 with 5.6 percent of the national vote. It then had a platform in the Bundestag and was able to focus on national issues: nuclear weapons and the related peace issue, national environmental policies, and the cause of minority and disadvantaged groups.

Support for the Greens is based on a number of factors. One is simply concern with issues such as the environment. Another is the mobilizing of a protest vote against the monopoly of political power wielded by the larger parties and the consensus politics they foster. A third is the advent of idealist politics, appealing particularly to the young and well-educated. A fourth factor concerns the SPD: its long identification with government and the moderate course it has taken in opposition since 1982 have led to dissatisfaction among younger voters who came to see the party as incapable of initiating radical change in German society.

The motivations of those who support the Greens are varied, and the party contains a diversity of ideological views, especially between those who wish to keep to particular issues and those who would like to restructure German society and also have a leftist inclination. Not surprisingly, those who support the Greens also rallied behind the peace movement and campaign against nuclear weapons sites in the Federal Republic.

Party organization and leadership are still loosely structured. That was deliberate and intended to avoid the formation of permanent party elites. The Greens were initially an "antiparty party." Leadership was both collective and rotating so that few people could have a permanent major influence, and Green *Land* organizations were virtually independent.

The Greens have changed considerably since the 1980s and have become a normal party. Unlike earlier years when orthodox politics was rejected, coalitions with other parties at the *Land* level are no longer exceptional. The Greens are still committed to radical change but are prepared to work through the existing institutions to secure them.

In the election of 1990 the Greens fared badly in western Germany, partly because they had been lukewarm on unification. However, the Greens recovered subsequently, thanks to support in the *Länder*. Their vote of 6.7 percent in 1998 was sufficient to form a coalition with the SPD. The increase in support for the Greens in 2002 (to 8.6 percent) was largely due to Joschka Fischer's charisma as party leader and the party's policies regarding the war in Iraq. Elections in 2002 also marked the first time that a Green Party candidate (Hans-Christian Ströbele, who is identified with the left-wing branch of the party) managed to win a "first vote" direct mandate to represent one of the Berlin districts. In 2005 the party's support held steady with 8.1 percent of the vote. As of 2005 the party leaders were Claudia Roth and Reinhard Bütikofer.

Although the Greens have proportionately more younger voters than other parties, the age composition of the party is rising, a process especially evi-

dent among the leadership cadre. The Greens will be adversely affected by the operation of the new Party Law that puts a premium on party members' contributions in order to receive state subsidies. The Greens do not aspire to being a membership party, nor can they expect to receive large private donations.

LEFT PARTY

(Die Linkspartei; PDS)

The Left Party, formerly the Party of Democratic Socialism (PDS), is the successor party to the Socialist Unity Party of Germany (SED), which wielded sole power in the former German Democratic Republic for 40 years. The peaceful revolution in the GDR swept the Communists from office, and by the time of the first free elections in the GDR held in March 1990, the SED had changed its name to the Party of Democratic Socialism and won 16.4 percent of the vote, indicating that the Communist system was not entirely discredited. In the all-German election of December 1990 the PDS scored only 2.4 percent because it had almost no support in western Germany. In 1994 the PDS recorded 4.4 percent of the federal vote. Although it fell below the 5 percent requirement, the PDS managed to win four district contests (all in Berlin) on the "first vote" and so qualified for its full share of Bundestag seats. The PDS suffered a major drop in its success in the 2002 elections, with eastern voters favoring the SPD (following Schröder's SPD reaction to a flood that caused much damage in eastern Germany). The party lost most of its direct mandates and could not pass the 5 percent hurdle. "First vote" direct mandate was granted in only two Berlin districts, which means that despite the fact that the PDS has two representatives in the Bundestag, it cannot form a *Fraktion* in it. In 2005 the party, with its new name (including the period and "PDS" appended to its German name), entered into an alliance with the Labor and Social Justice Party of western Germany and won 8.7 percent of the vote.

Although the membership of the Left Party (at about 70,000) is far lower than for the old SED, it is still larger than that of any other party in the new *Länder* and Berlin. Support for the party comes from three main sources: former members of the SED, the unemployed, and (perhaps surprisingly) younger voters. One reason for the Left Party's ability to attract a substantial following is that many people in the new *Länder* resent the patronizing attitudes of some western Germans and believe that voting for the Left Party is the best way of asserting their identity and furthering their interests. Left Party finances come principally from members' contributions, but clearly the party has also had access to the funds and resources of the SED, although it is difficult to assess the party's actual wealth.

The party's policy is firmly anticapitalist, although playing down its communist ideology, and the Left Party commits itself to parliamentary democracy. It particularly emphasizes its role in the new *Länder* and naturally calls for measures to cut unemployment and increase social expenditure. The party demands the disbandment of NATO and does not wish Germany to have a seat on the UN Security Council.

For the future, the Left Party appears to have a secure place in the new *Länder* and may win modest support in western Germany, as happened in 2005. It looks like it has become an established regional party, with some appeal on the national level to young left-wing voters. To achieve a breakthrough, the Left Party would need to become fully acceptable to other parties, for instance, by participating in *Land* coalitions. Success in achieving this did come in 1998 when it entered a coalition in Thuringia with the SPD, and, since then, it has become a coalition party in many new *Länder*, including Berlin.

Minor Political Parties

There are numerous other minor parties in Germany. However, for the most part these are splinter parties with no hope of electing representatives or winning more than a few thousand votes in an election. The minor parties stand for diverse issues: various kinds of Christian orientation, assorted extreme-left groupings, civil rights, animal welfare.

Over the past few years, most attention has been focused on the possible threat posed by the extreme right, with a few parties contesting *Land* and federal elections. These include the National Democratic Party (NPD) and the Republicans. The extreme right has often seemed to be on the brink of making a breakthrough into federal politics, but actual successes have been limited to winning a few seats in several *Land* assemblies. In 2005 the results were no different, with the various right-wing parties remaining weak at the national level.

One new party of note is the Labor and Social Justice Party (WASG), which was founded by former members of the SPD in 2005. The party formed a coalition with the Left Party in advance of the 2005 elections; the coalition gained 8.7 percent of the vote.

Other Political Forces

The military remains under firm civilian control and does not interfere in the country's political system. While the major parties may draw some support from trade unions, business groups, or religious groups, none of these have a major influence on the political system. Perhaps a larger influence is the European Union (EU), of which Germany is key member with an important role (along with France and Great Britain).

National Prospects

As a consequence of unification, Germany has become Western Europe's most populous country. Germany's economic might has made it a leading European power, and its leadership role in the EU has involved pushing for further integration of the EU and extending it to Eastern Europe.

Nevertheless, political and economic uncertainties affect Germany's prospects. In light of the 2005 elections, a new grand coalition between the SPD and the CDU/CSU was being constructed, but the coalition's long-term success was a question mark.

Of equal concern must be the course of economic development. Germany has suffered from massive structural unemployment, in part resulting from high labor costs and high social security costs. This has made industry uncompetitive and unattractive for investment, and the country's growth rate in the early 2000s was one of the lowest in all of Europe. Most affected is eastern Germany: unemployment is higher in the former GDR, and the burden of financing unification is much greater than was expected, which all acts as a deadweight on more prosperous western Germany. Germany's deserved reputation for political and economy stability since the 1950s will be tested in the coming years, as attempted economic reforms may cause increasing instability in the system.

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REPUBLIC OF GHANA

By Robert J. Griffiths, Ph.D.



Ghana, a country with a population estimated at 21 million in 2005, lies on the Gulf of Guinea in West Africa. After 10 years of military rule, Ghana returned to a democratic, multiparty political system in 1992 under the constitution of the Fourth Republic.

Ghana encompasses the territory of the former British colony of the Gold Coast, with the addition of that portion of Togoland administered by Great Britain, first as a League of Nations and then as a United Nations mandate. On March 6, 1957, Ghana became the first black African country to achieve independence from colonial rule. The independence constitution provided for a parliamentary democracy designed along Westminster lines and headed by a prime minister. In 1960 a new republican constitution was introduced that established a presidential system. In the 1960 plebiscite, which was called to approve the constitutional changes, Kwame Nkrumah, Ghana's first prime minister, was elected president. His party, the Convention People's Party (CPP), attained an overwhelming majority in the National Assembly. The republican constitution transformed Ghana into a de facto one-party state, a condition made formal in 1964. The First Republic, under Kwame Nkrumah, was overthrown in a military coup d'état in February 1966.

Between Nkrumah's ouster and the 1992 elections, Ghanaians experienced two short-lived civilian governments and five military regimes. The National Liberation Council (1966–69), which took over from the First Republic, turned over power voluntarily to a democratically elected government in 1969. The Second Republic, headed by Kofi Busia and the Progress Party, was in turn deposed in a military coup on January 13, 1972. The new military government (first entitled the National Redemption Council and then the Supreme Military Council) was headed by Colonel I. K. Acheampong, who inaugurated a period of ill-fated military reform. Acheampong himself was forced to abdicate in 1978. He was replaced by Lieutenant General Fred Akuffo. Akuffo surrendered in 1979 to Jerry Rawlings's Armed Forces Revolutionary Council. This marked the first appearance of Rawlings on the political scene. Civilian rule was revived briefly during the Third Republic (1979–81). On December 31, 1982, Rawlings once again returned to power, suspended the 1979 constitution, and assumed the chairmanship of the Provisional National Defense Council (PNDC), which ruled Ghana until the 1992 elections.

The Rawlings regime came to power during a period of extreme economic recession and political turmoil. When Rawlings first intervened in 1979, he carried out a self-proclaimed housecleaning exercise aimed at eradicating widespread corruption and abuses on the part of state officials. Although he voluntarily handed over power to Dr. Hilla Limann, the president of the Third Republic, he remained in the country and commented frequently on the inadequacies of his successor. During this period he called for a thorough revision of the institutional structure of the country and for a code of public accountability for officeholders. He also maintained close links with junior and noncommissioned officers in the army and with student and trade union

activists. When Rawlings returned to power, he did so amid reports that members of the Limann government were under investigation for receiving massive bribes from local and foreign firms. Rawlings asserted at the time that he had not led a coup but was only paving the way for "real democracy, government of the people, by the people, for the people."

To pursue this goal, the PNDC established a series of defense committees, charged with carrying out the aims of the Rawlings revolution. People's Defence Committees (PDCs) were established in each community; Worker's Defence Committees (WDCs) in factories, banks, and major places of wage employment; and Armed Forces Defence Committees (AFDCs) in the armed services. An Interim National Coordinating Committee (later changed to the National Defence Committee) was established to coordinate the activities of the local bodies. By 1984 20,000 committees, limited in membership to those who supported the precepts of the government, had been created. During the course of 1983, however, the defense committees were increasingly criticized, even by Rawlings, who decried the overzealousness of some committee activists.

In December 1984 the National Defence Committee was disbanded and PDCs, WDCs, and AFDCs reorganized under the name of Committees for the Defence of the Revolution (CDRs). The CDRs opened membership to all Ghanaians, including chiefs and managers who had been excluded from the previous structures. The switch to CDRs, therefore, introduced a new tone of reconciliation, in contrast to the confrontational style adopted during the early years of PNDC rule.

The system of executive government supported by direct consultation through defense committees stamped Ghanaian governmental structures with an aura of populism, a label frequently attached to the Rawlings regime after 1982.

Rawlings's pursuit of a populist agenda, ideology, and management style allowed his regime to postpone return to civilian rule. However, by 1990 the regime was under domestic and international pressure to democratize. The Movement for Freedom and Justice (MFJ), a loose alliance of previous political groups under the First, Second, and Third Republics headed by Professor Adu Boahen, emerged as the leading opposition force to Rawlings's regime. The MFJ demanded a timetable for the return to constitutional rule, an end to the prohibition on political activity, the release of political prisoners, and amnesty for exiles. Rawlings was also pressured by international financial institutions and Western donors to whom his regime had become indebted as a result of his efforts to reverse Ghana's economic decline. In 1990 a National Commission for Democracy was established to convene a series of regional debates on Ghana's political and economic future. In December 1990 Rawlings announced plans for a new constitution to be completed by the end of 1991 and a national consultative body, the Consultative Assembly, which was established in May 1991 with the task of reviewing constitutional recommendations made by the government. The new constitution was finally presented to the Ghanaian people in a referendum in April 1992 and approved by a large margin of those voting.

Preparations for Ghana's elections were overseen by the Interim National Election Committee, established in late 1991. Elections took place November 3, 1992, and Rawlings, who had resigned his military commission to run as a presidential candidate, was elected president with 58.3 percent of the vote, defeating his closest challenger, Professor Adu Boahen, who got 30.4 percent. The former president Hilla Limann ran a distant third with 6.7 percent, Kwabena Darko received 2.8 percent, and a retired general, E. A. Erskine, obtained 1.7 percent.

Although the elections were judged free and fair by the Commonwealth observer group, the opposition charged that there had been widespread voter fraud. Opposition parties boycotted the parliamentary elections in December 1992, giving Rawlings's party, the National Democratic Congress (NDC), an overwhelming 189 seats in the 200-seat parliament. In the presidential election held in December 1996, Rawlings was reelected with 57.4 percent of the vote.

In December 1998 Rawlings announced that he would comply with the constitution and not run for a third term as president. At the NDC party congress the position of life chairman of the party was created for Rawlings. Rawlings announced that his vice president, John Evans Atta Mills, would be the NDC's presidential candidate in the 2000 elections. Objecting to the changes at the party congress and Rawlings's selection of his successor, a group broke away from the NDC and formed the National Reform Party (NRP). In October 1998 the New Patriotic Party (NPP) nominated John Kufuor as the party's presidential candidate.

Elections were held December 7, 2000. The NPP won 100 of the 200 seats in parliament while the NDC won 92, the People's National Convention Party (PNC) took three, the CPP gained one, and indepen-

dent candidates secured four seats. Subsequent by-elections gave the NPP 103 seats, the NDC 89, and the smaller parties and independent candidates 8. In the presidential voting, Kufuor got 48.2 percent to Mills 44.5 percent, forcing a runoff election in which Kufuor won with 56.9 percent of the vote. The results were notable for the fact that the incumbent party was turned out of office. The NPP highlighted corruption on the part of the NDC during that campaign and it remains an important issue with Kufuor's government fending off charges of corruption during its tenure. In February 2001 Kufuor announced the formation of the National Reconciliation Commission to look into allegations of human rights abuses and other official misdeeds although the focus has been on previous administrations.

In March 2002, following the death of the Dagbon leader, Yakubu Andani, ethnic clashes broke out in northern Ghana resulting in some 40 deaths and a state of emergency. There were allegations that NPP authorities were involved in Andani's death and speculation that these charges would cost the NPP votes in northern areas in the 2004 elections.

In December 2002 Mills was nominated to be the NDC's candidate in the December 2004 elections. There was controversy within the party over the vice presidential candidate between candidates favored by Rawlings and those backed by the party chair, Obed Asamoah. Rawlings continued to cast a long shadow over Ghanaian politics. He charged the Kufuor government with incompetence and called on the public to engage in "positive defiance." Mills tried to distance himself from Rawlings, but the former president continued to campaign around the country and keep his hand in politics. The registration process for the December 2004 elections was controversial as well. Complaints about the process were similar to those leveled in the 1995 campaign when the opposition charged that the electoral rolls were padded. Adding to the controversy, the government created 19 new districts, and the Electoral Commission established 30 new constituencies.

Four political parties announced their presidential candidates for the December 2004 elections. In a reprise of the 2000 elections the front-runners were President Kufuor of the NPP and John Atta Mills of the NDC. Once again, Kufuor won the election, this time taking 53.4 percent of the vote to Mills's 43.7 percent. The NPP likewise won the legislative elections, taking 128 seats out of the total of 230 (increased from 200), while the NDC took 92 seats and smaller parties took the remaining 10.

The System of Government

Ghana is a democratic republic with a strong presidency and a unicameral legislature. The constitution was approved in 1992.

EXECUTIVE

Under the 1992 constitution the president is elected by universal suffrage of those 18 and over for a term of four years. If no candidate receives over 50 percent of the vote, a runoff takes places between the top two vote getters. The president is the chief executive, head of state, and commander in chief of the armed forces. The president appoints the vice president and, with the approval of parliament, also appoints the Council of Ministers. The constitution also provides for a 25-member Council of State made up primarily of presidential nominees and regional representatives and a 20-member National Security Council, both of which advise the president.

LEGISLATURE

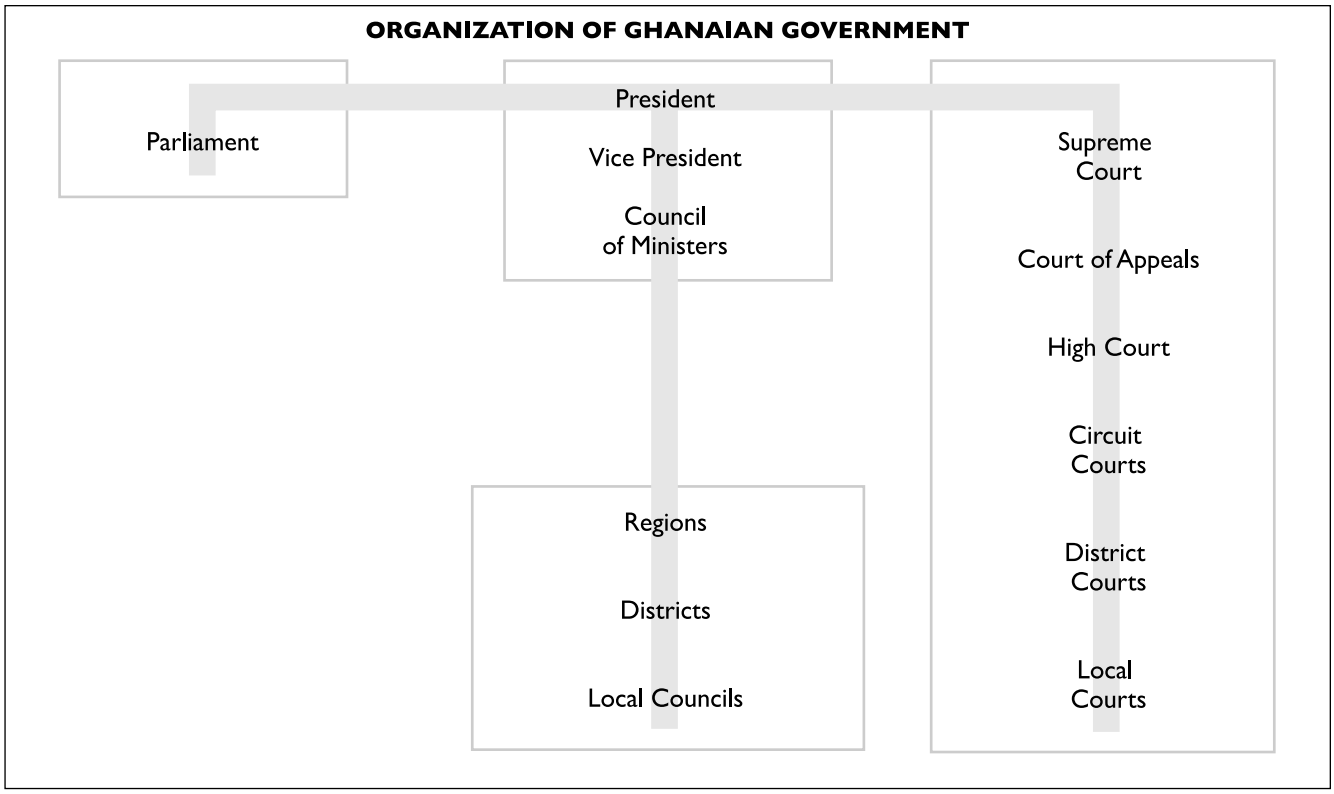
The National Parliament is a unicameral legislature consisting of 230 members who serve four-year terms. Legislation must have the approval of parliament and the president in order to become law.

JUDICIARY

The legal system is based on the constitution, Ghanaian common law, and parliamentary statutes and contains elements of customary (traditional) law. Under the Courts Act of 1971, the court system consists of the Supreme Court, the Court of Appeals, and the High Court of Justice, which stand at the apex of a complex network of circuit, district, and traditional courts. The PNDC established public tribunals, which tried offenders and meted out justice quickly and, at times, harshly. The Courts Act of 1993 incorporated these public tribunals into the existing court system. The Supreme Court has the power of judicial review over any legislative or executive action. The High Court has both original and appellate jurisdiction. Throughout the postcolonial period, the courts have shown a great deal of resilience and independence.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The country is divided into 10 administrative regions under the administration of regional secretaries.



There are also 110 administrative districts, each with a district assembly and a district secretary. There are regional coordinating councils in each of the 10 regions consisting of the regional secretary, the deputy regional secretaries, and all the district secretaries and members of the district assemblies in the region. The 1992 constitution added at least two chiefs to the membership of each council. These councils formulate, implement, and oversee programs in conjunction with the district assemblies and ensure that these programs reflect national policy. Local government consists of submetropolitan district councils, metropolitan assemblies, zonal councils, municipal assemblies, and town and area councils.

The Electoral System

The president and parliament are elected by universal suffrage of those 18 years of age or older. The 1992 constitution stipulates that in the event that no presidential candidate receives more than 50 percent of the vote, a runoff election is held within 21 days between the two candidates with the most votes. Both the president and the members of parliament are elected for four-year terms. The president is limited to two terms in office.

The Party System

ORIGINS OF THE PARTIES

Two major political traditions emerged in Ghanaian politics, and these have endured, despite many changes in name, since independence. The first is associated with Kwame Nkrumah, the independence-era leader, and reflects his socialist, Pan-Africanist ideology. The second is identified with the former prime minister Kofi Busia and one of the founders of the nationalist movement, J. B. Danquah, and has a more conservative, free-enterprise orientation. Over the years, therefore, when electoral opportunities have surfaced, the informal two-party system has been revived under new rubrics.

THE PARTIES IN LAW

Under the PNDC, political associations were banned in Ghana, reflecting Rawlings's view that political parties were associated with elitism and corruption. In May 1991 the PNDC announced it would support

the restoration of a multiparty system, and a year later the Political Parties Law came into effect permitting the formation of political parties. This law was controversial, however, since it outlawed the use of any name, symbol, color, or slogan that had been used by previous political parties contending Ghanaian elections. The law also restricted the size and sources of political contributions for the political parties. Six of the parties that emerged in the aftermath of this legislation were certified to contest the 1992 presidential elections.

Major Political Parties

There have been a number of changes in Ghana's political parties since the lifting of the ban on party formation in 1992. There are two major parties in Ghana—the NPP and NDC— and a handful of minor parties. In the most recent elections, the NPP gained 128 seats and the NDC 92.

NEW PATRIOTIC PARTY (NPP)

The NPP is considered a centrist party, although it is generally more liberal than its chief rival, the NDC. The NPP is the party of President Kufuor, who won both the 2000 and 2004 elections. In the 2004 legislative elections the NPP took 128 out of the 230 seats.

NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC CONGRESS (NDC)

The NDC is more conservative than its rival, the NPP. It was founded by Jerry Rawlings, who remains a major influence in the party. Its presidential candidate for the 2000 and 2004 elections, John Atta Mills, lost both times to John Kufuor. In the 2004 legislative elections the party won 92 seats, second to the NPP's 128.

Minor Political Parties

There are several smaller parties in Ghana. Three of these—the Every Ghanaian Living Everywhere Party (EGLE), the Great Consolidated People's Party (GCP), and the People's National Convention—formed a coalition known as the "Grand Coalition" for the 2004 elections. The coalition won four seats. In addition, the Convention People's Party (CPP) won three seats in the 2004 elections.

Other Political Forces

ARMED FORCES

The armed forces consists of some 7,000 troops. The army is the largest branch, with 5,000 members. All three branches of the military (the army, the navy, and the air force) are relatively well trained, professional, and ethnically integrated. During the PNDC era elements of the armed forces, especially among the lower ranks, provided Rawlings with important support. He did not, however, enjoy the backing of some veteran army officers and recruits from the central Akan regions. The armed forces have returned to the barracks and appear to have adapted to a reduced role in the internal affairs of the country as well as reductions in strength. However, in 2004 several military officers were arrested on charges of planning to destabilize the upcoming elections.

ETHNIC GROUPS

Ghana's population, as that of most African states, is ethnically diverse. The dominant group is the Akan (composed of the Ashanti, Fante, Akim, and Nzima, among others), who in 1998 (the most recent figures available) constituted an estimated 44 percent of the population. Other major groups include the Mossi-Dagomba (16 percent), the Ewe (13 percent), and the Ga-Andagme (8 percent). All told, there are 75 distinct linguistic groups in the country. The Mossi-Dagomba are concentrated in the north, while the other four main groups inhabit the forest and coastal areas of the country and intermingle frequently, especially on the coast. Approximately 63 percent of the population of Ghana is Christian, and Muslims now constitute about 16 percent.

Ethnicity remains a factor in Ghanaian politics. Ethnic voting was evident in both the 1992 and the 1996 presidential elections, in which Rawlings, a member of the Ewe ethnic group, received significantly fewer votes in the Ashanti region than elsewhere. In the 1996 elections Ashanti was the only region where Rawlings failed to receive over 50 percent of the vote.

National Prospects

Ghana's successful transition to democracy in 1992 and the NDC's replacement of the incumbent NDC in the 2000 elections indicate Ghana's steady progress toward democratic consolidation. In 2001 Ghana sought debt

relief under the Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative, and in 2002 the government reached agreement with the International Monetary Fund and the International Development Association on a comprehensive debt reduction package.

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GREECE

(Elliniki Demokratia)

By Jeffrey K. Hass, Ph.D.



Located in southeastern Europe, Greece (formally called the "Hellenic Republic"), the original home to the democratic form of government, has witnessed authoritarianism and a return to stable if constantly shifting and evolving democratic politics since 1975. Military rule, which in 1967 overthrew a formal monarchy in the name of national security and anti-communism, gave way in 1974 to democracy. A constitution was adopted on June 11, 1975, replacing both the monarchical and the military systems, and it continues to serve as the basis for Greek political life. One foundation of some political certainty—the two-decades-long rule of the feisty Andreas Papandreou over the hegemonic Pan-Hellenic Socialist Movement and Greek politics—came to an end in 1995. Greece still awaits either another charismatic leader or the institutionalization of stronger formal rules of party life to bring more certainty to the processes of political selection and decision making.

The System of Government

The Greek political system is essentially parliamentary. While the political structure in Greece resembles that of most other Western democratic nations—the three-part division of executive, legislative, and judicial branches—the legislative branch is the most powerful, having the most control over policy formulation.

The ground rules for Greek political life are contained in the constitution. A constitution was drawn up and adopted in 1975 following the end of military rule, but numerous additional laws and referenda began to make these ground rules somewhat complex and convoluted. The constitution was amended in 1986, but this did not provide much improvement in the basic structure, and so the parliament sitting from 1996 to 2000 drew up constitutional reforms to amend up to 100 of the 120 constitutional articles. Changes included improving women's rights, updating the language of the constitution, allowing for postal voting (for Greeks residing in foreign countries), and the like. The constitution sets procedures for choosing and evicting holders of political positions, defines the right and responsibilities of the different institutional actors, and sets the division of power between the branches. Other rights and rules include setting the voting age (18), recognizing the legitimacy of agreed-upon international agreements, and stipulating basic rights such as freedom of speech, print, and assembly. More specific points of Greek political life are defined either by tradition (as in the case of patronage-oriented political parties) or by specific laws (which may introduce slight changes in electoral procedure from election to election).

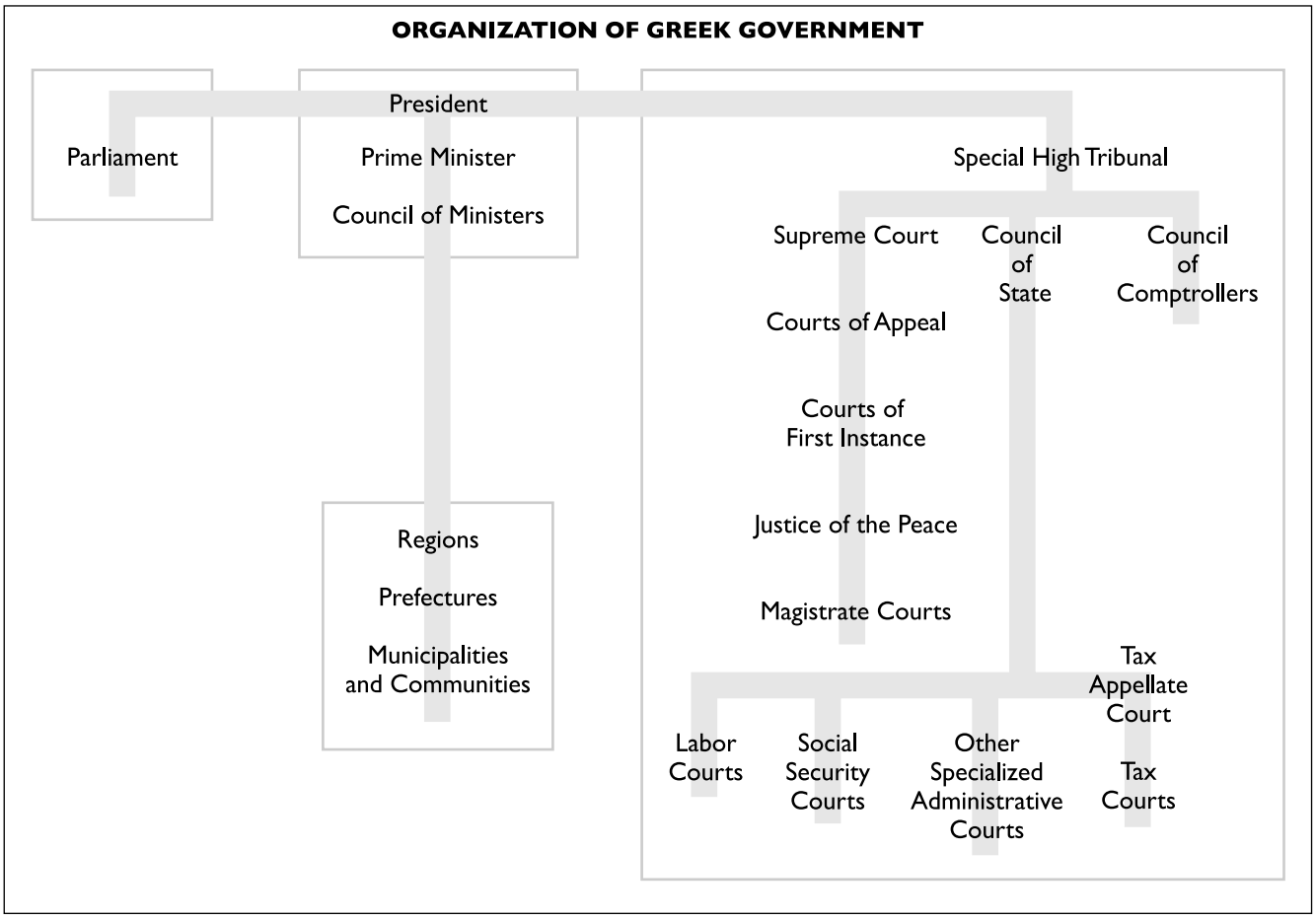
EXECUTIVE

The Greek executive has two parts, the presidency and the prime minister and ministries. Presidential powers

were much greater before changes to the constitution in 1986 shifted many presidential powers to the prime minister and parliament. At present the president, as in many European countries, is more a figurehead than a vital actor in shaping policy or the political landscape. The division between president and prime minister follows that of most European countries: the president is the formal head of state and Greece's primary representative in the international arena, while the prime minister heads the state bureaucracy and hence is concerned with domestic matters and implementing policies at home.

The powers of the president are strongest in the realm of diplomacy. Here the president negotiates and concludes international treaties (which require parliamentary approval for implementation) and meets with foreign dignitaries and other heads of state. In this way the president is a "grand ambassador" responsible for international negotiations and presenting the fruits of such negotiations to parliament for acceptance. The president also has some powers in declaring war and accepting peace. While the president is nominally the commander in chief of the armed forces and formally has the power to declare war, actual mobilization for war can occur only if parliament implements a "state of siege." This prevents the president from acting on his own and possibly restricting the ability of another president to stand off against parliament or call a state of emergency and reintroduce military rule.

Presidential powers in domestic affairs are more restricted. For example, most presidential acts are not valid unless countersigned by the prime minister or by the minister whose sphere of competence is most relevant. Only a few presidential acts do not require countersignature: appointing the prime minister, dissolving parliament in the case of problems with selecting a president (see below, "Electoral System"), returning bills to parliament for reconsideration (a weak veto), and appointing people to staff positions in the presidential administrative services (although the actual selection of who should fill these offices is decided by others). The president's veto consists of sending bills back to parliament for reconsideration; but parliament may override this presidential veto if an absolute majority again votes in support of the



bill. Additionally, the president may proclaim a referendum. In extraordinary circumstances—such as moments of crisis occurring when parliament is not in session—the president may issue presidential acts that temporarily have the power of legislation. However, this power is also circumscribed. First, the president is supposed to issue such acts only when asked to do so by the cabinet, and, second, such acts may be subject to parliamentary debate and approval or rejection when parliament is able to meet once again. The president also has the power to grant pardons and to appoint and dismiss public servants.

Appointment of the prime minister might appear to be the president's greatest domestic power, but even this is a formality: the president, by the constitution, is required to appoint to the position the leader of the party having the absolute majority of seats in parliament. (If no party has an absolute majority, the president must give the leader of the party with the relative majority an "exploratory mandate," which is the opportunity to ascertain whether a government can be formed that would have majority support in parliament. If this fails, the president then extends this exploratory mandate to the second-largest party. This process continues either until a government is formed or until the president runs out of parties and either attempts to organize a cabinet himself or turns to the Supreme Court to do so.) Once the prime minister assumes office, the president appoints those people chosen by the prime minister to fill the basic ministerial posts. If the government loses a vote of no confidence or the prime minister offers his resignation, the president can then remove the prime minister from office. Further, the president does have the power to dissolve parliament—but only on the suggestion of the government.

In domestic politics the prime minister is far more powerful and important. He selects the ministers who run the government, and only he has the power to dismiss them. The prime minister and the cabinet retain control over both the state bureaucracy and the formulation and implementation of policy—in essence giving the cabinet control over day-to-day domestic affairs. The prime minister and the cabinet have the authority to introduce legislation to parliament—in fact, the ministers exercise this power more than the legislature does, which is more concerned with fulfilling political patrons' needs and demands. The exact bounds of the prime minister's power depend also on the structure of power of the party he comes from. For example, if the majority party relies on national-level power, then the prime minister has increased power. But if the party relies on local political patronage machines and bases, then the prime minister is more indebted to these regional allies and will have to go some way to appease them, making it more difficult to control and discipline cabinet members.

One leading figure in Greek politics and the executive branch was Andreas Papandreou, leader of the Pan-Hellenic Socialist Movement (PASOK). With the rise to dominance of PASOK in the 1981 parliamentary elections, Papandreou rose to prominence. Papandreou's personality (populist and nationalist) and party (ideologically concerned with justice) set the tone for Greek politics in the 1980s. However, illness led Papandreou to resign in late 1995. The PASOK party faction had to vote twice before finally deciding on a successor, Kostis Simitis. Simitis, a former lawyer and economist who served a stint as minister of industry, became prime minister from 1996 to 2004. Simitis's image differed from that of Papandreou; while the latter was more populist and nationalist, Simitis projected an image as a pragmatist and technocrat more oriented toward European affairs and closer collaboration with the Continent.

Simitis called new elections in 2004 and stood down as leader of PASOK. The party lost the elections to the New Democracy Party, and Costas Karamanlis became the new prime minister.

LEGISLATURE

At the national level the Greek legislature is the Greek parliament (Vouli ton Ellinon). A full quorum consists of 300 members; a minimum of 200 is needed for a legitimate parliamentary quorum to meet. In theory the legislature shares legislative responsibility with the ministers; in practice, however, the ministers write up and propose most legislation, and parliament debates and passes (or rejects) it. Parliamentary members act more as representatives of their home regions than as a nationally minded body (much like the U.S. House of Representatives). Their time is devoted to dealing with the needs and complaints of constituents and to amending legislation to ensure that their constituency receives its share of gain (or reduces its share of pain). In times when parliament is not in session, some members remain in session as a sort of "mini-parliament," so that the entire body does not have to be in session for the full calendar year.

Legislation must pass through three readings in parliament before it is considered passed. In the first vote parliament considers the general principle of the

bill. In the second vote the component parts and divisions of the bill are discussed, debated, and voted on one at a time. In the third reading parliament votes on the entire bill itself. While such a system may appear cumbersome—and undoubtedly does suffer from a degree of slowness and inefficiency—it also guarantees closer deliberation of policies and laws. (Such a system also presents ample opportunity for legislators to introduce their own pet changes.)

One additional power parliament has is the vote of no confidence over the ministries. Once the government is formed, parliament must table a vote of confidence within 15 days. Additionally, at a later date parliament may table a vote of confidence in individual ministers or in the government as a whole. Such a motion requires support of one-sixth of members to be introduced. If an absolute majority of deputies supports the measure, the individual or the government as a whole (depending on the target of the vote) must resign. If the vote of no confidence fails, it cannot be introduced for another six months; an exception is if an absolute majority supports a no-confidence motion ahead of time, which would be binding. The probability of a vote of no confidence passing or of another such motion being introduced before the end of the six-month grace period is reduced by the fact that the government is organized by the majority or plurality party. Greek election procedure appears to bring the high probability that one party will have either a majority or a plurality; and because the government will come from this party, only a serious split within party ranks would make a no-confidence vote likely to succeed, guaranteeing a degree of political stability that other countries—such as Italy or many Eastern European countries—can only envy.

Constitutional reforms drawn up in the 1996–2000 parliament affected the legislature—not in its core functions or procedures but still in certain important aspects. One change concerns nonparliamentary careers and is known as the "incompatibility" measure. Members of parliament have to give up nonparliamentary jobs once they take their seat in the legislature, because of the view that outside work is a distraction and thus is incompatible with focusing full attention on parliamentary duties. Some opponents to this change included a well-known celebrity expert on sexual advice, who would have had to give up his television show to enter parliament. To make the measure more palatable, reformers suggested a grandfather clause or grace period for people to make up their minds or make a transition out of the private sector and into politics.

JUDICIARY

The judicial system has three parts. The most important is the Supreme Court, the highest court in Greece. Appeals move their way up from lower courts to this ultimate court. The second court at the top level is the Council of State, which handles administrative issues and the legality of government acts. For example, issues of constitutionality are addressed to the Council of State, which can then rule on and support or reject laws. Because the Council of State rules on constitutionality and because the constitution is the law of the land, decisions by the Council of State are binding on all governmental branches. It this way, the duties of deciding on appeals and on issues of constitutionality—duties fulfilled by a single Supreme Court in many other countries—are split between the Supreme Court and the Council of State. The third high court, the Comptrollers' Council, is responsible for overseeing government accounts and preventing fraud by governmental or administrative personnel. At times a special fourth court, the Special Supreme Court, convenes. The job of this body is to resolve disputes between different courts and to address electoral problems (disputed returns or problematic results of election procedures).

Judges are not directly elected but rather are appointed by special councils made up of judges. Judges work their way up the hierarchy, replacing those above them who die or retire (usually at the age of 65 or 67). In this way the judiciary resembles a professional bureaucracy. While councils of judges recommend the motion up and down the hierarchy, prosecutors have some input in recommending candidates, and the actual appointment and promotion decisions are made by the president.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The constitution provides local administrative organs with a degree of autonomy from the national level, although this autonomy is not total or absolute. At the base Greece is divided into 900 urban municipalities (*demoi*) and about 130 rural communities (*koinotetes*). At the next rung up, Greece is divided into 51 local prefectures, called *nome* (*nomos* in singular). Each of these 51 prefectures is run by a prefect (*nomarch*) who is elected locally. (This has been one recent change; earlier, prefects were appointed by the central government.) Additionally, there are 13 administrative regions incorporating prefectures; these are headed by governors

appointed by the central government. Despite the introduction of direct election of prefects, finance comes primarily from Athens, and so the central government still has an important say in regional politics.

Politics at the local level is less tied to political parties than is national politics. While national parties may have a presence in major urban areas, they are less present and important in smaller communities, where particularistic and personal connections and the rule of families and clans are more important. This may change, however, as Greek politics and the Greek economy continue to bureaucratize and centralize.

The Electoral System

Parliamentary elections are crucial to Greek national politics because the processes of selecting both the president and the prime minister go through parliamentary procedure rather than through national ballots. The president is chosen through election within parliament and sits for a five-year term and may be chosen for no more than two terms. To stand for the presidency a person must have been a Greek citizen for at least five years, must be at least 40 years old, must be eligible to vote, and must have Greek family heritage through the father's bloodline. By a secret ballot, parliament votes for the president one month before the end of the current president's term. On the first ballot a successful candidate must receive two-thirds of the total number of parliament members (300—therefore, 200 votes needed). If this majority is not reached, a second round of voting takes place five days later, and here again a two-thirds majority is needed. If this round fails, a third round occurs five days hence, when a three-fifths majority (180 votes) is needed. If in this third round of parliamentary voting no candidate receives the necessary majority, parliament is dissolved within 10 days of the failed third round; this acts as an incentive against intraparliamentary infighting. After convocation of the newly elected parliament, the rules for election become more lenient: first a three-fifths majority; if this fails, a new round of voting takes place within five days, and the candidate receiving an absolute majority wins; if even this fails, then the top two vote-receiving candidates continue to another round five days later, where whoever receives the relative majority of votes is proclaimed the new president.

Parliamentary elections are held every four years, although it is not unusual for parliamentary elections to be called ahead of schedule. The 1996 parliamentary election was such a case, held one year ahead of schedule.

Election to parliament follows a system of proportional representation to discourage the proliferation of smaller parties and encourage through coalitions or mergers a smaller, more manageable number of parties. The 300 members of parliament are elected according to a complex system involving proportional representation, and a party must receive at least 3 percent of votes cast to hold seats in parliament. The vast majority of members of parliament—288—are elected directly within their constituencies. (Candidates, like voters, must be registered in that constituency.) The remaining 12 are "national deputies." They are assigned to parties on the basis of their percentage of overall national vote received—whichever party received the highest percentage of overall votes over the 3 percent barrier gets the highest number of these 12. These deputies are chosen from party lists, rather than from an individual standing for office.

After the end of military rule, leftist parties have enjoyed more success with the electorate. In 1989 New Democracy gained a parliamentary majority—possibly due to the influence of center-right politics and the weakness of leftist ideology sweeping Europe in the last years of communism. The Socialists returned in 1993, however, and ran Greece until the 2004 elections, when New Democracy again won a parliamentary majority. Part of the left's hold on Greece stems from memories of authoritarian rule, but the pragmatism of leftist parties gives them appeal that they could have lost with the collapse of communism had they based their campaigns purely on ideological appeal.

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS: MARCH 7, 2004

Party	% votes	Seats
Nea Dimokratia	45.4%	165
Panellino Socialistiko Kinima	40.5%	117
Kommounistiko Komma Ellado	5.9%	12
Synaspismos	3.3%	6
Laikos Orthodoxos Synagermos	2.2%	—
Dimokratiki Kinoniku Kinima	1.8%	—

Source: www.electionworld.org

The Party System

The basis of the Greek political system would appear to be political parties, but this is only partially the case. Political parties arose in Greece after World War II and were given legal support by a right in the 1975 constitution for citizens to organize or join in political parties so long as they did not attempt to break democratic traditions or overthrow democratic institutions (no doubt a legacy of the years of military rule). The number of political parties participating in elections has varied; some parties die out, others are created anew, and others reorganize or split. Forming a political party in Greece is fairly easy. All that is required is registration with the Supreme Court's public prosecutor. There are, however, a few parties that have remained over time and have continued to be players (with varying degrees of power) over the last two decades.

While Greek parties span the political spectrum, left-wing parties have more support and are thus more represented in the legislature. One the one hand, this should not be surprising, given the strong history and organization of Socialist movements in Greece following World War II. However, Greek political parties do not adhere intensely to ideology. Rather, actors within the parties are more pragmatic in outlook. As a result, parties tend to be less highly organized bodies (such as Communist parties in Eastern Europe) and more like factions under the parliamentary umbrella—that is, parties more closely resembled coalitions of political elites or parliamentary deputies, alliances created for political or electoral expediency instead of for disciplined mobilization of support and resources. This has helped make Greek political party life fluid. Mobilization of support or the rise to power involves the use of political connections and deal making in order to obtain support and votes. As a result, patronage was and remains a central feature of political and party life. Party bosses make it to the top of their parties and into parliament through deals and alliances, and once in power they have to pay off those who helped their rise.

Such links and chains of patronage from national to local levels, rather than a formal party structure, have been the motor of political action within Greece. One result has been shifting membership: people do not feel themselves to be members of a particular party or organization toward which they should be loyal; rather, they link themselves to individuals on the basis of material gifts in exchange for votes and other forms of political support. Another result of this system is that party movements tend to be personalized, with party organization less bureaucratic and more centered around individuals; because of this, electoral defeats, retirement, or other means of exit from the political stage can lead to the fragmenting of a political party. Adding to this underinstitutionalization of parties has been the fact that parties could not count on home bases, such as workers' movements, middle-class groups, or other such entities, because of Greece's corporatism: the state controlled such bodies and kept them out of the political arena.

Two currents have begun to alter this particularistic party system. First, changes have occurred in Greek economic and social life. The rise of a national media has provided an alternative route to the voter, replacing the development of social networks of patronage and deals. The growth and bureaucratization of the state apparatus have made fulfillment of promises through patronage more difficult, leaving voters and local elites to search for alternative means to achieving political ends. The second current altering this pattern of underinstitutionalization is the Pan-Hellenic Socialist Movement (PASOK), which emerged in the 1974 elections as a unified, organized party able to mobilize support and members for political and electoral action.

Right-wing parties held control of Greek politics from the 1950s until 1977, when PASOK, participating for the second time in national elections, began to gain strength. In 1981 PASOK both took control of Greek politics and had a coattail effect for other left-leaning groups, who benefited and saw an increase in electoral support over the last 20 years. In 1981 the Greek electorate shifted to the left, and while one right-wing party (New Democracy, see below) remains prominent, others have faded and lost much of their political influence and parliamentary power. This left-wing hegemony explains much of the growth of the state sector and other Socialist programs in the Greek economy, regardless of the reaction against left-wing economic programs throughout much of the world (especially in the Western Hemisphere but also in Europe) in the 1980s. However, such left-wing politics led to a backlash (perhaps helped by the problems in the Communist world in 1988–89). In 1989 power shifted back to the right as PASOK lost ground in the parliamentary elections—due to corruption charges and a publicized affair between Papandreou and a younger woman—and the New Democracy Party gained a majority, putting party leader Constantine Mitsotakis into the prime minister post. The New Democracy government introduced austerity measures (reducing social benefits and raising prices) to prepare the Greek economy for integration into the European economy along the lines of the Maastricht Treaty. Privatization

measures (for example, of the giant Greek telecommunications networks) were planned but not implemented, as the right-wing victory was short-lived.

After some political turmoil, public reaction against New Democracy's austerity measures and economic programs, and problems within the New Democracy ranks, parliamentary elections were held six months ahead of schedule in 1993, and PASOK stunned the political world with a major comeback, gaining 46.9 percent of the national vote and, through the Greek system of awarding extra seats to majority parties, gained 171 seats, putting Papandreou back into the position of prime minister. PASOK held power until 2004, when New Democracy gained back control of parliament.

There are two dominant parties—PASOK and New Democracy—with a third party, the Greek Communist Party, a stable but minority player. Beyond these three parties the picture begins to become more fuzzy, as parties rise, gain seats in an election, and then promptly lose them in the next (or the party reorganizes itself). Thus the political scene consists of two protagonists, one important minor player, and several extra stagehands wandering on and off the political stage.

Major Political Parties

PAN-HELLENIC SOCIALIST MOVEMENT

(Panellino Socialistiko Kinima; PASOK)

HISTORY

Founded in September 1974 by the late Andreas Papandreou and drawing on members of the earlier Center Union Party (headed by George Papandreou, Andreas's father), PASOK initially grew out of the resistance movement against the 1967–74 military regime. After that point PASOK gathered strength and, with the exception of the 1989–93 period, was the majority parliamentary party between 1981 and 2004. In 2004 it lost power to the New Democracy Party.

ORGANIZATION

PASOK's rise to prominence stems from two factors: the organization of the party and the prestige of its figurehead, Papandreou. As mentioned earlier, Greek political parties were more like masks for social networks and ties of patronage; while this lent a degree of pragmatism, it also made mobilization for a particular cause, program, or ideology difficult. Under Papandreou, PASOK emerged as a more Western-style party: highly organized and hierarchical, disciplined, organizing local-level party cells rather than political personal ties, mobilizing the resources of the mass media to take a political message directly to voters. Organizationally, PASOK's structure resembles a pyramid: a wide base of local-level cells running up through intermediary levels to the upper-level leaders and the national PASOK congresses. Such an organizational framework brings two results. First, PASOK can convey a sense of "partyness" that other parties do not have, a sense of community and a shared ideology, a feeling that one actually belongs to a party. This has helped PASOK energize grassroots support, both for votes and for actual party work. Second, such a framework has allowed PASOK to coordinate political strategies, including spreading political messages and challenging local-level political bosses who still run their bailiwicks through patronage networks to leaders in parliament or the state bureaucracy. This has helped PASOK recruit young blood away from other parties.

The second advantage PASOK enjoyed in its rise to power was the figure of Andreas Papandreou. Papandreou could count on his father's positive image to boost his own appeal among the electorate. Papandreou was also an outspoken populist: for example, he caused an international stir when entering power with his biting criticisms of the United States. However, he used his populism to enhance his image in Greece and attract support, implicitly comparing his populist care for the people with the paternalistic patronage of political competitors. Along with his organizational skills and charismatic and political appeal, Papandreou was somewhat mercurial and even dictatorial. As the number one person within the party, Papandreou was not overly tolerant of dissenting views, and at times he expelled people from the party for challenging his authority. While this side of Papandreou's personality may have had its costs (losing members), it also gave Papandreou an aura of authority. (This aura was occasionally tarnished, as before 1989, when corruption, especially ties to corrupt banker Georgios Koskotas and an affair, tarnished Papandreou's image and made him seem out of touch with real political life and more concerned with his own personal affairs.) Finally, Papandreou, unlike his political peers, grasped the importance and centrality of ideology for a modern political party: ideology gives an identity and sense of meaning to a party and can create a political community, holding a party together and making mobilization less costly. Both these factors (organization and personality) brought results, with PASOK holding power

between 1981 and 2004 with one four-year exception (1989–2003).

MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY

PASOK's ideology was initially populist, combining leftism and a hint of nationalism; the party united under the slogan "national independence, popular sovereignty, and social liberation." The main policy stance was that Greece had two immediate problems: underdevelopment (and economic dependence on the industrialized world) and social inequality. While still in a minority (following the 1974 and 1977 elections), PASOK hammered this theme home against opponents: New Democracy was not running Greece in the interest of Greece but rather in the interest of domestic elites and international capital. Upon taking power in 1981 PASOK more clearly defined its goals, which focused on reducing inequality and social injustice, developing the Greek economy and gaining some autonomy from international finance, maintaining territorial integrity, and enhancing Greek cultural feelings and overall quality of life. In the arena of international relations, Papandreou stressed nationalist values and concerns; in particular, he was upset with the lack of American support for Greece against Turkey, and PASOK considered withdrawing Greece from NATO and evicting American armed forces from bases on Greek territory. (These demands were dropped soon after, however.) Initial domestic policies sought to address populist issues of injustice and inequality through state intervention and met with some success: income inequality was reduced somewhat, and the underprivileged received legislation giving them more rights in society. However, there was a downside to these policies. Unemployment actually increased, and increased state control of the economy led to spiraling budget deficits and, as a result, inflation. PASOK policies, which thanks to party rhetoric gained an antifinance and antibusiness image, hurt investment from both domestic and foreign sources, adding to economic troubles. As a result, PASOK lost some support in the 1985 elections, although it still held a parliamentary majority (slimmed down from 172 to 161 delegates out of 300). After the 1985 elections PASOK's policies took a more centrist turn, with a stress on attracting investment and implementing austerity measures. This led to unpopularity and hurt PASOK. First, the Communist Party (KKE) tried to mobilize popular discontent and to foment strikes against the austerity policies. Second, as a result of the unpopular (and "unpopulist") measures, PASOK lost its majority in the 1989 elections.

PASOK was not out for long, however; thanks to even harsher neo-orthodox policies and government splits and scandals, New Democracy frittered away its public support, and PASOK returned to power in October 1993. Rather than make a left turn in economic policy, Papandreou and PASOK continued to follow a more neo-orthodox path, albeit with less stress on privatization. Most important was coming to terms with the government deficit and the inflation rate; the Papandreou government adopted spending controls and focused on increasing revenue collection to reduce the deficit and bring down inflation. In 1995 Papandreou left politics due to illness, and died soon after. His successor, Kostis Simitis, was a more technocratic, less populist, more pragmatic leader. Simitis managed to maintain PASOK's electoral popularity, despite the complaints that the party had been in power for too long (which hurt it in the 1989 elections), and was rewarded with electoral victories in 1996 and 2000 and the role of prime minister. While he did not possess Papandreou's image or ideological zeal, his pragmatism paid off for himself and PASOK. Where Papandreou was vocally critical of Western Europe, Simitis took PASOK in a pro-European direction and made Greek inclusion in further European expansion and development a political priority. As part of his strategy of linking Greece closer to the capitalist world—after 1989, the only game in town—he negotiated Greece's entry into the euro zone and won the right to host the 2004 Olympic Games. Overall, Simitis replaced PASOK's confrontational tone (set by Papandreou) and belief that socialism would create social justice and equality with claims that integration with Europe would provide social protection. Like other European left-wing parties, PASOK has taken up calls for "modernizing" its public services, especially improving efficiency and responsiveness of the state bureaucracy.

In 2004 Simitis announced that he would be stepping down as head of the party, and George Papandreou, Andreas Papandreou's son, was elected to fill the vacancy in PASOK leadership. While PASOK can no longer rely on automatic domination of the Greek electorate—New Democracy defeated the party at the polls in 2004—Papandreou inherits a powerful party nonetheless. Unlike other parties, PASOK has been skillful at shaping voters' preferences, rather than simply relying on marketing a particular message to a large bulk of the electorate.

FINANCING

While obtaining exact information on membership and finances is difficult, general trends can be dis-

cerned. PASOK's actual membership has grown, particularly among younger voters, turning PASOK into a full-fledged mass-mobilizing party. In class respects, PASOK draws support from the middle and lower middle class, from rural regions, and from the rising managerial class (distinct from capitalist owners or controllers of financial institutions).

NEW DEMOCRACY

(Nea Demokratia; ND)

HISTORY

New Democracy is the current standard-bearer for the Greek moderate right. New Democracy was founded in 1974 by Constantine Karamanlis, the first post-coup prime minister. (Karamanlis originally headed the New Radical Union, founded in 1955, and had been prime minister before the military takeover.) In the first elections (1974 and 1977) New Democracy enjoyed wide majorities, gaining 54.4 percent of the vote in 1974. New Democracy promoted free markets but also a role for state intervention in the market, when necessary, to defend social justice. New Democracy brought Greece into the European Union and tried to address tensions with Turkey over Cyprus (which were affecting Greece's general relations and position within NATO).

In 1980 Karamanlis was elected president by parliament, and George Rallis took over party leadership and the prime ministerial post. However, he was ejected when PASOK stormed to a parliamentary majority in the 1981 elections. Rallis lost his leadership of the party, but further leaders could not bring New Democracy back into power. Between leadership changes, internal tensions, and electoral defeats, New Democracy spent the 1980s in a bit of confusion over its program and identity.

New Democracy briefly returned to power after special June 1989 parliamentary elections. Scandals (including Papandreou's affair with a younger woman, whom he subsequently married), corruption, and the leader's ill health hurt PASOK, and the electorate turned to New Democracy in what amounted to a sea change. However, ND did not receive a majority and so had to form a coalition—with, surprisingly, KKE (the Communist Party). This coalition ran Greece until the November 1989 elections, when ND gained more seats but was still shy of the majority. (PASOK, in a remarkable comeback, increased its showing over the June 1989 elections.) The KKE refused to join a right-wing coalition, and so the leaders of PASOK, KKE, and ND joined to form a temporary government of national unity. But this "grand coalition" soon broke down, leading to new elections in 1990, at which point New Democracy finally received a parliamentary majority and could take control of the government. However, right-wing austerity programs invited a backlash from a population used to some social safety net; responses included strike waves in 1991 and 1992. Further, two other events broke New Democracy's victory: the conflict over the independence of the Yugoslavian province of Macedonia and the resulting exit of Antonis Samaras. When Macedonia became independent, Greece, especially through its foreign minister, Samaras, issued objections to aspects of Macedonia's independence process. First, Macedonia could not call itself "Macedonia," since this referred to the Greek territory. Second, Samaras and Greek leaders feared that Macedonian independence would have repercussions in the Greek Macedonian territory or that the former Yugoslavian Macedonia might have territorial intentions against Greek sovereign territory. Eventually the Greek leadership accepted a solution in which Yugoslavian Macedonia adopted the name "The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia," but this did not suit Foreign Minister Samaras's uncompromising stance. Samaras was forced to resign, but he did not leave quietly. Instead, Samaras formed a right-wing alternative party, Political Spring, and defectors followed Samaras from New Democracy to the new party. As a result, New Democracy lost its slim majority in parliament and had to call for early elections. Between public bitterness over policies and the spectacle of the Macedonian issue and party fragmentation after Samaras's defection, New Democracy lost its majority position to PASOK in 1993. It remained in the opposition until 2004, when it gained back power under the leadership of Costas Karamanlis, the nephew of the founder. The younger Karamanlis became the new prime minister.

ORGANIZATION

New Democracy earlier followed the normal Greek model of party organization, which entailed a collection of leaders with charisma and/or political connections who engage in backstage deals to stay in power. Such a structure succeeded in winning parliamentary majorities in 1974 and 1977, but it did not help New Democracy beat out PASOK for the majority in 1981. Thus, an attempt was made to transform New Democracy into a more bureaucratic, formally structured organization, with local cells and a formal hierarchy and schedule of meetings and congresses. This process was difficult, since creating a formal

structure contradicted the practices and incentives of parliamentary members who drew power from the network form and would have preferred to maintain that system. Also, candidate recruitment and generational turnover plagued New Democracy (and other parties as well), because the use of networks rather than formal structure made nomination of younger delegates and their rise to power (à la Britain's Tony Blair) more difficult.

New Democracy did not have a central ideology or political identity; rather, positions and programs espoused by New Democracy tended to reflect the style and substance of party elites, especially Karamanlis and Mitsotakis. Karamanlis left a twin legacy, namely, that of an activist state and anti-Communism—a fusion of left-wing domestic policies and right-wing rhetoric and identity. Under the National Radical Union, in the 1950s and the 1960s, state activity in the economy expanded (especially in industrial statization and welfare expansion). In the 1970s and early 1980s New Democracy supported the status quo, hoping to build on the memory of stability in the 1950s and 1960s under the National Radical Union's watch. However, this ploy failed, and in the mid-1980s New Democracy rhetoric, under Mitsotakis, turned away from state-led economic policies (which could placate the electorate) to neo-orthodoxy, which under the Thatcher-Reagan banner was sweeping the globe. Such a set of policy positions called for more attention to macroeconomic problems such as inflation and budget deficits over concern for welfare and a state-regulated or state-controlled economy. This was the position followed after the 1989 parliamentary victory; however, neo-orthodox prescriptions brought only voter anger in the 1993 elections. New Democracy, then, has moved from the more personalized, politically contingent policies of the National Radical Union legacy to a more neo-orthodox, conservative stance; to call this a party ideology might be a stretch, although this policy stance appears to be gelling as a centerpiece of New Democracy policy and identity. While building a formal party structure has been problematic—although far from defeated—an ideological identity appears to be coming into being, bringing New Democracy closer to the European type of political party.

In foreign policy New Democracy is more consistent: maintenance of close ties with Europe and the United States and continued participation in NATO. Strains appeared, however, after the 1974 Turkish invasion of Cyprus, to which the United States did not strenuously object. As a result, Greece moved out of participation in NATO's military procedures and activities, although Greece under New Democracy's watch remained a member. Neo-orthodox economic prescriptions from 1989 to 1993 were aimed at further integration in the European economy, continuing a Europe-centered tradition of New Democracy dating back to the National Radical Union.

COMMUNIST PARTY OF GREECE
(Kommunistiko Komma Ellados; KKE)

HISTORY

The KKE is currently the third-largest party in Greece, a position it has held since 1981. KKE was originally founded in 1918 in the wave of Communism that engulfed Europe following the Bolshevik coming to power in Russia. However, the KKE was not a significant political force before World War II. The KKE gained popularity through its anti-Nazi partisan activities, but then exhausted this support through its insurgent activities in the Greek civil war of 1946–47. After the end of the civil war the KKE was temporarily outlawed; party activists who remained in Greece continued their political operations through the guise of other parties, such as the United Democratic Left (which was disbanded in the 1967 military coup). After the return to democracy in 1974, the KKE was allowed to organize itself into a formal party. However, this did not mean a full return to normal political activity: while KKE is a highly organized and disciplined group, it has also suffered splits, defections, and loss of center-left-leaning support to rivals such as PASOK, the Communist Party of the Interior, or newer groups such as Coalition of the Left and Progress and the Democratic Socialist Movement. The collapse of Communism and the East Bloc also tarnished KKE's image and made it more marginal than in earlier years.

In terms of policy recommendations, KKE still holds to Soviet-style Communist ideology and has made little effort to move to a more post–cold war center-left stance. KKE desires an end to NATO and American military presence in Greece, wishes for Greece to leave the European Union, and calls for more Greek autonomy vis-à-vis the policies of other industrialized nations. In the domestic realm, in addition to policies of social justice, KKE has called for strict regulation or breaking up of monopolies. KKE has also opposed EU enlargement and expansion of the European currency (the euro) on the grounds that such expansion amounts to little more than increased domination of leading capitalist countries, especially Germany. KKE supports conflict resolution through the United

Nations and opposes attempts by NATO, the United States, or the European Union to mediate international tensions, especially in Cyprus. KKE continues an anti-NATO and anti-American policy, in particular against regional military bases.

ORGANIZATION

The KKE's attempt to maintain a separate, unique, and attractive identity amidst competition from other left-wing groups has been a major goal and expenditure of effort for KKE. (Another major goal—combating the influence and power of right-wing capitalism and imperialism—was temporarily gained with the turn of the electorate to the left in the 1980s but waned in the 1990s.) Here KKE has been caught in a bind. On the one hand, PASOK is an ally because it is on the left and identifies with many Communist goals (especially addressing social inequality and injustice and promoting Greek autonomy over outside capitalist forces). However, PASOK is a very popular competitor, and because PASOK has been able to garner parliamentary majorities, KKE does not have much room for negotiating with PASOK over public policy. Hence, while KKE may be satisfied with a left-wing parliamentary majority, it is a majority of another party. Thus, KKE wants both to support and to challenge PASOK.

In 1989 KKE formed the Coalition of the Left and Progress (Synaspismos; SYN), but in 1991 internal tensions created a split. Current SYN leadership claim that KKE left the coalition, but KKE leaders maintain that present-day SYN is actually the splinter group that left the original coalition—that is, that KKE and SYN remain united but that the current independent SYN party has stolen the name.

MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY

While KKE does have a strong grasp on the more extreme left wing of Greek politics and while it appears that KKE's support is not declining (hovering around 4–6 percent and 10 deputies in parliament since 1974), KKE also does not appear to be moving up either. PASOK captured the center-left and left KKE in a marginal position. Further, given PASOK's near-constant majoritarian status, KKE support has not been needed to form a coalition of the left and hence has not had the leverage it would need in order to be a force in national politics. Only an erosion of PASOK power—such as happened with the 2004 elections—could perhaps bring KKE increased influence. Even in such a case, KKE needs to develop tighter organization at the grassroots level and to more effectively harness resources and support, so that it can mobilize to take advantage of weaknesses in PASOK or New Democracy fortunes. KKE claims a strong association with regional governments, trade unions, student political associations, and the like, although they have not been able to translate these links into concrete electoral support or other material advantage.

FINANCING

Figures on KKE's support are difficult to determine, as party membership in Greece is not a strong signal of popularity. KKE claims on membership have fluctuated but in the last decade have hovered around the 600,000-member mark. The majority of Communist support comes from two sources, the working class and Greeks not born in Greece (e.g., Greeks expelled from other countries). KKE also has support from residents on many of the islands with depressed economic conditions.

Minor Political Parties

Greek political life is mostly divided between New Democracy and PASOK, with some minor influence by KKE. There are other smaller Greek parties that so far have been marginal. First, many of them are new and need to create a base of support. Second, because Greek politics is still patronage-centered, creating a viable party movement takes time in order to develop personal connections. Third, as party organization becomes more important, creating a viable party structure requires effort, resources, and a leadership capable of holding together a central core of activists and supporters. Minor Greek parties still struggle with such problems and resulting marginalization.

COALITION OF THE LEFT OF MOVEMENTS AND ECOLOGY

(Synaspismos; SYN)

While PASOK and the Communist Party dominate Greece's political left, there is still room for parties on the center-left. However, most other leftist parties and their constituencies are too small to post a serious electoral challenge and gain seats in parliament. KKE had formed a coalition also called Synaspismos but withdrew from it in 1991. In 1992 the current SYN party was founded. Its most important founding member was KKE-Interior, a Communist Party faction drawing support primarily in Athens and from voters attracted

to its leader, Leonidas Kyrkos. When this proved too little, KKE-Interior and other small parties merged to form the Progressive Left. When this party received only 2.9 percent of the vote in the 1993 elections, the party was reorganized again, into the Coalition of the Left and Progress. Under this label the party received 5.1 percent of seats in the 1996 elections. Much of the gain came less from the name change than from defections from PASOK supporters. SYN's ideology was close enough to PASOK's (except for being more pro-European at the time) that it was not difficult for some PASOK supporters to switch their votes. However, as PASOK moved toward the center and promoted a more pro-European stance, SYN lost some of its grounds for support, going from 10 seats in 1996 to six by the 2004 elections.

In 2003 the party changed its name again, this time to Coalition of the Left of Movements and Ecology. SYN's left-leaning platform supports welfare protection for society, democratic pluralism, greater women's rights, and concern for ecological issues.

DEMOCRATIC SOCIAL MOVEMENT

(Dimokratiki Kinoniku Kinima; DIKKI)

The Democratic Social Movement (Dimokratiki Kinoniku Kinima; DIKKI) entered parliament in 1996 when it gained 4.4 percent of the vote and nine parliamentary seats. DIKKI is European-oriented and less nationalist than other left-leaning parties. Most likely DIKKI gained its electoral support from the same wellspring as SYN, namely, the decline in PASOK fortunes. As PASOK's popularity returned after 1996, DIKKI's fortunes reversed, and in 2004 the party gained only 1.8 percent of the vote, too little for parliamentary seats.

POPULIST ORTHODOX RALLY

(Laikos Orthodoxos Synagermos; LAOS)

The rise of the right in Greek politics in the 1990s was reflected in the emergence of LAOS as a minor party. LAOS combines conservative values, including religious rhetoric and cultural insulation (bordering on intolerance), with populism, and some analysts place it in the company of Europe's more right-wing parties. Party leaders have been critical of Europe (especially the West), and there are undercurrents of xenophobia in some quarters of the party. LAOS has tried to tap into a revival in Greek Orthodoxy. Some leftist intellectuals left Communism for Greek Orthodoxy in the 1980s, and the Orthodox Church became vocal during the Yugoslav strife, with some priests taking a reactionary line vis-à-vis the West's actions in Serbia. LAOS tried to tap into the conservatism of the Church and its faithful followers, and party leader George Karatzaferis received the political blessing and a blessing of support from archbishop Christodoulos. This did not translate into broad support in the recent parliamentary election, however. The party won only 2.2 percent of the vote in 2004, not enough to gain any seats.

POLITICAL SPRING

(Politiki Anixi; POLA)

One conservative alternative to New Democracy that enjoyed a moment in the sun and a hope of survival was Political Spring (Politiki Anixi; POLA). Political Spring came into being in 1993 when former foreign minister Antonis Samaras left New Democracy after disputes over the handling of Yugoslav Macedonian independence. Political Spring ran on a right-wing ticket, but its program was not really different from that of New Democracy—neo-orthodox, technocratic, with slightly more nationalist sentiment than New Democracy—with the exception of taking a hard line on the Macedonian issue and using stronger nationalist rhetoric. After the split Political Spring had a respectable showing for a new small party—4.87 percent of the vote in the 1993 elections and 10 deputies. However, since 1993 Political Spring's fortunes have declined, owing no doubt to the inability of the party to increase its presence and to attract support from other right-wing groups. In 1996 Political Spring gained only 2.9 percent of the vote and did not receive a single seat in parliament. By 2004 POLA was not a serious rival to New Democracy and captured no seats in parliament. New Democracy was able to recapture much of the vote on the right, and POLA did not move to tap nationalist sentiment.

Other Political Forces

THE MILITARY

From 1967 to 1974 the Greek military controlled political life, in response to threats from Communism. However, blunders in the domestic and international spheres (including a near miss war with Turkey) led to the military's turning political control back to a civilian government. Given the collapse of Communism, memories of the military

intervention, and a subterranean break within the officer corps (with higher-ranking officers in favor of right-wing politics and younger junior officers closer to PASOK), it is unlikely that the military will venture back into the political realm (barring serious political instability or a severe crisis).

In 2003 Greece spent approximately $7,288.9 million, or 4.3 percent of GDP, on the country's military. While Greece is a part of NATO, the Greek military is not particularly active in geopolitics—the exception being the case of Cyprus, where Greek and Turkish militaries have engaged in the defense of their relative sections of the island.

National Prospects

In 2004 Greece was riding a political high. Politics remained stable and Greek consumer society continued to develop. In the summer of 2004 Greece won the European football (soccer) championship, and the August 2004 Olympic Games went off without incident—a cause for celebration, considering the criticisms and fears of corruption, terrorist attack, and incompetence expressed by many in the days leading up to the games. Greece does not appear overly troubled by its authoritarian past; unlike the experience in many postauthoritarian nations, legacies of the military period of rule do not appear to have carried over to the present day. The transition to democracy appears complete, and democratic institutions—in spite of the problems of patronage and corruption (familiar to many other democracies)—appear vibrant. The leftist parties in control of politics are not radical and most likely will not lead Greece down a radicalized and unstable path anytime soon (as was the case in Allende's pre-1973 Chile).

One problem for Greece concerns economic change. While Greece hopes to integrate itself into the European Union, its high budget deficit and large state sector make efforts at further integration troublesome. Further, while anti-inflationary austerity measures have helped ease macroeconomic problems somewhat, additional structural reforms—especially privatization—might be the next serious step Greece will have to take to escape economic doldrums. An unemployment rate of around 10 percent as of 2005—not the highest in Europe but still high—must also be addressed, especially through promotion of the private sector. For such reforms to work, Greece will have to lock into a healthy European economy; yet, as the frustrations of Eastern European reformers reveal, such hopes of exporting one's way to happiness via a healthy Western Europe are for the time being problematic.

Another problematic area of Greek politics concerns the fate of Cyprus. This island nation remains divided between Greek and Turkish enclaves, and unification does not appear to be on the immediate horizon. The tension between the two enclaves is exacerbated by economic differences (the Greek enclave is far more prosperous than the Turkish enclave). The lack of U.S. support for Greek claims—a difficulty for the United States given that both Greece and Turkey are members of NATO and that at present American international interests are stronger in Turkey—helped inflame anti-American sentiment, sentiment that only increased with the anti-American and pro-Socialist rhetoric of Andreas Papandreou and PASOK. When Papandreou exited the scene, talks over Cyprus did begin, and progress was made toward the issue of some degree of reunification. Turkey's growing importance to NATO and the European Union, in no small part because of its importance to Western allies in the "war on terror" (post-September 11, 2001), also forced Greece to start coming to terms with Turkey. A referendum on political unification was held in the spring of 2004, but Greek Cypriots rejected it, mostly on the grounds that they would ultimately have to cede political voice to the Turkish population. Cyprus remains a thorny issue for Greek international relations, although it is not the problem that it once was. Concerns over instability in the former Yugoslavia, and fears of an independent Macedonian state, played on the Greek political elite in the late 1990s, although these fears have been groundless thus far.

The final issue that must be faced is "modernization"—industrialization and economic integration into a wider European economy and the bureaucratization of party politics. This means changing the incentives of the party elite (who at present would lose in a transformation from patronage-based to bureaucratic party politics) and rooting out corruption (creating negative incentives for patronage and personal networks). Certainly, personal networks are present in all political systems, but a political system firmly founded on and grounded in such a set of networks makes for corruption and difficulty both in mobilizing the public around important issues and in permitting the rise of competent "new blood" into politics. Party reform can only partially be legislated from above; just as important is the lesson of PASOK's organizational form. As the political reins pass to a

new generation, the impetus to normalization (away from network-based politics), pragmatism on the left and right, and integration into Europe appears to be proceeding apace; gone are the days when Papandreou and Greece were the enfants terribles of Europe. There remain issues of human rights, for example, brutality against asylum seekers or Gypsies; but Greece seems to have put behind it much of the bad memories of authoritarian rule and initial inefficiencies in its democratic system.

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GRENADA

By Thomas D. Anderson, Ph.D.
Revised by Soeren Kern



Grenada is an island country of only 340 square kilometers that lies north of the Galleons Passage across from Trinidad-Tobago. The capital is St. Georges. The largely black, English-speaking population of 90,000 (2005 est.) is 98 percent literate.

Grenada gained independence from Britain in 1974. In 1979 leaders of a bloodless coup d'état proclaimed a one-party Socialist state. Murders of the original leaders by more radical members in October 1983 led to an invasion to restore order by a joint U.S.-Caribbean military force. The governor-general then appointed a nine-member Advisory Council that administered the country until general elections were held to restore the parliamentary system in December 1984.

The System of Government

Grenada is a parliamentary democracy with a bicameral legislature.

EXECUTIVE

The chief of state is the British monarch represented by a governor-general who appoints as prime minister the head of the majority party of parliament. The prime minister holds effective executive power through a cabinet appointed from members of the legislature.

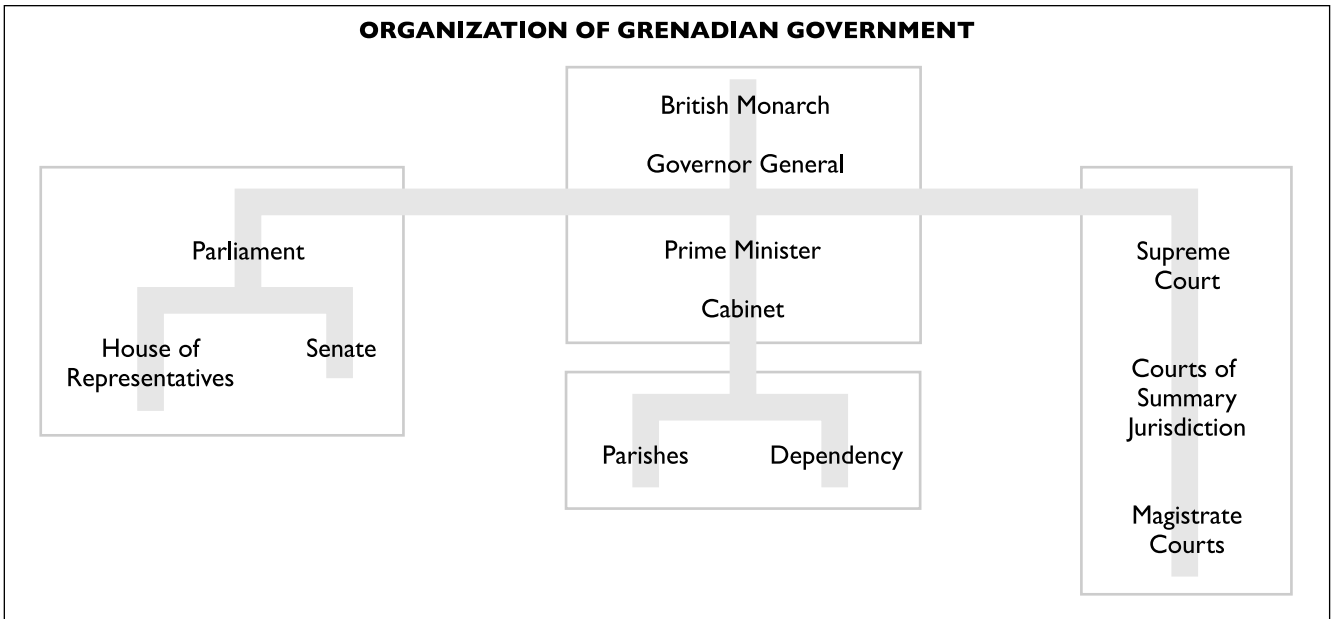
LEGISLATURE

The bicameral legislature consists of a 13-member Senate appointed by the governor-general, 10 upon the advice of the prime minister and three on advice of the leaders of the opposition. The 15 members of the House of Representatives serve five-year terms following direct elections. Parliament is empowered to introduce bills and with a two-thirds majority can change the constitution, which dates from December 19, 1973.

The first postindependence legislature was controlled by Eric Gairy's Grenada United Labour Party (GULP), which won nine seats to six for an alliance of opposition parties, despite the fact that Gairy had been removed by the Crown in 1962 for malfeasance as premier. In March 1979, when the New JEWEL Movement (NJM) seized power, it suspended the constitution and dissolved parliament. Upon the restoration of democracy in 1984, the New National Party (NNP), a centrist coalition headed by Herbert Blaize, won control of the House. In 1991 a coalition led by the National Democratic Congress (NDC) won power. The NNP returned to power in the 1995 elections, and it maintained its hold in elections held in 1999 and 2003.

JUDICIARY

The judicial system is based on English common law. The law is administered by the Supreme Court of the Judicature, which is composed of the High Court of Justice and a Court of Appeals, the highest court in the



land. Further appeals may be sent to the Privy Council of the British monarchy.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Grenada is divided into six parishes and one dependency (the small islands of Carriacou and Petit Martinique in the Grenadines). Although local government structures were effectively eliminated under the arbitrary rule of both Eric Gairy and the NJM, they have been reinstituted following a series of regional discussions by the NNP government.

The Electoral System

Grenada has universal suffrage for citizens of 18 years or older. General elections are scheduled every five years. An independent civil servant, the supervisor of elections, oversees voter registration and the conduct of elections.

The Party System

From the institution of universal suffrage in 1951 until the NJM coup in 1979, Eric Gairy's GULP dominated Grenadian politics. Gairy was the first political figure to seek support from the previously ignored rural population. By means of his union, the Grenada Manual and Mental Labourers Union (GMMLU), Gairy won higher wages and loyal political support from the workers. His appeal derived less from ideology or program than from his charismatic personality. His formal political party consisted, for example, of only 70 members. As prime minister, Gairy increasingly acted as an autocrat (enforced by his "Mongoose Gang") in an atmosphere of corruption.

Seizure of power by the NJM headed by the magnetic Maurice Bishop in 1979 not only radically altered the existing political system and economy but also linked Grenada increasingly closer with the Soviet bloc—and with Cuba in particular—during the cold war. Cuban "volunteers" served as advisers throughout the society, and their work toward completion of a 9,000-foot runway near St. Georges was viewed with geopolitical suspicion in Washington. When in October 1983 Bishop and scores of his supporters were gunned down by an NJM faction (the Revolutionary Military Council, or RMC) headed by Bernard and Phyllis Coard and Hudson Austin, alarm in neighboring island states and the United States led to an invasion by a combined force that quickly restored order and was greeted as liberators by the masses.

Major Political Parties

NEW NATIONAL PARTY (NNP)

The NNP is a coalition party formed from three smaller parties in 1984. The impetus for the coalition was the fear by business interests, religious leaders, neighboring

governments, and Washington that Gairy's GULP would win again. The agreement was worked out at an August 26, 1984, meeting hosted by the St. Vincent prime minister, James F. Mitchell, and the late Tom Adams of Barbados. Joined were one old party, the Grenada National Party (GNP) of Herbert Blaize, and two new ones, the Grenada National Movement (GDM) of Francis Alexis and the National Democratic Party (NDP) of George I. Brizan. As the oldest and most experienced figure, Blaize was selected as head.

In the December 1984 elections the NNP won 14 of 15 House seats and moved quickly to draft a new constitution that would provide stronger safeguards against future efforts to overturn the parliamentary system. Despite the winning margin, the NNP's popularity suffered through weak leadership and a stagnant economy, and within its five-year term the party fragmented and lost power. However, in the elections of June 1995, under the leadership of Dr. Keith Mitchell, the NNP again won, with eight seats in the 15-seat House. The NNP maintained and affirmed its hold on power when it took all 15 parliamentary seats in the January 1999 elections. General elections were held again in November 2003. The NNP won eight of the 15 seats, holding on to power with a much-reduced majority. Party leader Keith Mitchell, who has been credited with overseeing economic growth and inward investment during his time in office, began a third straight term in office in late November 2003.

GRENADA UNITED LABOUR PARTY (GULP)

The oldest of the active parties in Grenada, the GULP was Eric Gairy's personal vehicle to power. It won the country's first election, but its corruption and abuses of power contributed to the NJM's forceful takeover in 1979. Gairy went into voluntary exile during that period but returned in 1984 to direct his party in the elections, even though he was not a candidate. His party remained a major contender for the national leadership up to his death, but it never again won control of the House, although in 1995 it did win two seats. In the 2003 elections it won less than 3 percent of the vote and no seats in parliament.

NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC CONGRESS (NDC)

Most successful of the alternative parties has been the NDC of Nicholas Brathwaite and George Brizan. The NDC leadership pulled its followers out of the NNP coalition prior to the 1990 election, won, and both Braithwaite and Brizan served as prime ministers. In 1995 it won only five seats. In the November 2003 election the NDC led by Tillman Thomas won seven seats and became the official opposition.

Minor Political Parties

The Maurice Bishop Patriotic Movement (MBPM) was formed in May 1984 on what would have been Bishop's 40th birthday by two former ministers in Bishop's government, Kendrick Radix and George Louison. Although some affection for Bishop lingers, both the memory of what he wrought and a lack of confidence in his successors made voters wary of this attempt at revival. Despite advice from Cuba, it has won no seats in two elections.

Other Political Forces

The Grenada Technical and Allied Workers Union (TAWU) is the most powerful labor union in Grenada. TAWU is known for its militancy in opposing the government's labor policies, and has often engaged in industrial battles that have effectively shut down the country. In turn, the government has often accused TAWU of having a political rather than a labor motive.

National Prospects

Despite the country's flamboyant recent political history, constitutional government appears to be on firm ground in Grenada. The vigor of the democratic process is attested to by the swirl of political party creation and reformulation, as well as by the lack of dominance of a single figure or party over the past decade. The deaths of both Bishop and Gairy leave personalities less colorful but perhaps more competent. The economy remains largely dependent on exports of mace and nutmeg (Grenada is the world leader) and tourism. The latter is aided greatly by completion of the airport and runway near St. Georges after the invasion by the United States, but the national infrastructure is too weak to provide serious competition to its island neighbors in this activity, despite a recent surge in visitors from Europe. The economy was severely damaged in 2004 by Hurricane Ivan, which damaged 90 percent

of the island's buildings and decimated the nutmeg crop. In 2005 Grenada reestablished diplomatic ties with China.

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REPUBLIC OF GUATEMALA

(República de Guatemala)

By Kristin Marsh, Ph.D.



The Central American country of Guatemala borders Mexico to the north and west, Belize to the northeast, and El Salvador and Honduras to the southeast. With 108,430 square kilometers of land area and over 14 million people, Guatemala is the largest country in the small but politically significant region. The majority of Guatemalans (55 percent) are Ladino (mixed Amerindian-Spanish). The remaining 45 percent are Amerindian (43 percent). Spanish, the official language, is spoken by 60 percent of Guatemalans, and 40 percent speak one of 23 Amerindian languages. The religious makeup of the country is approximately 70 percent Roman Catholic and 30 percent Protestant. A small minority practice indigenous Mayan religions.

Guatemala's recent political history is somewhat of an extreme reflection of the region as a whole and is best characterized as dominated by political instability, social unrest, and repression. The Guatemalan economy has benefited a small economic oligarchy, while heightened levels of poverty and inequality has long fueled unrest among the indigenous population. Civil war remained a constant backdrop to the political instability for 36 years, finally coming to an end in negotiated settlement between the guerrillas and the government in December 1996.

HISTORY

After gaining independence from Mexico's Central American Federation in 1839, Guatemala was ruled by a series of dictators through World War II. A popular revolution initiated the socioeconomic reforms of Juan José Arevalo (1945–51) and Jacobo Arbenz Guzmán (1951–54). Reform was to be short-lived, as Communist support of Arbenz prompted U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) sponsorship of Colonel Carlos Castillo Armas's coup d'état. Castillo's short term (1954–57) ended in assassination. The term of his elected successor—Miguel Ydigoras Fuentes (National Democratic Reconciliation Party)—was cut short as well, in 1963. This time a military junta installed Colonel Enrique Peralta Azurdia.

The 1965 Guatemalan constitution called for presidential elections at four-year intervals. A civilian, Julio César Mendez Montenegro of the moderate leftist Revolutionary Party (PR), was elected to the presidency in 1966. However, real power remained in the hands of the armed forces, and the civilian president held little effective control. When violent political protest escalated in 1966–68, Colonel Carlos Arana Osorio eradicated the guerrilla movement in Zacapa and temporarily quelled the political violence. He went on to win the presidency in 1970 under conditions of electoral terror. Military control of the government would continue to characterize Guatemalan politics through the early 1980s. Because of widespread electoral fraud between 1970 and 1982, voters had little real choice at the polls. Legal parties were conservative allies of the military, and the choice for president represented a strategic alliance between the economically powerful civilian oligarchy and the armed forces high command.

Yet the military was quickly losing its ability to govern in Guatemala. The ruling military-oligarchy alliance was increasingly factionalized and was quickly losing legitimacy within society as a result of the openly fraudulent elections of 1974, 1978, and 1982. From 1978 to 1982 General Romeo Lucas García was able to retain state authority only through extreme repression. And by 1982 outward political reform was needed to return some measure of legitimacy, peace, and stability to the country's military rule. General Efraín Ríos Montt staged a coup d'état, but his extremist "scorched-earth" tactics of indiscriminant killings in rural communities, particularly the Indian highlands of the northwest, eventually lost him the support of the ruling coalition. A second coup d'état in August 1983 saw him replaced by General Oscar Humberto Mejía Víctores. From the standpoint of the leading oligarchy, the goal of both coups was to initiate a return to controlled civilian rule. From the perspective of the military, the goal was both to reestablish the confidence of the bourgeoisie and other sectors of the civilian population and to finally demobilize all leftist opposition.

If the 1982 and 1983 coups represented the outward initiation of reform, a return to normalized electoral politics was to signal the follow-through of a formally redemocratized, pluralistic Guatemalan government. At first, the rhetoric of political pluralism meant only slight liberalization in practice. The Christian Democratic Party was legalized, and the Social Democratic Party was allowed to participate, but only after renunciation of its leftist leanings. All leftist parties were still excluded from legal participation, and open electoral fraud was replaced by continued political exclusion. In the 1984 election for a constituent assembly that would draft the new constitution and new laws governing elections, exclusion of all but the accepted conservative parties led to a high rate of abstention, and only 43 percent of the eligible electorate cast valid ballots.

The constitution adopted in 1985 introduced considerable reform and represented a move toward civilian rule. And procedural democratic reform did result in the 1985 election of a civilian president, Vinicio Cerezo. On the other hand, Cerezo's government turned out to be weak and ineffectual, and his presidential powers were subordinated to the powers of the armed forces, particularly in the areas of national security and rural development. The military implemented several programs of "security and development" that targeted the rural conflict zones. All adult males were conscribed to newly created Civil Defense Patrols, tens of thousands of displaced civilians were forced to resettle in "model villages," and local government activity was overseen by "interinstitutional coordinators." Electoral reform was thus coupled with the heightened institutionalization of the counterinsurgency activities of the military.

By 1990 public confidence in the Christian Democrats had been fully undermined by the Cerezo administration's corruption and leadership. Also, several high-profile tragedies of the civil war were concentrated in 1990, Cerezo's final year as president: a massacre at Santiago Atitlán, which left 15 dead; the murder of Michael Devine, an American citizen; and the murder of anthropologist Myrna Mack.

Jorge Serrano Elías won the 1991 runoff election as the candidate of the newly formed Solidarity Action Movement (MAS) and with the support of the National Center Union and the Christian Democrats. Corruption charges against Serrano's government, including vote manipulation in Congress, were increasing. Although implicated himself, Serrano argued that congressional and Supreme Court corruption had made it impossible for him to govern. On May 25, 1993, he attempted an *autogolpe*, or self-coup, that involved suspension of the constitution, the Congress, the Constitutional Court, and the Supreme Court of Justice.

The Serrano *autogolpe* proved a critical test of the newly reformed democratic process in Guatemala. In coordinated and quick response, the civilian sectors of Guatemalan society formed the Committee on National Consensus (Instancia Nacional de Consenso). Although without legal authority, the Instancia acted quickly to return the country to its constitutional order, calling for cleansing of all branches of government. A deal was struck with the Christian Democrats and others opposed to the self-cleansing. Several changes to the constitution were agreed to, as well as procedures for electing a transitional Congress and establishing a new Supreme Court.

Understandably, voter turnout in 1994 was low, indicating a lack of confidence in the political system in general, as well as alienation from the established political parties. Voter alienation in 1995 was countered by a widespread call for electoral participation. Even the Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unity (URNG) called a cease-fire for the election and encouraged citizens to participate in support of alternative candidates. While alternatives were few, 1995 marked the first time a participating party represented a platform of the ideological left. The New Guatemalan Democratic Front (FDNG) won six congressional seats

on a platform emphasizing land reform, demilitarization, refugee repatriation, and indigenous rights.

Corresponding to the signs of strengthening ideological pluralism and stabilizing constitutional democracy through the first half of the 1990s, the Guatemalan peace process progressed haltingly during the same time period. Working from a framework agreement established in Mexico City in 1991, a series of accords were signed within the next few years, culminating in the final peace agreement signed in December 1996. Together, the Peace Accords called for substantial reduction of the size and power of the armed forces, elimination of the paramilitary counterinsurgency units, judicial reform, UN verification of respect for human rights, and legal recognition of Guatemala's multiethnic and multilingual population.

Implementation was difficult and was largely stalled in May 1999 by the failed referendum aimed at reforming the constitution. International attention on the electoral process has resulted in a gradually stabilizing political system since that time, but judicial and constitutional reforms are greatly needed. The indigenous peoples remain largely disenfranchised politically and economically; poverty is widespread; and violence is rampant throughout the country. Since the accords were signed, a hopeful chance for stability and peace has become increasingly tenuous and volatile.

The System of Government

Currently a constitutional democratic republic, Guatemala has been governed under four separate constitutions in the last half century. Under the current constitution, which was passed in 1985 and became effective January 14, 1986, Guatemala's republican form of government is made up of the executive, the legislative, and the judicial branches of government.

EXECUTIVE

Guatemala's executive branch of government is made up of the president, the vice president, and the cabinet (called the Council of Ministers). Under changes made to the constitution in 1994, the president holds the authority of chief of state and head of government and appoints members of the Council of Ministers. Both the president and the vice president are elected by universal suffrage to nonrenewable four-year terms. The vice president, who presides over Congress, can run for president after at least four years out of office. The last two elections saw the victory and then the defeat of the Guatemalan Republican Front (FRG): In 1999 Alfonso Portillo (FRG) was elected president; then four years later (November/December 2003), the Grand National Alliance's (GANA) candidate, Óscar José Rafael Berger Perdomo, won the presidency with 54 percent of the runoff vote. Eduardo Stein Barilla (GANA) became vice president.

LEGISLATURE

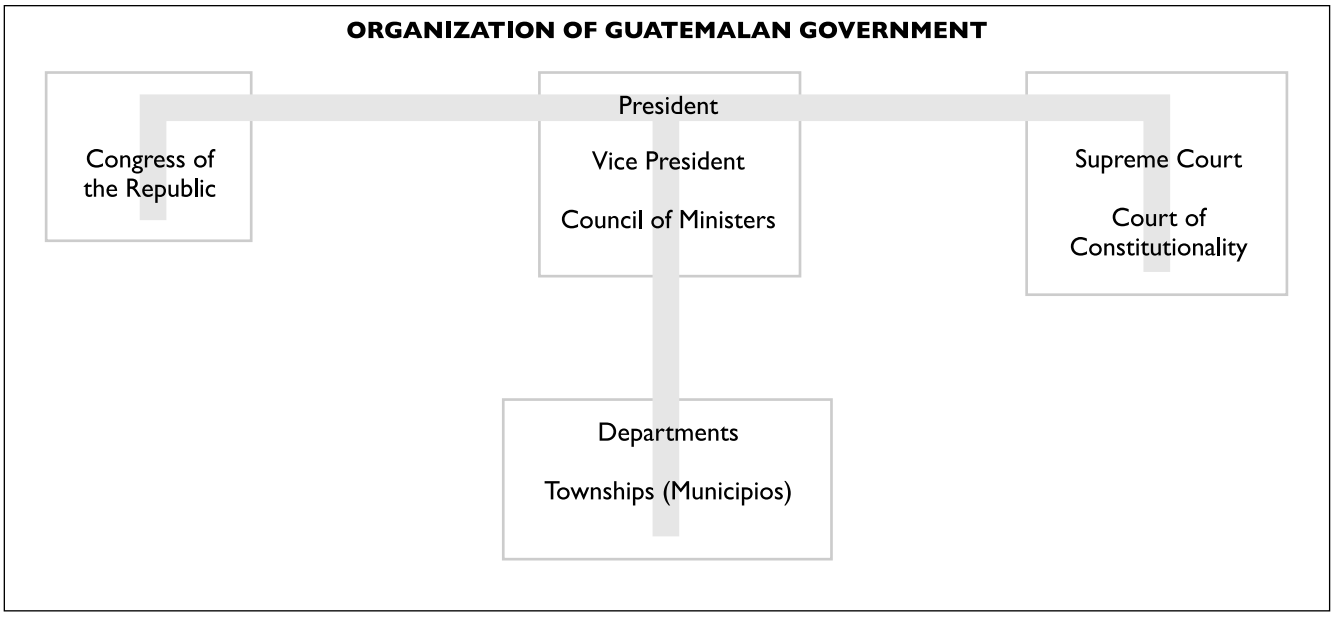
National parliamentary elections are held every four years, and seats of the Congress of the Republic (Congreso de la Republica), or National Congress, are filled partially by proportional representation and partially by departmental constituencies. As of the term beginning January 2004, the number of congressional seats has increased to 158 (from 113). In the 2004 Congress, four political parties (and alliances) controlled 139 out of 158 seats: GANA (47), FRG (43), National Unity of Hope (UNE, 32), and National Advancement Party (PAN, 17).

JUDICIARY

The Supreme Court of Justice and Constitutional Court are Guatemala's highest courts. Supreme Court justices are elected by the National Congress. Under the 1993 constitutional reforms, the number of Supreme Court justices increased from 9 to 13, while their term of service was reduced to concurrent five-year terms. The president of the Supreme Court, who is elected by members of the Court each year, supervises trial judges around the country. The president of the Supreme Court also presides over the separate Court of Constitutionality, which determines the constitutionality of laws and regulations.

A lack of separation of powers between the three branches of government in Guatemala has resulted in a continual blurring of judicial and executive roles. Both the executive and the military have influenced judicial functions and decisions. Members of the military, in particular, have been able to act with impunity. Furthermore, the judicial system has historically been characterized by unequal treatment of the indigenous versus nonindigenous population.

While the 1996 Peace Accords seemed to offer potential for change, a full transition depended on the passage of a set of constitutional reforms. The intended reforms were conceptualized during the peace process and were aimed at enhancing human rights for Guatemala's indigenous majority, further separating



the different spheres of government and reducing the power and impunity of the army. The Demilitarization Accord, for example, called for extreme limitations to the role and budget of the army, in addition to mandating judicial reform toward the elimination of impunity. The Accord on Identity and Rights of Indigenous Peoples mandated a constitutional redefinition of Guatemala as multiethnic, multicultural, and multilingual. And the Accord on Identity and Rights had the potential to equalize rights and representation of Guatemala's indigenous population. Constitutional reforms stipulated in these specific accords were brought to a national vote on May 16, 1999. Roberto Belarmino Gonzalez, a top official of the New Guatemalan Democratic Front (FDNG) and strong adherent of the "yes" vote, was assassinated in the days leading up to the referendum. In the context of this political violence, and in spite of the importance of the referendum to the peace process, the referendum was defeated two-to-one.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Guatemala is divided into 22 departments plus the central district of the capital, Guatemala City. A governor traditionally appointed by the president heads each department. The departments are subdivided into 327 municipalities (*municipios*). Each municipality has a mayor who is elected by direct popular vote. In towns of less than 10,000 people, mayors serve 2½-year terms; in large cities the term of office is five years. In 1985 the Christian Democrats (DCG) won nearly three-quarters of the mayoralties. In Guatemala City the mayoral contest usually involves candidates loyal to particular localities. The office can serve as a conduit to the presidency. The mayor elected in 1985 was Alvaro Arzú (PAN), who went on to win the presidency in 1996. In 1990 the Guatemala City mayoralty again went to the PAN candidate, Oscar Berger, who won the presidency in 2003. In the 1998 local elections, PAN (the ruling party) won control of the majority of 30 contested municipalities. By 2003 local elections reflected the fragmented electorate nationally. The FRG won 120 municipalities, GANA won 77, the UNE took 37, and PAN took 34.

The Electoral System

The electoral system in Guatemala is based on universal suffrage for all citizens 18 years of age or older. Historically, left and center-left parties have been illegal and were not allowed to participate in elections. In addition, election procedures were consistently fraudulent and elections were held under conditions of terror.

Reform of the electoral system has been slow and minimal but has involved the opening up of the system to include centrist parties, resulting in a slightly broader political spectrum. Nonvoting is punishable by a small fine, though this penalty is rarely imposed. Illiterate citizens (70 percent of the total population over the age of 15 are literate: 78 percent of males

and 63.3 percent of females) are not obliged to vote. Problems persist regarding access to the polls and corruption leading up to and during elections (e.g., vote buying, misuse of state funds, and political violence). Registering to vote is costly and time-consuming, as is voting itself. In a relatively new democracy, where elections have had any minimal meaning only for just under 20 years, it is understandable that voter turnout has been quite low historically. Further, disenfranchisement is much greater among indigenous groups and in the rural areas. However, meaningful if modest improvements have been made since the elections in the 1990s. In the November 2003 first-round elections, 58 percent of registered voters went to the polls, although participation varied widely across different municipalities and declined in the second round in December 2003.

The Party System

Guatemala's political party system, in spite of reforms adopted in the 1986 constitution, remained a legacy of the 1954 coup by Colonel Carlos Castillo Armas and the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency through the mid-1990s. The electoral process was continually unsettled, and the Guatemalan left and center-left were consistently excluded from party politics. The military retained considerable control over politics and the party system. After the military coup in 1982, all political parties and organizations were declared illegal and forced to disband. By the mid-1980s, however, the military began to relinquish control of the party system. In the aftermath of Serrano's *autogolpe*, with the 1994 transitional elections, the 1995 general elections, and particularly with the signing of the 1996 Peace Accords, the spectrum of ideological representation via legal party participation began to broaden meaningfully.

The fragility of Guatemala's electoral system is sharply evident in a highly volatile party system. Rather than well-developed, internally democratic organizations representing identifiable ideological positions, political parties in Guatemala really only emerge in the context of a particular election season. Key political leaders may organize a party around their individual aspirations, only to form new tactical alliances for the next election, allowing the original party organization to dissolve. Following this pattern, voter support also shifts from election to election. Further undermining party system legitimacy, campaign finance is weakly regulated and there is widespread suspicion about illegal use of state funds for campaign purposes.

Major Political Parties

CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY

(Democracia Christiana Guatemalteca; DCG)

Organized in the late 1950s, the Christian Democratic Party (DCG) was not legally registered as a party until 1968. Today it is considered a center-left party within the Guatemalan political spectrum, although it contains a more conservative faction as well.

In 1974 the DCG ran a strong campaign with Rios Montt as its presidential candidate. While observers considered Rios Montt the winner, the army's candidate, General Kjell Laugerud of the PR/MLN, was declared the winner among widespread charges of electoral fraud. DCG subsequently became a prime target of political repression, and more than 250 Christian Democratic leaders were assassinated under General Romeo Lucas Garcia's presidency between 1978 and 1982.

In 1982 the DCG and the PNR formed an alliance called the Opposition Union (Union Opositora) and supported the PNR candidate, Alejandro Maldonado Aguirre, for president, with Roberto Carpio Nicolle as the vice presidential candidate. When both the Opposition Union and the MLN claimed victory, army officers ousted the official (MLN) candidate, and Rios Montt declared himself president.

After the 1983 violent military coup and the subsequent military rule by decree, the Christian Democrats were among participants in the June 1984 election for the constituent assembly to draft the new constitution and electoral laws. Although the largest share of the vote went to the Christian Democrats, the DCG controlled only 20 seats, compared with 23 for the MLN/CAN coalition and 21 for the UCN.

In 1985 the Christian Democratic presidential candidate, Vinicio Cerezo, successfully contested the presidential campaign with Roberto Carpio Nicolle as his running mate. In 1990 the Christian Democrats had lost popular support due to Cerezo's weak leadership and ineffectual attempt at civilian administration. In spite of coalition efforts and work on the party's image, support for the historically important party declined irreparably through the 1990s. After the 2003 elections, DCG influence extended only to a participa-

tory role in the presidential elections (Jacobo Arbenz won 1.6 percent of the vote) and a one-seat vote in the legislature (DCG won 3.2 percent of the popular congressional vote).

DEMOCRATIC UNION

(Unión Democrática; UD)

The Democratic Union (UD) was formed by leader José Luis Chea Urruela in 1994 as a new party of the right. From the start, the UD has met with only minimal electoral success. In 2004, for example, the party won only two seats in the legislative election.

GRAND NATIONAL ALLIANCE

(Gran Alianza Nacional; GANA)

GANA is the party of President Oscar Berger Perdomo and Vice President Eduardo Stein Barilla. Berger formed GANA early in 2003 after internal divisions led to his leaving the PAN. A rightist coalition party, the Grand National Alliance is made up of the Patriotic Party (Partido Patriota; PP); the Reform Movement (Movimiento Reformador; MR); and the Party of National Solidarity (Partido Solidaridad; PSN)—all minor political parties. Berger won the 2003 election with 54.1 percent of the vote in the second round.

GUATEMALAN REPUBLICAN FRONT

(Frente Republicano Guatemalteco; FRG)

General Efraín Rios Montt founded the Guatemalan Republican Front (FRG) as a populist party on the extreme right. The FRG allied with the Democratic Institutionalist Party (PID) and the National Unity Front (FUN) in the 1990 elections under the "No Sellout Platform" (Plataforma No Venta; PNV). Rios Montt, who assumed dictatorial powers in 1982, ran as the PNV presidential candidate in 1990, but the party alliance was deregistered on the basis of Montt's participation in the coup. The FRG managed a strong comeback in the 1994 congressional election, winning 32 of 80 seats and establishing Montt as the president of Congress. In the January 1996 runoff presidential election, the FRG candidate (Jorge Portillo Cabrera) came in a close second to Arzú. In 1999 Alfonso Portillo won the presidency by appealing to a broader political base than the FRG had in the past, and the FRG took a significant majority in the legislature. However, divisions were evident in the FRG early on in Portillo's administration. By 2003 Ríos Montt was once again the FRG candidate (amid controversy over the constitutionality of his campaign), and he took third place with only 11 percent of the vote.

NATIONAL ADVANCEMENT PARTY

(Partido por el Adelantamiento Nacional; PAN)

A center-right party, PAN was founded in 1989 by the then Guatemala City mayor, Alvaro Arzú Irigoyen, to contest the 1990 general election. Arzú received 17.3 percent of the vote (fourth place) in the November election, and PAN obtained 12 congressional seats as well as the Guatemala City mayoralty. Throughout the 1990s, PAN became a dominant political force, winning a majority of parliamentary seats and a narrow presidential victory for Arzú in 1995. PAN influence has waned more recently. Due to the party's adherence to neoliberal policies, the PAN was seen as the representative of the economic elite in Guatemala. In 2003 PAN's presidential candidate, Leonel Lopez Rodas, came in a distant fourth. In Congress, PAN earned 17 seats, again coming in fourth behind UNE, FRG, and GANA.

NATIONAL LIBERATION MOVEMENT

(Movimiento de Liberación Nacional; MLN)

The National Liberation Movement (MLN) was founded in 1960 by Mario Sandóval Alarcón and is one of the two oldest remaining parties in the Guatemalan political system. Traditionally and consistently right wing, the MLN was strongly critical of the peace process in Guatemala and in Central America more generally, although their stance became more moderate by the early 1990s. The party's spiritual father is considered to be Colonel Carlos Castillo Armas (National Democratic Movement; MDN), leader of the coup that overthrew President Jacobo Arbenz with the aid of the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency in 1954. He became president from 1954 until his assassination in 1957.

The MLN staged the 1963 coup against Miguel Ydigoras Fuentes, installing the short-lived presidency of Colonel Peralta Azurdia. The MLN lost the 1966 election but regained office from 1970 to 1978. It was during this time that the death squads associated with the MLN were most active.

The MLN participated in the June 1984 constitutional election in alliance with the Authentic Nationalist Central (CAN), winning 23 seats. And for the November 1985 general election, the MLN and PID formed an alliance. The MLN presidential candidate, Sandóval, came in fourth, and the MLN won six congressional seats. Support for the MLN waned throughout the 1990s.

UNIONIST PARTY

(Partido Unionista; PU)

Dating to the early 20th century, the Unionist Party is the political party most tightly associated with the working class in Guatemala. With seven seats in the 2004 legislature, the PU continues to play a meaningful, if small, role in electoral politics. The Unionist Party 2003 presidential candidate was Fritz Garcia-Gallout, with Hector Adolfo Cifuentes Mendoza as his running mate.

NATIONAL UNITY OF HOPE

(Unidad Nacional de la Esperanza; UNE)

Alvaro Colom Caballeros (originally a member of, and presidential candidate for, the URNG) founded the National Unity of Hope (UNE) in 2000. Although he is still identified with the left, many of Colom's advisors represent right-leaning policies. UNE was GANA's closest contender in the 2003 presidential elections. As UNE's candidate, Colom came in second with 45.9 percent of the vote in the runoff election.

GUATEMALAN NATIONAL REVOLUTIONARY UNITY

(Unidad Revolucionaria Nacional Guatemalteca; URNG)

The Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unity was formed in 1979 as an insurgent guerrilla alliance of leftist opposition groups, including the Guerrilla Army of the Poor (EGP), the Rebel Armed Forces (FAR), and the Guatemalan Labour Party (PGT). The Armed People's Organization (OPRA) joined the umbrella URNG the following year.

In the late 1980s the URNG began to seek a peace settlement with the government. Initial talks were unproductive, and the peace process stalled until talks resumed again in Norway in 1990, with preliminary meetings. In Mexico City, in April 1991, representatives of the military participated, as well, and a framework agreement was signed that July. With a peace agreement likely in the near future, the URNG supported popular participation in the 1995 elections. The Peace Accords were signed in December 1996, demobilization of nearly 3,000 URNG guerrillas was completed in early May 1997, and the URNG turned its focus to institutionalized politics. Still a party of the far left, in 2003 the URNG won two seats in the national parliament.

Minor Political Parties

Guatemalan political history has been marked by an unusually high number of political parties and highly tactical (and therefore tenuous) coalition building. A high degree of instability in the party system and coalition building among existing parties emerged amidst the restructuring of the political system in the 1980s. The promised grand coalition of the right never materialized as divisions among right and center-right parties aided the singular DCG. But the Christian Democrats' loss of credibility in the late 1980s and early 1990s necessitated a series of coalitions with other minor parties.

Recent examples of party coalitions include Platform "No Sellout" (Platafoma No Venta; PNV) and the National Front (Frente Nacionale; FN). The PNV forged the alliance of the Democratic Institutionalist Party (PID), the Guatemalan Republican Front (FRG), and FAN in the 1994 legislative elections. The FN was established in 1995 as a coalition of the Christian Democrats (DCG), the National Center Union (UCN), and the Social Democrats (PSD). Its presidential candidate, Fernando Andrade Días Durán, came in with 12.9 percent of the vote in November 1995.

Parties that either have no current representation in Congress include the following: Citizens for Democracy (Ciudadanos por Demócracia; CPD), a recently formed left-wing party; Civic Democratic Front (Frente Civico Democrático; FCD), a splinter of the DCG; Democratic Institutionalist Party (Partido Institucional Democrático; PID), the official party in 1966 and part of a right-wing alliance thereafter; Democratic Party of National Cooperation (Partido Democrático de Cooperación Nacional; PDCN); National Renewal Party (Partido Nacionalista Renovador; PNR); National Unity Front (Frente de Unidad Nacional; FUN), originally a coalition of the Christian Democrats, the PRA, and the FPP; Nationalist Authentic Central (Central Auténica Nacionalista; CAN); Revolutionary Party (Partido Revolucionario; PR); Social Christian

Party (Partido Social Cristiano; PSC); Social Reformist Union (Unión Reformist Social; URS), an original member of the New Guatemala Democratic Front electoral alliance; United Revolutionary Front (Frente Unido Revolucionario; FUR), the left successor to the Revolutionary Democratic Union; Democratic Alliance (Alianza Democrática; AD); Guatemalan Committee of Patriotic Unity (Comité Guatemalteco de Unidad Patriótica; CGUP); and Guatemalan Labour Party–National Leadership Nucleus (Partido Guatemalteco del Trabajo–Nucleo de Dirección Nacional; PGT-LN), the de facto Guatemalan Communist party.

Other Political Forces

GUATEMALAN OLIGARCHY AND PRIVATE BUSINESS INTERESTS

Historically, Guatemalan business groups have commanded an organized political voice. The most powerful and best-known interest group for the private sector is the Coordinating Committee of Commercial, Industrial, and Financial Associations (Coordinadora de Asociaciones Agrícolas, Comerciales, Industriales, y Financieras; CACIF). CACIF, representing a broad base of private interests, acts as an umbrella organization for mostly small to medium-sized business organizations. Supporting classical liberalism, CACIF contains the following chambers: commerce, industry, sugar, finances, agriculture, construction, and tourism. CACIF was instrumental in initiating an organized response to Serrano's 1993 *autogolpe*, mobilizing civilian society to form the Instancia.

A narrower interest group ideologically, Friends of the Country (Amigos del Pais) was founded in 1974 as an ultraconservative lobbying organization. Despite political differences, both CACIF and Amigos del Pais oppose tax and agrarian reform.

The oligarchy has clearly controlled Guatemala's economy but has also been a powerful political voice even as the members of the armed forces dominated governmental positions throughout the 20th century. The Guatemalan oligarchy became an increasingly visible political force in the 1990s—particularly in the aftermath of Serrano's 1993 coup attempt when control of the government shifted to members of the oligarchy. The continuing influence of business can be seen most clearly in the pro-business legislative activity of the Portillo administration and in the fact that the country signed on to the neoliberal principles of the Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA).

THE MILITARY

The military in Guatemala has retained control of the state administration through much of the 20th century. Although the 1965 constitution established electoral procedures for presidential selection, the military at that time managed to retain control of the government through formally open elections that in actuality reflected narrow political choices, closely controlled candidate selection by the ruling military-oligarchy alliance, and fraudulent electoral outcome in the face of popular opposition. And even as the 1985 constitution seemed to reestablish standard democratic political rights and guarantees, the same constitution legalized other counterinsurgency institutions. Through the civilian self-defense patrols (*patrullas de autodefensa civil*; PACs), army-controlled "model villages," and other administrative structures, the army was able to retain considerable control throughout the country.

A central element of the peace settlement, the Demilitarization Accord of 1996 called for constitutional reforms to limit the army to border and territorial defense. In addition, all paramilitary and counterinsurgency units were eliminated, the size of the army was reduced by a third, a new civilian police force was deployed, and judicial reforms were called for to eliminate impunity of members of the military. Implementation of the accord has been uneven, though, as the constitutional amendment calling for appointment of a civilian minister of defense was defeated in 1999. In addition, the extensive crime wave has justified army support of the civilian police.

EXTERNAL FORCES

As in neighboring Central American countries, external actors have historically played a key role in shaping Guatemala's political events. The U.S. government was influential at decisive moments throughout the 20th century. Cold war ideologies led the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency to stage the 1954 coup against Jacobo Arbenz Guzmán, ushering in the series of military-dominated administrations that characterized Guatemala's government for the latter half of the 20th century. And during the 1980s, which opened with the government's 1981–83 "scorched-earth" campaign against guerrilla supporters in the indigenous highlands, the Reagan administration held steadfast to its pro-government position. The level of violence was consistently underestimated, and responsibility for the atrocities was deflected away from the Guatemalan army. Once negotiations had been initiated in the early

1990s, the UN stepped in and played a central role in mediating the negotiations and in implementing portions of the settlement. The Human Rights Accord of March 1994 created a UN Verification Mission (MINUGUA). With its mandate extended through 2004, MINUGUA continued to play a critical role in protecting outside observers and human rights groups. The U.S. role is still grounded in economic relations. As Guatemala's largest trading partner, the United States has considerable influence over economic policy, including trade policy and Guatemala's official support of CAFTA.

National Prospects

An estimated 150,000 Guatemalan lives were lost over 36 years of civil war, the longest and costliest civil war in modern Central American history. The December 1996 Peace Accords represented a long-awaited end to the violent conflict. In some ways, the transition is still underway and consolidated peace seems out of reach. The Guatemalan Peace Accords were far-reaching in some respects, timid in others. And because the accords found malcontents on both sides of the conflict—in the military as well as in leftist groups—implementation of all terms of agreement proved a slow, conflict-laden process itself.

Prospects are fading for improvements in social conditions, human rights concerns, and reform of the judiciary and military. Socioeconomically, Guatemalans continue to be plagued by poverty and extreme inequality. MINUGUA has been instrumental in maintaining some transparency in politics, but corruption and crime persist. MINUGUA's mandate had to be extended through 2004. Additional volunteers were deployed, and the international community has begun to turn its attention to Guatemala once again. The accords provided Guatemalans the opportunity to move beyond the devastation of civil war; today, the question remains whether that opportunity will eventually translate to stability, the rule of law, and social prosperity in a democratic society.

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REPUBLIC OF GUINEA

(République de Guinée)

By Thomas O'Toole, D.A.
Revised by Abdul Karim Bangwa, Ph.D.



Guinea, a nation in northwestern Africa of 9.4 million people (2005 est.), was a one-party presidential regime until the military coup of April 3, 1984. It is now a unitary state with a democratic republic form of government that combines features of both the presidential and the parliamentary systems.

After gaining independence from France in 1958, the country was led by Sékou Touré. After his death in 1984, a bloodless military coup ousted Touré's Democratic Party of Guinea (PDG) and brought General Lansana Conté to power. Not until the 1990s did Guineans see a constitution that allowed the existence of political parties. On December 19, 1993, the first multiparty presidential elections in more than three decades were held. Conté was elected president, gaining 51.7 percent of the vote in the final official count. In March 1996 an attempted military coup was put down with considerable bloodshed. Conté was reelected on December 14, 1998, with 54.1 percent of the vote. In mid-June of 2001 Conté announced his intention to hold a national referendum on a proposed constitutional amendment that would permit the president of the republic to seek longer and limitless terms of office. Although opposition and human rights groups condemned the proposal, Conté justified it by reference to the ongoing instability in Guinea's border regions. The referendum was held on November 11, 2001. According to official results, 98.4 percent of voters endorsed the constitutional revisions, with a turn-out of 87.2 percent reported. Opposition and media sources, however, reported a lower than 20 percent turnout. The presidential term of office was extended from five to seven years, with effect from the 2003 presidential election, and the constitutional provision restricting the president to two terms of office was rescinded. Moreover, the president was to be granted the right to appoint local government officials, who were hitherto elected.

At the end of December 2002 it was confirmed that Conté was receiving medical treatment in Morocco. Nonetheless, in January 2003, Conté announced that he was standing for reelection later in the year. A series of harassments of opposition party leaders and the detention of some prompted almost all of them to boycott the December 21, 2003, election. Consequently, Conté received 95.3 percent of the votes cast. In February 2004 Conté appointed François Lonseny Fall, previously the representative of Guinea to the United Nations, as prime minister. After sending his family members out of the country and while he himself was on a government trip overseas, Fall shockingly announced his resignation in April, after just two months in the job, protesting that his political and economic reforms were being blocked by Conté.

The System of Government

Guinea is formally a democratic republic that combines features of both the presidential and the parliamentary systems. However, Lansana Conté has held power since 1984, and his Party of Unity and Progress (PUP) dominates the political landscape.

EXECUTIVE

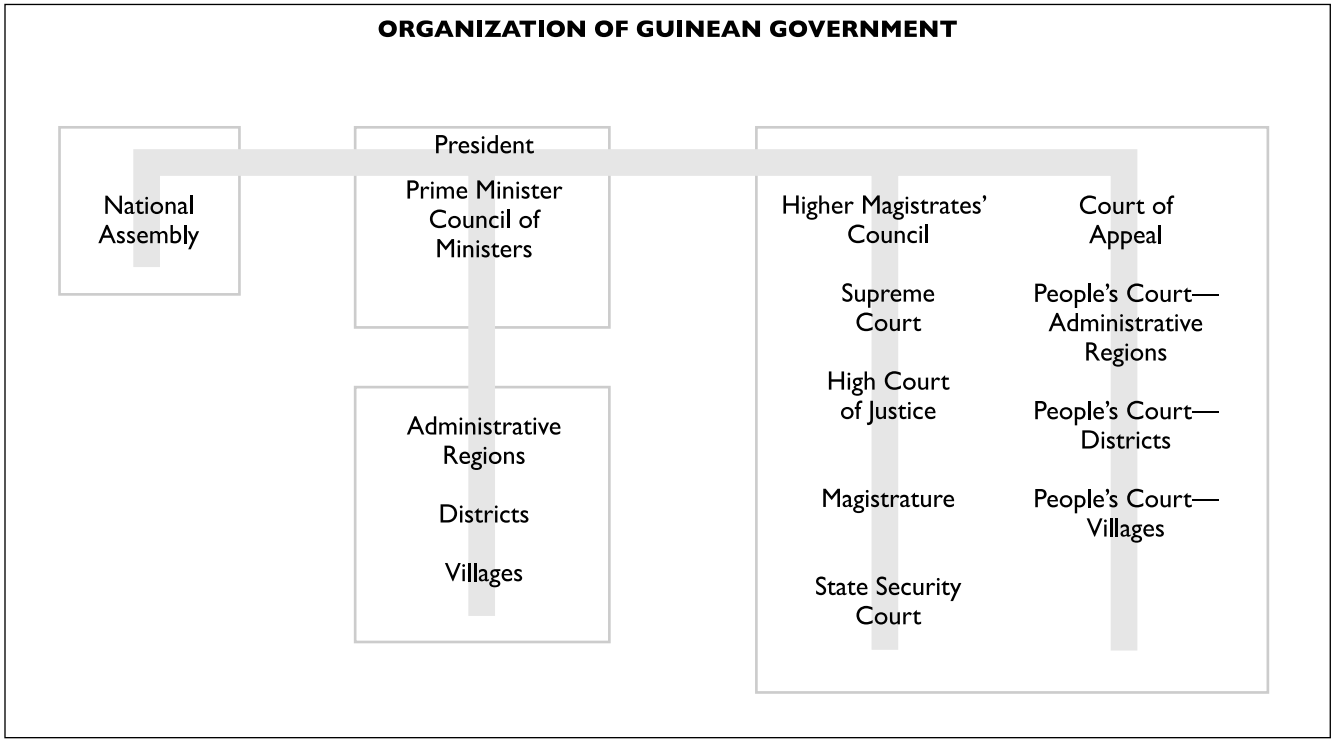
The president of the republic is the chief of state, elected by an absolute majority of the ballots cast by direct universal suffrage for a seven-year term. A second round of voting for the top two candidates is required if a majority is not gained in the first round. The president appoints all ministers and civil servants. Most of the formal business of the executive is transacted in a Council of Ministers chaired by the president. Both the president and the legislature can initiate laws. The president can dissolve the National Assembly once during his term but not before the third year of the legislature.

LEGISLATURE

Deputies to the National Assembly are directly elected from slates presented by legally constituted parties by universal direct suffrage for any number of five-year terms unless the Assembly is dissolved. Two-thirds of the deputies are elected from a national list of candidates with proportional representation, and one-third are directly elected from legally defined electoral districts put forth by legally constituted political parties. The president of the National Assembly is elected for the duration of the legislature. The Assembly ordinarily meets in open session for no more than 30 days beginning April 5 and no more than 60 days beginning October 5. The budget for the following year is passed in the second session. The Assembly can be called into special 15-day sessions by the president or by a majority of the deputies a month after the close of a session.

JUDICIARY

The judiciary includes courts of first instance, two courts of appeals (one in Kankan and one in Conakry), and the Supreme Court, the court of final appeal. After 1988 all judgments regarding violations under the penal code were rendered by civilian courts. The constitution affirms the judiciary's independence. However, magistrates are civil servants appointed by the president with no guarantee of tenure. Guinean judicial authorities have often deferred to central authorities in politically sensitive cases. In addition, the administration of justice is plagued by numerous other problems, including a shortage of magistrates (who generally are poorly trained) and lawyers (there are fewer than 50 in the country) and an outdated and overly restrictive penal code. An ethnically based system of justice functions at the village or urban neighborhood level where litigants present their civil cases before a village leader, neighborhood leader, or council of elders. Cases



that cannot be resolved to the satisfaction of all parties within this system may be referred to the formal system of adjudication.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Far-reaching changes to regional administrations were introduced in 1994. Instead of the previous four-way divisions (Guinée Maritime, Moyenne Guinée, Haute Guinée, and Guinée Forestière), the country was divided into seven administrative regions. The coastal region, formerly Guinée Maritime, was split into Kindia and Boké regions, with that part of the Futa Jalon bordering Guinea-Bissau now in Boké region. The rest of the Futa, which was in Moyenne Guinée, was split between Labé (to the north) and Mamou regions. The new Faranah region straddles the old boundary between Haute Guinée and Guinée Forestière, with the rumps of the two former regions encapsulated in the new administrative zones of Kankan and N'Zérékoré. Conakry retains its special status as the capital.

The Electoral System

Suffrage is universal for all citizens age 18 and older. After the elections of December 1993 were verified in January 1994, no fixed timetable for the legislative elections was immediately established. President Conté suggested that a "cooling-off" period before starting new election campaigns was in order. Having undergone the window-dressing democratization demanded by Western donors, President Conté's grip on the reins of power was enhanced by the electoral process. The legislative elections in 1995 were rather anticlimactic, choosing three deputies from each of the 38 constituencies in the country under a complex voting procedure, one-third of the deputies elected by a majority vote and the remaining two-thirds by proportional means. The presidential election of 2003 saw Conté improve on the share of the vote he won in 1993 and 1998, in part because most opposition candidates boycotted the election.

The Party System

The pro-regime Party of Unity and Progress (Parti de l'Unité et du Progrès; PUP) exercises its influence throughout the country by co-opting most state and local administration officials. It is suggested that officials who fail to join the party are reposted or encouraged to find alternative employment. The PUP has its main strength in the Susu-dominated coastal regions, with some following in most major towns. Many opposition parties boycotted the 2003 elections.

Major Political Parties

PARTY OF UNITY AND PROGRESS

(Parti de l'Unité et du Progrès; PUP)

The presidential party draws most of its support from the Susu ethnic group and holds a dominant position in the electoral process. Its candidate, Lansana Conté, received 51.7 percent of the vote in the 1993 presidential election, 54.1 percent in 1998, and 95.3 percent in 2003. The party won 61.5 percent of the vote in the legislative elections of 2002, which translated into 85 of the 114 seats in the National Assembly.

Minor Political Parties

ASSEMBLY OF THE GUINEAN PEOPLE

(Rassemblement du Peuple de Guinée; RPG)

Drawing most of its support from the Maninka (Malinké) ethnic group and led by the long-term exile and opponent of Sékou Touré, Alpha Condé, this party received 16.9 percent of the vote in the 1998 presidential election. Condé had supported antigovernment demonstrations from 1990 on. He joined with the PRP to contest the legislative elections. The party did not participate in the 2003 presidential election. After spending several years in exile in France, Condé returned to Guinea in July 2005.

UNION FOR PROGRESS AND RENEWAL

(Union pour le progrès et le Renouveau; UPR)

This party is a merger of the Union for the New Republic and the Party of Renovation and Progress. Its presidential candidate in 1998, Mamadou Ba, a former World Bank employee, finished second with 24.6 percent. Its presidential candidate in 2003, Mamadou

Boyebarry, received 4.6 percent of the votes. The party won 21.7 percent of the vote and 20 Assembly seats in the 2002 legislative elections.

UNION FOR THE PROGRESS OF GUINEA

(Union pour le Progrès de la Guinée; UPG)

This party's Conakry-based leader and candidate for the 1993 presidential election, Jean-Marie Doré, received some support in the forest region but gained less than 1 percent of the total vote. In the 2002 legislative elections the party won 4.1 percent of the vote and three Assembly seats. The party boycotted the 2003 presidential election.

GUINEA PROGRESS PARTY

(Parti Guinéen du Progrès; PGP)

Led by a former member of Sékou Touré's government, Alpha Abdoulaye "Portos" Diallo, who had been jailed for 10 years after the Portuguese invasion in 1970, this party has minimal popular support. In exile Diallo wrote a book critical of the Touré regime and returned to oppose the Conté regime. The party decided to boycott the 2003 presidential election.

DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF GUINEA–AFRICAN DEMOCRATIC ASSEMBLY

(Parti Démocratique de Guinée–Rassemblement Démocratique Africain; PDG-RDA)

This party takes it name from the original party of independence founded by Sékou Touré. Its leader, El Hadj Ismaila Ghussein, served in the PDG under Touré and was head of the Guinean petroleum office in 1991. Those who had suffered under Touré resented his resurrection of this party name to run against Conté. The party won one Assembly seat in the 2002 legislative elections and did not participate in the 2003 presidential election.

Other Political Forces

Since the mid-1990s unrest in Liberia and Sierra Leone has spilled over into Guinea on many occasions, undermining stability and creating humanitarian emergencies. Domestic fighting among disparate rebel groups and youth gangs in Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone have created insurgencies, street violence, looting, arms trafficking, ethnic conflicts, skirmishes, deaths, and refugees in border areas. In 2003 Guinea and Sierra Leone established a boundary commission to resolve a dispute over the border town of Yenga. The occupying Guinean troops were pulled out of the area and sovereignty granted to Sierra Leone in October 2004.

National Prospects

Guinea is endowed with major mineral, hydropower, and agricultural resources, yet it remains a developing nation. The country has over 30 percent of the world's bauxite reserves and is the second-largest producer of the mineral. The mining sector accounts for approximately 75 percent of the country's exports. Long-term improvements in the government's fiscal arrangements, literacy, and the legal framework are imperative if Guinea is to overcome poverty. Fighting along the Guinean, Liberian, and Sierra Leonean borders, in addition to refugee movements, has precipitated major economic disruptions, including to investor confidence. Foreign mining companies have reduced their expatriate staff, while panic buying has fueled food shortages and inflation in local markets. Guinea has lost multilateral aid, and the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank cut off most of their assistance in 2003. The absence of an obvious successor to Conté, who is known to be suffering from ill health, continues to cause widespread concern, with fears that a destabilizing power struggle could arise in the event of his death.

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REPUBLIC OF GUINEA-BISSAU

(Republica da Guiné-Bissau)

By Tony Hodges
Revised by Mohamed Mbodj, Ph.D.
Further revision by Leon Newton, Ph.D.



Guinea Bissau, a nation of 36,125 square kilometers, is a multiethnic country of 30 percent Balantas, 20 percent Fulas, 14 percent Manjancos, 13 percent Mandigas, 7 percent Papels, 4 percent Mancanhas, 2 percent Felupes, and 10 percent other. Some type of African religion is practiced by 50 percent of the 1.4 million people, while 45 percent are Muslim and 5 percent are Christian. The official language is Portuguese.

Following its independence from Portugal in 1974 after a long liberation war, Guinea-Bissau was a one-party republic under the rule of the African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde, or PAIGC. During this period the leader of the PAIGC was automatically the president of the republic. However, after a military coup in 1980, the armed forces exercised a dominant political influence in the party and the government. João Bernardo Vieira, a veteran commander of the liberation war, took over from Luiz Cabral as president at that time. During the next decade the Vieira regime survived several coup attempts triggered by infighting between rival clans and a deplorable economic situation.

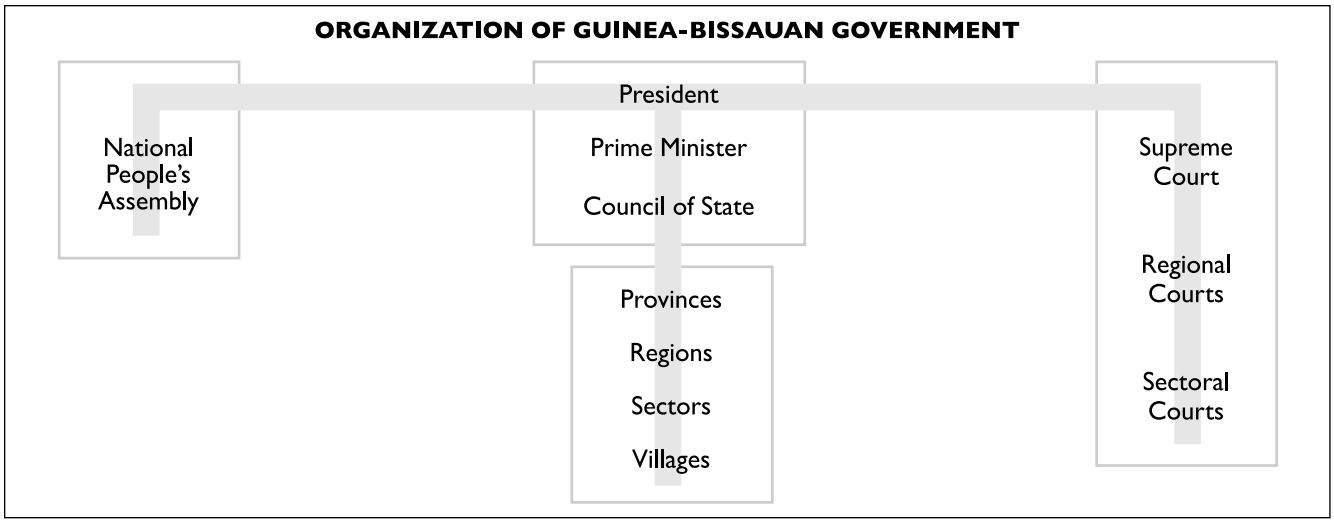
In 1990 the regime decided to allow multiparty politics, which was fully in place by 1994. A new constitution abolished the leading role of the PAIGC as well as that of the militia (groups of veterans and politically involved people who functioned as a sort of police force and national guard), and it allowed independent trade unions, a free press, and freedom of expression. It also stipulated universal suffrage for the office of president. The 1994 presidential elections were deemed fair and free by foreign observers, and Vieira won only after a second round, and with a slim margin. But the opposition, contrary to the observers' views, accused the PAIGC and Vieira of rigging the elections.

Vieira fired his army commander in 1998, triggering a civil war and military mutiny that overthrew Vieira in May 1999. In new presidential elections held in February 2000, Kumba Yala, founder of the Party for Social Renewal (PRS), was elected president. A new constitution was approved by the National Assembly in April 2001. Yala was deposed in 2003 in a military coup led by General Verrísimo Correia Seabra, who placed Yala under house arrest and dissolved the government. Henrique Rosa was sworn in as president. Seabra was killed in another military uprising in 2004.

In 2005 Vieira, who had been in exile in Portugal, returned to Guinea-Bissau in advance of new presidential elections. In the July elections, Vieira won the presidency. In September he dissolved the government of Prime Minister Carlos Gomes Junior.

The System of Government

Guinea-Bissau is a multiparty republic with a strong president and a unicameral legislature.



EXECUTIVE

The president is elected by popular vote for a five-year term. The prime minister and the Council of State are appointed by the president after consultation with party leaders.

LEGISLATURE

The country's legislature, the National People's Assembly (Assembleia Nacional Popular), has 100 members elected by popular vote for four-year terms. The National Assembly's powers are not that significant because of the concentration of powers in the president's hands.

JUDICIARY

The judicial system is not independent and still draws from the liberation war and the one-party system eras. The Supreme Court consists of nine justices who are appointed by the president and who can be removed by him at any time. Below the Supreme Court are regional courts and sectoral courts.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The country is divided into eight regions and one autonomous section (the capital, Bissau), each of which is administered by a state committee and an elected council.

The Electoral System

Suffrage is universal for all citizens age 18 and older. Elections tend to be marked by violence and civil unrest. The 2005 presidential elections included reports of violence, but European observers labeled the voting as "calm and organized."

The Party System

Since 1994 the dominant party has been the PAIGC. Rooted in the rural communities, PAIGC membership is spread throughout the territory. It is the most representative party, garnering more than 30 percent of the popular vote during the 2004 legislative elections. Despite internal dissension, the PAIGC still enjoys a solid lead over its competitors because of its seniority, its superior organization, and its control of the state's resources. The party held 45 seats in the legislature as of 2004.

Major Political Parties

AFRICAN PARTY FOR THE INDEPENDENCE OF GUINEA AND CAPE VERDE

(Partido Africano da Independência da Guiné e Cabo Verde; PAIGC)

The PAIGC was founded in 1956 by Amilcar Cabral to lead the independence struggle in both Guinea-Bissau and the Cape Verde Islands. In 1963 the party began a guerrilla war against Portugal in Guinea-Bissau. By 1973 the PAIGC controlled about three-quarters of the country and Portugal retained control of the country's few cities and the northeastern savanna belt inhab-

ited by the Islamic Fula. That same year, the PAIGC proclaimed the Republic of Guinea-Bissau, and, a year later, in September 1974, Portugal recognized the republic and withdrew its troops.

The PAIGC had unlimited control over the state and its citizens. Luiz Cabral, the party's secretary-general, exercised all power. He succeeded his half brother, Amilcar Cabral, the founder of PAIGC, who was assassinated while in exile. Soon after the PAIGC took power, however, the new state was beset with problems. Agricultural production fell drastically during the war, and there was no mining and almost no manufacturing. The country had to import all its oil and much of its food, including rice, which was its main staple. The only exports, groundnuts, fish, and palm kernels, together paid for less than 30 percent of the imports. The foreign debt had grown dangerously large, and there were prolonged shortages of basic consumer goods, including rice. The shortages did much to undermine popular confidence in Luiz Cabral's regime, as did the widespread corruption, especially in the state-run people's shops. There was resentment at the apparent privileges of the Mesticos and Cape Verdians, who were prominent in the urban petty bourgeoisie and the PAIGC leadership. There also was dismay at Cabral's concentration of power and the repression of dissidents, including numerous executions.

Discontent was particularly strong among the largest ethnic group, the Balantas. They had borne the brunt of the struggle and were predominant in the army and the militia but enjoyed little influence in the upper reaches of the PAIGC. They feared attempts to demobilize parts of the war-bloated army and were disillusioned by the economic decline, shortages, and increased taxes.

The 1980 coup enjoyed strong popular support among Guineans. President Cabral was allowed to go into exile, but the coup was condemned by the Cape Verdian wing of the party, which then changed its name to the African Party for the Independence of Cape Verde (Partido Africano da Independência de Cabo Verde; PAICV) and declared its independence. The coup leaders, mainly army veterans, eventually decided to retain the PAIGC organization (and the reference to Cape Verde in its name) and accused Luiz Cabral of betraying the revolutionary principles of his half brother, Amilcar Cabral.

The party retained its dominance through the next two decades, although it has been controlled by the military for much of that time. In the 2004 legislative elections the party won 45 seats in the National Assembly. But in 2005 its presidential candidate, Malam Bacai Sanhá, lost the election to former president Vieira, garnering 46 percent of the vote to Vieira's 52 percent in the second round of voting.

PARTY FOR SOCIAL RENEWAL

(Partido para a Renovaçao Social; PRS)

The PRS is led by former president Kumba Yala. In the 2004 legislative elections it won nearly 25 percent of the vote and earned 35 seats in the National Assembly, behind only the PAIGC's 45 seats. Yala participated in the 2005 presidential election but was defeated in the first round of voting.

UNITED SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY

(Partido Unido Social Democrático; PUSD)

The PUSD won 16 percent of the vote and 27 seats in the 2004 legislative elections.

Minor Political Parties

Among the minor political parties in Guinea-Bissau are the United Platform coalition (PLATAF), which won 4.5 percent of the vote but no seats in the 2004 legislative elections; the Electoral Union (UE), which won 4 percent and two seats; and the United Popular Alliance (APU), which won 1 percent and one seat. There are numerous other small parties, but none of them hold any seats in the National Assembly.

Other Political Forces

FOREIGN RELATIONS

Guinea-Bissau remains committed to nonalignment, pragmatically seeking aid from as many sources as possible. In practice, most aid, including food aid, has come from Western countries. Most trade is still with the West, especially the European Union. Guinea-Bissau also has established close relations with neighboring Senegal and Guinea-Conakry, despite disputes over maritime borders, which were refereed in the International Court of Justice. Surrounded by French-speaking countries, Guinea-Bissau strongly supports cooperation among the Portuguese-speaking African countries, but without much success. Finally, it joined the African Financial Community (CFA) zone (a monetary zone uniting the former French colonies who

share the same currency pegged to the French franc by a fixed exchange rate) in 1997.

Following the end of the disastrous civil war in 1999, the country received financial guidance and debt relief from the International Monetary Fund. However, that support was suspended following charges that the Yala regime had misappropriated funds. Since that time the country has received debt relief packages from the African Development Bank and the World Bank.

ETHNIC GROUPS

Historically, the mixed blood Euro-Africans, Cape Verdians, and local Mesticos have been influential in Guinea-Bissau. Under the colonial regime they enjoyed the enviable status of being considered *assimilados* (nearly Europeans). At that time, they had access to education and economic opportunities and held the little political power left to Africans. By the 1960s, they constituted the local elite and, under Amilcar Cabral and his PAIGC, led the struggle for independence. Since the 1980 coup, however, they have been excluded from the political forefront, but they remain important as members of the intelligentsia and technocracy. They tend to support Kumba Yala's PRS.

The Balantas, who constitute about 30 percent of the population, grow most of the country's rice and account for a large percentage of the military. They exercise the decisive role in the ruling PAIGC.

National Prospects

The ethnic character of its political parties makes Guinea-Bissau's political scene uncertain and allows the army to play a central role in the country's future. The presence of the army in politics also means that civilians have few prospects for experiencing a genuine, open multiparty system. President Vieira had been nominated by the military and ruled largely on its behalf. The necessity to reassess the army's role, to reduce its size, and to involve a new generation in politics is obvious but has yet to be undertaken. The veterans who stand to lose the most are the most active on the political scene, especially in the PAIGC. The obstacles on the road to a true democratic society remain daunting. Following his win in the 2005 presidential election, Vieira promised to promote national unity and democratic reform.

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COOPERATIVE REPUBLIC OF GUYANA

By Robert H. Manley, Ph.D.
Revised by James Wessman, Ph.D.
Further revision by Edward Dew, Ph.D.



Guyana, a country of 765,000 (2005 est.) on the northeast coast of South America, is a multiparty democracy. The population of Guyana contains several ethnic groups. Currently, East Indians make up 50 percent of the population, Creoles (Blacks) 37 percent, Amerindians 7 percent, and Others (including Mixed Race, Chinese, and Europeans) 7 percent. Guyana is the only English-speaking nation in South America. About half the population is Christian; a third is Hindu, 10 percent is Muslim, and the remainder practices other religions. The population is in a decline of almost 1 percent per year, due to immigration to England, Canada, Suriname, and the United States. Guyana shares borders with Venezuela, Suriname, and Brazil and has border disputes with the first two countries.

The Guyanese government bears the imprint not only of its colonial past but also of neocolonial interference with the project of nation-building. Guyana moved toward independence in the 1950s under the leadership of Cheddi Jagan, an Indo-Guyanese, and Forbes Burnham, an Afro-Guyanese, in the People's Progressive Party (PPP). Great Britain, acting under pressure from the United States, suspended Guyana's constitution and landed troops, ostensibly to prevent Guyana from becoming a communist state. The British invasion occasioned a split within the PPP, a socialist party that previously had maintained an alliance between Afro- and Indo-Guyanese, and led eventually to the two-decade-long dictatorship of Burnham, who became leader of the People's National Congress (PNC).

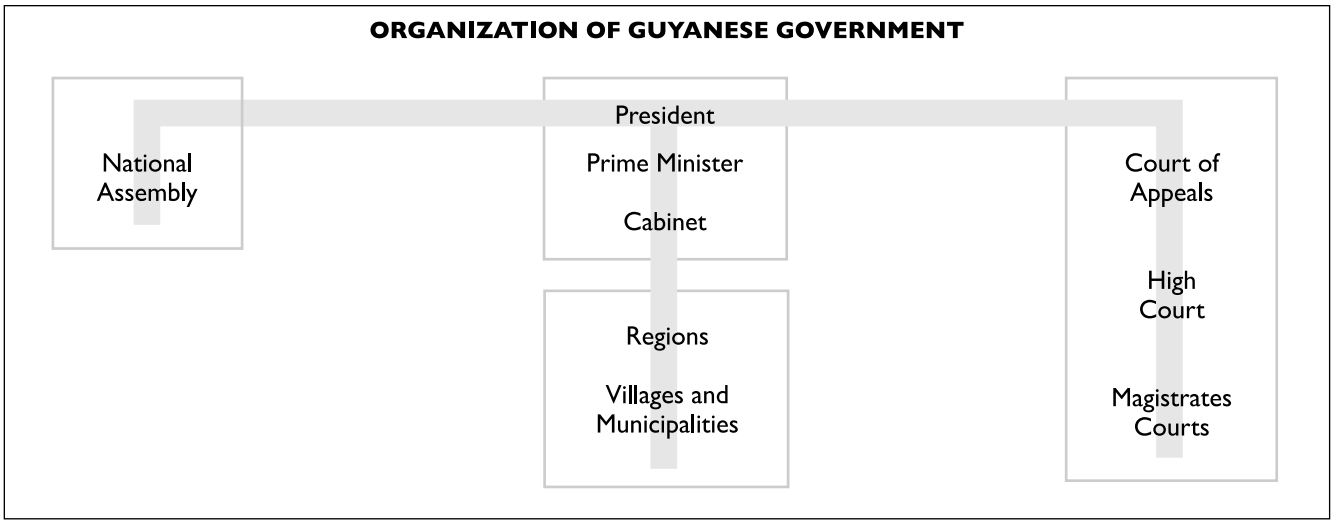
Jagan was imprisoned for a time by the British in 1954, but his party continued to win elections, up to the 1964 elections, when it appeared that Jagan would become prime minister and lead Guyana to independence. That election was marred by race riots that brought on an alliance between the PNC and the United Force, culminating in Burnham's election and independence in 1966. Seven years after Burnham's death in 1985, Jagan became president of Guyana. He died in 1997 and was succeeded by his widow, Janet Jagan, in 1998.

The System of Government

The Cooperative Republic of Guyana is a secular, democratic, and sovereign state within the British Commonwealth. Its constitution is based on the principle of participatory democracy and provides for a division of executive, legislative, and judicial powers.

EXECUTIVE

Under the 1980 constitution, a ceremonial presidency was replaced with a powerful office under the same name that combined responsibilities as head of state, chief executive, and commander in chief of the armed forces. The new post sometimes is referred to as executive president. The position was tailor-made for Forbes Burnham, who ruled from 1964 to the time of his



death in 1985. Burnham had been prime minister, and this position was continued but made subsidiary to the presidency, as were other cabinet positions, including a number of vice presidencies. Appointments to cabinet positions, including prime minister and vice presidents, are made by the president. The presidency is now an elective rather than an appointive office, and the prime ministership is a kind of senior vice presidency. The president is elected to a five-year term based on legislative elections. Bharat Jagdeo took over the presidency in 1999 after Mrs. Jagan resigned for health reasons. The ongoing rivalry of East Indian and Creole (Black) groups has paralyzed government—first in the virtual dictatorship of the Burnham years, then in the more democratic governments of the Jagans and Jagdeo. Jagdeo was reelected in 2001.

LEGISLATURE

The constitution vests legislative power (subject to presidential veto) in a National Assembly of 67 elected members. Although the legal system is based largely on English common law, with some features of Roman-Dutch law, Guyana's government combines features of the Westminster and Philadelphia systems. The president may dissolve the National Assembly at any time and must call for new elections within five years of the previous election. Persons appointed to the cabinet who have not been elected to the Assembly may serve in the Assembly but may not veto.

JUDICIARY

The constitution provides for a Supreme Court of Judicature, consisting of the Court of Appeals and the High Court. Judges of the Court of Appeals are the chief justice and additional lower judges as prescribed by the Assembly. The chancellor, chief justice, and other judges are appointed by the president. Critics from many quarters, both within and outside Guyana, have alleged that the courts have not been free from substantial influence by the dominant party.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The constitution provides that the nation is divided into 10 regions, which are further divided into smaller units. A regional democratic council is elected by each region's residents, as well as local democratic organs. The National Congress of Local Democratic Organs, elected by and from the local bodies, is responsible for representing the interests of local governments.

The Electoral System

Subject to certain minor disqualifications, all persons may vote who are 18 years of age or older and either citizens of Guyana or Commonwealth citizens domiciled or resident in Guyana for one year. Election of members of the National Assembly is by secret ballot, but many observers have criticized the electoral process as largely rigged and fraudulent.

Allegations of electoral irregularities have accompanied nearly every vote in Guyanian history. The WPA refused to participate in the 1980 elections, claiming that the outcome would be manipulated by the ruling PNC. A report by Lord Avebury called the elections

of 1968, 1973, and 1980 fraudulent. The report also questioned the results of the referendum on postponing both new elections and drafting a new constitution. This referendum, initiated by the PNC, was opposed by every other party and all leading civil and religious organizations. Their boycott of the vote rendered the outcome meaningless. By general agreement, the elections of 1992 were the first since 1964 to be free and fair.

In 1992 the People's Progressive Party (PPP) took 36 of the 53 seats allocated in the national vote; the People's National Congress (PNC), 26; the United Force (UF), 1; and the Working People's Alliance (WPA), 2. These proportions were to hold in the subsequent elections. In 2001 the electoral system in Guyana was revised to provide a bloc of seats for regional (district) representation to accompany the national list, for a new total of 67 seats. The result was greater diversification of legislative representation: in 2001 the PPP took 34 seats; the PNC, 27; and four smaller parties gathered in six seats between them. The narrow margin between government and opposition led to a near constitutional crisis, as the PNC demanded to enter a power-sharing coalition with the PPP, backed up by a series of civil disturbances. Negotiations were attempted without result.

The Party System

ORIGINS OF THE PARTIES

The first major political party of modern times was the People's Progressive Party, founded in 1950. With broad popular support, it pushed for Guyanese independence from Great Britain under the combined leadership of Forbes Burnham and Cheddi Jagan. In the mid-1950s the party split along ethnic and ideological lines. Burnham formed the PNC with substantial support from African voters in 1957. Shortly thereafter, in 1960, the UF was formed with support from Guyanese of Portuguese and mixed descent. A minority party, the UF threw its support behind Forbes Burnham in 1964, which enabled him to become prime minister and the PNC to control the National Assembly. A multiethnic movement of protest against corruption and electoral fraud and for a more effective social democratic system developed through the 1970s and became the formal WPA party in 1979. The WPA, however, suffered extreme harassment at the hands of the Burnham government (including the assassination of its leader, Walter Rodney). Still it has survived to the present. Other parties have emerged since 1992.

THE PARTIES IN LAW

The right to form political parties and their freedom of action are guaranteed by the constitution. The only stated limitation is that parties "must respect the principles of national sovereignty and democracy." Nevertheless, during the Burnham years, a variety of restraints were placed on party activity, including government control of newsprint, which limited publication of opposition newspapers. The opposition parties and their leaders were also subjected to various forms of harassment.

PARTY ORGANIZATION

The PPP and PNC aim at being formal membership parties with institutionalized party structures. The PNC under Desmond Hoyte was still apparently tightly controlled from the top, and its continued domination of the civil service administration provides the party with an organizational scaffolding. The PPP under Cheddi Jagan declared itself to be a Marxist-Leninist party, but it was unlikely that its own structure was as tightly centralized as the PNC. In any case, both parties continue to be dominated by their respective leaders. There is no reliable information on the size of party memberships or on their finances.

Major Political Parties

PEOPLE'S PROGRESSIVE PARTY (PPP)

At the time of its founding in 1950, the PPP had a broad base of support among both the East Indian and the African populations, the two dominant ethnic groups, in its struggle against British rule in particular and imperialism in general. However, as Guyanese politics polarized ideologically and ethnically from the mid-1950s onward, the PPP became more and more dependent upon East Indian support and, through the years, more and more closely committed to a Marxist-Leninist approach, until in 1969 it made this its official position.

Both Cheddi Jagan, the PPP leader, and his U.S.-born wife, Janet, were party members at its founding. Mrs. Jagan edited its daily newspaper, the *Mirror*, and undertook key organizational tasks during its history. Internationally, the party has maintained warm relations with Cuba and the states of the former Soviet

Union. In mid-1975 the PPP undertook a position of "critical support" for the PNC-led government in its asserted goal of achieving socialism and undercutting imperialism. However, it continued its outspoken criticism of many aspects of governmental policy and implementation.

The PPP's return to power in 1992 was constructed around an alliance with business and other leaders in Guyana who had opposed the PNC administration of Forbes Burnham but had not embraced the PPP's ideology. This group of leaders, known as "the Civic," was not the result of local initiative but created by the PPP in recognition that it could not by itself win the election. Jagan chose Samuel Hinds, a member of the Civic and a political unknown, as his candidate for prime minister. These leaders did not bring in blocks of voters to the PPP but served as examples of the economic and political policies the new PPP stood for. Consequently, the alliance appealed to independent or uncommitted voters.

In office, President Jagan remained committed to the Marxist principles of his youth but implemented social democratic reforms that had an impact on health and education as well as economic infrastructure. His relations with the business community remained contentious, in part due to Jagan's reputation. He took steps to involve Guyanese of all backgrounds in his government. The Civic is represented by ministers of education, labor, public works, and legal affairs.

Jagan's administration was more pragmatic and developed a climate in which private enterprise expanded greatly. Strained relations with the business community continued, but the United States evidently was satisfied that Guyana's charismatic leader, whose dealings with Cuba early in the 1960s elicited covert operations against him, no longer posed a threat after the fall of the Soviet Union.

In the reorganization that followed Jagan's death in 1997, his wife Janet assumed the position of president, with Hinds as prime minister. Her deteriorating health led to her resignation from office in 1999, and Bharat Jagdeo was selected to take her place. With the PPP's election victory in 2001, Jagdeo consolidated his position as the country's leader.

The PPP's main decision-making body is its congress, which meets every three years. These delegates determine policy and elect the 35-member central committee. The general secretary of the party is then selected by the central committee. The Progressive Youth Organization (PYO) is the PPP's youth arm, and the Women's Progressive Organization (WPO) is the women's arm. In addition to the *Mirror*, the PPP publishes *Thunder*, a quarterly journal.

PEOPLE'S NATIONAL CONGRESS (PNC)

The PNC was unable to best the PPP in the first two elections in which the two groups were pitted against each other, in 1957 and 1961. However, in 1964, the first race under a proportional representation system, its vote, when coupled with that of the United Force, surpassed that of the PPP. Accordingly, a PNC-UF coalition government was created, with Forbes Burnham as prime minister and the then UF leader, Peter d'Aguiar, as finance minister. The coalition ended in 1968 when the reported count in the first postindependence elections gave the PNC a majority of National Assembly seats.

Following the end of the coalition with the more conservative United Force, the PNC pushed for measures to bring about a transition to socialism, beginning with the change to cooperative republic status in 1970 and followed in succeeding years by nationalization of all bauxite and of major sugar-producing operations. At the same time, the PNC increasingly attempted to present itself and the government as synonymous, raising speculation that a one-party system was its eventual goal.

Linden Forbes Burnham was the undisputed leader of the party from 1957 until his death in 1985. He was of African descent, as are most other major party figures. Hugh Desmond Hoyte, a barrister closely associated with Burnham for two decades, who had served as vice president and as prime minister, became president in August 1985 and won a five-year term in December of that year. Hoyte promptly reversed many of the policies of the Burnham years, defusing a difficult situation and opening the way for a return to democracy. Hoyte remained the leader of the PNC until his death in 2002. In 2005 the leader was Robert H. O. Corbin.

UNITED FORCE (UF)

The UF was initially dependent to a considerable degree on support from Portuguese and ethnically mixed Guyanese and has been notably more conservative ideologically than either the PPP or PNC. After Peter d'Aguiar's retirement from active politics in 1969, the United Force leadership fell to Fielden Singh, a barrister. Manzoor Nadir currently leads the UF. The party's prospects seem limited to maintaining its very modest minority position. It won one seat in the legislative elections of 2001.

WORKING PEOPLE'S ALLIANCE (WPA)

The WPA is an ethnically diverse party. Its position is one of eclectic but dedicated socialism. The WPA is widely respected and was increasingly viewed as the force that might end the PNC's dominance. However, in June 1980 its most prominent leader, Walter Rodney, was killed by an explosive device, a death thought by many to have been instigated by the PNC. (The purported assassin was not formally accused until 1996.) The party forged an alliance with the Guyana Action Party for the 2001 elections; the alliance won two seats in the National Assembly.

Minor Political Parties

Other parties active in Guyana include the Guyana Action Party (GAP) and Rise, Organize, and Rebuild (ROAR). ROAR won one seat in the 2001 elections, while GAP formed an alliance with the WPA and captured two seats.

Other Political Forces

ORGANIZED LABOR

The Guyana Agricultural Workers Union (GAWU) arose in the post–World War II period as a bulwark of support for the Jagan-led PPP. During Burnham's regime, the GAWU joined the Trade Unions Congress (TUC), which included workers from a number of other fields, including bauxite mining and government service. As a multiethnic umbrella organization, the TUC has been the site for a smaller version of a PPP-PNC power struggle. In 1984 an independent group of union leaders took control of the TUC from the Burnham supporters, producing a livelier, less inhibited labor activity in Guyana.

GUYANESE DEFENCE FORCE (GDF)

Strengthened through the years, partly on the basis of threats posed by Venezuelan and Surinamese claims to Guyanese territory, the GDF was, along with the Guyana police forces, a key element of PNC internal control. Financing of its operations, along with those of the police, has been a major drain on the nation's resources. The GDF has about 7,000 members in 20 corps, which are involved in development projects. In 2000 Surinamese gunboats prevented Guyanese oil exploration in an oil-rich zone in a disputed offshore area.

National Prospects

With the death of Cheddi Jagan at age 78 in 1997, Guyana's political scene changed dramatically. Gone are the two "warriors" who dominated Guyanese political life over four decades, first Jagan in the 1950s and early 1960s, then Burnham until his death in 1985. Jagan's return to power in 1992 lasted to his own death in 1997. Not many of their generation are still active in national politics. The PPP selected Jagan's widow, Janet Jagan, a Jewish-American nurse from Chicago, as its presidential candidate for the 1998 election, but, after winning, she resigned for health reasons in 1999. Observers consider the elections of the 1990s and of 2001 to have been fairly conducted, and a degree of transparency has been restored to the political system. But there is still a serious ethnic rivalry between the more urbanized Creoles and the more numerous East Indians, who are largely rural-based. The current president, Bharat Jagdeo, has been confronted with stubborn, and threatening, demands by the PNC for power-sharing. Negotiations have been attempted for a coalition government but without result. Economic development has led to little recovery, despite the higher prices for bauxite and ongoing gold mining operations. Out-migration continues, as political and economic conditions "push" Guyanese toward the "pull" of their family members overseas.

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REPUBLIC OF HAITI

(République d'Haïti)

By Michel S. Laguerre, Ph.D.
Revised by Soeren Kern



Haiti, with a population of approximately 8.1 million in 2005, occupies one-third (27,750 square kilometers) of the island of Hispaniola. It shares the island with the Dominican Republic. Haiti's capital city is Port-au-Prince.

MODERN HISTORY

In 1986 the three-decade-old dictatorial regime headed first by François "Papa Doc" Duvalier and then by Jean Claude "Baby Doc" Duvalier collapsed under its own weight as a result of street unrest and the unwillingness of the U.S. administration to support the corrupt government. To manage the crisis, the Haitian military stepped in and established a National Council of Government headed by General Henri Namphy. This was the beginning of a turbulent period of political instability, with a succession of nine presidents and eight prime ministers between 1986 and 1996, each spending on average less than a year and half in office.

Following the proclamation of the new constitution of 1987, legislative elections were held to select the senators (Sénat) and representatives of the people (Chambre des Députés) in preparation for the 1990 presidential elections. The new president, Jean Bertrand Aristide, a Catholic priest, took the oath of office in February 1991. He was toppled in a military coup the following September. This coup, by unseating a popular president with a national mandate, was seen by the Haitian electorate and the Organization of American States (OAS) as a setback for the installation of democracy in Haiti. It brought about a major constitutional crisis for the nation and much human suffering among the pro-democratic forces and supporters of the fallen regime. From Venezuela, where he was given political asylum, the deposed president Aristide brought the seat of the exiled government to Washington, D.C., to be closer to the mainstream American political scene, the Haitian diaspora in America, and human rights activists and grassroots organizations that supported his administration.

In order to return Aristide to Haiti, much negotiation took place among his administration, the General Assembly of the United Nations, the general secretary of the OAS, the administrations of George H. W. Bush and Bill Clinton, and the powerbrokers of the Haitian armed forces. On July 3, 1993, President Aristide and General Raoul Cédras signed the Governors Island Accord that set in motion President Aristide's return to Haiti. Still unwilling to let Aristide in, the general staff of the Haitian armed forces changed their minds only after it became obvious that they were going to be willingly or unwillingly removed by U.S. marines. The U.S.-UN Occupation Forces landed in Port-au-Prince in September 1994, and, a month later, President Aristide ended his exile and was able to return to complete his mandate. Humiliated by the presence of foreign military forces in Haiti and demoralized by the exile of key players among the general staff of the army, many soldiers deserted their barracks, and some went into hiding. In 1995, preoccupied with the creation

and training of the new civilian police force and under pressure from the populace to do away with the army, President Aristide disbanded the Haitian armed forces.

On December 17, 1995, René Garcia Préval was elected president with 88 percent of the vote. Préval appointed Rosny Smarth prime minister in March 1996. However, in June 1997 Smarth resigned his post, largely over the government's complicity in the electoral fraud committed during and after the April 6, 1997, partial Senate and local government elections. Eventually, in December 1998 Jacques Edouard Alexis was confirmed as prime minister.

This period was one of political gridlock, and the government was unable to organize the local and parliamentary elections due in late 1998. In early January 1999 Préval dismissed legislators whose terms had expired—the entire Chamber of Deputies and all but nine members of the Senate—and converted local elected officials into state employees. The president and prime minister then ruled by decree, establishing a cabinet composed almost entirely of partisans of the Lavalas Family (FL), a new political party created by former president Aristide in late 1996. Under pressure from a new political coalition called the Democratic Consultation Group (ESPACE), the government mandated the nine-member Provisional Electoral Council (CEP) to organize the overdue elections for the end of 1999. Following several delays, the first round of elections for local councils, municipal governments, town delegates, the Chamber of Deputies, and two-thirds of the Senate took place on May 21, 2000. The election drew the participation of a multitude of candidates from a wide array of political parties and a voter turnout of more than 60 percent.

Controversy ensued, however, when the CEP used a flawed methodology to determine the winners of the Senate races, thus avoiding runoff elections for eight seats and giving the FL a virtual sweep in the first round. The flawed vote count, combined with the CEP's failure to investigate alleged irregularities and fraud, undercut the credibility of that body. The CEP president fled Haiti, and two members eventually resigned rather than bow to government pressure to release the erroneous results. Nevertheless, on August 28, 2000 Haiti's new parliament, including the contested senators accorded victory under the flawed vote count, was convened.

The international community had sought to delay parliament's seating until the electoral problems could be rectified. When these efforts were rebuffed, Haiti's main bilateral donors moved to re-channel their assistance away from the government and announced they would not support or send observers to the November elections. Concurrently, most opposition parties regrouped in an alliance that became the Democratic Convergence. The Democratic Convergence asserted that the May elections were so fraudulent that they should be annulled and held again under a new CEP. Elections for president and nine senators took place on November 26, 2000. All major opposition parties boycotted these elections, in which voter participation was estimated at 5 percent. Jean-Bertrand Aristide emerged as the easy victor of these controversial elections, and the candidates of his FL party swept all contested Senate seats. On February 6, 2001, the Democratic Convergence named respected lawyer and human rights activist Gerard Gourgue as provisional president of their "alternative government." On February 7, 2001, Jean-Bertrand Aristide was inaugurated as president.

The political stalemate, however, continued, and OAS-mediated negotiations began in April 2001 to find a resolution, focusing on the possible makeup of a new electoral council, a timetable for new elections, and security for political parties. These negotiations were suspended in mid-July without a final agreement.

In January 2002 the OAS adopted Resolution 806 on Haiti that called for government action to address the political stalemate and growing political violence. It also authorized OAS establishment of a special mission in Haiti to support implementation of the steps called for in Resolution 806. The OAS special mission began operations in March 2002, working with the government on plans to strengthen Haiti's democratic institutions. Nevertheless, the climate of security deteriorated, and a rapidly weakening economy created risks of a humanitarian disaster. On September 4, 2002, the OAS adopted Resolution 822, which set a new course for resolving the crisis by committing the Haitian government to a series of steps leading to an improved climate of security for free and fair elections in 2003.

Protests and attacks on opposition demonstrations by government-supported gangs between November 2002 and February 2003 hardened attitudes on both sides. The opposition issued a public call for Aristide's removal and announced plans for a transitional government. In March 2003 a high-level joint delegation of the OAS and the Caribbean Community presented specific demands to President Aristide to restore public security and create confidence necessary to move toward elections.

Political instability grew throughout the fall of 2003, and government-sponsored repression of opposition protests reached a nadir when, on December 5,

pro-government gangs entered Haiti's state university campus and broke the legs of the rector.

Following a meeting with Aristide at the Summit of the Americas in January 2004, Caribbean Community leaders proposed a plan to resolve the political crisis. Aristide stated that he accepted the plan at a meeting on January 31. However, when the plan remained unimplemented, a high-level international delegation came to Haiti on February 21 to obtain an agreement on a specific implementation timetable. Aristide agreed, but the opposition Democratic Platform group of political parties and the overall civil society sector expressed reservations.

Meanwhile, violence spread across the country, culminating on February 28, 2004, when a rebel group led by a former police chief, Guy Philippe, advanced to within 40 kilometers of the capital. As a result of the popular revolt, Aristide, on February 29, 2004, submitted his resignation as president of Haiti and flew on a chartered plane to the Central African Republic. Aristide and his supporters claimed that the action was essentially a coup d'etat organized by the U.S. and French governments.

Boniface Alexandre, president (chief justice) of Haiti's Supreme Court, assumed office as interim president in accordance with Haiti's constitution. On the recommendation from the Council of Elders, the president chose Gérard Latortue as interim prime minister.

The System of Government

Haiti in theory is a parliamentary republic. It has a bicameral legislature, and the prime minister is the most powerful member of the executive branch. In practice, these institutions remain extremely weak and in some cases do not function at all.

EXECUTIVE

The president of the republic is the head of state, while the government is headed by the prime minister. To be elected as president of Haiti, a person must be born in Haiti, must never have renounced his or her Haitian nationality, must own real estate or practice a profession, must have resided in Haiti for five consecutive years, and must have no criminal background. To become president a person must be 35 years old, and to become prime minister, 30 years old.

The functions of the president and the prime minister are spelled out in the following manner by the constitution: The president is elected for a five-year mandate beginning on the February 7th following the general elections and cannot be reelected at the end of his term in office. However, after an interim period of five years, the individual may serve an additional term. Under no circumstances can he or she be elected to a third term.

The powers of the president are multiple. The president is responsible for the implementation of constitutional norms, the maintenance of political stability, the functioning of state institutions, and the preservation of the internal and external security of the state. The individual must select a prime minister from among the majority party in parliament. If no party holds a majority of seats in parliament, the president has to confer with the president of the Senate and the speaker of the house in selecting a prime minister. The president has the right to dismiss the government after receiving a letter of resignation from the prime minister, promulgates laws voted by the two houses, and enforces judicial decisions. The president may pardon or commute sentences if he or she deems such a practice appropriate, appoints ambassadors, consuls, and special envoys to foreign countries, and receives letters of accreditation of ambassadors from foreign powers. The president also presides over the Council of Ministers.

There are also limitations to the powers of the president as set forth by the constitution. He or she must submit to the Senate its nominees for ambassadorial posts and to the National Assembly (Assemblée Nationale) its choice for prime minister and all international treaties, conventions, agreements, and peace treaties. Furthermore, the president must deliver the state of the nation address before parliament at the first annual meeting of that body.

The government is made up of the prime minister, ministers, and secretaries of state. The prime minister has the right to select the members the Council of Ministers and to appoint or dismiss government officials. The prime minister's primary role, however, is to run the government smoothly and enforce the laws. He may appear before the upper or lower house to defend the policies of the government. Also, the individual may serve both as prime minister and as minister in charge of a specific ministry; however, the prime minister cannot serve as a member of parliament. In the absence of the president, he or she may preside over the Council of Ministers. In addition to the ministers the prime minister is entitled to select, he or she may

appoint secretaries of state to make the work of the government more efficient.

The primary role of a cabinet minister is to run his or her ministry efficiently, enforce laws, implement government policies, and cooperate with the prime minister. He or she may appoint government employees in his or her ministry. However, a minister cannot hold another job in the public sector. (An exception is made for those who teach in the public school system or at the university level.) Furthermore, a minister can be dismissed by the executive branch if he or she is censured by the Senate or the Chamber of Deputies.

LEGISLATURE

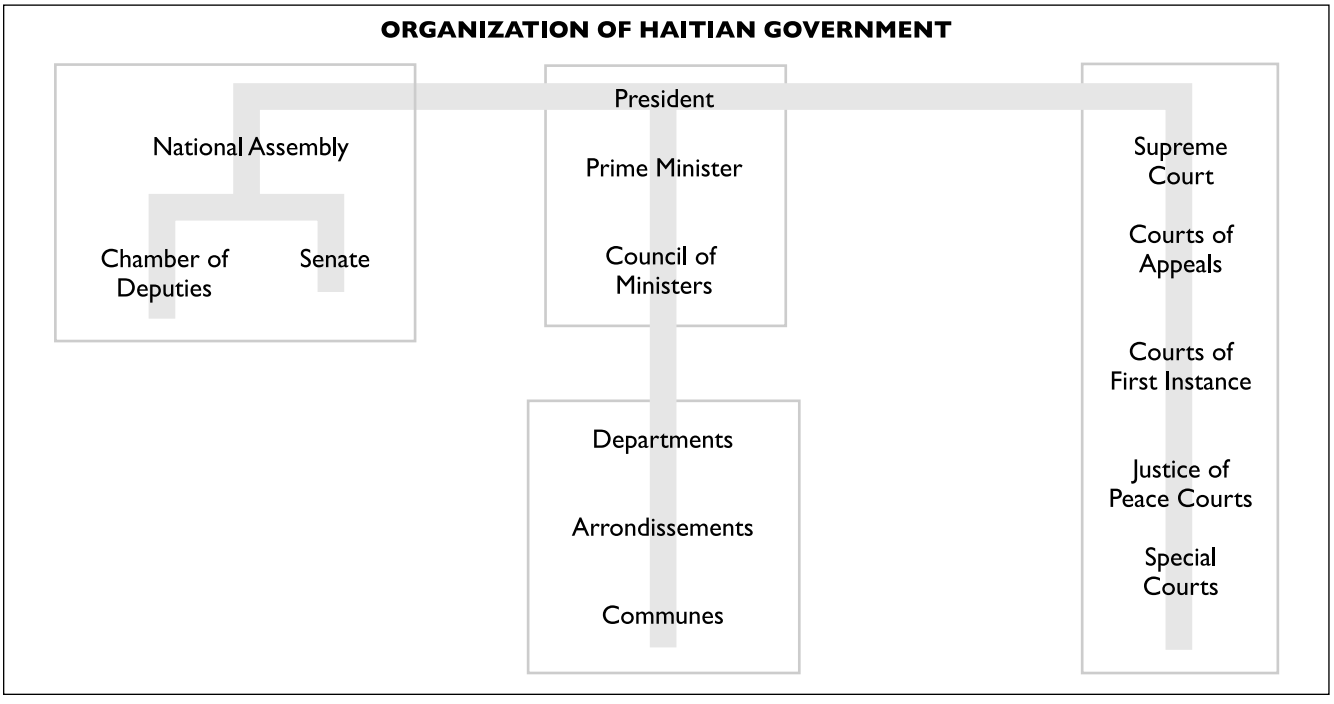
The legislature, which is formally known as the National Assembly (Assemblée Nationale) consists of two bodies: the Senate (Sénat) and the Chamber of Deputies (Chambre des Députés). The Senate, the upper house, is a 27-member body, with three senators for each of nine departments. The senators are elected for six-year terms, with one-third up for election every two years. The senators are elected by direct suffrage.

The Chamber of Deputies, or the lower house, has 83 members who are elected for four-year terms. The representatives begin their terms on the second Monday of January, which coincides with the beginning of the first session of parliament. The parliament holds two sessions, the first from the second Monday in January to the second Monday in May and the second from the second Monday in June to the second Monday in September.

The lower house may, with a two-thirds majority, initiate the process of impeachment of the president, the prime minister, or any of the ministers or secretaries of state. It can do so by simply convoking the accused before the Haute Cour de Justice (High Court of Justice, which is not to be confused with the Supreme Court) made up of the president of the Senate and the president and the vice president of the Supreme Court.

Unlike the Chamber of Deputies, which holds two annual sessions, the Senate is permanently in session. In the interim of the legislative sessions, it may adjourn, but it must put in place a permanent committee to handle current business. One-third of the Senate is replaced every two years. In addition to its legislative mission, the Senate has the duty to propose to the executive branch of government a list of potential Supreme Court justices and has the right to transform itself into a High Court of Justice to deal with specific legal problems under its jurisdiction.

The National Assembly is made up of the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies when they meet in a joint legislative session. These two bodies hold joint meetings to open and close each legislative session. The National Assembly administers the oath to the president of the republic, ratifies any decision to declare war



before it can take effect, approves or rejects all international treaties and conventions, is an active player in the selection of the Permanent Electoral Council, and is provided at the opening of each session with a report on the government's activities. The National Assembly is headed by the president of the Senate, who serves as its president, and the president of the Chamber of Deputies, who serves as its vice president.

The main role of the legislature is to enact laws for the common good and the welfare of the state. Either house or the executive branch can introduce legislation. Each law or bill must be voted upon and adopted by a majority of legislators present before it can be sent to the executive branch for promulgation. The president reserves the right to veto any laws submitted to his office. The legislature has the legal right to impose disciplinary penalties or even expel members who have not lived up to their constitutional duties.

The number of districts is selected according to the electoral law developed by the Provisional Electoral Council (PEC). However, an electoral district is defined by the constitution as "a collective municipality" whose boundaries are set by the PEC. The last electoral law, issued in 1995, does not spell out how the number of districts is determined.

According to the constitution, any Haitian man or woman who has never renounced his or her Haitian nationality, owns real estate or practices a profession or a trade, and enjoys civil and political rights can be elected to serve in the Chamber of Deputies. He or she must be at least 25 years old and have resided for two consecutive years in the district he or she is to represent. The same requirements hold true for a person to be elected to the Senate; however, he or she must be at least 30 years old and have lived in the department he or she is to represent for at least four consecutive years. Contractors, concessionaires of the state in the operation of public services, and their representatives and agents are not eligible for membership in the legislature.

JUDICIARY

The mechanisms by which the judiciary functions in Haitian society are set up by the constitution. The judicial branch of government is composed of the following courts: Supreme Court (Cour de Cassation), courts of appeals, lower courts or courts of first instance (Tribunaux de Première Instance), peace courts, and special courts. The judges of the Supreme Court are appointed by the president of the republic from a list of candidates submitted by the Senate. Judges of the courts of appeals and lower courts are appointed by the president from a list submitted by the departmental assembly concerned, and judges of the peace courts are selected by the president from a list submitted by the communal assemblies. While the judges of the Supreme Court and the courts of appeals are appointed for 10-year terms, those of the lower courts are appointed for seven-year terms. Jurisdictions over civil, political, and commercial rights are usually handled by the lower courts and the courts of appeals, while the Supreme Court concentrates its attention on jurisdictional conflicts and the constitutionality of laws.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The department (*département*), the largest territorial division of the republic, is administered by a council of three members elected for four years. Haiti is divided into 10 such departments. The executive branch is represented in each department by a delegate and in each *arrondissement* by a vice delegate. The liaison between the executive branch and the department is made possible by the existence of the interdepartmental council that is made up of representatives designated by departmental assemblies.

Each department is further subdivided into *arrondissements,* and each *arrondissement* has one or more communes and communal sections under its jurisdiction. Any Haitian man or woman who enjoys civil and political rights, has no criminal background, and is at least 25 years old can be elected to serve on the communal section council if he or she has been living in the area for two consecutive years.

The communal section is the smallest administrative territorial entity. A council of three members, who are elected for four-year terms, administers it. These individuals can be reelected. The commune is administered by a municipal council headed by a president who functions as mayor, aided by a municipal assembly made up of representatives of the commune. These officers are elected for four-year terms and can be reelected thereafter.

The Electoral System

Suffrage is universal for all citizens over 18 years of age. Both houses of parliament are directly elected, with the members of the Senate serving six-year terms and the members of the Chamber of Deputies serving four-year terms. The president is also elected by popular vote; the term of office is five years. The prime minister is

appointed by the president and approved by the Chamber of Deputies.

A former foreign minister and UN official, Prime Minister Gérard Latortue was appointed to the post in March 2004, and he proceeded to form a cabinet whose members had no political affiliations. Latortue and his caretaker government, backed by more than 6,700 United Nations peacekeepers, focused on setting conditions for elections in November 2005. However, with preparations for the elections in disarray, officials were likely to postpone the elections until 2006. Members of the interim government will not run in these elections.

The Party System

During the first six years of the Duvalier dictatorship, all political parties were banned. Not until the 1987 constitution were political parties officially sanctioned in Haiti. There are now many parties and coalitions in existence, with the primary one being the Lavalas Family, the party of former president Aristide. The next most influential party in terms of popularity with the electorate is the Democratic Convergence (Convergence Démocratique), a coalition of most leading opposition parties formed to protest the results of May 2000 legislative and local elections.

Major Political Parties

LAVALAS FAMILY

(Fanmi Lavalas; FL)

This is the party of former president Aristide. It was formed in 1996 after Aristide broke away from the Lavalas Political Organization to form his own grassroots party. The party dominated the elections in 2000, winning 73 of 83 seats in the Chamber of Deputies and 26 of 27 seats in the Senate. In advance of the next scheduled elections in late 2005 or 2006, a split appeared in the party, with one camp determined to boycott the elections and another in favor of participating. One of the party's most prominent members, Rene Preval, announced that he would run for president as an independent.

DEMOCRATIC CONVERGENCE

(Convergence Démocratique)

Democratic Convergence is a coalition of some 200 small political parties and groups, all opposed to the Lavalas Family party of Aristide. Democratic Convergence was formed in the aftermath of the May 2000 legislative and local elections; it received funding and organization assistance from the U.S. government. It is led by former Port-au-Prince mayor Evans Paul, a previous Aristide supporter. Paul announced his candidacy for the next presidential election, scheduled in either late 2005 or 2006.

Minor Political Parties

FRONT FOR NATIONAL RECONSTRUCTION

(Front de Reconstruction Nationale; FRN)

The FRN was founded in May 2004. It is run by former rebel leader Guy Phillipe, who played a major role in ousting Aristide. The FRN was previously called the Front de Résistance de l'Artibonite (Artibonite Resistance Front), which itself was once a street gang known as the Cannibal Army. The Cannibal Army helped lead the antigovernment rebellion in early 2004 by attacking the Gonaïves police station in January and killing police officers. Then in February, using the Dominican Republic as a staging ground, Phillipe and a larger force associated with the Cannibal Army launched a bloody incursion into Haiti aimed at toppling the government of Aristide. Phillipe was among the candidates determined to run in the next presidential elections.

ORGANIZATION OF THE STRUGGLING PEOPLE

(Organisation du Peuple en Lutte; OPL)

The OPL is the other party that emerged from the split in the Lavalas Political Organization in 1996; Aristide and his followers formed the FL, and those that remained formed the OPL. It was headed by Gérard Pierre-Charles until his death in 2004.

Other Political Forces

Following the ouster of Aristide in 2004, the security situation in the already dangerous country degenerated even further, with armed gangs in charge of much of the country. The international community provided some level of stability with the presence of nearly 7,000 UN troops stationed in the country. Another

important political force is the large number of Haitian immigrants living outside the country; approximately 15 percent of all Haitians live abroad.

National Prospects

Haiti remains the least-developed country in the Western Hemisphere and one of the poorest in the world. Comparative social and economic indicators show Haiti falling behind other low-income developing countries (particularly in the hemisphere) since the 1980s. Haiti now ranks 150th of 175 countries in the UN's Human Development Index.

Although the July 2004 World Bank Donor's Conference pledged $1.085 billion through 2006, Haiti's most serious social problem, the huge wealth gap between the impoverished Creole-speaking black majority and the French-speaking mulattos, 1 percent of whom own nearly half the country's wealth, remains unaddressed. Furthermore, the country's infrastructure has almost completely collapsed, and drug-trafficking has corrupted both the judicial system and the police force.

In April 2004 the United Nations Security Council adopted Resolution 1542, which created the UN Stability Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH). The mission numbers 6,700 troops and 1,622 civilian police. In October 2004 the UN mission, which is being led by Brazil, faced renewed political violence, this time guerrilla-style urban warfare operations by small groups of "Chimères"—violent gangs calling for Aristide's return to Haiti. Aristide's Lavalas Family party has refused to participate in the electoral council organizing the 2005 elections (likely to be postponed to 2006), although some members of the party broke from this position and vowed to participate in the elections. The political violence that has buffeted the country is likely to continue for the foreseeable future.

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REPUBLIC OF HONDURAS

(República de Honduras)

By Kirk Bowman, Ph.D.



Honduras is a constitutional republic in Central America still attempting to consolidate a democratic government and a political culture. The country has been nominally democratic since 1982, but civilian control of the powerful armed forces is a recent success, and a consolidated full-fledged democracy is still an uncertain goal. While the country has a long history of instability with 14 written constitutions and limited experience with democratic rule, it did not experience the large-scale social upheaval and violence in the 1980s that occurred in neighboring El Salvador, Guatemala, and Nicaragua. Honduras is an extremely poor country, which, coupled with a highly unequal distribution of resources, leaves the vast majority of the citizenry struggling and many not meeting minimal nutrition and health requirements.

The country of nearly 7 million people has a land mass of 43,277 square miles, roughly the size of Tennessee. The vast majority of Hondurans live in the western half of the country, while the eastern Caribbean or Mosquito Coast region is sparsely populated. The country has a long northern coastline on the Caribbean and a small opening to the Pacific. Honduras shares a long border with Nicaragua to the south, the site of the U.S.-sponsored contra rebels who fought the Sandinista government in the 1980s. Guatemala is to the west and El Salvador to the southwest. Honduras is largely a Mestizo (mixed-race), Spanish-speaking, and Roman Catholic country, although a small indigenous population exists (7 percent) as well as a number of Garifuna (of African and Carib Indian descent) communities along the Caribbean (2 percent). Protestant churches are growing in number.

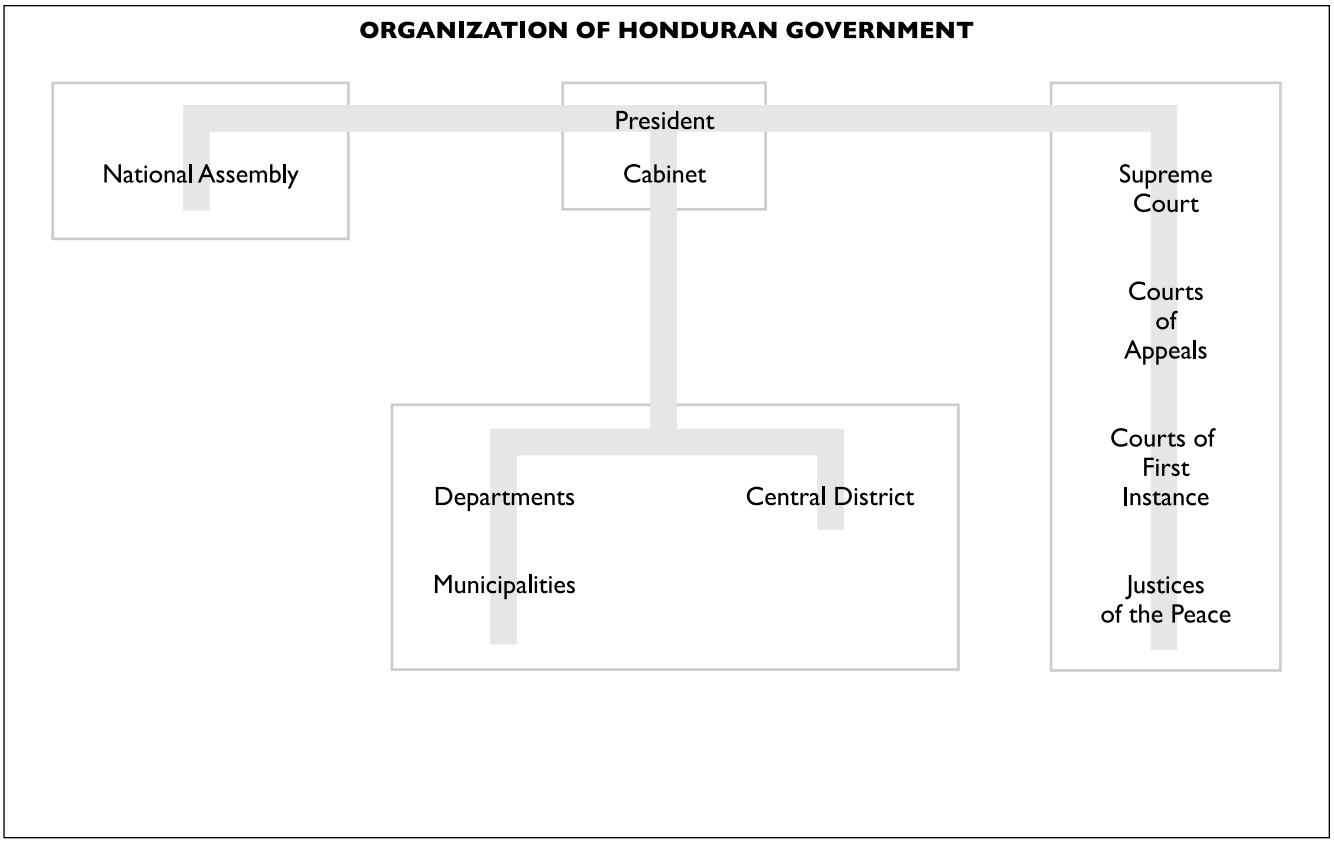
The System of Government

Honduras is a constitutional republic featuring a president and a unicameral legislature. The constitution dates from 1982, although it has been amended several times since then.

EXECUTIVE

Honduras features a presidential system where the chief of state is elected every four years by winning a simple majority of votes. The president must be native-born, at least 30 years old, and not an active member of the armed forces or a pastor or priest. Three vice presidents are elected concurrently with the president. If for any reason the president is unable to continue, the National Assembly selects one of the vice presidents to finish the president's term. The president appoints 14 ministers who form the cabinet.

In the 1994–98 term President Carlos Reina created two new ministries (the Public Ministry and the Ministry of Environment). The Public Ministry, which is the attorney general's office, is especially important as it coordinates and oversees the police once they



leave the jurisdiction of the military, a transition that is in process.

The president has veto power and can both call the Assembly into special session and extend a regular session; a two-thirds vote is required to overturn a veto. The president also has foreign policy and security responsibilities, although there are questions as to where de facto power resides since the military is largely autonomous. While the 1982 constitution gives the National Assembly the power to appoint many government officials, such as Supreme Court justices and the attorney general, in reality the Assembly generally rubber-stamps the wishes of the president (although over time the Assembly is showing greater signs of independence). The president oversees the government bureaucracy of some 70,000 state workers. Government jobs have long been a source of patronage; the civil service lacks professionalism with many positions changing with each election. The president also appoints governors for the country's 18 administrative departments (provinces or *departamentos*).

After decades of military rule, the road to elected executives began in 1980. Legislators were elected and were expected to choose a president, but instead they asked the military president, Policarpo Paz, to stay on until 1982. Roberto Suazo Cordova of the Liberal Party won the 1981 presidential election. In the 1985 elections Suazo attempted to extend his term and the major parties were unable to select candidates; the military was called on to broker a solution. This solution, known as Option B, was to hold elections that were simultaneously primary and general elections. Multiple candidates for each party appeared on the ballot with the candidate receiving the most votes for each party becoming the nominee. Each party's nominee subsequently received all of the party's combined votes. The final results of the balloting gave 42.6 percent to Rafael Leonardo Callejas Romero of the National Party and 27.5 percent to the Liberal Party's José Azcona. However, because the total vote of the combined Liberal candidates was 51.5 percent, Azcona was declared the victor and assumed office in 1986.

Callejas Romero was victorious in the 1989 elections, and a peaceful electoral transfer of power from the Liberals to the Nationals occurred for the first time in Honduran history. Power was transferred back to the Liberal Party with the elections of November 1993, which were won by Carlos Roberto Reina Idiaquez, an attorney with a strong human rights record who ran

on an anticorruption and antimilitary platform. Reina assumed office in January 1994.

The 1997 general elections were the fifth consecutive generally free and competitive elections since the return to democracy in the early 1980s. The Liberal Party candidate was Carlos Roberto Flores Facusse, the former president of the National Congress who had been defeated as the Liberal Party candidate in the presidential election of 1989. Flores studied engineering at Louisiana State University and is the owner of one of the country's leading newspapers. The National Party standard-bearer was Nora Gunera de Melgar, a former elementary schoolteacher and mayor of Tegucigalpa and the widow of a former president who took power in a military coup in 1975. The campaign was uneventful until early polls showed Flores with a large lead, and the National Party brought in U.S. campaign handler and strategist Dick Morris, who had previously caused a scandal as a consultant to President Bill Clinton. Morris was quick to employ negative campaign tactics, trying to make an issue of the fact that Flores's mother is of Palestinian descent and his wife is American. Melgar began to run ads emphasizing her "100 percent Honduran roots," and flyers and placards appeared denouncing the Middle Eastern business class in Honduras. Despite these ploys, Flores secured an impressive victory, receiving 52.8 percent of the vote compared with 42.7 percent for Melgar.

In 2001 the National Party ran dashing and charismatic candidate Ricardo Maduro. Maduro ran an efficient campaigned focused on fighting gangs and criminality, the number one problem in the country. Maduro, whose only son was kidnapped and murdered, personalized the crime issue and won the presidency with 52.2 percent of the vote.

LEGISLATURE

The National Assembly (Asamblea Nacional) is a unicameral legislature whose members serve four-year terms concurrently with the president. Congressional members are elected through proportional representation allocated among the 18 departments according to population with each department assured at least one representative. Each deputy is elected with a substitute (*suplente*) who may serve out any vacated office. There are 128 congressional deputies (*diputados*). The largest delegations represent the departments of Morazán (home of Tegucigalpa, the capital) and Cortés (the San Pedro Sula area).

Deputies must be Honduran by birth and over 21 years of age. Religious leaders, members of the military and police forces, and public officials and their spouses and close relatives are barred from becoming deputies. Deputies enjoyed personal immunity from most legal and police action. This privilege became a source of national outrage. The immunity protected 20,000 government officials from prosecution and dozens that were implicated in serious crimes, including many national legislators. In 2004 the National Assembly voted unanimously to eliminate criminal immunity for its members.

The Assembly elects its own president and appoints a permanent commission of nine members that conducts congressional business when the legislature is not in session. The Assembly is in regular session from January 24 to October 31. Extraordinary sessions may be called by the president, by the permanent commission, or by a simple majority of members. These extraordinary sessions may only consider matters specifically stated in the convocatory decree.

The powers, duties, and responsibilities of the Assembly include the election of the nine Supreme Court justices and seven alternates, the commander in chief of the armed forces, the comptroller general, and other officials. In practice however, the legislature generally rubber-stamps the recommendations of the president, except in the case of the chief of the armed forces. Then it simply accepts the choice of the armed forces' executive council, although historic reforms of the military institution that would provide greater civilian control are currently under legislative review. The Assembly has the power to make peace and declare war and to approve or disapprove treaties made by the president. The Assembly receives the national budget from the president and has the power to make modifications before formal adoption.

To become law, a bill must pass three readings on three different days. An amendment to the constitution must receive a majority vote of the entire congress, not just of a quorum, in two different years.

The 2001 elections resulted in a congress comprised of 61 deputies from the National Party, 55 from the Liberal Party, 5 from the Democratic Unification Party, 4 from the Social Democratic Party, and 3 from the Christian Democratic Party.

JUDICIARY

The Honduran judiciary consists of a Supreme Court of Justice, courts of appeals, courts of first instance, and justices of the peace. The Supreme Court has both appellate and original jurisdiction and exercises judicial review in cases involving constitutional questions; it consists of nine justices and seven alternates who are

selected by the National Assembly to serve four-year terms concurrent with the election cycle. This leaves the court highly politicized with judges often handpicked by the president. The Supreme Court in turn selects all lower court judges and justices of the peace. These positions are often political rewards, and many of the justices of the peace are of questionable qualifications, often even lacking primary education.

The nine courts of appeals are three-judge panels that hear all appeals from lower courts. Appeal judges must be attorneys and at least 25 years of age. The 64 first-instance courts are trial courts that hear serious civil and criminal cases. Each department capital and municipalities of more than 4,000 inhabitants have two justices of the peace, and municipalities of fewer than 4,000 have one. Justices must be 21, live in the municipality that they serve, and be able to read and write.

While the constitution stipulates that the judiciary receive 3 percent of the total national budget, this is in practice never followed. The Honduran judiciary is underfunded, politicized, and of questionable effectiveness. Courageous judges have, for example, held trials of military officers for human rights abuses and other crimes, but often the police mock or threaten the judges and ignore orders to capture and imprison convicted soldiers. In addition, women's groups argue that the penal code, approved in 1996, is an affront to women. Articles 151 and 152 of the code provide that a man who rapes a girl between the ages of 14 and 18 can go free if he marries the victim and that government prosecutors are prevented from pressing rape charges if the rapist used nonviolent methods—such as drugs or taking advantage of a sleeping or unconscious woman—to commit the crime.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The nation's 18 departments are headed by presidentially appointed governors, who are essentially dignitaries. The 18 departments are divided into 297 municipalities. Each municipality (*municipalidad*) may contain more than one town within its boundaries and is similar to a county in the United States. Every municipality has an elected mayor and between 4 and 10 council members, depending on the population. In recent years there has been a movement toward decentralization and stronger local governments. Beginning with the 1993 elections municipal officials were elected on a separate ballot from the president and legislature (one vote per ballot). This allows ticket splitting and makes local officials responsible to the electorate. Additionally, this gives the smaller parties much greater opportunities to win local elections. Tegucigalpa, the capital and largest city, also now has an elected mayor and city council. Local governments are highly dependent on the central government for funding.

The Electoral System

The Honduran electoral system is based on universal suffrage (since 1956) for all citizens over the age of 18. Voting is compulsory for those between 18 and 60, though compliance is not enforced. Active members of the armed forces do not vote. The ballot is secret, and since voters merely make a single fingerprint mark on each colored ballot that features symbols of the parties, literacy is not necessary.

For the elections from 1981 through 1989, a single ballot included the name of a presidential candidate and ranked lists of that party's candidates for the National Assembly and the municipal council in the area. Voters cast a single ballot for an entire slate. Beginning in 1993 municipal officials were elected on a separate ballot that allowed ticket splitting between local and national candidates. The 128 seats of the legislature are divided proportionally by votes cast in each department. The president is elected by a simple majority, as are local mayors.

A National Election Tribunal (Tribunal National de Elecciones) was created under the 1981 electoral law. The tribunal is charged with registering all eligible citizens, regulating the registration process of political parties, and overseeing electoral rules. The tribunal is an independent, autonomous body that has a president chosen by the Supreme Court and one member chosen by each of the registered national parties. In anticipation of the 1997 elections, the tribunal proposed various changes to electoral rules. The most important was to make a separate ballot for the election of legislative deputies, a proposal that was formally adopted and that benefited the smaller parties. One electoral rule that helps maintain the status quo is that parties are given public campaign funds based on the number of votes received in the previous election.

The Party System

ORIGINS OF THE PARTIES

Among Central American countries, Honduras has the longest tradition of two dominant parties: the Liberals and the Nationals. The Liberal Party was formed

in 1891 by one of the country's most successful presidents, Policarpo Bonilla. The National Party was originally a breakaway group of liberals led by Manuel Bonilla. Until 1948 the Nationals and the Liberals were the only official political parties in the country. For many years the two parties were aligned with rival North American banana companies, the Liberals with Cuyamel and the Nationals with United Fruit. The military has been strongly allied with the National Party. While Hondurans have shown displeasure with the corruption, nepotism, and policy failings of the principal parties, alternative parties have never captured a significant portion of the electorate.

THE PARTIES IN LAW

The constitution recognizes the role of legally inscribed political parties in providing for the effective participation of citizens in the political process. Parties are only recognized upon the presentation of petitions bearing the signature of a specified number of voters in each department. Registration traditionally has been difficult due to the challenges in collecting and authenticating the signatures. As would be expected, the two major parties have stopped all movement to more easily facilitate the registration of parties.

At present five parties are legally recognized: the two traditional rivals, the National Party and the Liberal Party; two parties formed in the 1970s, the Party of Innovation and Unity (PINU) and the Christian Democratic Party (PDC); and one party recognized in 1996, the Democratic Unification Party (PUD).

PARTY ORGANIZATION

With the exception of the newly formed Democratic Unification Party, all Honduran parties are national in scope. Even departments that are considered National or Liberal strongholds have swung back and forth between the two in national elections. There are no parties based solely in one region nor departments entirely in the hands of one or another party.

Political parties have grassroots organizations, student organizations, and dues-paying members with locally selected officials in each department. Many of these groups, in addition to political organization and indoctrination, maintain programs of political education and services such as dental and medical clinics and food distribution at the regional and municipal levels. Local party bosses, especially in the rural areas, are often powerful area chieftains (*caciques*) who still resort to violence to maintain their positions of power and dominance.

Party structures are highly centralized, and power has traditionally been centered in Tegucigalpa. With the rise of San Pedro Sula as the industrial center of the country, this city and the department of Cortés is beginning to challenge the old guard in the capital. The two major parties themselves are divided into bitter factions, and intraparty competition is as bitter and important as that between parties.

CAMPAIGNING

The limited size of the country and the concentration of the population in the western half permits personal campaigning by the candidates in all populated areas. The campaign begins a full two years before the national elections when the candidates start their quest for their party's nomination. Candidates visit towns, participate in parades, sponsor barbecues, kiss babies, speak to local groups, and try to garner support from the movers and shakers. Town officials and elites try to line up early behind a successful candidate in order to later receive patronage positions in the government or bureaucracy. The major parties hold national primaries to select their nominees to the presidency. These primaries often involve backroom deals where candidates withdraw and throw their support to another. For the 1993 elections the National Party's major factions struck a deal and only one candidate ran in the primaries. For the 1997 elections both the National Party and the Liberal Party primaries featured multiple candidates.

Honduran primaries are held almost a full year before the national election, resulting in a very long campaign season. The country is canvassed with flags, posters, balloons, billboards, wall paintings, hats, and television, radio, and newspaper advertisements featuring the colors and symbols of the parties and the names of the standard-bearer. Even the rocks along the sides of the highways are painted with National blue or Liberal red paint.

While the government provides campaign subsidies based on the number of votes received in the previous election, campaigns are very expensive and expenditures are not limited or reported. Campaign funds are provided by wealthy party members, individuals hoping for a patronage position, and merchants and industrialists who are said to hedge their bets by contributing to both major parties.

INDEPENDENT VOTERS

Formal party membership, in the sense of paying dues and carrying a membership card, covers a

minority of registered voters. Family traditions and party loyalties are strong but declining. The use of a separate ballot to select national legislators produced a surprising amount of ticket splitting, resulting in the election of deputies from nontraditional parties, and may lead to a larger number of independent voters in the future.

Major Political Parties

HONDURAS LIBERAL PARTY

(Partido Liberal de Honduras; PLH)

HISTORY

The oldest political party in the country, the Liberal Party has its roots in the 1890s liberal movement of Policarpo Bonilla, whose presidential term (1894–99) marked one of the most successful eras in Honduran political history. During the first half of the 20th century, the Liberal Party was closely allied with Cuyamel, a North American banana company owned by Samuel Zemurray. Zemurray waged land wars against another U.S. company, United Fruit, which was aligned with the National Party. In 1929 Zemurray gave up the battle and sold Cuyamel to United Fruit, leaving the Liberals with a loss of support and on the political sidelines from 1933 to 1957.

In 1957, after years of dictatorship (Tiburcio Carías from 1933 to 1949), the Liberals regained power with Ramón Villeda Morales. While staunchly anti-Communist, Villeda was socially progressive, and his Liberal administration brought about a new labor code, began discussions on land reform, and started to modernize the country. When it became apparent that an even more progressive Liberal, Modesto Rodas Alvarado, would sweep the 1963 elections, the military engineered a coup.

The Liberals were not to regain power until the election of Suazo in 1981. A country doctor, Suazo was an incompetent and unpopular executive who attempted to maintain his power beyond his four-year term. In part due to Suazo's machinations, the Liberal Party was unable to select a candidate for the 1985 elections. The military intervened and brokered a plan whereby each party could run multiple candidates in the national election and the party that got the most total votes would win, making the president the candidate who obtained the most votes for said party. This ended in fiasco, with the winning candidate, the Liberal's José Azcona, garnering only 27.5 percent of the vote. Azcona was forced to make a pact with the National Party in order to govern. Carlos Flores Facussé won the 1988 primary for the Liberals but was defeated in the 1989 elections. In 1993 Carlos Roberto Reina, of the progressive wing of the party, was the party's nominee and ran on a platform of moral revolution (anticorruption) and weakening the power and prerogatives of the military. Reina, an attorney, is a former chancellor of the university and justice on the Interamerican Human Rights Court. The Liberal Party won the 1993 elections in a landslide, and Reina was moderately successful in his attempts to rein in the military. Although there were various attempts on his life and both overt and subtle threats from the military high command, Reina was able to change military service from obligatory to voluntary and to pass a constitutional amendment to transfer the police from military to civilian control. While it is widely accepted that the Reina administration was cleaner than that of its National predecessor, some members in the administration were accused of corruption. On the economic front, the Reina administration was unable to ignite the moribund economy, and levels of poverty and unemployment remain critically high.

Flores returned as a party candidate in 1997, became the standard-bearer for the Liberals, and won the presidential elections. The party lost in 2001 but remained one of the two major parties.

MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY

The PLH has a broad base of support throughout the country and strong support in urban areas. Claims of membership are highly suspect, but in open elections it has shown to be the dominant party in the country. The more centrist of the two major parties, the PLH traditionally has had a strong following among organized labor, the educated, and the young.

FINANCING

The government subsidizes campaigns based on the number of votes received in the previous election. Individual and business donations are not regulated and go unreported.

PROSPECTS

While the party continues to suffer from factionalization, its prospects are good to remain a major political force for some time. Its 2001 electoral defeat was only the second loss in six elections since electoral democracy was established in 1981. Ahead of the 2005 presidential elections, it nominated Manuel Zelaya as its candidate.

NATIONAL PARTY OF HONDURAS
(Partido Nacional de Honduras; PNH)

HISTORY
The National Party, one of two dominant parties in Honduras, was first formed in 1902 as a splinter group of the Liberal Party. It was the party of long-term president and dictator Tiburcio Carías A., who ruled the country with an iron fist from 1932 to 1949, and of his successors, Juan Manuel Gálvez and Julio Lozano. The PNH's candidate, Ramón Cruz, won the 1970 elections, but his weak and aimless administration was toppled by a military coup after only a year in office. The PNH has been an active collaborator in military governments and throughout the cold war was a right-wing, pro-military party with strong ties to the rural landed elite.

During the 1980s the party was a strong supporter of the militarization of Honduras and cooperation with the United States and U.S.-sponsored contras who used Honduran territory to wage war on the Nicaraguan Sandinistas. In the 1981 elections, which ended years of military rule, the PNH ran Ricardo Zúñiga, an unpopular member of the ultraright wing of the party, who fared poorly in the national elections. In the 1985 elections the PNH's candidate was Rafael Callejas, a young, U.S.-educated figure who was to put a new face on conservatism in the party. While Callejas won the largest number of votes in the national election, the unusual electoral format of this election gave the victory to the Liberals. Callejas won convincingly in 1989, giving the PNH its first victory in the new era of democracy. Callejas immediately adopted a series of neoliberal economic reforms and structural adjustment programs designed by international lending institutions. This caused widespread protest throughout the country. By the end of his term unprecedented charges of fraud and abuse were leveled against the administration and against Callejas's family and friends.

In the 1993 elections the party was taken over by the right wing, which launched the candidacy of Oswaldo Ramos. Ramos's charges that Reina, his presidential opponent, was a Communist, fell on deaf ears, and the party lost badly. A host of PNH officials, including Callejas, were indicted on charges of fraud.

Following years of infighting and corruption charges on Callejas and others, the PNH rebounded in the presidential election of 2001. Its candidate, Ricardo Maduro, waged an effective campaign and captured the presidency with 52.2 percent of the vote.

ORGANIZATION
The party is nominally run by a convention and executive committee. In practice, various factions battle to gain control. The party has national coverage and party organizations throughout the country. Power runs from the party center in Tegucigalpa out to the grass roots. Patronage and the hope of jobs with winning candidates remain the glue that holds the organization together.

MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY
The PNH has traditionally been strong in rural areas and the less-developed departments. The party has a large membership, although it is believed that official membership claims are exaggerated.

FINANCING
The government subsidizes campaigns based on the number of votes received in the previous election. Individual and business donations are not regulated and are unreported.

PROSPECTS
Ricardo Maduro reinvigorated the party with his candidacy for president in 2001. Charismatic and an excellent campaigner, Maduro effectively used his personal story as a father grieving over the kidnapping and murder of his son to connect with the Honduran masses, who suffer widespread deprivation from the national epidemic of gangs and crime. After becoming president, Maduro continued to focus on this issue, often joining anti-gang units on arrests and neighborhood sweeps. This resulted in direct personal threats against the president by the organized gangs, which only added to his anticrime persona. In this regard, Maduro has transformed the pro-military image of the party into a pro–law enforcement image. For the 2005 presidential election, the PNH nominated Porfirio Lobo as its candidate.

Minor Political Parties

CHRISTIAN DEMOCRAT PARTY
(Partido Demócrata Cristiano; PDC)

The PDC was formed in 1980 and is a full member of the Christian Democrat International. The party has never won more than three seats in the National Assembly and in the 1993 elections won 1 percent of the vote and no seats. In 1997 the party recovered

slightly, receiving 2.2 percent of the vote and gaining a single seat. In 2001 the party won three seats and 3.7 percent of the national legislative vote.

PARTY OF INNOVATION AND UNITY

(Partido de Inovación y Unidad; PINU)

The PINU was founded in 1970 and identifies itself as a social democratic party with links to the German Social Democratic Party (SPD). The PINU earned 1.5 percent of the presidential vote, 4.6 percent of the legislative vote, and four seats in the National Assembly in 2001.

DEMOCRATIC UNIFICATION PARTY

(Partido de Unificación Democrática; PUD)

The latest party to gain recognition from the National Election Tribunal is the PUD, which ran for the first time in the 1997 elections. The PUD's founder and presidential candidate was Matias Funes, a university professor and author. The PUD is the first recognized party of the Left. The PUD is antimilitary, advocates an anti-neoliberal economic policy, and supports humanist and progressive economic and social legislation. The PUD's support in the 1997 elections was a major surprise as the party earned a seat in congress and some municipal positions.

The PUD increased its electoral strength considerably by 2001, winning five seats in the National Assembly. As the minor parties pick up seats, their importance grows, since the two largest parties no longer win a majority of seats in the National Assembly, but only a plurality. Therefore, the ruling party is required to form coalitions on particular issues to gain passage of legislation.

Other Political Forces

THE MILITARY

The strongest alternative political force in the country remains the military. The Honduran military was first professionalized in 1954 with the establishment of the Francisco Morazán military academy. By 1956 the military unleashed its first coup. The military played an important role in writing the 1957 constitution, which granted the organization autonomy from elected presidents and freed the head of the armed forces from allegiance to elected officials. The military ruled almost continuously from 1963 to 1982.

In 1982, while power was ostensibly transferred to civilians, the real power in the country lay with the military and its commander in chief, Gustavo Álvarez. Military autonomy was also strengthened in the 1982 constitution. In the Honduran military, leaders are appointed from within—rubber-stamped by the Assembly—and the presidentially appointed defense minister only coordinates. Simultaneously, in the early 1980s the United States was using Honduras as a base for anti-Sandinista contras and sending the Honduran generals unprecedented levels of aid. Commander in Chief Álvarez was staunchly anti-left, and during his tenure human rights abuses increased dramatically. Battalion 3-16, an elite military unit with U.S. training, was responsible for the disappearance of many suspected leftists. The police, totally under military control, also participated in kidnappings, disappearances, and assassinations.

Álvarez was ousted by an internal military coup, and the worst of the human rights abuses disappeared. In January 1999 the constitution was amended to abolish the position of military commander in chief of the armed forces, thus codifying civilian authority over the military. Honduran armed forces have refocused toward combating transnational threats such as narcoterrorism and organized crime. In 2002 Honduras deployed troops to Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom; the troops were recalled in 2004.

The resolution of civil wars in El Salvador and Nicaragua, as well as budget cuts in all ministries, has reduced funding for the armed forces, causing the military to fall far below its authorized strength.

FOREIGN RELATIONS

Honduras worked toward implementation of a regional customs union by the end of 2004 in order to ease border controls and tariffs among Honduras, Guatemala, Nicaragua, and El Salvador. Honduras and Nicaragua had tense relations throughout 2000 and early 2001 due to a maritime boundary dispute off the Atlantic Coast. Relations have since improved, but animosity remains.

Discussion over the Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA) are in process among the countries of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua. By mid-2005 the agreement had been ratified by several of the governments, including those in Honduras and the United States.

National Prospects

Honduras is in the midst of the longest period of civilian rule in its history, with six presidents elected in relatively free elections since 1981. There is a strong two-party tradition, and the volatile Central American region appears to have found a permanent peace. However, all is not well for Honduras and Hondurans. The country is poor, its citizens undereducated and underfed, and its industry incapable of competing in the global market. The loss of life and infrastructure resulting from Hurricane Mitch in 1998 remains a devastating setback for the country. The sleaze of the Callejas administration reinforced the belief among the citizenry that politicians are corrupt.

Honduras has one of the most inegalitarian distributions of income in the world, which leads to episodes of violence, especially in the countryside. The end of the U.S.-sponsored Sandinista-contra war left thousands of contras and tens of thousands of weapons idle in Honduras. With massive poverty and unemployment and an oversupply of weapons and mercenaries in the country, crime has escalated out of control. The military and police seem unable and even unwilling to combat lawlessness; indeed, they are charged with masterminding the largest crime organizations. Due in part to U.S. pressure, electoral democracy will continue for some time. But the citizenry is becoming increasingly cynical of the promises of democracy, and perpetual crisis will continue as the norm.

Honduras's material and political challenges are compounded by the AIDS epidemic and the unprecedented increase in criminal gangs and crime. Honduras has one of the highest rates of HIV infection in the hemisphere and by some estimates as many as 100,000 gang members; one such gang carried out a massacre of 28 civilians on a bus in 2004. The economic potential of tourism and investment are seriously undermined by crime and disease. President Maduro made crime and the gangs his number one priority, leading some to assert that the demonization of gangs has led to human rights abuses.

Honduras has made progress in democratization, opening up the country to trade, privatizing state enterprises, and eliminating the immunity of government officials to prosecution for alleged crimes. Much more needs to be done.

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REPUBLIC OF HUNGARY

(Magyar Köztársaság)

By Jeffrey K. Hass, Ph.D.



Hungary lies in the middle of East-Central Europe, adjacent to traditional "Western Europe" on the west and to former Warsaw Pact members on the east, giving Hungary a prime geopolitical location.

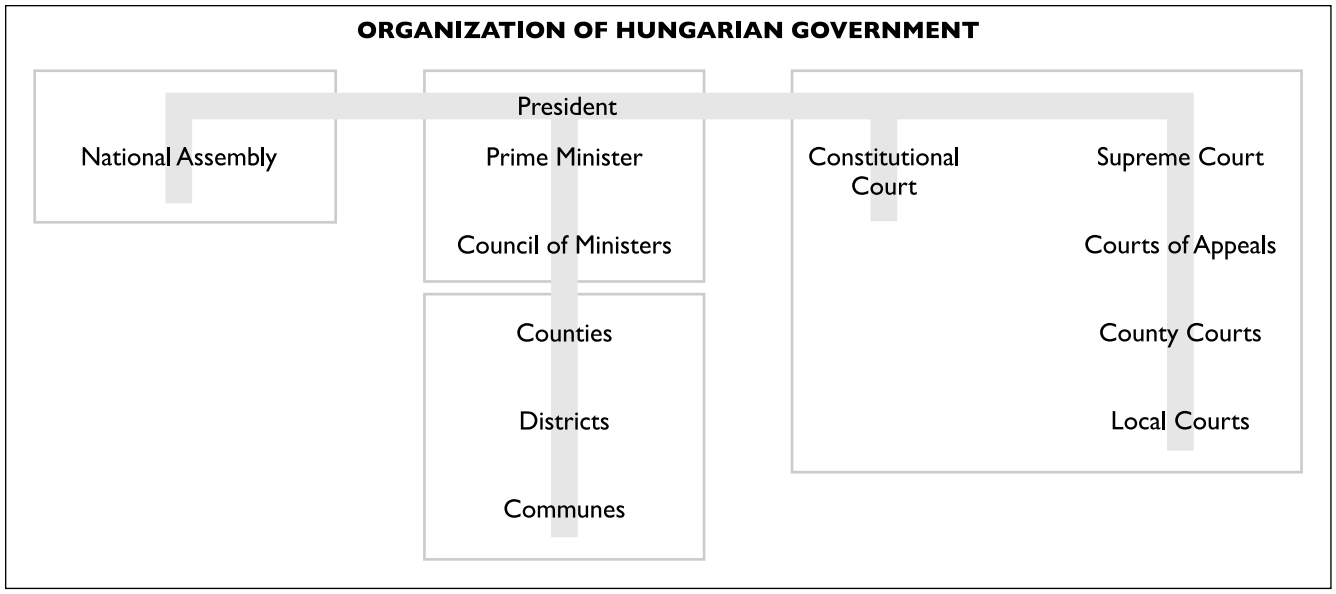
Hungary's economy was viewed as the potential miracle of Eastern Europe until 1994. Before 1989 Hungary had the most Western-oriented economy of all East bloc countries, with stronger trade ties and with economic reforms—surprising for Soviet-sphere economies (the "New Economic Mechanism")—that allowed for some degree of private enterprise. However, rising external debt made economic reform, especially in the form of privatization and austerity programs, imperative. From 1990 to 1993 economic reforms included financial stabilization and mass privatization. But with the economic reforms came economic pain: an inflationary spike from price liberalization, rising unemployment, and some social backlash against the rising wealth of the former Communist elite (the *nomenklatura*) and some economic traders.

In 1994 this pain was translated into an electoral victory for the Hungarian Socialist Party, with slower economic change. Privatization essentially came to a halt, and the state budget and current account deficits rose sharply. In 1995 the Socialists reversed themselves and introduced an austerity package that reduced Hungary's debt and returned to mass privatization. The GDP began to grow in 1994 (2.9 percent) and 1995 (1.5 percent), and unemployment began to fall in 1995 (14 percent to 10 percent). Inflation was episodic, with spikes in 1991 and 1995. For the most part, however, the economy has been stable and foreign investment has increased in the 1990s and after 2000. Entry into the European Union may create some dislocation but generally should benefit Hungarian economic growth and post-Socialist adjustment.

Hungary has been one of the more promising countries of Eastern Europe to make the transition from a Communist polity and economy to democracy and market capitalism. While the transition has not been smooth—economic pain paved the way for the Socialists to return to power, and complexities or snags in legislation and procedure have made political institutions run less than smoothly—Hungary still exhibits successful institution building. While political actors regularly fight and coalitions and splits have occurred, there is little threat of political instability, and Socialists have not tried to turn back the clock on democracy or the free market.

The System of Government

Hungary's political system at the national level is split into three branches: the executive, headed by the president and the prime minister; the legislative, headed by the National Assembly; and the judiciary, headed by the Constitutional Court. The overall political system resembles that of Germany: the prime minister is the most important executive figure and,



while autonomous, the executive in the end answers to the legislature, where ultimate political sovereignty resides.

EXECUTIVE

The executive branch is headed by two figures, the president and the prime minister. The president is, as in much of Eastern Europe, a figurehead whose powers reside mostly in the realm of diplomacy and international affairs. The prime minister derives his or her power from heading the state bureaucracy. Both executives, however, are subjugated to the ultimate sovereignty of the National Assembly.

The president, considered in the constitution as the "head of state," is weak. Formally the job of the president is to represent the nation in the international arena and to guard democratic procedure, in essence putting the president above the executive branch and all other branches as well. However, commensurate with this responsibility, the president has few powers. Formally the president can conclude international treaties (which must then be approved by the National Assembly); announce parliamentary and local elections; petition the Assembly to undertake legislation or other actions; initiate a national referendum; appoint and dismiss the heads of the National Bank, universities, and the armed forces; and grant pardons and bestow citizenship. Most of these acts require the countersignature of the prime minister if they are to be legally valid.

The president also has two forms of a weak veto. First, he can send disagreeable legislation back to the Assembly for reconsideration, but the parliament can override this veto with a simple majority vote. Second, the president can refer legislation to the Constitutional Court, which must then rule on its constitutionality.

The president can be removed from office via impeachment if he has violated the constitution (e.g., having a conflict of interest between presidential responsibilities and personal interests, such as side employment) or some other law. A motion for impeachment may be introduced by no less than one-fifth of the members of the Assembly and requires a two-thirds majority for impeachment proceedings to begin. At that point the president is suspended from his duties, and the Constitutional Court is called on to rule whether the president did in fact violate the constitution or any other law; the Court then has the final say on the president's guilt. Should the president be found guilty, he must step down. In this case or in any other case when the president cannot execute his or her duties of office, the chain of command runs to the speaker of the National Assembly (who does not have the power to send legislation back to the parliament or to the Constitutional Court or dissolve the Assembly).

The president also has the power to dissolve the National Assembly, but only within strict bounds—either when the parliament has not approved a prime minister 40 days after the first candidate was nominated (e.g., soon after the prime minister resigned) or when the Assembly passes a no-confidence motion

four times in the course of 12 months. To dissolve the parliament the president must request the opinions of the prime minister, the speaker of the National Assembly, and the parliamentary leaders of the represented parties. The president must be careful when dissolving the Assembly, however; if he tries to do so beyond these limits, then Assembly members can consider the president in violation of the constitution and motion for his impeachment.

The prime minister and his deputy ministers run the state bureaucracy and so have great potential power. Ministers do answer to the National Assembly: they must make reports when asked to do so, and ministerial power to rule by decree is very limited. All ministers except the prime minister are appointed and removed not by the parliament but only by the prime minister himself. The prime minister generally comes from the largest parliamentary party and must be approved by majority vote. The National Assembly also has some control over the prime minister through the vote of no confidence; in this way the prime minister can be removed from office.

However, two factors make it more difficult to remove a prime minister in Hungary than elsewhere. First, the prime minister comes from the largest party, and so it would take a major split between the prime minister and his own party before a no-confidence vote could come to pass; and a vote for no confidence cannot come to the floor unless it is brought up with a parallel nomination for another prime minister. This mechanism has made for more stable relations: Hungary does not suffer from as many no-confidence motions and successful votes as do other countries. However, this has not prevented conflict between the two branches, in particular between the prime minister and opposition parties or junior partners in the ruling coalition. (This happened to Jozsef Antall, who in 1992 found himself the target of criticism from the Independent Smallholders' Party, which was a junior member of the ruling coalition.)

Because the executive has two possible heads, conflict between them is a possibility, especially when one member is from the parliamentary opposition. This was the case in the early 1990s, when Antall and Arpad Goncz went head to head over executive prerogative. Goncz had come from the opposition Alliance of Free Democrats as president in a political pact with the Hungarian Democratic Forum, which as the senior member of the ruling coalition had put its own leader, Antall, in the office of prime minister.

A series of scandals emerged after 2002 involving past involvement with the Communist secret police. New prime minister Peter Medgyessy, from the ruling alliance of Socialists and Alliance of Free Democrats, was accused of working for counterintelligence in the Interior Ministry. The chairman of the Alliance of Young Democrats (Fidesz) was also accused of links (through his father) to the secret police. In the end, the scandals remained confined to momentary newspaper headlines, and did not generate further accusations or investigations.

LEGISLATURE

The parliament, called the National Assembly (Orszaggyules), is a unicameral body and is the most powerful branch of government in Hungary. This resulted from the legacy of Communism: the Communist opposition first came to power within the parliament (and was determined to maintain its power by locating sovereignty in the National Assembly), and politicians did not want to pave the way for potential dictatorship (which they overthrew in 1989).

The main powers of the National Assembly are passing legislation, defining policies, approving the budget and the government's programs, declaring war or a state of national emergency, calling a national referendum, approving and dismissing the prime minister, and dissolving local assemblies that have violated the law or constitution. Parliamentary approval is reached by simple majority or by two-thirds majority, depending on the situation. For a declaration of war or national emergency, for passing a motion on impeachment, and for altering the constitution, a two-thirds majority is required. In order for parliamentary actions to be binding, a quorum (one-half of delegates) must be present for voting.

Legislation may be initiated by the president, the prime minister, parliamentary committees, or by any member of the National Assembly. If a bill has been passed by a simple majority, the speaker signs it and sends it to the president, who has 15 days to sign it and promulgate it (5 days if the speaker has declared the bill an urgent act). Within this period the president may send the bill back to the National Assembly for reconsideration and then to the Constitutional Court. According to the constitution, if the bill is found unconstitutional, the president must send it back to the National Assembly.

The National Assembly, according to the constitution, is the supreme political body in Hungary. All other bodies are subordinate: local government is restrained by national legislation, and the executive branch must report its activities and results of policies to the parlia-

ment. Only the Constitutional Court is autonomous from the parliament, and then only in its proceedings; justices must be approved by the National Assembly before entering the bench. Further, the parliament has the power to dismiss the prime minister and government through a vote of no confidence.

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS, 4/7/02 AND 4/21/02

Party	seats
FIDESZ-MDF	188
— Fidesz–Magyar Polgári Párt	(164)
— Magyar Demokrata Fórum	(24)
Magyar Szocialista Párt	178
Szabad Demokraták Szövetsége	20
Other parties (% less than 5%)	(0)

Source: www.electionworld.org

JUDICIARY

Since 1990 the Hungarian government has been committed to creating an independent judiciary that follows international norms and standards and is able to guarantee the rule of law in the country. Toward this goal the Hungarian government has created the Association of Hungarian Judges, has limited the power of the Ministry of Justice over the judiciary to administrative tasks alone, and has supported the power of the National Judges' Council to approve changes in personnel and judicial budgets. (For example, a judge may be appointed to a position by the Ministry of Justice only after such an appointment has been approved by the National Judges' Council; this helps reduce administrative and political pressure on the judicial branch.)

The Hungarian judicial system follows a continental procedure. This has two practical implications for the functioning of the judiciary. First, contrary to Anglo-American common-law tradition, the Hungarian courts do not follow precedent when deciding cases; instead, each case is decided on the basis of the facts of that case alone and on the relevant laws. Second, and related, the Hungarian courts do not have the power to interpret laws; they have only the power to decide legal outcomes based on the laws themselves. Even the Constitutional Court does not have the power of interpretation, although it can judge the merits of laws.

The judicial hierarchy starts at the lowest level, county tribunals and local courts that oversee decisions in civil disputes and criminal cases. Appeals on rulings may be made up the judicial hierarchy to courts of appeals and then on to the Supreme Court, which is the final arbiter of civil disputes and criminal decisions. Further, courts do have the power to review the *actions* of local authorities. (The Constitutional Court has this power for the national government.) Thus, while the courts themselves cannot interpret the law, they can act as a safeguard against government abuse of the law.

The Constitutional Court stands outside the normal court system. While other courts are concerned with deciding conflicts between civil parties, deciding guilt in criminal cases, or ruling on appeals, the Constitutional Court instead is an overseeing court. Its purpose is to make sure that all branches and organs of government follow the rule of law and remain inside the bounds of power prescribed by law. Since 1990 the court has reviewed an immense number of laws, petitions, and other documents. They have included rulings on abortion and the death penalty (where the court found Hungary's law unconstitutional), on property distribution, on extending the statute of limitations for crimes committed in the Communist period (which the court ruled unconstitutional), and on the scope of presidential powers.

According to the constitution, the Constitutional Court consists of 11 justices who are nominated by a Nominating Committee (consisting of one member from each party represented in the National Assembly). The National Assembly as a whole must then approve by two-thirds vote each candidate for justice of the Constitutional Court.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

At the local level Hungary is divided into 42 counties (*megyek*), with the capital city, Budapest, equivalent to a county, and each county is composed of districts and communities or communes. Local legislative assemblies are elected for four-year terms; local executives are headed by mayors. Powers of local government include disposing of local government property and funds, levying of local taxes, and passing and implementing of local legislation (which must not violate national laws or the constitution).

Local legislatures are chaired by the mayors. Powers and rights of the local government are constrained

by national laws, which may be adopted only by two-thirds majority vote of the National Assembly.

The Electoral System

In Hungary the president is elected by the National Assembly to a five-year term and may repeat himself in office only once. When 30 days remain before the end of the current president's mandate, the speaker of the National Assembly proclaims the process of selecting a new president, which must be concluded not more than 30 days after the announcement. For a person to become a candidate, at least 50 members of the National Assembly must nominate him or her prior to the announcement of the election. On the day of voting, a candidate receiving two-thirds of all votes cast by parliamentarians is declared the winner. If no candidate receives the two-thirds majority, the voting process is repeated; if for a second time no candidate receives two-thirds of the vote, a third round is held, in which the two candidates with the most votes from the second round compete. Only a simple majority is required in the third round. The whole voting process is to take no more than three days, according to the constitution.

The first post-Communist president was Arpad Goncz of the Alliance of Free Democrats (SzDSz)—a party that was not in the post-1990 ruling coalition. Goncz received the position in spite of this because of a pact between the SzDSz and the Hungarian Democratic Forum (MDF): an SzDSz candidate would receive the presidential post (but not a position in the coalition) if the laws were changed so that a two-thirds majority would not be needed for passing legislation (thus making political life easier for the ruling coalition, which consisted of three parties and held only 59 percent of the vote). In 1995 Goncz was reelected by parliament, receiving 259 of the 335 votes cast. In 2000 Ferenc Mádl was selected as president, and in 2005 Laszlo Solyom won the post.

The National Assembly sits for a period of four years; only presidential dissolution of the parliament may interfere with this period. (Once the National Assembly is dissolved, new elections must occur within three months.) Parliamentary elections in Hungary are extraordinarily complicated owing to the electoral law. Because various parties wanted to safeguard their ability to enter or remain in the National Assembly, several mechanisms were included that have made the Hungarian electoral process difficult to understand; predicting an outcome and the implications of one's vote for different parties is almost impossible.

Delegates enter the National Assembly in one of three ways: through individual races, through local party lists, or through a "national list" based on "fragment votes." (This system is for all practical purposes the same as that in Estonia.) Of the 386 seats in the National Assembly, 176 are set aside for the individual races, 152 are set aside for local county lists (party-based races), and 58 are set aside for the national lists and fragment votes. The two figures of 152 and 58 are only a maximum and a minimum, however; less than 152 seats may be distributed through local party races depending on whether parties receive the necessary votes to garner a mandate, and those seats not determined through the local party races go to the national list. Each voter has two votes: one for a candidate in the individual races and one for a party in the county-level party races.

The individual race is straightforward. For a vote to be valid, more than 50 percent of registered voters must cast a ballot. To win in the first round, a candidate must receive a majority of votes cast; otherwise, a runoff is held between those candidates who received at least 15 percent of votes cast, or among the top three candidates if less than three received 15 percent or more. In the runoff, only 25 percent participation is required and, to win, one needs to receive only a plurality (i.e., the highest number of votes) rather than a majority.

The next path is through "county lists," races between parties at the level of the county (not the national level). Parties present lists of potential delegates, and voters cast their votes for a party. To have an opportunity to send candidates to the National Assembly, a party has to overcome a threshold of 5 percent. Each county has a number of mandates, depending on the population, and each mandate is a number of votes. A party can receive mandates at the county level, which are translated into Assembly seats. A party has to overcome the percentage barrier to have a chance to receive a mandate. For example, if in a certain county there are 10,000 votes per mandate and a party receives 30,000 votes, then that party receives three mandates; the first three candidates on the party list become members of the National Assembly.

Those mandates that are not filled are transferred to the national list, which is a minimum of 58 but can be augmented by unfilled county mandates. These national-level seats are distributed to the parties that receive overall more than 5 percent of votes cast

nationally. Parties that do not cross the barrier do not get seats from this pool; and those that do cross the barrier receive a number of seats equal to the percentage of votes that party received of all votes cast for parties that break the 5 percent barrier.

One must note a slight caveat: once a delegate enters the parliament, he or she is not bound to party discipline and at worst can be dropped from the party list of candidates only in the *next* election. Hence, party strength cannot be based on number of seats alone. For example, the Hungarian Democratic Forum won 165 total seats in the 1990 elections; however, by 1994 the "formal" number of Forum delegates was 136. Of the original 165, 31 had left for other factions (Alliance of Young Democrats or other parties), and the Forum had gained two delegates from two other parties.

The Party System

ORIGINS OF THE PARTIES

Hungary's transition to democracy began with political negotiations between the embryonic Hungarian Democratic Forum (MDF)—the vehicle for rising democratic opposition under Communism—and the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party (the ruling Communist Party). The initial steps in the direction of democracy were the revising of the existing constitution in 1989 and the setting of parliamentary elections for 1990. The electoral law was a result of political negotiations, allowing ruling parties to remain in politics but also giving challengers a chance to enter the parliament. The first post-Communist elections gave the most seats to the Democratic Forum and then to other left-leaning social democratic parties and right-leaning (but not nationalist or extremist) parties. After the 1990 elections a ruling coalition, headed by the Democratic Forum and with the support of the Independent Smallholders' Party (FKgP) and the Christian Democratic People's Party (CDPP), was established; while the president was chosen from the Alliance of Free Democrats (Arpad Goncz), the Democratic Forum managed to get its party leader, Jozsef Antall, approved as prime minister.

Governance in Hungary was made more difficult by several political factors. The first arose from tensions within the ruling coalition, especially between the Forum and the junior member, the FKgP. The FKgP pushed for land restitution, the return of land to previous owners taken by Communists. Forum members resisted and then wavered, since the ISP was adamant on the issue and the Forum required ISP support to maintain a majority in the National Assembly. A second source of political instability came from tensions between the president and the prime minister. With the separation of powers between the two nominal heads of the executive left vague in the constitution, both actors tried to become the top player; only as disputes emerged did the Constitutional Court begin to delineate the boundaries of power (usually in favor of the prime minister).

The MDF-led government began with the best starting conditions of any former Communist country. Hungary had been tinkering with economic reform, and it had a polity relatively free from nationalist/ethnic or party strife. However, by 1992 Antall came under criticism from opposition parties, especially the Alliance of Free Democrats (SzDSz) and the new rising star, the Alliance of Young Democrats (Fidesz), for its inability to take advantage of such conditions and actually reform the economy. Land reform followed the FKgP's demands, which did not create a vibrant sector of independent farmers; privatization had bogged down, as the government could not decide among several plans, and what privatization did occur seemed to favor interconnected shareholding between directors of large firms; and the government did not have in place programs to address unemployment, social support, deficits, and inflation.

In 1994 the MDF-led government's inability to bring quick, effective reform and the pragmatic image propagated by the Socialists led to a victory of the Hungarian Socialist Party. While the MSzP achieved a parliamentary majority, it turned to the SzDSz (whose economic and political programs were similar) to form a coalition; the MSzP party leader, Gyula Horn, was approved as prime minister. In 1995 the MSzP decided to take action on Hungary's rising deficits and stagnating economy by privatizing state firms and by initiating a fiscal austerity program in order to bring in IMF funding. Such measures did not please the electorate, and the MSzP saw its popularity in polls drop.

In 1998 Fidesz took advantage of public anger over the rising crime rate and a series of government scandals to win a plurality of seats in the Assembly. It formed a government with the FKgP and the Democratic Forum. In 2002 the MSzP and SzDSz took back control of the Assembly, winning a combined 51 percent of the vote.

The Hungarian party scene is both stable and unstable. It is stable in that a small group of parties appear to have become constant players, but unstable in that this number will most likely be whittled

down. Parties hold to set ideological positions only in a vague sense; tactics often determine what a party believes. Finally, party strength over the long haul is questionable for two reasons. First, parties do not exercise high discipline, and so members can leave and join parliamentary factions; this hurt the Alliance of Young Democrats, for example. Second, with the exception of the Hungarian Socialist Party, parties do not have strong grassroots divisions and do not try to mobilize social support; instead, they usually act like groups of political elites making an appeal to the populace from above.

Hungarian parties can be grouped along a traditional left-right continuum. However, certain points can be noted at the outset. For one thing, there are no true extremist parties in the National Assembly. While some parties hold to a more nationalist outlook or promote Christian principles, none take this rhetoric to an extreme, as is the case with Gheorghe Funar's party in Romania. Most parties are basically moderate.

Major Political Parties

HUNGARIAN SOCIALIST PARTY

(Magyar Szocialista Párt; MSzP)

The major party on the Left is the Hungarian Socialist Party. While the MSzP *organizationally* is a direct descendant of the Hungarian Workers' Socialist Party (i.e., the Communist Party), *ideologically* the MSzP has openly broken all links with the old Communist ideology. The MSzP has agreed that a market economy is desirable. Where the MSzP differs from other parties is that it supports a slower and more gradual transition that takes into account support for the social safety net (economic support for the population, especially those at risk of poverty) and support for social justice.

However, as 1995 showed, the Socialists realize that the requirements for economic health may contradict party ideology and take precedence. In 1995 the Socialist-led government backed away from a gradualist position and implemented an austerity package that helped lower budget and current account deficits and continued mass privatization of $3 billion worth of state assets. Finally, while the MSzP had a majority in the parliament after the 1994 elections, it preferred to build a larger ruling coalition that could embrace other like-minded parties in order to create a larger sense of political community and unity.

In the 1998 elections MSzP appeared to be headed toward victory, but Fidesz gained the most votes and seats in the National Assembly, leaving MSzP in second place. Laszlo Kovacs, one of the party's more popular leaders, became head of the MSzP parliamentary faction and set about remaking the party's image, in particular making ties and integration with Europe more central to its platform. (In this MSzP followed a line that other social democratic parties in West and East Europe have been doing, namely, a move toward the center-left.) The strategy had some success. While some politicians and elites on the Left have been critical of Kovacs's move toward the center, MSzP remains the single dominant left-leaning party and faces little competition from that side of the political spectrum; it can shore up support from the left and expand its political base. In 2002 MSzP gained the second-highest number of seats and put aside arguments with the SzDSz to form a left-of-center government. With approximately 35,000 members and continuing support from labor unions, MSzP remains one of the two most important parties in Hungary.

ALLIANCE OF FREE DEMOCRATS

(Szabad Demokratak Szovetsege; SzDSz)

The Alliance of Free Democrats initially emerged in the 1980s as a political group of many leading intellectuals disaffected with Communism. The Alliance was formally organized as a party in 1988 in opposition to the ruling Communist Party, and it aided with the transfer of power from the single-party Communist system in 1989. SzDSz supported pro-market reforms in the 1990s (turning away from the historical third way of "market Socialism" advocated for a time by Hungarian social scientists), and initially after 1989 it held to an anti-Communist line. This position, including support for such policies as compensating people who lost property in the Communist takeover, began to weaken in the party rhetoric, and SzDSz began to turn in a more liberal direction. Thus, despite its support for market reforms, SzDSz is not neoliberal party. Rather, SzDSz began to support mostly left-of-center policies, although it does not lean as far to the left as social democratic or Socialist parties. This made possible alliances and coalitions with the Hungarian Socialist Party, but this prospective tactic led to internal conflict when the issue came up in 1994. As a result of internal struggles, several leaders and members who wanted to pursue opposition to the Socialist Party switched their support to Fidesz. Regardless, relations between the Socialists and those remaining in SzDSz became

strained in the second half of the 1990s, until the 2002 coalition.

SzDSz enjoys modest electoral support, counting on Hungary's emerging middle class of professionals and entrepreneurs, as well as intellectuals. This has not helped stop SzDSz's political fortunes from tumbling, partly because there was no new cohort of younger leaders ready to carry the party forward in its political development. Despite its small number of seats (20) and previous tensions with the Socialists, SzDSz entered into a ruling coalition with the Socialists after the 2002 elections.

CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S PARTY (CDPP)

(Keresztèny Demokrata Nèppàrt)

The Christian Democratic People's Party, one of the members of the 1990–94 ruling coalition, claims to support Christian values and support pro-market ideology and reforms. Based in Christian beliefs, the CDPP makes individual freedom a central tenet of its political program. The other basic elements of its program are a state led by Christian ideals, parliamentary democracy, and sovereignty of the people. While CDPP does support some form of social safety net, especially for those most likely to be hurt by economic transformation, it also staunchly supports private property, especially in the agricultural sector, where it believes small private farming should be the foundation. In the 1998 elections, support for the Christian Democrats dropped considerably—they did not gain any seats—and by 2002 they appeared to be a spent force. Part of this may be due to other parties (such as Fidesz) taking up positions close to Christian democracy but from a stronger position in employing more forceful rhetoric and in fielding more attractive party personalities.

ALLIANCE OF YOUNG DEMOCRATS

(Magyar Polgàri Pàrt; Fidesz)

The Alliance of Young Democrats was formed in 1992 by young intellectuals and "yuppie"-type political aspirants as a counter to other parties. The Fidesz, however, had difficulty finding a platform that both its elite and the population at large would support. The party has supported pro-market reforms, in particular, rapid privatization and a state economic role reduced to promoting private growth. Early on, the Fidesz was left-leaning and popular, enabling it to act as an effective opposition party against the MDF-dominated ruling coalition.

However, in preparation for the 1994 elections, party leaders tried to re-create the party's ideological platform, leading to a split between pro-market reformers (headed by Viktor Orban) and another group of reformers (headed by Gabor Fodor) who preferred a balance between market reforms and economic and social justice. After the split, in which Orban successfully gained control to define the party platform, Fodor and his followers abandoned the Fidesz for the SzDSz—both because the AFD platform was similar and because Orban had the reputation of being a strong-armed political leader who could not well accommodate different views. As a result of the split and defection, the Fidesz's star dimmed in the 1994 elections.

By 1998 and 2002 Fidesz's fortunes changed, mostly because Orban successfully changed the nature of the party. He replaced the party's initial liberal ideology with right-wing conservatism, more nationalism, and occasional Christian themes, tapping into the rising wave of right-wing nationalist sentiments that spread through segments of Eastern European populations toward the end of the 1990s. Fidesz's new popularity translated into 148 seats in 1998 and 164 in 2002. However, it has not been able to form a government, even in alliance with the Democratic Forum in 2002.

HUNGARIAN DEMOCRATIC FORUM

(Magyar Demokrata Fòrum; MDF)

MDP emerged as an informal opposition movement in 1987 that pursued nationalist rhetoric and stressed the possibility of a Hungarian third way between Socialism and capitalism (for a time popular among Hungarian academics).

The Democratic Forum was the winner of the 1990 parliamentary elections and the center of the ruling coalition from 1990 to 1994. MDF was the group most involved with Hungary's initial transition from Communism, acting as the major opposition to the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party and forging the creation of parliamentary democratic politics through political negotiation with the Communists. The MDF has supported overall economic and political change, but not through reforms so radical that they would destabilize society and bring social catastrophe. MDF has supported Hungarian traditions and in this way has been democratic, nationalist, and Christian and has opposed all forms of extremism on the Left and Right. In fact, the

MDF supported the idea of gradualist market reform, although gradualism was softened somewhat in the debates with the Independent Smallholders over property compensation.

MDF policies in 1990–94 included slow privatization (privatizing 15 percent of state-owned enterprises), unemployment support and retraining, encouragement of small business, and promotion of foreign investment. Hence, the MDF tempered market reforms with policies of social support. In 1996, after a national convention to decide the party's ideological tone for the future, the MDF split in two—between those who wanted a turn to the right (pro-market reform, moderate nationalism, and ties with the smaller and more extremist Hungarian Truth and Life Party) and a more center-right group. The center-right members left the MDF, thus reducing the MDF presence in the National Assembly to 19 deputies, and formed the Hungarian Democratic People's Party. MDF has never been able to recover from the split, and MDF still has traits of being a "movement" rather than a structured political party. Because of this its electoral fortunes remain on the wane. (The Hungarian Democratic People's Party never did gain much popularity, and so it has not acted as harmful competition to MDF.)

Minor Political Parties

Other small parties litter the Hungarian political scene. Some parties, such as the Independent Smallholders' Party (Független Kisgazda Pàrt; FKgP), have lost what political clout they once had. In the 1990s FKgP tried to set itself up as the major opposition party, putting it in competition with Fidesz. FKgP championed land reform, including returning land taken by the Communists in the 1940s to its original owners or some other form of compensation. Otherwise, FKgP generally espouses values and ideology similar to the Christian Democrats. Because FKgP could not expand on its base of small farmers and strident anti-Communists, it has seen its political fortunes fall. It was also hurt by leader Joszef Torgyan's harsh rhetoric in opposition to post-Socialist reformers. As a sign of its collapse, the party received just 0.8 percent of the vote in 2002.

Three other minor parties are Hungarian Justice and Life Party, Center Party, and the Workers' Party. Hungarian Justice and Life was founded in 1993 when its leader was ejected from the Hungarian Democratic Forum. This party promotes xenophobic, nationalist rhetoric (sometimes with anti-Semitic sentiments). While it did not overcome the electoral barrier, it has obtained a better showing than all other minor parties. This result reflects the nationalist wave that spread across Eastern Europe at the end of the 1990s, affecting Poland (e.g., Samoobrona) and Romania (Greater Romanian Party). The Center Party is a more recent phenomenon, emerging in the 2002 elections (although unable to overcome the electoral barrier) to try to capture the center of Hungarian politics. The Workers' Party is a marginal leftist group that caters to nostalgia for Communism and supports a Socialist-style welfare state. The Workers' Party has played a largely insignificant role in parliamentary politics, but it does shore up an important position in the political spectrum by catering to the radical Socialist Left.

Other Political Forces

One prop of the Communist regime was the armed forces, prepared and backed by Moscow to maintain the Communist Party in power. Since the collapse of Communism, however, the armed forces have remained passive and outside politics. Trade unions as well have not been powerful actors. This is due partly because of historical legacies: unions were co-opted and controlled by the Communist Party and rendered impotent, and they did not regain power after the collapse of Communism. The European Union likely will exert some force over Hungarian politics in the future. It already has led to relaxation of visa requirements vis-à-vis Western Europe, but uniformity with EU directives and policies on such matters as civil rights, economics (such as customs laws, monetary and budgetary policy, and the like), and others will increase with further integration into the European Union.

National Prospects

Relative to other former Communist countries, Hungary seems well on its way to creating a well-functioning democracy and market economy. The legacy of Socialist economic reforms made the transformation of the Hungarian economy, particularly the creation of a small entrepreneurial sector, much easier than elsewhere, and the return of Socialists to power did not bring populism and economic decline but the opposite: new economic reforms. Hungary's political system does not suffer from the problems faced elsewhere in the former Communist bloc: ethnic disputes (Romania), overly ambitious leaders

holding levers of power (Belarus), institutional bias for one branch that can endanger democracy (Russia), or hatred for the past hindering cooperation in the present (Poland).

Hungary does have one particular problem, however, stemming from its electoral system. A "well-functioning democracy" (as currently understood in the West) fulfills three functions: political justice, chance for negotiations, and some degree of predictability (although not absolute). Voters must be able to have some idea of what outcome their voting will have; political participants must have the possibility to negotiate in order to avoid losses; and voting must bring some degree of justice and legitimacy. This three-way interaction presents the possibility of contradictions, which has happened in Hungary.

To ensure their own continued existence in politics, party elites negotiated an electoral system that, through individual races, county lists, and a national list, gives them opportunities to remain on the political scene. Such a negotiated electoral contract assuaged the worries of elites; however, the electoral system that resulted has run aground of the other two assumptions of democracy. The electoral system is thoroughly confusing, and so it is nearly impossible for the average (or above-average) Hungarian to figure out just what will happen if he or she and others vote a certain way. Further, such a system has unexpected consequences, making political justice difficult: if voters do not want a certain party to be represented, then that party has no fundamental right to representation, yet the system was created in part to make sure that parties have every chance of returning to the parliament.

However, this point aside, Hungary's future prospects appear brighter than those of many other Eastern European countries. The economy remains one of the more attractive to foreign investment, especially given privatization and an orientation both to exports and to integration with the European economy. Hungary's joining NATO in 1999 and its accession into the European Union in 2004 were two further links cementing relations with the West.

Also, given the absence of strong nationalist or ethnic feeling and the absence of popular and mass-mobilizing nationalist parties, Hungary does not suffer from internal political and ethnic strife, which has been problematic in other countries. Finally, Hungary appears to have turned away from the Communist past in two senses. First, even the Hungarian Socialists have embraced market reforms, much more so than Socialist parties elsewhere; while the degree of the human face on capitalism differs from party to party, all appear to be in agreement on the need for a market economy. Second, Hungarian politicians appear not only to be playing by the rules (based on the idea of a rule of law) but also to be appealing to a sense of political community. While political criticism has been present and sometimes radical, for the most part Hungarian politics does not exhibit the same degree of polarization as seen in Russia, Romania, or Bulgaria.

Hungary has seen a rise in right-wing nationalism and even xenophobia and racism, but its impact on party politics has been more limited than in Romania, Russia, or Poland, where ethnic tensions persist and have become institutionalized in extreme parties (e.g., in Romania) or internal war (e.g., in Chechnya) or where intense anti-Communism has combined with conservative religious sentiments to create a potential divide within the country (e.g., in Poland). Closer to the outcome in Bulgaria, Hungarian parties have managed to contain the spread of right-wing extremism, racism, and xenophobia. (As well, Hungary's economic recovery has lessened tensions over economic resources.) Before the fall of Communism, Hungary was singled out as the bright star of the Eastern bloc, and, in the aftermath of 1989, despite bumps and obstacles on the road to reform, it remains a bright star.

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REPUBLIC OF ICELAND

(Lýðveldið Ísland)

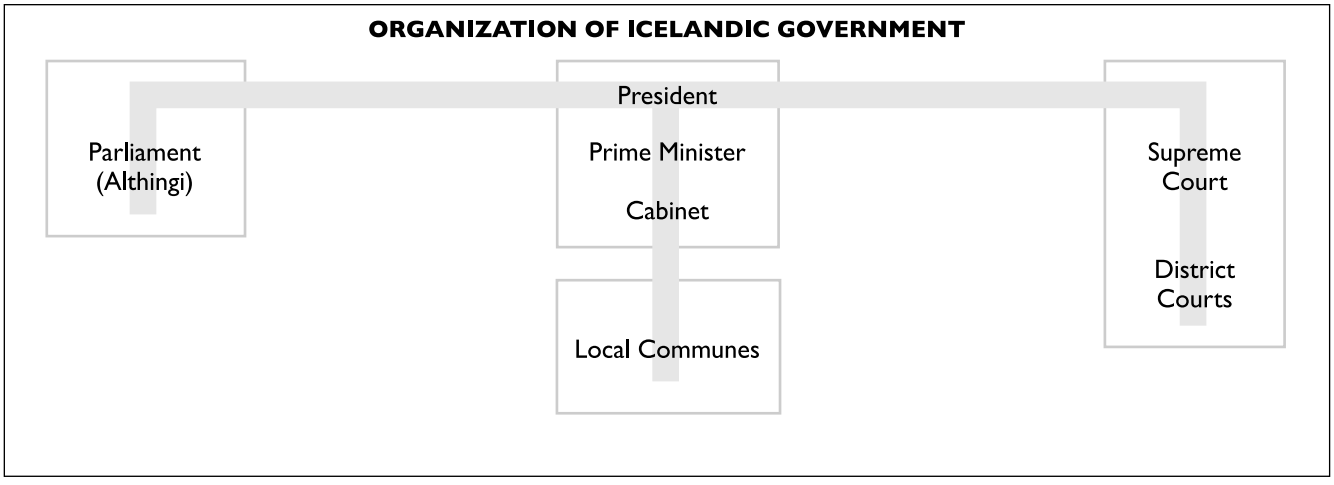
By Ólafur Th. Hardarson, Ph.D.

Iceland is an island in the North Atlantic with some 300,000 inhabitants. The country was settled in the ninth and 10th centuries, mainly from Norway. The settlers founded a commonwealth without a king or executive power. Its central institution, which had legislative and judicial powers, was the Althingi, founded in 930. In 1262 the country came under rule by the Norwegian king. When Norway and Denmark united under the Danish Crown in 1380, Iceland became a Danish dependency. The Althingi gradually lost its legislative function, and in 1662 the Danish king obtained absolute power. In 1800 the Althingi was abolished, having functioned mainly as a judicial body for centuries. It was reestablished in 1845 as a consultative assembly to the Danish king.

In 1874 the king "gave" the Icelanders a constitution, which granted the Althingi legislative and financial powers, while the king retained an effective veto. Home rule in 1904 granted the Icelanders authority in most domestic affairs with the establishment of an Icelandic administration headed by a minister, responsible to the Althingi. Iceland became a sovereign state in 1918 but remained in a union with Denmark under the king until 1944, when it adopted its present republican constitution.

The System of Government

Iceland is a parliamentary republic and a unitary state. It has a unicameral parliament, the Althingi.



EXECUTIVE

The president (forseti), who is elected directly by the people every four years, has mainly ceremonial duties, while the executive power in fact belongs to the cabinet, which ususally represents a majority coalition of two or more parties and is led by the prime minister. The president can, however, play some political role if the bargaining process of a new coalition government becomes difficult, and has done so on a few occasions. According to the constitution, the president has the right to refuse to countersign a statute, which then shall go to a referendum. This clause had never been used and was widely considered to be a dead letter, when President Ólafur Ragnar Grímsson refused to sign a new (and very unpopular) media law in 2004, creating a major controversy in Icelandic politics. The government withdrew the new law without a referendum, announcing that the government would attempt to get an agreement on constitutional changes during the current electoral term.

LEGISLATURE

The Icelandic parliament, Althingi, was made a unicameral parliament in 1991, having previously been divided into an Upper Chamber and a Lower Chamber since 1874. The Althingi has 63 members, elected in a general election for a term of four years. During this period the Althingi can be dissolved at any given time, and a new election held. This is done by a decree of the president, acting upon the advice of the prime minister, who in practice dissolves the Althingi only with the approval of all coalition partners in the cabinet. Since 1944 there have been 18 general elections, with an average term of around 3½ years.

Formally, the Althingi is the most powerful institution in the Icelandic political system. It can make law on any subject it chooses (within the limits set by the constitution), it makes and breaks governments, it can make any changes it likes on the draft budget, and it elects a considerable number of people to various important boards and committees. In practice, however, the political parties are the most important units in the political system, and most policy decisions, as well as major decisions on government coalition formations, are taken by their parliamentary groups rather than the party organizations.

While the cabinet has increasingly played a major role in policy formation—in 2000–01, 91 percent of passed bills were government bills—the Althingi still retains considerable power vis-à-vis the administration. Government bills are scrutinized by the parliamentary groups of the government coalition before being presented to the assembly. Since Iceland became a founding member of the European Economic Area in 1994, an increasing part of legislation stems from Brussels.

JUDICIARY

The Icelandic court system consists of only two levels of courts, eight district courts (héradsdómur) and the Supreme Court (Haestiréttur). These courts have jurisdiction in both civil and criminal matters. The rules of procedure are largely based on Scandinavian and German principles.

The Supreme Court, established in 1920, can declare a statute unconstitutional and has done so on a few occasions. The judges are appointed for life by the president, acting upon the advice of the minister of justice.

Two special courts have a limited jurisdiction. The High Court of State (Landsdómur) can impeach cabinet ministers, but this court has not convened since it was established in 1905. The Labor Court (Félagsdómur) tries cases relating to laws on trade unions and employers' associations.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The functions and financial revenues of local governments are mainly decided by law. The basic units are communes (*sveitarfélög*), which elect their own councils (mainly by proportional representation using the d'Hondt formula). The local communes (101 in 2005) vary greatly in size: The capital Reykjavík has some 100,000 inhabitants, whereas the population in other communes varies from around 50 to 17,000. In recent years, the government has tried to unify communes voluntarily, in order to give local governments increased responsibilities, but with limited success so far. Nevertheless, unification by legislation has been ruled out, while in 1996 the responsibilities of local governments were greatly increased by handing over the running of the elementary schools to them. Current government proposals aim at reducing the number of local communes to 39.

The Electoral System

Important changes of the electoral system took place by a constitutional change in 1999 and subsequent changes in electoral law in 2000.

Since 1934 the constitution had contained a detailed description of the electoral system, including, among other matters, the boundaries and the number of MPs of individual constituencies. The system had been very slow in responding to population changes, despite constitutional amendments in 1942, 1959 and 1983. This resulted in a huge overrepresentation of the countryside. In 1999 the 67 percent of voters living in the urban southwestern areas elected only a minority of the MPs (31 out of 63). Due to a very complicated electoral system, however, the number of MPs for each party had been quite proportional to their national vote since the constitutional change of 1983.

The major aims of the 1999 changes were to reduce the overrepresentation of the countryside and to simplify the electoral system. Future improvements were also made easier as some important aspects of the electoral system are no longer subject to constitutional change.

The following aspects of the electoral system are now specified by the constitution: The number of MPs (63), proportionally elected for a four-year term, is unchanged. Instead of eight constituencies with constitutionally defined boundaries, the number of constituencies is reduced to six or seven: their exact number and boundaries are to be decided by law. Each constituency, however, shall have at least six seats, allocated on the basis of constituency results. Supplementary seats are to be allocated in order to make each party's number of seats proportional to the party's share of the national vote. However, a party now must obtain at least 5 percent of the national vote in order to obtain supplementary seats. Earlier, parties could obtain supplementary seats if they had at least one member elected in a constituency. After each election, the National Election Board shall calculate the number of registered voters per seat in each constituency (including supplementary seats). If this number turns out to be half or less compared to any other constituency, the National Election Board shall change the number of seats in these constituencies in order to decrease the discrepancy—except if a constituency is down to the minimum of six seats. Changes of constituency boundaries and allocation rules can now be amended by electoral law, but only by an increased majority of two-thirds in the Althingi. It should be noted, however, that a simple majority in the Althingi can, by law, reduce the number of seats in any constituency to six if it so chooses.

According to the electoral law passed in 2000, the number of constituencies shall be six. Three of these are in the urban Southwest: two Reykjavík constituencies, and the southwestern Reykjavík suburbs. The number of constituencies in the countryside is reduced from six to three: the Northwest, the Northeast, and the South. The boundaries are defined by law, except the boundaries between the two Reykjavík constituencies: when an election is called, the National Election Board shall draw those boundaries in such a way that the number of voters per seat in both constituencies is approximately equal.

The law also decides that 54 of the 63 seats shall be allocated on the basis of constituency results. The nine remaining seats are supplementary seats, fixed to particular constituencies. All six constituencies obtain nine constituency seats. The two Reykjavík constituencies and the Southwest Reykjavík suburbs each also obtain two supplementary seats, while each of the three constituencies in the countryside obtain one such seat.

The allocation rule in constituencies is changed. Before the 1987 election, the d'Hondt rule had been replaced by LR-Hare, in order to increase the possibility of small parties to obtain one of the four or five seats on offer in the regional constituencies, and thus reducing the need for supplementary seats. As all constituencies now contain nine constituency seats, this was no longer deemed necessary and the d'Hondt rule was adopted again. For the same reason only nine supplementary seats—instead of 13 before—are thought sufficient to secure proportionality between the parties. The allocation of the supplementary seats between the parties is based on the d'Hondt rule as before.

Those changes are quite important, as they greatly reduced malapportionment in the Icelandic electoral system. In the 2003 Althingi election, the majority of voters living in the urban Southwest for the first time elected the majority of MPs (33 out of 63). However, the three regional constituencies, containing around 38 percent of the voters, elected 48 percent of the MPs.

The voter can cast his or her vote only for a list. While changes in the rank order of candidates on the chosen list are allowed, the rules make it unlikely that such changes, even made by a substantial proportion of the voters, will alter the ranking. Elections take place on a Saturday by secret ballot. With many polling places in each constituency it is easy for the voters to get to the polls. The ballot papers are counted by constituencies. Registration is automatic, and suffrage is universal for adults 18 years of age or older. Absentee ballots can be cast in the eight-week period preceding polling day. Turnout in Althingi elections has been stable around 90 percent in recent decades.

If an elected member cannot attend Althingi sessions for at least two consecutive weeks, his place is taken

(temporarily, if the member returns) by the next person on the party list. Thus, by-elections are unnecessary.

The president is elected by direct, simple majority vote for a four-year term. The first president, Sveinn Björnsson, was elected by the Althingi in 1944. In 1945 and 1949 Björnsson was the only candidate for nationwide direct election, so no actual election was held. When Björnsson died, in 1952, the Independence Party and the Progressive Party together supported one candidate, who was defeated by an Althingi member from the small Social Democratic Party, Ásgeir Ásgeirsson, who maintained that the people, not the parties, should choose the president. The political parties never again attempted to put up a candidate or take a stand in presidential elections. In 1968 the director of the National Museum, Kristján Eldjárn, was elected, and in 1980 the director of the Reykjavík Theater, Vigdís Finnbogadóttir, became the first popularly elected female head of state in the world. In 1996 a former leader of the left-socialist People's Alliance, Ólafur Ragnar Grímsson, somewhat surprisingly won the presidential race. His victory was thought clearly based on personal merit, rather than political grounds.

Until 2004 a sitting president wishing to be reelected had only been opposed once (in 1988), when Finnbogadóttir easily beat a candidate from a fringe political group. In the 2004 presidential election, two candidates opposing President Grímsson obtained jointly 14 percent of the valid votes. In addition, 21 percent of those turning up at the polling booths turned in a blank ballot, probably to protest the president's refusal to countersign a statute for the first time in the history of the republic. As of 2005 the prime minister was Halldór Ásgrímsson.

The Party System

ORIGINS OF THE PARTIES

In the 19th and early 20th centuries the question of Iceland's relationship with Denmark dominated Icelandic politics. The first political parties emerged at the turn of the 20th century, when home rule and control of the executive were in sight. Those cadre-style parties were mainly based on different attitudes toward tactics in the independence struggle.

The independence question was largely resolved in 1918, and in the 1916–30 period the party system was completely transformed. Economic and class-related issues became the focal point of politics, as four new parties emerged: the Social Democratic Party, the agrarian Progressive Party, the conservative Independence Party, and the Communist Party. The four-party format came to dominate Icelandic politics, but on occasions short-lived minor parties have entered the Althingi, especially since the 1970s. However, only one of those parties, the Women's Alliance, has survived more than two terms.

A major restructuring of the left wing of the Icelandic party system took place in the 1999 election. The old Social Democratic Party, the left socialist People's Alliance, the Women's Alliance, and the People's Movement formed a new social democratic party, the Social Democratic Alliance, which subsequently became the second largest party in Icelandic politics. The more traditional left socialists from the People's Alliance, however, joined hands with some environmentalists and some prominent members of the Women's Alliance and formed a new party, the Left-Greens, which had six members elected to the Althingi, thus carrying, on the left, the socialist banner in Icelandic politics and continuing the four-party format as the core of the Icelandic party system.

The left-right dimension is still by far the most important in Icelandic politics. While foreign policy also became a major cleavage after World War II, those issues are closely related to the left-right spectrum in the minds of voters. In the 2003 election study the voters ranked the five parties that won parliamentary seats from left to right (on a 0–10 scale) in the following manner: Left Greens (2.3), Social Democrats (4.1), Liberal Party (5.5), Progressive Party (6.0), Independence Party (8.3)

THE PARTIES IN LAW

The right of association, including the right to form political parties, is guaranteed in the constitution. There is no law on how political parties operate or on how they select candidates, and they do not have to disclose their finances. It is easy to get a list on the ballot: all that is needed is a formal recommendation by 100 to 380 registered voters.

PARTY ORGANIZATION

Since the 1930s the major parties have formally been mass parties organized on a regional basis. The local organizations elect representatives to the party's constituency council and to the party convention. The party convention elects a central national council and usually also the party leader. The institutionalization of the Icelandic parties has, however, probably always been weaker than among their counterparts in Northern

Europe. Criteria for membership have been unclear, as membership fees have rarely been collected on a regular basis and membership files have been inaccurate. The parliamentary groups have been much stronger than the party organizations regarding policy making, and the position of the leadership is quite strong. Party conferences tend to confirm decisions made by the leadership. Usually that leadership is reelected, although challenges to the leadership, usually by a competing leadership group, have been successful at times.

Since the 1970s primary elections have been the major method of selecting candidates. Many of these primaries have been open, that is, not confined to party members, as clearly indicated by the fact that on several occasions the number of people taking part in a party's primary in a constituency has greatly exceeded the party's number of votes in the following Althingi elections. Some primaries, formally confined to party members, have also in fact been open, due to the unclear membership criteria of the parties and the fact that at times people have been able to join the party at the primary polling place. The primaries have clearly weakened party organizations and undermined party cohesiveness.

CAMPAIGNING

Election campaigns are waged to a large extent on a national level through the mass media. In an increasingly competitive and nonpartisan media market, candidates from all parties present their views in articles in the national newspapers and take part in discussion programs on television and radio. The impact of local party papers and rallies has decreased. On the other hand, political advertisements have come to play a major role.

While the parties are not required by law to reveal anything concerning their income and expenditures, only the Independence Party refuses to give any information on party finances. The information the other parties present is, however, often incomplete and can be misleading. Nevertheless it is clear that membership fees have rarely been strictly collected. Instead, the parties have relied on lotteries and financial support from individuals, interest groups, and firms—some companies are known to donate to all parties. But this kind of fund-raising by the parties has become relatively less important in recent years, as public grants are now the main source of party income, at least in most cases. State support has greatly increased and is proportionally (per vote) much higher than in neighboring countries. The main reasons for increasing party expenditure are more professional and expensive election campaigns, including extensive political advertising in newspapers, on radio, and—most important—on television since 1987.

INDEPENDENT VOTERS

Since the early 1970s electoral volatility has been high. The gains and losses of parties in elections are often quite large. In the elections of 1987, 1991, 1995, and 2003 around one-third of the voters claimed to have switched parties between elections. The number of voters claiming no party sympathy whatsoever increased from 19 percent in 1983 to 29 percent in 1999, but dropped again to 27 percent in 2003.

ALTHINGI ELECTION RESULTS, 1987–2003 (PERCENTAGES OF TOTAL VALID VOTES AND NUMBERS OF ELECTED MEMBERS)

	1995	1999	2003
Independence Party (IP)	37.1 (25)	40.7 (26)	33.7 (22)
Progressive Party (PP)	23.2 (15)	18.4 (12)	17.7 (12)
Social Democratic Alliance (SDA)	26.8 (17)	31.0 (20)	—
Left Greens	9.1 (6)	8.8 (5)	—
Liberal Party	4.2 (2)	7.4 (4)	—
Social Democratic Party (SDP)	11.4 (7)	—	—
People's Alliance (PA)	14.3 (9)	—	—
Women's Alliance	4.9 (3)	—	—
People's Movement	7.1 (4)	—	—
Citizen's Party	—	—	—
Others	1.9 (0)	0.8 (0)	1.5 (0)
Total Number of Seats	63	63	63
Total Valid Votes	165,043	165,727	183,172
Percent Turnout	87.4%	84.1%	87.7%

Major Political Parties

INDEPENDENCE PARTY (IP)

(Sjálfstaedisflokkurinn)

The Independence Party (IP) was founded in 1929 with a merger of the Conservative Party (founded 1924) and the Liberal Party (founded 1926). Partly because of Iceland's unusually high degree of ethnic, religious, and linguistic homogeneity, the IP was able to unite the right-of-center opponents of the SDP and the agrarian PP in one party, which has remained the largest party in the country from its foundation, usually polling around 40 percent of the votes. However, in the 1930s the IP's strength among the electorate was not reflected in seats held in the Althingi and the party spent most of its first years in opposition. After a change in the electoral system in 1942, the IP became "the natural party of government" with all of its leaders serving as prime ministers: Ólafur Thors (1942, 1944–47, 1949, 1953–56, 1959–63), Bjarni Benediktsson (1963–70), Jóhann Hafstein (1970–71), Geir Hallgrímsson (1974–78), Thorsteinn Pálsson (1987–88), and Davíd Oddsson (1991–2004).

A serious schism emerged in the party in 1980, when the deputy leader, Gunnar Thoroddsen, supported by a few IP members of the Althingi, formed a coalition government with the PP and the PA, leaving the bulk of the party, including party leader Hallgrímsson, in opposition. Thoroddsen and his supporters remained in the party, however; and in 1983 Thoroddsen left politics, while his supporters were all reelected as Althingi members for the IP.

The IP split in 1987, when a popular patronage politician, Albert Gudmundsson, formed the Citizen's Party just before an Althingi election. Gudmundsson had been forced to resign as a minister, due to tax evasion while serving as minister of finance. The election results were a disaster for the IP, as the party polled only 27.2 percent of the votes, whereas the new Citizen's Party had seven members elected to the Althingi. During the next term, however, Gudmundsson left politics for an ambassadorial post in Paris, the Citizen's Party disintegrated, and the IP recovered its previous electoral strength in 1991.

The IP has emphasized that it is a party of independent individuals without strong party discipline, but it has been the best-organized party in Iceland in terms of electoral machinery and national coverage. The party has generally combined strong leadership with a notable tolerance in party discipline. Individual IP members of Althingi have—without sanctions—voted against their government on crucial issues (such as Icelandic membership in the European Economic Area in 1993), refused to support a government headed by their party (in 1944), and even formed a coalition government strongly opposed by their party (in 1980).

Separate organizations for women and youth are affiliated to the IP. Separate associations for working-class members have also been organized. The party is a member of the European Democratic Union (EDU) and associated with the Nordic conservative parties. The women's organization is affiliated with the Nordic Association of Conservative Women while the youth organization is a member of the Democrat Youth Community of Europe (DEMYC), European Young Conservatives, International Young Democrat Union, and Nordic Conservative Youth.

In domestic policy, the IP has combined elements from liberalism and conservatism and emphasized nationalism and opposition to class conflict. In the 1930s, while the party was in opposition, the emphasis in party policy was clearly directed toward economic liberalism and private initiative. After the war the IP became more pragmatic, as the party accepted the welfare state and participated in governments that greatly increased government involvement in the unstable and overpoliticized economy. The IP has quite successfully avoided an anti–working-class image.

In the 1960s a coalition government of the IP and the SDP abolished strict import controls and introduced free trade as the main principle of external economic policy. Iceland acceded to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade and joined the European Free Trade Association, and the government also opened for foreign investment in power-intensive industry. Since the 1980s the IP has emphasized further liberalization of the economy, following international trends as the other parties have also done to varying degrees. But the IP has been cautious in its approach, for instance, supporting active government involvement in the bargaining process in the labor market, successfully trying to maintain economic stability. In a coalition government with the SDP in 1991–95, the IP resisted SDP demands for liberalizing agricultural imports. While Iceland joined the European Economic Area during that coalition, the IP opposes an application for Icelandic membership of the European Union.

In security policy the IP has been the most consistent supporter of Icelandic membership in NATO and of the NATO base in Keflavík. Since 1995 the IP has, along with its coalition partner the PP, carried out a

further liberalization of the economy. Most important has been the privatization of the financial sector.

The IP claims around 34,000 members. According to the Icelandic election studies of 1999 and 2003, the number of voters considering themselves IP members numbers around 20,000. A part of the discrepancy can probably be explained by people who have formally joined the IP in order to participate in primaries but nevertheless do not consider themselves members.

The IP has a remarkably weak class profile for a conservative party. In 1999 the party enjoyed the support of 40 percent of unskilled workers, 41 percent of skilled manual workers and middle-class professionals, while 48 percent of lower non-manual workers and 56 percent of employers and higher managerials voted for the party. The party's weakest following in any occupational group—by far—was among farmers (25 percent). In 1995 the party almost closed a gender gap, as the party's support was only 2 percent higher among men than among women, while this figure had been 9 percent and 14 percent in 1987 and 1991. The gender gap however reemerged in 1999 (5 percent) and in 2003 (7 percent).

The IP has traditionally been stronger in the urban Southwest (37.4 percent of the vote in 2003) than in the regions (27.3 percent).

After the long period (1934–70) of the strong leadership of Ólafur Thors and Bjarni Benediktsson, the IP suffered from rather weak and divided leadership for two decades. A serious leadership struggle took place in the 1970s and the early 1980s, especially between the party leader, Geir Hallgrímsson, and his deputy, Gunnar Thoroddsen. That crisis was solved in 1983, when Thorsteinn Pálsson became leader. Pálsson's leadership was generally considered weak, as exemplified by his short-lived coalition government in 1987–88. He became the first IP leader to lose his post in the leader election at the party convention.

Davíd Oddsson (born 1948), then deputy leader of the IP, successfully challenged Pálsson for the party leadership just before the Althingi election of 1991. A few weeks later he became a member of Althingi for Reykjavík, as well as prime minister in a coalition he formed with the SDP. After the 1995 election he continued as prime minister, now in a coalition with the PP. Oddsson, educated as a lawyer, had become mayor of Reykjavík in 1982, when the IP regained a majority in the city council, which it lost in 1978, having been in power since the party was founded. The party kept a comfortable majority in the municipal election of 1986, and increased that majority in 1990. Despite winning the party leadership contest in a close vote in 1991, Oddsson quickly obtained a firm grip on the party and became generally considered a strong leader.

In a historical perspective, the period between 1971 and 1990 was a difficult one for the IP. The party spent a longer time in opposition than in government, had several bad results at the polls, and suffered from internal disputes and weak leadership. Under the strong leadership of Oddsson the party's fortunes changed for the better. Oddsson became the longest serving prime minister in Icelandic history (1991–2004), first in a coalition with the Social Democrats, but from 1995 with the PP. In the 2003 election the IP's strength was reduced form 40.7 percent in 1999 to 33.7 percent. The government coalition nevertheless continued with a reduced majority, but as a part of a new coalition deal between the IP and the PP, the PP-leader, Foreign Minister Halldór Ásgrímsson, took over the prime minister's post in September 2004, when Oddsson became foreign minister.

PROGRESSIVE PARTY, PP

(Framsóknarflokkurinn)

The Progressive Party (PP) was founded as a parliamentary group in 1916. In its first years, the party was almost exclusively a farmer's party, and it had close ties to the cooperative movement. Since 1923 the PP has on average polled around 25 percent of the vote, which made it for decades the second largest party in the country. In the last 25 years the PP has however polled under 20 percent in six out of eight elections.

Until 1987 the PP was always stronger in the Althingi than among the voters, due to the electoral system. This was especially pronounced before 1942 and contributed to the strong position of the party in the coalition system of that period: from 1917 to 1942, it spent only five years in opposition and held the premiership from 1927 to 1942.

In the 1940s the party lost its role as "the natural party of government" to the IP. Nevertheless, the PP has chaired seven coalitions in the postwar period, and, since 1971, it has been in opposition for only four years.

While the PP was clearly a cadre party at the beginning, it developed the formal characteristics of a mass party in the 1930s.

The PP is a member of the Liberal International, and it is affiliated to the association of center parties in the Nordic Council. The party's youth organization is a member of the International Federation of Liberal and Radical Youth (IFLRY) and the Nordic Youth

Center Association (NCF). While the party's women's organization is not a formal member of any international organization, it has informal cooperation with its Nordic counterparts, as well as inside the Liberal International.

The PP may be labeled a center or an agrarian party in terms of domestic policy. For decades the party's aims were clearly the defense of the interests of farmers and the more sparsely populated regions. While the PP has supported some of the liberalizing economic measures of recent years, it was critical of foreign investment and EFTA membership in the 1960s and has been the major champion of extensive government programs on rural development. In 1993, half of the party's members of Althingi voted against the ratification of the treaty on the European Economic Area, while the other half abstained. While the PP has opposed an Icelandic application for membership in the European Union, party leader Halldór Ásgrímsson has stongly emphasized that such an application might be necessary in the near future.

The PP has supported Iceland's membership in NATO, but it has been critical of the Keflavík base and, at times, supported its removal.

The PP claims 9,300 members, while the Icelandic election study of 2003 suggests that around 7,000 voters consider themselves party members.

In its early decades the party's electoral support was almost exclusively in the rural areas. While the PP has been quite successful in broadening its electoral appeal, it nevertheless remains much stronger in the three regional constituencies (26.3 percent in 2003) than in the urban Southwest (12.7 percent).

The class profile of the PP is weak, except that it still enjoys 50 to 60 percent support among farmers, a group that, however, in numbers has been reduced to electoral insignificance.

Party leader Halldór Ásgrímsson (born 1947) was a university lecturer in business studies before he entered the Althingi for the East in 1974. He was minister of fisheries in 1983–91, minister of justice in 1988–89, and became foreign minister in 1995. Ásgrímsson had been deputy leader since 1980 when he took over the leadership post from Steingrímur Hermannsson in 1994. While Hermannsson, who left politics to become one of the three directors of the Central Bank, was widely considered to be opportunistic, anti-European, and leftist, Ásgrímsson is considered more center-right and more pro-European.

Since 1971 the PP has been a member of government coalitions except for four years. Ásgrímsson became prime minister in 2004.

SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC ALLIANCE (SDA)

(Samfylkingin)

In 1999 a major restructuring of the left wing of Icelandic politics took place when the old rivals, the Social Democratic Party (SDP) and the left socialist People's Alliance (PA) joined hands with the Women's Alliance and the People's Movement and formed an electoral alliance, which a year later became a formal party, the Social Democratic Alliance (SDA). A major characteristic of Icelandic politics in the 20th century had been that the SDP was one of the weakest social democratic parties in Europe (usually obtaining around 14 percent of the votes) while the PA was one of the stongest left socialist parties (around 17 percent of the votes). Numerous attempts to unite the left into one large social democratic party along Scandinavian lines had always failed. Now the attempt succeeded in the sense that, in its first election in 1999, the new Social Democrats (SDA) obtained 26.8 percent of the vote and became the second largest party, and in 2004 the party obtained 31 percent, thus becoming the first party apart from the IP since the 1930s to break the 30 percent barrier. On the other hand, the attempt to unite the left in one party failed, as the more orthodox left socialists formed a new party, the Left Greens, continuing the fourth main stream in Icelandic party politics.

The Social Democratic Party (SDP) had been founded in 1916 as the political arm of the labor movement. The party was organizationally tied to the Icelandic Federation of Labor (founded at the same time) until 1942.

The SDP was founded as a democratic socialist party and was clearly a working-class party. It maintained that politics were about economic distribution and the living conditions of the working class—a very radical conception in a period when politics was dominated by the struggle for independence from Denmark.

The SDP grew continuously in strength for its first two decades, and polled over 20 percent of the vote in 1934. The party lost some ground in the 1937 election, and from 1942 it was usually the smallest of the four major parties, receiving 14 to 16 percent of the vote. This history is in stark contrast to the development of the social democratic parties in Scandinavia. The socialist bloc in Iceland became smaller than in the other Nordic countries, and, until the formation of the Social Democratic Alliance in 1999, the Icelandic Social Democrats had been the smaller of the two

major socialist parties within that bloc (except in the 1987 and 1991 elections). This can partly be explained by the frequent splits the SDP suffered, losing its left wing each time.

The SDP first joined a coalition government (with the PP) in 1934, having supported a PP minority government in 1927–31. The party was in government for around two-thirds of the remaining part of the 20th century, holding the premiership in one majority coalition (Stefánsson, 1947–49) and two minority cabinets (Jónsson 1958–59; Gröndal 1979–80). The SDP worked with all other major parties in coalitions. Of special interest is the extraordinarily long coalition partnership of the SDP with the IP 1959–71, an unusual political combination by European standards.

After 1971 the SDP had mixed fortunes. While the party polled only around 10 percent of the votes in 1971 and 1974, it won a major victory in 1978 with 22 percent. After a split leading to the formation of the short-lived Alliance of Social Democrats, the SDP was again down to 11.7 percent in 1983. The party recovered in the elections of 1987 and 1991, receiving over 15 percent, but after yet another split and the emergence of the People's Movement, the SDP obtained only 11.4 percent of the vote in 1995.

From 1971 the SDP remained in opposition (except for 1978–80) until 1987. Since then the party was continuously a member of various government coalitions until 1995.

The People's Alliance (PA) was descended from the Communist Party and other breakaway groups from the SDP. The Communist Party was founded in 1930 by radical SDP members as an orthodox communist party and a member of Comintern. It won its first seats in the Althingi in 1937 with 8.5 percent of the vote. In line with Comintern policy, the Communists demanded that the SDP join it in a Popular Front, but the SDP main body refused. Again, the left wing of the SDP broke off and formed the United Socialist Party with the Communists in 1938. The new party became larger than the SDP in its first election in 1942 with 16.2 percent of the vote. The United Socialist Party was not a Comintern member, but it was clearly pro-Soviet in foreign policy, and most of its major leaders had been prominent Communists. The party held cabinet posts in a coalition with the IP and the SDP in 1944–47. In 1956, after another split in the SDP, the PA was created as a loose electoral alliance between the United Socialist Party and the former SDP group. The PA immediately took a role in the government coalition of 1956–58. After a decade out of power, the PA re-created itself as a formal political party in 1968 and the United Socialist Party was dissolved. The PA took part in the governing coalitions of 1971–74, 1978–79, 1980–83, and 1988–91. It never held the portfolios of prime minister, foreign affairs, or justice, but it was allotted the finance ministry both in 1980 and 1988.

The 1968 reorganization led to a split in the PA, led by former SDP leader Hannibal Valdimarsson and others, who formed the Union of Liberals and Leftists. This group had considerable success in 1971 (8.9 percent of the vote and five seats), largely at the expense of the SDP. The party lost seats in 1974 and disappeared from the Althingi in 1978.

The organization of the Social Democratic Alliance is similar to that of the other Icelandic parties, except that the leader is elected by all members in a postal vote. This method of selecting the leader had first been used by the People's Alliance in 1995. The old SDP had been the first formal mass party in Iceland and to some extent showed the way toward present party organization and intraparty democratic procedures.

Like the old SDP, the new SDA is a member of the Socialist International and the social democratic group in the Nordic Council. The party and its youth movement are also affiliated to various international and Nordic social democratic organizations. The People's Alliance was never affiliated with any international organizations but was a part of the left socialist group in the Nordic Council, a place that now has been taken over by the Left Greens.

The domestic policy of the Social Democratic Alliance is a fairly conventional version of European social democracy with a mix of market solutions and emphasis on the welfare system, and it is probably closer to the policy of Scandinavian social democrats than was the case with the old SDP. The domestic policy of the SDP had evolved along lines similar to other European social democratic parties: emphasis on nationalization and class struggle was dropped while adherence to the principles of the market economy, accompanied by a strong welfare state, became core issues of the party program. The fact that the SDP lost its left wing several times probably put its mark on party policy, which seemed closer to the political center than was the case with the Scandinavian social democrats. Since 1978 the SDP increasingly supported radical liberalization measures in the Icelandic economy, long marked by more state involvement and political patronage than has been common in Western Europe. Jón Baldvin Hannibalsson, SDP leader from 1984 to 1996 and minister of foreign affairs 1988 to 1995, led the Icelandic negotiations resulting in a membership of the European Economic Area in 1994. Before the 1995

election, the SDP—always the least nationalistic of the major parties—came out in favor of an Icelandic application for membership in the European Union—the only party to do so. Support for EU membership has become the European policy of the Social Democratic Alliance.

While the People's Alliance had clearly been farthest to the left on the Icelandic political spectrum, the party became more pragmatic in the last decades of the 20th century, abandoning its former socialist aims of extensive public ownership and increasingly accepting market solutions. The party—especially when in opposition—was nevertheless critical of many of the economic liberalization measures carried out in the 1980s and 1990s, and generally supported extensive public welfare services. Emphasis on environmental issues had also increased, just as was the case among left-socialist parties in Scandinavia.

The People's Alliance combined its socialist policies with a strong emphasis on nationalism. For decades, opposition to NATO membership and the U.S. military base in Keflavík formed a core of the party program, and those issues were among the most hotly debated in Icelandic politics. This was one of the major cleavages between the SDP and the left socialists, as the SDP was closest to the IP on the foreign policy dimension, supporting Icelandic membership in NATO and the base in Keflavík. From 1978, however, the People's Alliance participated in government coalitions without demanding radical changes in security policy and, in the 1990s, those issues were hardly raised by the party in the public debate. The People's Alliance was critical of foreign investments and opposed Icelandic membership in the European Union. In 1993 the PA—in opposition—voted against Icelandic membership in the European Economic Area, even though the party had been a member of the previous government that largely negotiated the treaty. Now the Left Greens have largely taken over the old left socialist foreign policy platform, including a strong emphasis on nationalism and opposition to EU membership.

The Social Democratic Alliance claims around 14,000 members, while the 2003 election survey indicates that around 8,000 voters consider themselves as members. In 1999 the party had a weak occupational profile, except that it was very weak among farmers (8 percent), as had been the case with the old SDP, and exceptionally strong among middle-class professionals, including public sector "caring" professions (36 percent)—as had been the case with the People's Alliance. The party had much stronger support among women than among men, both in 1999 (+11 percent) and 2003 (+13 percent).

In 2005 the party faces a leadership contest, as the present deputy leader, Ingibjörg Sólrún Gísladóttir, a popular former mayor of Reykjavík and the party's prime ministerial candidate in the 2003 election, has announced that she will challenge party leader Össur Skarphéðinsson for the leadership post before the next party convention.

LEFT GREENS

(Vinstrihreyfingin—grænt frambod)

The formation of the Left Greens in 1999 was the result of the attempt to unify the left in the Social Democratic Alliance. The idea of unifying the left was born out of the theory that its fragmentation had given the right-wing Independence Party a position of influence in Icelandic politics that could be broken by a unified party of the left. The end of the cold war and increasing acceptance of the market by the left generally was felt to facilitate such a move. Attempts to put forward joint lists in local elections, moreover, indicated that such cooperation might work. Negotiations on an electoral alliance of the left-wing parties began in 1997 and included the Social Democrats, the People's Alliance, and the Women's Alliance. After a difficult process of negotiations the three parties reached an agreement (in 1998) and put forward a joint platform for the upcoming election. The platform bore all the hallmarks of a difficult compromise, being intended to satisfy a broad spectrum of opinion, from fairly moderate social democrats to radical socialists. In the end it probably satisfied no one, being too vague to satisfy either those on the right or the radicals on the left. The latter, in fact, split away from the People's Alliance rather than go through with the unification and formed the Left Greens, a new party of left-socialists and environmentalists. The split in the People's Alliance was a serious blow to the Social Democratic Alliance, which could hardly claim to speak for the unified left as it set out to do.

The Left Greens were uninhibited by the sort of large-scale compromise out of which the Social Democratic Alliance grew. Under the assertive leadership of a former People's Alliance MP, Steingrímur Sigfússon, the Left Greens provided a clear-cut alternative for voters on the far left. Combining the traditional egalitarian values of the left with environmentalism and pacifism, the party had no difficulties in forming relatively clear policies on many of the issues that were giving the Alliance greatest difficulties. In many respects, the

Left Greens could be seen as the heir to the traditions of the People's Alliance—including opposition to the U.S. military base and NATO membership—even if the People's Alliance was formally part of the Alliance.

The Left Greens established themselves as a real party in the 1999 election, obtaining 9.1 percent of the votes and six MPs. The party consolidated itself in 2003, despite minor losses at the polls (8.8 percent and five MPs). The 1999 and 2003 Icelandic Election Studies make clear that, among voters, the Left Greens are considered the successor of the People's Alliance as the alternative farthest to the left in Icelandic politics. The party claims 1,300 members, a number confirmed by the 2003 election study. In 1999 the Left Greens had a remarkably weak occupational profile, obtaining 8 to 10 percent in all groups, including employers and higher managers. There was no gender gap in the following of the party, neither in 1999 nor 2003.

Minor Political Parties

Challenges to the four-party format of Icelandic politics have become more frequent in recent years. While most minor parties contending elections in the postwar period did not win seats, several short-lived parties have had members elected to the Althingi: the National Preservation Party in 1953 (2 members), the Union of Liberals and Leftists in 1971 (5) and 1974 (2), the Social Democratic Alliance in 1983 (4), the Citizen's Party in 1987 (7), the People's Movement in 1995 (4), and the Liberal Party in 1999 (2) and 2003 (4).

Only one new party, the Women's Alliance, showed more preservance, as it had members elected in four consecutive Althingi elections after its initial success in 1983. The party focused on women's issues and its policies were left-of-center. In 1987 the party doubled its share of the vote with 10.1 percent. While the party held its own in 1991 (8.4 percent), it suffered badly in 1995 (4.9 percent). The party had lost its most prominent leader in the local elections of 1994, when Ingibjörg Sólrún Gísladóttir left her Althingi seat in order to become mayor of Reykjavík after the victory of a joint list of all parties except the Independence Party. A feud concerning candidate selection, disagreements on policy, and the fact that the new party on the left wing, the People's Movement, was led by a popular female politician may also have contributed to the party's difficulties. Besides, women have had increasing success in the old parties. In 1998, for instance, 27 percent of Althingi members were female, while the corresponding figure was 5 percent when the Women's Alliance emerged. The Woman's Alliance joined the new Social Democratic Alliance in 1999. Some prominent members of the party, however, joined the Left Greens or quit politics.

Other Political Forces

Besides the political parties and the administration, major interest groups—increasingly independent of the political parties—play an important role in the political system. The interests of agriculture and fisheries have traditionally greatly influenced government policy. In recent decades, the Federation of Labor (ASÍ) and the Federation of Employers (VSÍ) have increased their influence on policy making, as governments have tended to offer them certain "policy packages" in return for moderate settlements and peace in the labor market. Interest groups have, for example, influenced legislation on the quota system in fisheries, agricultural policy, indexing of loans, welfare benefits, unemployment measures, mortgages, and taxation—such as the reduction of VAT on food from 24.5 percent to 14 percent.

National Prospects

After seven years of recession the economy started to improve in 1994 and has been booming since. For the first time in decades, economic stability and low inflation have been maintained for 15 years (since 1990), largely due to restraint in the labor market. Foreign investment in power-intensive industry has been increasing. Some Icelandic companies in the retail and financial sectors have been extremely successful abroad. Unemployment has been low. The economy, long characterized by excessive state involvement by Western European standards, has been greatly liberalized, and major privatization has taken place. Iceland became a founding member of the European Economic Area in 1994. The economic future looks bright and living standards can be expected to stay among the highest in the world.

In the last decades, the political parties have experienced decreasing power, increasing electoral volatility, and less internal cohesion. The scope for arbitrary decisions of individual politicians has decreased, partly due to increased professionalization of the administration, less state involvement in the economy, and the growth of critical and nonpartisan media. Despite a major restructuring of the left wing of Icelandic poli-

tics in 1999, the four party format nevertheless seems to have survived. The fact that a large social democratic party and a small left socialist party now constitute the left wing of the spectrum is, however, a major change, making the Icelandic system more similar to the Scandinavian party systems, and greatly changing the Icelandic game of government coalition formation.

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REPUBLIC OF INDIA

(Bharatiya Ganarajya)

By Stanley A. Kochanek, Ph.D.
Revised by Srikrishna Ayyangar



With a population of more than a billion in 2005, India is one of the poorest, most diverse, and most heterogenous countries in the world. Although Hinduism is the dominant religion, India contains all of the major world religions; it is subdivided into a myriad of castes; and it has 18 major languages plus a vast array of smaller languages, dialects, and tribal tongues. In its diversity and continental size, India is more like the multistate European Union than the more integrated and unified federal system in the United States.

The System of Government

India is a federal republic with a British-style parliamentary form of government. Over the past 50 years since independence, the governmental system has evolved from a highly centralized state dominated by one party to one that has become increasingly federalized, fragmented, and controlled by unstable multiparty coalitions and alliances.

Though its roots are much deeper, the contemporary Indian political system dates from August 15, 1947, when its long and unique struggle for independence from British rule finally succeeded. Independence brought partition on religious lines between secular but predominantly Hindu India and Muslim Pakistan.

Newly independent India drafted a constitution modeled on the British and other existing constitutions. The constitution, which entered into force on January 26, 1950, provides for a democratic republic, secular, parliamentary, and federal in character. It is one of the longest and most detailed written constitutions in the world and one of the most frequently amended.

EXECUTIVE

The president of the republic is the head of state and supreme commander of the military forces but exercises the executive power only formally. The president is elected to a five-year term by an electoral college composed of the elected members of both houses of the national Parliament and of the lower houses of the state legislatures. Voting is weighted to allow for population differences between the states. The president is supposed to be a nonpartisan figure, but in practice candidates have been elected only if they were acceptable to the prime minister.

From the beginning, the president was intended to exercise his or her power only with the closest advice of the prime minister and the cabinet. His primary role was to be symbolic, much in the manner of the British monarch, although there was considerable discussion of the extent of the president's discretionary powers. Any ambiguity was removed by the Forty-Second Amendment to the constitution in 1976 and the Forty-Fourth Amendment in 1978, which explicitly required

the president to act in accordance with the advice of the cabinet.

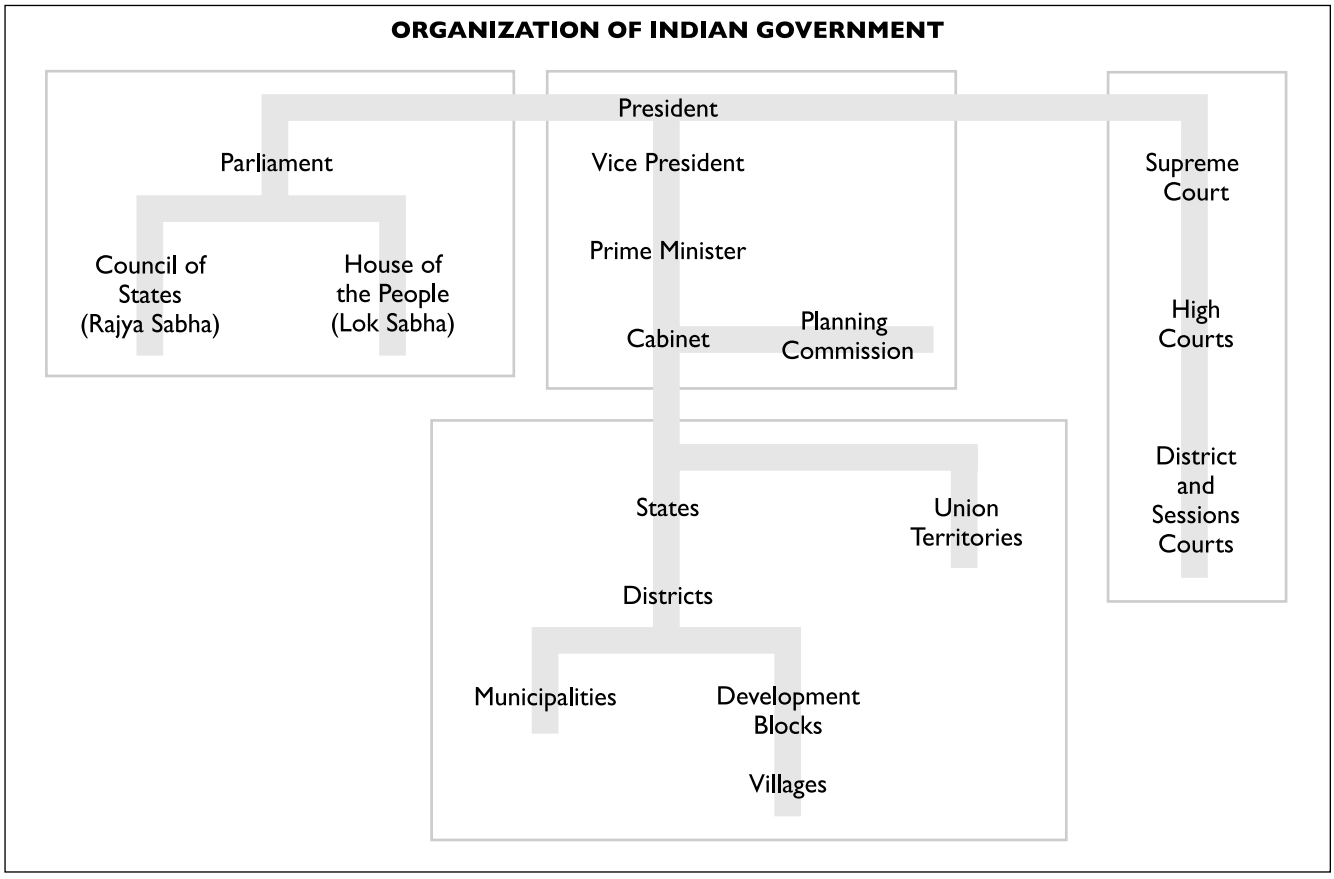
Thus, effective executive power belongs to the prime minister and the cabinet (formally the Council of Ministers.) The prime minister is appointed by the president and must be able to command majority support in the Lok Sabha, the lower house of Parliament. If there is a recognized leader of a party or coalition that commands a majority in the Lok Sabha, the president has no discretion. With the emergence of coalition government, the president's discretionary power to appoint the prime minister has increased.

The prime minister is responsible to the Lok Sabha, which may force the prime minister from office at any time by demonstrating the lack of majority support for him. Since 1979 several Indian prime ministers have been forced to resign in the face of an impending vote of no confidence or failure to maintain majority support.

The president appoints the members of the Council of Ministers on the advice of the prime minister and removes them in the same way. Within the cabinet, the prime minister has always been the strongest figure; the collective decision-making process of the British system of cabinet government is much less characteristic of India, where the prime minister and his formal and informal advisers (who may or may not be members of the cabinet) predominate. Cabinet ministers, therefore, mainly are occupied with implementation of policy decisions affecting their governmental ministries and with day-to-day administrative responsibilities.

Ministerial departments are staffed by a powerful and prestigious civil service, the modern successor to the almost legendary Indian Civil Service of British colonial days. At the apex of the modern civil service is the Indian Administrative Service, an elite cadre of highly qualified, competitively selected administrators who exercise wide-ranging power over implementation and administration of government policy subject only to the supervision of politically responsible ministers.

India has had 17 prime ministers in 50 years of independence. Jawaharlal Nehru and his daughter, Indira Gandhi, governed for 30 of those years. Mrs. Gandhi served from 1966 to 1977, when her Congress Party was defeated by a coalition of opposition parties that took the name Janata (People's) Party after 21 months of authoritarian rule under the draconian emergency provisions of the Indian constitution. The



Janata Party formed a government under Prime Minister Moraji Desai, who served from 1977 to mid-1979, when the party split. Charan Singh then became the prime minister. New national elections resulted in Mrs. Gandhi's return to power in January 1980. Mrs. Gandhi was succeeded by her son Rajiv Gandhi following her assassination on October 31, 1984. Rajiv Gandhi led his Congress (I) Party to an overwhelming victory in the December 1984 general elections. Rajiv's policy failures, his centralization of power, and a series of corruption scandals involving defense contracts resulted in his defeat in the November 1989 elections.

The defeat of the Congress Party, however, led to a hung Parliament. For the first time since independence no single party was able to secure a majority and India entered an era of unstable coalition and alliance politics. Following the 1989 elections, the National Front, a loose multiparty coalition, elected V. P. Singh as prime minister. Friction within the National Front, however, led to the downfall of Singh in less than a year. Singh was replaced by Chandra Shekhar, supported by the Congress Party. This unstable alliance lasted only four months, and Indians were forced to go to the polls for the second time in less than two years in the midst of major political and economic crises.

The uncertainty that dominated the 1991 Lok Sabha elections was further compounded by the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi by a Sri Lankan Tamil during an election meeting in Tamil Nadu. Rajiv's assassination had a dramatic impact on the election results. During the first round of voting that had preceded the assassination, the Congress had suffered severe reverses. However, in the delayed second and third rounds of voting, a significant sympathy vote in favor of the Congress Party enabled the party to win 227 seats—just 29 seats short of a majority. P. V. Narasimha Rao, the newly elected Congress leader, was able to form a minority government that gradually increased its support and survived for a full term of five years.

The Congress revival, however, proved to be short-lived as the party, tainted by charges of corruption, suffered its worst defeat in history in the April–May 1996 elections. The defeat of the Congress, once again, resulted in a hung Parliament that was more fragmented then ever before. Because the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) had won the largest number of seats in the election, the president of India asked the party leader, Atal Behari Vajpayee, to form a government. Vajpayee, however, was forced to resign 13 days later when faced by the prospect of losing a no-confidence motion in Parliament. The president then invited the National Front–Left Front, a coalition of 13 regional and national parties, to form a government. The Front elected H. D. Deve Gowda, a former chief minister of Karnataka, to be prime minister. Gowda headed a minority government supported by the Congress Party, which refused to join the coalition cabinet. Gowda lasted less than a year and was forced to resign when the Congress Party withdrew its support. He was replaced on April 21, 1997, by Inder Kumar Gujral, a candidate more acceptable to the Congress Party. The Gujral government lasted until December, when new parliamentary elections were called. In March 1998 Vajpayee again became prime minister when the BJP cobbled together a coalition of over a dozen and a half regional parties following the 1998 Lok Sabha elections.

In the 2004 elections the Congress came back to power primarily because of the support it gained from striking pre-electoral alliances with state parties. The BJP was taken by surprise. Since their partners, the All-India Anna-Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK) and the Telegu Desam Party (TDP), performed poorly in their respective states, the BJP alliance failed to win the majority. At the last minute, Congress Party leader Sonia Gandhi gave up her position as prime ministerial candidate in favor of Manmohan Singh, because she felt that her prime responsibility was to promote the welfare of the Congress Party and not her personal ambition to lead the nation. Singh's candidacy was received tepidly because doubts were being cast about his political ability to push forward economic reforms, since the parties on the left are his primary alliance partners.

LEGISLATURE

The Indian Parliament is bicameral. The more important lower house is called the Lok Sabha, or "house of the people." It has 543 members directly elected from single-member district constituencies based on population and two seats filled by nomination. Elections are normally held at five-year intervals. The five-year limit has been abridged only once when, in 1976, the life of the Lok Sabha was extended by one year by Indira Gandhi under the emergency provisions of the constitution. The extension was renewed a year later. Parliamentary elections may be called at less than five-year intervals by the president acting on the advice of the prime minister.

There are 79 Lok Sabha seats reserved for members of the Scheduled Castes, or untouchables. Another 40 seats are reserved for members of Scheduled Tribes. These reserved seats are allocated among the states on

PRIME MINISTERS OF INDIA, 1947–2004

Prime Minister	Party	Dates
Jawaharlal Nehru	Congress	8/15/47–5/27/64
Lal Bahadur Shastri	Congress	6/9/64–1/11/66
Indira Gandhi	Congress	1/24/66–3/24/77
Morarji Desai	Janata	3/24/77–7/8/79
Charan Singh	Janata	7/28/79–1/14/80
Indira Gandhi	Congress	1/14/80–10/31/84
Rajiv Gandhi	Congress	10/31/84–12/1/89
V. P. Singh	National Front	12/2/89–11/10/90
Chandra Shekhar	Samajvadi Janata	11/10/90–6/21/91
P. V. Narasimha Rao	Congress	6/21/91–5/16/96
Atal Behari Vajpayee	BJP	5/16/96–6/1/96
H. D. Deve Gowda	Janata Dal	6/1/96–4/11/97
I. K. Gujral	Janata Dal	4/21/97–3/19/98
Atal Behari Vajpayee	BJP	3/19/98–5/21/2004
Manmohan Singh	Congress	5/22/2004–

the basis of the proportion of their populations that fall into the respective Scheduled category. Electorates for the reserved seats are made up of all classes of Indian citizens, but only Scheduled Caste or Scheduled Tribe members may stand for such seats. These provisions for special representation are constitutionally temporary, but they have been regularly extended. In another special category, the president of India is empowered to appoint up to two Anglo-Indians (descendants of mixed British-Indian marriages or liaisons) to the Lok Sabha.

By constitution, the Lok Sabha must meet at least twice each year with no more than six months between sessions. In practice, it usually meets three times a year.

The upper house of Parliament is the Rajya Sabha, or "council of the states." It has 250 members, 12 of whom are appointed by the president from among Indians distinguished in the arts and professions. The remainding members are elected by the state legislatures to fixed terms, with approximately one-third retiring every second year. Thus it is possible that the partisan majority in the Lok Sabha will not coincide with the majority in the Rajya Sabha, which has happened on several occasions.

The two houses of Parliament have the same power over ordinary legislation; both must pass bills in agreed form. However, money bills may be introduced only in the Lok Sabha, and the Rajya Sabha has only the power of delay. If a money bill is amended or rejected by the Rajya Sabha, it needs merely to be repassed by the Lok Sabha in the original form to be sent to the president for assent. The Rajya Sabha exercises independent jurisdiction in a limited range of issues relating to the states.

JUDICIARY

India's constitution makers took the notion of parliamentary supremacy from the British model but tried to graft onto it an independent judiciary and judicial review system based largely on the American model. At the apex of an integrated national judicial system is the Supreme Court of India. It consists of a chief justice and not more than 25 other judges appointed by the president. Judges of the Supreme Court serve until they reach the age of 65, unless removed by an elaborate and difficult parliamentary procedure. The chief justice is normally the most senior judge in terms of age, although there have been a few controversial cases of "supersession," that is, the appointment of a less senior judge as chief justice.

The Supreme Court has broad original and appellate jurisdiction that extends to civil and criminal matters and especially to matters of constitutional interpretation and relations between the center (the national government) and the states. The exercise of these powers has led to considerable conflict between governments committed to greater or lesser degrees of social reform and a court equally committed to the protection of fundamental rights outlined in the constitution. The conflict between court and government has been waged in a variety of ways over the years. Many of the 90 amendments to the Indian constitution have been designed to reverse some Supreme Court ruling striking down an act of Parliament. The most substantial attack on the Court came in 1976 when Mrs. Gandhi's government pushed through Parliament the very detailed and extensive Forty-Second Amendment Act that, among other things, placed very stringent limitations on the power of the Supreme Court to review acts of Parliament on constitutional grounds. The Supreme

Court itself struck down part of this amendment and the Janata Party government further altered it in the Forty-Fourth Amendment in 1978. The fundamental difficulty of reconciling parliamentary supremacy with judicial review remains one of the troublesome issues facing the Indian political system.

One of the most important developments in India in recent years has been the renewal of judicial activism. The Supreme Court has begun to promote public-interest litigation (PIL) based on a reinterpretation of the constitution to include equal treatment under the law and due process. In keeping with this new activism the Supreme Court has encouraged class-action suits, has treated letters written to judges as writ petitions, has acted upon newspaper reports, has appointed committees to investigate the facts of a case, has summoned experts to obtain their views, and has even made public authorities investigating charges of corruption on the part of public officials directly responsible to the Court. The result has been a massive expansion of civil, political, economic, and social rights. Supreme Court activism has also spread to the lower courts. The Court's new role, however, has brought it into conflict with both the executive and the legislature and has led to efforts by both to restrict the Court's action.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Although India is a federation composed of 28 states and 7 union territories, Indian federalism is weighted heavily toward the central government. The union territories are ruled by the central government under a variety of arrangements. The states are organized mainly along language lines. The central government may and occasionally has redrawn state boundaries. The structure of state government is similar to that of the central government. The executive power is vested in a governor who is appointed by the president of India on the advice of the prime minister. The governor is appointed for a five-year term and is largely a figurehead whose powers and role are analogous to those of the national president.

Real political and administrative power is exercised by a chief minister (analogous to the prime minister at the national level) and his council of ministers who are appointed by the governor and are collectively responsible to the legislative assembly. Most states have a unicameral legislature. The legislative assemblies are composed of between 60 and 500 members chosen by direct election from territorial constituencies based on population. The legislative assemblies function in a manner similar to the Lok Sabha at the national level. Six states have bicameral legislatures with a smaller legislative council functioning alongside the legislative assembly.

Members of the legislative council are elected indirectly by the assembly or appointed by the governor to fixed terms with approximately one-third retiring every second year.

The Indian constitution divides the functions of government between the states and the central government through three detailed lists. The Union List contains areas exclusively reserved to the national government, including defense and military forces, atomic energy, foreign affairs, railways, shipping, air transport, posts and telegraph, currency, international trade, banking, insurance, mining, and nonagricultural income and corporate taxation. The State List contains items reserved to the states, including public order, police, prisons, local government, public health, agriculture, land and land tenure, property tax, and tax on agricultural income. The Concurrent List contains items on which either the states or the national government may act, including criminal law, preventive detention, marriage and divorce, contracts, economic and social planning, social security, labor, education, and civil procedure. In the event of conflict between the national government and state action on matters on the Concurrent List, the national government position prevails. Moreover, a reserve clause grants the national government exclusive jurisdiction over all areas not enumerated in one of the lists. In periods of emergency or with the concurrence of two-thirds of the Rajya Sabha, the national government may act on matters on the State List.

Finally, if the president "is satisfied that a situation has arisen in which the government of the State cannot be carried on in accordance with the provisions of this Constitution," he may, on the advice of the prime minister, suspend the state government and rule directly from New Delhi. This is referred to as "president's rule" and has been used with increasing frequency since the 1960s.

The Electoral System

Although the Rajya Sabha and the legislative councils are indirectly elected, the more important Lok Sabha and the legislative assemblies are elected directly. Since 1967 all electoral constituencies have been single member. Candidates must be Indian citizens at least 25 years of age. Most successful candidates are nominated by

recognized parties, although a large number of independents always stand for election. A candidate must put up a deposit of 10,000 rupees (about $218 in 2005) to run for a Lok Sabha seat and 5,000 rupees for a legislative assembly seat. A candidate must poll at least one-sixth of the votes cast in that constituency in order to have his deposit refunded. The candidate receiving a simple plurality of the valid votes cast in the constituency wins.

Vacancies caused by death, resignation, or removal from office are filled through by-elections that are watched carefully as signals of political trends.

Ballots list candidates by party symbol, in English and in the local language(s). Voting is secret and carefully supervised. Although there have been charges of corruption, intimidation, and "booth capturing," most observers agree that Indian elections are remarkably free, fair, and orderly.

All Indian citizens 18 years of age or over are eligible to vote. Registration rolls are kept by the Election Commission, an independent agency charged with responsibility to ensure fair and efficient conduct of elections, and are updated regularly at the initiative of the Commission. To insure against double voting, voters' fingers are marked with indelible ink. Voters are not counted until the final polling day is under way, and returns are not released until all polling is completed.

With approximately 605 million eligible voters, India has the largest democratic electorate in the world. Voter turnout has been relatively high. Since 1952 the average voter turnout has been 57.1 percent of the eligible voters. The highest turnout was in 1984 following the assassin of Indira Gandhi when 64.1 percent of the eligible voters turned out. The lowest turnout occurred in the first two elections of 1952 and 1957 when it was only 45.7 percent.

LOK SABHAELECTIONS, 2004 (VOTER TURNOUT 58.07%)

Party	Seats Won	Seats Contested	% Votes
Congress (I)	145	417	26.53
Congress (I) Allies[a]	77	122	9.29
	(222)	(539)	(35.82)
Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)	138	364	216
BJP Allies[b]	51	223	11.75
	(189)	(587)	(32.91)
Left Front[c]	61	119	8.34
BSP	19	435	5.33
Other Parties[d]	50	1320	14.20
Other Independents	2	2385	3.79
Total	543	5435	100.39

[a]*Congress (I) allies and number of seats: Rashtriya Janata Dal (21), Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (16), National Congress Party (9), Pattali Makkal Katchi (6), Jharkhand Mukthi Morcha (5), Telengana Rashtra Samiti (5), LJNP (4), Marumalarchi DMK (4), People's Democratic Party (1), Muslim League (1), Republican Party of India (A) (1), Independents with Congress support (1)*

[b]*BJP allies and number of seats: Shiv Sena (12), Biju Janata Dal (11), Janata Dal (U) (8), Akali Dal (Badal) (8), Telugu Desam Party (5), West Bengal Trinamool Congress (2), Mizo National Front (1), Sikkim Democratic Front (1), Indian Federal Democratic Party (1), Nagaland People's Front (1), Independents (1)*

[c]*Left front and allies: Communist Party of India (M) (43), Communist Party of India (10), Revolutionary Socialist Party (3), Forward Bloc (3), Kerala Congress (1), Independents (1)*

[d]*Other parties: Samajwadi Party (36), Rashtriya Lok Dal (3), Janata Dal (S) (3), Asom Gono Parishad (2), Samajwadi Janata Party (R) (1), National Conference (2), National Loktantrik Party (1), Majlis e Ittehadul Musalmeen (1), Muslim League Kerala State Committee (1)*

The Party System

ORIGINS OF THE PARTIES

Most, but not all, Indian political parties grew out of the independence struggle. The Congress Party, which has held power on the national level for most of the years since independence, is the direct descendant of the Indian National Congress, the umbrella organization that led the independence struggle from 1885 until independence in 1947. As an umbrella organization, the Congress was highly aggregative, seeking to unite disparate ideologies and personalities in the service of self-rule. With independence at hand, ideological and personal differences led to defections from the Congress.

An early ideological split led to the establishment of the Socialist Party in 1947. Personality differences

created a break between Charan Singh and the Congress in Uttar Pradesh, India's largest state, and the establishment of the Bharatiya Kranti Dal in 1967. A combination of ideology and personality led to a major "split" in the Congress in 1969 and the establishment of the Congress (O). Since 1969 the Congress has experienced repeated splits due to personality clashes and factionalism that have considerably weakened the party and filled the ranks of the opposition. Almost all of the Indian parties—except the Communist Party, Bharatiya Janata Party, and some of the regional and state parties—arose from these defections or splits in the Congress Party.

THE PARTIES IN LAW

Political parties are not given significant treatment in the constitution of India and have little special status in Indian law. Independent candidates have essentially the same legal rights and responsibilities as party candidates: nomination procedures, financial limits, and reporting requirements are the same.

Parties recognized by the Election Commission have reserved symbols. To be recognized a party must meet one of two criteria. It must either exist and participate in political activity for a period of five years or secure at least 6 percent of the votes cast in the state for the Lok Sabha or Vidhan Sabha (state assembly) elections. In the 2004 elections there were six recognized national parties and 36 recognized state parties with reserved symbols.

PARTY ORGANIZATION

Most Indian parties profess to be mass organizations based on dues-paying members; in reality, few are. Only the Congress, the Indian People's Party (BJP), and the Communist Party have sustained such a mass character over any length of time. The BJP and the Communists are numerically smaller and confined to a narrower geographical area than Congress. One of the reasons for the relative success of the Congress in the past was that it was a coalition party composed of diverse castes and communities and of disparate groups espousing different emphases in government policy. Over the years, however, the Congress has become less coalitional and more personalistic in character, a process hastened during Indira Gandhi's and her son Rajiv's tenure. While the leadership still remains personalistic under Sonia Gandhi, the party struck alliances with other parties in the 2004 elections. Now both ruling and opposition parties have entered into alliances with other smaller parties reflecting a new trend in the party system of coalitional arrangements clustering toward a bipartisan political system.

None of the other parties has been of the coalition type, except the Janata briefly during its incumbency from 1977 to 1979. Other parties tend to be ideological, personalistic, or regional.

The main parties maintain national and state organizations. Real power usually is divided between these two sets of organizations in shifting measures. The work of running campaigns rests with the state or local units of the party. While state or local units often carry substantial political power, the national organization usually exerts major influence over the allocation of tickets (nominations). Although the details of party organization differ from party to party and from time to time, all the main national parties are structured to reflect the division of electoral and administrative structures into states and districts.

As in most parliamentary systems, there is a certain amount of tension and conflict between the parliamentary and organizational wings of the parties. Such conflict has been most pronounced in the ruling Congress Party. However, the Janata also experienced major differences when in power from 1977 to 1979, and these resulted in a split of the party in mid-1979. Such differences often have been seen at the state level.

CAMPAIGNING

Indian political campaigns have a festive air. People turn out in large numbers at political rallies and other appearances by candidates. Candidates circulate extensively in their constituencies, usually traveling from village to village by jeep, sometimes on foot or by elephant. In urban areas, parties canvass door to door. Signs, banners, and graffiti play a prominent role in campaigns. Party notables move extensively around the state or country making personal appearances in tightly contested constituencies.

Radio and television are government-controlled and have not played prominent roles in campaigning. However, beginning in 1977 in some state elections and in the 1980 national elections, all recognized parties were provided with campaign time on radio and television. But an increase in the number of channels since the broadcasting sector was liberalized in the 1990s has increased the media attention for political campaigns.

Campaign expenditures are sharply limited by law. In 1998 each candidate for the Lok Sabha was permitted to spend not more than Rs 1,500,000 ($32,830) in election expenses. Each candidate is required to

maintain a daily documented account of expenditures that must be submitted to the relevant election official. Failure to comply with these regulations may result in a candidate's disqualification from serving in either house of Parliament for three years.

However, it is widely agreed that these limits are wholly unrealistic and that Indian elections are vastly more expensive. A well-known Indian news magazine (*India Today,* March 31, 1996) reported a candidate for a seat in the Lok Sabha might have to spend anywhere from Rs 500,000 to Rs 50 million ($10,943 to $1,094,331).

Political finances are the subject of much rumor and speculation and little hard data. Parties devote a good deal of effort to raising money. Some of the devices used include the collection of membership dues, the sale of advertisements in party publications, the sale of space and decorations at party functions, requests for direct donations, and, it has been charged, pressures bordering on extortion and solicitation of bribes. The large industrial families—the Birlas, the Tatas, and the like—have a tradition of financial support for political movements that goes back to well before independence. Other sources of funds include small-time traders, local industry lobbies, cooperatives, nonresident Indians, the underworld, government contracting, and various regulatory approvals. The Congress Party has been the main beneficiary of financial support from the business houses, but other parties have increased their share depending on their relative strength.

During the cold war Communist Parties were widely believed to have received support from outside India, and there have been repeated charges that other parties, including the Congress, received covert monies from the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency. However, hard evidence about sources of financial support for Indian parties is fragmentary and should be approached with caution. In any event the end of the cold war has sharply reduced incentives by outsiders to fund Indian parties.

INDEPENDENT VOTERS

Party membership figures in India are highly unreliable. Personalist parties rarely have any formal membership outside Parliament. Even in mass-based parties, frequent defections, splits, and factional conflicts make available figures highly unreliable. Voting rolls do not indicate party identification, but public opinion studies indicate that a surprisingly large proportion of the voters expresses identification with parties. Recent elections suggest that party identification may be less indicative of voting behavior than orientation to personalities and issues. Since 1971 Lok Sabha and state assembly elections have generally occurred at different times. Therefore, since voters usually cast only one ballot for one member of the Lok Sabha, ticket splitting is normally impossible.

Major Political Parties

INDIAN PEOPLE'S PARTY

(Bharatiya Janata Party; BJP)

HISTORY

The BJP was founded in 1980 after the breakup of the governing Janata Party coalition. It is the current manifestation of the former Jana Sangh (People's) Party with its long tradition of militant Hindu nationalist politics. The Jana Sangh was established in 1950 largely by a cadre of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), or National Volunteer Organization, a paramilitary group and by some figures from the Hindu Mahasabha, a militant Hindu political party. The initiative for a new party was led by Dr. S. P. Mookerjee, a former Hindu Mahasabha leader and former member of Nehru's cabinet. Beginning with the first general election in 1952, the Jana Sangh gradually replaced the Hindu Mahasabha as the voice of Hindu cultural militancy.

Since its creation the strategy of the Jana Sangh and its successor, the BJP, has oscillated between the propagation of militant Hindu nationalism based on ethnoreligious mobilization and a more pragmatic approach based on moderation and coalition building designed to broaden the movement's electoral appeal. The basic dilemma of the leadership has been to maintain its militant core support based on the paramilitary National Volunteer Organization (RSS) and its cadre and the need to temper that ideology in an effort to develop a more centrist appeal designed to win power. Initially, in the years following its creation in the 1950s the Jana Sangh followed a militant Hindu nationalist strategy. This strategy, however, had a limited impact on the electorate, and the party was marginalized by the strong appeal of the Congress Party and the popularity of its leader, Jawaharlal Nehru.

In an effort to break out of its isolation, the Jana Sangh shifted to a more pragmatic strategy in the 1960s that saw it begin to build electoral support in the Hindi-speaking belt of North and Central India. Its electoral success enabled the party to participate

in coalition governments in several states and to gain control of municipal governing bodies. This strategy continued into the 1970s as the Jana Sangh supported the opposition movement led by Jayaprakash Narayan, opposed emergency rule from 1975 to 1977, and joined the broad-based Janata coalition that defeated the Congress Party for the first time since 1947 in the 1977 parliamentary elections. Following the elections, the Jana Sangh became incorporated into the new Janata Party that brought an end to its formal existence.

Following the breakup of the Janata Party, the bulk of the former Jana Sangh members left the Janata Party to form the BJP under the leadership of Atal Bihari Vajpayee, a former Jana Sangh leader who had served as the foreign minister in the Janata government. Under Vajpayee the BJP attempted to build a new Hindu nationalist party that would be more open, centrist, and broadly based than the old Jana Sangh. The party adopted a moderate program based on Gandhian socialism, nationalism, democracy, value-based politics, and positive secularism. This new program, however, upset the party's traditional hard-core supporters in the RSS and generated considerable internal dissent. Members of the RSS became increasingly alienated from the party and began to drift toward the more militant appeals of the Congress Party under Indira Gandhi. The attraction of RSS members to the Congress increased sharply following the assassination of Indira Gandhi by her Sikh bodyguards. The assassination, Sikh separatism, anxiety over isolated incidents of Muslim conversions of low-caste Hindus, and growing insurgencies along India's northern border created a sense of insecurity and a Hindu backlash that resulted in a massive victory for Rajiv Gandhi and a stunning defeat of the BJP in the 1984 elections. Elements of the RSS contributed to this victory by actively working on behalf of Rajiv, and several prominent RSS leaders openly endorsed him.

The defeat suffered by the BJP in the 1984 elections resulted in a change of leadership, policy, and program as the party attempted to return to its roots. The more liberal Vajpayee was replaced as leader of the party by L. K. Advani who had close ties to the RSS. Under Advani the BJP adopted a more militant Hindu nationalist position and a strategy of ethnoreligious mobilization. The shift in BJP policy coincided with a sharp rise in communalism that was heightened by the agitation surrounding the long-simmering dispute over the Babri Masjid (Mosque) in Ayodhya. Hindus claimed that the Babri Masjid had been built by the Mughals on the site of a destroyed Hindu temple that had marked the birthplace of Lord Rama, a Hindu deity. They wanted the mosque demolished and replaced with a new Ramjanmabhoomi temple. The BJP used the religious symbol of the Babri Masjid/Ramjanmabhoomi during the 1989 elections in an effort to mobilize the Hindu vote. This strategy helped the BJP improve its position throughout North and West India. Its success was further enhanced by its strategy of election alliance with the newly formed National Front, a coalition composed of the Janata Dal and several regional parties.

Although the 1989 elections resulted in a hung Parliament, V. P. Singh, the leader of the Janata Dal, was elected prime minister with the support of a diverse group of opposition parties including the BJP. The BJP, however, withdrew support in November 1990 in response to Singh's decision to implement the recommendations of the Mandal Commission, which had called for the reservation of 27 percent of all central government jobs for backward castes.

The fall of the V. P. Singh government and its successor led to the dissolution of the government and new elections in 1991 that were dominated by the twin issues of Mandir (temple) and Mandal (reservations for backward castes). The BJP actively campaigned for the construction of a Hindu temple at Ayodhya and opposed the further reservations based on caste as an attempt to divide the Hindu nation. The BJP's campaign resulted in a major victory for the party across states in North and West India and significantly increased its strength in the Lok Sabha. Although the Congress Party was able to form a government thanks to a wave of sympathy that followed the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi, the BJP appeared destined to become a dominant force in Indian politics. Encouraged by its electoral success, the BJP continued its campaign to build a temple at Ayodhya. The movement peaked when Hindu militants succeeded in destroying the mosque in December 1992. The destruction of the mosque led to the outbreak of the worst communal riots in India since partition.

The seemingly unstoppable success of the BJP in the early 1990s, however, was brought to a crashing halt in the November 1993 state assembly elections in which the party was defeated in North India, its traditional stronghold. The defeat made clear that the BJP's militant strategy of ethnoreligious mobilization had reached its limits. As a result the party was forced to change its militant strategy and adopt a more moderate approach. The BJP began to play down its emphasis on ethnoreligious mobilization and, in an effort to broaden its base, focused on socioeconomic and national issues. As part of this new strategy the BJP also entered into a series of electoral alliances in

preparation for the 1996 parliamentary elections. The 1996 elections, however, ended in another hung Parliament. Although voter support for the BJP increased only marginally, its electoral alliances expanded the number of BJP seats significantly and the party emerged as the largest single party in the Lok Sabha. Because of its position as the largest of the 28 parties represented in Parliament, the president of India turned to the BJP and asked it to form a government. The newly formed BJP government, however, lasted only 13 days when the largely secular opposition refused to support it.

Although the 1998 Lok Sabha elections produced a highly fractured mandate and another hung Parliament, the BJP again emerged as the largest party, with 179 seats and 25.47 percent of the vote. In addition, its 12 regional allies won 73 seats for a total of 252 seats that was just 20 seats short of an absolute majority. The BJP was able to cobble together a broad-based unstable coalition government when a combination of independents, small regional parties, and the Telugu Desam Party, a former member of the United Front, agreed to support a BJP-led government.

Despite sound economic performance on the macroeconomic front, the BJP was not able to return to power in the 2004 elections. It came back with a lesser tally of 138 seats, even though its vote share had marginally dropped to 22.16 percent. Further, its key ally, the Telugu Desam Party, had been convincingly defeated, reducing that party's share from 12 to 4 seats. Its other ally, the DMK, aligned with the Congress a few months before the elections and came back with an additional 10 seats from its earlier tally of six seats.

ORGANIZATION

The party's organizational strength depends on the RSS, a paramilitary cadre group. The RSS provides a tightly knit, well-organized, disciplined body of party workers. The connection, however, has been a mixed blessing for it also creates tension over control of party policy and strategy and has limited efforts to develop electoral alliances.

POLICY

Initially the BJP tried to be more open and liberal than the Jana Sangh. The disastrous defeat of the party at the polls in 1984, however, forced a major change in policy. The party reaffirmed its commitment to the integrity and unity of the county, democracy, value-based politics, positive secularism, Gandhian socialism, and—most important of all—building a polity in India that conformed to Indian culture and traditions. While continuing to emphasize Hindutva (literally, Hindu-ness), a term which has become the equivalent of Hindu/nationalism, the BJP in the 1990s moved away from Gandhian socialism and became an ardent critic of state intervention in the economy and a strong supporter of the Indian private sector against the forces of globalization and competition from foreign multinationals.

In foreign policy, the Jana Sangh took a militantly anti-Pakistan position, rejecting the legitimacy of the 1947 partition and advocating reunification of the subcontinent by force, if necessary. The responsibilities of office seemed to alter Jana Sangh perspectives, especially those of A. B. Vajpayee, who took a more benevolent approach to neighboring countries, including Pakistan, a stance that created some intraparty conflict. Once out of power, some of the old militancy returned to the rhetoric of BJP leaders. The BJP supports a strong national defense, including the development of an effective nuclear capability. BJP made good on this commitment when India conducted five nuclear tests in May 1998 and declared itself to be a nuclear weapons state.

MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY

The BJP, like the Jana Sangh before it, draws its main support from upper-caste, middle-class Hindus living in urban areas but has also extended its base to include nonelite intermediate castes. It has proved remarkably attractive to urban youth, and the Vidyarthi Parishad, the student affiliate of the RSS, is India's largest student organization. Geographically, its main strength has been in the Hindi-speaking areas of North and West India, but the party remains weak in the South and East.

FINANCING

Initially the BJP relied heavily on dues and contributions from its ideological supporters. The growing success of the party, however, has begun to attract increased support from Indian industrialists.

LEADERSHIP

The BJP leadership has begun to age. The most prominent leader is A. B. Vajpayee (born 1926), who has been responsible for the strategy of broadening the geographical base of the party. His most important colleague is the former RSS leader and Janata minister, L. K. Advani (born 1927). The next generation of leaders includes the general secretaries, Pramod Mahajan and Arun Jaitley, the urbane face of the party; the

party president, Venkaiah Naidu; and Narendra Modi, the chief minister of Gujarat, who was the chief campaigner for the party in the northern states and is the voice of the culturally hard-line cadre of the party.

PROSPECTS

Many observers believe that the BJP has the best prospects to become a viable alternative to the Congress (I) among the opposition parties. Its organization, the breadth of its appeal, and strong leadership set it apart from most other Indian parties. The isolation and weakness of the BJP in the South and East, however, requires a strategy of alliance formation with regional and caste parties. It was this strategy that enabled it to come to power in March 1998. But this strategy also creates a basic dilemma that the party has faced throughout its history. A policy of pragmatism does not appeal to its RSS cadre and core supporters who are committed to the party's more militant ideology. They also oppose the use of caste appeals as contrary to the unity of Hinduism. Yet, given the weakness of its appeal in the South and East, an alliance strategy represents the only hope the party has of coming to power at the national level.

At the state and local level, BJP prospects are somewhat better. The party has become a major political force in the states of the North and the West.

COMMUNIST PARTY OF INDIA (CPI)

HISTORY

Founded in 1925, the Communist Party of India was initially a part of the Communist International and became closely connected with the Communist Party of Great Britain. In the 1930s it collaborated with the Congress in the independence movement. This relationship, however, was never an easy one and broke down completely after Nazi Germany invaded the Soviet Union. Shifting their stance, the Communists advocated collaboration with the British (and the Soviets) in the "antifascist war," while the Congress launched an anti-British noncooperation movement and demanded immediate independence. Legalization of the Communist Party in 1942 gave it the opportunity to broaden its organization while the Congress leaders were immobilized in British jails.

After the war and with the coming of independence, the Communists were divided over the appropriate approach to parliamentary democracy and to the Congress government. This has been a basic issue inhibiting the unity of the Communists throughout the postindependence period.

When the Soviets in 1953 began to woo the international nonaligned movement and its most prominent leader, Nehru, the CPI opted for competitive electoral politics within the parliamentary framework. In 1957 the CPI led a coalition government in the southern state of Kerala. Congress-led street agitation forced that government from office in 1959.

In 1964 the party split, with the more moderate group under the leadership of S. A. Dange retaining the party label and a close relationship with the Soviet Union. The more militant wing, led by E. M. S. Namboodiripad, a former chief minister of Kerala, and Jyoti Basu, later to become chief minister of West Bengal, left to form the Communist Party of India (Marxist), or CPM. The basic cause of the split was a longstanding difference over how to relate to the ruling Congress. Dange, adhering to the Soviet view, argued that the Congress represented an anti-imperialist force and should be opposed only on domestic issues. Namboodiripad and Basu argued for implacable opposition to the Congress.

The CPI never regained the strength it had possessed before the split, but it did play a prominent role in national politics again in 1969 when its support for Mrs. Gandhi's faction of the Congress provided the necessary parliamentary margin to permit her to retain the prime ministership. The party supported Mrs. Gandhi until the end of the 1975–77 state of emergency. This association with emergency hurt the CPI in the 1977 general elections, and the CPI formally shifted policy and began to take a more critical line.

The relationship to Mrs. Gandhi led to yet another split in the CPI in 1981. The general secretary of the party, C. Rajeswara Rao, argued that the party's support for Mrs. Gandhi during the emergency period had been a mistake. Dange and some of his followers disagreed and left the party to form the All-India Communist Party (AICP).

Since abandoning its cooperation with the Congress (I), the CPI has opposed Congress dominance and the communalism of the BJP and has worked closely with the CPM. Still, the CPI has never fully recovered from the 1964 split and its alliance with the Congress (I). The party's electoral support has declined from 23 seats and 5 percent of the vote in 1967 to 10 seats and 1.4 percent of the vote in 2004. Unlike the CPM, the CPI became part of the United Front government in 1996–98, and its general secretary, Indrajit Gupta, was given charge of the powerful portfolio of home minister.

Like all other left parties, it is also supporting the Congress. Its historical differences with the Congress

did not allow its leaders to join the Council of Ministers. Party leader A. B. Bardhan became the speaker of the lower house in 2004.

ORGANIZATION

The CPI claims to have a highly organized structure operating on the basis of democratic centralism. In fact, the state organizations have considerable autonomy, and there is a substantial amount of fragmentation and factionalism. To the extent that power is centralized, it is lodged with the general secretary.

The party has an extensive publication program that includes journals, such as *New Age,* published directly by the party; *Link,* a news magazine that generally follows a Marxist line; and books on technical as well as political subjects. In addition, the party used to distribute subsidized publications from the Soviet Union.

It has acquired control of the All-India Trade Union Congress and operates youth, peasants', and women's organizations.

POLICY

Prior to the collapse of the Soviet Union the CPI always had a close relationship with the Soviets, and Soviet attitudes toward existing Indian governments was often a function of Soviet relations with the particular government. Soviet views, however, were only one among several factors influencing CPI policy and actions.

On domestic issues, the CPI follows classic Marxist policy positions favoring secularism, rapid industrialization, nationalization of large-scale industry, land reform, and collectivized agriculture. In foreign policy, the CPI favored a pro-Soviet position on global issues and an anti-imperialist posture on regional issues.

The collapse of communism in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, the breakup of the USSR, and the end of the cold war have accentuated ideological confusion within the CPI and the Communist movement in India. The movement has yet to come to grips with these momentous changes. Its policy remains anti-imperialist, anti-American, and antimarket. The party has also failed to come to grips with the rise of communalist and xenophobic forces.

MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY

The CPI electoral strategy emphasizes a broad rural constituency and the urban working class. In Kerala and Bengal, the CPI has done well among middle peasants and is the dominant Communist influence in the fragmented urban trade union movement. The CPI lost much of the traditional Communist support in West Bengal and Kerala to the CPM.

FINANCING

The CPI uses all the customary devices to raise money. In the past, it apparently raised substantial funds through the sale of subsidized Soviet publications. There were also persistent and generally accepted rumors that the CPI received substantial direct funding from the Soviet Union.

LEADERSHIP

S. A. Dange's dominant role in the party precluded the rise of other important leaders. His age—he was born in 1899—had already led to a lessening of his grip even before he left the party. The present general secretary is A. B. Bardhan.

PROSPECTS

Dange's departure offered an opportunity for the CPI to begin to forge some sort of left unity with the CPM. Although the two parties have actively cooperated with each other, complete unity remains a distant dream. The CPI continues to remain on the fringes of Indian politics, important only in intermittent coalitions in Kerala and West Bengal and its influences in some trade union circles.

COMMUNIST PARTY OF INDIA (MARXIST) (CPM)

HISTORY

The CPM split from the CPI in 1964 over issues of militancy, ideology, and personality. It favored a more militant opposition to the Congress government. It felt the Maoist notion of peasant-based revolution was more relevant to the Indian situation than the worker-based ideas of Marx and Lenin advocated by the CPI.

The CPM gained credibility among Marxist voters when the CPI sided openly with Mrs. Gandhi after 1969. The CPM position of firm opposition to her rule, especially during the emergency period in the mid-1970s, resulted in considerable electoral success among left voters, especially in the election of 1977 when the CPM was allied loosely with the Janata coalition. The CPM has been highly successful in challenging Congress (I) candidates, especially in West Bengal. In state politics, the CPM has been even more successful. It has headed the state government in West Bengal since 1977, first with Jyoti Basu as chief minister and then since 2000 with Buddhadeo Bhattacharya; it has also

extended its base into Tripura, next door. After leading the Kerala government under E. M. S. Namboodiripad from 1967 to 1969, the CPM continued to be a major factor in that state.

Although the CPM is given the status of a national party by the Indian Election Commission, the party's support is limited to West Bengal, Kerala, and Tripura. In the 1998 Lok Sabha elections the CPM won 32 seats and 5.18 percent of the vote. Unlike the CPI, the CPM refused to join the United Front government in 1996–98 but agreed to give it external support. However, in the 2004 elections the CPM played a key role in helping Congress form the government. This was the first time that CPM had won 43 seats. Along with its allies, it became a key member in the present government.

ORGANIZATION

The organizational structure of the CPM is similar to that of the CPI—strongly centralized on paper but state-based in practice. In West Bengal, Jyoti Basu managed to retain a more disciplined control over his party than is usual in India. In 2000 Jyoti Basu relinquished office of chief minister of Bengal to his protégé, Buddhadeo Bhattacharya, who has tried to open the economy to private sector investment, thereby incrementally changing the economic profile of the state.

POLICY

Over the years the CPM has distanced itself from its ideological moorings, especially in its stronghold of West Bengal. Many diehard Marxists and Maoists are dismayed at the sellout. While the CPM has opposed the Structural Adjustment Program adopted by the Rao government in 1991, the party in West Bengal has publicly embraced the principles of an open economy and foreign direct investment in the state by foreign multinationals. The party, however, continues to oppose dismantling of the public sector. In foreign policy the CPM supports a strong defense, nonalignment, resistance to American imperialism and cancellation of military cooperation with the United States, and opposes attempts to impose the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty and the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty on India.

MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY

The CPM has done better than the CPI in the traditional communist strongholds of West Bengal and Kerala, but less well in Uttar Pradesh, Andhra, and Bihar. It has targeted landless laborers in rural areas and has done well in that constituency. It has had less success with organized urban workers.

FINANCING

As a participant in the government in West Bengal and Kerala, the CPM has access to traditional sources of funds in these states. In the past there have been occasional rumors of financial support from the People's Republic of China. The CPM has no central treasurer and relies heavily upon mass collection of funds by local party units and trade unions affiliated with the party. All party MLAs and MPs are expected to contribute part of their income, and all card-carrying members must contribute, including police and bureaucrats.

LEADERSHIP

With the death of E. M. S. Namboodiripad in March 1998, Jyoti Basu (born 1914) became the last of the old guard. Both were veterans of left-wing and union politics. Basu, trained in law, came from a prominent elite Bengali family. Namboodiripad was widely regarded as the most intellectually sophisticated of contemporary politicians. Although they had dominated the party since the 1964 split from the CPI, their prominence attracted a highly competent younger group of leaders. As of 2005 the general secretary was Prakash Karat.

PROSPECTS

Since 1980 the CPM has come full circle. Founded as a revolutionary alternative to CPI reformism, the CPM itself has become increasingly reformist. The most radical wing of the party left in 1969 to form the Communist Party of India, Marxist-Leninist. The party has provided land reforms and local government reform to its rural constituency, but in the process it has become increasingly divorced from attempts to revolutionize the masses. The dilution of its ideological position and nearly 30 years of power in West Bengal have had a negative effect on the commitment of its cadre, have resulted in the stagnation of its electoral support, and have obscured the party's transformational agenda. In short, the left in India has become increasingly confused by international developments and has been unable to cope with the rising importance of cultural nationalism, the rise of communalism, and the growing appeal of the BJP.

INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS (I)

HISTORY

The Indian National Congress was founded in 1885 as an organization devoted to expanding opportunities for Indians in the colonial regime and incorporating Indian elite opinion in policy making.

The first two decades of the 20th century brought a deep struggle over philosophy and direction between the early great Congress leaders, B. G. Tilak (1856–1920) and G. K. Gokhale (1866–1915). Gokhale was highly educated in the Western tradition, moderate, elitist, and secular. Tilak was a prominent scholar of the Hindu scriptures, more radical, and wanted to mold the Congress in the Hindu tradition, broaden its mass appeal, and transform it into a more militant organization. Tilak's influence gave the Congress an increasingly Hindu character in spite of continuing professions of secularism.

Mohandas K. Gandhi became the dominant Congress leader in 1920 and remained so until his assassination in 1948. Gandhi was convinced that Congress had to retain its secular character in order to succeed as an umbrella organization. But he also realized that the movement depended on the mobilization of mass participation. Hindu symbolism and philosophical principles provided ready tools for mobilizing the masses. Throughout his years at the helm, Gandhi struggled to balance the commitment to secularism with the necessity of mobilizing the Hindu masses. In the end, however, the predominantly Hindu character of the Congress so frightened significant Muslim elites that independence could be won only at the price of partition.

Gandhi's leadership and philosophy left a profound mark on the postindependence party. He came to be revered as a saint by the Hindu masses. He was universally called Mahatma, "great soul." His philosophy and strategy of nonviolence (*ahimsa*) and noncooperation based on soul force (*satyagraha*) and his commitment to secularism, mass participation, village self-sufficiency, and reform of the most discriminatory features of the Hindu caste system continue to be touchstones for the modern Congress Party.

The two principal lieutenants of Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, presided over the transformation of the national movement into a modern political party. As expected, the Congress formed the first independent government under Nehru. Although Congress never won a majority of the popular vote, the electoral system and the fragmentation of the opposition parties ensured that Congress usually would have a majority in the Lok Sabha. Congress used to receive between 41 percent and 49 percent of the vote in each national election, but in the 1990s and 2000s that number has slipped; in 1996 and 1998 it polled only 28.8 percent and 25.9 percent, respectively, and in 2004 it polled 26.53 percent. At the state level, Congress has been less dominant. It often lost control of state governments to regional parties or to coalitions even before it began to lose power at the center from 1989 onward. Since then, their vote share has remained the same in states like Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, and Rajasthan, and in many other states the party does not enjoy the dominant status it used to.

Despite frequent splits and defections, leadership of the party has shown remarkable continuity. Nehru was the dominant leader from 1948 until his death in 1964. Lal Bahadur Shastri was prime minister from 1964 until his sudden death in 1966, but much real power in the party rested with a group of party bosses known as the "Syndicate." The Syndicate played a prominent role in the selection of Nehru's daughter, Mrs. Indira Gandhi (no relation to Mahatma Gandhi), as Shastri's successor and struggled with her for power until a major split occurred in 1969 between pro-Syndicate and pro-Gandhi factions. Her victory was confirmed by the electorate in 1971, and she remained the dominant figure in the party until her death in 1984. In fact, her role was so strong that the party is now officially labeled Congress (I) for Indira.

The combination of a fragmented opposition and a massive wave of sympathy votes following the assassination of Indira Gandhi on October 31, 1984, enabled the Congress Party under the leadership of Rajiv Gandhi to win a massive victory in the 1984 elections. The new prime minister's lackluster performance, his inability to reshape the Congress, and a series of corruption scandals weakened Rajiv, and the Congress went down to defeat in the 1989 general elections.

The elections, however, produced a hung Parliament as coalition and alliance politics replaced the era of Congress dominance. Like its predecessor, the Janata Party, the new Janata Dal–led National Front government proved to be weak and unstable and collapsed. As a result, India was forced to go to the polls once more in 1991 only to have tragedy strike again. In the midst of the campaign, Rajiv Gandhi, like his mother, was struck down by an assassin. As was the case in 1984, the assassination produced a last-minute wave of sympathy votes in favor of the Congress. Although the party fell just short of a majority, it was able to form a government and returned to power under the leadership of P. V. Narashimha Rao, who was able to survive a full five-year term.

The Rao government came to power in the midst of the most serious economic crisis in postindependence Indian history. Rao's success in handling the economic crisis, however, was undermined by his inept handling of the crisis in Ayodhya when Hindu militants suc-

ceeded in destroying the Babri Masjid and communal riots broke out in many parts of India. His leadership was further undermined by charges of corruption.

The Congress Party entered the 1996 elections for the first time without a member of the Nehru-Gandhi dynasty at the helm and plagued by corruption scandals, factionalism, and major defections. The result was the worst defeat of the Congress Party in its history. The party won only 140 seats in the Lok Sabha and 28.8 percent of the vote. Rao was forced to step down as leader of the Congress Party and was replaced by Sitaram Kesri, the longtime party treasurer.

In the 1998 Lok Sabha elections, Sonia Gandhi, Rajiv's Italian-born widow, finally decided to officially enter the political arena and campaigned actively on behalf of the Congress. Despite her active role in the campaign, however, the Congress was able to win only 141 seats and 25.88 percent of the vote. The main impact of the Sonia factor on the elections was to stem the tide of defections from the Congress, boost party morale, and halt the further erosion of support for the party. Following the elections, control of the party was again placed in the hands of a member of the Nehru-Gandhi dynasty when Sonia was elected president of the party to replace Sitaram Kesri.

Before the 2004 elections the Congress broke from tradition by establishing pre-electoral alliances with state-level parties. This tactical move brought the Congress back to power, but with the acceptance of a changed political scenario where its predominance in the party system has waned.

ORGANIZATION

Congress (I) is a highly structured party. Basic organizational units exist at the district, the state, and the national levels. The annual conference of the party is composed of the members of the Congress committees at the state and district levels. The conference elects the Congress president to a two-year term and chooses the All-India Congress committee (AICC). Real power, however, is in the Congress working committee (CWC), often called the Congress high command, which has 20 members, 13 of whom are appointed by the Congress president.

The Congress president is usually selected by the prime minister if the Congress is in power. Sometimes, in order to ensure control of the party organization, the prime minister may assume the Congress presidency, as Nehru did in the early 1950s and, later, Indira and Rajiv Gandhi and P. V. Narasimha Rao. At other times, the prime minister will ensure that a trusted loyalist holds the position. The two most recent Congress presidents, Sitaram Kesri and Sonia Gandhi, have been elected by the party membership. The Congress (I) Party has an elaborate structure on paper but a weak organizational base. Despite the party's constitution, internal party elections were not held from 1972 until the early 1990s and most committees were ad hoc or nonexistent. Lacking a popular state leadership, the party in most states was forced to rely on the national party to resolve contentious policy and personnel issues. The result was that issues are often not addressed by the center until the problem has reached crisis proportions. Despite the return of some degree of internal party democracy, the Congress organization remains weak, factionalized, and semiparalyzed. The unexpected death of second-level leaders such as Madhav Rao Scindhia and Rajesh Pilot has exacerbated the situation. Horizontally, the party is divided into the old guard, such as Arjun Singh, Natwar Singh, Pranab Mukherjee, and very young and inexperienced leaders, such as the sons of the deceased leaders mentioned above. Vertically, the party is differentiated by those who are aligned with Sonia Gandhi and have little organizational popularity, such as Ambika Soni and Margaret Alva, and the truncated minority group of middle-level leaders, such as Ghulam Nabi Azad, who maintain the party's electoral base.

The daily newspaper the *National Herald* was founded by Nehru and is closely tied to the Congress (I). After the CPI gained control of the All-India Trade Union Congress, the Congress Party organized the Indian National Trade Union Congress (INTUC). Congress (I) also has women's and youth organizations.

POLICY

Until Rao's economic reforms of 1991, Congress (I) had espoused moderate socialism and a planned mixed economy aimed at rapid economic growth, self-sufficiency, and industrialization. It now supports liberalization, deregulation, privatization, and opening up of the Indian economy to foreign direct investment and trade. It also supports a secular state with egalitarian values and special programs for victims of discrimination. Land reform and national integration planks have been consistently incorporated into its party manifestos.

Under Nehru, the Congress developed a foreign policy based on nonalignment, that is, active participation in international affairs while refraining from alliance with either superpower bloc. Despite the end of the cold war nonalignment continues as the declared policy of the party. At the height of the cold war, American support for Pakistan and the development of

warmer relations between the United States and China encouraged a closer relationship between India and the Soviet Union and the USSR became India's chief arms supplier. Although the Congress government signed a long-term Treaty of Friendship with the Soviet Union in 1971 (in the midst of the Bangladesh crisis), the Congress (I) still adhered to a fiercely nationalistic form of nonalignment. Congress (I) favors a strong defense posture with as much self-sufficiency as possible. The Congress favors a nuclear weapons–free world and complete disarmament and refuses to sign the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty or the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty.

Congress (I) has professed a desire for friendly relations with India's neighbors in South Asia but has expected them to acknowledge and accept India's leading role in the area. The party attaches special importance to relations with Pakistan. While desiring more normal relations, Congress (I) clearly expects Pakistan to recognize India's pre-eminent role in the subcontinent and opposes international military assistance of sophisticated weapons to Pakistan.

MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY

In the past, Congress has claimed as many as 10 million primary members and over 300,000 active members, although most observers agree such claims probably overstate the facts. Both membership categories contribute to party finances by payment of dues, although the amount for primary members is nominal. Active members may be assigned specific party duties and are eligible to hold party office.

The success of Congress had rested on the maintenance of the traditional if incongruous coalition of Muslims, Scheduled Castes, Brahmins, industrialists, landless laborers, and well-to-do landowners. The loss in 1977 was apparently the result of the defection of large numbers of Muslim and Scheduled Caste voters, especially in North India. Minority groups of all sorts, especially religious minorities, have joined the Congress coalition, reflecting the widespread perception that the opposition parties' commitment to secularism is suspect. The Congress electoral defeats of 1996 and 1998 reflected the gradual loss of support among its old constituents to various opposition parties. Some evidence indicates that the Congress is also having difficulty recruiting new support among young voters, who do not remember the Congress role in the independence movement.

Geographically, Congress traditionally has enjoyed strong support in the South except in Tamil Nadu. However, its solid base of support in the Hindi belt of North India has been sharply eroded. Congress also has had to fight more competitively in the eastern and western regions of the country.

FINANCING

As the ruling party for most of India's independent history, the Congress has had a decided advantage over other parties in raising funds. Many observers have asserted that Congress fund-raising efforts have sometimes been rather like extortion. In the early days of independent India, Congress enjoyed a near monopoly over political contributions from businesses and still receives substantial support from such sources. Party dues also provide significant funds, and the party is also in a position to command resources from abroad.

LEADERSHIP

The temporary eclipse of the Nehru-Gandhi dynasty saw the emergence of weak, colorless, elderly, old-style Congress leaders. Following the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi the Congress turned to P. V. Narasimha Rao, a loyal supporter of the dynasty. Despite diabetes and heart bypass surgery, Rao at age 69 (born 1921) was the most senior member of the party leadership and was a compromise candidate. The defeat of the Congress in the April–May 1996 elections and charges of corruption forced the resignation of Rao and the selection of Sitaram Kesri, an 80-year-old compromise candidate.

The persistence of the Nehru-Gandhi legacy is demonstrated by Sonia Gandhi. Following her husband's death, Sonia continued to play a significant behind-the-scenes role in Congress Party affairs, and in mid-1997 she officially became a member of the Congress Party. She actively campaigned for the Congress in the 1998 Lok Sabha elections, and, following the elections, the 52-year-old Sonia was elected president of the Congress.

Given its long history and extensive governmental experience at the national and state levels, the Congress Party has a large pool of talent and potential leaders. Many of the most prominent, however, have been tainted by charges of corruption. Still, given the Indian contexts, many of these leaders may be rehabilitated. Indeed, in the 2004 Union Council of Ministers, Manmohan Singh had to include senior leaders such as Pranab Mukherjee, Shivraj Patil, Arjun Singh, Natwar Singh, and Priyaranjan Dasmunshi, among others, despite the party's pre-electoral claim that it was a younger, rejuvenated party. The problem that Sonia Gandhi faces as the party leader is that she is left with very old and very young leaders. With the exception

of Manmohan Singh, she has very few peers who have served in office and thereby have some professional experience to lead the country. The real problem facing Gandhi and the 120-year-old party is the need to develop a new generation of local and state leaders capable of coping with the massive challenges India faces as it enters the 21st century.

PROSPECTS

The decline of the Congress has been the most significant political development in the past 50-plus years of Indian democracy. The party has seen its old coalition of Brahmins, Scheduled Castes and Tribes, Muslims, and other minorities gradually erode as former Congress supporters have drifted away to the BJP, caste, and regional parties. The party's assumption that a return of the Nehru-Gandhi dynasty will result in its return to power may well be wishful thinking. Neither Indira nor Rajiv was able to build or maintain a sustainable party base, and the Italian-born Sonia Gandhi also lacks the charisma, experience, and skills needed. The party needs new leadership and a new program, and it must rebuild its social base for it to return to power as a majority party. In short, while the Congress will continue to play an important role in Indian politics, the days of Congress dominance have passed.

PEOPLE'S PARTY

(Janata Dal; JD)

The Janata Dal was formed in 1988 when a group of centrist parties and factions combined to form a new party led by V. P. Singh, a former minister in Rajiv's government. The Janata Dal then joined with a group of Congress dissidents and the regionally based parties to form the National Front to contest the 1989 general elections. The National Front won 144 seats in the elections, of which the Janata Dal won 141.

Although the 1989 elections produced a hung Parliament, the results were seen as a mandate for V. P. Singh to become prime minister. The experience of Singh's coalition, however, turned out to be a replay of the Janata experience of 1977 to 1979. Despite his enormous popular support, Singh's leadership of the Janata Dal was challenged by Chandra Shekhar and Devi Lal, two of his chief competitors. In August 1990, in an effort to head off the challenge and strengthen his support, Singh suddenly announced that he had decided to implement the party's electoral pledge to carry out the recommendations of the Mandal Commission and reserve 27 percent of all central government jobs for members of the backward castes, Devi Lal's chief constituency in the Punjab. The announcement, however, transcended the issue of factional politics within the Janata Dal and touched off a firestorm of protest and criticism throughout India. The action also alienated the BJP, one of the key backers of the National Front, and the party withdrew its support. On November 9, 1990, Singh lost a vote of confidence in the Indian Parliament and was forced to resign. He was replaced by Chandra Shekhar, who split the JD and was elected prime minister with the support of the Congress Party. Chandra Shekhar's party, the Janata Dal (S), was so dependent on Congress support that it proved to be short-lived and Indians were forced to go to the polls. Chandra Shekhar's Janata Dal (S) was later converted into the Samajwadi Janata Party (SJP).

As India embarked upon the 1991 elections, a hung Parliament appeared to be inevitable. The assassination of Rajiv Gandhi, however, produced a last-minute wave of sympathy votes for the Congress and its new leader, P. V. Narasimha Rao. Rao was able to form a government that lasted the full five-year term of Parliament.

The 1996 elections ended in another hung Parliament, and the Congress Party suffered its worst defeat since 1947. Although the largest bloc of seats was won by the BJP, the party was not able to command a majority in Parliament. In an effort to isolate the BJP, a broad alliance of 13 national and regional parties hammered together a United Front minority government that commanded the support of 180 Lok Sabha members. The United Front was supported by the Congress Party, which refused to join the new government. The Janata Dal was the largest constituent in the United Front with 45 seats. The other major components of the United Front were the CPI, the CPM, and 10 regional parties. The United Front elected H. D. Deve Gowda, a Janata Dal leader and former chief minister of Karnataka, as prime minister. The new government clearly reflected the anti–upper-caste politics of the post-Mandal era. The coalition, however, proved to be extremely unstable, and Gowda was forced to resign after less than a year in office. The United Front replaced Gowda with I. K. Gujral, a weak compromise candidate whose government survived until December 1997. Riven by splits and internal factionalism, the Janata Dal suffered a devastating defeat in the 1998 elections, winning only six seats and 9 percent of the vote.

Since then, the Janata Dal has lost its popularity as a national party because it has been broken up into smaller factions led by powerful leaders. With V. P.

Singh being infirm and I. K. Gujral sequestered, the remaining leaders have, with the exception of George Fernandes, been relegated to representing regional aspirations. However, taking on a regional character has increased their influence at the national level since the prospects for power depend on the nature and size of a coalition.

The organization of the Janata Dal at the regional and local level is rudimentary and ad hoc, consisting of little more than the personal followers and clients of its regional leaders and members of Parliament.

The Janata Dal advocates the eradication of poverty, unemployment, and wide disparities in wealth, the protection of minorities, and a policy of nonalignment. As leader of the United Front, it was pledged to implement a common minimum program that called for the continuation of the policy of economic liberation begun by Rao in 1991, social justice, and a foreign policy that would stress better relations with India's neighbors.

The Janata Dal, which has been an important force in the states of Bihar, Karnataka, and Orissa, has been almost wiped out in these states. It has lost its Backward Castes (OBCs) and minority vote base to the BJP and breakaway parties that had left the Janata Dal.

The Janata Dal has no central collection system, and each factional leader depends upon his own base of financial support from business houses and industrial lobbies in their respective states. Very little is collected from its membership, and there have been no membership dues for years.

The spiritual leader of the Janata Dal is V. P. Singh, who is no longer active but is consulted during times of crisis. The most important leaders are all regionally based. In Orissa the Janata Dal has been split into two factions: one that supports Naveen Patnaik, who is the son of legendary Biju Patnaik, and another that is a loyalist; both claim to be the true inheritors of Biju's legacy. In Karnataka the Janata Dal has been riven by factions between S. R. Bommai, Deve Gowda, and supporters of late Ramakrishna Hegde. In Bihar the Dal has been divided between Laloo Yadav and his detractors in the Janata Dal (U) such as Sharad Yadav, Ram Vilas Paswan, and Nitish Kumar.

Throughout its brief history, the Janata Dal has been plagued by an unending capacity for schism. The Janata Dal (S) left in late 1990, the Samata Party split in 1994, Laloo Prasad Yadav broke away in July 1997 to form the Rashtriya Janata Dal, and Ramakrishna Hedge created the Lok Shakti Party to fight the 1998 elections. Factionalism has all but destroyed the party as a national political force.

Minor Political Parties

ASOM GANA PARISHAD (AGP)

The Asom Gana Parishad, or Assam People's Council, was born in 1985 out of the student agitations in Assam against the influx of Bangladeshi refugees in the 1980s. Following the signing by Rajiv Gandhi of the Assam Accord that attempted to settle the refugee issue, the party won a majority of the seats in the 1985 state assembly elections. The failure of the Rajiv government to implement the accord, however, led to a return of insurgency and president's rule. The AGP was defeated by the Congress in the 1991 Lok Sabha elections, and the party split. In the 1996 elections, however, a reunited AGP-led alliance defeated the Congress and was returned to power in the state. The party also won five seats in the Lok Sabha and became part of the United Front government in June 1996. The AGP was unable to win any seats in the 1998 Lok Sabha elections. In the 2004 elections it won two seats.

BHUJAN SAMAJ PARTY (BSP)

The Bhujan Samaj Party (literally, "party of society's majority") was founded in 1984 to speak on behalf of India's untouchables or Dalits (oppressed). The party began making its presence felt in the late 1980s but scored its first really big success in the 1993 state elections in Uttar Pradesh when it won 67 seats and 12 percent of the vote and formed a coalition government with the Samajwadi Party. This Dalit and Backward Caste alliance, however, disintegrated in June 1995, and the BSP formed its own government with the support of various opposition parties. The BSP government, however, lasted only a few months and the state was placed under presidential rule.

The BPS won 10 seats in the Lok Sabha elections of April–May 1996 and 67 seats in the October 1996 state assembly elections. Since the state assembly elections resulted in a hung Parliament, Uttar Pradesh was again placed under president's rule. Finally in March 1997 the BSP and the BJP agreed on a unique coalition arrangement whereby the cabinet would be based on equal representation of each party and the chief ministership would rotate between the two parties. Leadership for the first six months was to be provided by Mayawati, the 42-year-old leader of the BSP in Uttar Pradesh and close confidant of Kanshi Ram, the founder of the party. The BSP won five seats and 4.68 percent of the vote in the 1998 Lok Sabha elections. In addition to Uttar Pradesh, the BSP also has some sup-

port in the Punjab and Madhya Pradesh and sees itself as an All-India voice of the Dalits.

The strength of the BSP is in its stable vote base among the other backward castes. Typically, it has restricted itself to securing all the votes at the social margin, consistently since its inception. It limited itself to few states in the North. But in the 2004 elections it contested 435 seats, which is higher than the seats contested by even the Congress or the BJP. While it won 19 seats with 5.33 percent of the votes, it also reflects the confidence that the party has in its social base in the country. Further, it has not aligned with either the BJP or the Congress-led coalition. With 19 seats it has a significant role to play in tilting the balance in favor of any coalition, if the established alliances are in trouble.

COMMUNIST PARTY OF INDIA

(Marxist-Leninist; CPML)

In 1967 an apparently spontaneous peasant revolt broke out in the Naxalbari District of West Bengal. The West Bengal state government, dominated by Communists, adopted a policy of crushing the rebellion. Some leftists—believing the government's actions contrary to the dictates of Marx, Lenin, and Mao—joined forces with the Naxalbari peasants. Dubbed Naxalites, they vowed violent actions against authority, especially in the rural areas of Bengal and Andhra. The central and state governments made determined efforts to stamp out this movement and incarcerate its leaders.

In 1969 several factions of Naxalites came together to form the CPML. The party was banned during the emergency from 1975 to 1977, and factional disputes raged for years over the issue of violent revolutions versus an electoral strategy. The party has now turned to a parliamentary strategy but has not been especially successful at the polls. It has failed to gain any representation at the state or national levels.

DRAVIDA MUNNETRA KAZHAGAM (DMK)–DRAVIDIAN PROGRESSIVE FEDERATION & ALL-INDIA ANNA-DRAVIDA MUNNETRA KAZHAGAM (AIADMK)

The heir to the anti-Brahmin Dravidian nationalist movement in South India, the DMK was founded in 1949 by C. N. Annadurai to press the claims of Tamil cultural and linguistic autonomy. Its platform of radical populist economics and cultural nationalism bordered on secessionism but served to gain the party control of the Tamil Nadu state government in 1967.

Rivalries that were primarily personal in nature but related to the party's relations with Mrs. Gandhi's Congress followed Annadurai's death in 1969 and led to a split in 1972. Two factions emerged. The old title of DMK was retained by the group led by M. Karunanidhi. A new group, under the leadership of film idol M. G. Ramachandran (universally known as M.G.R.), claimed to be the true followers of Anadurai and called itself the All-India Anna DMK (AIADMK). These two parties have dominated the politics of Tamil Nadu for the last 15 years, with the DMK controlling the state government until 1976 when presidential rule was imposed. The AIADMK ruled Tamil Nadu from 1977 to 1989.

Following the death of M.G.R. in 1987, the party split into two factions, one led by his wife, Janaki, and the other by his protégé costar Jayalalitha, and lost the 1989 elections to the DMK. The party united again under Jayalalitha and was swept back into power in 1991. The AIADMK began to run into trouble again when Jayalalitha was accused of corruption and using state funds to finance her foster son's wedding in September 1995. The party was defeated in the April–May 1996 elections and replaced by a DMK government led by M. Karunanidhi. At the national level the DMK joined the United Front government in June 1996 and Murasoli Maran of the DMK was allotted the industry portfolio. In the 1998 Lok Sabha elections, the AIADMK, in alliance with the BJP, made a remarkable comeback and won 18 seats. The party became a major force in the BJP government and was given four seats on the Council of Ministers. Both parties have learned to play a strategic game with the BJP and the Congress, striking alliances and withdrawing them in apparently whimsical ways, but primarily based on local electoral prospects. AIADMK withdrew support to the BJP government after 1998, then the DMK, which was earlier a Congress ally, began to support the BJP until 2003, and finally both parties reverted to their 1998 positions by switching loyalties again for the 2004 elections.

Responsibilities of office have muted whatever secessionist zeal lingered in these parties, though they both continue to champion states' rights and resist the spread of Hindi cultural and linguistic preeminence.

SAMAJWADI PARTY (SP)

The Samajwadi (Socialist) Party was formed by a group of Janata Dal dissidents led by Mulayam Singh Yadav, the leader of the Yadav community in Uttar Pradesh,

in 1992. The party formed a coalition government with the Bahujan Samaj Party in Uttar Pradesh in 1993 that lasted until June 1995. In the 1996 general elections the SP won 17 seats and became a key component of the United Front government in which Mulayam Singh Yadav served as defense minister. The party won 110 seats in the assembly elections in Uttar Pradesh in October 1997. The SP represents the Backward Castes. In the 1998 Lok Sabha elections, the SP won 20 seats and 4.95 percent of the vote.

Even though the party tally jumped to 35 seats in the 2004 elections, its offer to join the government coalition in return for representation in the Union Council of Ministers was rebuffed by the Congress-led government.

SAMATA PARTY (SP)

The Samata (Equality) Party was founded in early 1994 following a split with the Janata Dal. The party is led by George Fernandes, a veteran socialist and trade unionist, and Nitish Kumar. The party is based largely in Bihar and in 1996 won eight seats in the Lok Sabha, six from Bihar and one each in Uttar Pradesh and Orissa. The party had an electoral alliance with the BJP in Bihar and is considered a BJP ally at the national level. In the 1998 Lok Sabha elections, the party won 12 seats and Fernandes became the defense minister in the BJP government.

Their most influential leader, George Fernandes, organized a merger with the Janata Dal (U) in 2003, and he is now the president of the latter. The Samata Party now consists of members who did not want to merge with Janata Dal (U). They have been allowed to retain the party name but have a different symbol.

SHIROMANI AKALI DAL (SAD)

The Shiromani Akali Dal is a Sikh communal party confined to the Punjab. Its roots go back to early Sikh nationalism. It has supported greater autonomy for Sikhs. Some even support the notion of Khalistan, an independent homeland. The extremists became increasingly assertive in early 1984, and Indira Gandhi ordered the army to occupy Amritsar's Golden Temple, the major Sikh temple that had become a center for the militant campaign. The attack, resulting in several hundred deaths, angered many Sikhs, as did the bloody anti-Sikh riots that broke out in the wake of Mrs. Gandhi's assassination by two of her Sikh bodyguards.

A moderate Sikh faction of the Akali Dal worked out an agreement with Rajiv Gandhi in July that envisaged returning the state to civil rule. Elections in September 1985 witnessed a victory for the Akali Dal Party, the first time it had won a majority on its own. The militant faction of the Sikhs renounced the agreement, and in early 1986 extremists again seized the Golden Temple and turned it into a center of the Khalistan campaign.

At the height of Sikh militancy the Akali Dal split into a half dozen factions. In the April–May 1996 Lok Sabha elections the party faction led by two-time Chief Minister Prakash Singh Badal won eight seats, and in the February 1997 assembly elections the party won 75 seats in alliance with the BJP. In both the 1998 and 2004 Lok Sabha elections the party again won eight seats. Stridently anti-Congress, the Akali Dal has become an ally of the BJP and demands a broad-based confederate structure in contrast to militant Sikhs who demand a separate Sikh nation.

SHIV SENA

Founded in the 1960s as an anti-immigrant movement centered in Bombay, the Shiv Sena fostered the building of Maratha pride and demanded that Maharashtrans be given preferences in jobs in the city. The movement expanded its influence in several urban areas outside Bombay in the 1970s and 1980s and increasingly took on a more antiminority, Hindu nationalist color. The Shiv Sena became more prominent in the 1990s as a result of its strong support of the Ayodhya issue and its alliance with the BJP at the state and federal levels. The party won 15 seats in the 1996 Lok Sabha elections and supported the short-lived BJP government. In 1998 the party won only six Lok Sabha seats, but in 2004 it won 12 seats. The Shiv Sena also governs the state of Maharashtra in alliance with the BJP. The party combines religious militancy with regionalism and is led by its founder, Bal Thackeray, a onetime cartoonist.

TAMIL MAANILA CONGRESS (TMC)

The Tamil Maanila Congress was formed by a group of Congress dissidents in Tamil Nadu who were expelled from the Congress in April 1996. The dissidents opposed P. V. Narasimha Rao's alliance with the AIADMK in the state. The party won 20 of the 39 Tamil Nadu seats in the 1996 Lok Sabha elections and 39 seats in the state assembly in alliance with the DMK. In 1998, however, the party won only three Lok Sabha seats. The party is led by G. K. Moopanar, former general secretary of the Congress, and P. Chidambaram, a former Congress minister. Chidambaram was the finance minister in the United Front government,

and the party held four other seats on the Council of Ministers.

Chidambaram parted ways from Moopanar in 1998 when the latter aligned with the AIADMK for the Tamil Nadu assembly elections, forcing the former to start the TMC Democratic Front. Moopanar died in 2001, and his son took over the reins, only to eventually merge with the Congress by 2002. Eventually Chidambaram also dissolved his party and joined the Congress in 2004. He is the finance minister in Manmohan Singh's cabinet.

TELEGU DESAM PARTY (TDP)

During the early 1980s New Delhi intervened repeatedly to establish an effective government in Andhra Pradesh, a state ruled by a faction-ridden Congress (I) Party. A succession of chief ministers imposed by the central government aroused the ire of many voters in the state who were disgusted with the pervasive corruption of Congress (I) politicians and with national officials seeming lack of concern for an effective government in the state. On March 21, 1982, the leading matinee idol, N. T. Rama Rao, announced his intention to establish a new party, the Telegu Desam, to restore a clean government that would serve the interests of the common people. In January 1983 state assembly elections were held and the new Telegu Desam won 185 of 261 seats. The Desam resisted the pro–Rajiv Gandhi electoral tide in the 1984 general elections and 1985 assembly vote by winning a large majority of the seats.

N. T. Rama Rao developed a populist program including a number of social welfare schemes such as providing free lunches to all schoolchildren. On the national level, N. T. Rama Rao was a major figure in the unsuccessful move to unify the opposition prior to the general elections in the 1980s.

Andhra switched over to the Congress in 1989 and then back again to Rao in 1994. A rift developed within the family, however, when Lakshmi Parvathi, Rao's biographer, whom he married in August 1993, began playing an active role in party offices. The result was a revolt by Chandrababu Naidu, Rao's son-in-law, who toppled him in August 1995. On Rao's death in January 1996, the leadership of his faction was taken over by his wife. In the 1996 election, however, the TDP-Naidu faction won 16 Lok Sabha seats and the Parvathi faction none. Naidu became chief minister and one of the key state leaders responsible for creating the United Front government.

In the 1998 Lok Sabha elections the party won 12 seats. Following the elections, the TDP resigned from the United Front and provided the 12 critical votes that enabled the BJP to win its vote of confidence in March 1998. As a reward for its support of the BJP government, a member of the party was elected speaker of the Lok Sabha. In 2004 the party won five seats.

MUSLIM LEAGUE

The remnants of the major Muslim political organization of preindependence days, most of whose leaders went to Pakistan, the Muslim League of today is a small party devoted to the welfare of Muslims in Kerala. It occasionally has participated in coalition governments at the state level. The party won two seats in the 1998 Lok Sabha elections and one seat in the 2004 elections.

NATIONAL CONFERENCE

The National Conference is the most popular party in Jammu and Kashmir and has been a tool for giving Kashmiri Muslims a special role in their government in a state that Pakistan claims as its territory. The leading figure of the National Conference during the troubled postindependence period was Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah, who served as the state's chief executive until his arrest in 1953. After signing an agreement in 1975 accepting the state's constitutional relationship with India, Abdullah returned as chief minister and retained that post until his death in September 1982. His son, Dr. Farooq Abdullah, was his father's hand-picked successor. Prime Minister Indira Gandhi is believed to have worked to split the National Conference in mid-1984, which brought G. M. Shah, Abdullah's bitter rival, to power. However, Shah's government was unpopular and ineffectual. Following widespread communal riots in early 1986, the prime minister imposed governor's rule.

Although the National Conference was again elected to power in 1987, the government was dismissed in 1990 amid mounting unrest. Despite several efforts, no elections could be held due to an increasingly bloody insurgency by Muslim separatists. The success of the relatively peaceful parliamentary elections in May 1996 led to a decision to hold full-scale state assembly elections in September 1997. Amidst widespread allegations of voter coercion, the National Conference led by Farooq Abdullah won a massive two-thirds majority, enabling the national government to restore local government in Kashmir for the first time since 1990. In the 1998 Lok Sabha elections the party won two seats.

In the 2002 assembly elections the National Conference summarily lost to the People's Democratic Party, led by the ex–Janata Dal leader Mufti Mohammed Sayyed and his daughter Mehbooba Mufti, and formed the government with Congress's support. Thereafter, Mehbooba Mufti and Omar Abdullah, who took charge of the National Conference from his father, Farooq Abdullah, have emerged as the political leaders of the region. The National Conference retained its seats in the 2004 elections.

Other Political Forces

ORGANIZED LABOR

Due to the character of social, economic, and political change, organized labor in India has declined as a political force. Employment in the organized sector has decreased from 9.7 percent in 1971 to 9 percent in 1991. This decline has been accompanied by an increasing fragmentation of the working class and deunionization. Of the 27 million Indians employed in the organized sector in 1991, only 6 to 7 million belonged to trade unions. This small group of unionized workers, moreover, is represented by some 50,000 trade unions organized into 12 highly politicized central federations. The top five labor federations and their political affiliations are the Bharatiya Mazdur Sangh—BJP; the Indian National Trade Union Congress—Congress (I); the Centre of Indian Trade Unions—CPM; the Hind Mazdoor Sabha—originally socialist, now Janata Dal; and the All-India Trade Union Congress—CPI. While fragmentation has long plagued the Indian trade union movement, the problem has become compounded by the development of sectarianism and criminalization. The only significant effort to organize the unorganized sector in India is being made by nongovernmental organizations (NGOs).

STUDENTS

The largest student organization is the All-India Students Organization (Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad; ABVP), which is affiliated with the RSS and dominates many of the campuses of North India. It provided an important source of campaign workers for the Jana Sangh and the Janata Party and now provides valuable assistance to the Bharatiya Janata Party. The Congress (I), through the Youth Congress, and the Marxists also have been able to attract periodic activity on their behalf from groups of students.

BUSINESS

The Indian business community is the best-organized sector of Indian civil society, and its influence has increased significantly since the beginning of economic liberalization of the Indian economy in 1991. Due to the internal divisions of the business community based on caste, region, and the competition between foreign and indigenous capital, India has three major apex associations that represent business. The largest and most broadly based apex association representing indigenous business is the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry. The Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry is the oldest, and, although it initially represented foreign capital, it now represents indigenous business groups as well. The newest, richest, and most influential apex association is the Confederation of Indian Industry. Since 1991 these associations have increasingly been consulted by government on major issues involving economic policy. The business-government relationship, however, still remains strained, and the Indian equivalent of Japan Inc. remains a distant dream.

FARMERS AND PEASANTS

Following the green revolution of the 1960s, Indian farmers began to organize movements under a variety of nonparty banners to fight for rural interests against a perceived urban, industrial bias. These new farmers' movements were organized by cultivating landowners producing commercial crops in irrigated areas located largely in northern and western India. Farmers' movements began to play a major role in pressing their demands on government in the 1980s but declined in the 1990s and 2000s as they attempted to play a more direct political role. The vast majority of the peasantry, however, especially landless labor, remains unorganized, and attempts by political parties to develop peasant movements have had limited success. Although each major party has a peasant organization, these organizations have had much less influence on policy than the more articulate and organized farmers' movements. The major farmers' movements in India are the Bharatiya Kisan Union (BKU) Punjab, Bharatiya Kisan Union (BKU) Uttar Pradesh, Bharatiya Kisan Sangh Gujarat, Shetkari Sanghatana Maharashtra, Karnataka State Farmers' Association (Karnataka Rajya Ryota Sangha or KRRS) Karnataka, and Tamil Nadu Agriculturalists' Association (Tamilaga Vyavasavavigal Sangham or TVS) Tamil Nadu.

NONGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

One of the most significant recent developments in India has been the rise of the NGO sector. NGOs began to mushroom in India in the late 1970s as new issues and new forces began to emerge outside the framework of formal politics and government in an attempt to develop new relations with the rural and urban poor. It is estimated that India has some 100,000 NGOs, of which 20,000 are active. Of these some 14,000 are foreign-funded. NGOs have become active in welfare, relief, charity, development, health, education, and local planning. More recently they have become champions of women's rights, civil liberties, ecology, bonded labor, child labor, and alternative development strategies. Though they are far from being characterized as India's fifth estate, they have become an important force. The 1990s, however, saw a rising tide of criticism of the NGO sector for lack of coordination, proliferation, politicization, nepotism, and lack of accountability.

CASTE

Caste is a hierarchical ordering of status groups, membership in which is based on birth. Caste groups have been the major institution organizing human relationships and interactions in India for centuries. Inevitably, a system so deeply imbedded in Indian society has influenced and been influenced by the modern political system. No single factor influences politics in India more deeply than caste, but this influence is felt most fully at the local level.

Caste groupings and more formal Caste Associations have become mediating and mobilizing institutions in Indian politics. They use and are used by political parties at the local level. They interpret political issues and positions to their members and convey caste political interests to the parties and administration. They mobilize voters, workers, and sometimes money and candidates.

SCHEDULED CASTES

Historically the most economically and socially disadvantaged groups in Indian society, the Scheduled Castes are separate castes grouped together for legal and administrative purposes. The Indian constitution outlaws the most extreme forms of discrimination against untouchability and provides special protections in parliamentary representation, civil service employment, and education. Untouchability, however, is still widely practiced in rural India, and members of the Scheduled Castes remain heavily overrepresented among the poorest, least employed, and most illiterate in Indian society.

Until recently, untouchables generally have looked to the Congress (I) Party as the source of protection for their interests. However, while there have always been significant untouchable political movements, the Dalits, as they now prefer to call themselves, are beginning to seek political power on their own. The most important untouchable movement, the Scheduled Caste Federation founded in 1942 by Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, the most prominent untouchable leader of the modern period, was largely confined to Maharashtra and central Uttar Pradesh.

Attempting to broaden its appeal to Non-Scheduled oppressed groups, the Scheduled Caste Federation took the name Republican Party of India (RPI) in 1956. It achieved considerable success at the state level in Maharashtra and at the municipal level in Agra City in the late 1950s and 1960s, but factionalism has reduced its importance in more recent times.

A more militant student-based group called the Dalit (oppressed) Panthers emerged in Maharashtra in the 1960s and developed some influence by forging links between rural and urban groups.

In the late 1970s, another organization, the All-India Backward and Minority Communities Employees Federation (BAMCEF), began to organize the Scheduled Castes and other oppressed groups on a broader geographical basis. It used the now-significant number of Scheduled Caste government employees—holders of reserved posts in the civil service—as an organizing base. Led by Kanshi Ram, the BAMCEF has been transformed into the Bahujan Samaj Party.

MUSLIMS

The most prominent minority in India is the Muslim minority. With over 138 million Muslims, India has the third largest Muslim population in the world. Yet, Muslims are only about 13 percent of the Indian population. At the time of the partition of British India, many of the Muslim elite migrated to Pakistan. The Muslim population, geographically scattered and without its traditional leadership, turned to the Congress Party for protection. That support began to erode during the 1975–77 emergency when many Muslims felt themselves the victim of overzealous bureaucrats seeking to implement the government's slum removal and sterilization programs. Since then Muslims have been more selective in their support of various political parties.

Muslim confrontations with the police and with other social groups have become more frequent as the Muslim community has become more assertive politically and socially. This assertiveness is a sign of its growing self-confidence and owes much to the openness of the democratic political system and to a growing middle class more willing to speak out on the community's behalf. Some Muslims support the Jamaat-e-Islami, a tightly organized paramilitary organization, which is roughly the counterpart of the Hindu RSS.

National Prospects

Fifty years of independence have produced a mixed picture of success and failure for India. Among the developing countries of the world, India has been generally recognized as a political success but a near economic failure. Despite a variety of problems, Indian democracy has served the country well. Its great socialist experiment, however, has produced neither growth nor equity, as the country remains plagued by poverty, illiteracy, disease, massive unemployment, and despair. As India enters its second 50 years of freedom, however, there is considerable hope that its new policy of economic liberalization and globalization will transform the country into an important economic and political force.

Perhaps India's most important success has been the resilience of its democratic order. The basic political framework based on mass franchise, parliamentary government, and an independent judiciary has withstood the test of time and has acquired increased legitimacy. These institutions have played a major role in helping to reconcile India's diverse social, economic, and cultural interest. Dormant institutions like the courts and the election commission have become revitalized and have come to play an increasingly important role.

While India's institutional system has remained intact, its party system has been transformed significantly. The party system has been marked by the gradual decline of the once-dominant Congress (I) Party, repeated failure of centrist alternatives parties to survive, the stagnation of the Communist left, the rise of the Hindu nationalism of the BJP, and the regionalization of parties. None of the national political formations is capable of governing without relying on the votes of regionally based parties that draw their support from caste and religious groups that have become electorally powerful. As a result of the transformation of the party system, India is faced by an era of weak, unstable coalition and alliance governments. These weak governments may not be in a position to make the kind of tough choices that face the country in the coming years, especially in the economic sphere.

The Indian economy has not been an especially notable success, although in the late 1990s and early 2000s this started to change. India's most important economic achievement has been in feeding its vast population, warding off famine, and avoiding the horrors of mass starvation that occurred during the British period and in Mao's China. As of 2005 about 25 percent of the population lived below the poverty line, and 40 percent of the adult population was illiterate; both numbers were significantly better than they were in the mid-1990s. In the industrial sphere, India's vibrant private sector has been overshadowed by a massive, inefficient public sector that remains a major legacy of India's socialist past. The liberalization policies of the Rao government began the process of reducing state intervention in the economy, ending protection, and joining the global economy. Successive governments did not stray from this path, thereby ensuring an average growth rate of 6 percent and maintaining inflation at less than 15 percent. Export-oriented sectors such as information technology received the right incentives to integrate themselves very successfully with the global economy. With the largest population between 18 and 60 years of age anywhere in the world, India, along with China, is emerging in the eyes of the developed world as the biggest economic opportunity and challenge for this century.

The collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the cold war have totally undermined the cornerstone of India's foreign policy of nonalignment. Indian leaders and foreign policy officials, however, continue to insist that nonalignment remains relevant and have failed to engage in a fundamental review of India's future role in the post–cold war world. Another legacy of the past is the continued dominance of Indo-Pakistan relations in Indian foreign policy and the problem of its relations with its neighbors. Indo-American policy also remains prickly due to differences over nuclear weapons and missile development and deployment. The May 1998 explosions of five nuclear devices further complicated India's political, economic, and foreign policy future. However, in 2005 India signed an agreement with the United States that promised to lift U.S. sanctions on Indian access to non-military nuclear technology.

These various economic, political, and foreign policy problems will continue to strain the capabilities of India's political system. India's biggest challenge

will center on its ability to deal with the problems and opportunities of globalization, the development of cultural nationalism, and the need to maintain political stability and effective government in an era of coalition and alliance politics.

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REPUBLIC OF INDONESIA

(Republik Indonesia)

By Michael Malley, M.A.
Revised by Joel Selway



An archipelagic country of 241 million people (2005 est.), Indonesia stretches 3,000 miles along the equator from the Indian Ocean to the Pacific. Although it consists of more than 13,000 islands, only about 6,000 are inhabited. Its population is the fourth largest in the world. Nearly 60 percent of the country's people crowd onto the island of Java, which accounts for just 7 percent of the country's land area. The rest is spread mostly among Sumatra, Sulawesi, Maluku, Bali, and the Indonesian parts of Borneo and New Guinea. Nearly 90 percent of the population professes Islam, making it home to more Muslims than any other country. Christian, Hindu, and Buddhist minorities are prominent in certain regions.

The census does not record ethnic identity, but it is estimated that about 40 percent of Indonesians are ethnically Javanese, traditionally found in eastern and central Java. Other major ethnic groups include the Sundanese in western Java; the Acehnese, Minangkabau, and Batak in Sumatra; the Dayak and Banjar in Borneo; the Bugis in Sulawesi; and the Balinese in Bali. Indonesians of Chinese descent, numbering fewer than 10 million, live mostly in urban areas and control many major economic activities.

HISTORY

Prior to 2002 the constitution provided few checks and balances on executive power. More than three decades of rule by President Soeharto's authoritarian New Order regime (1966–98) institutionalized executive domination over all other branches of government. The New Order regime claimed legitimacy as the upholder of the 1945 constitution and the national ideology, *Pancasila*, which is contained in the document's preamble. The brief, hurriedly written constitution was adopted at the beginning of the revolution against Dutch colonialism (1945–49) but replaced by a provisional constitution in 1950 that instituted a system of parliamentary democracy. Amid regional rebellions and parliamentary instability, President Soekarno declared martial law in 1957. Two years later, under army pressure, he disbanded the elected Constitutional Assembly and restored the 1945 constitution. In 1966 the army forced Soekarno to cede power to its commander, General Soeharto. Soeharto became acting president in 1968 and remained president until 1998, when massive demonstrations and the defection of key military and bureaucratic supporters led him to resign. His vice president, B. J. Habibie, assumed the presidency and began to grapple with widespread pressures for political reform. He acknowledged that he was a transitional leader and promised to revise the country's electoral laws and hold elections in 1999.

Elections were held as promised in 1999. Forty-eight parties competed in what international observers declared as free and fair elections, though not void of problems. Megawati Soekarnoputri's party took firm control of the House of People's Representatives with Golkar (Soeharto's party) coming in second. Megawati was expected to win the presidential election in

the same year due to mass popular support. However, Islamic conservatives and remnants of the old regime were opposed to Megawati, a woman, assuming rule over Indonesia—the world's largest Muslim country. In a shock election, the People's Consultative Assembly (MPR) elected Abdurrahman Wahid (better known as Gus Dur) as president. Gus Dur's National Awakening Party had come in third in the parliamentary elections, and his election caused mass demonstrations on the streets of Jakarta. As a token of appeasement, Wahid appointed Megawati as vice president. Nevertheless, demonstrations continued over the next two years and increased as two financial scandals broke out in the Wahid administration. Parliament dismissed Wahid in July 2001 and Vice President Megawati took over the reins of government.

In August 2002 the MPR passed significant constitutional amendments, which moved Indonesia closer to democracy. For the first time in Indonesia's history, the chief executive was to be elected by popular and direct vote. In addition, the changes stripped the MPR of its power and removed all reserved seats for the military and other special function groups. In its stead, the constitution allows for a bicameral legislature to pass laws. Moreover, the executive is now responsible only for initiating legislation rather than having the power to make statutes. Lastly, the constitutional changes created two new institutions: first, an independent electoral commission to oversee elections; second, a Constitutional Court with the power of judicial review.

The System of Government

Indonesia is a unitary state with a presidential system of government. It has a bicameral legislature.

EXECUTIVE

The amendments to the constitution passed in 2002 had the primary goal of checking and reducing the powers of the president. The 1945 constitution allowed for enormous presidential powers, which Soeharto took full advantage of. Under Soeharto, the government operated more under presidential and ministerial decrees than legislation. Futhermore, there were no term limits on the president. Thus, when Soeharto resigned in 1998, he was the world's second longest serving head of state.

According to the 2002 constitutional amendments, which became effective in 2004, the president and vice president are elected under a joint ticket by the direct voice of the people. If none of the candidates wins a majority in the first round, the top two candidates compete in a second round. The candidate with the most number of votes becomes president.

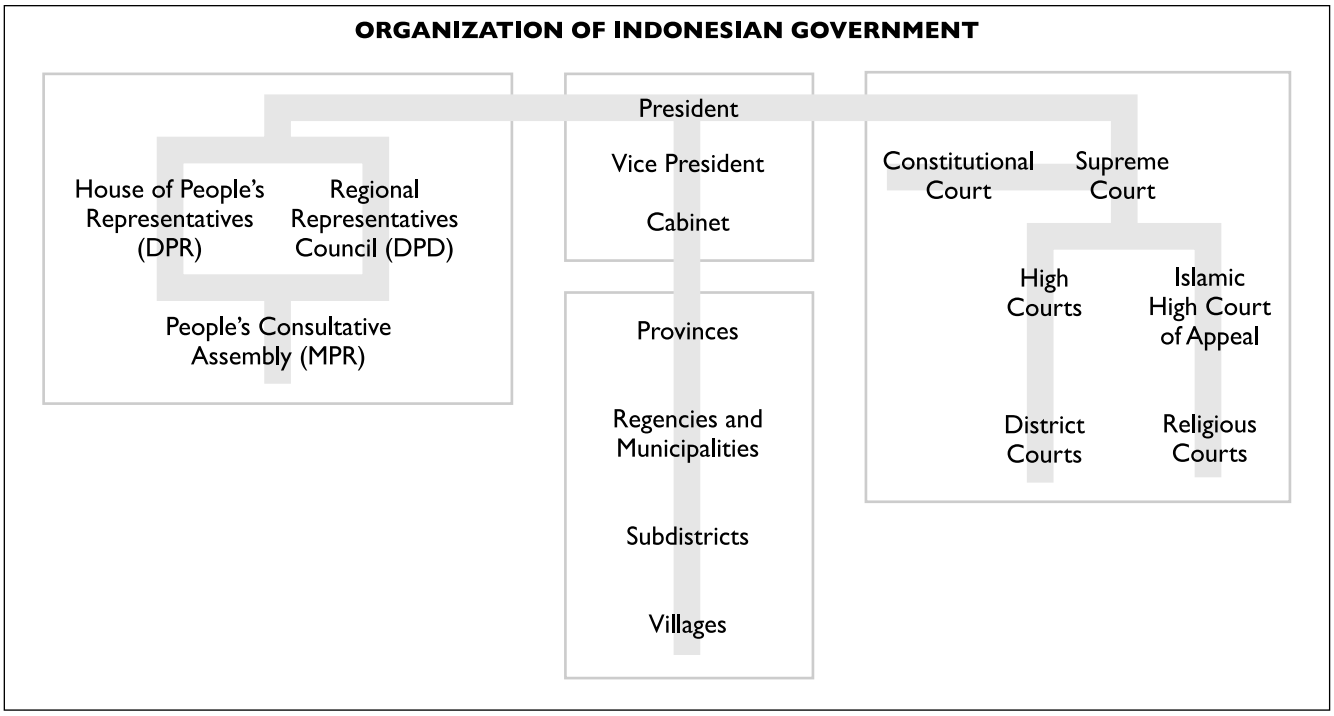
Under the new presidential powers, the president can submit laws to the Indonesian House of Representatives (the DPR), but not make statutes as in the past. The president and vice president also have a two-term limit. Moreover, the president can be impeached by the People's Consultative Assembly (the MPR) after the Constitutional Court has investigated and submitted its verdict. Lastly, the president cannot freeze or dissolve the DPR. The impact of these changes on the dynamics between the president, the DPR, and the Constitutional Court has yet to take effect. Nevertheless, the changes are large enough that the office of president is sure to be significantly reduced in importance, giving way to the more deliberative body of the DPR.

LEGISLATURE

In addition to checking the president's power, the 2002 constitutional amendments also significantly changed the legislative branch of government. Under the 1945 constitution, the People's Consultative Assembly (MPR) was the highest political body with unlimited power. The MPR was made up of about 80 percent members elected and 20 percent appointed from the military. This afforded the military significant influence in Indonesian politics. The MPR was solely responsible for electing the president and setting the broad outlines of state policy.

Under the amended constitution, the MPR has limited responsibilities and powers. It can amend or draw up a constitution, act as an electoral college, and impeach the president (although it has no exclusive powers to impeach). Moreover the MPR is now made up wholly of directly elected members. The joint bodies of the DPR and the Regional Representatives Council (DPD) now constitute its entire membership. The MPR is no longer responsible to set state policy.

The legislative branch is now bicameral, similar to the American system of House and Senate. The Indonesian House of Representatives (which is historically but inaccurately referred to as "parliament") is known as the Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat or DPR. It is the main legislative-making body in the Indonesian system. In order to make DPR candidates more accountable to their con-



stituencies, the 2002 amendments changed the closed list proportional representation system to an open list system. Theoretically, this should allow candidates further down on the party's list to win seats. However, the amendments set a district quota on the minimum number of votes these candidates have to win. This quota is very high and there are doubts that this revised system will effect greater constituency accountability.

The Indonesian "Senate" is known as the Regional Representatives Council, the Dewan Perwakilan Daerah or DPD. The DPD is not entirely like the American Senate. It does not have equal powers with the DPR, and is primarily charged with proposing, discussing, and monitoring laws relating to regional autonomy. The DPD also provides consideration to the DPR over bills on the state budget and on bills related to taxation, education, or religion. Each of the 33 provinces, regardless of its size, has four representatives in the DPD. Candidates to the DPD must not be formally affiliated to any party, even though they might be supported by parties. The electoral system is the single non-transferable vote (SNTV). Thus, the top four candidates with the most votes from each province are directly elected to the DPD.

In the elections held in May 2004, Soeharto's old party, Golkar, won the most seats in the DPR (21.6 percent). Megawati's party, Partai Demokrasi Indonesia Perjuangan, came in second with 18.5 percent of the vote. The party of Megawati's presidential challenger Susilo, Partai Demokrat, came in fifth with 7.5 percent of the vote.

JUDICIARY

The members of the Supreme Court (Mahkamah Agung) are appointed by the president. The Court has both original and appellate jurisdiction but no power of judicial review. It has never played a significant autonomous political role, and the doctrine of separation of powers is not legally recognized. The New Order regime tended to fill high-level posts in the Department of Justice as well as seats on the Supreme Court with military lawyers and judges. Indonesians widely regard the courts as subject to political influence and bribery.

Since Soeharto's dismissal in 1998, there is hope that the judiciary will take on a more autonomous role. The 2002 amendments introduce a clear separation of powers between the three branches of government, with proper checks and balances. The most significant of these changes is the introduction of the Constitutional Court (Mahkamah Konstitusi). It has the power to review laws, determine disputes over the authorities of state institutions in the Constitution, decide over the dissolution of a political party, and decide disputes over the results of general elections. It shares judicial power with the Supreme Court (Mahkamah Agung) and is comprised of nine "constitutional justices,"

appointed by the DPR, the Supreme Court, and the president. The Supreme Court is given a boost to its independence through the creation of the Judicial Commission. The Judicial Commission possesses the authority to propose candidates for appointment as justices of the Supreme Court. This serves as a check on the presidential power to appoint justices.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Indonesia is divided into 33 provinces, which are subdivided into regencies (*kabupaten*) and municipalities (*kota*), respectively. According to the 1945 constitution, each level of government had a Regional People's House of Representatives (Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah or DPRD) whose members are elected. However, the laws governing regional autonomy (*otonomi daerah*) were antiquated and had been abused by Soeharto. Thus, revision of the 1974 and 1979 laws on regional government were a chief demand of anti-Soeharto forces. Under Soeharto, regional governments were tightly governed by the Department of Home Affairs. As at the national level, regional legislators consisted of 80 percent elected members and 20 percent appointed by the armed forces. Regional executives were approved by the national government. Moreover, the government party (Golkar) won a majority in every province after 1987 until its end in 1998. Moves to reform decentralization laws were set in motion before Soeharto resigned. In 1995 a pilot program shifted administrative responsibilities from the provincial to the district level, which the government party had less control over. In 1997 a new law on regional finance was passed. However, regional autonomy was not really achieved until the passing of Law No. 22/1999 on Regional Governance, and Law No. 25/1999 on Fiscal Balance between the Centre and the Regions. Law 22/1999 introduced the devolution of a wide range of public services to the regions, and it strengthened the elected regional councils, which received wide-ranging powers to supervise and control the regional administration. Law 25/1999 raised regional economic capabilities. In addition, it reduced regional funding gaps and created a funding system that reflected the new division of functions among levels of government.

The Electoral System

New Order officials proudly claimed that they held elections six times in 30 years. In contrast, during the country's first two decades of independence, national elections were held just once, in 1955. However, those elections were also widely regarded as the only truly fair elections in the country's history until 1999. Under the New Order, elections were used as instruments to legitimate the regime, not to change the government. To this end, electoral rules were made to appear scrupulously fair, but the political system as a whole was structured to produce a predictable outcome—victory for the ruling party.

The electoral system was given a dramatic overhaul under the 2002 constitutional amendments. Chief among these changes was the establishment of the new Election Commission. The National Election Commission (KPU) is an independent, permanent and non-partisan body consisting of 11 members. All members enjoy equal voting rights.

Its primary role is to organize the elections, monitoring polling booths and canvassing, and ultimately counting votes. As a complimentary institution, the new Constitutional Court has the sole authority to adjudicate disputes concerning the election results. The existence of two adjudicating institutions at different stages of the elections will ultimately result in a fairer electoral system overall. The president and vice president are no longer elected by the MPR. The old system, which still proved to be undemocratic in the 1999 post-Soeharto elections, was replaced with a two-round majority system process. In order to win the election, a candidate's vote must satisfy two criteria. First, a ticket must receive 50 percent plus one of the votes. In addition, at least 20 percent of the votes must be in at least one half of the Provinces.

The DPR is now fully elected. The military no longer has reserved seats, and was not allowed to vote at the first 2004 election. Another significant change is that the DPR, DPRD-1, and DPRD-2 moved from a closed to an open list proportional system. In addition to marking their party choice, voters can add a mark for the one candidate of their choice within the party's list. The final change is the creation of a second legislative chamber at the national level, the DPD, which replaces the weak consultative body. The DPD uses the single non-transferable vote (SNTV) system of representation—the first four candidates with the most votes from each province will be directly elected to the DPD.

New election participation criteria have also been introduced. At the party level, a political party qualifies for election participation only if it meets one of two conditions: the party is operational in at least two-thirds of the provinces, or it is operational in at least

two-thirds of the regencies within the province where it intends to run. At the individual level, for the DPD, only individuals who have a specified minimum number of supporters in their relevant province (number changes with province size) can participate.

New electoral districts have also been created. There are now 69 electoral districts for the DPR (previously 27—one per province), 211 DPRD-1 electoral districts, (27 in 1999), and 1,645 DPRD-2 electoral districts. Critics have argued that the redistricting results in proportionality, with the risk that many small parties may disappear. Proponents argue that in order for the Indonesian party system to mature this is exactly what the country needs.

The Party System

ORIGINS OF THE PARTIES

Legally, the New Order permitted only three parties to exist: Golkar, Development Unity, and Indonesian Democracy. In the latter years of Soeharto's reign, dissidents announced the creation of alternative parties, but since these were considered illegal they remained tiny and were not allowed to contest elections. The most prominent was the Democratic People's Party, many of whose young founders were jailed on government charges of inciting violence and disrupting the electoral process.

The army founded Golkar in 1964 as a political federation of labor unions and veterans' cooperatives that it sponsored. The army aimed to compete with Communist and radical nationalist parties and their affiliated organizations that dominated politics at that time and opposed the army. When President Soeharto decided in 1969 to hold elections to legitimate his new government, he instructed his associates to transform Golkar into the government's own electoral vehicle.

The other two parties are amalgams of parties that flourished in the country's brief period of multiparty democracy in the early 1950s. Dozens of parties existed during that era, but four dominated. In the 1955 election, the Indonesian Nationalist Party earned 22 percent, the modernist Muslim party Masyumi took 21 percent, the traditionalist Muslim party Nahdlatul Ulama won 19 percent, and the Communist Party carried 16 percent. After taking power in 1966, Soeharto banned the Communist Party for its alleged involvement in the assassination of several officers on October 1, 1965. He also permitted members of Masyumi, which Soekarno had banned in 1960 for its alleged role in regional rebellions, to form a successor known as Muslim in Indonesia.

When elections were finally held in 1971, Golkar faced nine opponents and defeated them handily. It received 63 percent, while its nearest competitor, Nahdlatul Ulama, gained just 19 percent. Despite this massive victory, the new government was not satisfied with its ability to dominate the political system. In 1973 it forced the nine minority parties to "fuse" into just two. The four Muslim parties were incorporated into the Development Unity Party, and the five nationalist and Christian parties merged into the Indonesian Democracy Party.

In 1977 and 1982 Development Unity garnered more than a quarter of the votes, while Indonesian Democracy failed to reach even 10 percent and Golkar took 62 percent to 64 percent. In 1987 and 199, Development Unity sank to 16 to 17 percent and Indonesian Democracy peaked at 15 percent in 1992. Indonesian Democracy's rise came entirely at Golkar's expense, driving its share of the vote down from 73 percent in 1987 to 68 percent in 1992. Fearful of Indonesian Democracy's growing strength, the government undermined the party's leadership in the run-up to the 1997 elections. As a result, Golkar achieved a record 74 percent, Development Unity improved to 22 percent, and Indonesian Democracy plunged to a mere 3 percent. Following the fall of Soeharto, B. J. Habbie announced that elections would be held in 1999 and what happened to the party system in Indonesia can be described as nothing short of feverish. In the wake of the elections, a little less than 200 political parties registered to take part in the momentous event, although only 48 qualified to participate. By the 2004 elections this number had fallen to less than 50. It is clear that Indonesia's party system is immature and at times chaotic, driven more by personalities than specific agendas. Nevertheless, in both the 1999 and 2004 elections, six or seven parties took just over 80 percent of the parliamentary votes. Thus, the fledgling Indonesian party system shows signs of consolidation.

PARTY ORGANIZATION

Under Soeharto, political parties were forced to organize in a determined fashion. The result was two opposition parties that were merely loose federations of previous parties and social organizations. Membership was not required, and parties tended to be fissured along outside organization lines. In this way, Golkar effectively ensured the weakness of opposition parties. Parties also tended to be highly centralized under the

New Order regime. This was due to the forbidding of party organization at the village level. If all else failed, Golkar (via the government) would directly intervene in party leadership struggles. In 1996 the government used blatant coercion to remove the popular head of the Indonesian Democracy Party, Megawati Soekarnoputri, in preparation for the 1997 elections.

Following the reform movement of the late 1990s and beyond (known as *reformasi*), party organization has been less centralized, after the general pattern of Indonesian politics. Although most of Indonesia's leading political parties have roots back to the 1950's, they should be viewed as new parties created during *reformasi*. A leading characteristic of *reformasi* parties is that they have emerged as personality-driven rather than agenda-driven. Although Indonesian voters may have party affiliations, their voting behavior often contravenes party affiliation, favoring the most charismatic candidate. This has led to parties being associated with their leaders rather than their ideology. Thus, when a leader dies (physically or politically), the party loses much of its identity. This has a number of consequences for the Indonesian political system. Chief among these outcomes is the difficulty in forming coalitions along party lines, which hinders executive-legislative cooperation. Explicitly, if the president has a particular platform, he or she might not be able to get anything done. As the party system has matured, the top parties have begun to identify increasingly with issues. In time, they will hopefully occupy concrete positions in the political spectrum.

CAMPAIGNING

During New Order, the government attempted to exert as much control over campaigning as it did over other aspects of the electoral process. A successful campaign was one that proceeded, in the jargon of government officials and military officers, in a manner that was "safe, orderly, and smooth" (*aman, tertib, lancar*).

To ensure that the campaign proceeded this way, parties had to comply with many restrictive rules. Campaigning was permitted for only about four weeks and then had to cease during a "quiet period" (five days in 1997) immediately prior to the polls. During the campaign, the parties were required to obtain police permits to hold rallies, and the content of their speeches and other campaign materials had to be vetted by the national office of the General Election Institute before being disseminated to regional party branches. Parties were forbidden to criticize each other or government policies, and under no circumstances could they question the state ideology, *Pancasila*.

Campaigns were centrally coordinated affairs, largely because the government insisted on maintaining centralized control over the parties and the electoral process. The General Election Institute determined when and where each party could campaign, ostensibly to prevent conflict between rival parties and competition for venues. Typically, national party leaders traversed the country to appear with local officials at large public rallies. To attract the largest possible crowds, nationally known entertainers were flown from Jakarta to regional campaign sites. However, a party's ability to attract large crowds during its campaign has not been a useful indicator of electoral support, as Indonesian Democracy discovered in 1992 and Development Unity found out in 1997.

Violence was a feature of all election campaigns under the New Order, since the regime readily resorted to the use of security forces to manipulate the minority parties and secure overwhelming electoral victories. However, violence increased in the 1990s, particularly on Java. The causes of campaign violence are complex but are clearly related to two factors. One is the accumulation of minority parties' political grievances, especially the impossibility of effecting real political change through elections. The second factor is the growing number of unemployed urban youth who seek opportunities to protest the economic injustices they attribute to the government. Such people gravitated to Indonesian Democracy in 1992, and then to Development Unity in 1997.

In 1997 the government attempted to institute a "dialogical" style of campaigning in order to avert the potential for mass violence that surfaced in 1992. It forbade motorcades and parades and encouraged party spokespersons to discuss platforms on television rather than at large rallies. These restrictions failed, partly because Golkar supporters insisted on staging their own parades, which provoked a cycle of conflict, counterparades, and further violence. Campaigning during *reformasi* has been more open than at any time in Indonesia's postcolonial history. The 2004 elections saw widespread and mass political rallies, canvassing, television appearances, and parades. Such a healthy campaigning period offers signs that Indonesia is adapting well to its democratic freedom. Some incidents of violence and protest occurred but nothing in comparison to the incidents of the late 1990s. Campaigning for the 2004 presidential elections took on a personality tone, as expected. Five candidates ran promising results on some issues, but with no specific

details on how to implement policy to achieve such results. More effective was the self-positioning of candidates vis-à-vis the rest of the field. For example, one of the top five candidates, Amien Rais, positioned himself as the only true reformer of the presidential contenders. Mudslinging has also been incorporated skillfully by opposition candidates. A familiar attack of the 2004 elections came against presidential hopeful General Wiranto, whose campaign suffered from human rights allegations leveled against him over his role in Indonesia's former province of East Timor.

Major Political Parties

FUNCTIONAL GROUP PARTY

(Partai Golongan Karya; Golkar)

Golkar began as an army-based party to counter the Communist Party and the ultra-nationalist parties that dominated Indonesian politics in the 1950s. Soeharto used Golkar to consolidate his power, and subsequently to guarantee the New Order government consistent majorities of the vote (ranging from 62 percent to 75 percent in the elections from 1971 to 1997). Yet despite Soeharto's hard-and-fast fall in the mid-1990s, Golkar managed to transform itself as a reformist party operating under a "new paradigm" with a new "spirit of reform." Akbar Tandjung, a minister in the Soeharto government, took over the party reins in July 1998. Despite the negative image associated with the Soeharto dictatorship, Golkar had an advantage over the new parties: a support base of existing bureaucrats, whom Golkar attempted to manipulate as they did throughout the New Order. In the 1999 elections Golkar was the only organization capable of reaching the outer reaches of the huge Indonesian archipelago. Its ability to do this was directly related to the bureaucracy's ability to influence local attitudes.

During the 1999 elections the party's platform was to present Golkar as a sensible choice for voters because of its moderation, experience, expertise, commitment to a law-based state, and pluralism. For example, Golkar campaigned on its ability to lead the country out of the economic crisis. The party's election slogan, "New Golkar, Together for Development" (*Golkar Baru, Bersatu Untuk Maju*), underlined this uneasy mix of experience with new thinking. Golkar received 22.4 percent of the national vote and 26 percent of parliamentary seats, coming in second behind Megawati's PDI-P. Thus, it was obvious that Golkar continued to represent a significant part of the country's interest. Supporters of Golkar were concentrated most strongly outside of Java.

In the 2004 elections the party decided on General Wiranto, former head of the armed forces and defense minister, as its official candidate for the presidency, demonstrating the party's continued close links with the military. However, any suggestion that Golkar was still a militaristic party disappeared with the party's winning 21.6 percent of the vote and 128 of the 550 parliamentary seats—the most of any of the competing parties. This landslide victory signified that Golkar truly had transformed itself from its dictatorial past to a popular party in the new Indonesian party system.

INDONESIAN DEMOCRACY PARTY—STRUGGLE

(Partai Demokrasi IndonesiaPerjuangan; PDI-P)

PDI-P is a secularist, but nationalistic party that emerged in the 1950s era of parliamentary democracy. PDI-P came to the forefront of Indonesian politics under Megawati's leadership after the fall of Soeharto. Following a failed bid to win the presidency in 1999, then vice president Megawati replaced the corrupt Wahid in 2001. In 2004 she stood in the final stage of the presidential elections against Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono of the Democratic Party, barely beating third-place Wiranto for a place in the final round. Megawati's initial popularity was hindered by her performance in office, especially her failure to revive the ailing economy.

PDI-P is a heavily personalistic party. It is headed by Megawati Soekarnoputri and centers on her leadership. Some followers have even gone so far as to label her as the long-awaited *ratu adil* (just ruler) of Javanese folklore. Even less extreme followers are solidly devoted to her. Soekarnoputri is the daughter of Indonesia's first president, Soekarno, and it is perhaps the blood of leadership running through her veins that has obliterated any challenge to her leadership in the party. Her massive popularity can in part be attributed to the unpopularity of the outgoing dictator, Soeharto. In comparison to his gross abuse of power, her modest deportment earned much goodwill from the people as head of one of the only two legal opposition parties during the New Order. In 1996 the Soeharto government ousted her as leader of the Partai Demokrasi Indonesia. Thus, at its beginnings, PDI-P positioned itself as a party representing victims of past injustice.

PDI-P was seen as a strong supporter of democracy in the 1999 elections, its reformist agenda advocated gradual rather than radical change. Indeed, during the talks for constitutional reform in 2001, Megawati herself was not sure Indonesia was ready for direct presidential elections.

In 1999 PDI-P easily won the largest percentage of parliamentary (DPR) seats. Among 48 contending parties, PDI-P won 33.7 percent of the popular vote. Despite this success in the DPR, PDI-P was unable to transform its popular mandate into obtaining the presidency in the ensuing October 1999 session of the MPR. With PDI-P unable to build a large coalition, and criticized for its arrogance, Amien Rais of the National Mandate Party garnered the support of the Central Axis (an alliance of Muslim parties) and built a coalition that kept Megawati out of office. The Central Axis refused to see a secularist woman become the nation's next president. PDI-P's seemingly insignificant consolation prize, the vice presidency, turned out to be a hidden fortune, as a nation sensitive to corruption removed Wahid from office just two years later.

The party enjoys a broad base of support. Although its initial support came from the urban and rural lower classes, in the 1999 elections PDI-P garnered votes from all income and educational levels relatively evenly. The party's strongest bases are in Java and Bali, but election results suggest good support all over Indonesia.

NATIONAL AWAKENING PARTY

(Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa; PKB)

In 1998 Indonesia's largest Muslim organization, the Rise of the Islamic Scholars (Nahdlatul Ulama or NU) founded the PKB. The NU, which is estimated to have over 30 million members, made up the initial support base of the PKB. Because the NU is clearly identified with traditional Javanese forms of Islam, PKB's main area of strength is on the island of Java amongst the *pesantren* (rural religious school), small traders, and landowners. However, religious tenets do not transform into party policy in general. Its membership is open to all religions—part of PKB's emphasis on tolerance toward Indonesia's pluralistic society.

In the first post-Soeharto elections, PKB took the third largest share of the vote and the presidency. PKB's parliamentary success continued in the 2004 elections, when it again secured the third largest share of the vote. In terms of percentage of the vote, in 1999 and 2004, PKB won 12.6 percent and 11.8 percent, respectively. However, the party's popular vote does not transform into an equal proportion of seats in the DPR. For example, in 1999, the PPP, who earned just 10.7 percent of the popular vote, took 58 seats compared to the PKB's 51. Likewise, in 2004, two parties with less share of the vote took more seats than the PKB: the PPP with 8.3 percent and 58 seats, and the PD with 7.5 percent and 57 seats. The PAN with just 6.5 percent of the vote (almost half that of PKB) took the same number of seats, 52. This seat allocation is reflective of PKB's narrower support base (mainly Java), while the PPP and other parties have more support outside Java.

PKB's significance has not lain only in its parliamentary seats. In October 1999 the PKB took the presidential reins in the figure of Abdurrahman Wahid. While it is true that Megawati's failure stemmed from PDI-P's inability to relate with other parties, it does not explain the dexterity of political bargaining the PKB displayed in bringing its candidate to the forefront. The PKB was able to market itself as a moderate choice for all parties, and the parties compromised on Wahid. The presidency did not remain long in their hands, however, as Wahid was promptly removed on charges of corruption not two years into his term. Nevertheless, Wahid's ousting had little effect on the party's popularity, mainly due to the underlying support of the NU. Although PKB took a slightly smaller percentage of the popular vote in 2004, its number of seats in Parliament remained the same.

UNITED DEVELOPMENT PARTY

(Partai Persatuan Pembanguna; PPP)

In 1973 Soeharto attempted to suppress the threat of the four leading Islamic parties by a strategy of unite and conquer. The result was the PPP. As the second of only two legal opposition parties during the New Order, the PPP has retained popular support and, in the two elections since Soeharto's fall, have taken the third most parliamentary seats. PPP has maintained this strength despite the reemergence of parties that were once component parties of the PPP. The PPP has several advantages over other parties competing for the Islamic vote. Foremost among these advantages is the party's legacy as the major opposition party prior to Soeharto's fall. In addition, the PPP has a support base that spreads all over Indonesia. PPP is based on Islam, but in both post–New Order elections it has chosen to emphasize moderation. The party does not favor implementation of Islamic sharia law, but maintains that policies should conform to Islamic principles.

PPP finished the elections with a very respectable 10.7 percent of the national vote. Due to distortions caused by the electoral system, the PPP's 10.7 percent

earned the party 12.6 percent of the elected seats in Parliament, making it the third largest party. In 2004, the PPP gained just 8.3 percent of the vote, but retained 58 seats in the DPR. The PPP was also instrumental in the 1999 presidential elections. Hamzah Haz led the party to support eventual winner Wahid over the Golkar candidate, B. J. Habbie. The significance of this political maneuvering cannot be underestimated in terms of Indonesia's democratic survival. The reaction of the masses to another Golkar president may well have led to widespread and violent protests. Ironically, PPP was instrumental in ousting Wahid just two years later. In the 2004 presidential elections, PPP candidate Hamzah Haz was defeated in the first round with just 3 percent of the national vote.

NATIONAL MANDATE PARTY

(Partai Amanat Nasiona; PAN)

PAN is the least personalistic of all the leading parties in Indonesia. At its early stages, the party was led by a number of prominent reformers and introduced an ideological platform rather than centering on a single personality. The party was instrumental in the student protests of 1998 that led to Soeharto's fall. However, the party has become increasingly focused on Amien Rais. Amien Rais was a prominent Muslim intellectual and head of the Muhammadiyah, and thus has important connections to maintain a solid support base for the party. During the 1998 protests, Amien was a major supporter of the student movement. As a result, he became known as the "Father of Reform" (*Bapak Reformasi*). In November 1998 Amien Rais committed the party to a less radical agenda of reform, giving the party a different tone than its supporters had anticipated. This was the first of a number of divisive events that have weakened PAN. Indeed, since its inception, the party has been haunted by factions. Initially, PAN was unable to unify all modernist Muslims leading to the formation of a splinter party known as the Partai Bulan Bintang (PBB), which is notably more Islamic-leaning in its platform. Subsequently, PAN has been split into two factions: the modernist Muslim faction led by A. M. Fatwa and the liberal faction led by Secretary-General Faisal Basri. Amien straddled both factions trying to keep the party together, but Faisal walked out of the party in late 2000. Faisal accused the PAN of becoming increasingly personalistic.

It is this personalization that led to the party's disappointing performance in the 1999 elections. PAN was expected to be a major contender for the leading number of seats in Parliament. However, Amien's identification with Islamic organizations deterred non-Muslims and tainted PAN's claims to be an "open" political party. The party ended up with just 7.1 percent of the vote. PAN gained few votes outside of the modernist Muslim stream, which also led to the party's increased commitment to Islam. Later on in 1999, Amien orchestrated shrewd coalition-building efforts to keep Megawati from becoming president. It was hoped that Amien would become the preferred candidate of this coalition, but he was unable to overcome the charismatic Wahid. In 2004 Amien gained just over 14 percent of the popular vote in the presidential elections. The party took 52 seats (9.5 percent) in the enlarged DPR despite attracting only 6.4 percent of the vote.

DEMOCRAT PARTY

(Partai Demokrat; PD)

The Democrat Party is a personalistic party centered on the figure of General Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (SBY), who failed to be chosen vice president in 2001. SBY was responsible for important reforms in the armed forces following the collapse of the New Order. The party was established by a number of persons from the MPR and academics. Viewed as inconsequential prior to the 2004 elections, the PD enjoyed success beyond everyone's expectations. While gaining just 7.5 percent of the vote in the parliamentary elections, the party gained 57 seats (10.4 percent) in the DPR, making it the fourth largest party in the House. In addition, Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono won the presidential election.

The PD's dogma emphasizes nationalism, religion, pluralism, and humanitarianism. With a militaristic leader, it is not surprising that one of its main goals is also to protect the territorial integrity and promote the unity of Indonesia. Susilo was a military officer during the Soeharto regime and his inability to completely erase that connection from his image may ironically win him the presidency. Disillusioned by Megawati's inability to take hold of the economy and stabilize employment and prices, Indonesians have looked back somewhat nostalgically to the relative stability under Soeharto. While his military connections may have worked against him at first, as the elections evolved, SBY's popularity increased. Other domestic issues that have turned the public to a military leader include the separationist conflict in Aceh and the rising incidence of acts of terror. His administration severely challenged not long after taking office by a massive earthquake

and a resulting tsunami that killed more than 220,000 people in the region around the Indian Ocean.

PROSPEROUS JUSTICE PARTY

(Partai Kedilan Sejahtera; PKS)

Despite being one of Indonesia's youngest political parties, PKS has quickly risen to a powerful standing in the political arena. The PKS is a successor to the PK (Justice Party) formed in 1998, which was part of the Central Axis that thwarted Megawati's first presidential campaign in 1999. The Justice and Prosperity Party and the Justice Party merged into one party on July 3, 2003. In the 1999 elections the Justice Party won only 1.4 percent of the vote. Consequently, it failed to meet the electoral threshold to participate in the next election without forming a new party or changing its name. The party's leader, Hidayat Nurwahid, is known for his ideological proximity to the alleged chief of Jemaah Islamiya, Abubakr Bashir. Moreover, PKS is regarded as a radical Islamic party. Specifically, the party has a goal of transforming Indonesia into an Islamic society. However, PKS is committed to allowing the population to decide to switch to an Islamic society via the democratic process.

PKS's 2004 general election campaign was not based on Islamic doctrine. Rather, the party emphasized its commitment to tackling graft, reviving the economy, and the party's record of social service and education in urban Indonesia. PKS campaigned on a motto of "clean, honest and caring" Islamic values. Thus, PKS won the support of many disaffected voters, especially in Jakarta. Despite its religion-free campaign, the party's support base remains rooted in Islamic organizations. During the campaigning period, PKS revealed that Muhammadiyah supported PKS.

In a field of 24 parties in the general elections, PKS came in sixth, with 7.3 percent of the vote and 45 seats (8.1 percent). The party's votes came from middle-class and educated voters, including young professionals who were attracted by PKS's tough stance on graft. However, the party was successful in attracting the urban poor, especially in Jakarta, where PKS finished as the largest party. Despite passing the 5 percent threshold required to put up a presidential candidate, PKS did not field a candidate. The party wanted to convince its supporters that it was concentrating its efforts solely on reforming the DPR. Initially, PKS threw its support behind PAN presidential hopeful Amien Rais. With Amien Rais suffering defeat in the first round, PKS joined the coalition of parties supporting Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono's presidential campaign. Some PKS supporters were upset with the party throwing its support behind SBY. Many had hoped the party would join with PAN to establish an opposition bloc in the DPR. Regardless of this decision, the PKS head, Nurwahid, will be an important figure in Parliament.

Minor Political Parties

Since Soeharto's fall, hundreds of political parties have been formed in Indonesia. However, there are strict rules on competing in general elections. As a result, only 48 parties competed in 1999. In 2004 this number had been cut in half. In 2004, of the 24 contending parties, 17 won seats in the DPR. The two dominant parties were Golkar and PDI-P, which won over 100 seats each. There are about five parties that won around 50 seats: PPP, PD, PAN, PKB and PKS. Three parties won around 10 seats and can be deemed as minor parties. They include the Reform Star Party (PBR), the Prosperous Peace Party (PDS), and the Crescent Star Party (PBB). Seven parties won five or less seats. They are the United Democratic Nationhood Party (PPDK), the Concern for the Nation Functional Party (PKPB), the Justice and Unity Party of Indonesia (PKPI), the Freedom Bull National Party (PNBK), the Pioneers' Party (PP), the Indonesian National Party Marhaenisme (PNIM), and the Indonesian Democratic Vanguard Party (PPDI).

Other Political Forces

Under Soekarno's principle of "Guided Democracy," the Armed Forces of the Republic of Indonesia (ABRI) played a significant role in Indonesian politics from the 1950s up until *reformasi*. This continued under the leadership of General Soeharto, and the military saw itself as the guarantor of political stability and economic development. The military was reserved a certain number of seats (about 20 percent) in Indonesia's most powerful body, the MPR. Moreover, military officers occupied various powerful positions in Soeharto's government. In addition to political positions, the military owned and operated their own commercial enterprises. As the post–World War II generation of military officers was replaced by a younger, less politically interested generation of officers, the stage was set for the political transformations witnessed in the late 1990s. In addition, in Soeharto's latter years, he became increasingly concerned with

projecting a personal style of leadership and saw the military less and less as an ally.

ABRI has continued to demonstrate uncertainty in defining its new role in a more open and democratic Indonesia. In the early years of *reformasi* the military, especially Wiranto and Habbie, were tainted by Black Friday, a day when civil security forces killed 16 and injured over 400 demonstrating protestors. Following Black Friday, the military established four general principles to guide this reduction in ABRI's political role, known as "New Paradigm." First, ABRI does not need to be at the forefront of politics, as it was in the New Order. Second, the military will no longer occupy key positions, but instead will only influence the process of decision making. Third, that influence will no longer be exercised directly, but only indirectly. And fourth, the military will share roles in political decision making with nonmilitary partners.

Under the new constitution, seats are no longer reserved for military appointees. In the recent 2004 elections two of the three main contenders were ex-military leaders. These leaders, however, do not have a history of involvement in the inner circle that allowed so much violence to spread during the New Order era. The new president, Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (SBY), has shown a strong commitment to civilian control of politics. In June 1998 SBY, then chief of the army's influential Social and Political Affairs Directorate, published a reform proposal that declared ABRI's commitment to democratic reforms and called for Indonesia's ratification of international human rights conventions. SBY also supported limits on presidential powers so that the military could not be misused by an unpopular president seeking to quell opposition. In 2000, as chief minister for security and political affairs under Wahid, he refused to declare a state of emergency. It is likely that the prevalence of ex-military officers is merely due to the fact that they are simply the only ones with political experience. As civilian institutions begin to churn out capable individuals, the military connection of politicians is sure to diminish further.

National Prospects

The future of the Indonesian political system is bright. Political reforms have been instituted that put the country on the road to democratization. The instability that occurs with every new democracy has been moderate. There have been two successful, consecutive elections, and political violence at the 2004 elections was low. A key issue in the 2004 elections was the elimination of corruption, demonstrating Indonesia's openness and progress. Though personalities are still a major part of the party system, several parties have become strong, regular contenders for power, and party platforms in the 2004 elections emphasized more issues. Political power is changing hands often, and without violence and protest. Corrupt politicians are being ousted swiftly. These are healthy signs for Indonesia's political transition.

Despite these positive movements, Indonesia faces several tough challenges if it is to survive the infancy period of democracy and develop into a regional leader. Indonesia is a vast country with huge ethnic diversity, and the government will have to prioritize national security. However, the military must handle separatist attempts carefully. Failure to do so could result in entrenched civil war in several parts of the country. In addition, there is a possible misunderstanding afoot from the onslaught of religious conservatism. International observers have expressed fear at the success of radical Islamic groups such as PKS in the recent elections. Though their electoral platforms were void of Islamic rhetoric, the goals of conservative political parties remain unchanged—to create an Islamic state. Whether this poses a threat to democracy is not yet known. There are three possible scenarios. First, the conservative parties will respect the democratic system and pursue their party goals by the people's mandate. The recent elections suggest that this is the likely way. Second, the parties attempt to overthrow the democratic system and force Islamic law on the country. This scenario is unlikely, due to the existence of moderate Islamic groups, and a clear political preference for secular parties. Moreover, there would unlikely be militaristic support for such an agenda. Indonesia is simply too vast to achieve such a goal without either military or mass support. Third, the government, either through international pressure or desire to gain a majority, seeks to stamp out Islamic parties or confuses party agendas with the terrorist dilemma. This third option cannot be ruled out.

Lastly, Indonesia must achieve economic stability. Currently, a third of the labor force, 40 million people, is unemployed. The government is unable to sustain a growth in GDP above 5 percent, the average rate in the Soeharto era, leaving millions jobless. Critics blame the government's sluggishness and inconsistency toward removing impediments to domestic and foreign investment. But it is a simple notion that 40 million unemployed will not be appeased by theoretical improvements for a sustained period of time. The next president will have to move fast to revive the economy, or risk social instability transforming into political instability.

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ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN

(Jomhuri-ye Eslami-ye Iran)

By Pooya Alaedini, Siamak Namazi, and Lawrence G. Potter
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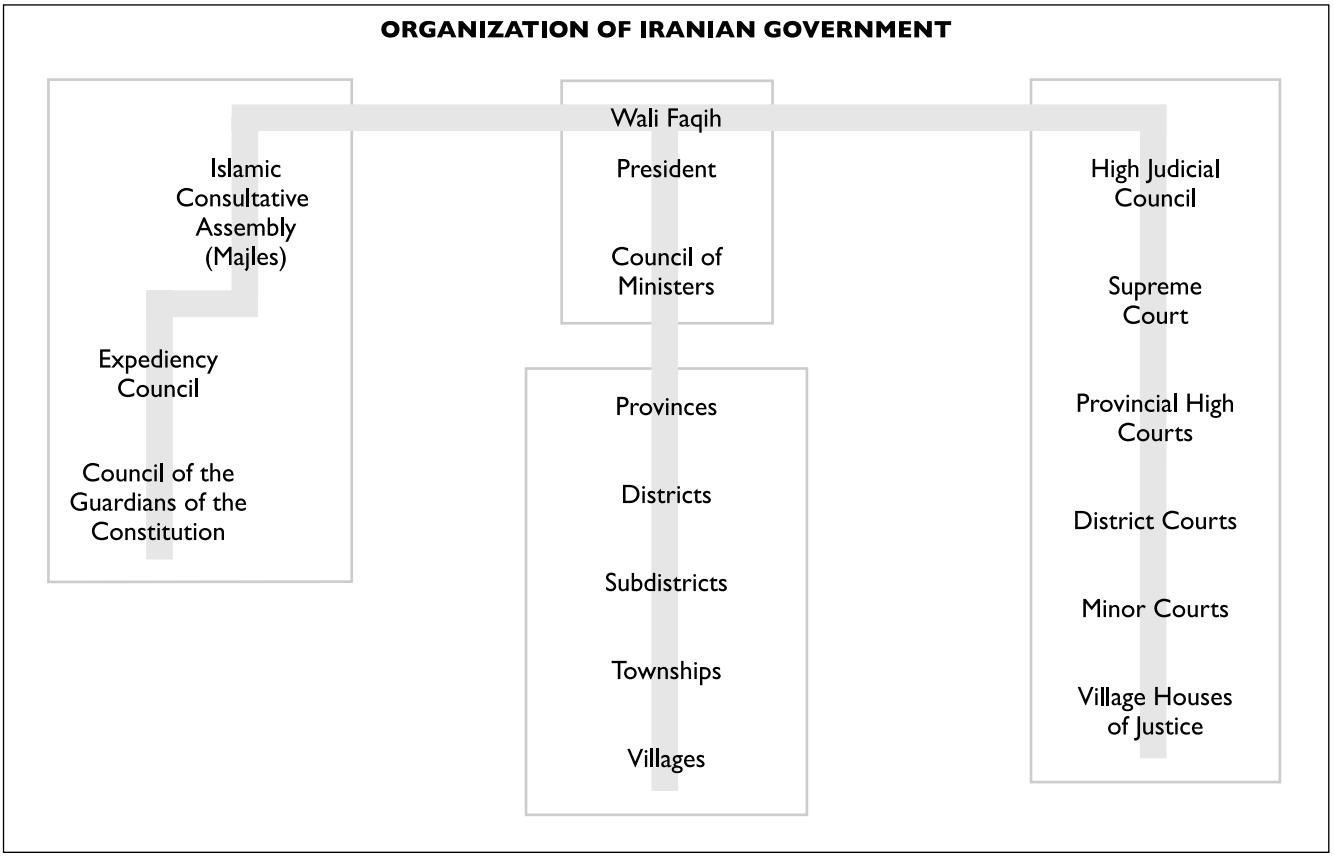
Iran, a country of 68 million people (2005 est.), serves as the nexus between the Caspian Sea and the Persian Gulf and connects the steppes of Central Asia to Anatolia and continental Europe. To the north, Iran is bounded by the Republic of Azarbaijan, the Caspian Sea, and Turkmenistan, to the east by Afghanistan and Pakistan, to the south by the Sea of Oman and the Persian Gulf, and to the west by Iraq and Turkey. Covering some 1.648 million square kilometers, Iran's topography is often likened to that of a bowl with the Alborz Mountains creating the northern rim and the Zagros Mountains the western and southern rims. The center of the country is arid and dry for the most part, while the Alborz Mountains have created a fertile crescent around the Caspian Sea. Most of Iran's major cities, including Tehran, Tabriz, Shiraz, and Mashhad, were built along the foothills of mountains where a traditional system of irrigation canals, *qanats*, delivered needed water.

While the majority of Iran's population is considered to be Persian, the country is diverse in terms of ethnicity and language. Most of the population is Twelver Shiite Muslim, while religious minorities include Sunni Muslim, Zoroastrian, Jewish, Christian, and Bahai. In addition, Iran is the largest host to refugees in the world and currently shelters close to 1.5 million displaced persons from Afghanistan and Iraq. The country is undergoing rapid urbanization, and the urban areas now claim 60 percent of the total population, compared with only 31 percent in the 1950s. Iran possesses one of the youngest populations in the world, with 30 percent of the people 15 years old or younger.

The country's urban population was largely responsible for the overthrow of the monarch, Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi (reigned 1941–79, died July 27, 1980, in exile). A coalition of clerics (*ulama*), merchants (*bazaaris*), liberal reformers, Islamic radicals, Communists, and guerrilla organizations united behind Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini and brought the monarchy to an end on February 11, 1979. This broad coalition fell apart shortly after victory, and Islamic radicals loyal to Khomeini managed to consolidate power by pushing out the liberals and carrying out mass arrests and executions of the Communists and guerrillas between 1980 and 1982.

The System of Government

Iran is officially an Islamic Republic, following the approval by 98.2 percent of eligible voters of a referendum on March 29–30, 1979. Modeled on Khomeini's ideas of *velayat-e faqih* (rule of the Jurist), an unorthodox conception of Islamic government, the community is to be guided by the most respected religious scholar (the *faqih* or Leader), who rules in the absence of the Twelfth Imam. This Imam, a descendant of the Prophet Muhammad, went into "concealment" in the ninth century and is expected to return at the end of the era



to establish a golden age. Until that time, the Imam's will is transmitted to the people through inspired ayatollahs (*mojtahids*). Ayatollah Khomeini ruled Iran as *faqih* until his death in June 1989.

After Khomeini's death there has been no absolute source of authority in Iran. While one can readily identify the heads of different state institutions and political movements, it is often difficult to tell which actor holds the trump cards on a particular issue.

LEADERSHIP

The 1979 constitution maintained that the highest political and religious authority of Iran is the Leader (*faqih*). The Leader has extensive powers: he nominates the religious jurists on the Council of Guardians, appoints the highest judicial authorities, and is designated commander in chief of the country's armed forces. He can declare war. He must sign the order formalizing the election of the president and can dismiss the president if the Supreme Court finds him politically incompetent (a fate that befell Abolhasan Bani Sadr, the first president of the Islamic Republic, in June 1981).

The description of the Leader's powers was largely designed to fit the person of Ayatollah Khomeini, who enjoyed unparalleled popular and religious legitimacy. He was a grand ayatollah and a source of emulation (*marja'-e taqlid*) in the Shiite religious hierarchy. Not surprisingly, the issue of succession was always on the minds of the rulers of post-revolutionary Iran. Originally, Ayatollah Hosain Ali Montazeri was designated as Khomeini's successor, but after a series of disagreements between the two over the powers of the leadership in late 1988 and early 1989, Montazeri was dismissed as the future Leader. Khomeini failed to recommend a new figure before his death.

After Khomeini's death no grand ayatollah in Iran had the ambition to take over the political reins. In fact, the *ulama* of Iran traditionally eschewed direct political involvement and saw their mandate as constructive criticism of the system. According to the constitution, "the task of appointing the Leader shall be vested with the experts elected by the people," that is, the Assembly of Experts. Should there be no decisive majority of the people in favor of one *faqih*, three to five candidates are to be appointed by the Assembly of Experts to serve on a Leadership Council.

Consequently, in June 1989, the first debate the Assembly of Experts faced was whether to opt for a single person or a group of *faqihs* to take over Khomei-

ni's position. With the support of Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, then Speaker of the Majles (the Parliament) and one of Khomeini's most trusted advisers, Hojjatoleslam Hosein Ali Khamenei was nominated as a compromise candidate and won majority support. The government and the media then began referring to him as ayatollah, and he was proclaimed Leader of the Islamic Republic. Later his authority was downgraded and the function as the highest religious authority was delegated to Grand Ayatollah Araki.

Khamenei, too young and lacking religious eminence, worked hard to increase his religious authority by appeasing the conservative *ulama* of Qom. However, his ambition to become the religious source of emulation was hindered following the death of Grand Ayatollah Araki in 1995, when Iran was left with no grand ayatollahs and the country's high-ranking clergy were forced to announce new sources of emulation. Khamenei's candidacy was rejected, and he was told that he lacked the needed religious credentials, though in an apparent face-saving compromise, he was included on a list of 10 ayatollahs who had the potential to become *mojtahids* in the future.

Notwithstanding, Khamenei is still the highest-ranking official of the Islamic Republic, and the Leadership as an institution maintains a great deal of power and authority. During the 1990s the Leadership came under severe criticism by Islamic reformers and liberals, who charged that Khamenei was out of touch with the needs of the country and the Iranian people. The charges prompted a concerted counterattack by defenders of the system of *velayat-e faqih,* who mobilized a variety of clerical and parastatal institutions, most notably the Revolutionary Guards Corps, to restore both the institutional prerogatives of the Leader and the personal influence of Khamenei.

EXECUTIVE

The Leadership was not the only office of government severely affected by the death of Ayatollah Khomeini. Under the original constitution of 1979, the president of the Islamic Republic was elected by a majority of popular votes cast, for a four-year term, and he could be reelected only once. He would preside over a cabinet of 26 members and would appoint the prime minister, who remained in power unless he lost the confidence of Parliament. The Leader has the power to dismiss the president.

Concurrent with the appointment of Ali Khamenei as the new leader, Rafsanjani was elected president of the republic and the post of prime minister was eliminated. In effect, the political authority of Khomeini was now embodied in a Khamenei-Rafsanjani dyad. This arrangement attested to the political skills of Rafsanjani, who quickly proved himself adept at increasing the power of the political institution he controlled.

In many ways, the arrangement was also ideal for purposes of maintaining the new regime. One of the most complex tasks that Khomeini had mastered in his ascent to power was balancing conservative and radical Islamic forces. To retain both pillars of support, Khomeini often resorted to contradictory messages in various speeches, one day praising the concept of private ownership as one that is guaranteed and encouraged by Islam, and the next speaking to the grievances of the *mostaz'afan* (oppressed and poor masses). Similarly, in the duet comprised of Khamenei and Rafsanjani, the responsibility to appease different power centers was divided: Khamenei attempted to maintain good relations with the *ulama* and Islamic radicals, while Rafsanjani took a more moderate position and appealed to the *bazaaris*, technocrats, and intellectuals. The country's remaining secular leftists were gradually removed from the political scene.

The official powers and responsibilities of the president are rather vague in the Iranian constitution. Article 113 states: "After the office of Leadership, the president is the highest official in the country. He is the one responsible for implementing the constitution and acting as the head of the executive, except in matters directly concerned with [the office of] the Leadership." The real power of the executive branch, however, rests in its control over Iran's oil revenues, which account for nearly three-quarters of the country's foreign exchange income. The executive also has primary authority over government expenditures.

During his eight years in power, Rafsanjani filled executive posts with his supporters. Key Cabinet positions were given to moderates and technocrats close to him, with a few compromises to the radicals. He further bypassed the legislative checks and balances by often appointing candidates ousted or rejected by the Majles' special advisers and vice presidents—positions not subject to parliamentary oversight.

While such maneuvers were effective in helping Rafsanjani retain credibility among his supporters, it further complicated the political landscape of the Islamic Republic and created institutions with vague and overlapping mandates. However, the Rafsanjani legacy paved the way for the prominence of technical expertise as the basis for filling government offices, rather than strictly revolutionary and Islamic credentials. Hence,

the number of moderates in key cabinet positions increased.

In May 1997 Mohammad Khatami won the presidential elections with nearly 70 percent of the total votes. Khatami represented a new generation of post-revolutionary leaders. His primary supporters included students, women, intellectuals, and artists, who hoped that the new president would loosen the existing constraints on individual expression. After a year-long honeymoon, during which he took steps to relax official controls on newspapers, called for greater access for women to senior administrative positions, and authorized the formation of political parties, Khatami ran into strong resistance from forces opposed to political and social liberalization.

President Khatami's efforts to revitalize the sagging local economy provoked opposition as well. He quickly alienated the administration of the powerful Foundation of the Oppressed, and angered former president Rafsanjani by openly criticizing earlier attempts to promote private enterprise on the grounds that they had led to a renewed concentration of wealth. More important, his unwillingness to stand up to protect university students and journalists who engaged in public protest to demand greater freedom of expression greatly diminished his prestige among those who had been his most enthusiastic early supporters.

Khatami won reelection to the presidency in May 2001 but exercised less and less power over political outcomes. At a rally on the campus of Tehran University in December, he was put on the defensive by angry students and attempted to mollify them by insisting that he had only "limited powers" to carry out a reform program. When he visited the city of Bam in December 2003 to survey the devastation inflicted by a massive earthquake, he was greeted by catcalls and local representatives refused to meet with him. His steadily falling prestige tended to weaken the institution of the presidency as well, and by early 2004 the Leader had become the more important of the two offices.

In June 2005 a new presidential election was held, and a former student radical leader and mayor of Tehran, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, defeated a number of candidates, including Rafsanjani, to become the country's first non-cleric president in 24 years.

LEGISLATURE

The Majles-e Shura-ye Eslami (Islamic Consultative Assembly), commonly referred to as the Majles, is composed of 270 members elected for four-year terms. There are 265 geographical seats, plus 5 seats reserved for recognized religious minorities. The Majles holds open sessions, barring exceptional conditions. These discussions are made public by radio, and the minutes are readily available in various media. The 1979 constitution empowers this body to make laws and approve international agreements, as well as to conduct investigations into all the affairs of the country.

The Majles is by no means a rubber stamp for the executive. There is often spirited debate, and the Majles has frequently asserted its independence by refusing to confirm some of the choices of the president for cabinet posts. In fact, when Mohammad Khatami was elected president, analysts immediately evaluated his political skills by how he passed his moderate cabinet through a radical legislature. In addition to veto power over the cabinet, the Iranian legislature has final approval of the five-year plans that set the tone for the country's development and investment policies. The Second Five-Year Plan, which was in effect until March 2000, was originally drafted by moderates in the executive branch to emphasize industrialization. However, radicals in the Majles chose to modify the plan and change its direction to emphasize agricultural development.

In the 1996 elections radicals and moderates competed fiercely for seats. As a result of those elections, 100 of the 270 seats in the Majles were clearly connected to radical forces led by the Speaker, Hojjatoleslam Nateq Nuri. Groups affiliated with moderate factions won about 90 seats. The remaining 80 deputies were considered independent or having only loose contacts with major political factions.

Parliamentary elections in February 2004 returned the radicals to power, after the Council of Guardians had disqualified more than 3,500 reform candidates. Only 51 percent of eligible voters turned out to cast a ballot, despite strenuous efforts by the Revolutionary Guards Corps to mobilize the inhabitants of impoverished urban neighborhoods and areas of the countryside that had previously had relatively low participation rates. The new speaker, Gholam Ali Haddad Adel, enjoyed close personal ties to Khamenei, which helped to reestablish a strong political alliance between the Majles and the Leader.

COUNCIL OF GUARDIANS

This council, known as Shura-ye Negahban, is an extremely powerful 12-member group that determines whether laws passed by Parliament conform to Islamic principles and can be ratified. It is responsible for

interpreting constitutional law and supervising elections. Of its membership, six clerics are appointed by the *faqih*, the other six, whose selection must be confirmed by the Majles, are nominated by the High Judicial Council and are laymen lawyers. Members are elected for six-year terms. At times, this group has refused to concur with measures passed by the Majles, notably those on land reform. The Council of Guardians is headed by Ayatollah Ahmad Jannati. In the 2000 and 2004 parliamentary elections this body took an active part in skewing the candidate pool by rejecting prospective candidates whom it considered to exhibit a "lack of respect for Islam." During the first five years of the 21st century, the Council of Guardians vetoed approximately one-third of the bills adopted by the Majles on similar grounds.

EXPEDIENCY COUNCIL

The Council on Determining the System's Expediency (Majma'-e Tashkhis-e Maslehat-e Nezam), or the Expediency Council, has become one of the key institutions of the Islamic Republic. Created in 1986 by Khomeini's personal decree, the Expediency Council is a mediator and arbitrator between the Majles and the Council of Guardians. Originally, this role essentially amounted to mediation between the moderate and radical forces in the Islamic Republic.

The Expediency Council's influence and power were increased after Khomeini's death. This move was made to appease the members of the Council of Experts who favored a Leadership Council rather than a single Leader. As Rafsanjani neared the end of his second and last term as president under the constitution, a group of his supporters started a debate over amending the constitution to allow him a third term. Such a move was widely opposed, even by Rafsanjani himself. But the true political prowess of Rafsanjani has always been redefining the political institutions of Iran to suit his ambitions. Hence, in March 1997, just two months before the presidential elections, it came as no surprise when Khamenei declared that the Expediency Council was to assume increased responsibility. At that time, Khamenei doubled the number of the Leader's appointees to 26, declared that the Expediency Council would serve as his main advisory body, and appointed Rafsanjani as the Council's chairperson.

ASSEMBLY OF EXPERTS

The main duties of the Assembly of Experts have been to draft the constitution, to name the Leader, and to make amendments to the constitution. The first Assembly of Experts was a 75-member group (60 of whom were clerics) elected in August 1979 to draft the Islamic Republic constitution. These elections were boycotted by opposition groups when it became obvious that dissenting viewpoints would be excluded. The first Assembly was disbanded when the constitution was completed. A second, 83-member Assembly of Experts was elected in late 1982 to choose Khomeini's successor, seeking to avoid a political vacuum after his death. In November 1985 it chose Ayatollah Montazeri, who was later dismissed from the post. After Khomeini's death in 1989, the Assembly of Experts formed once again and elected the current Leader, Ali Khamenei.

JUDICIARY

In principle, the judiciary is an independent force. Its responsibilities are overseen by the five-member High Judicial Council, made up of the head of the Supreme Court, the attorney general, and three judges. They serve for five-year terms, with the possibility of extension for another five. Ayatollah Mohammad Yazdi, a radical cleric, is currently the chairman of this council and head of the judiciary. The power to appoint and dismiss the head of the judiciary lies in the hands of the Leader, and hence the judiciary stands independent of the executive and legislative powers. Consequently, there have been several occasions when the judiciary has blocked the executive branch's policies.

Trials are to be held openly and the public is allowed to attend, unless this is incompatible with public order, which it often is. Judges issue findings on cases, which must be based on Islamic principles. The court system is overloaded due to a scarcity of judges with religious qualifications. In January 1998 a few female judges were allowed to preside over the courts of the Islamic Republic for the first time.

Besides the general courts of the country, a number of "revolutionary courts" were formed in the early days of the revolution. Led by *ulama*, these courts were responsible for the execution and imprisonment of "traitors" in the Pahlavi regime, and wide disparities in sentences for the same crime were common. Although the revolutionary courts were officially merged with the country's general courts in 1984, traces of them still exist.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

There has always been a strong tradition of local government in Iran, although power was increasingly

centralized in Tehran under the monarchy. Provincial heads, as well as the mayor of Tehran, were appointed directly by the shah, and the minister of the interior was the main influence in selecting provincial officials. The only authority elected on a local level was the village headman.

Iran is currently divided into 30 provinces (*ostan*), headed by governor-generals (*ostandar*). However, as a result of rapid population growth and the urban boom, as well as political considerations, these divisions are constantly changing. Provinces are divided into districts (*shahrestan*) headed by governors (*farmandar*). Districts are divided into subdistricts (*hakhsh*) administered by lieutenant governors (*bakhshdar*). Subdistricts are divided into townships (*dehestan*) led by sheriffs (*dehdar*). Townships are divided into villages (*deh*), which are led by a headman (*kadkhoda*).

Elections for local councils were held for the first time in February 1999. Voter turnout was reported to be extremely high, although precise numbers were not released. A second round of municipal and provincial council elections in February 2003 saw considerably lower participation rates, estimated at no more than 20 percent of eligible voters in Tehran, Isfahan, Shiraz, and Mashhad.

The Electoral System

Members of the Majles are elected by direct and secret ballot. The first elections were held in two rounds, in March and May 1980; the latest elections took place in February 2004. A candidate has to have a majority to win on the first ballot; otherwise, there are more rounds of voting. This system makes it difficult to fill seats in many constituencies. Also, there have been instances of ballots for entire areas being disqualified and the election process repeated, which certainly adds to voter distrust.

Candidates who wish to run for office must be approved by the Council of Guardians, which drastically pares the list of aspirants. No standard criterion has been declared as the basis of this selection process. Thus, of over 200 candidates who registered to run in the presidential election of 1997, all but four were disqualified and no adequate explanation was provided for a person's disqualification; likewise, in 2005 over 1000 candidates were disqualified, leaving only seven to run for president.

Suffrage is universal in the Islamic Republic, an ironic fact given that Khomeini criticized the shah for extending voting rights to women. The voting age is 15, and assistance in reading the ballot is provided to illiterates. The vote of youth was a major factor in the victory of Khatami, who during his campaign had courted young people, women, and intellectuals. Around 90 percent of eligible voters participated in the 1997 presidential election. Khatami managed to win the support of 20 million people, or approximately 70 percent of the total participants.

In 2005 the turnout was only 59 percent. The victor, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, drew considerable support from the poorer classes, reflecting his appeal as a long-time radical who spoke out against improved relations with the United States and his promise to address persistent economic problems.

The Party System

Until 1998 there were no officially recognized parties in the country, although the 1979 Iranian constitution allowed for their formation provided they did not oppose the principles of Islam or undermine national sovereignty and unity. The Islamic Republic Party, officially sanctioned in the one-party system that was established after the revolution, was disbanded in 1987. As a result of increased polarization within the government and the general public, the formation of new parties out of the existing factions has begun to occur.

POLITICAL FACTIONS WITHIN THE RULING COALITION

While Khomeini was able to defuse disagreements among the ruling coalition, factional fighting intensified after his death because of real differences among various groups within the regime. At the same time, the survival of the regime has been always at the top of each faction's agenda, and so far the existence of differences has not resulted in open hostilities. The main actors can be categorized as the radicals, the moderate pragmatists, the Islamic conservatives, and the liberal reformers.

Major Political Parties

ISLAMIC SOCIETY OF ENGINEERS

(Jame'e-ye Eslaami-e Mohandesin; ISE)

This organization is the party of President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, who won the 2005 election. Interestingly,

the ISE did not support Ahmadinejad during the election but instead backed Ali Larijani.

SOCIETY OF COMBATANT CLERGY

(Jame'eh-ye Rohaniyat-e Mobarez; JRM)

This party is one of the main bastions of power among the radicals who have dominated the Islamic Republic since its inception.

It enjoys institutional support from the Revolutionary Guards Corps, which took a more active part in defending the existing political order after a number of large-scale riots erupted in spring 1992. Its interests are also furthered by the more militant Ansar-e Hizbullah (Supporters of the Party of God), which emerged in the fall of 1997 and has played an active role in suppressing dissent on university campuses.

ASSEMBLY OF COMBATANT CLERICS

(Majma'-e Rohaniyun-e Mobarez; MRM)

This party split from the JRM in 1987. It is also known to dominate Sazman-e Mojahedin-e Enqelab-e Eslami, the Organization of the Crusades of the Islamic Revolution.

Mohammad Khatami, the former president of Iran, is the best-known figure affiliated with this organization. Other prominent figures include Mir Hosein Musavi (former prime minister), Behzad Nabavi (former minister), Musavi Ardebili (former head of the judiciary), and Mehdi Karrubi (former Majles Speaker).

The pro-Khatami faction has recently announced the formation of a new political party, called the Islamic Iran Participation Party. The newspaper *Khordad* seems to be publishing the views of this group.

EXECUTIVES OF CONSTRUCTION

(Kargozaran-e Sazandegi)

The pragmatist grouping formed around the personality and ideas of Rafsanjani. In January 1996 a group of Rafsanjani's close aides and advisers drew up a platform to compete in the Majles elections. This faction, which is composed of the technocratic elements in the regime, was formally to be known as Kargozaran-e Sazandegi (Executives of Construction). It is now an officially recognized party.

Besides Rafsanjani, other members of the Kargozaran include Gholam Hosain Karbaschi (former mayor of Tehran), Abdollah Nuri (former minister of the interior), and Mohsen Nurbaksh (governor of the Central Bank of Iran). This faction's ideas and policies are supported by the newspapers *Hamshahri, Bahman*, and *Iran*.

ISLAMIC IRAN PARTICIPATION FRONT

(Jebheye Mosharekate Irane Eslaami)

This liberal reformist party is led by Mohammad Reza Khatami, the brother of former president Khatami. Its candidate in the 2005 presidential election, Mostafa Moin, was among the approximately 1,000 candidates who were disqualified prior to the election.

Minor Political Parties

There are numerous smaller parties in Iran. Those that back the regime are often dominated by larger and more powerful parties. Internal opposition to the Islamic Republic remains amorphous and sporadic. The only organizations that expressly reject the existing political order and engage in a modicum of activity inside the county are the Liberation Movement of Iran (Nahzat-i Azadi-ye Iran) and circles close to it, as well as the National Front of Iran (Jebhe-ye Melliye Iran) and the Iranian Nation Party (Hezb-e Mellat-e Iran). A major part of opposition activity in Iran has been carried out by intellectual circles gathered around a few relatively independent journals and magazines and by independent writers, clerics, artists, and lawyers.

LIBERATION MOVEMENT OF IRAN

(Nahzat-e Azadi-ye Iran)

The LMI, led by Ebrahim Yazdi (a minister in the post-revolutionary transitional government) has remained active since the revolution. It was founded by Mehdi Bazargan, the late Ayatollah Mahmud Taleqani, and others in 1957. They hoped the party, influenced by Shiite Islam and European socialism, would show Islam's relevance to modern politics in a way the traditional *ulama* could not. For years, this party and its publications provided public criticism of Khomeini's policies. In the 1980 elections Liberation Movement candidates won five seats; the party boycotted the 1984 elections. Bazargan sought to run for president in 1985 but was disqualified by the Council of Guardians. He

did not oppose the formation of an Islamic Republic but wanted to reform it by persuasion and public protest, not violent action.

Ebrahim Yazdi became secretary-general of the party after Bazargan's death in 1995. LMI remains tolerated despite its criticism of the government, though several of its leaders have been frequently harassed or arrested. LMI and circles close to it have tried to participate in different Iranian elections with very little success. Yazdi was arrested in late 1997 but was released on bail shortly thereafter without being charged. While calling for democracy, the rule of law, and free elections, the LMI supported President Khatami against the conservative and radical factions in the ruling coalition.

NATIONAL FRONT OF IRAN (INF)

(Jebheh-ye Melli-ye Iran)

The old National Front was not a political party as such but rather a coalition of parties opposed to the shah, originally formed in 1949 by Dr. Mohammad Mosadeq. Most National Front leaders were arrested after the fall of Mosadeq's government in 1953, and the movement was reconstituted as the National Resistance Movement. This, in turn, was banned by the government in 1956.

The new National Front was established in 1977 and played a relatively important role in the early days of the revolution. Its ideology is secularist and slightly left-of-center; it was opposed to the establishment of an Islamic Republic. Support for the party has been drawn from professionals and the educated middle class. INF was led by secular supporters of Mosadeq, notably Karim Sanjabi and Shahpur Bakhtiar. There was a rift between the two in the fall of 1978. Sanjabi concluded a pact with Khomeini, then in exile in Paris, to work together for the overthrow of the shah. He went on to become foreign minister in the first postrevolutionary government, although he resigned in April 1979. Bakhtiar, who did not oppose the idea of constitutional monarchy, served as the last prime minister under the shah. The National Front expelled him from the party, and he left Iran in February 1979 after trying to prevent the return of Khomeini. He was assassinated in France in 1991.

Today, although INF is not officially recognized and is often harassed, the party continues its activities in Iran under the direction of a central council. Supporters of the party are also active in Western Europe and North America, where they publish several periodicals. While in the years following the revolution the party was squeezed out by the more radical groups, there still exists a moderate, centrist constituency for the program of the National Front. Among the prominent members of the National Front coalition who are still close to the party are Daryoush Forouhar and his Iranian Nation Party (Hezb-e Mellat-e Iran), which has boycotted the presidential and Majles elections in the past.

Other Political Forces

OPPOSITION IN EXILE

There are many Iranian groups outside the country that oppose the current government in Iran. The opposition in exile remains, however, fragmented and is characterized by constantly shifting alliances. The programs of these groups span the political spectrum: from royalists who want to restore the Pahlavi family to the throne to those who argue for a constitutional monarchy to nationalists and leftists.

The National Iranian Resistance Movement, which aimed to establish a social democratic government, was the first exile group to be formed in Paris (in 1979) and was for a while one of the largest and best-funded groups. It was led by Shahpur Bakhtiar.

Royalist groups are primarily directed by the family of the late shah (who never abdicated) or his former top officials. Some support the return to the throne of the shah's son, who declared himself Reza Shah II upon reaching the age of 20 on October 31, 1980. Reza has pledged that as a constitutional monarch, he would reign but not rule. He has kept a low profile and spends most of his time in the United States and Europe.

The significance and membership of the once-powerful leftist parties have been severely reduced as a result of both the crackdown on their activities inside Iran and the collapse of the Soviet bloc. There are nevertheless several Iranian leftist groups that have kept active through their publications in Western Europe and North America. Their platforms cover the entire leftist spectrum, from hard-line Stalinists and Maoists to those believing in socialism through parliamentary means. Many of these groups have been formed through split-offs from the Tudeh Party (the original postwar Communist party of Iran) or Fada'yan (originally Sazman-e Cherik-ha-ye Fadai-ye Khalq-e Iran), while others may be considered newer groups.

ORGANIZATION OF THE CRUSADERS OF THE IRANIAN PEOPLE

(Sazman-e Mojahedin-e Khalq-e Iran)

With the secular leftist parties and royalists in disarray, the Mojahedin has become the most cohesive Iranian opposition group in exile. The Mojahedin was formed in 1966 and initiated military operations in 1971. The group was a major force in the 1978–79 revolution. Following the revolution, however, the Mojahedin broke decisively with the clerical regime, on June 20, 1981, after authorities opened fire on a huge demonstration organized by the Mojahedin to protest the dismissal of President Bani Sadr by Khomeini.

The leader of the group, Mas'ud Rajavi, and President Bani Sadr were forced into exile in France and formed a short-lived coalition. The Mojahedin continued its activities from Paris until the French government closed down its headquarters in 1986. The Mojahedin's leadership as well as other party members then moved to Iraq where they formed an army of several thousand fighters, responsible for unsuccessful attacks on Iranian soil. Women are reported to constitute a major component of this army, which is under an all-female leadership council with Rajavi's wife, Maryam Azdanlu Rajavi, as commander. The Mojahedin has organized an extensive structure in Europe and North America to lobby against the regime in Iran.

The Mojahedin was a respected organization in Iran because of its long guerrilla struggle against the shah. Its ideology, emphasizing Shiite Islam, socialism, and Iranian nationalism, proved to have strong appeal to the lower classes, who carried out the revolution. However, this appeal has been seriously compromised because of disillusionment with the group's leaders who have built personality cults around themselves, its violent tactics that kill civilians, its ties with Iraq, and the apparent lack of a viable platform.

SHIITE CLERICS

The clerical group has been estimated to include 300,000 persons, a large number of whom are lower-ranking *ulama* active on a local level, preaching in mosques throughout the country and providing religious leadership and education. Middle- and higher-ranking clerics are called *mojtahids*. The title *hojjatoleslam* ("proof of Islam") is below the rank of ayatollah ("sign of God"), of which there are thought to be about 100 at present. The highest-ranking ayatollahs are called grand ayatollahs, of which there are only a handful.

The ranks of the Shiite clergy, and the number of mosques, swelled after the revolution. Formerly, low-ranking *ulamas* were not held in high esteem, but now they have achieved new power and prestige. Before the revolution there were about 10,000 theological students in Iran; today their numbers have increased considerably, two-thirds of them in Qom.

The image of the Iranian *ulama* generally conveyed by the foreign media is that of a fanatically intolerant, monolithic establishment. This image, however, is misleading, for it does not take into account the serious personal and ideological disagreements that characterize intracleric politics.

Khamenei is not a grand ayatollah and therefore cannot be a *marja'* (source of emulation) for Shiite Muslims. To justify his position as Leader, the constitution was changed in 1989 to separate the office of faqih from that of the *marja'*. This change, however, goes against the spirit of Khomeini's conception of *velayat-e faqih* (the rule of the Jurist). At the same time Khamenei was appointed by the Council of Experts to the position of Leader Grand Ayatollah Araki was chosen as *marja'* (the highest religious authority).

With the death of Araki and a few other grand ayatollahs in the early 1990s, the problem of *marjaeiyyat* (the position of the source of emulation) has been brought to the forefront once again. Of the clerics with credentials to be *marja'*, almost none seems to be on good terms with the low- and middle-ranking clerics who control Iran.

In 1997 Ayatollah Montazeri challenged the establishment by questioning the credentials of Khamenei as Leader. Montazeri's office was attacked in response, and demonstrations against him were staged in front of his residence in Qom. Several high-ranking clerics and leading political figures support Montazeri. The outcome of this struggle and the inherent contradiction in the present ruling arrangement have important implications for the fate of the regime.

MILITARY

The two shahs of the Pahlavi dynasty were both authoritarian figures closely identified with the military. They pampered it and used it as their primary instrument for modernizing the nation and asserting central control from Tehran. Before the revolution the shah's armed forces (413,000 men in uniform, plus 300,000 reserves) were equipped with the best military hardware available. This formidable force was, however, impotent during the revolution. Afterward, the officer corps was discredited for having supported the

shah, and many high-ranking officers were executed, imprisoned, or fled the country, and Iran's military was severely weakened.

The postrevolutionary rulers continued to mistrust the army, which they considered foreign-oriented. In order to protect itself from a potential coup d'état, the new regime created the Revolutionary Guards Corps as a counterweight to the army. After Iraq's invasion of Iran in 1980 and the ensuing eight-year war, the Revolutionary Guards grew enormously. The Leader is the commander in chief and supervises both forces.

Today the Corps is structured much like the army with its own ground, air, and naval forces. It has a draft, just like the regular army. All males are required to register for military service at the age of 18 for two years, unless they enter university, in which case they serve after obtaining their degree. At present, the regular armed forces consist of 400,000 men, while the Revolutionary Guards are composed of 120,000 men. Due to demographic changes, Iran's armed forces will be inflated in the future since more men are drafted each year than discharged.

The Revolutionary Guards also control the *basij* (mobilization) forces, which is a large volunteer force (formed in November 1979) used primarily as unpaid militia. The regime is increasingly trying to transform this group from that of a revolutionary force to a civilian one.

The Revolutionary Guards are known to interfere in politics, usually on the side of the radicals, despite a clear legal ban on doing so.

FOUNDATIONS

One of the most powerful forces of postrevolutionary Iran are the quasi-governmental public foundations (*bonyads*). These parastatal organizations have grown into major political and economic nodes of power in the Islamic Republic. With immense financial means at their disposal, some foundations are known to have created and implemented their own policy agenda, including aiding radical groups outside the country. Two foundations deserve particular attention.

The Foundations of the Oppressed and of War Veterans (Bonyad-e Mostaz'afan and Bonyad-e Janbazan) were created atop a number of prerevolutionary foundations. These organizations not only inherited the riches of the Pahlavi Foundation, they also took charge of the properties and businesses confiscated by revolutionary courts. The Foundation of the Oppressed is currently Iran's richest financial institution and controls a lion's share of the country's economic activity. Said to be the richest foundation in the world, it is headed by Mohsen Rafiqdust, the former head of the Revolutionary Guards. Numerous charges of corruption have been leveled against this organization, and while no one has yet dared to accuse Rafigdust himself, his brother was tried and convicted for the embezzlement of hundreds of millions of dollars.

The 15th of Khordad Foundation (Bonyad-e Panzdah-e Khordad) is best known for having placed a bounty on the head of Salman Rushdie, the British author of Indian descent against whom Khomeini issued a *fatwa* that condemned him for writing *The Satanic Verses*. This organization is well known for its militant ideology and is led by Hasan Sanei, one of the most radical figures in Iran today. In 1998 Sanei was included in the expanded Expediency Council. Some analysts see this move as an attempt to integrate Sanei and the 15th of Khordad Foundation within the system and make the organization more accountable.

BAZAARIS

Historically, a significant political force in Iran has been the merchants of the *bazaar*, or *bazaaris*. The *bazaar* refers to a nationwide network of merchants and shops that has long played a key role in financing the clerical establishment, including Islamic schools and social welfare activities.

Bazaaris played a crucial role in ogranizing antiregime demonstrations in 1978-79. Following the success of the revolution, many *bazaaris* were able to grab high positions in the newly formed government. They quickly turned the state agencies into huge profiteering centers that have been in direct competition with the traditional *bazaar*, so that the *bazaar* has lost much of its former social and economic importance. The establishment of trading houses within ministries has accelerated this trend.

Bazaari interests have since the early 1960s been represented by the Society of the Islamic Alliance (Jamiyat-e Mo'talefeh-ye Islami), which organized support among urban tradespeople for Khomeini and other critics of the monarchy. After the revolution, members of this organization managed to seize control of a variety of lucrative enterprises, which gave them a stake in the existing order. The society thus opposed fundamental change to the postrevolutionary political economy, despite harboring a principled interest in the spread of private enterprise and market relations.

INTELLIGENTSIA

Under the monarchy, a rather large group of modern intelligentsia arose. Such people did not hold the clerics in esteem, although some were religious (e.g., Mehdi Bazargan). They included those who supported the regime and its modernizing efforts as well as those who opposed it, including liberals and leftists. While the intelligentsia was instrumental in the revolution, it hoped that the new government would be a liberal, if not secular, regime. As a result, the intelligentsia became a favorite target for removal by the postrevolutionary regime after the failure of the transitional government of Bazargan. Many fled abroad (one estimate places the number at 1 million).

With the imposition of general restrictions on political activity, the intelligentsia has directed its activities toward cultural and social issues. While secular intellectuals have been confined to literary or nonpolitical cultural activities, the liberal-religious intelligentsia has entered into important debates on the role of religion in the government and on the new, liberal interpretations of Islam.

Intellectuals of all stripes played a major role in the 1997 presidential election. Khatami's plaform, which advocated the rule of law, the expansion of civil society, and greater freedom of expression, appealed directly to this particular group. As it became clear that the new president was going to be unable to carry out his ambitious campaign promises, however, disillusion and frustration steadily spread among the educated elite.

ORGANIZED LABOR

Trade unions as such do not now exist in Iran. Between 1945 and 1953 several trade unions were formed, particularly in Tehran and the oilfields, and there were many strikes. However, from 1953 until 1979 any attempt to organize a labor movement was strongly suppressed. After 1959 the government permitted the formation of "official" trade unions, which were not allowed to strike or engage in political activity (unless it was to support the regime). There were about 1,000 such unions by 1978.

After the fall of the monarchy, many factory owners fled the country and workers took over the factories, which they ran through workers' councils. The postrevolutionary regime has generally taken an ambivalent position toward the workers' councils. With the worsening economic situation, many labor strikes have been recorded in the country and have been crushed by the government to prevent further escalation of labor activity. Today, two government-sanctioned, national labor organizations exist in Iran, the House of Workers and the Islamic Society of Workers, with the latter established to counterbalance the former.

YOUTH

With the rise of the fertility rate in the years following the revolution, Iran has experienced a drastic demographic change. As a result, over half of the country's population either was born after the revolution or has no recollection of the prerevolutionary period and the revolutionary struggle. While the regime has tried its best to educate youth to its own liking, this group constitutes a disaffected and potentially antagonistic force. With Iran's high unemployment rate and unpopular social restrictions, the government will not be able to satisfy the demands of this segment of the society. Their aspirations were apparent during the 1997 presidential election, in which those young people who could vote became a major force behind Khatami's victory.

UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

While students played a prominent role in the ouster of the shah, the extent of their support for the postrevolutionary regime is unclear. After the 1978–79 revolution, university campuses remained a major scene of political activity. As a result, all colleges and universities were closed in the spring of 1980 in the wake of rioting. They reopened in 1983 after developing a new "Islamic curriculum." Preference is given for entrance to those with a "correct" political and religious background and to war veterans.

Students presently constitute a large and disaffected group. There is severe competition to matriculate, and, upon acceptance, there are many limits on behavior and political activity. The government has responded to the problem of space availability by establishing the semiprivate, low-quality Islamic Open University, which has branches in many large and small towns. Since the only possible line of political activity on Iran's university campuses has been through the Islamic student associations, secular students have been severely restricted.

Islamic student associations have recently become platforms for protest. Many such organizations have invited liberal-religious intellectuals to deliver speeches. As a result, there have been a number of confrontations between such groups and radical students who, with the help of the mob, have tried to prevent such gatherings. As part of this trend, Heshmat Tabarzadi, the secretary-general of the Union of Students' Islamic

Association and the editor of the weekly *Payam-e Daneshju* (Students' Message) was fined and banned from working at any publication for five years. He had called for a curtailment of the powers of the Leader, in line with a democratic society. This provoked a physical attack on him by a pro-regime mob.

WOMEN

Although Iranian women were a major force in the revolution of 1978–79, they became a main target of restriction once the Islamic regime was established. They were forced to cover their hair and dress modestly in public and were encouraged to limit their role in the society to that of housewives. Some university majors and government positions were rendered off-limits to women. Several laws, which previously protected the rights of women in the family, were revoked or modified.

These major setbacks have not remained unchallenged. The major challenge has come from both the women who essentially believe in the regime and those who have adopted an Islamic discourse to fight for women's rights. Women's magazines such as *Zanan* and *Zan-e Ruz* used religious texts to call for a change or a new interpretation of laws. As a result of these and other efforts by women's organizations, female Majles deputies and other women close to the ruling elite, and independent women's rights advocates, some restrictions have been lifted. All academic subjects are now accessible to women, and a law to protect the rights of women in marriage was passed in 1992. More recently, a female vice president was appointed by President Khatami, and the previous ban on women becoming judges was lifted. Women were a major force behind the election of Khatami.

MINORITY RELIGIOUS GROUPS

About 90 percent of the people of Iran adhere to the Twelver Shiite branch of Islam. Minority religious groups include Sunni Muslims, Bahais, Christians (of different churches), Jews, Zoroastrians, and a few other sects within Shiism. Under the monarchy, there existed a general atmosphere of religious tolerance. As a result, the members of most minority religious were apprehensive at the prospect of a militant Shiite regime coming to power following the 1978–79 revolution.

According to the 1979 constitution, Zoroastrians, Jews, and Christians are the only recognized non-Muslim minorities and are to be left free to follow their religious precepts. These minority religious have traditionally been protected in Muslim societies, which regard their members as "People of the Book." They are represented in the parliament as follows: Zoroastrians and Jews each have one representative; the Assyrian and Chaldean Christians, together, have one representative; and the Armenian Christians of northern and southern Iran each have one representative. There is a provision for a small increase in representation, should their numbers increase.

Bahais, probably the largest non-Muslim minority (over 300,000), are generally reviled by the regime for being apostates from Islam and are not recognized as a legitimate religious group. They are not mentioned in the constitution and have no seat in Parliament.

ETHNIC GROUPS

What constitutes a distinct ethnic group in Iran is difficult to answer. A combination of language, religion, and cross-border proximity to similar groups seems to determine a group's self-identification as a distinct ethnicity in Iran. Most Iranians speak Persian or one of its major dialects (Luri, Bakhtiari, Caspian coast or Baluchi). Persian is a subgroup of the Indo-European family of languages, and is the official language of Iran. It is spoken as a first language by approximately 60 percent of Iranians. The rest speak either a Turkic tongue (Azerbaijani, Turkoman), a Semitic language (Arabic, neo-Syriac), Kurdish or Armenian (a non-Persian Indo-European language).

Kurdish and Baluchi Iranians have long desired autonomy within Iran, although in most cases not actual independence. They have their own political organizations, as well as armed factions that have actively opposed the regime. Government warfare against Kurdish rebels was carried out at the same time as the war against Iraq.

The main political association supported by the Kurds has been the Iranian branch of the Kurdistan Democratic Party, which was led by Abdorrahman Qasemlu until his assassination. The party slogan is "Democracy for Iran, Autonomy for the Kurds." The other Kurdish group, the Kumala, has been important in urban areas, especially Sanandaj.

Azerbaijani speakers are the largest linguistic group in Iran after Persian speakers. Although Azerbaijani is a Turkic language, similar to the official language of the neighboring republic of Azerbaijan, this minority community is well-integrated in Iranian society, and its members make up a considerable proportion of the country's economic and social elite.

A significant percentage of ethnic groups still profess some degree of affiliation to an *il*, which can be defined as an organized pastoralist group based on kinship relations, formerly under the leadership of an *Ilkhan*. There are, however, no accurate figures on such populations, and calculation is difficult because many people who may ethnically belong to an *il* now live in urban areas.

Most *ils* have not played a significant role in national politics since the early part of the 20th century, and this fact does not seem likely to change. They had a long history of hostility toward the Pahlavi regime, which attempted, with some success, to integrate them into a modern state by disarming and settling them and forcing them into the state educational and military systems. The present regime, like the monarchy, represents an urban, centralized government and seeks in similar ways to extend central control to *ili* areas. While the general climate of the first postrevolutionary decade was conducive to the political involvement of the *ils,* with the subsequent consolidation of the regime, most activities of this kind have subsided.

National Prospects

After more than a quarter century of instability due to revolutionary turmoil and war, the Islamic Republic of Iran continues to survive. Early predictions that this unprecedented experiment in modern Islamic governance would collapse as a result of external attack, international isolation, or internal mismanagement proved incorrect. Not even the death of the undisputed Leader, Ayatollah Khomeini, led to the undoing of the new order. Yet a major crisis seems to be escalating in the domestic arena, as the hopes that were kindled by the election of Muhammad Khatami as president in 1997 have largely expired. After a brief political, social, and cultural opening, when it appeared likely that autonomous civic associations, political parties, and independent newspapers and journals might take root and flourish, forces threatened by the turn toward liberalization reasserted control.

In the wake of Khatami's landslide victory, three competing nodes of power emerged inside the regime. One advocated opening up the political system, institutionalizing the rule of law, reducing restrictions on social and cultural life, building bridges to the outside world, and improving the country's technical and intellectual infrastructure. A second favored restoring a vanguard political organization, protecting the principles associated with Khomeini's peculiar interpretation of social justice, reinvigorating a form of command economy, and standing firm against the Siren song of global imperialism. The third, and mediating, position reflected the fundamental pragmatism of the Rafsanjani years, when institutional balance and a mixed economy provided opportunities for the enrichment of a privileged few.

Each current had an identifiable leader: Khatami the reformer, Khamenei the radical-conservative, and Rafsanjani the pragmatist. Khatami's aura faded dramatically during his second term as president, generating more despondency and apathy than rage among his various constituencies. The one area in which his administration met with a degree of success was in reestablishing ties to the international arena, as the governments of Europe, East Asia, and Russia pursued mutually beneficial economic and cultural relations. Only the United States persisted in labeling the Islamic Republic an outlaw regime, whose actions could destabilize a vital region of the world. Repeated fulminations from Washington poisoned Khatami's efforts to promote basic changes in Iranian society that might have been interpreted as creeping Americanization. More important, they augmented the influence of radical activists, who took advantage of U.S. military intervention in the Gulf and Central Asia to rally popular support behind a return to the policies that characterized an earlier phase of the postrevolutionary era. In this project they were joined by a small but growing contingent of neoconservatives, who opposed the liberalization measures introduced by Khatami and demanded stricter adherence to presumed Islamic values. This faction appeared to be victorious with the election of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad in the 2005 presidential election.

These struggles play out in the context of a rapidly growing population, stagnant oil prices, and intense competition for Iranian products on global markets. Consequently, the government continues to have great difficulty meeting the day-to-day needs of the general public. Persistent unemployment and inflation remain critical problems that provoke occasional outbursts of popular violence, and they were important in the election of Ahmadinejad, who promised to focus on addressing these economic problems. To this point, the authorities have permitted the Revolutionary Guards Corps and Ansar-e Hizbullah to take the lead in suppressing discontent. But relying on brute force to maintain order is likely to prove successful only in the short run. Moreover, the religious establishment in Qom, whose senior figures have monopolized the interpretation of Shiite juisprudence for more than

three decades, faces the prospect that a rival center of authority will shortly take shape in the historic seminary and pilgrimage cities of southern Iraq. Each component of Iran's ruling coalition appears to face an uncertain future.

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REPUBLIC OF IRAQ

(Al-Jumhuriyya al-'Iraqiyya)

By Soeren Kern



Formerly part of the Ottoman Empire, Iraq was occupied by the United Kingdom during World War I. It was declared a League of Nations mandate under British administration in 1920. Iraq became independent on October 3, 1932.

Following the overthrow of the pro-Western monarchy of King Faisal II in 1958 and a coup in 1968, Iraq became a center of Arab nationalism under the control of the ruling Ba'th (Renaissance) party. In 1972 the Ba'thists nationalized the Iraq Petroleum Company; the resulting oil revenues made Iraq rich. When Saddam Hussein became president in 1979, petroleum made up 95 percent of the country's foreign exchange earnings.

However, the 1980–88 Iran-Iraq war, the 1991 Gulf War following Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in August 1990, and the subsequent imposition of international sanctions had a devastating effect on its economy and society and reduced Iraq to a pre-industrial state.

Saddam Hussein's regime collapsed in April 2003, three weeks into a major U.S.-led military campaign. Iraq was governed for a year by the "Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA)" led by the United States and the United Kingdom. On March 8, 2004, the U.S.-appointed Governing Council signed an interim constitution. The transfer of sovereignty to the interim government took place on June 28, 2004. A newly elected democratic government was in place by April 2005, and voters approved a new constitution in October 2005.

Iraq now faces a period of uncertainty and transition. Although free from the tyranny of Saddam Hussein, the most pressing problems facing Iraq include the restoration of civil order, the creation of a new political system, and reconstruction.

The System of Government

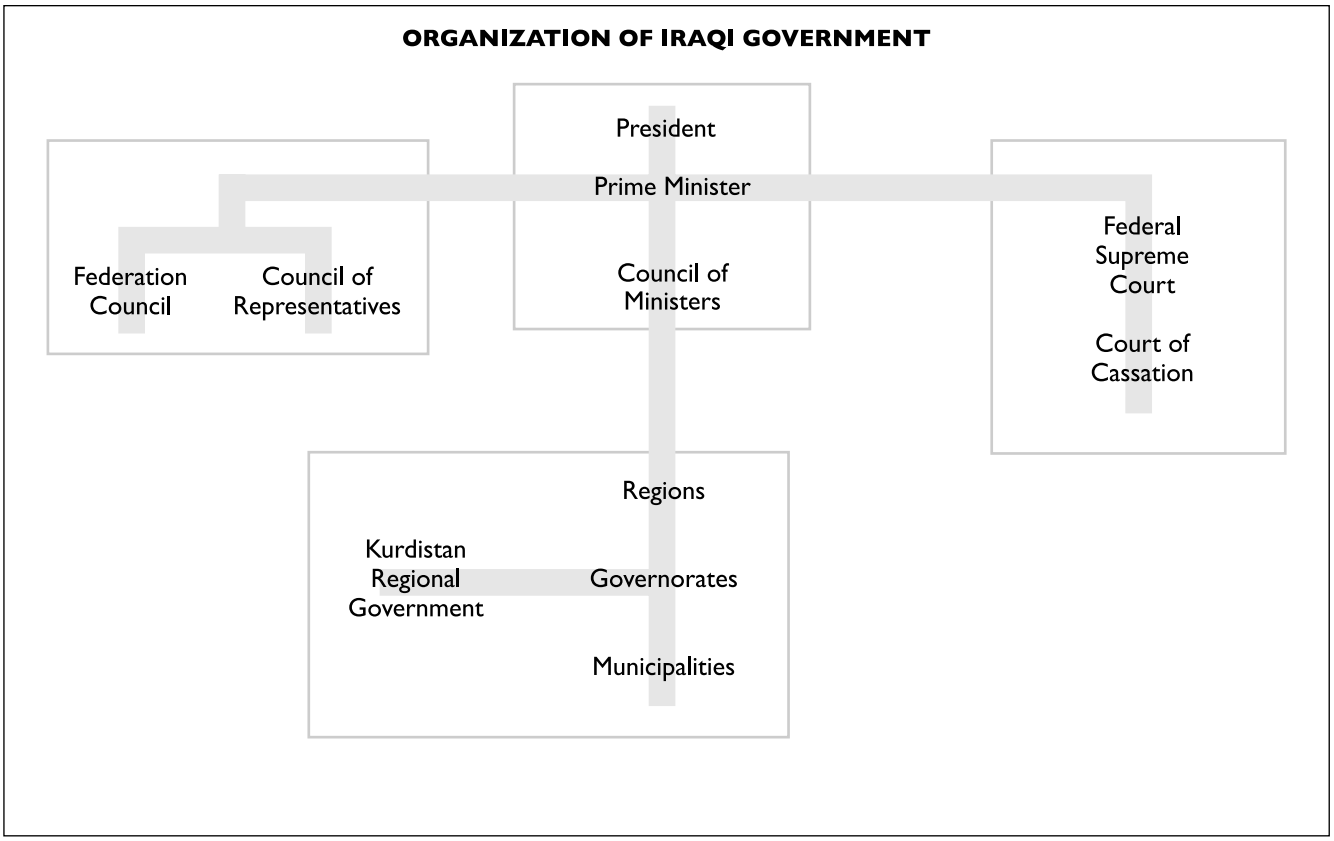
Iraq is now a federal republic with a parliamentary style of government. A permanent constitution was written after the January 30, 2005, national elections for a transitional National Assembly; the document was approved by voters in a referendum in October 2005. New parliamentary elections were scheduled for December 2005.

EXECUTIVE

According to the 2005 constitution, the prime minister is responsible for the day-to-day running of the government through the ministries; he is also commander in chief of the armed forces and is responsible for choosing the members of the cabinet. The president acts as the head of state and oversees the work of the prime minister.

LEGISLATIVE

The constitution calls for two legislative bodies: the Council of Representatives and the Federation Council. The former is the most important body. It consists of one representative per 100,000 Iraqi citizens. The



members are directly elected to four-year terms. Its functions include passing federal laws, electing the president, and ratifying international treaties. The Federation Council includes representatives from various regions and is apparently designed to address regional needs; this body is overseen by the Council of Representatives.

JUDICIARY

The Federal Supreme Court is the highest court in Iraq. It hears judicial appeals, settles disputes between the federal government and the regional authorities, and arbitrates other federal legal issues. The Supreme Court will consist of members based on a method to be determined by the Council of Representatives. The constitution also calls for a Court of Cassation.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The constitution calls for regions, governates, and local municipalities. Each region will be allowed to draft its own regional constitution that defines the structure of the regional government; the capital city of Baghdad is given special consideration to form its own local governing council. The region of Kurdistan is allowed additional powers of self-governance and autonomy.

The Electoral System

The January 2005 elections for the transitional national assembly marked the country's first direct multiparty parliamentary elections since 1953. Each voter was able to select one entry on the ballot, whether a party slate or independent candidate. All Iraqis 18 years of age or older on January 1, 2005, were eligible to vote. The vote was a single national ballot, with no constituencies or regional representation. For the most part, voters cast a single vote for a list of candidates from a party or coalition of parties. Seats in the transitional assembly were allocated by proportional representation (if a party received 20 percent of the vote, it would receive 20 percent of the seats in the assembly). The party's seats were filled from its candidates list, starting from the top and counting down until the seats are filled.

Following the adoption of the new constitution in October 2005, new parliamentary elections were scheduled for December. The constitution allows for direct election of members of parliament by secret ballot.

The Party System

More than 120 parties were approved to run candidates for the transitional National Assembly in January 2005. A total of 83 slates of candidates were registered for the January elections. Many of the parties banded together to form broad alliances for the election. It was unclear how many of the newly formed parties, not to mention the broad alliances, would establish themselves as permanent players in Iraq's political scene.

Major Political Parties

UNITED IRAQI ALLIANCE

This 240-member alliance was backed by Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, Iraq's leading Shiite religious authority. It contained representatives of the country's main Shiite religious parties. Its members won nearly half of the votes for the transitional National Assembly and ended up gaining 140 out of the 275 seats. The alliance included the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution (Sciri), headed by Abdulaziz al-Hakim, and Da'awa, headed by Ibrahim Jaafari, who became the country's prime minister in April 2005. The alliance also included Ahmed Chalabi, leader of the Iraqi National Congress, as well as Hussein al-Shahristani, an independent Shiite politician and nuclear scientist, who is a close adviser to Sistani. Many of the Shiite politicians featured on the alliance developed close ties with Iran when they were forced into exile during the regime of Saddam Hussein. The alliance also included a number of other Shiite and Turkmen parties and some independent Sunnis and tribal leaders. Followers of the radical Shiite cleric Moqtada al-Sadr considered joining the alliance but decided against it because of theological differences with Sistani.

KURDISTAN ALLIANCE

This alliance included Massoud Barzani's Kurdistan Democratic Party and Jalal Talabani's Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, the two leading Kurdish parties that have shared power in the semi-autonomous Kurdish regions of northern Iraq. The list also included six smaller Kurdish parties. The alliance won 75 seats in the January 2005 elections, second only to the United Iraqi List.

IRAQI LIST

This alliance included the Iraq National Accord, a secular-leaning party headed by Iyad Allawi, Iraq's interim prime minister, along with several other secular parties. The list campaigned on security and law and order and favored a secular and nonsectarian Iraq. It won 40 seats in the January 2005 elections.

IRAQIS' PARTY LIST

This secular party was led by Iraq's Sunni interim president, Ghazi al-Yawar. The list contained 80 candidates from different sections of Iraqi society and included ministers, governors, tribal leaders, and clerics. It won five seats in the January 2005 elections.

IRAQI ISLAMIC PARTY

This party, led by Mohsen Abdel Hameed, was the biggest Sunni party and was dominated by members of the formerly outlawed Muslim Brotherhood. It initially presented a list of 275 candidates but withdrew from the elections in late December because of security concerns. Without the Iraqi Islamic Party, however, no other party or candidate had enough support to attract the popular Sunni vote.

Minor Political Parties

PEOPLE'S UNION

This 275-candidate list included the Iraqi Communist Party led by Hamid Majid Moussa. It won two seats in the January 2005 elections.

INDEPENDENT NATIONALIST ELITES AND CADRES

This 180-candidate alliance represented the Shiites of Sadr City, the impoverished Baghdad suburb dominated by followers of the rebel cleric Moqtada al-Sadr. It won three seats in the January 2005 elections.

IRAQI INDEPENDENT DEMOCRATS

This 76-candidate list represented a secular party headed by Adnan Pachachi, a prominent Sunni politician and former foreign minister.

IRAQI DEMOCRATIC GATHERING

This party was led by Mishaan Jibouri and was linked to the Jibouri tribe, one of the largest and most powerful Sunni Muslim tribes in Iraq. The party pushed for the return of former members of Saddam Hussein's Ba'th Party to government.

CONSTITUTIONAL MONARCHY

This was a moderate Sunni-dominated group that sought to restore a constitutional monarchy. Its 275-candidate list was headed by Sharif Ali Bin Hussein, a cousin of Iraq's last king.

CHRISTIAN LISTS

Due to a dispute over the order of candidates appearing on the list, the Christians split it in two. However, the manifesto of the National Rafidayn List and the Two Rivers Coalition was essentially the same, with a focus on safeguarding the rights of minorities, including the Chaldeans and Assyrians. Their campaign also underlined the importance of teaching the Assyrian language, which is spoken by about 1 million Iraqi Christians living in Baghdad, Kirkuk, and Mosul.

Other Political Forces

LOCAL GOVERNORATES

The 2005 constitution promotes federalism, a system of government that gives local areas substantial control over their own affairs, strengthens the unity of the entire country, and prevents any region or group from dominating the others. Yet, in many areas of the country, the central government is seen as lacking in legitimacy and control.

FOREIGN FIGHTERS

Much of the violence and chaos in Iraq following the ouster of Sadaam Hussein has been tied to foreign insurgents pouring into the country to battle the U.S.-led coalition forces and all Iraqi forces and institutions that sought to forge a new democratic system.

National Prospects

Iraq's economy is dominated by the oil sector, which has traditionally provided about 95 percent of foreign exchange earnings. With the exception of its southern neighbor, Saudi Arabia, Iraq has more oil buried underneath it than any country in the world: Iraq is estimated to hold 115 billion barrels of proven oil reserves and possibly much more undiscovered oil in unexplored areas of the country. Iraq also is estimated to contain at least 110 trillion cubic feet of natural gas.

Ultimately, the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq in March–April 2003 resulted in the shutdown of much of the country's oil production facilities. A joint UN and World Bank report released in the fall of 2003 estimated that Iraq's key reconstruction needs through 2007 would cost $55 billion. In October 2003 international donors pledged assistance worth more than $33 billion toward this rebuilding effort.

In July 2004 a U.S. National Intelligence Estimate painted a pessimistic picture for the future of Iraq, including the possibility of civil war. The 50-page report raised serious questions about Iraq's ability to achieve political solutions in subsequent years, noting the country's limited experience with representative government and its history of violence.

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IRELAND

(Éire)

By Alan J. Ward, Ph.D.



Ireland is located in five-sixths of the island of Ireland, on the western edge of Europe. It has an area of nearly 70,000 square kilometers (27,000 square miles) and a population of just over 4 million (2005 est.), approximately 93 percent of whom identify as Roman Catholics. Of the remainder, 3 percent are members of the Anglican Church of Ireland.

Irish is the first official language of Ireland and English the second. The English text of the constitution uses Irish terms for certain offices and institutions: Oireachtas (Parliament), Dáil Éireann (House of Representatives), Seanad Éireann (Senate), taoiseach (prime minister), and tánaiste (deputy prime minister). This use of Irish will be followed in this account, as will the customary use of Irish names for three political parties, Fianna Fáil, Fine Gael, and Sinn Féin.

When the island of Ireland was partitioned by the United Kingdom in 1921, the six counties in the northeast, which contained the majority of the island's Protestants, became a self-governing region of the United Kingdom, known as Northern Ireland. The remaining 26 counties became independent in 1922 as the Irish Free State (Saorstát Éireann), with the constitutional status of a British Dominion under the Crown, like Canada. In 1936 all references to the British Crown were deleted from the Free State constitution (Bunreacht na hÉireann), and in 1937 Eamon de Valera's government introduced a new constitution, which was approved by a plebiscite. The state was renamed Ireland (Éire). The constitution was wholly republican in form, but Ireland retained the External Relations Act of 1936, which authorized the king of England, as head of the British Commonwealth, to act formally for Ireland in external relations. In this way, the country retained a relationship with Britain until 1949, when the Republic of Ireland Act was implemented and Ireland withdrew from the Commonwealth. The state continues to be called Ireland in the constitution, but the names Irish Republic and Republic of Ireland are also widely used.

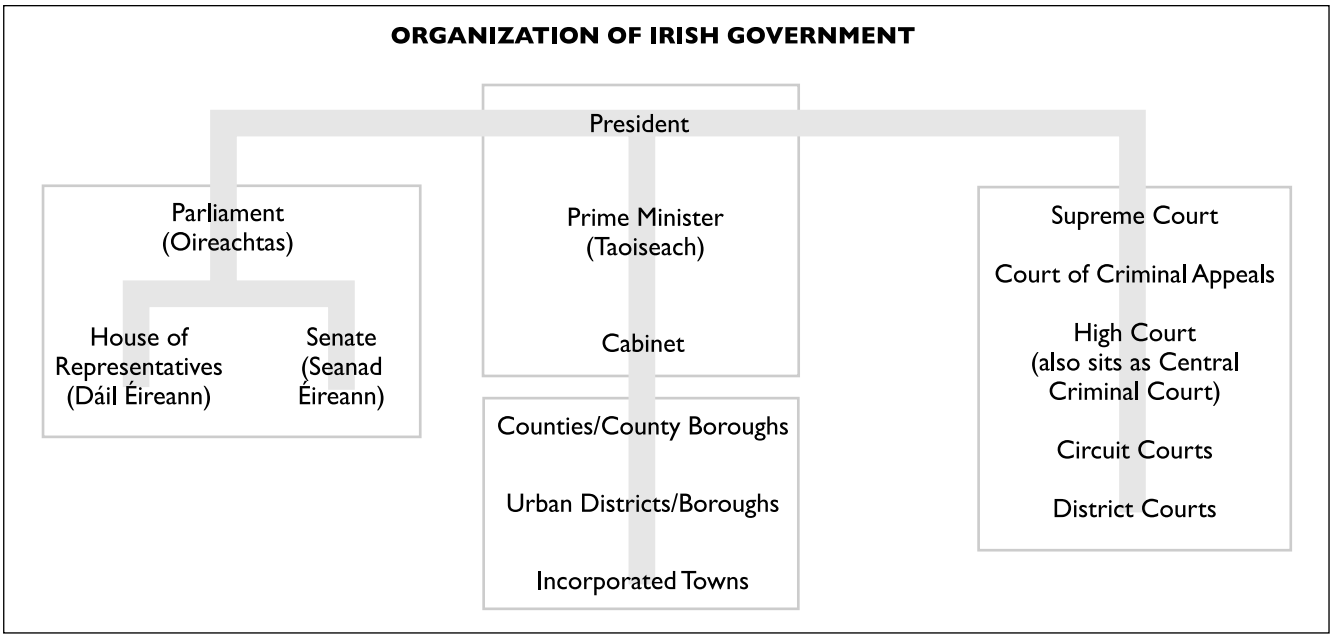
The System of Government

Ireland is a unitary republic with a parliamentary form of government. Amendments to the constitution require the approval of the Oireachtas and a public referendum.

EXECUTIVE

The Irish head of state is the president (Uachtarán na hÉireann). The constitution specifies that most of the president's powers are exercised at the direction of others: the taoiseach, the Government, or Dáil Éireann. These include the power to appoint ministers, summon and dissolve the Oireachtas, and assent to bills.

The president has seven discretionary powers, but the advice of the Council of State must be sought on five of these, including the most important, the decision



to submit a bill to the Supreme Court for a test of its constitutionality. The statutory members of the Council are the taoiseach, tánaiste, chief justice, president of the High Court, attorney general, presiding officers of the two houses of the Oireachtas, and people who have held office as taoiseach or chief justice in the past. The president is not required to seek the Council's advice when appointing up to seven additional members of the Council and deciding to dissolve, or not dissolve, Dáil Éireann on the advice of a taoiseach who has lost the support of a majority in the Dáil.

The president must be at least 35 years of age, serves a seven-year term, and may be reelected only once. Elections are partisan, and most presidents have been members of the largest party, Fianna Fáil. Until 1990 presidents conducted the office in a low-key manner, but the Independent Labour president Mary Robinson (1990–97) may have set new expectations for the office by speaking out on public issues and representing Ireland on frequent overseas visits. President Robinson resigned on September 12, 1997, some months before the completion of her term, to take up a position as UN High Commissioner for Human Rights. A new president had to be elected within 60 days of her resignation. A Presidential Commission, composed of the chief justice of the Supreme Court and the two presiding officers of the Oireachtas, performed the essential functions of the office until November, when the Fianna Fáil candidate, Mary McAleese, a native of Northern Ireland, was elected president.

As in all parliamentary countries, the effective executive in Ireland is not the president but a cabinet, known in Ireland as the Government, which is selected from the majority in the lower house of the Oireachtas, Dáil Éireann. The Government must resign if it loses the support of the majority, by losing a general election, a vote of no confidence in the Dáil, or a vote on the budget. Ireland adopted this model before independence, when the first Dáil Éireann was formed during the War of Independence in 1919. The model was retained when the Irish Free State constitution was adopted in 1992 and was confirmed in the constitution of 1937.

The Irish Government is composed of ministers selected from the Oireachtas to head government departments. The constitution limits the number to 15, and no more than two may sit in the Seanad. The taoiseach, tánaiste, and minister for finance must sit in the Dáil. Seventeen ministers of state, or junior ministers, have been established by ordinary law to support ministers, and these must also sit in the Oireachtas.

The constitution recognizes the special role of the taoiseach, or prime minister, in various ways. Appointed by the president on the nomination of the Dáil, the taoiseach alone nominates ministers and ministers of state to the president for appointment, as well as the attorney general, who need not sit in the Oireachtas. The taoiseach alone may request the president to dismiss members of the Government. It is the taoiseach's responsibility to request the president to dissolve the Dáil and call for a general election. The

request must be granted if the taoiseach has the support of a majority in the Dáil, but it may be denied if that support has been lost. In practice, no president has ever denied a request for a dissolution. If the taoiseach resigns or dies in office, the whole Government is deemed to have resigned. In a coalition, some of the taoiseach's powers may be circumscribed because coalition partners will want a say in the disposition of certain offices.

The taoiseach is clearly preeminent in the government, but the constitution requires the Government to meet and act as a collective body in many matters, including the presentation of appropriations bills to the Dáil, the conduct of foreign relations, and most instructions to the president. In 1992 the Government decided that all its decisions would be announced as if taken unanimously, and in 1924 it decided that the appearance of unanimity required all Government proceedings to be confidential. It therefore resisted court subpoenas. A constitutional amendment in 1997 confirms secrecy of proceedings but permits court access to documents in some circumstances.

Ministers represent their own departments in Parliament. The Ministers and Secretaries Act of 1924 recognizes each minister as a "corporation sole," which is to say, as personifying the department in law, and it always acts in the minister's name.

The members of the Government control the executive departments, of course, but party discipline enables them to dominate the legislature as well. Standing Orders, which are the rules of each house, have been written to favor the Government in significant ways. The members of the Government also supervise the large, semistate sector of "state-sponsored bodies." These account for roughly 10 percent of Ireland's GDP, and they engage in a variety of commercial, marketing, research, and regulatory activities. Their governing boards are appointed by ministers, and the Oireachtas has very limited influence over them.

The Supreme Court has the constitutional power to reject legislation as unconstitutional, but other formal checks on the Irish Government are weak. Backbench deputies on the Government's side can influence its policies in the privacy of party meetings, but they are socialized to accept its dominance in the Oireachtas itself. Members of opposition parties have very little influence in the Oireachtas.

Government dominance is most evident when a single party forms a majority Government, but Irish governments have been formed with four kinds of support, each of which tends toward a different degree of dominance. First, a party may be able to form a single-party, majority Government, and it gives the Government the greatest degree of control. Second, the Government may be formed by a majority coalition composed of two or more parties. The composition and programs of the Government will be, of necessity, compromises between coalition partners. Third, if no party controls a majority of seats in the Dáil, a single party may be able to form a minority Government without a coalition if it has the support of other parties or independents on votes of confidence and budget votes. This places the government in a precarious position. Finally, and least common in Ireland, a coalition may form a minority government under the same conditions.

LEGISLATURE

The Oireachtas is defined by the constitution as a tricameral institution, comprising the president, Dáil Éireann, and Seanad Éireann, but in practice, the Oireachtas is always taken to mean an assembly of two chambers, Dáil Éireann and Seanad Éireann.

Dáil Éireann has 166 members and is the primary house of the Oireachtas. Elections are by popular vote using single transferable votes (STV) in multimember constituencies. The Dáil may sit for a maximum of five years but can be dissolved in a shorter period at the request of the taoiseach. The Dáil elects a chairman (Cathaoirleach) and deputy chairman (Leas-Cathaoirleach) after each general election, usually from a Government party. The seat of a sitting chairman is not contested at a general election unless he or she is retiring. The Dáil has exclusive responsibility for nominating the taoiseach and approving his nominees for the Government. The taoiseach, tánaiste, and minister for finance must sit in the Dáil, and money bills, which deal with taxes, appropriations, and public loans, must be introduced there by the Government. Once approved, a money bill is forwarded to the Seanad, which has 21 days to make comments, but it may not offer amendments. The Dáil may accept the Seanad's recommendations, or it may vote to send the original bill to the president for signature. Nonmoney bills may be initiated in either house, but in practice very few are introduced in the Seanad. That house has 90 days to consider a nonmoney bill sent to it from the Dáil, and if it does not return the bill in this period or amends it in ways that are unacceptable to the Dáil, the Dáil may vote to send the original bill to the president for signature. The 90-day delay may be abridged for reasons of public peace, security, or emergency, as determined by the taoiseach with the president's

concurrence. In practice, the Seanad has rejected only a handful of Government bills, and it almost never amends them in ways that are unacceptable to the Government.

The great majority of bills that become law in Ireland are introduced by the Government in Dáil Éireann. A small amount of time is available for private members' bills, but it is dominated by opposition parties rather than individual members. Party members are expected, and in some parties are required, to vote as directed by the party on all bills except votes of conscience.

The Dáil sits for fewer than 100 days a year. It appoints standing committees to handle the third, or committee, stage of some noncontroversial bills, but most bills pass through all of their stages in the full house, sitting as itself or as a "committee of the whole." Select committees are established annually to consider specialized topics. Some are reappointed year by year, such as the Public Accounts Committee, the Procedure and Privileges Committee, the Joint Committee of Dáil and Seanad on Commercial State-Sponsored Bodies, and the Joint Committee on Secondary Legislation of the European Union, but they do not consider legislation and there are no committees to review financial estimates.

The Seanad has 60 members and is very much a secondary chamber. In addition to the constitutional restrictions on its powers discussed above, the Senate is subjected to party discipline and is invariably dominated by the Government. Indeed, the taoiseach nominates 11 senators, enough to ensure the government's control. The Seenad sits for fewer days than the Dáil.

JUDICIARY

The Irish judicial system was inherited from Britain. Irish law is derived from British common law, British statutes that applied to Ireland at the time of independence and have not been amended by Irish statutes, the Irish constitution, and Irish statutes passed subsequent to independence.

The lowest court is the district court, which is divided into 23 districts to hear minor civil and criminal cases. More serious cases go to the circuit court, which is divided into 8 circuits. Next in authority is the High Court, a panel of 17 judges who handle the most serious cases and hear appeals from lower courts in civil cases. When hearing criminal cases the High Court sits as the Central Criminal Court. Criminal appeals are heard by the Court of Criminal Appeal, which includes both High Court and Supreme Court judges. The High Court is permitted by the constitution to consider the constitutionality of laws in its decisions. The Supreme Court is the court of final appeal from decisions of the High Court and the Court of Criminal Appeal, and it is required to consider the constitutionality of bills referred to it by the president before signing them into law. Irish judges are appointed by the president on the recommendation of the Government.

Early Irish Supreme Court justices were trained in the British tradition and practiced typically British judicial restraint, but since the 1960s they have been interpreting the constitution quite broadly to nullify acts of the Oireachtas. The Irish constitution includes specific rights of citizens, several based upon Catholic teachings, that courts must apply, and a 1983 referendum added the prohibition of abortion to this list. In addition, since Ireland joined the European Economic Community (now the European Union) in 1972, Irish courts have been bound by European law and European Court decisions.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Ireland is a unitary state. All local governments operate under powers granted by the Oireachtas and may only perform tasks permitted by law. Councils were occasionally suspended by the Government, and local elections were postponed several times, most recently in 1990. Since 1999, however, the constitution has recognized local government, and elections must be held at least every five years.

The major local government functions are public housing, roads and traffic, water supply, sewage, environmental protection, planning and development, and recreation. Expenditures are funded, in order of importance, by central government grants, local government charges for goods and services, and taxes on business and industrial property. The central government exerts considerable influence by making laws with respect to local government, making grants for roads, housing, and other purposes, and coordinating certain activities, such as planning. Local governments spend about 5.5 percent of Ireland's GNP, approximately 65 percent for current expenditures and 35 percent for capital expenditures.

In order of descending levels of responsibility, there are 29 county councils and 5 county borough councils, 49 urban district councils and 6 boroughs, and 30 boards of town commissioners. Elections to five-year terms are by proportional representation and are contested by parties. Each jurisdiction has a manager,

a public servant who is appointed by the authority on the recommendation of the Local Appointments Board, a central government agency. Elected members set general policy, the annual tax rate, and public borrowing. The also enact by-laws to regulate local matters, such as traffic and parking. Managers administer according to these policies, but they are typically experienced sources of advice to local councils. About 25,000 people are employed in local government.

Eight regional authorities were established by law in 1994 composed of representatives from local governments. They coordinate regional public services and advise on the implementation of certain European Union programs. In addition, there are regional tourism organizations, vocational education committees, county enterprise boards, fisheries boards, and harbor authorities.

The Electoral System

The minimum voting age for all elections in Ireland is 18, and balloting is secret. The electoral register is prepared by an annual house-to-house survey. Elections for president are by all registered voters in Ireland using the single transferable vote. Candidates must be nominated by 20 members of the *Oireachtas* or 4 county councils. Voters indicate their preferences among the candidates, and if no candidate wins a majority on the first count, the second preferences of the candidate with fewest votes are redistributed to the remaining candidates, as happened, for example, in 1990.

Dáil elections are by proportional representation and secret ballot using the STV system in multimember constituencies. There are 41 constituencies, and the number of seats varies between 3 and 5. Constituencies are revised at least every 12 years, and the boundary commissioners are required by the constitution to maintain a ratio of electors to deputies of between 1:20,000 and 1:30,000. Commissioners are also required to consider county boundaries, geographic features, and continuity in relation to constituencies, which is why permissible variations in constituency size are helpful.

The Dáil electoral system operates as follows. On their ballots, voters number candidates in their order of preference up to the number of seats to be filled. The minimum number of votes required to elect a member is the "quota," which is determined by the formula: the number of valid ballots votes cast/(number of seats + 1) plus one. By this measure, the quota is 25 percent plus one in a three-seat constituency, 20 percent plus one in a four-seat constituency, and 16.66 percent plus one in a five-seat constituency. When the ballots are counted, the first preferences for each candidate are sorted. Should a candidate reach the quota at this point, the second preferences of votes that are surplus to the quota are redistributed to other candidates. Should no other candidate reach a quota, the second preferences of the candidate receiving the least number of first preferences are redistributed. This process proceeds at length, redistributing the surplus votes of winners and then the second preferences of the bottom candidates, until all the seats are filled. Parties influence the outcome by directing how their supporters should cast their preferences. From 1997 candidates for the Dáil have been subject to spending limits for campaigns, but they may receive verifiable expenses from the state if they can secure at least 25 percent of the quota for their districts.

The Dáil electoral system produces a house whose membership approximates quite closely the proportion of votes cast for each party. About 80 percent of voters usually see their first- or second-preference candidates elected. In Britain, by contrast, a majority of seats are won by candidates who poll less than a majority of votes and only a minority of voters can claim a role in electing a member of Parliament. However, because the quotas in Ireland are very high, by proportional representation standards, the STV system somewhat underrepresents small parties, the Green Party and Sinn Féin, for example. STV also has the effect of making deputies compete against members of their own parties for high preferences, and a deputy may lose a seat to a member of the same party who cultivates the constituency more assiduously. Deputies spend a great deal of time performing constituency service to protect their seats.

Labour and the smaller parties do not offer candidates in all constituencies, which limits the proportion of the nationwide vote they can receive. In recent years approximately 13 percent to 14 percent of Dáil members have been women. Though far from satisfactory, this is a substantial increase over the 8 percent of November 1982 and 7 percent of 1989.

Proportional representation makes it difficult in Ireland for a party to form a government alone with a majority of seats in the Dáil. This happened nine times after 1922 but not once since Fianna Fáil lost office in 1981. Elections are more likely to lead to coalition or minority governments.

The Senate has 60 members, selected in three ways. Two groups are selected by elections, which must be held within 90 days of the dissolution of

the Dáil, using STV and postal ballots. Forty-three members are elected from five panels representing broad vocational constituencies: agriculture, industry and commerce, labor, culture and education, and administration. The distribution of seats per panel is set by law. Candidates to the panels are nominated by recognized nominating bodies or by members of the Oireachtas. The electorate for this group of senators is members of the local councils and deputies from the new Dáil, about 1,100 voters. Next, three senators each are elected by graduates of the National University of Ireland and the University of Dublin (Trinity College). The third form of selection is by nomination. Eleven senators are appointed on the nomination of the incoming taoiseach.

When designing the constitution in 1937, de Valera did not view the Senate as a chamber in which vocational interests would be represented per se. Rather, he thought that elections in vocational panels would produce senators of distinction who would represent the interests of Ireland as a whole. In the event, however, the Seanad has been a disappointment by any standard. Other than the university members, who are usually Independents, the nominations process has always been dominated by political parties, and the taoiseach's nominees ensure that the chamber is always friendly to the Government.

The Party System

Parliamentary systems depend on political parties. Without them, governments would have to construct new majorities issue by issue and would be exposed to defeat, and hence resignation, day by day. Disciplined parties bring stability and have been a feature of the Irish political system since independence. They contest elections at every political level. Parties that are registered by the clerk to Dáil Éireann and have no fewer than seven members elected at the previous general election receive subsidies from state funds in proportion to the votes they received. Each candidate's party, if any, is identified on the ballot, and parties are allocated free TV and radio broadcasts during general elections. They are prohibited by law from television and radio advertising during campaigns.

The present Irish party system reflects the events that accompanied the end of the Irish War of Independence. The war was concluded with the Anglo-Irish Treaty of December 1921, which caused a devastating split in Sinn Féin, the party that had led Ireland in the war. The treaty was accepted as the best they could secure from Britain by the Irish negotiators, led by Michael Collins and Arthur Griffith, but it recognized the Irish Free State as a British Dominion, under the Crown, and left Ireland partitioned. When both the Dáil Éireann Executive (cabinet) and the Dáil itself approved the treaty by very narrow margins, the more radical Irish nationalists, led by Eamon de Valera, left the Government and the Dáil.

This schism led to the Irish Civil War of 1922–23 and laid the foundations for the Irish party system. The present-day Fine Gael and Fianna Fáil parties, the largest parties in the state, are the descendants of the pro- and antitreaty factions of Sinn Féin in 1922. Because the two major Irish parties were primarily defined by their attitudes to the Anglo-Irish Treaty, rather than by social class or economics, and because the people of the Irish Republic are religiously and culturally homogeneous, Irish party politics has not reflected the class and religious cleavages that are characteristic of continental European parties.

Between 1922 and 1932, treaty supporters, now known as the Cumann nGaedheal Party, constituted the Government of the Irish Free State, but in 1932, the Fianna Fáil Party, formed by opponents of the treaty, took power for the first time. Between 1932 and 1989, Irish party politics revolved around the question of whether Fianna Fáil or an anti–Fianna Fáil coalition led by the successor to Cumann nGaedheal, Fine Gael, would form the Government. Fianna Fáil formed 14 governments and anti–Fianna Fáil coalitions 7 in this period. Since 1989, however, Fianna Fáil itself has led coalition governments. Coalition building is often a tortuous exercise, but it is possible in Ireland because of the nonideological character of the major Irish parties.

Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael move about on the political spectrum from time to time, and at present both can be identified in the center-right part of the European political spectrum. Ireland has one of the lowest levels of support for left-wing parties of any country in Europe for three major reasons: the treaty split stifled the development of class-based parties; Ireland has a small, industrial working class; and the Roman Catholic Church has been extremely hostile to socialism.

In the 1970s Fine Gael appeared to move toward European social democracy, and it formed coalition governments with the Labour Party in 1973, 1981, and 1982. In the late 1980s, however, it became quite conservative in its economic policies, and in 1993 Labour formed a coalition with Fianna Fáil, which had taken a centrist position on economic policy. When this

government broke up in 1994, Fine Gael formed another coalition with Labour and a small party to Labour's left, the Democratic Left. It appeared to move again in a social democratic direction. After the general elections of 1997 and 2002, Fianna Fáil formed coalitions with the Progressive Democratic Party, which is conservative on economic policy but liberal on social issues. Labour has often been the kingmaker because the traditional political enemies, Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael, have been unable to form coalitions together. But ancient enmities are dying, and there is nothing in the ideologies or policies of these two that would forever preclude such a union. Because of proportional representation, minor parties and independents have always been able to meet the election quotas in some seats, and they have often held the balance of power in the Dáil.

With the exception of the small Green Party, Irish political parties are hierarchically organized. A small central office staff in Dublin coordinates the activities of the party and reports to the national executive, a body of representatives from local branches and members of the Oireachtas that manages the party between annual conferences. There are usually several local branches (or *cumann* in Fianna Fáil) in each constituency, but candidate selection is handled by constituency-level bodies. The national executive may influence selections, but most authority lies at the local level. The centerpiece of the party is an annual or biennial conference (or Árd Fhéis) attended by delegates from local branches, members of the Oireachtas, and members of the national executive. This meeting features an address by the party leader and is increasingly staged for the benefit of broadcast media. The party leader is typically elected by members of the Dáil, but Fine Gael adds senators and members of the European Parliament to the electorate.

Party policy is officially set by the national conference, but when in office, a Government effectively sets party policy. Even in opposition, the leaders of a party in the Dáil have a great influence on policy. The Green Party has made an effort to deviate from this model, with a "coordinator" rather than a leader, and it develops policies by consensus.

Since 1997 Irish parties have been required to publish their accounts. They draw their funds in part from members' contributions or donations, and from private gifts from individuals, corporations, and trades unions, but by far the largest source of funds is annual grants from the state.

Major Political Parties

FIANNA FÁIL

(Soldiers of Destiny)

Fianna Fáil has been the largest party in the state since 1932. It was formed by Eamon de Valera in 1926 when he and a majority of treaty opponents abandoned their opposition to the Irish Free State. They entered the Dáil for the first time in 1927 and took office in 1932 as a minority government with Labour Party support. Since then Fianna Fáil has been the only party to form a single-party government.

Fianna Fáil was led by de Valera until he became president in 1959. The party was more inclined to press for the reunion of Ireland than Fine Gael, more protectionist in trade, less inclined to welcome secular influences from abroad, and more protective of traditional Irish values, including the Irish language. The Catholic hierarchy supported this policy of cultural isolation. The fact of Ireland's partition enabled Fianna Fáil to make electoral capital out of republican nationalism. The party has always been conservative on economic, cultural, and moral issues but has also espoused a brand of social populism that expresses support for the poor and underprivileged. In World War II, de Valera's Finna Fáil government adopted a policy of neutrality that evolved into abstention from military alliances in the postwar years.

De Valera's successor as party leader and taoiseach, Séan Lemass, began the process of modernizing the Irish economy in the 1960s and opened Ireland to foreign trade and investment. His government negotiated Irish entry into the European Economic Community in 1972. Lemass also began to change Fianna Fáil's position on Northern Ireland and twice met the prime minister of Northern Ireland, Terence O'Neill, for talks in Belfast and Dublin. Fianna Fáil now accepts that Irish unification must come about by the decision of the people of Northern Ireland themselves and by reconciling the two communities there. In December 1993, the taoiseach, Albert Reynolds, signed a joint declaration on peace with the British government that confirmed these policies, and in 1998, his successor, Bertie Ahern, also Fianna Fáil, signed the Belfast Agreement that cemented them into law.

Fianna Fáil sits in Europe with the European Democratic Alliance, which includes the French Gaullists. The European Democratic Alliance is customarily placed to the left of the larger European People's Party, the Christian Democrat group in Europe.

FINE GAEL

(Tribe of Irish People)

In 1923 the protreaty Sinn Féin republicans took as their name Cumann nGaedheal. The party became Fine Gael in 1933 in an amalgamation with the smaller Center Party. Fine Gael is today the second largest party in Ireland. As Cumann nGaedheal it formed the government of the Irish Free State until 1932, under the leadership of William Cosgrave, but since then it has only been in government as the largest party in a number of coalitions.

Fine Gael has been less confrontational to Britain than Fianna Fáil, less committed to republican nationalism, less protectionist on economic issues, less populist, and more committed to a pluralist Ireland, but it was a Fine Gael–led coalition that clarified Ireland's republican status in 1949 and withdrew Ireland from the British Commonwealth. In its early years the party was identified with large farmers and professional classes and had a weak party organization. In the mid-1960s, however, it changed its image and became a socially progressive party. The redefinition was led by Senator Garret FitzGerald, who became leader of the party and subsequently taoiseach in Fine Gael–Labour coalitions from June 1981 to February 1982 and November 1982 to 1987. FitzGerald also signed the Anglo-Irish Agreement of 1985 with British prime minister Margaret Thatcher, which committed both countries to pursue a peace in Northern Ireland based on respect for both the Unionist and Nationalist traditions and the consent of the majority in the province. The agreement was an important step toward the Belfast Agreement of 1998.

In a very testing period for the Irish economy, Fine Gael became too conservative in economic matters for its Labour coalition partner and the FitzGerald coalition collapsed in 1987. The party returned to power in 1994 in a Fine Gael–Labour–Democratic Left coalition under Taoiseach John Bruton. The party went into opposition in 1997.

Fine Gael has been the leading Irish supporter of the European Union. It sits with the second largest group in the European Parliament, the European People's Party, a Christian Democrat coalition.

IRISH LABOUR PARTY

The Irish Labour Party was founded in 1912 by the trades union leaders James Connolly, James Larkin, and William O'Brien. The party did not contest the 1918 United Kingdom general election or the 1921 Irish elections for fear of splitting the anti-British vote, and when it did contest the Irish general election in 1922 it found that its class-based politics could not compete with the highly charged politics of the Anglo-Irish Treaty. In addition, Ireland had only a relatively small industrial working class of the kind that supported successful left-wing parties elsewhere in Europe. Because of the abstention of antitreaty deputies from the first Irish Free State Dáil, Labour became the official Dáil opposition and is credited with playing an important part in the development of Irish parliamentary government. It has consistently taken third place among Irish parties since Fianna Fáil entered constitutional politics in 1927 but has participated in many coalition governments. In 1999 the Labour Party merged with the smaller Democratic Left, formerly the Workers' Party, which was itself an offshoot of Sinn Fein.

In 1990 the Labour Party nominated the Independent Labour senator Mary Robinson for president of Ireland. She had resigned from the party in 1985 to protest the Anglo-Irish Agreement, which she thought unfair to Unionists in Northern Ireland. She won the election and served from 1991 to 1997.

Labour is a social democratic party committed to social and economic equality. It has its greatest strength in Dublin, where a majority of its branches are located, and is weakest in western Ireland. It currently has 12 affiliated trades unions, representing about half of Ireland's trade unionists. In the European Parliament, it sits with the Party of European Socialists, the largest group, and it is also a member of the Socialist International.

Minor Political Parties

A large number of minor parties have come and gone in Ireland since 1922, but the following have figured in recent elections.

PROGRESSIVE DEMOCRAT PARTY

The Progressive Democrat Party was founded in 1985 by Desmond O'Malley, a former Fianna Fáil government minister who was expelled from the party in 1984. Though relatively libertarian, by Irish standards, on social and moral issues, it is neoliberal on economic issues and believes in minimizing government intervention in the economy. Mary Harney, who was elected to succeed O'Malley in 1993, was the first woman to lead an Irish political party. The party

has formed coalition governments with Fianna Fáil, including following elections in 1997 and 2002.

GREEN PARTY

The Green Party, formerly the Green Alliance and the Ecology Party of Ireland, dates to 1982 as an environmental protection party but now takes positions on a wide range of issues. It is committed to a participatory political system in which decisions are taken at the lowest effective level. It recognizes world peace as a necessary precondition for environmental protection and supports the redistribution of the world's resources from rich nations to poor. The party operates nonhierarchically, rotating leadership positions annually, and seeks to make policy by consensus.

SINN FÉIN

(We Ourselves)

Sinn Féin is the lineal descendant of those members of the antitreaty Sinn Féin who did not follow Eamon de Valera into constitutional politics in 1926 and have survived a number of schisms. It operates in both the Irish Republic and Northern Ireland, where it is the largest nationalist party.

Sinn Féin is committed to Britain's withdrawal from Ireland and the reunification of the island under a socialist government. It believes that the Unionist majority in the North will come to accept its place as a minority in Ireland as a whole. Its organization is based on local branches, and it has a very strong international support network, particularly in the United States.

SOCIALIST PARTY

Militant Tendency, a Trotskyite group, became the Irish Socialist Party in 1996. Organized in both the Irish Republic and Northern Ireland, it stands for public ownership and democratic socialist planning.

Other Political Forces

Ireland has a great variety of organized groups lobbying for interests and causes: business, agriculture, labor, humanitarian, and charitable. Their influence is felt primarily in public opinion and the executive, because members of the Oireachtas have so little independent power that lobbying them is largely ineffective. Many groups have become client groups for particular government departments and are routinely included in processes of government consultation. In 1973 the National Economic and Social Council (NESC) was launched from the Department of the Taoiseach with representatives from the government and "social partners." Its membership includes representatives from government, trades unions, business and employer organizations, farmers' associations, and, since 1996, community and voluntary organizations. There is a government appointed chairperson. The NESC produces plans for national economic and social policy, industrial policy, housing, social service priorities, agriculture, rural development, and emigration. The Department of Finance and other key government departments have public-private partnership units to coordinate the partnership process. Through their roles in the process, interest groups can have more influence on public policy than members of the Oireachtas, where partisanship inhibits cooperation.

The Catholic Church in Ireland continues to be an influential body, less through directions it gives governments than through its leadership of Irish Catholics. However, its influence is declining because of the growing secularization of Ireland. Against the wishes of the church, for example, Irish voters legalized divorce in a 1996 referendum.

About 70 trade unions are affiliated with the Irish Congress of Trades Unions, which operates in the Irish Republic and Northern Ireland. Most unions are quite small, but the ICTU itself is powerful in the public-private partnership process. Twelve trade unions are affiliated with the Labour Party.

National Prospects

The Irish Republic is a stable democracy and is likely to remain so. It has one of the healthiest economies in Europe and is firmly committed to membership in the European Union. There are no bitter cleavages in the country, economic, ethnic, or political, and whereas developments in Northern Ireland divided Irish political parties in the past, all the major parties now agree that the reunification of Ireland must depend on reconciliation between the Nationalist and Unionist communities and the consent of the majority in the North. With the issue of the North neutralized, the politics of the Irish Republic will revolve around social and economic issues. Proportional representation will continue to inhibit the formation of single-party, majority governments, but the pragmatic nature of the major parties will make coalition politics possible.

There are likely to be few changes in Ireland's constitution. The Constitutional Review Group appointed by the Government reported in 1996 in favor of only minor changes, and governments seem uninterested in even these. The Commission did recommend, however, that there should be an independent review of the role and composition of the Seanad, and this may come about.

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STATE OF ISRAEL

(Medinat Yisrael)

By Bernard Reich, Ph.D., and Gershon R. Kieval, Ph.D.
Revised by Tamar Gablinger

Israel is a small country in size and population, located in the Middle East on the eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea and bordered by Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, and Egypt. It is a multiparty parliamentary republic of some 6.2 million people (2005 est.), of whom 76.8 percent are Jewish; 15.7 percent Muslims (mostly Sunni); 2.1 percent Christians; 1.6 percent Druze, and 3.7 percent others—mostly non-Jewish immigrants from the former-USSR who would not like to be included as "Christians." Israel also controls territories occupied in the 1967 war ("Six-Day War"): the Golan Heights (occupied from Syria); the West Bank—Judea, Samaria and East Jerusalem (occupied from Jordan)—and the Gaza Strip (occupied from Egypt, though never claimed by that country). The Sinai Peninsula, also occupied during the war, has been returned to Egypt under the terms of the 1977 Peace Accord between the two countries. Egypt, however, renounced its interest in the Gaza Strip (as had Jordan regarding the West Bank, in 1988), and Israel withdrew its settlers and military forces from the territory in 2005. The occupied population does not enjoy civil rights and does not have Israeli citizenship, unlike the above-mentioned Palestinian citizens of Israel. In addition, approximately 200 settlements of Israeli citizens in the occupied territories are recognized by the Israeli government (dozens more are not recognized)—the majority of them in the West Bank. Most of the settler population lives in East Jerusalem. Different attempts to settle the dispute between Israel and its neighbors, including the Palestinians, have been made.

Since 1990 the Israeli political system demonstrated instability, marked by the assassination of Prime Minister Rabin (1995), and by frequent amendments to the electoral laws and Government Law as well as changes in the party system and coalition formations. The 1993 "Oslo Accord," which was intended to gradually settle the dispute between Israel and the Palestinians, was not upheld by either side (including clashes in 1996 during which more than 100 were killed within two weeks; and never-ending and terror attack retaliations). In September 2000 a second Palestinian intifada (uprising) broke out in the occupied territories, bringing further instability into the political and social system.

HISTORY

Although Israel achieved its independence in May 1948, the origins of the political system predate the founding of the state. During the period of the British Mandate (1922–48), the Jewish community in Palestine (the *Yishuv,* or settlement) established institutions for self-government, including the Assembly of the Elected (Asefat HaNivcharim), a representative body chosen by secret ballot. The party system appeared with the first election to the Assembly in 1920, and a system of proportional representation was used to distribute the Assembly's seats.

The Assembly met annually and elected the National Council (Vaad Leumi) to exercise administrative responsibility for Jewish communal affairs between

Assembly sessions. The National Council functioned alongside the Jewish Agency for Palestine, which was created on the authority of the League of Nations Mandate and which included Jewish organizations sympathetic to the idea of a Jewish national home. The Jewish Agency acted as the international diplomatic representative of the *Yishuv,* conducting negotiations with Great Britain, the mandatory government, and the League of Nations, in addition to fund-raising and establishing a network of communications with foreign governments. After the United Nations adopted a plan for the partition of Palestine in 1947, a National Council of State was chosen from the National Council and the Jewish Agency executive. This provisional government consisted of a state council (which served as a legislature), a cabinet elected from among the state council's members, and a president elected by the state council. The executive of the National Council became the cabinet. The provisional government functioned from May 14, 1948 (Israel's independence day) until February 14, 1949, at which time the state council's authority was transferred to the first Knesset (Assembly), a popularly elected, unicameral parliament.

Although Israel has no formal written constitution, a number of Basic Laws have been passed that are intended in time to form portions of a consolidated constitutional document. Laws include those on the Knesset (1958); the Lands of Israel (1960); the President (1964); the Government (1968, amended in 1992 and amended again in 2001); the State Economy (1975); the Army (1976); Jerusalem, the Capital of Israel (1980); the Judiciary (1984); the State Comptroller (1988); Human Dignity and Liberty (1992); and Freedom of Occupation (1994).

The System of Government

Israel is a parliamentary democracy with a unicameral legislature.

EXECUTIVE

The president is the head of state and is elected by the Knesset for a seven-year term. He may not be reelected. His powers and functions are primarily formal and ceremonial. The president has the task of selecting a member of the Knesset to form a government. The political composition of the Knesset in practice determined this selection in most cases. However, the president played a crucial role in determining which person was to form the next cabinet in 1984 and 1990 in situations in which different combinations of parties could have gained the support of the Knesset. As of 2005 the president was Moshe Katsav, who was the first Likud Party member and the first immigrant from a Muslim country to hold this position.

The prime minister as head of government is the chief executive officer and wields considerable power. He or she determines the agenda of cabinet meetings and has the final word in policy decisions, although such decisions are often arrived at by hard bargaining and compromise among the coalition of parties participating in the government.

After establishing a coalition, the government is to be approved by the majority of the Knesset members and all coalition agreements should be presented to parliament. During the period between 1996 and 2001 the Government Law was amended to include direct election of the prime minister by the public. However, in 2001 the current form was reestablished, and the prime minister is elected indirectly, by the Knesset.

The legislators hoped that by amending the Government Law and enacting direct election of the prime minister, they would reduce his or her dependency on smaller coalition partners. However, the result was the erosion of power base for the larger parties in favor of smaller ones, mostly those who represent the interest of the ultra-orthodox Jews, which were able to extract political concessions for their support of governmental decisions. The two ballot system enabled the voters to vote separately for a candidate, who would have been more likely to succeed, and for a smaller party, which represents a more radical ideology. Not fulfilling its purported goal, the law was amended again.

From the outset, Israel's governments have been coalitions of several political parties. This is the result of the intensity with which political views are held, the proportional representation voting system, and the multiplicity of parties. These factors have made it all but impossible for a party to win an absolute majority of seats in the Knesset. Despite the constant need for coalition governments, they have proved to be quite stable; only once, in 1990, has a government been forced from office by a vote of no confidence. A new government is constitutionally established when it receives a vote of confidence from the Knesset. The maximum term of a government and the Knesset is four years.

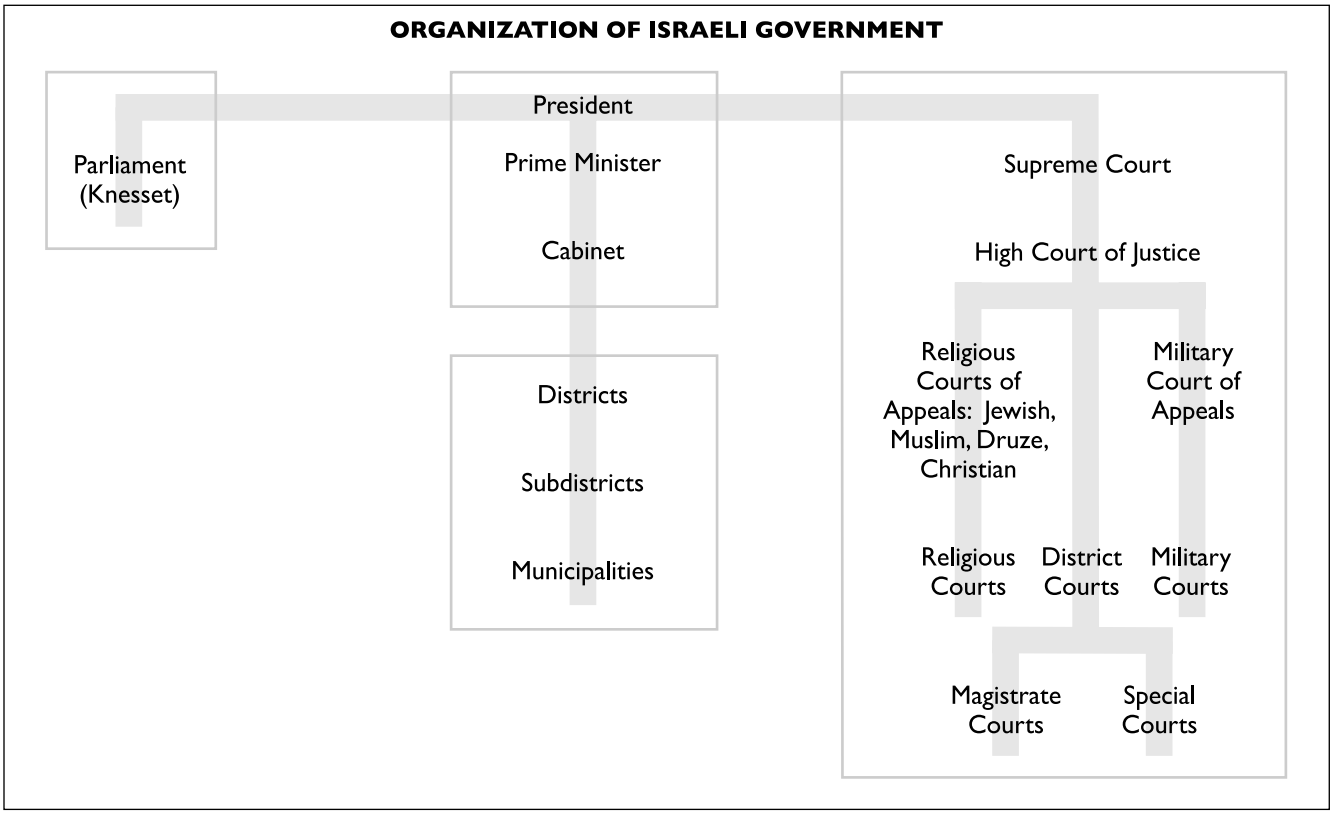
The stability of Israel's cabinets and political life has several bases. Until recently, political life in Israel

has been dominated by a small and relatively cohesive elite that has held positions in government and other major institutions since the period preceding independence. The periods of elite domination in the Israeli system could be divided into periods of complete domination of MAPAI (1932–65), including the delegitimization and exclusion of other parties (the right-wing Herut—later Likud—and the Communist MAKI); a period of bipolar power base with the right-wing Likud Party (1965–84); a period of power-sharing with the Likud, within Unity Governments (1984–90) and a period of instability, since 1990, in which each side attempts to achieve a landslide victory and to exclude the other (Labor Party bloc in 1992 and 1999; Likud Party bloc in 1996, 2001, 2003). The two power blocs include not only the Likud Party or the Labor Party, but smaller right- and left-wing parties, respectively, who are natural coalition parties for the larger ones. Rigorous party discipline in the Knesset has helped to curb irresponsible action by individual Knesset members.

The coalition system has resulted in the acceptance of bargaining as a procedure for the allocation of government portfolios and the distribution of power, as well as being a factor in determining government policy. This has permitted the religious parties, particularly the National Religious Party and SHAS (Sephardi Torah Guardians), to play strong roles in government decision making because they are essential components of any parliamentary majority.

LEGISLATURE

The Knesset, a unicameral body of 120 members, is the supreme authority in the state. The Knesset's main functions are similar to those of other modern parliaments and include votes of confidence or no confidence in the government, legislation, participation in the formulation of national policy, approval of budgets and taxation, election of the president, and general supervision of the activities of the administration. Legislation is usually presented by the cabinet, although a member of the Knesset (MK) can initiate private bills. Bills are drafted by ministerial committees in consultation with the Ministry of Justice, approved by the cabinet, and sent to the Speaker of the Knesset, who sends the bill to the appropriate committee for consideration. The legislation is read and voted on three times and is passed by a simple majority of MKs present at the time of the vote. An absolute majority is required for the election of the president and state comptroller for successful motions of no confidence, and for changes in the system of proportional representation and the Basic Laws.



The state comptroller's office, which functions as an arm of the Knesset, oversees the accounts and operations of government ministries and other state bodies. Critical reports from the comptroller usually bring reforms.

JUDICIARY

The judiciary consists of two court systems, secular and religious. Judges for both types of courts are appointed by the president upon recommendation by the nominations committee chaired by the justice minister. This committee consists of the president of the Supreme Court and two other Supreme Court justices, two MKs, one other cabinet member, and two members of the Chamber of Advocates (Israel's bar association). The Supreme Court is the highest court in the land. It hears appeals from lower instances in civil and criminal cases, (and quasi-judicial issues) and sits at a "further hearing" on its own judgment. It also rules as a first instance as the "High Court of Justice" (BAGATZ—"Bet Din Gavoa Le'tzedek"), regarding the legality of the actions of state authorities: issuing writs of habeas corpus, protecting the rights of Israeli citizens (as well as the Palestinian population in the occupied territories) and protecting the individual from arbitrary actions by public officials. The Supreme Court does not have the power of judicial review, but it may invalidate administrative actions and ordinances it regards as contrary to Knesset legislation. There are five district courts and numerous municipal and magistrate courts on the local level. The military courts are under the purview of the Military Court of Appeals, which is responsible to the Supreme Court.

Religious courts have jurisdiction over personal matters including marriage and divorce, alimony, inheritance, and so on. The High Rabbinical Court of Appeal is the highest Jewish religious court and is overseen by the Ashkenazic and a Sephardic chief rabbi. Its decisions are final. Christian and Muslim courts function in the same capacity.

All judges are tenured, holding office until death, resignation, mandatory retirement at age 70, or removal for cause.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Israel is divided into six administrative districts under the jurisdiction of district commissioners and 15 subdistricts overseen by district officers. These officials are appointed by and responsible to the interior minister. A district official drafts legislation pertaining to local government, approves and controls local tax rates and budgets, reviews and approves by-laws and ordinances passed by locally elected councils, approves local public works projects, and decides matters of grants and loans to local governments.

Local and regional councils are elected by universal, secret, direct, proportional balloting. Mayors are chosen from among these councilmen with the same sort of coalition bargaining as occurs in the Knesset. Kibbutzim (collectives), Moshavim (cooperatives), and other types of settlements are also governed by elected councils. Local governments are responsible for providing education, health and sanitation services, water, road maintenance, park and recreation facilities, firehouses, and setting and collecting local taxes and fees.

The Electoral System

Elections for the Knesset are national, general, equal, secret, direct, and proportional. Every citizen 18 years of age or older has the right to vote but must be 21 years old in order to be a candidate for a Knesset seat. The same rules apply to local elections. In 2001 the Knesset restored a single-ballot system, after a short period (1992–2001) in which there had been separate ballots for the prime minister and for the Knesset, and the prime minister had been elected directly and independently of the Knesset.

In the elections to the Knesset, the individual voter casts a ballot for a party list, not for an individual candidate. The list is prepared by each party, which ranks from 1 to 120 candidates on the list. Parties determine their lists by different methods, some by means of primary elections among registered party members and others by means of selection by a party committee or other body. The list stands for the entire country as a single constituency; there are no by-elections. If a seat in the Knesset becomes vacant, the next person on that party's list takes the seat. Elections are held by law at least every four years but can occur more frequently if the Knesset dissolves itself. Between 1992 and 2001 it was possible for the prime minister to resign, therefore calling for early elections. Participation is very high, averaging about 80 percent of eligible voters.

Elections are supervised by the Central Election Committee, composed of representatives of each political party in the outgoing Knesset and chaired by a justice of the Supreme Court.

The proportional representation system is based on the d'Hondt system. Parties receiving at least 2 percent

of the valid votes cast are entitled to a seat in the Knesset. The distribution is determined by dividing the total number of valid votes for all the lists that obtained at least 2 percent of the valid vote by the number of Knesset seats, the result being the quota required to obtain one seat. Each list receives the largest number of seats that can be determined by this process. The remaining seats are then distributed to those parties with the largest number of surplus votes. Any leftover seats go to the parties that have already won the greatest number of seats.

The Party System

ORIGINS OF THE PARTIES

Most of Israel's political parties trace their origins to various Zionists and non-Zionist forces that have existed in the country before 1948. The main forces before 1948 included—in the Jewish political arena—four main groups: the Zionist "left," the Zionist "right," the non-Zionist and Zionist religious movements, and the non-Zionist communists. In addition to these groupings, the pre-1948 Arab-Palestinian political arena included its own varieties of nationalist and socialist movements, similar to their contemporaries in other Arab societies in the area. However, after 1948, most Arab political leaders have not been active in Israel and the political activity among the Israeli Arabs has been marginalized. Besides the parties that existed before 1948, a few new parties (most of them small or of temporary success) have entered the political arena, owing to Israel's latest political experiences. They include parties representing specific ethnic groups (especially the recent immigrants from the Soviet Union as well as ultra-Orthodox Sephardim) and parties representing a liberal political ideology, such as Shinui.

THE PARTIES IN LAW

The only restriction on the formation of a new party is that its list may be disqualified if its candidates espouse the aim of destroying the state or the state's democratic character or if its program is determined to be racist. New parties must collect signatures of supporters and post a bond before being allowed to campaign. These requirements, which are easily met, have permitted the creation of a large number of parties. The bond is forfeited if the party does not win at least one seat. Access to radio and television is provided by the government in proportion to the parties' strength in the outgoing Knesset, with a minimum set aside for each party and each new list. The state also provides some financial assistance to the parties according to the number of seats held in the previous Knesset. New parties elected to the Knesset receive funding retroactively based on the number of seats won in the election. Campaign expenditures are limited by law. All election expense accounts are audited by the state comptroller but are made public only in aggregate. Campaign donations also are restricted by law.

PARTY ORGANIZATION

Political activity in Israel is highly ideological, often personalistic, and often based upon alliances of two or more parties. Charismatic individuals (e.g., David Ben-Gurion, Menachem Begin) often contribute to a party's success, and the formation of electoral alliances (GAHAL, Labor–MAPAM Alignment, Likud–Tzomet–Gesher) help the individual parties maximize their strength and influence on policy without losing their ideological identities. Smaller parties may consist of no more than one or two Knesset members and their loyal supporters, who are generally highly organized.

Israeli parties are marked by centralized leadership. In most parties, the central committee and party oligarchs are chosen by party elections but control the party machinery and in some cases determine the rankings on the party's national election list and thus the candidates' chances of winning a seat in the Knesset. This central control extends to the local government level. Party branches are often permitted more flexibility in choosing candidates for local office, but party necessities may also require that such candidates be chosen by the party nominating committee or be imposed by the requirements of an alliance or government coalition agreement. The parties are highly disciplined. All viewpoints may be aired in annual conventions, and intense bargaining can occur between factions. But once a policy is decided upon, members are expected to support it, keep silent, or quit the party.

In addition to campaigning and party business in the Knesset, the major parties engage in a great variety of other activities: publishing; housing projects; recreational facilities; various types of cooperatives; banking; and in the case of the religious parties, large educational systems. All the major parties maintain a variety of auxiliary organizations for youth, women, and other special groups.

Israeli party membership as a percentage of eligible voters is unusually high. Membership is not required,

but many voters join a party as a matter of civic duty and "fraternal" responsibility and to participate in intraparty elections. There are also some practical advantages to party membership and activity since the parties have considerable patronage to distribute. Consequently, party membership serves also as a mobilization mechanism for some. Their economic activities can provide both employment and security for party members.

Within the major groupings of left, center-right, and religious parties, the life of parties and alignments is fluid. Parties form, merge, split, dissolve, change names, and reform. Many small parties are formed primarily to advocate a special point of view on a narrow subject and have little hope of winning a Knesset seat. Others are the personal followings of major political figures who can lead their supporters into and out of alliances and mergers as necessary to further their effect on policy or advance their personal ambitions. Some of these small parties do not clearly fit into the three major groupings (left, right, religious) but from time to time may become aligned with one of them. Many parties form in preparation for national elections and dissolve or merge soon after. In 2003, 28 parties contested the election, while 13 secured the minimum percentage of the valid votes to obtain a seat in parliament. The Likud and the right-wing parties won this election in a landslide: The Likud secured 925,279 votes (38 seats), while Labor-Meimad secured 455,183 votes (19 seats). This campaign saw the rise of a new "centrist," neoliberal political party, Shinui, which secured 386,535 votes (15 seats).

CAMPAIGNING

Political campaigning takes place both within the parties and between the parties on the national scene. Within the parties, the goal is to achieve leadership positions and high positions on the election list; nationally, it is to secure as many votes as possible for the party. Campaigning focuses more on parties than on individuals, although at times individuals have been made the focus of opposition efforts. The campaigns involve television and radio appeals, substantial use of newspaper and magazine space, and rallies. Given the small size of the country and its population, extensive appearances of the parties' leading candidates throughout the state are an important aspect of the campaign. Generally, the parties seek to rally their traditional supporters and to sway the small number of uncommitted voters. Foreign and security policy issues have assumed greater saliency over domestic issues in recent elections, and security-related developments have often affected the outcome, such as in 1981 and 1996.

Currently, the larger parties are the Israeli Labor Party, Likud, SHAS, and Shinui. The instability of the system, however, could change the power relations. Smaller parties include the Democratic Front for

POLITICAL PARTIES AND KNESSET ELECTION RESULTS, 1996–2003

Party	1996 % (seats)	1999 % (Seats)	2003 % (Seats)
Labor[1]	26.8 (34)	20.2 (26)	14.5 (19)
Likud	25.1 (32)	14.1 (19)	29.4 (38)
Shinui	—	5 (6)	12.3 (15)
Shas	8.5 (10)	13 (17)	8.2 (11)
Am Ehad[2]	—	1.9 (2)	2.8 (3)
DFPE	4.2 (5)	2.6 (3)	3.0 (3)
Hamerkaz	—	5 (6)	0.06 (0)
National Union	—	3 (4)	5.5 (7)
NDA	—	1.9 (2)	2.3 (3)
NRP	7.8 (9)	4.2 (5)	4.2 (6)
The Third Way	3.1 (4)	—	—
UAL	2.9 (4)	3.4 (5)	2.1 (2)
UTJ	3.2 (4)	3.7 (5)	4.3 (5)
Yachad[3]	7.4 (9)	7.6 (10)	5.2 (6)
Yisrael Baa'liya[4]	5.7 (7)	5.1 (6)	2.2 (2)
Yisrael Beytenu[5]	—	2.6 (4)	—

[1] *In 1999 the Labor Pary ran under the name One Israel (Yisrael Achat).*

[2] *After the 2003 elections re-integrated into the Labor.*

[3] *Yachad is the current name of the party participating in 1999 as Meretz.*

[4] *Yisra'el Ba'aliya dissolved after the 2003 elections into the Likud.*

[5] *In 2003 ran together with Haichud Haleumi in one list.*

Peace and Equality, the National Religious Party, the National Union, United Torah Judaism, Yachad, and the Arab parties.

RESULTS OF THE DIRECT ELECTIONS FOR PRIME MINISTER: 1996–2001

Candidate	Party	Percentage
May 29th, 1996		
Benjamin Netanyahu	Likud	50.3%
Shimon Peres	Labor	49.6
May 17th, 1999		
Ehud Barak	Labor	56.08
Benjamin Netanyahu	Likud	43.92
February 6th, 2001		
Ariel Sharon	Likud	62.39
Ehud Barak	Labor	37.61

Major Parties

ISRAEL LABOR PARTY

(Mifleget HaAvodah HaYisraelit)

HISTORY

The Israel Labor Party came into being in 1968 as a result of the merger of three labor parties: MAPAI (Mifleget Poalei Yisrael; Israel Workers Party), Achdut HaAvodah (Unity of Labor), and Rafi (Reshimat Poalei Israel; Israel Labor List). MAPAI originated with the union of two smaller parties in 1930, but the roots of the movement can be traced back to the turn of the 20th century in Europe, especially Russia. MAPAI soon became the dominant party in Israel. The two parties that formed it had established the trade union federation Histadrut in 1920, and under their leadership Histadrut became the embodiment of Jewish Palestine. MAPAI controlled it as well as the National Assembly and the Jewish Agency. Many of the noted figures in the creation of Israel came out of MAPAI—Ben-Gurion, Moshe Sharett (Shertok), Golda Meir (Myerson), Moshe Dayan, and others.

After Israel became independent, MAPAI consistently won the largest number of votes in Knesset elections, usually about one-third of the total. It was the leading member of all government coalitions and ordinarily held the key portfolios of defense, foreign affairs, and finance, as well as the prime ministership. The party permeated the government, the bureaucracy, the economy, and most of the other institutions of Israel.

Achdut HaAvodah, originally the party of Ben-Gurion in the 1920s, exhibited a militant class consciousness in its early years. It was merged with MAPAI from 1930 to 1944, when it left in disagreement with MAPAI's gradualist policies, the prohibition of party factions, and the general exclusion of more radical elements from MAPAI leadership. It rejoined MAPAI in 1965.

Rafi appeared in 1965, when Ben Gurion and his protégés Moshe Dayan and Shimon Peres left MAPAI, partly out of dissatisfaction with the leadership of Levi Eshkol. Rafi advocated more technocratic efficiency in government, the transfer of some of the Histadrut's functions to the state, and reform of the electoral system in favor of single-member districts with simple plurality elections. Rafi stood alone for only one election (1965) and gained a respectable 10 seats in the Knesset. However, it strength derived from its leaders. These 10 seats also had significance, as for the first time the hegemony of MAPAI had been broken, and Rafi could then, theoretically, form a coalition with GAHAL.

In 1969 Labor formed an election Alignment (*Maarach*) with MAPAM, a socialist Zionist party that championed the cause of Israel's Arab population and promoted a solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict. The two parties retained their own organizations and memberships. The Alignment continued MAPAI's dominant position until 1977. A combination of elements contributed to the loss of the *Maarach* power, for the first time in Israeli history: lackluster leadership, corruption scandals, the loss of trust in the party after the 1973 Yom Kippur War, and the founding of the Democratic Movement for Change made way for the Likud victory.

In 1984 the Alignment emerged as the largest party in the Knesset, and its leader, Shimon Peres, was given the mandate to form the new government. He formed a Government of National Unity with himself as prime minister for the first two years of the government's tenure and with Likud leader Yitzhak Shamir as prime minister for the last two years. The Alignment was the leading force in Parliament and the government. Peres's decision to form a coalition with the rival Likud bloc prompted MAPAM to leave the Alignment. To compensate in part for the loss of MAPAM's six Knesset seats, the Alignment co-opted Ezer Weizman and his Yahad faction (three Knesset

seats) upon entering the 1984 unity coalition. Weizman and Yahad formally joined the Labor Party in 1988. The Labor Party won one less seat than Likud in the 1988 election, and the two parties joined in a new Government of National Unity, albeit dominated by Likud. That government lasted until the spring of 1990 when Labor withdrew over Likud's unwillingness to participate in a U. S. peace initiative. Labor subsequently engineered a successful vote of no confidence (the first ever in Israel's history) bringing about the government's downfall. Although given the first chance to form a new coalition, Peres was unable to do so, and a new Likud government was eventually fashioned.

Yitzhak Rabin, former chief of staff and hero of the 1967 Six-Day War, led the Labor Party to a decisive victory in the 1992 election, although Labor fell short of a parliamentary majority of its own, and he quickly formed a coalition government. The election victory marked a dramatic personal political comeback for Rabin, who returned to the prime ministership 15 years after having been forced to resign the leadership of Labor and relinquish the position of prime minister because of a financial scandal. But the victory did not represent a return to Labor's political dominance in Israel. Rather, it represented a classic case of voters punishing the incumbents, Likud, for years of "bad government" and other failures. Prime Minister Rabin was assassinated by an Israeli right-wing extremist in November 1995. Shimon Peres was returned to the prime ministership and became his party's candidate to run in Israel's first direct election for prime minister in May 1996. Peres narrowly lost that election, although Labor won two more seats in the Knesset than Likud. In 1997 Ehud Barak, former chief of staff and Rabin's hand-picked successor, was elected to replace Peres as Labor Party chairman.

Barak made some fundamental changes in the party, renaming it "One Israel," thus alienating some of its hard-core supporters. Two parties have joined Barak's "One Israel"—Gesher, David Levy's party (that later returned to the Likud); and MEIMAD (Medina Yehudit, Medina Demokratit; JSDS, Jewish State, Democratic State), a party representing moderate religious Zionists, headed by two rabbis, Yehuda Amital and Michael Malkior. Barak managed—as he had promised during his election campaign—to pull Israeli troops out of southern Lebanon. However, his inability and ineffectiveness in dealing with the second Palestinian uprising in September 2000 brought about his downfall. He had to resign as prime minister in 2001, and, in the 2003 elections the Labor Party (returning to its former name) was beaten by a landslide. Peres regained his position as party leader, reportedly "temporarily" (but as a matter of fact until a challenger to the leadership would manage to topple him). In 2003 another party joined Labor—"One People" (Am Echad), headed by Amir Peretz, the head of the Histadrut (the major labor union). Peretz formerly had left the Labor Party to form this unionists' party, claiming that Labor had lost its social way.

ORGANIZATION

The Labor Party is organized regionally and nationally, but with "branches" and a center. The party executives are democratically elected. The party has women, youth, and regional organizations. Its close connections with the Histadrut, however, have weakened, and the Histadrut is now closely aligned, politically, with its head, Amir Peretz, who heads the small faction "One People" ("Am Echad").

POLICY

Labor was a nationalist (Zionist) and socialist party. However, after 1965 there was erosion in the socialist policies and the party adandoned most of its socialist ideology. Nevertheless, some of the activists in the party still support unionist or socialistic ideals, and the party uses in general more "socialist rhetoric" than its counterpart, the Likud. Its platform, for example, still supports a social welfare state, a state-planned and publicly regulated economy with some room for the participation of private capital, full employment, minimum wages, and the right to strike. Similarly, the Labor platform supports the separation of religion and state, while in fact the party has made concessions to its religious coalition partners. It nominally supports equality for minorities, but also supports the free immigration of Jews to Israel, which is not expanded to include free immigration in general. It accepts the possibility of returning some—or all—of the occupied territories in exchange for peace.

MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY

Some 70,000 people are registered members of the Labor Party. The number tends to significantly increase before party primaries, general elections, and other important decisions. As a mass party, support of the party could be found in all sectors of Israeli society. Some ethnic and class predispositions still exist—more Ashkenazi or Israeli-born; as well as better educated; and most of the residents of Kibbutzim and Moshavim (collectives and cooperatives) citizens tend to support the Labor Party.

FINANCING

Data on the party's financing are unavailable. Most income is derived from membership dues and contributions.

LEADERSHIP

As of 2005 Shimon Peres was the leader of the party. The party, however, suffered a major leadership crisis in the late 1990s and early 2000s. This crisis deepened after Ehud Barak lost the premiership in the 2001 elections due to the changes he had tried to implement in the party. Peres has been part of the party's leadership since the 1960s, and he was one of Ben-Gurion's protégés and was appointed two times to the prime ministership: in 1984–86 (in a coalition government with the Likud party) and in 1995–96 (after Rabin was assassinated).

Peres's leadership is challenged by several in the party. Ehud Barak, who was the party leader between 1997 and 2001 (and prime minister from 1999 to 2001), resumed his claim to the party premiership in 2004, after his resignation from political life in 2001. Other challengers to the leadership include Amir Peretz (the head of the Histadrut workers' union and of the "One People" faction) and Matan Vilnai, a former army general. A recent addition to the leadership candidates is Ami Ayalon, a former commander of the navy and of the secret services (SHABAK) who joined the party in 2004 and who leads an independent peace movement.

PROSPECTS

The popularity of the Likud and the leadership crisis in the Labor Party both lessen the chances of Labor regaining power. The party's different factions—unionists, socialist and free-market supporters, political "hawks" and "doves"—do not contribute to a healthy diversity, but rather to constant conflict and an inability to determine a unified line, agreed by most of the members of the party. The party is not able to win the hearts of those who support Likud or Likud coalition governments, including hawkish voters and nationalists, the Ultra-Orthodox community (about 15 percent of the population), and immigrants from the former USSR (another 15 percent of the population), who prefer to vote for the Likud or parties that would align with it in a possible coalition.

LIKUD

HISTORY

Likud is an alliance of parties, the central element of which is the historical "Herut" party that existed (as part of the Revisionist Movement) before 1948. The name "Likud" has been in use since 1973, and the alliance crystallized at the time of the 1977 elections. It consisted of the GAHAL alliance (Herut and Liberals); the La'am alliance (the State List and the Free Center); Achdut (a one-man faction in the Knesset); and Shlomzion, Ariel Sharon's former party. Since then, other parties have joined Likud, most notably, Tzomet, Gesher, Yisrael Ba'aliya, and Tami as well as other one-man factions in the Knesset. Likud came to power in Israel in 1977, ousting the Labor government for the first time since Israel became independent. Although it retained its government position after the 1981 elections, its majority in the Knesset seldom exceeded two or three votes. In 1984 it lost its plurality and joined with the Labor Alignment to form a Government of National Unity in which it shared power and ministerial positions.

Likud emerged with one more seat than Labor in the 1988 election, and a new Government of National Unity was formed but with somewhat less power sharing. That government fell in 1990 in an unprecedented vote of no confidence, but Likud was able to fashion a new coalition government without Labor's participation. Likud suffered a stunning setback in the 1992 elections and found itself in opposition for the first time since 1977. In 1996 the new Likud leader, Benjamin Netanyahu, won Israel's first-ever direct election for prime minister, slightly edging Labor candidate Shimon Peres by ninetenths of 1 percent. Likud, running in an electoral alliance with the Tzomet and Gesher Parties, won 32 Knesset seats compared with Labor's 34, but Netanyahu was able to put together a Likud-dominated coalition commanding 66 seats in Parliament with the religious parties and two new centrist parties. In 1999 Netanyahu lost the elections in favour of Ehud Barak, the Labor (then "One Israel") candidate. In 2001, after Barak's resignation, Ariel Sharon won the prime ministerial direct elections (since then the law has been changed, and direct elections are no longer held), and attempted to form a coalition with the same results. In 2003 the Likud won by a landslide (mostly because of Labor's weakness and loss of votes in favor of Shinui), absorbing the Russian immigrants party Yisrael Ba'aliya and putting together a coalition with the National Union, the National Religious Party, and Shinui. Likud is a center-right, strongly nationalist party, and one strongly assertive in foreign policy.

As mentioned before, Likud is an alliance of several historical right-wing parties, but its main component is Herut. Herut is descended from the Revisionist movement of Vladimir Zeev Jabotinsky (1880–1940), who settled in Palestine after World War I and is

regarded by many as the leading Zionist figure after Theodor Herzl, Zionism's founder. The Revisionists advocated militant ultranationalistic action as the means to achieve Jewish statehood. Revisionism called for the creation of a Jewish state in "Greater Israel" (all of Palestine and Jordan), and, until recently, among Likud's symbols—those of Herut—one could find a map of "Greater Israel" with a shotgun replacing the Jordan River. It also supported rapid mass immigration of Jews into Palestine, formation of a free-enterprise economy, rapid industrialization—as opposed to agricultural settlements—to increase employment opportunities, a ban on strikes, and a strong army. In order to effect these policies and because they were outnumbered by leftist and moderate elements in the Zionist Organization, the Revisionists formed the New Zionist Organization in 1935. Their rejection of the socialist and liberal Zionist leadership and its conciliatory policy toward the mandatory power led Revisionists to form two paramilitary groups: Irgun Zvai Leumi (ETZEL), founded in 1937, and the even more radical Lohame Herut Y'srael (LEHI, alter. "Stern Gang"), founded in 1939–40. ETZEL was commanded by Menachem Begin after 1943. Betar, the Revisionist youth movement, was founded by Vladimir Jabotinsky in 1920 and continues as the Herut youth wing today. Begin founded Herut in June 1948 to advocate the Revisionist program within the new political context of the State of Israel.

Another smaller Likud faction is "Gesher." Founded by Likud's prominent politician at the time, David Levy, in 1995, Gesher was mostly based on Levy's charisma and strong following. With Gesher, Levy joined the Likud at the time of the 1996 elections, but in 1998 he left the alliance, contributing greatly to the fall of the Netanyahu government in 1999. Gesher then joined the Labor Party, participating with Labor and Meimad as "One Israel." In 2001 Levy left the Labor government again and returned to the Likud. Despite these frequent political turning points, Levy still maintains a stronghold of supporters in the Likud.

ORGANIZATION

The Likud is a mass membership party, with a large body of regionally elected members—the Likud "Center" ("Merkaz")—responsible for decision making for the party. The Likud Party center attracts different factions identifying with this party, from neoliberal businessmen to nationalist-religious settlers. The Likud Center assembles, at least, every six months and elects—among its other functions—the Likud list for the Knesset and the party's Secretariat (main executive body, nominating the party's executives). The party also operates several movements organizing youth ("Beitar"), students, women, and Jews from the Diaspora ("World Likud"). The Likud's younger members (aged less than 35) are also organized in the "Young Likud."

POLICY

Likud, as an alliance of several factions and as a mass party, includes numerous main streams. The party's platform supports a free-market economy with a minimum of controls, and advocates the "inalienable" right of Jews to settle anywhere in Israel, including the occupied territories.

MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY

According to the latest internal elections information, some 200,000 Israelis (2004) are Likud members, making it the largest party (in membership) in Israel, with more than 4 percent of the registered voters as its members. Likud membership, in fact, has become a means to influence national politics or to empower specific sectors and patronage systems.

Likud's constituency, as appropriate for such a mass party, consists of several sectors in Israeli society. In general, its voters tend to be more traditional, with many of them from the lower classes, drawn to its nationalistic ideology as well as to a certain populist and antiestablishment image that it possesses since the days that Herut served as the main opposition party to the MAPAI government (Labor's precursor). The Likud also enjoys support from more Oriental Jews (Jews of Middle Eastern origin) than does the Labor Party. However, the party also attracts those in the middle classes interested in fewer government controls on the market; and ultranationalists interested in influencing the government's policies "from the inside."

FINANCING

Most of the Likud income derives from membership dues and from donations. In addition, the annual income of the Likud's faction in the Knesset (including that from state funding to political parties), stands at $7 million.

LEADERSHIP

Since the early days of the Revisionists and Herut, the movement has been characterized by strong, charismatic leadership. Menachem Begin was Herut leader between 1948 and 1983. He was regarded by many as a heroic figure because of his role as a leader of the underground in the Israeli struggle for independence. He was also a skillful politician and a charismatic figure. Upon Begin's retirement, Yitzhak Shamir became

prime minister and party leader, although he was challenged within Herut by Ariel (Arik) Sharon and David Levy. In 1993 Benjamin Netanyahu was elected Likud leader, and in 1996 he was elected prime minister. However, Netanyahu, partly because of his fierce neoliberal political economy, and partly because of his personality, lost the 1999 elections to Ehud Barak. After he lost the elections, Netanyahu temporarily resigned from political activity, but resumed his activity after a year. Netanyahu is still one of the main challengers for the Likud's leadership, and he was appointed foreign minister (and, in Sharon's second government, finance minister).

After Netanyahu's resignation, Ariel Sharon assumed leadership of the Likud, and in 2001 he was elected prime minister. Sharon, who was the minister of defense during the 1982 invasion to Lebanon, was considered to be a hard-liner. Other prominent figures in the Likud's leadership include Ehud Olmert, former chief of general staff Shaul Mofaz, Foreign Minister Silvan Shalom, and Limor Livnat.

PROSPECTS

The Likud is as of 2005 Israel's strongest party, and despite some leadership struggles, it enjoys stability and mass popularity. Likud is expected to remain Israel's prominent party. Its main challenge is to maintain the balance between the party's nationalistic base and the party's own ideology while pursuing the compromise required by a peace process with the Palestinians and perhaps also with Syria. Netanyahu's economic policies have also drawn much criticism.

SHAS

(Sephardi Torah Guardians)

SHAS split from the ultra-Orthodox Agudat Yisrael and contested the 1984 election. While ideologically close to Agudat Yisrael, the former Sephardi chief rabbi, Ovadia Yosef, and other Sephardi rabbis decided to leave the Ashkenazi-dominated Aguda and set up SHAS after Aguda leaders refused to place enough Sephardi candidates on the party's list for the 1984 election. The founders of SHAS wished to secure the funds, political jobs, and other forms of support that they felt had been denied them. Eliezer Schach, an Ashkenazi rabbi and leader of non-Hasidic elements within Aguda, helped in the creation of SHAS. (Hasidism comprises several ultra-Orthodox, somewhat mystical, sects, whose leadership tends to be hereditary.) Schach was troubled by the influence of Aguda's Hasidic trends over its non-Hasidic members and thought the formation of a separate Sephardi ultra-Orthodox party would force Aguda's Hasidic leadership to pay more attention to the non-Hasidic segment of the party. SHAS won four Knesset seats in 1984.

SHAS's strength increased to six Knesset seats in the 1988 election. The party's success was largely the result of its participation in the previous Government of National Unity. SHAS controlled the Interior Ministry—traditionally the bastion of the NRP—which enabled it to channel funds through local governments to provide services to its constituency of *haredi* (pious) Sephardi Jews. SHAS also exploited the Sephardi-Ashkenazi split among Israelis, stressing in its platform the restoration of Oriental culture to a position of prominence in Israeli society.

Although SHAS gained some votes in the 1992 election, it did not manage to increase its Knesset representation beyond the six seats it already held. During the election campaign, the party's advertisements and statements by its leaders strongly suggested that SHAS intended to throw its lot only with a Likud-led government. When it became clear, however, that Labor had won the election and would be in a position to block a Likud-led coalition, SHAS leaders reconsidered their options and eventually decided to join the new government headed by Yitzhak Rabin.

SHAS made significant gains in the 1996 election, increasing its seats in parliament to 10 and confounding the preelection predictions of pollsters. The party continued to stress to its constituents a combination of ethnic pride and traditional values to compensate for the sense of cultural alienation felt by many of them. SHAS also exploited the strong mystical tendencies among potential SHAS voters, distributing 150,000 amulets blessed by the elderly mystic Rabbi Yitzhak Kadourie. In addition, it benefited from having as its spiritual mentor the former Sephardi chief rabbi, Ovadia Yosef, who was popular even among non-Orthodox Orientals. In the prime minister's race, the party's leaders refused to back either Likud leader Netanyahu or Labor leader Peres and allowed their followers to vote for either candidate. In this way, Yosef left all options open for joining either a Likud- or a Labor-led coalition afterward. In 1999 SHAS fared even better, reaching a peak of 17 seats in the Knesset, becoming the third largest political party. The party joined Ehud Barak's Labor coalition government, and, after it fell in 2001, joined the coalition headed by Ariel Sharon and the Likud. In the 2003 elections, however, the strength of SHAS weakened and it won only 11 seats, making it the fourth largest party (after the newcomer Shinui, which used anti-SHAS rhetoric for most of

its campaign). For the first time in its history, due to Shinui demands, SHAS has not been called to join the coalition. One of the reasons for the loss of votes is the indictment of former party leader Arie Deri and his removal from the movement.

ORGANIZATION

SHAS formed a council of sages known as Moetzet Hachmei Ha-Tora to guide major policy decisions and its leadership is closely linked to the former Sephardic chief rabbi, Ovadia Yosef. SHAS has built an extensive social service network, including low-fee day care centers and afternoon schools, in the poor neighborhoods of Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, and underdeveloped towns throughout the country.

POLICY

SHAS was founded to promote the interests of Sephardi ultra-Orthodox and traditional Sephardim. It argued that the Torah was its platform and regarded itself as a movement of spiritual awakening. It seeks to ensure government support for the party's network of educational and social organizations. Throughout the years, the party leadership demonstrated relative pragmatism on the question of the occupied territories and supported the government's position on the subject, in concession for social benefits to its institutions. Rabbi Ovadiah Yosef has famously ruled that Israel is allowed to return territories in exchange for "true" peace. On the other hand, the constituency of SHAS consists mostly of poor and alienated Israelis, who are easily persuaded to support ethno-nationalist and fundamentalist rhetoric. Therefore, the party's rank and file is more hawkish.

MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY

No reliable data on SHAS membership are available. SHAS attracts a mostly poor, alienated constituency—outside the scope of the original constituency of Sephardic ultra-Orthodox—which feels excluded from mainstream politics and tends to support enthnoreligious political movements. It is especially popular in poor neighborhoods of the big cities, and in the poor periphery.

FINANCING

No reliable information on SHAS financing is available.

LEADERSHIP

The former Sephardi chief rabbi of Israel, Ovadia Yosef, is the spiritual mentor of SHAS. The party is led by Eli Yishai, who replaced Arie Deri, the former, and still charismatic, party leader, who has been indicted for corruption. There is an apparent tension between supporters of the two leaders.

PROSPECTS

SHAS plays an important role in the center of the religious camp and is a potential partner in any Likud- or Labor-led coalition. The party's supporters, however, likely will continue to support Likud candidates as long as Labor is identified with the secular forces that religious voters see as threatening the Jewishness of the state. However, given the support of nationalist and religious ideology in the right wing, and the fact that those ideas are popular among its voters, SHAS is more likely to support right-wing coalitions.

SHINUI—THE CENTER PARTY

(Shinui—Mifleget Hamerkaz)

HISTORY

Shinui (lit. "Change") was originally founded as a small protest group by Professor Amnon Rubinstein of Tel Aviv University in the wake of the 1973 Yom Kippur War. It sought to effect changes in the Israeli political system and in the political culture. It developed a party organization, but did not have a charismatic candidate. In 1976 it joined with others to form the Democratic Movement for Change (DMC, Hatnua Hademokratit Leshinui, DASH), which secured 15 seats in the 1977 elections and in fact was one of the major elements in the "turnover," the Mahapach, and the loss of Labor power for the first time in the country's history.

The DMC was constituted under the leadership of a former IDF chief of staff, the archeology professor Yigael Yadin, who served as a deputy prime minister under Begin after the 1977 elections. In 1979, just two days before the final signing of the peace agreement with Egypt, the party split and Shinui joined the opposition. The party dissolved just prior to the 1981 elections and the Shinui faction emerged as an independent party, gaining two to three seats in the 1981, 1984, and 1988 elections. Approaching the 1992 elections, Shinui amalgamated with RATZ and MAPAM, to form a new party—MERETZ. MERETZ participated successfully in the 1992 elections, winning 12 seats, with two Shinui representatives. In 1996 its power declined to nine seats (still, with two Shinui seats).

In 1997 MERETZ leaders decided to unite the different factions into one party. Elements within Shinui's ranks expressed their objection. They claimed that the new party represented a socialist line, opposed

to Shinui's liberal tradition, and that the smaller faction's voice was unheard. Thus, a decision to run again as an independent party emerged.

Shinui's parliamentary leader, Avraham Poraz, decided to grant the leadership to Yosef ("Tomi") Lapid, a popular journalist and famous TV talk show star. The party presented a solid liberal platform. Its main campaign topic, however, was the alleged preference of the ultra-Orthodox community in the Israeli political system. It openly called for drafting Yeshiva students and canceling many of the benefits enjoyed by the ultra-Orthodox community as well as other "status quo" agreements made by the Likud and the Labor as concessions to their religious partners. This issue was the main cause of the party's success, first as it gained six seats in 1999, and then as it won 15 seats in 2003. After its major success in 2003, Shinui joined the Sharon coalition on the condition that the ultra-Orthodox parties would be left out of the coalition. In December 2004 Shinui ministers were dismissed from their posts after voting against the budget (which included 290 million shekels of "special" allotment for the ultra-Orthodox parties) and left the coalition.

ORGANIZATION

Two major institutions set the policy of the party. The first one is the Shinui Council, which consists of 168 members. This is the highest authority of the party and it decides the party's platform and elects its candidates for the Knesset. The members of the Shinui Council are elected by the party members; 60 of them in national elections and 90 are sent from the local branches (each branch sends representatives according to his relative strength). The remaining 18 places are secured places. The secretariat is the executive body, which is responsible for implementing decisions of the Shinui Council. It is also responsible for carrying out the daily activities of the party. This body numbers 45 members, who are elected from within the Shinui Council. Shinui is part of the World Federation of Liberal political parties, and it has a youth organization.

POLICY

Shinui's platform is a mixture of purist neoliberal economic policies and a liberal approach in all that is related to individual choice, especially the separation of religion and state. Its economic policies support the privatization of public holdings, sharp reduction in social benefits and subsidies, and a free-market economy without any government intervention. On the other hand, it is aligned with the Israeli left in supporting an agreement to make some territorial compromises in exchange for peace.

MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY

Shinui presents itself as the "bourgeoisie" party. Its voters are usually well educated, relatively affluent (middle class), and secular.

LEADERSHIP

Shinui's charismatic leader is Yosef (Tomi) Lapid. Lapid, who survived the Holocaust as a child, was a leading journalist and author before he made nationwide fame with his appearances in a political TV talk show. Lapid's spontaneous and populist reactions contributed to his popularity. The party's former leader, Avraham Poraz, decided to withdraw his claim for leadership in order to ensure the party's success at the polls. He is still considered the party's main ideologue.

PROSPECTS

Shinui is currently the third largest party in the Israeli Parliament, enjoying popularity despite its inability to fulfill its election promises when in government. It could, however, end up like many meteors in the Israeli political arena. Tzomet, the Center Party, the Third Way, and the DMC before it all attempted to establish an alternative to the largest parties and to present a different agenda. Like those parties, it might disappear after disappointing its voters. On the other hand, given the weakness of the Labor Party, and given the fact that Shinui has a solid constituency, it might continue existing, though it may lose some of its power.

Minor Parties

YACHAD—TOGETHER/ SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC ISRAEL

YACHAD (Yisra'el Chevratit Demokratit)

YACHAD was formed in 2003 from several left parties and factions: MERETZ, an alliance between several formerly independent parties; SHAHAR, a faction that seceded from the Labor Party, led by Yossi Beilin; and the Democratic Choice (HaBchira HaDemokratit), a one-man Knesset faction, led by Roman Bronfman.

YACHAD was supposed to unite voters of the left into one social democratic party, after the downfall that MERETZ suffered in the 2003 elections. MERETZ was formed prior to the 1992 elections from the merger of three smaller left-wing parties: Shinui, RATZ (HaTenua

Lezchuyot HaEzrach Uleshalom; The Movement for Civil Rights and Peace) and MAPAM (Mifleget Poalim Meuhedet; United Workers' Party). In 1997 Avraham Poraz and most of the other members of Shinui left the party and formed a separate party.

The Movement for Civil Rights and Peace was founded in 1973 by Shulamit Aloni (born 1928), a former Labor Party member and civil rights activist. RATZ did well following the 1973 war when there was substantial discontent with the Israel Labor Party. It won three seats in the 1973 elections and joined the government coalition for a brief period in 1974. Its position declined in the 1977 and 1981 elections, and, following the latter, Aloni pledged her party's support to Labor in an effort to block Likud's efforts to form the new government. The party changed character in the 1980s. It became a party whose membership was drawn from a variety of older groups: the historical MCR, including various liberals and secularists, the academics of the "Group of 100" (including former Peace Now and Labor Party doves), and other disaffected left-wing voters. Its constituency was primarily the "middle-class" Ashkenazi population, and its platform featured full civil rights for all Israelis. Yossi Sarid (born 1940), another former Labor Party activist, assumed a significant role in shaping the party's dovish foreign policy. The MCR's greatest success at the polls came in 1988 when it won five Knesset seats.

MAPAM was organized in 1948 when HaShomer HaTzair merged with radical elements from Achdut HaAvodah. From its beginnings the party was more Marxist than MAPAI. The former Achdut HaAvodah members left in 1954 because of MAPAM's pro-Soviet orientation and acceptance of Arabs as party members. Although the party's domestic policy was essentially indistinguishable from MAPAI's, MAPAM's share of the vote in national elections declined steadily before it joined the Alignment for the 1969 elections. MAPAM ended its alliance with Labor in September 1984 over the issue of the formation of the Government of National Unity with Likud. MAPAM ran as an independent party list in the 1988 election, winning three seats in the Knesset.

The Democratic Choice was formed in 1999 by two members of the immigrants party "Yisrael BeAliya" who objected to the government's social policy. The faction split once more, when Roman Bronfman aligned with MERETZ. Yossi Beilin and Ya'el Dayan, both Labor members of the Knesset, formed SHAHAR in 2002, after failing to win a "realistic" place on the party list. In 2003 Beilin and Dayan, with few of their supporters, aligned with MERETZ.

In the 1992 election MERETZ, with Shulamit Aloni at the head of the party list, ran on a platform stressing the need for territorial compromise in order to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict and a freeze on the expansion of existing settlements and building of new settlements in the occupied territories. It advocated the reform of Israel's electoral system in order to broaden political participation and make parties and Knesset representatives more accountable to the public. The party also called for greater pluralism and tolerance in the country's educational system, a strict separation between religion and state, and the conscription of Yeshiva students into the army. The new party won 12 seats in the election, two more than the movement's component groups held in the outgoing Knesset. MERETZ joined Labor in the government formed by Yitzhak Rabin, with Aloni appointed as education minister. In 1993 Aloni was removed from that post because of her frequent attacks against the Orthodox Jewish community and sidelined in the relatively minor post of minister of communications, science, and culture. At the same time, Yossi Sarid was brought into the cabinet as environment minister. Sarid replaced Aloni as party head prior to the 1996 election, in which MERETZ won nine seats.

After the outbreak of the second intifada in 2000, MERETZ, still a firm supporter of the Oslo Agreements, lost many of its voters. In the 2003 elections to the 16th Knesset, YACHAD won six seats, less than what MERETZ alone had held in the 15th Knesset. The party's leader is Dr. Yossi Beilin, the leader of SHAHAR.

DEMOCRATIC FRONT FOR PEACE AND EQUALITY (DFPE)

(Hachazit Hademokratit leshalom uleshivyon; HADASH)

A Communist party was active in Palestine before the establishment of the State of Israel. Unlike its counterparts, this party did not exclude Arab membership. The Israeli Communist Party (MAKI—Miflaga Komunistit Yisrealit) was founded in 1948. Communist representatives have been continuously represented in the Knesset since the first Knesset, though they have been excluded by MAPAI from any potential power. The Communist Party, in its different forms, generally secures a large proportion of their support from Israel's Arab population. On average, the Communists have secured three to five seats in the Knesset. MAKI split in 1965, with a group critical of the USSR remaining with the old name and the New Communist List

(RAKAH—Reshima Komunistit Hadasha), the party recognized by Moscow, secured its dominance as "the" Communist Party. In 1977 RAKAH allied with the Black Panthers, a left-wing protest movement founded by immigrants from North Africa and other Islamic countries, naming itself the "Democratic Front for Peace and Equality" (DFPE, or in Hebrew, HADASH—Hachazit Hademokratit leshalom uleshivyon).

As with Communist parties worldwide, the collapse of the Soviet Union led to an internal crisis. The support of the party declined and this was followed by contemplations on the continued adherence to communist ideology. It aligned with political forces in the Arab sphere, which are more (Arab) nationalist than Communist. In 1996 it aligned with the National Democratic Assembly (BALAD—Brit Leumit Demokratit—Altajamuu' Alwatany Aldimokraty) and secured five seats. In the following elections, in 1999, it participated independently of BALAD and won three seats. In 2003 it won three seats after it aligned again, this time with the Arab National Movement (TAAL—Tenuaa' Aravit Leumit), a move that brought about considerable internal criticism, especially from the Jewish members of the party.

Its platform calls for the total withdrawal of Israel from the occupied territories, including from southern Lebanon; the establishment of a sovereign, independent Palestinian state alongside Israel in the territories occupied by Israel in 1967, with eastern Jerusalem as its capital; and the cancellation of all "strategic" agreements between Israel and the United States.

NATIONAL RELIGIOUS PARTY (NRP)

(Miflaga Datit-leumit; MAFDAL)

HISTORY

Founded in 1956, the NRP was a full merger of Mizrachi (short for "spiritual center"), formally established as a party in Palestine in 1918, and HaPoel HaMizrachi (Mizrachi Worker), founded in 1922. HaPoel retained a degree of independence as the trade union section of the party responsible for immigration and absorption, labor and vocational affairs, housing, settlement, culture, pension funds and economic affairs, and so on. The central NRP organization was responsible for policy, party organization, religion and rabbinical relations, and publications. From its beginning, this party of Orthodox religious Zionists began to have an impact on the movement, electing 19 percent of the delegates to the 12th Zionist congress in 1921. The NRP has participated within the mainstream of Jewish life and the activities of the State of Israel since independence, has been a significant partner in almost all of Israel's governments, and consequently has wielded substantial political power.

Since the early 1980s the NRP has suffered from internal differences over issues and leadership that have led to the creation of factions—each with its own leadership and agendas—and breakaway parties. Prior to the 1981 election, Aharon Abuhatzeira, the scion of an important Moroccan rabbinical family, bolted from the NRP and formed TAMI (Tenuah LeMassoret Israel; Movement for Jewish Tradition) as a North African–oriented religious party. Abuhatzeira broke away from the NRP in part over the issue of ethnic representation, but he was also upset by the perceived lack of support he received from the NRP leadership during his trial for corruption. His new party list won three seats in the 1981 election, drawing support from the Oriental community, and appeared to have a major electoral impact on the NRP, which saw its Knesset strength cut in half from 12 to six seats. TAMI's political fortunes, however, declined steadily thereafter. In the 1984 election it won only one seat, and in 1988 Abuhatzeira was coopted into Likud and guaranteed a safe slot on its list of Knesset candidates.

The NRP further splintered in 1984 when its right-wing faction broke away and joined with several other right-wing politicians to form the Morasha (Heritage) party. Morasha won two seats in the 1984 election, and the NRP again lost ground, falling to four seats in Parliament. Morasha collapsed in 1988 when its former NRP component left to rejoin the NRP. The reintegration of the right-wing faction strengthened the nationalist tendencies within the NRP. Changes within the party leadership also contributed to the party's rightward swing. Yosef Burg, the party's moderate elder statesman, was no longer influential in party affairs and his successor as party leader, Zvulun Hammer, was himself replaced by Avner Shaki. Shaki, a Sephardi, was an ardent supporter of the Gush Emunim (Bloc of the Faithful) settlement movement in the West Bank and was committed to retention of all the occupied territories. Shaki also took a less conciliatory position on domestic religious issues, particularly the question of changing the Law of Return to recognize only those conversions to Judaism performed according to Orthodox religious law. Though the NRP suffered a small additional percentage loss in popular vote in the 1988 election, it managed to secure five Knesset seats.

In response to the NRP's rightward trend, party doves left in 1988 and formed the Meimad (acronym

for "Jewish State-Democratic State") Party. The new parry list fell about 7,000 votes short of the threshold (then 1 percent) for attaining a seat in the 1988 election and later joined the Labor Party.

The NRP won six Knesset seats in the 1992 election. It reinstated Hammer as head of its list, dropping Shaki to the second slot, and used the double entendre "NRP Right at Your Side" as its campaign slogan. The party's campaign identification with the political right wing, and implicitly with Likud, virtually ruled out any chance that NRP leaders would be able to maneuver after the election to join the new Labor coalition under Prime Minister Rabin.

The NRP fared much better in the 1996 election, winning nine seats. The party's platform called for applying Israeli sovereignty over greater Jerusalem, including the Gush Etzion settlement bloc and the settlements of Ma'ale Adumim and Givat Ze'ev; strengthening Jewish settlement throughout the West Bank, including Hebron (due to be handed over to Palestinian administrative control under terms of the Oslo accords); and retaining all of the Golan Heights. Since the 1992 elections, there has been only one diversion from its usual achievements of five to six seats in the Knesset. In the 1996 elections, using an ultra-nationalist campaign, it managed to win nine seats. However, in the 1999 elections it retained only five seats, and, in the 2003 elections it won six seats, under the leadership of its new leader—since the death of Hammer in 1998—Efraim ("Effi") Eitam.

ORGANIZATION

Officially, important decisions are passed through the NRP "center," a body of some 750 representatives of the party's local branches. In fact, however, there have not been new elections to the "center" since 1989, and its power is highly limited. Leadership is elected by the "center" but is usually, in actual fact, nominated. The party also has a women and a youth organization.

The NRP is related to an array of bodies and mobilized groups that have been founded by Mizrahi or are ideologically connected to it, including a youth movement (Bnei-Akiva), sports organization (Elitzur), a housing company (Mishav), and many more.

POLICY

The NRP was founded to emphasize the need for legislation based on Judaic religious law (*Halacha*) and protective of a "Torah-true" tradition. It actively supports Jewish immigration, the development of the private sector, and government support of all religiously necessary religious activities, including a religious school system and rabbinical councils in every city and town. These aims have been constant since the founding of NRP's predecessors, and they have been realized to a large degree. With only some minor intraparty disagreement, the NRP view was that it was organized for religious purposes and had no particular role to play in political, economic, or foreign affairs. It was able to cooperate effectively with MAPAI and Labor primarily because of its willingness to defer to the left on foreign and defense questions in return for support on religious matters.

With the Israeli capture of the West Bank and the Sinai Peninsula in 1967, however, NRP attitudes began to change. The capture of ancient Israeli cities—Hebron, Shechem (Nablus), and Old Jerusalem—was seen as a miraculous achievement in fulfillment of the covenant between God and the Jewish people. The NRP believed that the return of any of the territory of historic Israel to Arab control would be a repudiation of that covenant. On that basis, NRP "hawks" sought to focus the party's efforts on the rapid settlement of the new territory with the aim of securing it for Israel in perpetuity.

Although "hawks" are to be found in all of the NRP factions, they appear to be concentrated in the youth faction**,** which originally sought to reform the party organization, in part to increase the opportunities for newer and younger members in the party and government. They also wanted to increase NRP's independence in the coalition with the Labor Party. After 1967the youth faction sought to appeal to nontraditional voters with the slogan "no return of any part of Eretz [historic land of] Israel." Largely because both groups are composed of the same people, the youth faction has strong but informal ties with Gush Emunim, the leading movement of West Bank settlers. In some respects, the youth faction considers itself the political representation of the Gush Emunim. Youth faction leaders have come to increasing prominence in both the NRP and the government.

MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY

There are several thousand members in the NRP, but because of the ineffectiveness of the party mechanism, it is difficult to know how accurate this information is. Voting support comes primarily from the ranks of the Orthodox religious Zionists, while less-affluent Orthodox (or non-Zionists) voters tend to vote for SHAS or other parties in the past several years. One of the more important power bases of the NRP consists of voters in the "ideological" settlements in the occupied ter-

ritories, namely, those who came to settle the area for nationalistic, messianic, and religious motives.

FINANCING

No reliable information on NRP financing is available. Membership dues and donations provide the bulk of the party's income.

LEADERSHIP

The factionalism of the NRP reflects both personal conflicts and differing policy perspectives. Yosef Burg was the party leader from its founding until the late 1970s and served in most Israeli cabinets up until 1977. A man of great political skills, he worked successfully to maintain and expand the religious foundation of the state. His seniority and role as head of the largest faction (Lamifneh) secured his dominant position in the party, but he did not dictate its positions or policies. His influence was, in part, the result of his shrewd use of patronage in allocating jobs in the party and the party-controlled institutions. As a government minister, he was also able to distribute many public jobs in the religious and educational establishments and a variety of posts controlled by the Ministry of the Interior. Zvulun Hammer, who for many years was also head of the youth faction, served as party leader until his death in January 1998. Hammer was appointed education minister in the 1996 government of Prime Minister Netanyahu.

The current leader of the NRP is Efraim ("Effi") Eitam. Eitam, who is a decorated brigadier-general, leads a nationalistic and hawkish line. In 2004 he resigned from his post in Sharon's government because of his refusal to support Sharon's plans to resettle some of those in the Palestinian territories.

PROSPECTS

The NRP is firmly entrenched in the right-wing nationalist camp allied with Likud. It will continue to play a key role as a coalition partner for Likud, and press it—from the right—not to make any concessions on settlements with the Palestinians.

NATIONAL UNION

(Ha'ihud Ha'Leum)

The National Union was founded in 1999, uniting three parties—Herut (a group that seceded from the Likud, using its historical name to symbolize its commitment to the original Herut ideology); Moledet ("Motherland"); and Tkuma ("Resurrection"). A year later, Herut left the party, and Yisrael Beitenu ("Israel—Our Home"), a nationalist party founded by and for immigrants from the former USSR, joined in. The three factions still operate somewhat independently but run as one party.

The founder of the party was Rehavam ("Ghandi") Zeevi, a former army general who advocated a policy of "voluntary transfer" (de facto, expulsion) of the Palestinian population. Zeevi was the minister of tourism in Sharon's coalition when he was assassinated by a Palestinian in 2001. After Zeevi's death, Avigdor Liebermann, the leader of Yisrael Beitenu, became the new leader of the party, and the National Union withdrew from the coalition. Liebermann and Benny Elon, Moledet's new leader, joined the government again after the 2003 elections, but they were dismissed by Sharon because of their refusal to support his plan to disengage gradually from Palestinian territories. The party continues to support a hard-line nationalist policy, rejecting any compromise with the Palestinians.

UNITED TORAH JUDAISM (UTJ)

(Yahadut HaTorah Hameuchedet)

United Torah Judaism (UTJ) was formed prior to the 1992 election as a result of the merger of two ultra-Orthodox parties, Agudat Yisrael (Association of Israel) and its offshoot, Degel HaTorah (Flag of the Torah), which constitute the united party's two main factions.

Agudat Yisrael, the world organization of Orthodox Jews founded in 1912 by various rabbis and other religious leaders in Europe, was at first opposed to Zionism, believing that Israel should wait for divine redemption and the coming of the Messiah and that the establishment of a political state in Palestine was heretical. Although it boycotted the institutions of the Jewish community in Palestine, it eventually gave partial backing to the Zionist endeavor when it supported the establishment of Israel (but without ascribing any religious significance to it) and, upon becoming a political party in 1948, participated in the institutions of the state. As an independent party until 1992, it was represented in Parliament and supported most of the coalition governments, but after 1952 it refused to accept a cabinet portfolio. Its voting strength lies in Jerusalem and Bnei Brak and consists mostly of Ashkenazim.

In 1984 SHAS broke away from the Ashkenazi-dominated Aguda to contest that year's Knesset elections. The defection of the Sephardi wing of the party appeared to cost Aguda some of its support in the election; its Knesset representation was cut in half from four to two seats.

Agudat Yisrael was again split in 1988. This time, Rabbi Eliezer Schach, who had helped to engineer the creation of SHAS four years earlier, left Aguda with his followers over what he saw as the growing influence within the party of the Lubavitch Hasidic sect and its leader, Brooklyn-based Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson. So, on the eve of the 1988 election, Schach formed the rival ultra-Orthodox party Degel HaTorah. This development led Schneerson to mobilize his followers to vote for Agudat Yisrael, and his efforts were largely responsible for Aguda's success at the polls. It secured nearly three times the number of votes it had in 1984 and increased its Knesset seats from two to five. Degel Ha-Torah won two seats.

Degel HaTorah was all but negotiated out of existence prior to the June 1992 election when Rabbi Schach agreed that the party join Agudat Yisrael in a unified list called United Torah Judaism. Also joining the bloc was a small breakaway party from SHAS, the Moriah party. Schach accepted the fifth and seventh spots on the joint list for his Degel HaTorah representatives, but the new electoral alliance won only four seats in the election, as compared with the seven seats that the three constituent groups had held in the outgoing Knesset. The Moriah Party representative, who had the number two slot on the party list, was forced by a preelection promise to resign his seat in order to allow Degel HaTorah to take up the party's fourth and final seat in the new Knesset.

United Torah Judaism retained its four Knesset seats in the 1996 election but was the only religious party that failed to increase its representation. The party fell solidly behind Likud leader Benjamin Netanyahu in his bid to become prime minister; heeding the injunction of Agudat Yisrael's Council of Torah Sages to vote for the candidate who would be more likely "to work in the spirit of religion and Jewish tradition." In the 1999 and 2003 elections it gained five seats.

All crucial UTJ decisions on policy are made not by the party's Knesset members or its membership but by Agudat Yisrael's 12-member Council of Torah Sages, composed of revered rabbis, heads of yeshivas (religious schools), and members of Hasidic dynasties. Besides the council, the party's central institutions are the great assembly, composed of representatives of the local branches, the central world council, and the world executive committee. It has its own school network in which religious instruction is a major part of the curriculum. The government supplies most of the funds for the school system.

UTJ is primarily concerned with enhancing the role of religion in the state and is opposed to all forms of secularism. Its support for the Netanyahu coalition was secured on the basis of a lengthy coalition agreement containing numerous concessions to the group's religious perspectives, for example, strict Sabbath laws and revision of legislation to accommodate orthodox Jewish principles. The parliamentary leader is Meir Porush, son of a longtime Agudat Yisrael member of the Knesset, Rabbi Menachem Porush.

ARAB PARTIES

During Israel's War of Independence (1948) most of the political leadership of the Palestinians, along with most of the elite, left the territory of Palestine-Israel. The population that was left in the territory received citizenship and the Israeli Declaration of Independence called on them "to preserve peace and participate in the upbuilding of the State on the basis of full and equal citizenship and due representation in all its provisional and permanent institutions." In practice, however, a military government was imposed on most Arab-Israeli villages between 1948 and 1966, and the political activity of the Arab population was closely monitored and manipulated by MAPAI. The political activity was mostly limited to "daughter" parties sponsored by MAPAI (and sometimes also other Zionist parties), with MAKI (the precursor of the DFPE) as the only exception. The only political leader of that time who is worth mentioning is Toufiq Toubi, one of the leaders of the DFPE and the only pre-1948 leader who remained in the territory.

In the mid-1970s independent Arab parties began to consolidate and, with it, the support of the DFPE, which posed itself as the only established alternative, soared. The Arab-Israeli constituency is divided between those who vote for nationalistic (Palestinian) parties; those who choose to support the Islamic Movement and its representatives in the political arena; and those who choose to support the Communist and other parties, which do not define themselves as "Arab" parties. It is noteworthy that more than half of the Arab Israelis vote for various "Jewish" parties—Yachad, Labor, Likud, or others—and that there are as many Arab MKs from the Likud, Labor, and Yachad as there are from "Arab" parties. It is also worth mentioning that voting rates in the Arab population are much lower compared to the Jewish participation, due to unwillingness to recognize the state.

The two parties claiming to be "Arab" are the United Arab List (UAL, Reshima Aravit Meuchedet, RA'AM) and the National Democratic Assembly (NDA, Brit Le'umit Demokratit, BALAD). The UAL

was formed in 1996 as a union between three forces: the Arab Democratic Party (ADP), parts of the Islamic Movement, and the National Unity Front. The ADP was founded by Abd el-Wahab Darawshe in 1988, after Darawshe seceded from the Labor, because of its policies regarding the first Palestinian Intifadha. (Darawshe won one seat.) The Islamic Movement began its activity in Israel in the 1970s, as the Israeli version of the political forces ran by Islamists elsewhere in the Middle East and based on the model of the Muslim Brotherhood. It gained momentum after the rise of the Ayatollah Khomeini in Iran in 1979. In 1983 it participated for the first time in local elections, and won the control over two councils. The united party won four seats in 1996, five seats in 1999, but only two seats in 2003, presumably because of the refusal of some elements in the Islamic Movement to participate in the elections. The head of the UAL is Abd al-Malek Dahamshe, a lawyer who became more religious while serving a sentence in an Israeli prison for recruiting members to the PLO's Fatah faction.

A second "Arab" party is the National Democratic Assembly (Brit Leumit Demokratit. BALAD, or in Arabic—Altajamuu' Alwatany Aldimokraty), which tends to be more national-secular than its counterpart. The NDA was founded by Azmi Bishara, a philosophy professor who heads the party, and began its course by aligning with the DFPE in the 1996 elections. In the 1999 elections Bishara's extreme Arab nationalism brought him two seats, and in 2003 the party increased its power to three seats.

Other Political Forces

Outside of Israel's turbulent parliamentary sphere, social and political movements attempt to affect the government's policies or to press the politicians. Two of the most important movements—Shalom Achshav on the left and Gush Emunim on the right—can be traced to the disappointment of young voters from the political establishment after the 1973 "Yom Kippur" War.

Gush Emunim ("Bloc of the Faithful") is a loose movement of those supporting (and inhabiting) the settlements in the occupied territories (in Judea, Samaria, East Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip, and only to a lesser extent also in the Golan). Gush Emunim was founded after the 1973 war by Orthodox youth—mostly by those inspired by the theology of Rabbi Zvi Yehuda Kook—and operates as an independent, nonpartisan political movement, but it is in fact closely connected to the NRP. Gush Emunim still exists, but currently other names are more often in use, describing different groups within the settler community (the institutionalized YESHA Council, the anti-establishment "Hills' Youth," etc.).

An array of peace movements is also active in Israel. Shalom Achshav ("Peace Now") was founded in 1978 by IDF reservists, supporting a peace initiative with Egypt. It has been the primary force behind the protests against the Israeli involvement in Lebanon and supported governmental peace negotiations. The inability of Peace Now to react to the new realities after the second intifada broke brought other peace movements to prominence, including the non-Zionist Gush Shalom ("Peace Bloc"), headed by Uri Avneri; the Siruvniks movement that supports those who refuse to serve in the IDF because of the occupation; and the "National Accord" (Ha-Amana Ha-Leumit), led by Ami Ayalon and the Palestinian leader Sari Nuseybe, which tries to aim at the political center.

The main trade union, the Histadrut, is not as strong as it was in the 1950s and 1960s, when it was one of MAPAI's tools to control Israeli politics. It is, however, still a stronghold for the large and powerful unions, such as those of the Electricity Company or the Aviation industries (it has also been criticized for not protecting workers who are less powerful and are employed by personnel companies). Its head, Amir Peretz, still maintains power and is the most prominent figure representing Socialist and unionist ideology in Israel.

National Prospects

The continued drift to the right in Israeli public opinion in the early 2000s was partially caused by an unrelenting wave of Palestinian terrorist attacks and its disappointment of any possibility of sustainable peace in the region after the collapse of the Oslo Accords in 2000. The free market economic policies of the Likud government and the processes of international globalization have reshaped the political identities of the Israeli voters: those who are alienated and excluded from the political and economic processes find themselves identifying with nationalistic ethnoreligious rhetoric, the sort propagated by SHAS, the National Union, the Arab nationalist and religious parties, the NRP (to a lesser extent), and, ironically, also the Likud.

Those who feel threatened by the political ethnoreligiosity as manifested by SHAS tend to support the party that seeks to represent the Israeli bourgeoisie, Shinui. However, Shinui, which campaigned in the

2003 elections almost solely against the ethnoreligious policies, might find itself in dire straits if its disappointed voters cast their votes for other parties. Those who support free-market policies might find themselves within the Likud or the Labor, while those who voted for Shinui only because of its anti-religious rhetoric might support Yachad. The fate of Shinui, despite its tremendous success in the 2003 elections, might be similar to that of other attempts to establish a "liberal" or "third way" party in Israel.

Nevertheless, the Arab-Israeli conflict remains Israel's most important challenge. Failed peace initiatives and the need for personal security are other reasons for the success of the Likud in the 2003 elections. The emergence of the Likud as the dominant party in the 2003 elections was helped by the fact that the Likud center gained strength of its own accord. Some groups joined the center in order to change Likud's policies, a move that these groups perceived as the most effective means to affect the state's policies. The political system continues to reflect diversity, but it also manifests instability, which adds to the uncertainty expressed in public opinion.

The Israeli withdrawal from the Gaza Strip in 2005 provided a small opening for new peace prospects, but the Israeli-Palestinian divide was likely to remain one of the world's most enduring political conflicts in the years to come.

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REPUBLIC OF ITALY

(Repubblica Italiana)

By Jeffrey K. Hass, Ph.D.



Italy is a recent newcomer to the Western European community of nation-states. Originally a peninsula of smaller kingdoms, Italy only became a nation-state, with a constitutional monarchy, in 1861. The impetus to unification was driven by an elite from the Piedmont region. Initially Italy was not a democracy, as only 2 percent of the population enjoyed suffrage rights until 1919, when all males were given the right to vote. This introduction of universal male suffrage caused a split between the mass electorate and the elite. With growing discontent and economic downturn after World War I, Italian society split along class lines, as the working class turned more and more to emerging socialist and communist parties and movements and the middle class followed the lead of the elites and exchanged power for security with Benito Mussolini's emerging reactionary Fascist Party. Fascism contributed to certain future developments in Italian politics. First, Italy's centralization and unification were completed under Mussolini. Second, through the Lateran Pacts of 1929, the Catholic Church received a privileged position (Catholicism was legally admitted as the national religion), which brought Catholic organizations into politics and eventually gave birth to the powerful Christian Democratic Party. Additionally, fascism gave political legitimacy and moral authority to the Socialists and the Communists, who helped lead the Resistance movement and thus emerged from World War II as a contending power with the Christian Democrats. Third, by siding with the Fascists, the bourgeois elite and middle class traded future political legitimacy for security. After World War II and the horrors of fascism, right-wing elite and middle-class bourgeois parties were dead in the water; a mass electorate remembered how bourgeois interests had sold out the nation, and so until 1994 there was no bourgeois party with serious political support.

THE 1970S AND 1980S

The 1970s and 1980s were not kind to the Italian republic. The 1970s saw the continuation of civil strife from the late 1960s, except that radical right-wing and left-wing groups joined in the fray. One infamous radical left-wing organization was the Red Brigade, which used violence to splinter the political system. The Red Brigade's most daring and successful adventure was the kidnapping and murder of a former prime minister, Aldo Moro, in March–May 1978. This was replaced in the 1980s by organized crime (the Mafia). Historically the descendants of the private armies feudal landowners used in the 15th and 16th centuries, the Mafia, through penetration into the economy and politics, had become the new threat to stability. Particularly in the South, the Mafia could harass and threaten even state officials; judges and prosecutors tracking Mafia activities for legal action were targets of Mafia violence and helped trigger an anticorruption and anticrime wave that began to sweep Italy in the late 1980s.

Through the 1970s and 1980s Italian development followed two paths: greater local industrial development aided by effective, responsive local government in the North; and less effective, more corrupt and contentious local politics and business in the South. As more money concentrated in the North and stories of corruption and violence disseminated from the South, a reaction began. Some talk of secession by northern regions emerged, especially in the rhetoric of the radical party Northern League (Lega Nord). As well, political parties and elites in the North began to organize regional parties focusing more closely on local interests and in opposition to the power of the central government. This fault line between North and the South was not necessarily new. The two halves had different institutional histories, with regional association dominating the North and clan politics dominating the South, and the economies were primarily industrial (north) and agricultural (south). This gave Italy the semblance of an artificial nation that, united by culture, language, and religion, was less unified and integrated than from afar might appear to be the case. However, this fault line became more apparent by the 1990s, when right-wing parties started drawing on the reaction of northern voters against southern corruption and central government.

One important event was increasing openness about corruption and the rising passion to do something about it. Corruption investigations and scandals led to the fall of leading parties and, in the end, helped with the fall of the First Republic. A 1992 sting operation in Milan uncovered large kickback schemes; resulting plea bargaining led to more investigations and uncovered a trail of scandal and kickbacks leading to high government officials (including the former Socialist prime minister, Bettino Craxi) and members of the Christian Democrats. Additional disclosure revealed that a kickback system dubbed *Tangentopoli* permeated Italian politics and society. High-ranking government officials were forced to resign; public sentiment became so strong against the ruling politicians that not only did the electorate turn against them for alternative parties but also mobs at times threatened Parliament. The only two important parties that were not much harmed by corruption scandals and investigations were the Party of the Democratic Left (PDS), the former Communist Party, and the Italian Social Movement–National Right (MSI), the neofascists. As a result of the impact of the corruption probes, both these parties scored well in local elections, to the detriment of the formerly powerful Christian Democrats, which was relegated to electoral impotence. Ironically, this once-dominant party was quickly felled and has not recovered since.

THE 1990S TO THE PRESENT

Political shifts occurred in the 1990s with the collapse of the First Republic, owing to party splits, changes in electoral rules, and the rise of regional and right-wing parties. Left-wing parties, tainted by corruption, also had problems dealing with national problems, such as a sluggish economy and a $1 trillion national debt (one-tenth of which was being channeled to political parties illegally). When the left-wing parties could not handle corruption charges or political problems and when electoral laws and intraparty fighting led to political realignments, the time was ripe for a major change in the political landscape and, as a result, the rise of the right. Briefly in 1993 Central Bank head Carlo Ciampi was asked to become prime minister and form a government; but his government was short-lived. Another short-lived government led President Scalfaro to dissolve Parliament early in 1994 and call for new elections (under new electoral rules).

These elections changed the face of Italian politics. Arguably the most important and controversial actor in this whole scenario was the media millionaire Silvio Berlusconi, whose party owed its existence to its boss's drive and to an existing business network. Berlusconi united his right-wing Forza Italia with right-wing Alleanza Nationale, the regionalist anticenter, pro-market Lega Nord, and other smaller parties to bring a right-wing government to power in 1994, riding the wave of anticorruption feeling, the disorganization of former major parties, and the threat of a Communist resurgence (as the PDS had taken several mayoral races in 1993). This alliance, called the Freedom Pole (Polo della Libertà), obtained a majority of seats in Parliament. Berlusconi became prime minister. However, this alliance proved short-lived, as the Lega Nord, under the guidance of its fiery leader Umberto Bossi, soon withdrew its support from the alliance. By the latter half of the year Berlusconi was investigated for conflict of interests (for keeping his businesses in a blind trust that he could still control while prime minister), and Berlusconi's brother Paolo was investigated for kickbacks. Silvio Berlusconi tried to hamper judicial and investigatory power into his brother's affairs (through use of an emergency decree), but this was blocked by the threat of resignation by the anticorruption leader Antonio Di Pietro. Finally, amid the scandals and squabbling within the Freedom Pole alliance, the Northern League withdrew, and Berlusconi resigned. Lamberto Dini, an economist, became the new

prime minister in 1995 and attempted neo-orthodox economic reforms in the face of the Freedom Pole's opposition. Social benefits were cut and legislation was introduced to regulate the media (following allegations that Berlusconi had used his media empire unfairly in his election campaign). In 1995 Berlusconi was indicted for kickbacks to tax inspectors, although he did avoid one possible problem when a referendum supported Berlusconi's right to own three major television networks (which the government claimed amounted to near-monopoly power).

Berlusconi's first term as prime minister atop the right-wing coalition was marked by domestic and international concerns, not only with the tone of his and his coalition's rhetoric but also with his domination of the Italian media. Western governments distanced themselves from the governing coalition, with its sometimes neofascist language. Berlusconi also faced the prospect of formal legal investigations over charges that he bribed judges in the 1980s. To add to governance problems, the Northern League, the most radical of the right-wing coalition, opted out of the alliance. Under these domestic and international pressures, Berlusconi temporarily lost his grip on power. The final blow came when President Oscar Scalfaro's nominated prime minister, Antonio Maccanico, could not create a coalition government. This forced Scalfaro to dissolve the parliament and call for a new election in 1996. In a close race, Olive Tree, a center-left coalition led by PDS, emerged victorious by a narrow margin over the Alliance for Freedom (essentially the Freedom Pole without participation of the Northern League). Center-left control of the government was tenuous, however, because the ruling coalition depended on the good will of an alliance with the Communist Refoundation Party (unreformed Communists who disagreed with the main party's renunciation of communism after 1989). Other allies were found, but the two successive center-left coalition governments were unstable and did not last long.

By 2000 the right-wing parties were rebuilding their alliance. The Northern League had faired badly in regional elections after its uncooperative behavior in the 1990s and radical rhetoric. The new right-wing coalition, Freedom House, was once again led by Berlusconi's Forza Italia. The alliance parties made significant gains in local elections in 2000, setting the way for electoral victory in 2001. Partly this reflected the strength of the right, and partly it reflected the inability of the Communists and leftist Social Democrats to come to a working agreement for shared electoral and governing strategies. Berlusconi's fortunes on the world stage also improved as well. In his first term as prime minister he was not a favorite of the Western community because of fears that his right-wing tactics and image, coupled with his accumulation of immense economic and media power, bordered on neofascism. While this reality did not change, Berlusconi focused on improving his image abroad. He was able to make some inroads in parts of the international community when he joined American president George W. Bush and British prime minister Tony Blair in the "war on terror," including providing both moral support and troops for the U.S.-led incursion into Iraq. While this endeared him to the American and British political elite, it did not improve relations with antiwar leaders and publics on the European continent, who continued to view him with suspicion.

Despite the improvement of his fortunes in 2001, Berlusconi did not reign supreme, and in 2004 he was beginning to show signs of vulnerability. The popularity of his Forza Italia party was slipping in the polls, and his attempts to reform and improve the economy were bearing little fruit. Berlusconi came to power with ambitious plans to change Italy's economy and bring it out of the doldrums. His attempt to liberalize Italy's thicket of paternalist labor laws was partially successful, although it did cause outrage among some sections of the Italian public and in Europe more generally. (That his finance minister left office did not help the government's image or Berlusconi's efforts.) Accusations of corruption continued to hound him, in particular a trial over accusations of bribing judges. Further, while the Northern League fared badly in Chamber of Deputies elections (the lower house of Parliament), it contributed important seats to the Freedom House alliance in the Senate.

The Freedom House coalition collapsed in early 2005, leading to Berlusconi's resignation. However, not long after he was able to form a new coalition government that included his Forza Italia party, the Northern League, the National Alliance, and the Union of Christian Democrats.

The System of Government

Italy is a republican unitary state, with a functional constitution dating to 1948. The fundamental political system is parliamentary. As a unified country Italy is, in spite of its long history, a relative newcomer, with unification finalized only in the 20th century.

After the dark period of fascism, the Italian polity was restructured along democratic lines. However, due to the particularities of political institutions, Italian politics remains less than stable and for the outsider rather confusing. Recent radical changes both in electoral procedure and the organization of political parties, intended to bring greater stability, has made the Italian political landscape as confusing as it had been previously.

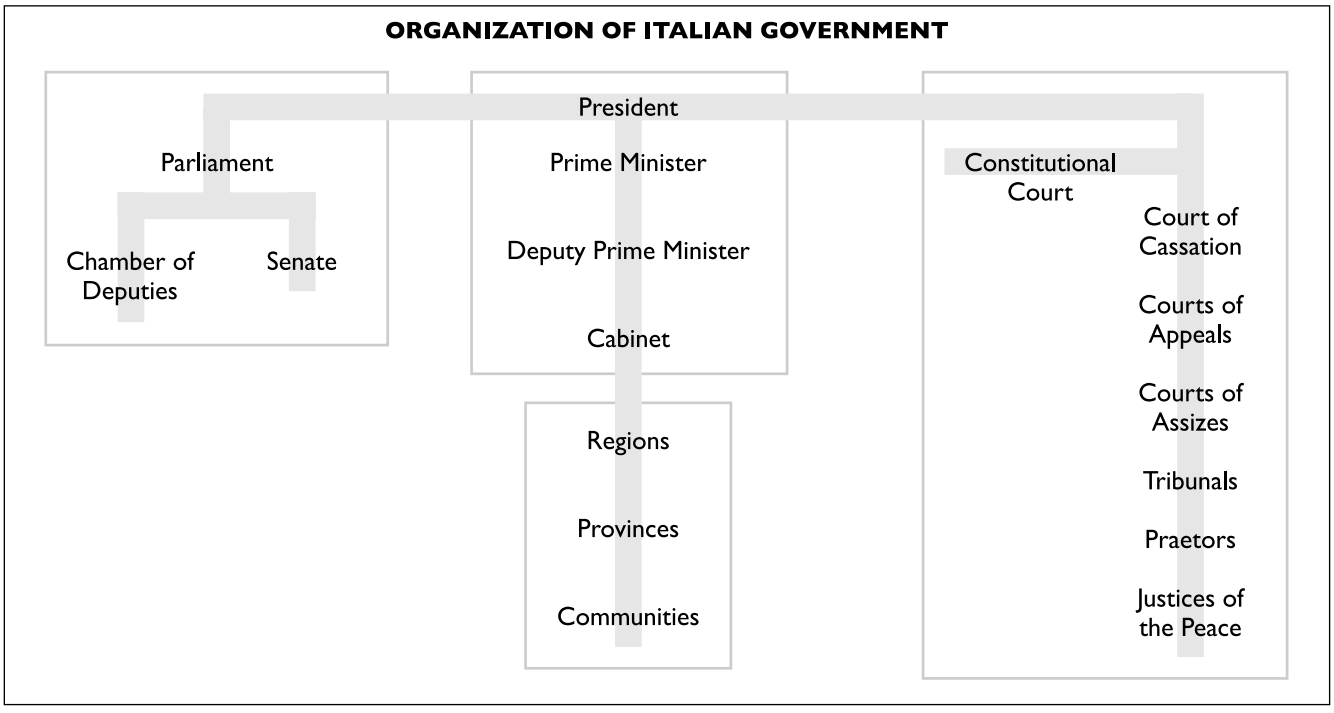
The Italian governmental system provides the sources of political instability—Italy has had more than 50 governments in the postwar era—and yet still remains able to provide a basic framework to keep politics from sliding into chaos. The executive has the duty of formulating and implementing policies and for maintaining order within the country. However, because of institutional restrictions and because of the structure of Italy's party landscape—in particular, the plethora of parties—it is difficult for a government to remain in power long. Thus, Parliament is the ultimate seat of power and sovereignty in Italy.

The Italian system is grounded in a constitution, which provides general rules of political conduct. The constitution provides the rules for selection for powers and for structures of the various branches and levels of government. Further, the constitution guarantees certain political and social rights: the existence of a minimum wage, state-sponsored vocational training, gender equality in the workplace, a welfare safety net (for the unemployed, the disabled, and the unfortunate), the right to form trade unions and to strike, the inviolability of private enterprise and private property (except in cases of "general interest").

However, constitutional rules are broad enough that much of the important political reality is governed by political structure and institutions, in particular, the structure of parties and the electoral system that shapes that structure. Electoral rules and party structures shape the resulting political landscape, which in turn accounts for policies and for the political instability that has hampered Italian politics since World War II.

EXECUTIVE

The executive in Italy, as in much of Europe, has two parts: a president and a prime minister. The president is mostly an international figurehead representing Italy on the world stage and in international negotiations; however, the president also has some powers that occasionally are of political importance. The first power is symbolic: the president can act as a national figure for uniting and rallying the country. Such symbolic power and the use of the presidential "bully pulpit" help the president mobilize political forces and common voters. Second, the president does have some official institutional powers. The president can suspend legislation—sending it back to Parliament for



reconsideration, although if the two chambers pass the bill once again with a majority of votes, then the president's weak veto is overturned. Presidential acts are considered valid only if they are countersigned by the prime minister, giving some degree of control over the president. Also, the president nominates the prime minister, which can constitute real power if Parliament is at loggerheads over just whom to nominate. Finally, after consultation with heads of both parliamentary chambers, the president can dissolve Parliament and call for early elections. In the case when a president cannot serve out his term, he is replaced by the speaker of the Senate; new elections are to be held within 15 days except in extreme circumstances.

The real executive power in Italy belongs to the prime minister and the Council of Ministers (Consiglio dei Ministri). Ministers are proposed by the president; the government then formulates its political program within 10 days and submits itself and the program to each chamber of Parliament. Both chambers must pass a majority vote of confidence if this new government is to be confirmed (although if only one chamber does not pass a vote of no confidence, after changes a new vote must be undertaken).

The government may issue decrees and provisional measures in exceptional cases or other cases of necessity; however, these decrees are good for only 60 days and must be submitted within five days to Parliament, which then debates whether these government decrees should become law. Other powers of the ministers are proposing and implementing policy and overseeing the activities of the state bureaucracy. Reform policies—for example, neo-orthodox policies of austerity and privatization, to lower Italy's budget deficit—are the responsibility of the cabinet, which must not only formulate these policies but also then make sure they will not face opposition in Parliament and that the state bureaucracy will implement them. One result of the power of ministries and government positions and the link between government and parties is that parties have used control of the government to place their own members into bureaucratic positions, turning the government into a tool of party patronage; this practice came back to haunt the Christian Democrats in the 1980s.

The prime minister and other ministers are assembled by the president, who then presents them to Parliament within 10 days for a vote of confidence; this requires knitting together a parliamentary coalition. The work of crafting a coalition embodies the weakness of the prime minister and cabinet—and of the executive and the Italian system in general. Prime ministers do have a great deal of direct power; however, given the parliamentary watchdog vote of no confidence, the prime minister and his cabinet can find themselves in tenuous positions if a supporting coalition in Parliament breaks down. This means that the parties and party bosses have greater power in influencing the executive than in many other parliamentary democracies in Europe, for a government's support depends on brokering between larger and smaller parties in the politics of coalition building. For example, prime ministers have fallen because of splits within their own party. This has led to one major problem with the Italian executive, the rapid turnover of governments and ministers in the postwar period, because of lack of firm support or a firm coalition within Parliament. Until 1986 the longest term for any one government was four years (that of Socialist Bettino Craxi, from August 1983 to 1987). From 1945 to 1995 Italy had 55 different governments and ruling coalitions; this was due mostly to instability fostered by two factors. The first was the electoral system, which allowed for a large number of parties to enter Parliament and which, as a result, did not encourage the thinning of the ranks to a few powerful parties that could win majorities outright or lead stable coalitions. A second reason was internal instability of the parties themselves; for example, the Christian Democrats often suffered splits within their own ranks, leading members of the ruling Christian Democratic coalition to levy a vote of no confidence against a prime minister and government headed by other members of their own party.

LEGISLATURE

Italy's national legislature is the Parliament (Parlamento), which is composed of two houses, the Chamber of Deputies (Camera dei Deputati) and the Senate (Senato della Repubblica). The Chamber of Deputies is composed of 630 representatives; the Senate is composed of 315 members chosen through direct elections plus former presidents and their appointees known as senators-for-life. The length of a legislative term is five years, although this term can be ended ahead of time if the speakers of the two chambers agree to do so and the president, after consulting with them, dissolves Parliament and calls for new elections.

The two chambers open their two annual sessions in February and October, although it is not uncommon for a session to continue into the next session, meaning a continuous convocation. There is no stipulation in the constitution or other laws making one house "upper" and the other "lower"; in principle, both have

equal legislative powers, and both have the same legal chance to send a member to a ministerial post. Each chamber has special committees (11 to 14 in each), which are where legislation is initially debated before being brought to the floor for a vote. Each committee has a president who has the power to control the committee's agenda, giving this individual certain legislative and procedural powers. Legislation is more often than not introduced by the executive (especially the ministers) into both chambers, although members of Parliament, members of parliamentary committees, and regional representatives and councils may introduce bills, and citizens' groups may introduce petitions (if 50,000 signatures are collected in support); while the executive submits many important bills, nonexecutive groups (especially parliamentary members) can be at times active in submitting legislation on their own. After being debated in committees, the bill might (if passed by committee) be sent to the chamber for a floor vote. For a bill to become law it must be passed by majority vote in both houses. There are two cases when this path is not used for legislation. First, a popular referendum (which needs at least 500,000 signatures of registered voters or the formal support of five regional councils to be legitimate) can be called by the public; however, referenda cannot alter or address budgetary laws, amnesties, or international agreements. The second alternative method is for a bill to be passed straight out of the committees without a floor vote; this, however, is rare.

These are the formal powers of the legislature. Just as important are the structure of parties within the legislature and the effect this has had on Italian politics. Previous electoral law allowed for any party to hold a seat in Parliament if it obtained votes; this led to a Parliament made up of numerous parties and deprived larger parties such as the Christian Democrats and Communists of the ability either to rule through majority or to have a commanding enough plurality that creating a coalition would require inviting only a few ideologically close parties. The result has been constantly changing coalitions, as no single group has the power to dominate Parliament. Further, political shifts within parties have led to intraparty fighting, which also threatens potentially stable coalitions. Such a precarious nature of Italian parties can be seen in the breakup of the larger parties (the Communists and Christian Democrats) in 1993 and 1994 into several smaller groups.

Actual coalitions have changed over time. Until 1963 the coalitions making up the government were centrist and center-right; after 1963, centrist and center-left coalitions began to dominate. The years 1992–93 witnessed instability within the coalition system, as no "stable" coalition (defined broadly in the Italian context) could be created. Recent coalitions (from 1993 on) have turned back to a neo-orthodox center-right type of coalition. This began with economic problems and corruption scandals within the government and the major parties. At the same time, media magnate Silvio Berlusconi, using his media empire to promote his political party Forza Italia and its allies the Northern League (Lega Nord) and the neofascist National Alliance (Alleanza Nazionale), came to prominence on a regionalist platform and a conservative reaction against scandals and instability of the 1992–93 crisis years. Bertusconi's coalition lasted from May to December 1994, when it was replaced (following a scandal involving Berlusconi) with a technocratic government of Lamberto Dini, backed by the Northern League, the Partito Popolare (formerly of the Christian Democrats), and the Democratic Party of the Left. This government lasted until February 1996, when it was replaced in April 1996 (following the parliamentary elections, called early) with a return to the center-left and a government led by a coalition of center-left parties (former Socialists and Christian Democrats) called "Olive Tree."

The center-left Olive Tree failed to maintain its electoral popularity. Partly this was due to the right's consistent use of Berlusconi's media power and the rise of right-wing (especially ethnic or nationalist) sentiments in the electorate. A major cause of the center-left's failure to hold on to power was the split between Olive Tree and the Communist Refoundation, which, after 1998, decided to contest elections against, rather than in conjunction with, Olive Tree parties. This split part of the center-left vote, allowing Berlusconi's Freedom House to return to power in 2001; following the collapse of this coalition in 2005, Berlusconi was quickly able to form a new government with most of his party's partners on the right.

JUDICIARY

While the Constitutional Court—the highest court in the land—was established in the 1948 constitution, it did not become functional until 1956. This Court is composed of 15 members; the number rises to 31 in cases of impeachment; Parliament appoints the additional 16. Originally, five judges are appointed by the president, five by a joint session of Parliament, and five by the judiciary itself; the constitution now states that 10 are chosen by various levels of judges within

the legal system and five are chosen by Parliament, all selections made from a pool of legal academics and lawyers with at least 15 years' experience. Except in extreme cases, "special" judges are forbidden by the constitution (most likely a rejection of fascist policies). The formal powers of the Court include decisions on the constitutionality of policies and laws; mediating disputes between the federal and regional governments; and running impeachment proceedings.

The judicial branch is formally independent from other branches and answerable only to the law; this has given judges some independence and helped them sweep aside fascist policy legacies and, at times, push the battle against organized crime. The overall judicial system in Italy is grounded in civil law; judicial review of laws is reserved for the Constitutional Court, so that the Italian system resembles the Continental rather than the Anglo-American system (where precedent, common law, and judicial interpretation of laws are important political procedures). Judges below the Constitutional Court may become judges only after a rigorous examination, making the judiciary resemble the bureaucratic civil service.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The constitution provides for regional autonomy, with a focus on decentralizing some powers to the local level. The hierarchy of local government runs from the regions (20) to the provinces to the communities. Italy's 20 regions are defined in the constitution as the following: Piedmont; Valle d'Aosta; Lombardy; Trentino–Alto Adige; Venetia; Friuli–Venetia Julia; Liguria; Emilia-Romagna; Tuscany; Umbria; Marches; Latium; Abruzzo; Molise; Campania; Apulia; Basilicata; Calabria; Sicily; Sardinia. Regions have a certain degree of autonomy from the federal government, and some regions enjoy additional political autonomy: Sicily, Sardinia, Trentino–Alto Adige (actually more functionally a province but having autonomy like a region), Friuli–Venetia Julia, and the Valle d'Aosta. Regional powers and responsibilities include organizing local planning, transportation, tourism, hospitals and charities, local police, artisanship, agricultural and forestry issues, vocational training, local fairs and markets, and other local duties. Regions are responsible for collecting their own taxes and providing for part of their own finances (although taxation on exchange between regions, or any other regulation of interregional exchange, is forbidden by the constitution). Local branches of the federal administration are overseen by a federal representative.

The local legislative body is the regional council; its powers include legislation at the local level and the proposal of bills to the national Parliament. Any legislation adopted by the regional councils must be sent to the local federal government representative, with has 30 days to approve the legislation or, in cases of unconstitutionality or incongruity with federal laws, to reject it. The executive branch is the Junta, headed by a president. The duties of the Junta and the president include implementation of local level laws and representing the region to other regions, to the national administration, and to foreign bodies as well. The regional council is elected by the local population, and deputies of the regional council in turn elect the members of the Junta and select the president of the Junta. The regional council may be dissolved ahead of electoral schedule if the federal government finds it in violation of federal laws or the constitution.

Decentralization has been an important political consideration in Italy in the postwar era, partially in reaction to fascist centralization. Historically, Communists and Social Democrats came into conflict over regional reform and autonomy in the postwar world. Communists favored regional decentralization because, given their power bases in the regions rather than at the national level, such reforms favored the increase of Communist power. The Social Democrats, being more of a national party, opposed regionalization for just this reason.

Provincial and community levels have less power and autonomy than the regional level. However, local elections at the community level do have some importance, as these set the government for the various towns. Communists did well in local elections in the 1970s and early 1980s, but they have witnessed a decline from the late 1980s on.

The Electoral System

Italy's electoral system has certain unique characteristics that mark it off from other Western democracies. Most differences are in parliamentary elections, where major changes occurred in 1993 and 1994. Suffrage is extended to Italian citizens who are 18 years old or older, except in elections to the Senate, in which suffrage extends to those 25 and older.

The election of the president for a term of seven years is fairly straightforward. The president, who must be at least 50 years old to stand for the office, is selected by Parliament during a joint session of the two chambers, in which there are an additional three

delegates from each region (except Val d'Aosta, which sends only one additional delegate). To win office a candidate must receive two-thirds of delegates' votes. Should no one gain this majority, a second round occurs, where victory also requires a two-thirds majority. If this does not produce a winning candidate (and it usually does not), a third round is undertaken, where a candidate needs only an absolute majority.

The previous system that ran from 1948 to 1992 contributed to the survival of smaller parties and maintained perpetual instability of governments. The changes to electoral procedure were supposed to encourage the winnowing of parties to a few powerful groups. However, parties now form electoral coalitions that keep alive Italy's tradition of multiple parties within the legislature. (The emergence of some parties to dominance has as much to do with recent political events such as the corruption scandals and new right-wing power base as the electoral procedures.) In the old system, the Senate was elected by a combination of direct elections and proportional representation conducted at the regional level. To win a single-member constituency, a candidate had to receive at least 65 percent of votes cast; in the case of any candidate failing to obtain such a number of votes, that seat was transferred to the general proportional representation pool for that region. The Chamber of Deputies was elected by a double proportional representation system. Regions received a number of seats to the Chamber, and parties received seats according to the proportion of votes they received in the general count, as manipulated by a complex formula. Some seats would be left unfilled this way, and those shifted to the national proportional representation pool and distributed among parties receiving more than 300,000 votes. This system was criticized for its complexity and contribution to instability, and it was also tarnished (as was much of the political system generally) by the scandals of the 1980s.

The new system has retained some of the complexities of the older system, but it has been streamlined somewhat. To be a Chamber candidate an individual must be 25 years old and have suffrage rights. For Chamber elections Italy is divided into 26 constituencies (plus the Valle d'Aosta region, which has only one seat); the number of seats per constituency is equal to that constituency's percentage of the overall Italian population. Constituencies are further divided into single-seat districts; the number of districts is equal to 75 percent of that constituency's seats. Thus three-fourths of all seats are from single-member districts, while one-fourth is left for proportional representation on the basis of the entire constituency rather than on districts. Voters receive two ballots, one for the single-seat race and one for the proportional list. This allows voters to split their votes between one for a particular person and one for a particular party. For the Chamber of Deputies, 475 members are now elected through a first-past-the-post system from the single-seat constituencies; this is the equivalent of American elections to the House of Representatives- where the candidate with the plurality of votes in his or her constituency wins a seat. The remaining 155 members are selected by a complex proportional system that favors "good losers." Once votes are tabulated nationwide, the proportional seats are distributed. Only parties overcoming a national 4 percent barrier can receive proportionally allocated seats. Further, the number of seats a party may receive is affected by the *scorporo,* a "price" paid for single-seat victories. In essence, the number of votes a party receives for purposes of proportional counting is diminished by the number of seats the second-place candidate gets in the constituency where a party's candidate has won the single-seat race. Thus, parties that lose in the single-seat races gain some ground in the proportional race, because parties that win in the single-seat races then lose votes they would have received on the second (proportional) ballot. This "good loser" system is unique to Italy.

Senators are elected by a combination of plurality and proportional representation systems. In the plurality system—also known as "first past the post"—the candidate with the most votes at the end of the day is declared the winner (rather than requiring 65 percent of the vote). The Senate also splits its members by single-seat mandate and proportional representation. To stand as a candidate an individual must be at least 40 years old. A constituency receives a number of Senate seats equal to its proportion of the overall population, although there are two stipulations to this constitutional rule: no constituency will have fewer than 10 senators, and the Molise constituency has only 2 and Valle d'Aosta has only 1. According to the recent electoral law, 232 members win their positions through first-past-the-post systems in their home constituencies; 83 members are selected through a proportional system. Constituencies are divided into 20 single-member districts for the 232 single-member seats, which follow a first-past-the-post system. The remaining 83 are distributed to parties based on the general number of votes they received from the party affiliation of individual candidates; these seats are distributed at the constituency level rather than at the national level (as is the case for the Chamber of Deputies). There is also no minimum percentage barrier,

as there is for the Chamber of Deputies. Further, the *scorporo* works somewhat differently for Senate races: a party with a losing candidate receives votes for the proportional seats based on the number of votes its losing candidates received. This complicated and confusing system allows smaller parties a fairer chance at representation (and would seem to promote the continuance of representation of smaller parties, and thus the fragmentation of Parliament).

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS, MAY 13, 2001

Party/Coalition	Chamber of Deputies	Senate
Casa delle Libertà (Freedom House)	368	177
– Forza Italia	{196}	
– Alleanza Nazionale	{99}	
– Lega Nord	{30}	
– Biancofiore	{40}	
– Nuovo Partito Socialista Italiano	{3}	
Ulivo (Olive Tree)	252	125
– Democratici di Sinistra	{172}	
– La Margherita	{85}	
– Il Girasole	{16}	
– Partito dei Comunisti Italiani	{10}	
Rifondazione Comunista	11	3
Lista di Pietro Italia dei Valori	—	1
Democrazia Europea	—	2
Lista Pannella Bonino	—	—
Ulivo-SVP	—	3
Südtiroler Volkspartei	3	2
Movimento Sociale Fiamma Tricolore	—	—
Union Valdôtaine (Valdostian Union, regionalist)	1	1
Aleanza Lombardia Autonoma	—	1

In spite of the confusion and constant governmental changes, the general orientation of Italian politics has been fairly stable.

These trends reflect a common wisdom about Italian postwar politics up until the crises of the late 1980s: the fascist legacy hurt the initial formation of right-wing movements, helping the left and center-left parties establish a stranglehold on politics. Two factors hindered right-wing formation: first, this legacy left political domination with the Christian Democrats, Communists, and Socialists and made advancement of center-right parties difficult; second, because of Italy's social structure (a state presence in the economy, bifurcation between the industrial North and the agricultural South, a small individualist bourgeoisie), organizing and mobilizing of potential right-wing support were difficult. In short, no right-wing party could gain ground without some system shock.

This system shock came in the late 1980s and early 1990s, with economic problems, the collapse of leftism at the end of the cold war, and political scandals. This drove many voters away from the left to regionalist or right-wing parties untainted by corruption. Further, entrepreneurship and the growth of a bourgeoisie provided the soil for right-wing groups, so that when Berlusconi entered the political scene, serendipity had provided the opportunity for a major political shift. This occurred in 1994.

Berlusconi's right-wing alliance, Freedom House, has remained a dominant force ever since. Italian politics, in the wake of a global move to neo-orthodox politics and away from socialism and state-centered policies, has noticeably shifted to the right and, barring a serious economic downturn due to neo-orthodox market reforms or political scandals, should remain viable after almost 50 years of marginality.

The Party System

HISTORY

Italy's party system did not begin to take shape until the 20th century. While the Socialist Party was founded in 1892, it remained marginalized, as its support base, the working class, did not have the right to vote. Catholic groups initially remained outside politics, a protest against the Catholic Church's loss of power in the face of secular unification and centralization. However, as the Socialist Party began to gain strength, Catholic organizations came together to form in 1919 the Catholic Popular Party. The Socialist

and Catholic Parties remained apart from each other, and this helped the rise to power of Mussolini's Fascist Party, which in 1926 outlawed all other political parties. As suggested earlier, the fascist period shaped the following political period: the Lateran Pacts brought Catholicism back into social domination, and helped give Catholic groups a firmer organizational base; and the struggle with fascism gave political legitimacy and capital to the Socialist and Communist organizations (which managed to hurt each other through splits and feuds borne of Stalin's antisocialist policies). Opposition to fascism made a temporary alliance between Socialist and Catholic groups possible, but this alliance fell apart in the postwar era. In the postwar world the Communists were kept out of power but still managed to gain a following among the working classes and certain industrialized northern regions; the Socialists and Christian Democrats became the leading parties but could not gain sufficient dominance to create durable coalitions. Additionally, party splits and an electoral system favorable to small parties led to a plethora of political parties and a consistently fragmented Parliament.

This was the general landscape for most of the postwar era. However, the situation changed in the 1990s. First, investigations into corruption led to shocks within the parties. Second, the changes in the electoral system encouraged and sped up centrifugal tendencies within the parties. The final factor was the weakening of the left, and especially of the Communist Party, in the late 1980s, and the rise of regional and conservative forces, led by the mercurial Silvio Berlusconi. The result was splits and realignments and a major reconfiguration of the party landscape.

In postwar Italy political parties have popped up like mushrooms after a storm, although some of these mushrooms have been far larger than others. This is due to two primary factors. The first is Italy's fractured nature: a liberal industrialized North and a conservative agrarian South, with less of a sense of national unity than other European countries. The second is the Italian electoral system, which allowed many small parties into Parliament and did not weed out these minor parties but instead encouraged their marginal existence. Yet in spite of the plethora of parties, a few parties managed to dominate, in particular the Christian Democrats and the Communists.

ORGANIZATION

Before the recent party breakups, political parties in Italy had two important features: they were mass parties, and they centered themselves and their actions on ideologies and ideological identity. Joining most parties required sponsorship by someone inside the party, in order to test for ideological "purity," and joining a political party was an ideological statement of sorts. And yet in spite of the stress on ideology, Italian parties were notorious for being factionalized. These factions are less based on splinters within the ideological framework than they are centered on personal networks and personalized groups or clans within parties. In this way, ideology served as the glue holding mass parties together, and yet the parties were rent through and through with networks of personal cliques and loyalties that weakened them.

Parties are linked with many other organizations in society. Parties have cells and formal ties with unions, with movements, with associations, and other political or nonpolitical organizations. These links are partly personal but also partly ideological, bringing political ideology into everyday life to a degree not seen in many other Western democracies. And the personal or clan side makes its way into the party-society structure as well. While many ties are ideological in nature—such as ties between parties and local cultural festivals—other links are patronage. For example, parties with influence in an area will get their people placed in local government, or a party drawing support from a region will use its parliamentary power either to get people from that region jobs in the state bureaucracy or to provide benefits, such as housing, government contracts, and the like.

Internal organization of most parties does not differ from mass parties elsewhere. On the one hand, there are institutions of democracy that promote mass participation. Local cells elect members of sections and section heads, who then select the provincial committees, which select the regional committees, and so on to the top. This provides some local grassroots influence and power. For most parties, national congresses that set the party programs are held every two years. However, this democracy is dulled by the need for everyday organization, which means the rise of a party elite and a party bureaucracy. This system gives party elites patronage power within the party (similar to patronage through the state) and the ability to reproduce their own power.

RIGHT-WING PARTIES

The Italian right saw renewed strength in the 1994 elections, owing to Berlusconi's resources and increased right-wing party organization, along with the discredit-

ing of the left-wing and centrist parties through news of scandals and corruption and through economic problems left-wing policies could not solve. Further, the return of the right was enhanced by the rise of Silvio Berlusconi and his Forza Italia party.

LEFT-WING PARTIES

The two basic left-wing camps are the Socialists and the Communists, broken through a Comintern-dictated split in 1921. In the postwar era both camps played on their partisan activities for legitimacy and popularity; the Socialists were able to become a legitimate governing party (although they had only one Socialist prime minister, Craxi) and the Communists remained in opposition.

The Italian Communist Party, formerly the largest Communist Party west of the Iron Curtain, was founded in 1921 following a Comintern-inspired split between Socialists and more radical Communists. During fascism the PCI was illegal and its leaders threatened or jailed; some, such as Palmiro Togliatti, escaped Italy, while others, such as Antonio Gramsçi, went to prison. The persecution under fascism did not, in the end, hurt the party; if anything, the PCI's resistance to fascism provided a certain moral power that helped the PCI survive the period and prosper afterward. Further, the PCI had always maintained some distance from Stalin and the Comintern; therefore, when Stalin's excesses were revealed in the 1956 "secret speech," the Italian Communists did not lose face or legitimacy as other Western European Communist Parties did.

After World War II the Communists temporarily took part in government in a three-way alliance with the Socialist Party and the Christian Democrats; however, PCI participation in government came to an end with the onset of the cold war. Initially the Socialists supported the Communists, but by the 1960s the Socialists moved closer (tactically) to the Christian Democrats in order to participate in the executive branch. This did not necessarily hurt the PCI; with the Socialists in some way involved in running the country, the PCI could remain an opposition force loyal to its party base (the working class); and indeed the PCI remained until recently not only Italy's second largest party but also the guardian of the left wing. By the 1970s, with the threats of neofascist parties' growing (although still small) success and the example of right-wing reaction against a left-wing government in Chile, the PCI turned to "strategic alliances" with other pro-democracy parties; this helped raise the PCI's support to over 30 percent of the electorate. However, this alliance also hurt the PCI, which was now more involved with the government and would lose some of the support among the left-wing dissatisfied elements in society (such as the working class). By the 1980s, with the loss of popular leader Enrico Berlinguer and with the problems of moving closer to the ruling parties, the PCI's support slipped, so that by 1987 PCI was only the third largest party. Of little comfort was the loss of support among party strongholds—the working class, especially in the industrialized North.

By 1989 some factions within the PCI came to the decision that a change was needed. The PCI had been slowly moving away from more radical policy and opposition tactics to become more of a social-democratic party; further, the fall of the Communist East bloc in 1989 sealed the fate of Communist Parties everywhere. In February 1991 the different tensions within the party over its future came to a head, and PCI split into two parties: the Democratic Party of the Left (Partito Democratico della Sinistra; PDS) and more traditional Communists, who broke off to form Communist Refoundation (Rifondazione Comunista; RC). The PDS suffered in the early 1990s from its split and from the taints of corruption that all major parties endured. However, in the 1994 elections the PDS regained some lost ground; as a response, Massimo D'Alema, the new head of PDS, organized for the 1996 elections the l'Ulivo (Olive Tree) coalition, consisting of the PDS, smaller liberal parties, and small parties from the Christian Democrats.

In 2004 the Olive Tree coalition became the Federation of All United in the Olive Tree (Unite Nell l'Ulivo). In 2005 this coalition aligned with a broader center-left coalition called the Union (L'Unione) in the hopes of capturing the 2006 elections.

CENTRIST PARTIES

After the corruption scandals that hit politics in the 1980s, the change in electoral rules, and the rise of the Italian right and right-wing parties to prominence, the political center in Italy has become difficult ground to hold. Once, the center-right Christian Democrats (Democrazia Cristiana; DC) were the most dominant Italian political party. Their collapse in the 1990s left Italy without a strong centrist party able to stand between left and right. Further, Italy's political atmosphere has become more charged, as former Communists and center-left parties have formed coalitions against the energized right-wing parties such as Forza Italia and Lega Nord.

Major Political Parties

FORWARD ITALY

(Forza Italia; Fl)

The most important right-wing party since the 1990s is Silvio Berlusconi's Forward Italy (Forza Italia; FI). The party and its leader, who served a brief stint as prime minister in 1994 and then again from 2001 onward, are inextricably linked; the party owes its fortunes to the leader, and the leader owes his ability to enter politics to the party network that brought electoral support. Berlusconi owed his rise to prominence to his media empire (three television networks that attained approximately 45 percent of the audience market), built through competition with inefficient state-run media outlets and through his control of the popular Milan football (soccer) team. Berlusconi himself also enjoyed personal acclaim as an entrepreneur who had built his own entertainment empire through his own hard work and had provided Italians with entertainment outside of that provided inefficiently by the state.

In January 1994 Berlusconi created Forza Italia on the basis of his media connections and of the Milan football team's various clubs, which became the equivalent of party cells. Berlusconi and Forza Italia rode a wave of antipolitician sentiment in 1994, but this was not the only political force to bring Berlusconi and his party to power. Berlusconi noticed that in spite of the window of opportunity open in the early 1990s, left-wing parties were numerous and could form their own alliances to return to power; hence, the emerging right wing had to form political alliances as well to pool their voters and resources. In 1994 Berlusconi was able to forge the Freedom alliance among his party, the right-wing Alleanza Nationale (which was popular in the South), and the new party Lega Nord, whose more regionalist agenda remained anti-insider and could deliver northern voters.

FI's and Berlusconi's ideological appeal came from two sources: no stain from political scandals (or from a political past) and adherence to neoliberal policies. The first benefited enormously, as Berlusconi could position himself and his party and alliance against the entrenched interests using the state to maintain their own power. The second built on the first, as Berlusconi could emphasize entrepreneurship, individualism, and a neoliberal economic platform that would lower corruption and bring economic growth (as his own personal history testified). He stressed anticommunism as well, although in the 1990s this tactic does not have the power it did in the cold war. Finally, Berlusconi was seen as a strong individual who could set right Italian politics and sweep away the old corruption.

Berlusconi's coalition collapsed in 1996 after the Northern League pulled out. However, the coalition reformed in 2000, allowing it to form a new government and for Berlusconi to regain the prime ministership. The coalition collapsed again in 2005, but Berlusconi was quickly able to form a new government and remain prime minister.

NATIONAL ALLIANCE

(Alleanza Nationale; AN)

Bringing up a more radical right wing was the Italian Social Movement (MSI), which in 1994 changed its name to MSI–Alleanza Nazionale and in 1995 simply to Alleanza Nationale (AN). Established in 1946, the MSI reflected much of the ideology and worldviews of the discredited (and in 1952 illegal) Fascist Party. In 1972 MSI merged with the Monarchist Party and became known as Movimento Sociale Italiano–Destra Nazionale (Italian Social Movement–National Right), but problems after the 1976 elections led moderate members to break off and form their own party, Democrazia Nazionale (National Democracy).

AN'S policy is anti-Communist and right-wing. This has come to hurt AN, which saw its fortunes start to drop until the 1994 elections, when in a party cartel it reversed the decline. The MSI had a strong organizational framework that the AN appeared mostly to have inherited—branches throughout Italy attached to youth and student movements, to women, to war veterans, and to some trade unions. Originally having roots in the north (where fascism had been at its strongest), the MSI slowly "migrated" south, a process helped when MSI "swallowed" the Monarchist Party. MSI tries to appeal in part to disillusioned youth; its rules permit one to join at the age of 14. While MSI had more of a pseudofascist appeal, AN has tried to moderate this image somewhat while remaining a right-leaning party.

AN ideology is problematic, mostly because party platforms and grassroots support do not necessarily meet, and the party's right-wing image is vague enough to attract many right-wing voters who have no other real party to turn to. AN, as MSI before it, took a strong positive view toward some Western ideals, toward corporatism, anticommunism, lower-middle-class populism (which made it difficult, until the 1990s, to espouse right-wing radical free-market reforms), and more conservative social views (such as

stances against abortion and divorce). Certain aspects of MSI ideology, such as more open admiration for fascism and hints of anti-Semitism and racism, have been dropped or pushed into the background (along with party leaders espousing these views). Most important in the ideology is a sense of "anti-insider" politics: criticisms of the centrist and left-wing parties that had led Italy for so long.

When one turns to the rank-and-file support, however, the ideological picture of AN gets muddled. While a sizable number of supporters still hold to an AN that is oppositionist and outside the system, more supporters now believe that AN should ally itself with other parties and enter the government. Further, against the traditional views of the party, a majority of supporters favor sexual equality; and a majority are not hostile to Catholicism, which contradicts historical anti-Catholic views of MSI and AN. One surprise on the ideological front—both for official AN views and views of supporters—is the lack of anti-immigrant sentiment. Given the influx of immigrant workers and the rise of anti-immigration right-wing politics throughout Europe (especially in France), one would expect a right-wing protofascist party like MSI/IAN to play this card; however, both AN and its supporters have refrained from making anti-immigration policies a centerpiece of party platforms. This does *not* mean that AN will *not* play this card in the future, however.

MSI's biggest problem, which appears to have been overcome in the 1990s with the formation of AN, was the creation of a veil of legitimacy. The MSI had two political stains that it had to wash out: first, its ideological and imagined links with fascism and, second, 1970s right-wing terrorism. In spite of MSI's freedom from corruption scandals, these stains were problematic. Several events helped bring the MSI (and then the AN) into legitimacy and respectability. The first was the collapse of the Christian Democrats and the Communists in 1992; this allowed an opening for new parties to grab up electoral votes. Second was party leader Giafranco Fini's ability to put together a network of political contacts that allowed AN to engage in political alliances in elections—and thus to overcome one of MSI's major problems, political isolation due to lack of political alliances. Third was the political air of 1993–94, when MSI changed its name to AN and when AN linked up with Berlusconi and Forza Italia, whose coattails added to AN's increasing popularity. Berlusconi's open support for AN in 1993—when Berlusconi himself was still popular—helped AN in local elections and propelled the party forward in 1994 national elections. The AN has remained part of Berlusconi's coalition since that time.

NORTHERN LEAGUE

(Lega Nord; LN)

Occasionally, small regionalist parties arise and compete in Italian politics, such as the Union Valdôtaine (drawing from the small Val d'Aosta) or Sardinia's Sardo d'Azione. However, until the 1990s they could not compete with the larger national parties. Only in the 1990s, with the change in electoral rules and the creation and realignment of parties, did one regionalist party arise to play more than a marginal role in politics: the Northern League (Lega Nord; LN). The Northern League began as an association of smaller northern regionalist parties, the most important of which was the Lega Veneta, stemming from Venice. The Venetian League surprised observers in the 1980s and refused to die; when it began to lose popularity, Leagues in other northern cities were already established political forces. In the late 1980s these small regional movements and parties unified into the umbrella Northern League, which in 1990 regional elections scored well, garnering nearly 19 percent of the vote.

The League's growing popularity was greatly helped by the breaking scandals, especially in 1992. These scandals ended the stranglehold the Christian Democrats and Socialists had held in northern towns and brought the Northern League, as the remaining important regional party, into prominence in 1993 local elections and then in 1994 national elections.

The basic ideology of the Northern League is regionalist. The League, rather than taking strong abstract positions, focuses on more concrete issues. One set of issues concerns misuse of public funds by the major parties. The League has supported fiscal reform and lower taxes; relatedly, the League has voiced the outrage of northern voters that their tax money is drained away to Rome and southern Italy, where it is used in corrupt patronage and never finds its way back to honest development in the North. Another set of issues the League supports is pro-market reforms. This stems from the individualist "Protestant Ethic" views of many northern elites and voters: that, as Berlusconi might suggest, development and growth come from hard work by individuals and not through state-led programs or the welfare state. Yet another set of issues is regionalist identity. Although the League is not secessionist, it does exude an antisouthern sentiment, regarding northern Italy as developed and European while seeing southern Italy as underdeveloped, flooded with immigrants and

thieves, controlled by the Mafia, and in general rather immoral. The League is more pro-European than some other parties. One caveat should be mentioned at the end, however. While these are the general sentiments voiced by League leaders and supporters, the Lega Nord, unlike many of the pre-1990s parties, does not really have a formal, worked-out party ideology; this purposive vagueness acts, in a sense, as a "big tent" for general discouragement and disillusionment with southern Italy, the welfare state, and the failures of postwar policies. So instead of formal programs, the League champions general issues such as devolution of political power and anticenter sentiment.

In terms of party organization, the League is not a preeminent example of the modern party, as Forza Italia or the pre-1990s Communists are. The party has a very loose structure, making it more of an umbrella social movement than a true organized party. It does not have the party machine—cells, a party press—that, for example, Forza Italia has. Further, Lega Nord has been wary of electoral alliances; while it did ally itself with Berlusconi in 1994, the League proved to be a less-than-charming partner, and its quick break with Berlusconi brought down the Berlusconi government in 1994, not long after it had formed. In 1996, rather than join an electoral alliance with Forza Italia and Alleanza Nationale, the Northern League decided to go it alone—and its vote count actually increased by a small margin.

The general portrait of the Lega Nord supporter is a male, with less-than-average education, either from the working class or from small individual businesses, who lives in a rural locale. However, given the League's loose structure, determining actual party membership and other party procedures is difficult at present.

Despite the hopes of the outspoken Bossi, electoral support for Lega Nord beyond its northern confines has been slipping, and even in the North Lega Nord does not have the same appeal as in the past. Likely this is because of radical claims that northern regions should secede from Italy, as well as its leader's xenophobic rhetoric. Poor showing in regional and European elections before 2000 were a warning that Lega Nord might be losing steam, and Bossi brought his party back into Berlusconi's alliance before 2001 to save his party a share of political power. In the 2001 elections Lega Nord received less than 4 percent of the overall vote, suggesting that its political base was becoming confined to specific groups. (The party did not gain a single seat in the Chamber of Deputies through proportional representation.) While Lega Nord no longer has the same political clout as several years before, the Freedom House coalition still needs Lega Nord seats in the Senate to maintain its majority there. This means that Bossi remains an important player, and he has continued to threaten to leave the right-wing coalition if his partners do not give in to his demands. While Berlusconi and partners continue to tolerate Bossi, it is uncertain how long they will do so, especially if Lega Nord drops further in the polls in the next parliamentary election.

DEMOCRATICS OF THE LEFT

(Democratici di Sinistra; DS)

This party was formerly the Democratic Party of the Left (PDS). Before the 2001 elections PDS set out to increase its strength by merging with several smaller, minor left-wing parties. The newly expanded center-left party was renamed Democratici di Sinistra (Democrats of the Left, DS). This did not particularly change the party's ideology and policy stance, and it made DS the leading member of the Olive Tree coalition. However, continued lack of agreement over electoral and governance strategies persists between the DS and its chief rival on the left flank, the Communist Refoundation Party (PRC). Until 2005 both parties competed against each other in local races, rather than joining forces against right-wing parties, dividing their electoral strength and keeping them from truly challenging Forza Italia and Freedom House. However, the DS-led Olive Tree coalition united with the PRC and related parties in 2005 to form the Union. This will increase its chances of capturing the 2006 elections.

COMMUNIST REFOUNDATION PARTY

(Partito della Rifondazione Comunista; PRC)

When the former Communist Party renamed itself PDS and softened its platform to the center-left in 1991, the radical left minority decided to maintain a Communist party and ideology. Led by Fausto Bertinotti, a former trade union activist, this group formed the PRC, Communist Refoundation Party, to preserve a more leftist version of Marxism in Italian politics. While the PRC has managed to maintain support among a small portion of the Italian leftist electorate, its electoral strength has been in slow decline, partly because of its more old-fashioned Marxism in a post-Soviet political world, and partly because in comparison to PDS and Olive Tree, PRC alone has been too weak to be the left's challenger to Berlusconi's coalition. PRC originally formed a pact

with PDS and Olive Tree to avoid competition between center-left parties, in order to present a unified front against Berlusconi. However, PRC broke with the Prodi government over the state budget. In 2001 PRC received only 5 percent of the general vote in parliamentary elections; it had received 8.6 percent in 1996. The party elite's desire to maintain organizational and ideological autonomy and to hold to a more unadulterated communism ultimately cost political influence—ironically, after the one moment when an Italian Communist party was finally part of a ruling coalition.

In 1996 PRC and PDS came to agreements about electoral strategies, with one withdrawing in deference to the other in local races so as not to split the left-wing vote against Forza Italia and Berlusconi. The strategy worked, and PRC joined the PDS-led Olive Tree coalition into power—a first for an Italian Communist party. However, the agreement between PDS and PRC lasted only two years, and by 1999 the PRC was out of the government and the governing coalition and had set out on its own. In the wake of this split, some PRC members formed their own separate Communist party, Partito dei Comunisti Italiano (Party of Italian Communists), and returned to Olive Tree and in 2001 added 10 seats to that coalition's count in the Chamber of Deputies (although they received only 1.7 percent of the overall vote)—not enough to give Olive Tree a majority, however. While PRC challenged PDS seats in Senate races, it did not challenge Olive Tree in Chamber of Deputies races, where an unofficial agreement over electoral strategy persisted.

In 2005 the PRC joined a new center-left coalition with the DS in the hopes of winning the 2006 elections.

ITALIAN DEMOCRATIC SOCIALISTS

(Socialisti Democratici Italiani; SDI)

The SDI is the successor to the Italian Socialist Party (PSI), which emerged from World War II with an antifascist image (although not nearly as strong as the Communists' image and legitimacy). In spite of weaker organization than the Communists, the Socialists quickly became the second largest party in Italy. Still the Socialists remained a party with a core of cadres and without a more organized mass base. Throughout the postwar era the Socialists remained a moderate left-wing party: forming governments with the Christian Democrats, trying to act as mediator between sides in the tense atmosphere of 1968. The Socialists provided a degree of stability to Christian Democratic governments, supplying the necessary vote count in Parliament to get new governments off the ground (although not being able to sustain them for long periods of time). The Socialists also took a more moderate ideological and policy line than their Communist brethren: the PSI remained pro-NATO and pro–law and order.

One major problem that the Socialists faced was constructing their own "ground" amid a two-front battle with Christian Democrats and the Communists, in essence to build its own identity separate from both the Communists and Christian Democrats and provide a left-wing "alternative." This "alternative" never materialized, and demoralization in the party continued in the 1970s. Bettino Craxi, party leader and briefly prime minister in the 1980s attempted to change the style of the Socialists; Craxi personalized both the Socialist Party and Italian politics, in this way acting as a legitimate forerunner of Berlusconi's brand of personalized politics. Craxi also tried to make the Socialists into a liberal party supporting modernity and reforms but tailored this image to the regions of the country. In the North the Socialists appealed to entrepreneurs with a stress on fiscal discipline and support of a privatization program, while in the South they advocated using the public sector and relying on clientelism and a degree of patronage (which brought on charges of corruption in the 1990s). When in the 1990s Craxi was under suspicion for corruption, the Socialist Party fell into disgrace along with its leader.

As of 2005 the party was led by Enrico Boselli. It was part of the Olive Tree coalition as well as the larger Union alliance.

FEDERATION OF THE GREENS

(Federazione dei Verdi)

This pro-environmental group entered Parliament following the 1987 elections. While the Greens appear condemned to marginality—averaging around 2.5 percent of the national vote—they were essential to the early success of the center-left Olive Tree coalition, where their small number of votes were crucial for a balance against the right wing. Like Green parties in other European countries, the Verdi focus more on environmental issues than on other political themes; this makes an alliance with center-left parties, which do not support free capitalism, more palatable than an alliance with right-wing parties, which wish to reduce state intervention (thus possibly leading to further unintended market-created environmental problems). The Greens joined the Union coalition in 2005.

DASIY–DEMOCRACY IS FREEDOM

(La Margherita–Democrazia è Libertà)

This party was formed by the merger in 2000 of the Italian People's Party (the DC's major founder) and three smaller centrist parties. In the 2001 elections the PPI-led Margherita managed to gain the second-most votes of all parties in the center-left Olive Tree coalition, reinvigorating the former Christian Democrats and the hopes of centrist parties. In 2005 this party decided against joining the new Olive Tree coalition, although it did agree to join the Union alliance.

Minor Political Parties

Below the major parties and their coalitions are numerous scattered minor parties that appear and disappear or that hang on for decades at a time but gain little representation. The Italian Republican Party was founded in 1894 and managed to survive through the 20th century, seeing some of its better showings in the 1970s and 1980s when its electoral score jumped from 2 percent to 4 percent of the general vote. This party split in the 1990s; both factions (each center-left in political orientation) joined Olive Tree at various times. The Italian Liberal Party, dominant in the 19th century, suffered in competition with the Christian Democrats and Socialists, and by the 1990s had split, with its center-right faction joining Berlusconi's various coalitions. Other local parties manage to gain the occasional parliamentary seat: for example, the Südtiroler Volkspartei, based in Bolzano (a northern province also known in German as Südtirol), gained a handful of parliamentary seats in 2001. Many of these minor parties emerged from splits of other minor parties or formerly important parties on the decline. Because the electoral system supports coalitions, the number of independent parties has not thinned as hoped, and so smaller parties persist, hoping either to gain seats through their own effort or to join larger coalitions with the demand that they gain a token seat in return for not campaigning locally against the major players.

Other Political Forces

Since World War II the military has not been an active player in Italian politics. However, other nonmilitary, nonstate forces have been important: trade unions, organized crime, and for a time terrorist groups. Italy has been noteworthy for waves of strikes, usually increasing with improvements in the economy. Trade unions historically have been more closely allied with leftist political forces, and could be more radical than left-wing parties in Parliament when they called their members out onto the streets. Since the 1980s strikes have been on the decline. This is partly due to economic stagnation in the 1990s and to some deindustrialization making unions irrelevant. (Unions are more prominent in industry and weaker in the service sector, where much of the growth in the European economies has been.) However, Berlusconi's attempts to reign in public spending as per European Union and euro-zone rules have led to increased agitation among unions, and it is possible that another wave of strikes may emerge before too long, should Berlusconi continue to push for austerity policies and decrease state spending on public works and the economy.

Organized crime has been indirectly important to politics for reasons of corruption, especially in southern Italy. Clans and factions have been informal but real structures of power. Through them, patronage and funds for politicians, judges, and other political elites—from bribes to support for a candidate or his/her opponent—made the Mafia a force to be reckoned with. The usual impact of organized crime on politics was in the realm of public policy and funding—state money going to political favorites and kickback schemes. In the 1980s and 1990s the police and judiciary launched attacks on the Mafia and political corruption, with some success. However, the Mafia and corruption are far from defeated, merely under better control than earlier.

Finally, terrorist groups occasionally played important roles in politics when they had the strength and organization to resist efforts by the state to control them. The most infamous group in the 1970s was the Red Brigade, responsible for the kidnapping and murder of Aldo Moro. Since the 1970s state efforts to control terrorist groups have been relatively successful.

National Prospects

Italy has not had one of Europe's more stable political systems—witness the constant changes in governments, the constant dissolutions of Parliament before the end of its five-year term, and the fracturing of parties since the 1990s—but also has not fallen into the same kind of chaos that has threatened other countries. Italy's instability is more a threat to policy efficacy than to the social fabric of the nation. Such instability did make

policy implementation difficult; however, changing coalitions always remained in one part of the political spectrum, so that ruptures were not great and policies could be implemented.

For Italy to continue its march into prosperity, several issues must be addressed. First, there is the issue of corruption and crime. The political system in the 1980s and 1990s was crippled by scandals of political corruption, in particular by widespread and deep structures of party patronage. While patronage had its positive side—breaking class stratification and helping development of various regions, especially those in the South—it also led to recriminations of political favoritism and to the formation of right-wing reactionary groups, especially in the North. Such corruption, in spite of its ability to funnel resources to often needy patrons, also can lead to abuses of power and distraction of policies.

Corruption is not the only part of the dark underside plaguing Italy's politics: there is also the Mafia, especially prominent in southern Italy and Sicily, where Mafia families dominate and in fact are the real power, literally ousting more ineffectual state structures. These Mafia families are involved in a lucrative drug trade, spurring tensions and conflict between organized crime and the state and leading at times to bloodshed. Mafia control makes further centralization and organization of state power and authority problematic. The Mafia also contributes heavily to the problem of official corruption.

Another issue that haunts Italy is xenophobia of right-wing parties and movements, especially in the North. While this phenomenon is not unique to Italy—right-wing xenophobia and racism have emerged as minority movements and parties in Europe, from the Greater Romanian Party to the more threatening Le Pen in France—in Italy this rhetoric has made it into the ruling coalition. The Northern League and its leader, fiery Umberto Bossi, have harangued foreigners, Muslims, Jews, gays, and others, and part of the support for Freedom House and Berlusconi come from disaffected segments of Italian society who fear that foreigners might dilute Italian society and culture.

Italian politics has been more stable in the early 2000s than in the preceding two decades, if by "stability" we mean how long a government remains in power. This has not brought general contentment to Italian politics, however. Berlusconi continues to call out emotional reactions (for and against) from both sides of the political spectrum. His attempts to improve the Italian government's finances through reduction of welfare support and state spending (especially in the economy) led to a wave of strikes in November 2004. Even if his standing among some countries has improved given his talk on terrorism and world politics, he has not been entirely accepted by world leaders and publics. As in past decades, Italy's politics are right-of-center—less because of an overall conservative population and more out of the machinations of the political elite. Revisions to the electoral process have not brought consolidations of parties, and it is uncertain whether Berlusconi's right-wing coalition can long govern as well. As is the situation elsewhere in Europe and the world, the weakening of the left after 1989 has given the right an advantage, and Berlusconi and company rely on this and the leader's media empire as much as on a feeling of national unity. Italian politics retains the undercurrent of fragmentation that has haunted political life since unification in the 19th century. That has not yet led to catastrophe, but it remains a problematic issue for Italian politics.

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REPUBLIC OF IVORY COAST

(République de la Côte d'Ivoire)

By Elizabeth L. Normandy, Ph.D.
Revised by Vasilis Margaras



Slightly larger than the state of New Mexico, Ivory Coast is located in West Africa between Ghana and Liberia. Its coastline borders the North Atlantic Ocean.

There is no single dominant ethnic group in Ivory Coast. Of the approximately 60 ethnic groups, four groups make up over 67 percent of the 17 million population. They are distributed as follows: Baoule, 23 percent; Bete, 18 percent; Senoufou, 15 percent; Malinke, 11 percent. About 3 million non-Ivorian Africans reside in the Ivory Coast, including 300,000 Liberians who have taken refuge in the country as a result of the Liberian civil war. There are also sizable French and Lebanese populations. The country's major religious groups are Muslim, 35 to 40 percent; Christian, 20 to 30 percent; and indigenous religions, 25 to 40 percent.

For more than three decades, Ivorian politics was dominated by President Félix Houphouët-Boigny, who led the country to independence, wrote the constitution, and governed the country until his death in 1993. In the country's first multiparty elections in 1990, Houphouët-Boigny defeated Laurent Gbagbo, a candidate of the "democratic left" coalition. Houphouët received 81.68 percent of the vote, and Gbagbo received 18.32 percent. Alassane Ouattara was named to the newly created post of prime minister by Houphouët-Boigny. Nonetheless, real power remained in the hands of the president, who guided Outtara's decisions from behind the scenes.

On the death of Houphouët-Boigny in 1993, Henri Konan Bédié, Speaker of the National Assembly, assumed the presidency as decreed by law. In the 1995 elections Henri Bédié retained the presidency, winning 96 percent of the vote. Outtara, the most serious challenger to Bédié, was forced to withdraw from the race because of a recently enacted restrictive electoral code.

In 1999 Bédié was overthrown in a military coup led by General Robert Guei. In October 2000 Guei proclaimed himself president after announcing he had won presidential elections, but he was forced to flee in the wake of a popular uprising against his perceived rigging of the polls. In the wake of his ousting, Gbagbo named himself president, setting off a fresh round of violence between his supporters and those of Outtara. An attempted coup failed to oust Gbagbo in 2001. In March 2002 Gbagbo and Ouattara met for the first time since the start of the post-election violence and agreed to work toward reconciliation. In January 2003 Gbagbo accepted a peace deal at talks in Paris. The deal, known as the Marcoussis Peace Accord, proposed a power-sharing government made up of the competing factions, which were generally split along regional lines, with Gbagbo's support drawn mainly from the Christian-dominated South and the opposition mainly in the Muslim-dominated North. The accord also stipulated that the legal age at which someone could run for president would be reduced to 35 years.

As a result of the peace accord, the "consensus" prime minister, Seydou Diarra, was charged with forming a cabinet. Nonetheless, the country remained unstable. In August 2003 French authorities detained a group of suspected mercenaries who were planning

to assassinate Gbagbo. Elections scheduled for October 2005 were postponed by Gbagbo, who invoked a law that he said allowed him to sidetrack the five-year term limit and remain as president. The African Union recommended that Gbagbo should retain his position for one additional year but urged him to appoint a different prime minister, one that would be acceptable to his foes in the northern part of the country.

The System of Government

Ivory Coast has a presidential form of government built on a separation of powers. The system is based on a new constitution adopted in 2000 following the coup by Guei.

EXECUTIVE

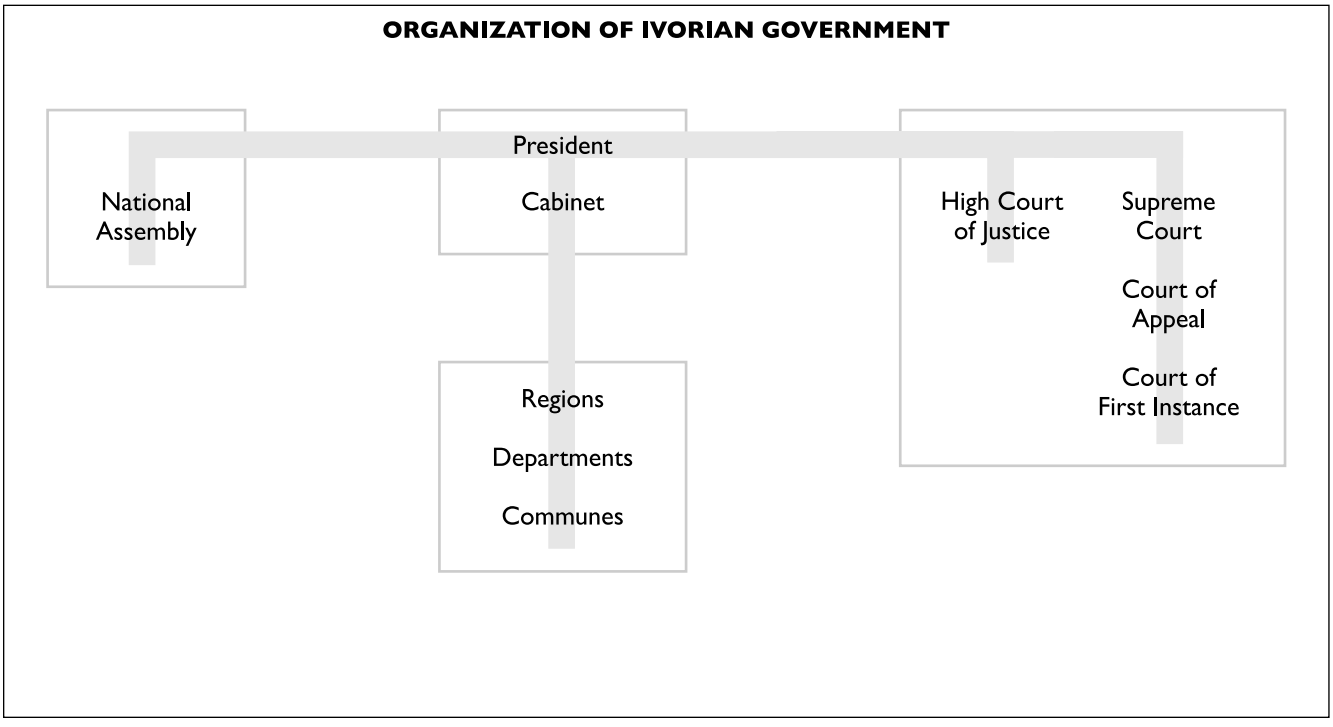
Most political power lies with the presidency, as stipulated by the constitution. The president has the power to submit a bill to a national referendum or initiate legislation in the National Assembly, where approval is almost automatic. He or she may appoint, dismiss, and outline the functions of the cabinet members and may appoint most other high-ranking civil, judicial, and military leaders. The president is also commander in chief of the military and may negotiate and ratify certain treaties.

The president is chosen by a direct national election for a five-year term of office. The constitution stipulates that the president be at least 40 years old, an eligible voter, and not the holder of one of several high political offices; the 2003 peace accord lowered the minimum age to 35 years. The president is elected if he receives a majority of votes cast on the first ballot or, if no candidate receives a majority, through a runoff election between the two top candidates.

LEGISLATURE

Ivory Coast's legislature is the National Assembly, consisting of 225 members. Since 1990 deputies have been selected in multiparty elections, replacing the multicandidate elections established in 1980. Deputies are elected by direct universal suffrage for five-year terms that run concurrently with the term of the president.

According to the constitution, the National Assembly meets in two regular sessions, each lasting about three months. The first session opens in April and the second in October. The primary powers of the National Assembly are the voting of laws and the authorization of taxes. The constitution stipulates that any power not expressly given to the National Assembly is outside its domain. This serves to augment the power of the president, who has fewer constitutional limits on his



power. In practice, the National Assembly has little independence from the president. It does not check the president's powers, nor does he consult it. Rather, its role is to ratify executive decisions in order to give them legitimacy.

In the 2000–01 elections, the Ivorian Popular Front (FPI) won 96 seats, while the Democratic Party of Ivory Coast (PDCI) won 94 votes.

JUDICIARY

The legal system of Ivory Coast is a mixture of customary and French law. The Supreme Court's constitutional section may rule on the constitutionality of bills that have been proposed or passed by the National Assembly but not promulgated. The Court's administrative section is the court of final appeal for cases dealing with government administration and the bureaucracy, and the audit and control section oversees state expenditures and audits state accounts. The High Court of Justice, composed of deputies to the National Assembly, rules on crimes committed by government officials within the line of duty and on charges of treason against high officials, including the president. The judicial system includes a court of appeals and lower courts. Although nominally independent, the judiciary does not ensure due process and is subject to pressure from the executive in political cases.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Local government in Ivory Coast is modeled after the French system. The country is divided into 19 regions, which are futher divided into 58 departments, each governed by a prefect appointed by the president. There are 135 communes, each headed by a competitively elected mayor. The 37 largest towns and cities are governed by municipal councils that are also elected.

The Electoral System

Elections in Ivory Coast are direct; suffrage is universal for those 18 years of age or older. Elections are held every five years. Under a multiparty system adopted in 1990, parties are legally free to organize and run candidates for office. However, election law stipulates that candidates must meet stringent parentage, residency, and citizenship requirements. Changes to the law in 1995 require candidates to prove that both parents were born in Ivory Coast.

The Party System

Prior to 1990 Ivory Coast was in practice a one-party state dominated by the PDCI. The PDCI prevented the rise of a formal opposition by giving prominent persons who might conceivably lead such an opposition high and demanding positions in the government. The total domination of the government by the PDCI helped to make it an unofficial fourth branch of the government. Most important decisions affecting government policy actually were made by the elite of the PDCI.

In 1990 several weeks of strikes and protests of unprecedented scale and intensity revealed intense dissatisfaction with PDCI-controlled government. With the party's popularity at an all-time low and opposition parties covering the entire political spectrum forming underground, the government announced that opposition parties would be recognized officially. In the elections that followed later that year, 26 opposition parties contested the elections.

This domination ended with the 1999 coup by Guei. Following his ouster and Gbagbo's installation as president in 2000, Gbagbo's FIP has been the leading party in the National Assembly, holding 96 of the 225 seats. The PDCI remains powerful, holding 94 seats in the Assembly. Like the country itself, the parties are divided along geographic and religious lines.

Major Political Parties

DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF IVORY COAST

(Parti démocratique de la Côte d'Ivoire; PDCI)

The PDCI was formed in the late 1940s as the Ivorian branch of the African Democratic Rally (Rassemblement Démocratique Africain; RDA). The RDA was an organization formed to encourage independence for French West Africa. Although the French opposed the efforts of the RDA prior to 1951, after that date the French withdrew their support of other African groups and then allowed the RDA—and its branch, the PDCI—to dominate politics in the region. Both the RDA and the PDCI were founded by Houphouët-Boigny. The PDCI was the sole legal party between 1963 and 1990.

Prior to 1990 Houphouët-Boigny maintained his control of the party and the government through strict repression of violence and co-opting of the opposition. During the 1990 election campaign the PDCI used its control over political resources, such as the news media and government facilities, to ensure that it won the election. In 1992 the PDCI-controlled government used heavy-handed tactics to suppress the opposition. Prior to the 1995 elections the government used lethal force to control antigovernment demonstrations that had been banned by decree.

As of 2005 the party held 94 seats in the National Assembly, second only to the FPI's 96 seats.

IVORIAN POPULAR FRONT

(Front Populaire Ivorienne; FPI)

The FPI became an important party during the 1990s, and it gained even more power when Laurent Gbagbo proclaimed himself president in late 2000. In 2001 the FPI emerged as the biggest single party in parliamentary elections, gaining 96 seats out of 225.

RALLY FOR REPUBLICANS

(Rassemblement des Républicains; RDR)

The Rally for Republicans (RdR) is a party led by Alassane Ouattara, who is regularly reported to be the inspiration behind the former rebel movement. The party's main support comes from the country's northern region. Ouattara was banned from the presidential election in 2000 because of his foreign origin. As a result, RdR boycotted the presidential and parliamentary elections of 2000–01. Outtara was awarded a certificate of Ivorian nationality in 2002. In August 2002 the party was given four ministerial posts in the new government as part of an effort to help stabilize the country.

Minor Political Parties

There are numerous smaller parties in Ivory Coast. Among those that won seats in the 2000–01 elections are the Ivorian Workers Party (Parti Ivorian des Travailleurs; PIT); the Union of Democrats of Côte d'Ivoire (Union des Démocrates de Côte d'Ivoire); and the Movement of Future Forces (Mouvement des Forces de l'Avenir).

Other Political Forces

THE REBELS

The initial rebel group was the Ivory Coast Patriotic Movement, known by its acronym MPCI. When the MPCI stopped fighting the government in late 2002, two new groups attacked from the west. Both the Movement for Justice and Peace (MJP) and the Ivorian Popular Movement of the Great West (MPIGO) were included in the January 2003 round-table talks at Marcoussis in France that brought the war to a close. But it is alleged by many that both MJP and MPIGO have such close links to MPCI that they are effectively satellite movements under MPCI control. After the Marcoussis peace agreement, all three rebel movements fused into a group known as the New Forces. Guillaume Soro, the organization's political leader, announced that he would not present himself as a presidential candidate in 2005. When President Gbagbo delayed those elections, the African Union recommended that he appoint a prime minister with executive power who would be acceptable to all parties; Soro's supporters called for Soro to take that position. As of November 2005, however, Gbabgo had declined to make this appointment.

National Prospects

Once a country of stability and economic growth, Ivory Coast is today in crisis. Thousands of people died in the civil war that began after the elections in 2000, and the local and national economy has been devastated. The war is now officially over, and rebel leaders have been given seats in the government. However, the rebels still control the country's North, and plans to demobilize and disarm them have so far produced modest results. Elections were due in 2005 but were postponed by Gbabgo. In the meantime, 4,000 French peacekeepers are monitoring the cease-fire line across the middle of the country while a further 6,000 UN troops have also been deployed in the country.

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JAMAICA

By Thomas D. Anderson, Ph.D.
Revised by Soeren Kern



Jamaica is one of the Greater Antilles with an area of about 4,200 square miles lying south of Cuba and west of Haiti in the Caribbean Sea. It is a parliamentary democracy that was granted independence from the British Empire on August 6, 1962. The capital city is Kingston. Its population is roughly 2.6 million and largely speaks English. Slightly more than three-fourths of the population is black, and another one-fifth is of mixed ancestry. Whites, Chinese, and others make up the remainder. Although about half of the population is Christian (largely Protestant), most of the rest identify with various spiritual faiths, the most important of which in Rasta Farianism, which originated in Jamaica. Agriculture is a major feature of the landscape, with about a quarter of the surface devoted to field and tree crops. However, bauxite mining, light manufacturing, and tourism are the most significant sectors of the economy.

The System of Government

Jamaica is a constitutional parliamentary democracy modeled after the British system. It has a bicameral legislature.

EXECUTIVE

The chief of state is the British monarch, represented by a governor-general appointed by the monarch on the advice of the Jamaican prime minister. The governor-general is advised by the six-member Privy Council. Effective executive power is held by the prime minister, who is leader of the majority party in the House of Representatives, to which the prime minister and cabinet are responsible. In 2003 the government of Prime Minister Percival Patterson announced a desire to create a republican form of government by 2007.

LEGISLATURE

The bicameral Parliament consists of the House of Representatives and the Senate. The House has 60 members elected by direct suffrage to five-year terms. The 21-member Senate is appointed by the governor-general: 13 members on the advice of the prime minister and 8 on the advice of the leader of the opposition. Cabinet members may be appointed from either the House or the Senate. Although Parliament is the preeminent legal authority, it is effectively under the control of the prime minister.

Bills may be introduced by either body, except for money bills, which must originate in the House. Although the Senate may delay passage of a bill by voting it down, the House may override the action by passing the bill a second time. Senate approval is required for constitutional amendments. Parliamentary standing committees handle legislative business under direction of the prime minister and his cabinet. On advice from the prime minister, the governor-

general may dissolve the legislature and call for now elections at any time. Otherwise elections are held at five-year intervals.

JUDICIARY

The judicial system is based on English common law and practices. The high courts are the Supreme Court and the Court of Appeals. The Supreme Court consists of the chief justice and other judges. The chief justice is appointed by the governor-general on the advice of the prime minister and in consultation with the leader of the opposition. The other judges also are appointed by the governor-general on the advice of the Judicial Service Commission, which is chaired by the chief justice. Appeals from the Supreme Court go to the Court of Appeals, which is the highest court in Jamaica. Further appeals may be sent to the Privy Council in London, which is the ultimate court of appeals.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

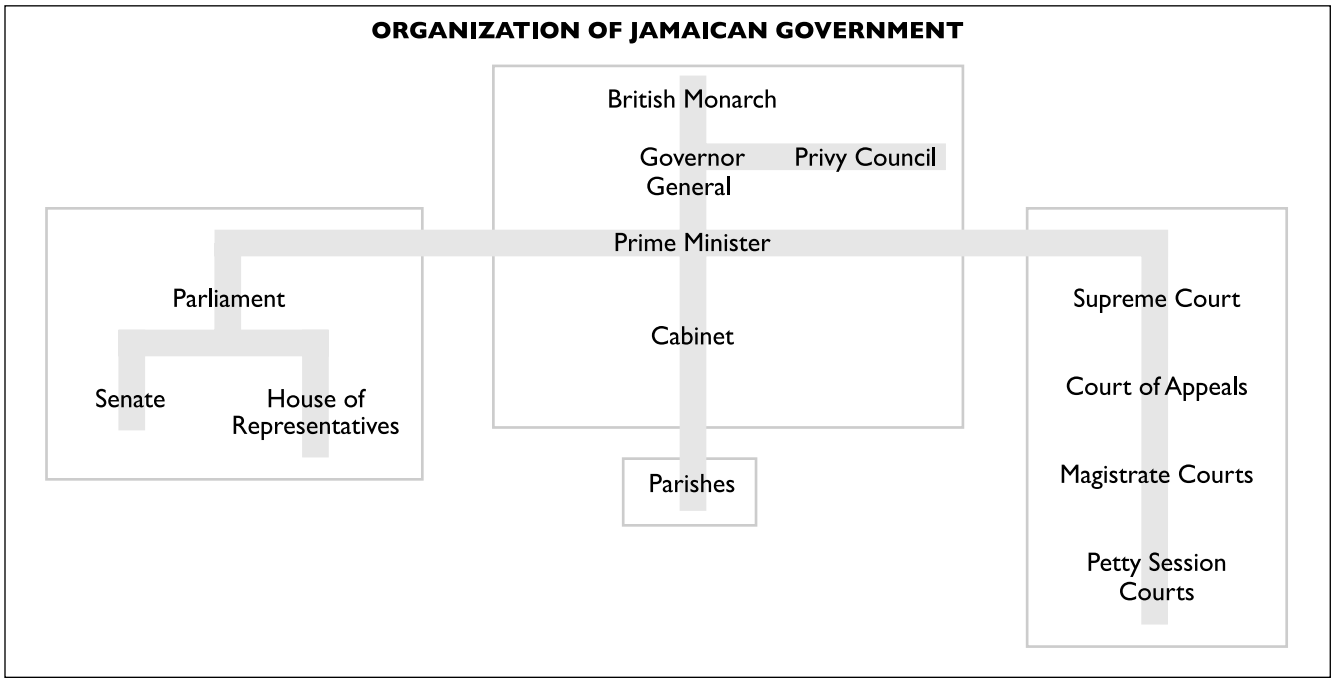
For administrative purposes, Jamaica is divided into 14 parishes; for local government purposes, Kingston and St. Andrew are grouped in the Kingston and St. Andrew Corporation, which includes the principal metropolitan area. Each parish has an elected council that administers local affairs.

The Electoral System

National elections have occurred in Jamaica since 1944. Suffrage is universal for citizens age 18 or older. Elections to the House of Representatives are held at least every five years, and seats are won by simple plurality in single-member constituencies. A nominal cash deposit is required for those who stand for office and is forfeited should the candidate receive less than 12.5 percent of the constituency vote. The boundaries of the constituencies are reviewed periodically by a standing committee in Parliament. In general, elections have been fair, although allegations of fraud were widespread after the election of 1976.

The Party System

The first open demand for greater self-government in the British West Indian possession came in 1936, when Jamaican expatriates in New York City founded the Jamaican Progressive League. This period was one of growing labor strife in the British West Indies. It began when an attempt to organize sugar workers on St. Kitts was suppressed. Two years later a general strike began in Trinidad, and related strikes and demonstrations spread to other British territories. London's reaction was to legalize unions and widen the franchise. What



next evolved was a hybrid political structure peculiar to the British Caribbean.

Although conditions differed, those that developed in Jamaica were somewhat archetypal: a two-party, two-union system with labor and political elements intertwined but still distinguishable. The pairings were the Jamaica Labour Party (JLP) and the Bustamante Industrial Trades Union, arrayed against the Peoples National Party (PNP) and the National Workers Union. The unions were very similar in composition. The leaders of each normally serve in Parliament, and both unions were blanket types in that a wide cross section of worker categories was represented. A significant event in 1952 was the expulsion from the PNP of the "Four H's"—Ken Hill, Frank Hill, Arthur Henry, and Richard Hart—for espousing Marxist doctrines in violation of party rules. The policies of the PNP have varied little since the time. External influences have helped to shape the distinctive non-Marxist union/party forms, such as U.S. and Western European governments and labor unions. Especially important was the Scandinavian example of worker participation in control of an industry's operation rather than its ownership. Two towering figures had major roles in these events. Alexander Bustamante first gained national stature when he was arrested and imprisoned following labor unrest in 1938. His defense lawyer was Norman Manley, considered a national hero in Jamaica and a founder of the PNP.

The party system is open and well developed. There are no barriers to the entry of new parties or independent candidates, but none of the former and few of the latter have fared well in competition with the disciplined organizations of the two major parties. Both the PNP and the JLP are organized by constituency. Since the early years, the party structures have been more influential than those of the unions. Both parties maintain youth organizations that provide the core of their forces during campaigns as well as training for the leadership of the future. Campaign expenditures are limited by law, but few details are public knowledge. It is generally assumed that both parties receive major contributions from business and industrial enterprises.

Election campaigns are well organized and fiercely contested—unfortunately in recent years this has included serious violence. In the 1980 campaign an estimated 500 people died in campaign-related incidents. Much of the violence is attributed to youth wings of the parties, which attempt to control sections of Kingston and exclude campaigning by their opponents in these sectors.

Most violence occurs in the poorest neighborhoods where each party competes strongly for a sector of the vote that had been a deciding factor in a recent election. The 1972 and 1976 successes of the PNP were attributed to the left-wing appeals to the urban poor by Michael Manley (son of Norman Manley), whereas his failure to improve their lot and a 30 percent unemployment rate was decisive in the rout of the PNP in 1980.

In 1983 the ruling JLP called a snap election that the PNP decided not to contest. Prime Minister Edward Seaga sought to capitalize on a wave of popular support for his role in backing the invasion of Grenada in order to reaffirm his leadership. The opposition boycotted on the grounds that the voter lists had not been updated to include 100,000 new voters. As a result, the JLP won all 60 seats in Parliament, leaving Jamaica without an official opposition for the first time. It was feared that such one-party rule would harm the political system, but the PNP remained active and because the JLP permitted public participation in the House of Assembly, a lively exchange of views continued.

Major Political Parties

JAMAICA LABOUR PARTY (JLP)

The JLP was founded by Alexander Bustamante in 1943, after he took his Bustamante Industrial Trade Union (BITU) out of association with the PNP in a dispute over that party's advocacy of Jamaican independence. Most of the JLP's support came from the workers, whereas the leadership was primarily from businesses and professionals. Initially opposed to independence, the JLP first came to power in 1944 when Jamaica was granted self-government. It lost power from 1955 to 1962 but presided over the transfer of sovereignty in 1962. From 1972 to 1980 it again served as an opposition party. The JLP held power again until defeat by the PNP in February 1993. The scale of the loss (the JLP won only eight seats) was such that the JLP contended that the election was the most fraudulent in Jamaican history and that they would refuse to contest any by-elections until electoral reforms were implemented. They did, however, drop 14 of 16 court challenges in specific constituencies.

In its early years, the party was dominated by Bustamante, but, following his retirement in the mid-1960s, the strength of the constituency organizations increased as greater democracy was introduced. The

party's political stance has always been right-of-center, with emphasis on free enterprise, foreign investment, and economic expansion as the best strategies to improve conditions for the island's poor. Along with a strong rural base, the JLP also draws strength from the social elite. The 1993 election defeat caused Seaga in 1995 to poll the party delegates regarding his standing. His version of the result (critics had their doubts) was a 78 percent approval rating, and he remained in the leadership post.

In national election of 1992 the party won only 10 seats in the legislature, but in 2002 it captured 47 percent of the vote and 26 seats, and it served as the main opposition party.

PEOPLES NATIONAL PARTY (PNP)

The PNP was founded in 1939 by Norman Manley. Its early policy thrust was Jamaican independence and an end to the dominance of British capital on the island. In its early years, it relied heavily on Bustamante's union for support, but, after Bustamante split with the party in 1943, it eventually developed an organization that won support both within the middle class and among labor when Manley organized the National Workers' Union in the 1950s.

Despite its early strength among the business and professional community under the leadership of Norman Manley, the party moved sharply to the left after the founder's death in 1969, when his son Michael took over. The younger Manley had been an NWU organizer and leader, and he increased the appeal of the party to the urban poor and younger voters. As prime minister from 1972 to 1980, Manley pursued a socialist policy that included nationalization of foreign holdings and social programs such as a literacy campaign, agricultural collectivization, and government-funded education through the university level. Manley identified Jamaica with the Third World and nonaligned movements and expressed solidarity with the Caribbean Marxist governments in Cuba and Grenada.

During Manley's eight years as prime minister Jamaica experienced a 17 percent drop in its economy, an increase in unemployment from 20 percent to 30 percent, and an accumulation of foreign debt that reached to over a billion U.S. dollars. The reaction of the voters was a resounding defeat of his party, although Manley retained his own seat in the House. An additional factor in this rejection was the attempt by Fidel Castro to provide money and political advice in support of the Manley campaign. Newspaper reports of these activities both swayed some voters and induced a wider turnout by others.

Despite this down period, the PNP retained is traditional solid base of support and took advantage of errors and a stagnant economy during the subsequent terms of Edward Seaga to return to power in the election of February 1988. Ill health induced Manley to give way to Percival Patterson in March 1992, and he led the PNP to victory in 1993, 1997, and 2002. The 2002 victory marked the first time any Jamaican political party has won four consecutive general elections since the introduction of universal suffrage to Jamaica in 1944.

Minor Political Parties

In the context of Jamaica's dominant two-party structure, the political alternatives could usually be more accurately termed factions. However, in October 1995 the former JLP chairman and heir apparent to Edward Seaga as party leader, Bruce Golding, formed the National Democratic Movement made up of dissidents from the major parties. However, it did not win any seats in the last two elections.

The New Beginnings Movement (NBM), with several hundred adherents, is a minor political party with only a slight political impact. The Rasta Farians ("Rastas") of the country, despite their relative informal organizational status, could be a potent political force should they decide collectively to take positions on specific issues. The movement has spread widely throughout the Caribbean as well as into Anglo-America and Britain but remains most influential in its land of origin and especially in the interior highlands (the "Cockpit" country).

Other Political Forces

Jamaicans for Justice (JFJ) is a nonpartisan human rights group that lobbies for change in the judicial system. JFJ has pushed the government to implement public policies that improve police accountability and ensure that Jamaicans have equal access to fair, correct and impartial treatment. The JFJ was especially active in the lead-up to the referendum on ratification of Jamaica's participation in the Caribbean Court of Justice (CCJ). In December 2003 three bills aimed at establishing the CCJ were tabled in the Senate, and in January 2004 JFJ filed a suit challenging, among other

things, the constitutionality of the proposed method of establishment of the Court as the final court of appeals, as did four other organizations. As a result, the Senate debate on the bills was postponed to allow for the hearing of the cases in court.

National Prospects

Jamaica's political system is stable. However, the country's serious economic problems have exacerbated social problems and have become the subject of political debate. While elections have often been marred by violence, their results have always been accepted and, on the whole, political institutions have managed to retain their legitimacy. With the downturn of the bauxite market and the increasing competition for tourist dollars (especially from Cuba), the prospects for economic growth appear best in the expansion of the manufacturing sector. Expansion of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) to Mexico, along with the continued exclusion of the rest of the Caribbean, has raised serious concerns about the likelihood of such expansion. For example, in 1997 the apparel industry suffered its first downturn in 20 years, and Mexico's membership in NAFTA was considered a chief explanation.

Jamaica is struggling to overcome lawlessness that has given it one of the world's highest murder rates and threatens to jeopardize its tourism industry, the main foreign exchange earner. The government has at times deployed army units to suppress violent unrest.

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JAPAN

(Nihon/Nippon)

By Richard Leitch, Ph.D.
Revised by Soeren Kern



Japan is an island nation-state located in northeastern Asia between the North Pacific Ocean and the Sea of Japan, approximately 450 miles east of China. The Japanese archipelago consists of roughly 3,300 islands, but the four largest islands—Honshu, Kyushu, Hokkaido, and Shikoku—account for 97 percent of Japan's land area and are home to 98 percent of Japan's approximately 127 million people.

The System of Government

Japan is a constitutional monarchy with a parliamentary democracy. The monarch, known in Japan as the emperor, is chief of state but has very little authority. The prime minister as head of the government is the most important executive in the government.

EXECUTIVE

Executive authority is vested in a cabinet, numbering some 20 members, all of whom must be civilians. The cabinet consists of the prime minister, and chief cabinet secretary, ministers of state with portfolio, and several directors general of agencies, all without portfolio. The constitution stipulates that the prime minister selects and may dismiss other members of the cabinet and also states that the prime minister, as well as a majority of the cabinet ministers, must be members of the Diet. Since ministerial appointments are usually made as a reward for political loyalty to the prime minister and/or factions within the ruling party or parties, tradition has held that only under extraordinary circumstances would a member of the cabinet not also be a member of the Diet. Most often, therefore, cabinet appointments by the prime minister are considerations of political exigency rather than selections of experts on the policy facing the various ministries and agencies.

The power of the cabinet is limited by its relationship to the Diet, especially to the Lower House. Cabinet members are required to attend the sessions of both houses of the Diet and the meetings of the committees relevant to their appointment, and to reply to questions raised in these forums. In policy, the power of the prime minister is checked in legislative matters primarily by party members of the Diet—particularly its leaders—and to a lesser extent by the leaders of the opposition parties in the Diet. Cabinet power is also limited by the role of bureaucrats in the drafting and implementation of legislation: the first because of their relatively greater knowledge of the specifics of a policy issue and the second because of their ability to enforce the law. At the height of bureaucratic involvement in the process of policy formulation, it was estimated that more than four-fifths of all legislation that reached the floor of the Diet was initiated by civil servants and presented through the cabinet.

The most significant check that the legislative branch holds over the cabinet is the power consti-

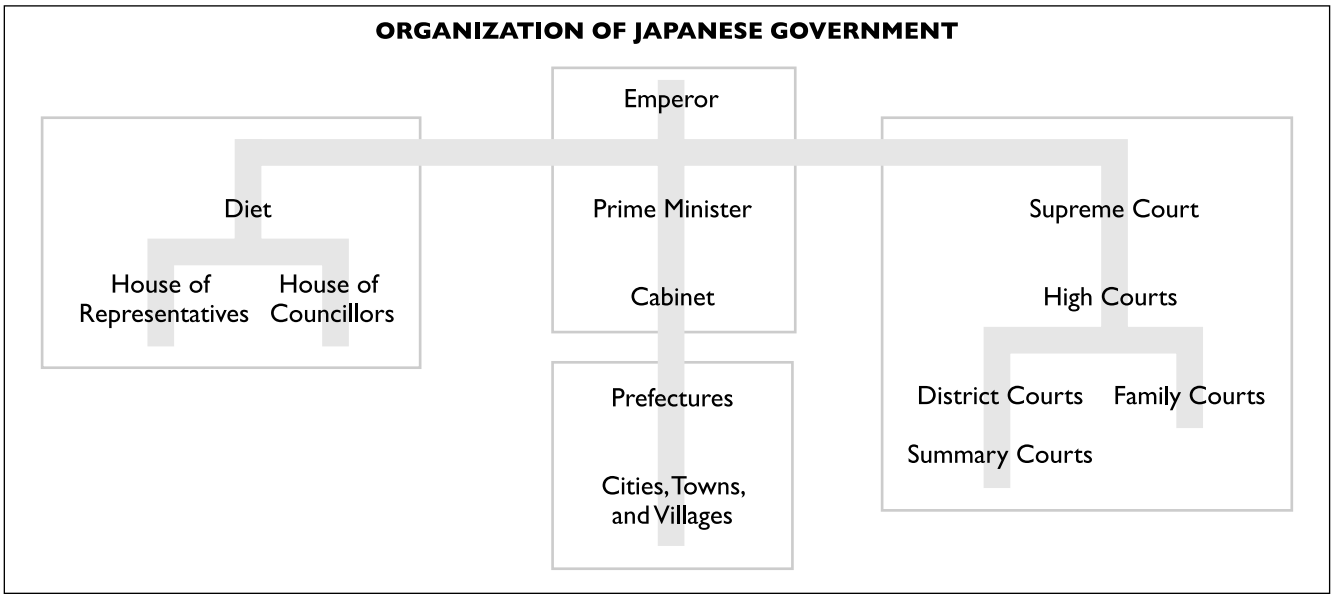
tutionally delegated to the Lower House to present no-confidence resolutions against the cabinet. The Upper House of the legislature is not empowered to present no-confidence motions, and the cabinet does not have the authority to dissolve the Upper House. If the Lower House passes a no-confidence motion (or rejects a confidence motion), the cabinet must resign en masse.

As is the case with all parliamentary democracies, Japan's prime minister is chosen from the ranks of the legislative branch. From its creation in 1955 until the general election of October 1993, the Liberal Democratic Party either held a majority of seats in the formerly 511-member Lower House of the legislature (therefore, at least 256 seats) or was able to win the support of minor parties or party independents in the unusual event that it did not win a majority of seats (only between 1976 and 1980 was this the case). Technically, these unusual situations would have made such an arrangement a coalition government, but because of the preponderance of LDP power in the relationship or the subsequent decision of the non-LDP representatives to change their party affiliation to the more powerful and better organized LDP, the instability inherent in a coalition government was virtually eliminated. Therefore, because of this LDP dominance, from 1955 to 1993 all prime ministers of Japan were members of the Liberal Democratic Party.

Conflict between the executive and legislative branches over legislation has traditionally been less frequent than is often the case in those nation-states that have a presidential form of government. Conflict between the legislative and executive branches was also lessened during the LDP reign because of the ritualized opposition role played by other political parties. The tactics of opposition parties were often determined well in advance of the presentation of an issue before the Diet, and, as their position was shared with members of the ruling LDP, everyone knew what was expected of the respective parties when the issue was ultimately presented. Conflict between the executive and legislative branches in Japan has also been mitigated because most prime ministers have been weak leaders in terms of innovative or bold policy agendas and have instead arrived at the position as a result of their seniority within the party, their ability to raise funds for the party, or sheer happenstance.

LEGISLATURE

Legislative authority is vested in a bicameral legislature called the Kokkai (Diet), consisting of the roughly 250-member Upper House, the Sangiin (House of Councillors), and the relatively more powerful 480-member Lower House, the Shugiin (House of Representatives). Of these, 180 are elected from 11 multimember constituencies by proportional representation, and 300 are elected from single-member constituencies. Members of the House of Representatives are elected for four-year terms, but as Japan has a parliamentary system, the House may be dissolved at any time during this four-year term and new elections held. Often, early elections are called by the prime minister when public opinion polls are favorable, making it likely that the will be reelected by an approving electorate. During the period between 1955 and 1993, during the Lib-



eral Democratic Party unchallenged dominance, dissolution of the Lower House for this reason was not uncommon. Indeed, the only time during this period that Lower House members served the duration of their four-year terms was between 1972 and 76); the average term lasted approximately 2½ years.

While "snap elections" called by the prime minister are the most frequent reason for early termination of a representative's term in office, elections are also required following a successful vote of no confidence (or rejection of a confidence resolution) against the cabinet by the Lower House, or in the event of a vacancy in the post of the prime minister, or if the cabinet resigns en masse.

In all three events described above, the composition of the House of Councillors is not affected. Members serve fixed, six-year terms, with half of the body up for election every three years. Although constitutionally weaker than the Lower House, the Upper House does have some power to influence the specifics of legislation or to delay the legislative process.

As a result of U.S. influence in drafting Japan's postwar constitution, operations in the Japanese Diet are similar to that of the U.S. Congress. Most debate on proposed legislation takes place at the committee level. Both houses of the Diet have standing and special committees, with the Lower House committees approximating the jurisdictions of the various government ministries and agencies and those of the Upper House relevant to national policy rather than to administrative matters. There are 16 standing committees in both houses, each with its counterpart in the other, and two additional standing committees (science and technology, and the environment) in only the Lower House. All are granted the right to conduct investigations of the actions of the government offices relevant to their charges, and the standing committees have their own investigative branches staffed by researchers and policy specialists. Representation on standing committees is apportioned according to the relative strength of each party's representation in the appropriate house, with chairmanships traditionally assigned to members of the ruling party or, in the case of a coalition government, ruling parties. Special committees are formed if the issue in question falls outside the scope of the standing committees and are disbanded after their findings have been reported to the Diet.

There are three distinct research offices that assist two distinct parts of policy making. Both the Lower House Legislative Bureau and the National Diet Library Research and Legislation Office assist Diet members in drafting bills. Cabinet bills are rarely the initiative of

TERMS IN OFFICE OF POSTWAR PRIME MINISTERS

Prime Minister	Term in Office
Higashikuni Naruhiko	August 1945–October 1945
Shidehara Kijuro	October 1945–May 1946
Yoshida Shigeru	May 1946–May 1947
Katayama Tetsu	May 1947–March 1948
Ashida Hitoshi	March 1948–October 1948
Yoshida Shigeru	October 1948–December 1954
Hatoyama Ichiro	December 1954–December 1956
Ishibashi Tanzan	December 1956–February 1957
Kishi Nobusuke	February 1957–July 1960
Ikeda Hayato	July 1960–November 1964
Sato Eisaku	November 1964–July 1972
Tanaka Kakuei	July 1972–December 1974
Miki Takeo	December 1974–December 1976
Fukuda Takeo	December 1976–December 1978
Ohira Masayoshi	December 1978–July 1980
Suzuki Zenko	July 1980–November 1982
Nakasone Yasuhiro	November 1982–November 1987
Takeshita Noboru	November 1987–June 1989
Uno Sosuke	June 1989–August 1989
Kaifu Toshiki	August 1989–August 1991
Miyazawa Kiichi	August 1991–August 1993
Hosokawa Morihiro	August 1993–April 1994
Hata Tsutomu	April 1994–June 1994
Murayama Tomiichi	June 1994–January 1996
Hashimoto Ryutaro	January 1996–July 1998
Obuchi Keizo	July 1998–April 2000
Mori Yoshiro	April 2000–April 2001
Koizumi Junichiro	April 2001–

the cabinet members themselves but, as the result of bureaucratic initiative and research, are often referred to as "government bills."

Zoku refer to those policy and issue-related realms in which Diet members have specialist knowledge or experience, and they act to protect the interests of affected groups by intervening in administrative and legislative matters on their behalf. For example, among others, there is an agriculture and forestry group (*norin-zoku*), a construction group (*kensetsu-zoku*), and a commerce and industry group (*shoko-zoku*). Under the multimember districts of the pre-1996 electoral system, on average, three to five representatives would hail from each district, with there rarely being two *zoku* representatives from the same district. Unless under exceptional circumstances, each representative would establish one *zoku* affiliation, which was coordinated by the LDP.

The *zoku* phenomenon was once seen as reflecting the close ties between members of the LDP, their counterparts in government ministries and agencies, and the special interest groups that they represented. This collaborative relationship became known as an "iron triangle" or, when it applied to the big-business realm of policy making, "Japan, Inc." Such a generalized, simplistic view obfuscates the conflict that was often inherent among the three groups, and it seems especially inapplicable in the post-1993, post–economic boom era.

Under Japan's revised, single-seat electoral system, representatives are now expected by the party (or compelled if they want to win a subsequent term) to develop multiple *zoku* affiliations. In contrast to the earlier era when *zoku* representatives could be considered experts on policy relating to that *zoku,* the result under the new system may be that less-than-knowledgeable Diet representatives come to rely on bureaucratic knowledge and assistance on those issues that fall outside of their primary *zoku* expertise even more than they had before. On the other hand, the likelihood of collusion among special interest groups, politicians, and bureaucrats—formerly accepted by the electorate as part of politics, but now openly criticized—may likely be mitigated.

It is normally the case that bills and other matters requiring Diet approval are first referred to the appropriate committee or committees for deliberation and then presented to the plenary session for a vote. Exception to this practice is given to those matters deemed so urgently in need of immediate legislative action that they must sidestep the committee channeling process. Following full-house deliberation, these issues are voted upon in the plenary session. Far more frequent than immediate-action cases but again exceptional relative to the number of bills first brought before committees are those significant items over which the ruling party (or parties) and the opposition will clearly be at odds. In these instances, which are termed important or "confrontational" bills, the item is introduced before the plenary session together with an explanation as to why the item is important enough to merit exception from the normal legislative channels. It is sure then to evoke debate during the plenary session. Although such a bill is not acted upon when introduced but is instead referred to the appropriate committee or committees, with an important bill's introduction before the full house, the stage has been set for backroom brokering and negotiations between the parties. Failing an interparty agreement before the bill once again reaches the plenary session for a vote, well-orchestrated, vitriolic harangues and displays of vote-stalling tactics by the party or parties that realize the vote may be against their cause are not uncommon.

The Diet is convened for any of three distinct sessions: regular, extraordinary, and special. By law, regular sessions must be held at least once a year. They are opened in December and last for 150 days. Extraordinary sessions are most often convened when the cabinet determines the need for such a session or when one-fourth of the membership of either house requests such a session. Special sessions are held in accordance with Article 54 of the constitution, which stipulates that upon dissolution of the House of Representatives, "there must be a general election of members of the House of Representatives within forty days from the date of dissolution, and the Diet must be convoked within thirty days from the date of the election."

The term of an extraordinary or special session is somewhat flexible, as it is decided by agreement of both houses, with the Lower House decision binding if no agreement can be reached. Yet expedience and efficiency are essential during any of these sessions, for a bill that is not approved by both houses during the same session cannot be carried over to the next session unless both houses agree to continue deliberations at the committee level. A Diet session can also be extended, in accordance with the procedure for determining the initial term of an extraordinary or special session, although the number of extensions permitted is limited to one for a regular session and two for extraordinary or special sessions. For the LDP, which from 1955 to 1989 either held an absolute majority in both houses or had the support of smaller parties when it did not, extending sessions or pro-

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES ELECTION RESULTS

	2000	2003	2005
Liberal Democrats	233	237	296
Komeito	31	34	31
United Social Democratic	—	19	67
Democratic Party of Japan	127	178	113
Japan Communist Party	20	9	9
Liberal Party	22	—	—
Liberal League	—	1	—
Conservative	7	4	—
Independent/Other	17	11	24
Total	480	480	480

longing the life of a bill was a matter of intraparty, not interparty, concern. But once it lost its majority in the Upper House following the July 1989 election, the LDP was forced to consider more seriously the influence of the opposition.

The constitution establishes the primacy of Lower House decisions over those of the Upper House in four areas: enactment of laws, passage of the budget, approval of treaties, and designation of the prime minister. If the two houses vote differently on a bill, a joint committee is convened to create a compromise bill that is returned to both houses for action. In such instances, if the Upper House still votes differently from the Lower House or if agreement cannot be reached through the deliberations of a compromise committee, the decision of the Lower House prevails. Of significance, if the budget is not passed by the Upper House, then the administration continues to operate on a budget equivalent to that of the preceding fiscal year.

Before the LDP's loss of its majority in the House of Councillors following the election of 1989, the convocation of a joint committee was for 33 years a rarity. But since 1989—and especially since 1993—the joint committee has become more frequent. The constitution stipulates that if the two houses cannot agree on a compromise version, the measure becomes law if approved by two-thirds or more of Lower House members present (Article 59). Yet since no party has ever held two-thirds of the seats in the Lower House, this scenario is possible only as a result of party alliances. In fact, the only period when these two-thirds alliances were struck was in the early years of LDP rule, and the most recent successful Lower House override of a measure other than those mentioned above (budget, treaties, and designation of the prime minister) was in 1957.

The 1996 election was the first conducted under a new electoral system that eliminated multimember districting in an effort to reduce corruption, decrease party factionalism, and create more cohesive parties in the Diet.

JUDICIARY

Article 81 of the constitution specifies that the Supreme Court is "the court of last resort with power to determine the constitutionality of any law, order, regulation, or official act." While the Supreme Court has the power of judicial review, with minor exceptions it has rarely been invoked, as the Court has taken a decidedly apolitical stance on issues involving constitutionality. On those infrequent rulings, the Court has generally maintained a status quo, pro-government, pro-public stance, in contrast to a confrontational, progressive, or individual rights position.

The Supreme Court consists of 15 members, 14 of whom are selected by the Diet from a list provided by the Court itself, while the chief justice of the Court is appointed by the emperor on the recommendation of the cabinet. Therefore, in theory, the executive, legislative, and judicial branches are responsible for determining who will serve in these 15 posts, but the actual power of appointment rests with the cabinet (Article 79). The name of justices are brought before the electorate at the first general election of members of the Lower House following the justices' appointment and are reviewed again at the first Lower House election following a lapse of 10 years and every 10 years thereafter in the same manner. A simple majority of those votes cast is needed for both continuity and termination of one's term of office. Yet because the office itself rarely questions the workings and decisions of either the executive or the legislative branch through judicial review, the members of the Supreme Court are nearly anonymous to the general electorate, and never has one who has sought a continuation of service not been returned.

In addition to the Supreme Court, which is at the pinnacle of a hierarchic judicial structure that allows for appeal of decisions, adjudication of criminal and

civil matters occurs in Japan's 8 high courts, 50 district courts, 50 family courts, and some 450 summary courts. At lower levels of adjudication, however, for reasons of bringing embarrassment to those involved and a lack of willingness to air personal matters in public forums, Japanese have traditionally preferred to settle disagreements through the payment of compensation deemed appropriate by both parties in a dispute or, failing that, through mediation that does not involve the court system. The number of attorneys is therefore low relative to other democracies, especially the United States.

There is a further explanation for the low number of civil proceedings handled by the Japanese court system, and that is the inaccessibility of the system to ordinary citizens. Japan's Civil Proceedings Law, under which civil matters are adjudicated, has not been revised in more than 70 years. The procedures are archaic, as is the language, written in classical, literary Japanese, used to explicate those proceedings.

Adjudication is the purview of the judges themselves, and with the exception of the Supreme Court, in which most hearings involve only five of its 15 members, cases at all levels of the judicial system are heard before either three judges or one judge and two subordinates who are considered to be experts in legal matters. There is no jury system in Japan.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

In keeping with the occupation authorities' belief that decentralized, local government would strengthen the foundations of democracy in Japan, the constitution provides for local government autonomy and grants these various lower levels of government the right "to manage their property, affairs, and administration and to enact their own regulations within the law (Article 94)." In practice, however, as with all unitary forms of government, Japan's 47 prefectures and other lower levels of municipal government are autonomous of the central government only to the extent that the central government, located in Tokyo, grants them that autonomy. It is a unitary form of government with generally mutual respect of the roles of each successively lower level of government, although each level is dependent to a large degree on the central government for the revenue necessary for it to carry out its functions. The primacy of the central government and its laws are recognized (and rarely have been challenged) by municipalities, either prefectural, city, or village. Nor, with rare exception, has the central government had to overtly use its power to enforce its position and make these lower levels of government conform to the policy of the center.

The Electoral System

Under the revised national-level electoral system, which applies only to elections for the House of Representatives and not to those of the House of Councillors, voters cast two votes, one for a candidate in a single-member district system and the other for a political party; the party votes are distributed on a proportional basis. Voting is by secret ballot, and for the Lower House races voters receive two ballots. For the single-seat races voters select from a list of candidates, while on the proportional representation ballot, voters must write in the name of the party. The October 1996 Lower House election was the first national election in Japan conducted under this reformulated electoral districting system that attempts to shift emphasis from individual candidates to political parties. Of the now 480-member Lower House, 300 members are elected with a plurality in single-member districts and another 180 members are selected from ranked lists of candidates on the basis of their party's proportional share of the vote in 11 electoral regions. As a concession to incumbents whose tenure might have been jeopardized under the new system, a candidate may appear on both the district and the regional ballots.

The objective of allowing dual candidacy was to make parties more significant than individual politicians, but critics complained that the system also allows those who could not win election in the single-seat constituencies to have a chance at winning in the broader-based proportional representation districts. In the 1996 election, for example, 566 candidates ran in both races, while 260 of them, which represented approximately 90 percent of all the party's Lower House candidates, were from the LDP. Of those LDP candidates who lost their single-seat races, 32 won seats in the proportional contest.

In eliminating multimember districts, the new electoral system may have addressed the structural explanation for political corruption in Japan, but it will not cease the demands of constituents on their representatives. Additionally, parties must now maintain a presence in 300 electoral districts compared with the previous 130, increasing the demand for funds.

The new electoral system also decreased the relative number of seats allocated to rural districts, recognizing

that overrepresented citizens in these regions had benefited from the LDP's occasional, minor electoral reforms that failed to accurately reflect rural-to-urban population shifts. Yet even the relatively significant reapportionment brought on by the new electoral system has not eliminated the disparity between the value of an urban dweller's vote and that of most rural counterparts. For example, the smallest rural single-seat constituency has about two-fifths of the eligible voters that the largest district in Tokyo contains

To run as a party candidate in a single-seat constituency, a candidate's party must be represented in the Diet by at least five party members or have obtained 2 percent of the votes cast in the previous national election. Of course, it is also possible to run as a party independent, but the prospects for election appear slim.

Voting rights were realized in three distinct periods in Japan: a period of limited male suffrage, from 1890 to 1925, in which voting was restricted to taxpaying male citizens, with qualifications gradually liberalized to increase the size of the eligible electorate; a period of universal male suffrage, from 1925 to 1945, in which male citizens aged 25 or over, with one year prior residence in the municipality and no tax qualification, were eligible to vote; and the present period of universal suffrage, which was established in 1945 and which also reduced the voting age from 25 to 20. The Election Law provides that anyone at least 25 years of age can stand for election to the Lower House. Only those judged legally incompetent or who are serving prison sentences or have violated the election law are prohibited from voting or seeking public office.

Although the intent of the Election Law is to provide a nearly universal opportunity for political hopefuls to seek office, the selection of political candidates is fairly limited, as it is in other nation-states. Three routes are more certain than most in winning election to a national-level post: inheriting the position, having experience in the national-level bureaucracy, and having served as an elected official in lower levels of government (such as local assemblies and municipal offices).

In the hereditary-post scenario, those veteran politicians who retire because of age or illness nominate their successors, with the support of the district's constituents. Oftentimes the successor may be a relative (son, daughter, or even adopted son-in-law), but familial relations are not essential. Through the successor, the retiree can still influence politics to some degree, and the constituents can benefit from the political machine that the retiree developed over the course of several terms. The practice of hereditary officeholding is most common in the LDP, where generally more than one-third of LDP Diet members inherited their posts.

The Party System

ORIGINS OF THE PARTIES

The first political parties in Japan were founded in 1874, when several oligarchs split with the other members of Japan's government over the issue of whether or not Korea should be invaded for, among other reasons, its refusal to recognize the legitimacy of the Meiji government. Those who advocated an invasion viewed this as an opportunity to restore pride to the samurai class, which had seen its status in society progressively decline. As their more numerous opponents were concerned that such an endeavor would prove costly to Japan's limited treasury resources, the proinvasion faction of the government lost what has been referred to as the "Great Debate of 1873" and walked away from their government posts. Their subsequent attempts to return to power focused on the betterment of former elite samurai, and the organizations they founded advanced a narrow interpretation of popular rights. It is from these early organizations that Japan's political party system was created.

PARTY ORGANIZATION

Japan has a multiparty system in which one political party, the LDP, has dominated national politics since the mid-1950s. This dominance has been tempered by the existence of several opposition parties, usually one that can be considered the primary opposition party in terms of its representation at the national level and several smaller parties that can see their relative strength temporally increase if their support is needed on legislative or parliamentary matters. For most of the post-1955 period, this main opposition party was the Japan Socialist Party (Nihon Shakaito), but the role of the opposition has been played by different parties since the 1990s, when the Japanese political system experienced major changes. A moderate range of liberal and conservative ideologies are represented through this multiparty system, which, with the exception of the Japan Communist Party, lacks the extremist parties found in some nation-states. The result is similar to what is found in most nation-states with an established two-party system characterized by leadership turnover—an appeal by the parties to the priorities and preferences of the mass of moderate voters—although

the change in leadership never materialized in Japan until 1993.

Seizing their opportunity to organize at the height of anti-LDP sentiment, these new party leaders established parties that were far too dissimilar in name, platform, and justification to bode well for the long-term survivability of most. Predictably, their party names included words that expressed a sense of newness, freshness, or reform; their platforms espoused the creation of a "true" democracy, increased accountability, and progress; and their justification was based on the anti-LDP, antigovernment cynicism of the electorate.

CAMPAIGNING

In principle, contemporary Japanese elections have operated on the basis of a distinction between political activity, or activities that seek to make the public understand the party's policies and programs, on the one hand, and election campaigning, or activity that is intended to secure votes for a particular candidate in a particular election, on the other. *Koenkai,* grassroots support networks for individual politicians, serve a role in achieving both objectives and can be considered the "modern" form of party organization in Japan. A politician forms a *koenkai* or to expand and to some extent institutionalize his support among the electorate. These mass-membership support groups are created and financed by the politician, but the myth is maintained that they are organized by the Diet candidate's supporters. In addition to including ordinary citizens, who make up the majority of the *koenkai,* local officials are given official titles and positions for their support. What makes *koenkai* "modern" is the use of mass membership for supporting candidates, not the appointment of local officials to head them. *Koenkai* also usually have various groups they organize, such as youth groups and women's groups.

Under the revised electoral system, all candidates receive a certain amount of free advertising space in newspapers. While there are strict limits on how frequently individual candidates may publicize their campaign via the mass media and limits as to how much they may spend in doing so, political parties are not faced with the same degree of regulation. No candidate or party may officially advertise a campaign via the mass media until 12 days before the date of election, which is also reduced from a 14-day period under the former system. Yet within those 12 days, political parties spend billions of yen.

Recent revisions to the Public Office Election Law maintained the prohibition of house-to-house canvassing by candidates and strengthened publicity limits by not allowing posting of campaign materials from six months before the expiration of one's term of membership or before the day following dissolution of the Lower House. Penalties for campaign violators and those convicted of bribery were also increased, as each can result in a five-year deprivation of the right to seek public office and the right to vote. Under the former system, no such penalty existed. Bribery within the party, for example, by those attempting to become the party nominee in a single-seat district or attempting to improve their relative place on the party list in proportional districts, would result in a prison term of up to three years for the influence wielder and a sentence of up to three years and a fine of up to ¥1 million (approximately $9,000) for the candidate. Recent amendments to the 1948 Political Funds Control Law will, in policy at least, ban all political contributions from corporations and other organizations beginning in the year 2000. Additionally, political parties must report contributions—and their contributors and recipients—of more than ¥50,000 (approximately $450), a change from the earlier level of ¥1 million. Failure to report such contributions would result in a five-year imprisonment and a fine of ¥1 million for the party accountant.

A more significant electoral reform was the establishment of the Political Party Subsidies Law. Any political party is eligible to receive public funding, provided that it has a representation of at least five of its members in the Diet or at least some representation if less than five, in which case it must have also obtained at least 2 percent of the total number of votes cast in the latest Lower House election or in the previous Upper House election or any national election before that. It is clear from such relatively minor requirements that the intent of the reformers was to make public financing the basis for party funds.

The pool of funds is allocated in the government budget and is based on the most recent census figures multiplied by ¥250 per citizen. Half the amount is distributed to parties in proportion to the number of Diet seats it holds, with the remaining half distributed on the basis of the share of votes each party obtained in the most recent national election.

But recent trends favor a two-party system. Indeed, Japan's once fractious political system has coalesced around the LDP and its main opponent, the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ). New Komeito is the only other major party of note.

Major Political Parties

LIBERAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY (LDP)

(Jiyuminshuto)

HISTORY

The Liberal Democratic Party was formed by the merger of the Liberal Party and the Democratic Party in 1955, at the initiative of business leaders and in response to the unification of leftist political organizations two weeks before its establishment. Despite its electoral defeat of 1993, which many commentators believed would usher in a system in which political leadership would alternate between two major political parties, a significant rival to the LDP's degree of organization, connections, and representation has yet to emerge.

ORGANIZATION

The LDP continues to be a group of groups, or factions. Leaders of the then five extant factions (named after their leaders or former leaders, which included the Obuchi, Komoto, Miyazawa, Mitsuzuka, and Watanabe factions) complied with a 1994 order of party bosses that they disband and cease their formal operations in the wake of legislation that created the new electoral system of single-member districts. In theory, this new system would have made the existence of factions superfluous. Indeed, following implementation of the revised law, there was an initial diminution in the role played by the former factions, which have since adopted some variant of the name "policy research groups."

MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY

Despite its 1993 electoral defeat, and other relatively minor setbacks that preceded it, in terms of representation in both houses of the Diet the LDP has been the dominant political party in Japan since 1955 and remains so today.

As the LDP was in part formed by the initiative of business leaders worried about a united socialist front, business interests have been a traditional support base for the LDP. Four major economic organizations deserve mention. The Japan Federation of Economic Organizations (Keidanren), Japan Federation of Employers Associations (Nikkeiren), Japan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (Nissho), and the Japan Association for Corporate Executives (Keizai Doyukai) have been, to varying degrees, supporters of the LDP. The largest and most influential of the four, Keidanren, is a corporation consisting of approximately 120 industrial organizations and 1,000 member companies. When it served as the principal conduit for member firms' contributions to the LDP, Keidanren was also a political force. But in 1993 the organization decided to stop collecting political donations from member businesses, limiting their purpose to the LDP. The four groups' influence as a factor to be considered in policy making and their role as mediators between the government (or, more specifically, the LDP) and the business world have declined with the downturn of the Japanese economy, which began in the early 1990s.

In November 2003 the New Conservative Party (Hoshu Shinto) was absorbed into the LDP, a move based largely because of the New Conservative Party's poor showing in the 2003 general election. The Conservatives won only four seats, and the party's leader failed to win reelection in his home constituency. In 2005 the LDP secured an excellent result. Prime Minister Koizumi Junichiro, facing internal dissension because of his plans to privatize the postal system (the Upper House rejected the plan), called an early election and was rewarded by voters, who gave the LDP an absolute majority in the Lower House.

POLICY

Historically, the LDP has ardently supported policies that benefit its major support bases, big business and agricultural interests, and, generally, it continues to do so. However, LDP-backed 1994 legislation that provides for a gradual liberalization of Japan's rice market (which had been closed to foreign competition) and other similar agricultural deregulation legislation made some agricultural supporters of the LDP reconsider their party loyalties, and subsequently their support has moved to the NFP. Similarly, as should be expected, both corporate and small business interests are divided about the repercussions of proposed deregulation measures, which the LDP generally supports, particularly those that target the energy, telecommunications, and finance sectors, as well as Japan's distribution system. Thus, one can no longer say that the party's policy interest, or even the prioritization of those interests, is as narrow as it once was.

LEADERSHIP

A new procedure for electing the party president was initiated in 1995. A candidate is elected LDP party president if he or she receives a majority of votes, with one given to each LDP Diet member and one representing every 10,000 party members who vote via mail (at present, there are some 1.5 million dues-paying

LDP party members). If no candidate garners a majority of votes, LDP Diet members determine the party president in a runoff election between the top two vote earners.

PROSPECTS

Prospects for the LDP remain strong, if only because they are the party with the most incumbents. And it is still the most popular party in Japan. Additionally, the LDP remains the only party that can truly qualify as a national party in terms of representation from a variety of districts throughout Japan. But the LDP is held together more by patronage than by ideology. For example, although Koizumi supports privatization of most industries, a large faction within the LDP opposes his neoliberal economic policies.

DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF JAPAN

(Minshu To)

HISTORY

The Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) was established in 1996 by two former high-ranking members of Shinto Sakigake (New Party Harbinger), Hatoyama Yukio and Kan Naoto, a former minister of health and welfare. While serving in the ministerial post, Kan had acquired a sudden national reputation as an advocate of the people for his investigation into a Ministry of Health and Welfare policy of the mid- to late 1980s not to inform the public that some blood products used in Japan may have been tainted by the HIV virus.

ORGANIZATION

The DPJ grew dramatically between 1996 and 2003, when it was strengthened by a merger with the Liberal Party, led by Ichiro Ozawa. In 2003 it won 178 seats in the House of Representatives, but in 2005 it was reduced to 113 seats in the LDP landslide.

MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY

The DPJ is a party dominated by young professionals, including bureaucrats, lawyers, doctors, aid workers, bankers, and journalists, who are able to draw on a wide variety of experience in formulating policy proposals. As a result, DPJ politicians have introduced a large number of independent bills. The party places a strong emphasis on the speedy implementation of across-the-board reform and the creation of a fairer and more inclusive social environment in Japan. The DPJ was instrumental in introducing the manifesto (party platform) to Japanese politics, marking the initiation of genuine policy debate. Specific policy proposals include increasing the consumption tax to fund the overburdened pension system; bolstering regional autonomy by moving from a system of tied subsidies to one of providing independent budgets to the regions; and making most of the highway network toll-free.

POLICY

In economic policy, the DPJ favors decentralization of the central government and the revitalization of regional economies. It also promotes regulatory reform, the transfer of powers from central to local governments, and free trade agreements with other countries. In domestic policy, the DPJ favors pension reform by integrating pension plans into a single scheme that would link the amount of benefits to the total payments of contributions made. In foreign policy, the DPJ places a priority on the Japan-U.S. alliance as an essential requirement for stability and development in the Asia-Pacific region. It also calls for an improvement in bilateral ties with China.

PROSPECTS

The DPJ has emerged as the main opposition party. It defeated the LDP by a single seat in the July 2004 upper house elections, but the LDP managed to keep the majority due to its alliance with New Komeito. Despite some speculation in 2003 that it might overtake the LDP by 2005, its status was undermined by the 2005 results. Nevertheless, many Japanese hope that DPJ strength might usher in a two-party system that puts Japanese politics on a sounder footing. A majority of Japanese favor a working two-party system, something Japan has not experienced since the end of World War II. But questions remain whether the DPJ can replace the ruling coalition. Indeed, many analysts believe the DPJ as a whole remains long on rhetoric and short on substance.

NEW CLEAN GOVERNMENT PARTY

(Komei To)

HISTORY

Often translated as "New Komeito Party," the New Clean Government Party is an offshoot of Soka Gakkai, Japan's largest lay Buddhist organization. The present party was formed as a result of a merger between the Clean Government Party (more to the left and very radical) and the New Peace Party in November 1998. New Komeito is now the third largest force in the Diet, after the LDP and the DPJ.

ORGANIZATION

Soka Kyoiku Gakkai was formed in 1930 to promote education based on Buddhism, the organization faced oppression until the end of World War II under the religious controls of the former military government.

In 1954 Soka Gakkai set up a culture department as part of its move into politics. The department's political activities were taken over in 1961 by the Komeito Political League, which went on to become Komeito and later, New Komeito. The party was officially founded in 1964 as the political wing of Soka Gakkai. Although Soka Gakkai makes no campaign donations to New Komeito, it concedes that it is New Komeito's "main supporting organization." The head of Soka Gakkai is considered the de facto head of New Komeito. The party in effect is a moderate conservative party, while at the same time it is a theocratic Soka Gakkai Buddhist party.

MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY

The party shares its support base with the LDP, made up of white-collar bureaucrats and rural populations. It also gains support from religious leaders. But married women account for half of Soka Gakkai's core membership, and they wield immense power in the organization. Because of its religious ties, New Komeito is a great vote-gathering machine, as Soka Gakkai boasts a membership of 10 million households. Indeed, its female supporters are key vote-gatherers. As a result, the party delivers key votes in every major constituency.

At a time when the LDP's traditional support bases, including agricultural cooperatives and construction firms, are losing their influence over rank-and-file members in election campaigns, the party has become increasingly dependent on Soka Gakkai for its election victories. In the Lower House election in November 2003, the LDP sought support from Soka Gakkai in single-seat constituencies. In return, the party called on their own supporters to vote for New Komeito in the proportional representation segment. Some four-fifths percent of LDP candidates who received New Komeito endorsement were elected in the November 2003 polls. New Komeito captured 15 percent of the vote and 34 seats in 2003, though in the landslide by the LDP, its coalition partner, in 2005, New Komeito was reduced to 31 seats.

POLICY

New Komeito is, in effect, a political-religious group. Soka Gakkai's fundamental principles include promoting peace, welfare, and democracy to protect human rights, freedom of religion, and freedom of speech. Its critics say the party is determined to make Soka Buddhism the state religion of Japan.

New Komeito says its mission is to act as an "accelerator" on structural reforms and a "brake" to prevent the coalition government from leaning too far to the right. The party's proposals include reduction of the central government and bureaucracy, increased transparency in public affairs, and increased local autonomy with the private sector playing an increased role.

In foreign policy, New Komeito has been torn between its ideals and reality. The party wants to eliminate nuclear weapons and armed conflict in general. But despite its pacifist ideology, it supported the LDP's deployment of Japanese troops to Iraq.

PROSPECTS

Though in the 2003 elections New Komeito was the only party other than the DPJ to pick up more seats, increasing its bloc from 31 to 34, it fell back to 31 in 2005. Nevertheless, it is considered the new kingmaker in Japanese politics. But New Komeito has many critics, and anti–New Komeito sentiments could grow among LDP members to the extent of jeopardizing the ruling coalition. The issue of whether current relations between the LDP and New Komeito change is the key to the future of Japan's political landscape.

Minor Political Parties

SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY (SDP)

(Shakai Minshu To)

HISTORY

The original incarnation of the SDP (the JSP, or the Japan Socialist Party, and subsequently the Social Democratic Party of Japan, although for both English language renderings it was known as Shakaito) was established in 1955 with a merger of formerly disparate left-wing and right-wing socialist forces. Until its support of the LDP-dominated coalition government in 1993, the SDP had been the LDP's primary opposition for nearly 40 years.

The 1993 Lower House election proved to be a disaster for the Social Democrats who, with anti-LDP sentiment among voters at a zenith, lost what was clearly their best chance at national leadership. Then party leader Doi Takako, the first female leader of a major political party, took responsibility for the party's relatively poor showing at the ballot box, and her successor, 74-year-old Murayama Tomiichi, was

selected by his coalition partners—dominated by the overwhelming plurality of LDP representation in the Lower House—as the first Socialist prime minister in Japan since 1947.

However, the minority status of the Socialists in this coalition arrangement and the perception that Murayama was unable to lead the country toward reform became apparent, and, in January 1996, the LDP replaced Murayama with one of its own, Hashimoto Ryutaro. By the early 21st century the SDP was on the verge of extinction.

JAPAN COMMUNIST PARTY

(Nihon Kyosanto)

HISTORY

Officially founded in 1922 during Japan's period of post–World War I liberalism, the Japan Communist Party (JCP) is the oldest political party in Japan. But as an organized group that has advocated radical policies, including an end to the imperial institution, the JCP was banned when liberalism took a back seat to Japan's militarist policies of World War II. Postwar occupation authorities released the jailed members of the former JCP and granted the party legal recognition. It is the only major political party that has not been included in any of the four mostly short-lived coalition governments that followed the 1993 defeat of the LDP. Its support increased in the mid-1990s, when it won 26 seats, but its support has dropped in more recent elections.

ORGANIZATION

Along with the LDP, the JCP has established itself as a well-organized political party, although, in contrast to the LDP, its grassroots appeal is generally limited to the urban electorate. A 168-member central committee elects the 38-member presidium, and the 14-member presidium standing committee. The standing committee alone determines policy, and once a policy decision is made, the party's belief in the concept of democratic centralism dictates that the decision must be followed by all party members.

MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY

Support for the JCP is concentrated in major urban areas, and Communists have served as mayors of some of Japan's largest cities. The JCP has traditionally competed with the SDP for a share of the progressive votes, with (until recently) the SDP attracting relatively more voters. Following the LDP–SDP–Sakigake coalition government, the JCP has since referred to itself as "the only opposition party," a move to attract those leftists in the SDP, moderates in the DPJ, and even some support from alienated former LDP backers. The JCP has about 400,000 members belonging to 25,000 branches.

POLICY

The JCP is the only one of Japan's major political parties that, at least ideologically and rhetorically, could be considered extremist. Among other policies, the JCP advocates a democratic revolution of the Japanese people against the rule of U.S. imperialism and a nationalization of the mass media. It also opposed nuclear weapons. In action, neither the party nor its members have displayed any radicalism or initiated any violence toward the existing social and political system. It is for this reason more than all others that the JCP is able to appeal to some members of the electorate whose primary party identification (if any) is for moderate or even conservative political parties. Some of the party's most distinctive positions, such as its call for abrogation of the United States–Japan Security Treaty, appear anachronistic and are clearly against the prevailing public sentiment.

PROSPECTS

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the JCP—unlike other Communist parties, such as those in Europe—failed to enact any major changes in direction. This was largely because the Japan Socialist Party already had claims to the social democratic space that the JCP would have entered. This has left the JCP politically vulnerable.

Indeed, the JCP was decimated in the July 2004 Upper House elections, largely by the opposition DPJ. The Communists collapsed from 15 to 4 seats and lost all 7 of their district seats, mostly in urban prefectures. In the proportional ballot, the JCP lost 4 of 8 contested list seats.

Other Political Forces

GAIATSU

Gaiatsu literally means "pressure from outside" or, in other words, foreign governments applying political pressure on the Japanese government to change its policies. For example, most analysts recognize that *gaiatsu* had some degree of influence on Japan's rice issue, in which Japan was pressured to open its rice market to

imported competition (particularly from the United States). These analysts disagree, however, on the extent to which *gaiatsu* contributed to the politicization of the rice issue and to the ultimate decision.

The influence of *gaiatsu* can be measured against the influence of the Japanese government. As far as the rice issue is concerned, some analysts argue that *gaiatsu* was weak and the Japanese government held its position not to open the rice market, and then did so only marginally. One reason that the Japanese government may have acceded is that the issue of food security is no longer so important to a generation that does not remember a Japan on the brink of starvation after World War II and in whose diet rice does not figure so prominently. On the whole, these commentators believe, the Japanese government seems to be stronger in many cases than is *gaiatsu* and cannot be bulldozed into action.

Other political observers argue that unless the Japanese government was confronted by periodic doses of *gaiatsu,* nothing would have changed in a status quo–seeking Japan. This camp therefore believes that a high degree of landmark legislation is attributable to the *gaiatsu* factor. Included among these significant policy shifts, they argue, were the decisions to liberalize Japan's rice market and to implement administrative and financial market reform (an initiative that, they claim, was the result of repeated foreign criticism of the difficulties of "doing business in Japan")—and even a movement toward understanding and admitting Japan's role in World War II.

BUREAUCRACY

For most of Japan's postwar history, civil servants—particularly those of the national government—were nearly revered for their abilities, generally beyond reproach for their steadfastness as public servants, and universally respected for the immense power that they commanded. Recently, however, the focus of reporting official corruption has shifted from politicians to civil servants. Together with a prolonged stagnation of Japan's economy, for which the bureaucracy was often attributed credit during economic prosperity, the bureaucracy has lost the public trust and is the target of administrative reform measures proposed at the national level.

The effects of the collapse of Japan's bubble economy of the late 1980s and early 1990s are still being felt. In 1996 the Diet passed legislation authorizing taxpayer funds to underwrite the bailout of seven *jusen* (housing-loan companies) saddled by billions of dollars worth of nonperforming loans. In the course of deliberations, it was revealed that more than a dozen former officials of the Ministry of Finance held leadership posts in these firms. In addition to the "*jusen* scandal, " other recent bureaucratic scandals involve the HIV-tainted blood dilemma, numerous cases involving officials at the Ministry of Finance, *amakudari* benefits awaiting civil servants shortly after retirement, and the perception of their less-than-transparent way of going about their duties or of describing their jobs.

Amakudari, literally "descent from heaven," refers to the practice of former civil servants, particularly those senior members of Japan's central government bureaucracy, receiving prestigious nongovernment posts in exchange for their contacts developed during their government careers. Recent legislation ruled that upon retirement, civil servants are prohibited from accepting employment in companies connected with their former ministries or agencies for two years, although this restriction can be waived if approval is granted by the National Personnel Authority.

Administrative reform is the contemporary buzzword in Japan, and all political parties have advocated it to a certain degree. Yet it is difficult to gauge how much of the drive is based, on the one hand, on a desire to decrease redundancy and inefficiency while increasing accountability and, on the other, on targeting a specific group of people who have found recent disfavor with the public.

National Prospects

Japan has the world's second largest economy, and its role on the world stage is considerable. It is a major international aid donor and a main source of global capital and credit. Moreover, in 2003, Prime Minister Koizumi deployed Japanese troops in Iraq following the U.S.-led invasion in 2003. The deployment divided public opinion, which many critics said violated the country's pacifist constitution.

But the move, seen as part of Koizumi's efforts to reshape Japan's foreign policy, could have consequences for many years to come. The government, and some elements of the public, recognize that Japan needs to continue to commit troops for the sake of its U.S.-Japan alliance, which affords the country protection against threats from neighboring China and North Korea.

Japan's relations with its neighbors are still heavily influenced by the legacy of Japanese actions before and during World War II. This is especially true of

Sino-Japanese ties, which are very chilly. Japanese and Chinese leaders have not reciprocated official visits, and they hold only occasional summits on the sidelines of international conferences in other countries. Ironically, Japan and China depend on each other for their prosperity. In fact, Japan's trade with China has surpassed that with the United States.

Japan's economy has been battered by repeated recession, deflation, and a long hangover from the collapse of its asset bubble in the early 1990s. The number of people gainfully employed has fallen, and unemployment exceeded 5 percent—a figure that would be considered excellent in many countries but was considered a disaster in Japan. Economic problems make people cautious about spending and hamper the performance of domestic companies.

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HASHEMITE KINGDOM OF JORDAN

(al-Mamlaka al-Urduniyya al-Hashimiyya)

By Curtis R. Ryan, Ph.D.



Like many other postcolonial states in the Middle East, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan has largely artificial boundaries, drawn by European imperial powers, as the previous empire, that of the Ottoman Turks, collapsed in the wake of World War I. But since these inauspicious beginnings, what began as the British Mandate of Transjordan in 1921 evolved into the Emirate of Transjordan at the time of independence from Britain in 1946, and finally into its current form as the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan since 1949. Jordan has, in short, evolved into a modern state that has long defied predictions of its imminent demise. The British installed two brothers of the House of Hashim, Abdullah and Faisal, respectively, in their mandates of Jordan and Iraq as a reward for Hashemite support in the Arab Revolt against the Ottoman Empire during World War I. The Hashemites originally hailed from the Hijaz area in what is today western Saudi Arabia but had been forcibly expelled by their Saudi rivals.

This kingdom of some 5.8 million people (2005 est.) is situated in southwest Asia and is bounded to the north by Syria, to the east by Iraq, to the south by Saudi Arabia, and to the west by Israel and the Palestinian territories. Given this location, Jordan was from the outset deeply involved in the various dimensions of the Palestinian-Israeli and broader Arab-Israeli conflicts. By the time of Jordanian independence in 1946, tensions were peaking in neighboring Palestine between Jews and Arabs over the issue of Zionist versus Palestinian aspirations to full statehood. The United Nations voted to partition Palestine between the two peoples in 1947, and Israel declared its independence and statehood the following year. Within 24 hours several Arab armies had invaded the new state, joining fighting that had already begun between the two communities. One of these armies was Jordan's Arab Legion.

Following the Israeli victory and the tense peace that followed, Jordan continued to occupy the territory of the West Bank of the Jordan River (including East Jerusalem), formally annexing it in 1950. In July 1951 King Abdullah was assassinated by a Palestinian nationalist as he entered the Al Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem. Abdullah was succeeded briefly by his son Talal, who was ultimately judged mentally unfit to rule and was in turn succeeded by his own son, Hussein, in 1953.

King Hussein's long reign (1953–99) was marked by a seemingly relentless succession of regional and domestic crises. In regional politics, further Arab-Israeli wars were fought in 1956, 1967, 1973, and 1982. Of these, the devastating Arab defeat in the 1967 Six-Day War was by far the most important for Jordan. For the Jordanians lost not only the war but also the entire territory of the West Bank—including East Jerusalem. In addition, tens of thousands of Palestinian refugees streamed into Jordan, joining those already there from the 1948 war. The large numbers of Palestinians in the kingdom led to recurrent domestic tensions between the Jordanian regular army and Palestinian guerrilla forces linked to the PLO. This spilled over into a bloody civil war in September 1970. King Hussein's bedouin-dominated army ultimately defeated and expelled the PLO forces and also pushed back an invasion force

from Syria. But the legacy of tension remained decades later—between radical Arab nationalists and the conservative Hashemite regime and also between the Palestinian and "East Banker" Jordanian communities within the kingdom.

The Hashemite regime had for years maintained its claim to the West Bank and East Jerusalem, but in 1988 it renounced these claims and turned instead toward consolidating its rule east of the Jordan River. The kingdom remained under martial law from the time of the 1967 war until 1992, when it was lifted following the promulgation of a new National Charter in 1991 that aimed at creating more pluralism and political liberalization in Jordan while also ensuring that the country remains a Hashemite monarchy.

The System of Government

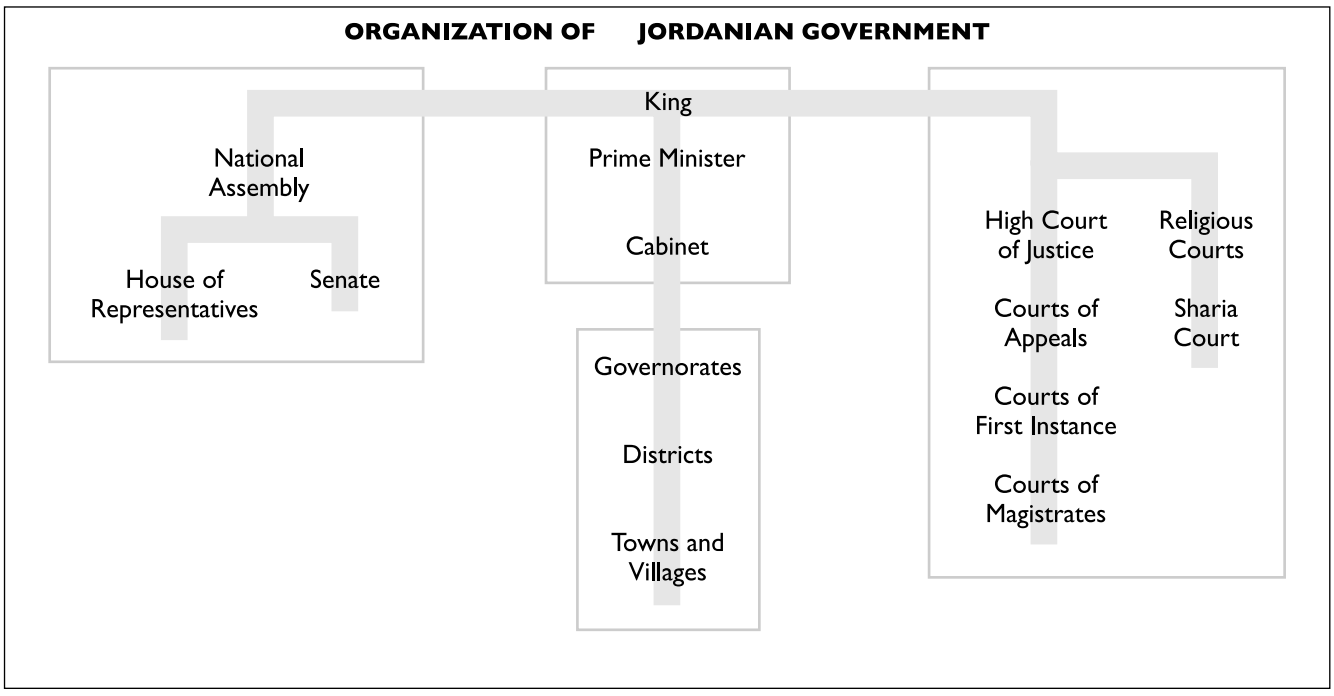
Jordan is a constitutional monarchy. The current constitution was established in 1952 during the brief reign of King Talal. The constitution gave increased authority to parliament, with executive power vested in the king, but ultimate authority over all branches of government is retained by the monarch. According to the Jordanian constitution, succession to the throne is guaranteed through the eldest male in direct line from King Abdullah I. Should there be no direct male heir, the eldest brother becomes king. On occasion, the king has altered this formula by decree. King Hussein, for example, maintained the line of succession from himself to his brother, Crown Prince Hasan, for more than 30 years, only changing it back to his eldest son weeks before the 1999 succession to Abdullah II.

EXECUTIVE

In accordance with the 1952 constitution, the king is head of state and government, with complete authority over the armed forces and power to appoint both the prime minister and cabinet. The king also has the authority to put laws into effect and to dissolve the legislature and call new elections. The prime minister is at least nominal head of government, appointed by the king, and in practice Jordanian prime ministers have selected their own cabinets subject to royal approval.

LEGISLATURE

Jordan has a bicameral legislature, divided between the 110-member House of Representatives (Majlis al-Nu'ab) and the 55-member House of Notables or Senate (Majlis al-Ayyan). Members of the lower house are elected by universal suffrage for four-year terms, while members of the Senate—the de facto upper house—are appointed directly by the king. The membership of the



House of Notables amounts to a veritable who's who (or who was who) of Jordanian politics.

Although the combined houses of the legislature can legally override the king's veto of any legislation, the fact that the entire Senate is made up of royal appointees effectively nullifies this as a threat to royal privilege.

JUDICIARY

The highest court in the kingdom is the High Court of Justice, centered in the capital, Amman. The court system includes a series of lower courts, including courts of appeals, courts of first instance, and courts of magistrates. In addition, and particularly in social and family matters, there are separate religious courts for the Muslim and Christian religious communities. Finally, in the rural areas of the kingdom, there are additional tribal courts for local bedouin affairs.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Jordan is divided into 12 provinces or governorates, each of which is headed by a governor and is further subdivided down to the level of the municipality. At that most local level, most municipalities are governed by two councils or—in the case of rural areas—by local Mukhtars, traditional village or tribal leaders.

The Electoral System

Full national parliamentary elections in Jordan only reemerged in 1989, following a more than two-decade hiatus in the wake of the 1967 war. The trigger event was the imposition of an IMF-sponsored economic austerity plan in April 1989 that led to the outbreak of rioting across the country. The riots, against both economic hardship and political corruption, prompted a shaken regime to respond with promises of elections and political reforms to begin that same year. The first of these elections took place in November 1989 and yielded a lower house of parliament in which both Islamist and secular leftist candidates were well represented.

By the time of the next round of elections, in November 1993, the regime had lifted martial law and its longstanding ban on political parties. More than a dozen newly legalized parties contested the 1993 elections, with the Islamists faring more poorly on their second attempt at national parliamentary power. This was due, in part, to a public backlash against unpopular Islamist legislation in the previous parliament but also to adjustments in the electoral law that limited each voter to one vote.

The previous electoral law had allowed voters to vote up to the number of representatives allotted for their district. Thus voters in Irbid in 1989 could vote for up to nine representatives from their city to the national parliament. In that election the Muslim Brotherhood, as the only organized group at the time, had run lists of candidates up to the exact number of seats for a district. In this way, they were able to exploit the plurality-based electoral system to gain representation well above their proportion of the overall vote. But in the 1993 elections almost the reverse happened, with the government closing that loophole and replacing it with the one-person one-vote law and also with adjusted new districts that disproportionately favored traditionally pro-Hashemite areas (such as rural rather than urban districts).

Voting rights in Jordan are universal for adults aged 18 or older. The franchise was extended to include women in 1973, but, since no new elections were held until 1989, women were unable to exercise their right to vote or run for office until that time. Within parliament, the regime reserved a number of seats for specific minority constituencies, all of which have traditionally been strong supporters of the Hashemite monarchy. These include nine seats for the rural bedouin, nine seats for the Christian community, and finally three seats for the Circassian and Chechen communities collectively. In 1993 one of the Circassian seats went to Tujan al-Faysal, the first woman in the House of Delegates. But even before that election, a number of grassroots organizations had formed that aimed to field more women candidates in the future and to mobilize blocs of women voters.

In 1997 the regime maintained its one-person one-vote formula for the electoral system, despite a threat by the opposition to boycott the election. Eleven opposition parties, led by the Islamic Action Front, chose to boycott the polls, while the regime chose to hold the elections anyway. The result, predictably, was a parliament filled with pro-regime legislators and very few opposition voices. After the death of King Hussein in 1999, the opposition hoped that the new king, Abdullah II, would be less conservative in his approach to political liberalization. But the next elections, due to be held in 2001, were repeatedly delayed by the new king, largely due to regional instability. Finally, after more than two years of delays, Jordan in June 2003 held national parliamentary elections in an effort to

reengage its stalled political liberalization process. The 2003 elections were deemed especially important by both government and opposition. They were the first since 1997, the first since the dissolution of parliament in 2001, and the first under King Abdullah II.

In June 2003 the elections were finally held under still another electoral law. The new law, announced in July 2001, lowered the age of voting eligibility for men and women from 19 to 18, and increased the number of parliamentary seats from 80 to 104, with new (but still uneven) electoral districts. In February 2003 King Abdullah supplemented changes with a new decree adding six more parliamentary seats in a specific quota to ensure minimal representation for women. In the previous three elections (1989, 1993, and 1997) only one woman was elected to parliament: Tujan al-Faysal. The Islamic Action Front had originally registered its strong opposition to the women's quota, but then included for the first time a woman, Hayat al-Musayni, among its slate of 30 candidates. No Jordanian woman won a seat outright in 2003, but Musayni turned out to be the top vote-getter among women candidates overall. Ironically, therefore, the first woman seated in the new 2003–07 parliament was a conservative Islamist activist.

The Islamic Action Front succeeded in getting 17 of its party members elected (including Musayni). Aside from the IAF, five independent Islamists were also elected, including such high profile Islamists as Abd al-Munim Abu Zant, whom the IAF had expelled from membership just before the election. Most of the parliamentary seats, however, went to traditional tribal leaders or former government officials. At least 62 seats out of 110, in short, went to loyalist pro-regime figures.

The Party System

Jordan's monarchs had in the past experimented in limited ways with party systems, including a brief but fairly vibrant period in the 1950s, but each experiment ended in the state's curbing party activity. In 1957, for example, the state charged that military and party leaders were colluding in an attempt to overthrow King Hussein. This resulted in a ban on political parties that lasted for decades, aside for some brief state-directed experiments with forming loyalist parties. With the beginning of the political liberalization process in 1989, however, a new era emerged that would lead to the restoration of political parties and parliamentary life in Jordan.

With the legalization of political parties in 1992, dozens of new and old parties applied to the Ministry of the Interior for approval. Many of these were approved and went on to contest the 1993 elections. But in many ways the Jordanian party system remains fluid, with parties rising and falling, merging or splitting in two, as a result of electoral campaign fortunes or internal struggles over platform issues and party leadership.

Jordan's political parties can be discussed in two broad groupings: 1) leftist and pan-Arab nationalist parties (Jordanian Arab Progressive Ba'th Party, Jordanian Arab Socialist Ba'th Party, Jordanian Communist Party, Jordanian Democratic Popular Unity Party, Jordanian People's Democratic Party, and Jordanian United Democratic Party); and 2) centrist, conservative, and Islamist parties (Future Party, Islamic Action Front, National Constitutional Party).

Major Political Parties

JORDANIAN ARAB PROGRESSIVE BA'TH PARTY (JAPBP)

(Hizb al-Ba'th al-'Arabi al-Taqadumi al-Urduni)

One of two wings of the pan-Arab ad socialist Ba'th Party in Jordan, this wing is thought to be linked to Syria. The JAPBP has not been as successful in electoral politics as its pro-Iraqi counterpart, the Jordanian Arab Socialist Ba'th Party, but still draws support not just from Ba'thist sympathizers but sometimes also from Jordanians who favor stronger ties with Syria in general.

JORDANIAN ARAB SOCIALIST BA'TH PARTY (JASBP)

(Hizb al-Ba'th al-'Arabi al'Ishtiraki al-Urduni)

This second wing of the Ba'th Party in Jordan is said to be linked to Iraq and was blamed by the government for "inciting" the 1996 bread riots following the imposition of the IMF austerity program. Despite being singled out for such criticism, which had resulted in temporary arrests of numerous party officials, the JASBP did manage to win a seat in the 1997 elections to parliament. The JASBP was, therefore, one of few left-

ist opposition parties to actually contest the elections, disregarding the opposition boycott.

JORDANIAN COMMUNIST PARTY (JCP)

(Hizb al Shuyu'i al-Urduni)

The Jordanian Communist Party (JCP), recognized by the state in 1993 after an initial rejection, later lost many of its members to the other secular leftist parties such as the Jordanian United Democratic Party. Still, the JCP is one of the oldest parties in the kingdom and dates its roots to the late 1940s. The Communist Party maintains a radical stance toward most socioeconomic and political issues, has ties to its counterpart in Israel, and has openly supported a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

JORDANIAN DEMOCRATIC POPULAR UNITY PARTY (JDPUP)

(Hizb al-Wahda al-Sha'biyya al-Dimuqrati al-Urduni)

A Jordanian secular, leftist, and Arab nationalist party with ties to George Habash's Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP). The JDPUP became a legal party only in the 1990s, in accordance with the 1992 National Charter legalizing political parties, but it had operated as an underground party since the 1960s. Its policy stances closely correspond to those of the PFLP, including its opposition to the Palestinian and Jordanian peace negotiations with Israel.

JORDANIAN PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC PARTY

(Hizb al-Sha'b al-Dimuqrati al-Urduni)

Better known as "Hashd," this secular neo-Marxist party is affiliated with Nayef Hawatmeh's Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP). Jut as the JDPUP corresponds closely to the PFLP, Hashd's policies strongly reflect those of its Palestinian counterpart, the DFLP. Before its legalization as a Jordanian political party in 1993, Hashd had been viewed by the government as virtually inseparable from the DFLP faction within the PLO. While opposed to what it views as the unfavorable terms of the Jordanian-Israeli Peace Treaty and the Israeli-PLO Accords, Hashd has stressed its support for a peace process in general. The party sees the current process, however, as slanted and unfair.

JORDANIAN UNITED DEMOCRATIC PARTY (JUDP)

(Hizb al-Dimuqrati al-Wahdawi al-Urduni)

In 1995 the JUDP emerged following the merger of several secular leftist and pan-Arab nationalist parties, with strong Palestinian roots. The JUDP is made up largely of pan-Arab nationalists and moderate former members of the Jordanian Communist Party (JCP). The party presents itself as a secular-left opposition force but is considerably more moderate than most other Jordanian leftist parties and has, for example, taken a moderate stance toward the Arab-Israeli peace process.

FUTURE PARTY

(Hizb al-Mustaqbal)

The Future Party is a pan-Arab nationalist and conservative party, usually well represented in parliament and even in cabinet posts. The party's leader, Sulayman Arar, was elected speaker of Jordan's lower house of parliament following the 1989 elections. In the 1997 electoral campaign, however, the Future Party surprised many on the Jordanian political scene by joining the opposition boycott of the elections.

ISLAMIC ACTION FRONT (IAF)

(Jabha al-'Amal al-Islami)

The main Islamist party in Jordan, the Islamic Action Front is the political wing of the Muslim Brotherhood. Before creating the IAF as a legal political party in 1992, the Muslim Brotherhood had been by far the kingdom's best-organized and most successful political grouping. In the 1989 elections, Islamists affiliated with the Brotherhood won 22 seats in parliament. They were so successful, in fact, that they prompted the regime to change the electoral law to the current one-person one-vote system. Despite their protests against this change, the newly formed IAF decided to compete in the 1993 elections, this time winning 16 seats. But in 1997 the IAF was one of the main parties leading the electoral boycott and thereby had no official representation in the 1997–2001 parliament (although several independent Islamists did win seats). The IAF is, in general, critical of the peace process and of Jordan's ties with the United States, but it has maintained a pro-monarchy stance as a "loyal opposition" party.

NATIONAL CONSTITUTIONAL PARTY

(Hizb al-Dusturi al-Urduni)

The NCP emerged only in 1997 following the merger of several other parties such as the Awakening Party (Hizb al-Yaqazah). The core of the National Constitutional Party, however, remained that of its main predecessor, the Pledge Party (Hizb al-'Ahd). The NCP presents itself as conservative and avowedly "pro-Jordanian" and draws support from Jordan's "tribal" communities as well as from numerous former ministers and army officers. The party advocates a Jordanian nationalism distinct from Jordan's Palestinian community. The NCP, in both its membership and party platform, is loyalist, and it is very much an establishment party. In the 1997 elections the NCP attempted to take advantage of the opposition electoral boycott to garner a core of parliamentary seats as the self-declared party of the regime. Its electoral performance, however, was less impressive, garnering only two of the 10 seats it officially contested.

Minor Political Parties

FREEDOM PARTY

(Hizb al-Huriyya)

Secular and leftist, the party advocates social democracy and a kind of reformed neo-Marxism. The Freedom Party is one of several small parties in Jordan that emerged in 1993 as offshoots of the Jordanian Communist Party.

JORDANIAN ARAB DEMOCRATIC PARTY (JADP)

(Hizb al-'Arabi al-Dimuqrati al-Urduni)

A secular leftist party supportive of Palestinian rights, it is critical of the peace treaty with Israel. The JADP experienced some electoral success in 1993, winning two seats in parliament, but since then has divided over the peace process. Some of this pro-Palestinian party's members supported the PLO's positions, including its accords with Israel, while others opposed the peace process in general.

JORDANIAN NATIONAL ALLIANCE PARTY

(Hizb al-Tajammu al-Watani al-Urduni)

This party is a conservative, pro-government, and pro-Hashemite party with strong roots in Jordan's bedouin communities.

NATIONAL PARTY

(Hizb al-Watan)

A conservative and usually proregime party, al-Watan leaders have been represented in Jordanian cabinet positions as well as parliament, although the party did oppose the regime's peace treaty with Israel.

PROGRESS AND JUSTICE PARTY

(Hizb al-Taqaddumi wa al-'Adl)

Progress and Justice is essentially a pro-government, centrist-to-conservative party that originally billed itself as economically liberal but socially conservative.

Other Political Forces

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

Given the 1997 electoral boycott by most opposition parties and the relative weakness in Jordan's still reemerging party system, political opposition shifted after 1997 to an institutional base in the kingdom's professional associations. These associations, particularly the Islamist-dominated engineers association, led the national campaign against normalization of relations with Israel. Other associations also organize along professional lines, with associations for pharmacists, journalists, medical doctors, and so on—and with similar levels of activism on domestic and foreign policy. While the state did try to reign in these organizations, the professional associations nonetheless provided a meaningful institutional vehicle for civil society in Jordan, especially during the absence from parliament (1997–2001) of most opposition parties.

MUSLIM BROTHERHOOD

The Muslim Brotherhood has long been the most organized political opposition group in Jordan. Even during the years when parties were banned, the Muslim Brotherhood was tolerated by the regime. As a result, when parliamentary elections resumed in 1989, the Muslim Brotherhood was the only really organized political force and used this to its advantage in the national elections that year. When the ban on political parties was lifted in 1992, the Islamic Action Front emerged as the political wing of the Muslim Brotherhood and as one of Jordan's most successful political parties. Unlike the mutual hostility that characterizes the relationship between Islamists and the state in neighboring Syria, the Muslim Brotherhood and

Hashemite monarchy have had a decades-long relationship of "peaceful coexistence."

MILITARY

As early as the foiled coup attempt of 1957, King Hussein relied on the loyalty of his armed forces to thwart serious challenges to his rule. The military was then composed almost entirely of bedouin and other "East Bank" Jordanians loyal to the Hashemite regime. Today, the army is still a bedrock constituency for the monarchy but represents a broader range of the population ever since the institution of the draft in the early 1970s.

PALESTINIANS

Estimates of the size of the Palestinian population in Jordan vary widely, anywhere from 50 percent to 60 percent of the overall population. Some still live in refugee camps, while others have more fully integrated into Jordanian economic and political life. The rift between Palestinian and Jordanian communities within Jordan tends to be exaggerated, overlooking the many overlaps between families and the number of Jordanians of Palestinian origin who are key parts of the political elite. But some level of difference does remain a source of tension, leading to charges of Jordanian domination of the public sector or of Palestinian domination of the private sector.

FOREIGN NATIONS

Throughout its existence as an independent state, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan has remained deeply dependent on economic assistance from external patrons. Originally, the kingdom's main ally in this regard was the United Kingdom. But since the 1960s the role of the United States and of Arab Gulf monarchies became increasingly important to the economic survival of the kingdom. In addition to these critical external aid linkages, the kingdom remains vulnerable to pressures on its domestic politics from its many powerful neighbors—in particular Syria, Iraq, and Israel.

National Prospects

The decade of the 1990s was traumatic for Jordan, beginning with the Gulf crisis over Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. Even before that, however, the kingdom had been rocked by riots over price increases and political corruption in April 1989. With the onset of the Gulf crisis and the war that followed, Jordan attempted to maintain its political and economic alignment with Iraq, while opposing the annexation of Kuwait and trying to mediate the crisis. As the crisis steadily tumbled toward war, Jordan's fence straddling was viewed as betrayal by Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and the Western-led coalition—in particular, Jordan's key ally, the United States. The price for Jordan's Gulf crisis stand was the abrupt cutoff in economic aid from the Gulf monarchies and the United States and the expulsion from Saudi Arabia and Kuwait (after the war) of more than 300,000 Palestinians and Jordanians. These Gulf "returnees" put tremendous strain on Jordan's social services and housing sector, but ultimately the kingdom managed to weather the crisis and eventually even restored its diplomatic links (and hence its foreign aid connections) to the United States and the Gulf states. This diplomatic success was due in part to Jordan's participation in the U.S.-sponsored Middle East peace negotiations that began in Madrid in 1991. Following the surprise announcement of an Israeli-PLO accord in 1993, Jordan quickly concluded a full peace treaty with Israel in 1994. The regime appeared to rush well ahead of its populace in doing so, possibly banking on an expected financial windfall based on full economic relations with Israel and also on financial rewards from Western states. The windfall, however, never took place, and domestic discontent over the peace treaty mounted steadily, especially following the election of hard-line prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu in Israel in 1996.

Domestic anger spilled over into unrest in August 1996, when the regime implemented its second IMF-sponsored austerity program. As in 1989, riots broke out in Karak, Ma'am, and elsewhere. The 1996 riots, however, were not quite as widespread or violent as those of seven years earlier. They did, nonetheless, demonstrate clearly the level of public dissatisfaction over key issues of state policy—from economic reform to the pace of political liberalization to foreign policy issues such as Jordan's relations with Israel.

In response to mounting criticism, the regime backpedaled in the process of political liberalization by issuing a new set of restrictive guidelines for the press. Jordan's print and television media had opened up considerably since the reform process began in 1989, yielding one of the most open societies in the Arab world. For that reason, however, the regime's media restrictions were regarded by many in the kingdom as draconian. As the Oslo peace process began to collapse, domestic disaffection increased within Jordan and 11 opposition parties, led by the Islamic Action Front,

organized a boycott of the November 1997 parliamentary elections. The opposition demanded that the electoral law be changed, that press freedoms be restored, and that normalization with Israel cease. None of these demands were met by election day, and so the elected Jordanian parliament included few members of either the Islamist or leftist opposition. Instead, with most of Jordan's parties sitting out the electoral process, the new parliament was tilted heavily toward conservative pro-regime figures. Thus, although the regime could expect to deal with a far more pliant parliament, it did so at the cost of setting back the minimal gains that had been made in Jordan's program of political liberalization.

The political liberalization process, along with the economic adjustment program and the peace treaty with Israel, were all meant to erase questions about the political future of Jordan and its monarchy. But as the kingdom entered the 21st century, profound questions remained about each of these areas of concern. In addition, the kingdom also faced the question of what would happen after King Hussein passed from the scene. At least in legal and constitutional terms, there had been no real "question" of succession since the king's brother, Hasan, had been crown prince for more than 30 years and was therefore the designated successor to Hussein. But in January 1999 the king surprised many observers by changing the succession and appointing his first-born son, Abdullah, to be his successor rather than Hasan. Thus what had seemed a relatively clear question of succession had instead become far more controversial. But with the death of King Hussein in February 1999, Abdullah ascended to the throne of Jordan, and in his first official act, appointed his half-brother Hamza crown prince. Yet even with this transition, the dominant questions in Jordanian politics continued to be about economic restructuring, political liberalization, and peace with Israel.

Almost immediately after the succession, the new king continued the electoral process through countrywide municipal elections in 1999. These elections even saw the return of many in the opposition who had boycotted the 1997 national parliamentary elections, suggesting that both regime and opposition were again pursuing the course of political reform. But the more important elections—the parliamentary elections scheduled for 2001—were repeatedly postponed. The myriad reasons included violence and unrest in Palestine to the west, and in Iraq to the east, as well as difficulties completing a newer system of electronic voting cards. But in 2003 the long delayed elections did finally take place, including full participation by the large Islamist movement as well as leftist and nationalist parties.

Prior to the polls, King Abdullah's government established a new electoral law, changing parliament from 80 to 110 seats, and later new legislation guaranteed women at least six seats in parliament. The regime returned to political liberalization, but only slowly and cautiously. In the atmosphere of the intifada and the Iraq war, for example, constraints on civil society—and specifically on the rights to organize public demonstrations or to question Jordan's foreign policy positions—have been severely circumscribed. To be clear, the regime program, symbolized accurately by its own slogan "Jordan First" (*al-Urdun Awalan*), has prioritized realignment in foreign policy as well as economic development in domestic policy. Domestic political reform has taken a back seat to both priorities, and has frequently suffered as a result. By 2004 the Palestinian uprising against Israeli occupation had entered its fourth year, while Iraq resistance to U.S. occupation also increased in intensity and violence. With continuing conflict between Israel and the Palestinians and sustained resistance to U.S. occupation in Iraq, Jordan was pressed between these unstable situations, as King Abdullah II attempted to respond to demands for more political reform at home while also steering the kingdom through a particularly difficult time in regional politics.

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REPUBLIC OF KAZAKHSTAN

(Kazakhstan Respublikasy)

By Roger D. Kangas, Ph.D.



Kazakhstan is located in the heart of Central Asia, just south of Russia and west of China. It is 2,717,300 square kilometers in size and has a population of 15 million (2005 est.). Given the high numbers of Russians, Germans, and Ukrainians who have left the country since independence in 1991, the population is actually smaller now than it was a decade ago.

The System of Government

Kazakhstan is a republic with a strong president, as outlined in the 1995 revised constitution. The country has a bicameral legislature.

EXECUTIVE

Like the other Central Asian states, Kazakhstan possesses a very strong president. Nursultan Nazarbayev has been president since independence, making a seamless transition from Communist Party of Kazakhstan's first secretary (appointed in 1989) to independent president. Nazarbayev was elected president of independent Kazakhstan on December 1, 1991, running unopposed. A referendum held on April 30, 1995, extended his mandate until the year 2000, preempting a 1996 scheduled election. The reported support for the referendum was 95 percent of eligible voters—a figure disputed by international observers. In October 1998 President Nazarbayev revised the constitution, eliminating the age and term limits on presidents and making terms of office seven years. He called for an early election to be held on January 10, 1999, which he promptly won with almost 80 percent of the vote.

As with the other Central Asian leaders, Nazarbayev has been able to successfully consolidate his authority. According to the most recent constitution (August 1995), the president has the authority to appoint and dismiss judges, cabinet ministers, senators, regional officials, and other bureaucrats in the government. In addition, he can call referenda at any time, can issue presidential decrees, and is responsible for all treaties and foreign negotiations. In sum, like the other Central Asian states, Kazakhstan has a strong, centralized presidential system.

The other executive is the prime minister, who has, in the past, played an important role in carrying out Nazarbayev's policies. This was especially true when the legislature was not in session, as during the 1995 dissolution of that body. At that time the prime minister, Akezhan Kazhegeldin, was in charge of implementing the president's domestic policies. It became apparent in 1997 that Nazarbayev was dissatisfied with his prime minister; he replaced him on October 10, 1997, with the former oil and gas minister Nurlan Balgimbayev. This is representative of the problems facing the "second executive" in Kazakhstan: Kazhegeldin was actually trying to wield his own authority and was also gaining a power base independent of the president. It seems that internal politics, more so than the stated

"health reasons," prompted his resignation. Since that time a loyal subordinate to the president has generally held the office of prime minister. Over time, the prime minister position has evolved into more of a managerial position within the government, acting as a "chief of staff" for the executive cabinet. As of 2005 the prime ministership was held by Daniyal Akhmetov.

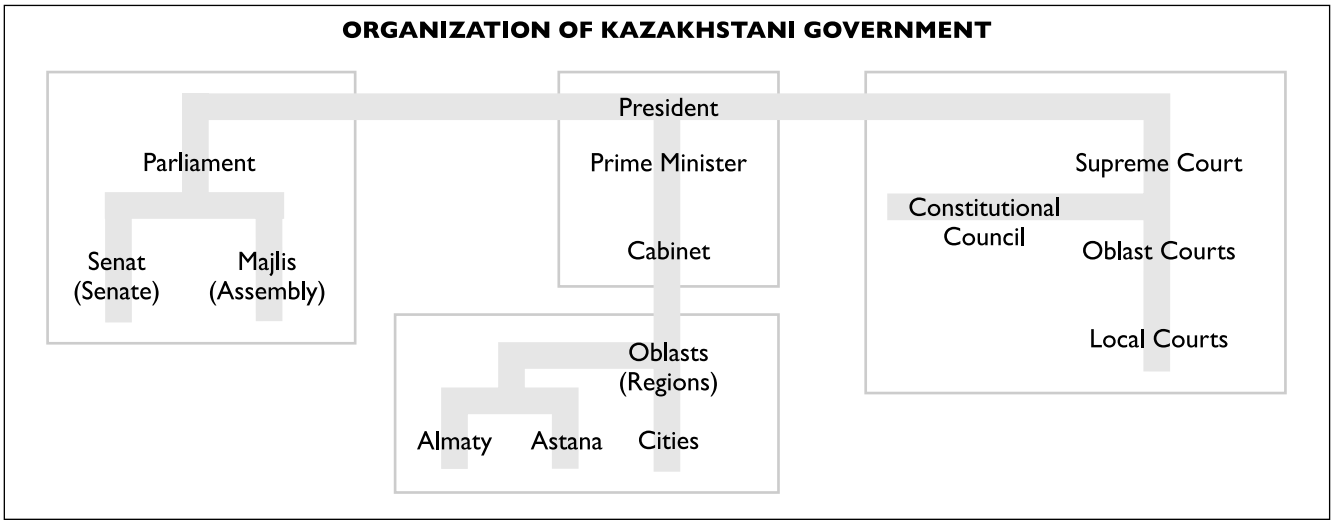
LEGISLATURE

Kazakhstan has a bicameral legislature consisting of the 39-member Senat (Senate) and 77-member Majlis (Assembly). The country has had three different legislatures in its short existence as an independent state. In 1991 the Soviet-era Supreme Soviet took on the role of legislature in the country, although it was dissolved in 1994 to accommodate the new constitutional arrangement. In that year elections were held for a 177-seat legislature. These elections were considered multiparty but, because of voting irregularities, were not considered free and fair by international observers. In spite of efforts by Nazarbayev to control the elections, his parties failed to gain a majority of the seats, and the 1994 legislature quickly began to assert its authority vis-à-vis Nazarbayev.

Because of an instance of "voter irregularity" in one district, the Kazakhstani Constitutional Court declared the entire 1994 election invalid on March 6, 1995. As a result, Nazarbayev dissolved the legislature five days later. A caretaker government under then prime minister Kazhegeldin took over for most of 1995, until a new constitution could be implemented and new elections called. It was at this time that Nazarbayev called for his own term extension and, on August 30, held another referendum on his new constitution, which outlined the current bicameral legislature structure. This referendum received slightly less support than the term extension, garnering only 89 percent of all eligible voters.

The powers of the current legislature are weak; it is nothing more than a rubber-stamp organization. While the members can challenge presidential legislation, they cannot address his decrees, effectively allowing the president and his cabinet to circumvent legislative oversight. In principle, the upper house represents the regions and regional governments, with the lower house representing the people. Surveys conducted by the U.S.-based group IFES (International Foundation for Election Systems) reveal that most Kazakhstani citizens cannot even name their legislator or senator and base their knowledge of politics on Nazarbayev's speeches and policies.

The Majlis held its first elections on December 9, 1995, with runoff elections in January and February 1996. It is important to note that a number of parties did not participate in the elections, protesting the 1995 annulment of the legislature. Elections were held again for the lower house on September 19, 2004 (with runoff elections on October 3, 2004). As these are for five-year terms, the next elections are not scheduled until 2009. In the Majlis, the pro-presidential parties have an overwhelming majority: the Fatherland Party (Otan) currently holds 42 seats, the Agrarian Party–Civic Party coalition (AIST) has 11, All Together (Asar) has 4, and Bright Path (Ak Zhol) and the Democratic Party each have one seat. Independent candidates, many with ties to Otan, occupy the remaining 18 seats.



JUDICIARY

The Supreme Court with 44 members oversees the constitutionality of laws and is the highest court of appeal in the country. The Court has not been active enough to give a fair assessment of its independence and position on issues. However, the fact that all justices are appointed by the president for fixed terms means that, most likely, the judiciary is subservient to the president. The 1995 constitutional crisis strongly supported this belief. There is also a Constitutional Council, consisting of seven members.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Up until 1997 Kazakhstan comprised 19 regions (*oblasts*) and the city of Almaty. A number of the *oblasts* have been merged into larger entities, bringing the total number down to 14; the municipal districts of Almaty and Astana each have their own councils. Various reasons have been given for reduction in the number of *oblasts*, including the need to control regional clan groups. Most likely, this streamlining is a way to more effectively control regional governments in general, particularly the *oblasts* in Russian-dominated northern Kazakhstan, where the mergers have taken place. Each province has its own legislature (Maslihat) and executive (Akim). Then former are chosen through regional election, and the latter are appointed by the president. Each Akim is also allowed to appoint a consultative body, much like the president's cabinet. Because the planning system is centralized, regional governments are largely dependent upon the central government for financial assistance. Terms are fixed for each of these officeholders at four years, although it is not uncommon for an Akim to be replaced by the president more frequently.

Kazakhstan also has a system of *mahallas,* or communal governments, that resemble rural township and urban district politics in the former Soviet system. Like the oblast governments, however, the *mahallas* have little power in the way of budgetary oversight.

The Electoral System

Kazakhstan uses three types of electoral systems in the executive and legislative branches. The presidency is determined through a nationwide election with the winner needing 50 percent plus one of the votes to win. Failing that, the top two vote getters participate in a runoff election shortly after the first vote. Nazarbayev ran unopposed in the December 1991 election. In the January 1999 race he did allow three challengers: the Communist Party chief, Serkbolsyn Abdildin, who won 13.5 percent of the vote, and two minor figures who received 4.3 percent and less than 1 percent, respectively. Nazarbayev himself received 78.3 percent of the vote. As the presidency now has a seven-year term, Nazarbayev does not have to face the voters again until 2006.

The Majlis is based on single-member districts (77) with the same 50-percent-plus-one requirement noted above. In addition, for an election to be considered valid, at least 50 percent of the electorate must participate. The Senat races are determined in two ways: 32 seats are selected via indirect elections with the legislatures of the 14 *oblasts* and the cities of Almaty and Astana each selecting 2 senators; the president is able to appoint 7 on his own.

The Party System

ORIGINS OF THE PARTIES

As with the other post-Soviet states, Kazakhstan's party system is a result of two phenomena: the Communist Party and the social organizations that emerged in the late 1980s to counter Communist Party activity. The current Kazakhstani constitution allows for opposition parties, as long as they are registered with the state.

THE PARTIES IN LAW

The current law on political parties requires that any political party that wants to register must have at least 50,000 registered members and a minimum of 70 in each province of the country. This was a change from the previous (1995) law that only required 3,000 signatories for a party registration form. Article 51 of the constitution further outlines requirements on eligibility of legislators, including residency status, language abilities, and age.

PARTY ORGANIZATION

Political parties in Kazakhstan resemble, in most ways, the structure of the former Communist Party of Kazakhstan (KPK), which differentiated between the *nomenklatura* and the masses. The former were/are the political elite within the party that held top offices, while the latter were in shop-floor groups, rural associations, and other local-level structures, called primary party organizations (PPOs). Above this level, the KPK was based on councils (*sovety*) and executive branch associations (*buro*) that operated at the district (*raion*), regional (*oblast*) and

republic levels. This top level was seen in the KPK party congress, political bureau, and secretariat, which was headed by the first secretary. The current political parties in Kazakhstan bear a striking resemblance to this structure, particularly Otan and the Communists, which are in many ways the heirs to the defunct KPK.

CAMPAIGNING

Campaigning in Kazakhstan has been lackluster at best. The presidential contest of 1991 was a one-candidate affair, so any campaign advertisements and rallies were for Nazarbayev only. The legislative campaign of 1994 did see a brief flurry of activity among the opposition parties. However, the annulment of that legislature and the creation of a new body in 1995 severely weakened any trend in fostering open elections. The combination of a short electoral season in December 1995 and the fact that a number of opposition parties opted not to participate (or could not, because they were not registered) meant that, once again, voters saw little in the way of campaigning.

In the early 2000s opposition parties have tried to pressure the media into granting more equal coverage of the campaigns. In the 2004 Majlis elections there was a modest amount of campaign literature distributed and efforts to make the voting population aware of different views. Ultimately, international organizations criticized the election on both the unfair amount of "pro-government" coverage and the inability of true opposition parties to be able to register (and thus participate in the election).

INDEPENDENT VOTERS

Since party identification is still weak in Kazakhstan, it is difficult to assess the role of independent voters in the country. With most votes going to Otan party members, or "independents" supportive of that party, it can be assumed that the Soviet-era trend of supporting the major political party remains.

Major Political Parties

FATHERLAND PARTY

(Otan)

HISTORY

Founded in March 1999, Otan is really the result of a gradual evolution of the pro-Nazarbayev elite in Kazakhstan that can be traced back to the *nomenklatura* of the Communist Party of Kazakhstan. As the Soviet Union was breaking up, Nazarbayev remained loyal to the Communist Party of Kazakhstan, although in August 1991 he had the party renamed the "Socialist Party of Kazakhstan." In October 1991 he attempted to merge the various social organizations present in the country into a "People's Congress," which was headed by the writers Olzhas Suleymanov and Mukhtar Shakhanov. However, these individuals often openly expressed their opposition to the president, and eventually this organization ran afoul of Nazarbayev. His third attempt at establishing a pro-presidential party was the Party of People's Unity of Kazakhstan (Partiya Narodnoye Edinstvo Kazakhstana; PNEK) in 1993.

The PNEK carried Nazarbayev's banner from 1993 to 1999. At that time, and perhaps in an effort to break from some potential political rivals, Nazarbayev switched his loyalty to the organization Otan. It has had several chairmen since its founding, all of whom profess loyalty to President Nazarbayev. With over 300,000 members, it is clearly the largest and most significant political party in Kazakhstan.

ORGANIZATION

Otan, as noted above, parallels the traditional party structure of the former Communist Party of Kazakhstan. There is a central administration based in the capital of Astana and *oblast* headquarters in each region.

MEMBERSHIP

Membership is based on a probationary-status system with required sponsorship of a current member. As of 2005 there were an estimated 300,000 registered members. Perhaps reflecting the post-Soviet reality in the country, party membership is not necessarily viewed as essential to upward mobility. That and the fact that Nazarbayev himself is at least publicly distanced from the party system may be seen as an explanation as to why membership figures are not higher.

POLICY

Otan is openly supportive of Nazarbayev's reform agenda and is viewed as the most pro-government party in the political spectrum. On paper, it supports a market economy, state control of the energy export industries, and the maintenance of the social welfare system. In the area of foreign policy, it supports ties with Russia while at the same time exploring relations with other regional states. This is the result of the fact that Kazakhstan shares a lengthy border with Russia and must be on good terms with this neighbor to the north.

FINANCING

Technically, "Otan" gets no funding from the government. Instead, it raises its money through membership dues.

LEADERSHIP

The chairman as of 2005 is Gani Yesimov, although most experts consider Nazarbayev himself to be the unofficial leader of the party. Technically, since Article 5 of the constitution prohibits government officials from being party leaders, Nazarbayev is forced to play this shadow role.

PROSPECTS

As long as Nazarbayev remains in power, Otan will most likely remain one of the strongest parties in Kazakhstan. Public opinion polls suggest a strong recognition of the party, as compared with others. In addition, its infrastructural support will ensure continued existence. The only problem it may face is if Nazarbayev further distances himself from the party in an effort to present himself as completely above party politics. This seems unlikely at present, given the valuable support Otan gives the president.

Minor Political Parties

The rest of the party spectrum in Kazakhstan can be considered a collection of minor parties. While there are a number of parties registered, technically making Kazakhstan a multiparty system, these tend to be limited in membership, leadership, and scope. Indeed, some are really nothing more than organizations supporting a particular political leader's opposition to Nazarbayev. Political parties in Kazakhstan are still in a state of flux and often revolve around a single individual leader. Over the past decade countless parties have emerged and then disappeared from the stage.

ALL TOGETHER

(Asar)

This party was founded by Dariga Nazarbayev, the daughter of the president, in late 2003 (officially registered on December 19, 2003). Asar's political platform emphasizes the development of a free market economy in the country and the "proper use" of energy profits, that is, for social development and pensions. More importantly, this party is seen as a potential vehicle through which Dariga Nazarbayev could launch a successful career on the way to being president. Thus, observers note that this party could develop into a serious force in the coming years. The party focuses on the younger generation of voters, with over half of the members between 25 and 35 years old. It is reported to have a membership of 177,000.

CIVIC PARTY OF KAZAKHSTAN

(Qazaqstan Azamattlyk Partiyasi)

Under the leadership of Azat Peruashev, the Civic Party is also deemed a "loyal opposition" organization to the president. With over 160,000 members this party is actually the third largest in the country.

AGRARIAN PARTY OF KAZAKHSTAN

(Qazaqstan Agrarlyk Partiyasi)

This party parallels the Aul Social Democratic Party, as most of the 100,000 registered members are from rural regions. Romin Madinov founded it in January 1999 (and registered it in March of that year). For the 2004 Majlis elections, the Agrarian Party and the Civic Party formed a bloc named AIST (Agrarian Party–Civic Party Bloc) and ran a combined ticket. This bloc is currently the second most important entity in the legislature, after Otan.

BRIGHT PATH

(Ak Zhol)

This party was founded by individuals who had expressed real opposition to the president while members of the Democratic Choice of Kazakhstan (DCK). It registered in 2002 and has since provided some criticism of the president. It purports to represent the interests of business and commerce in the country, and many of its nearly 150,000 members are supposedly from the business class.

PATRIOTS PARTY OF KAZAKHSTAN

Under the leadership of Gani Kasymov, this party was registered in mid-2000 and remains active in Kazakhstani politics. It has a membership of 132,000, about a third of whom are war veterans.

VILLAGE SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY

(Auyl Sotsial-Demokratiyalyk Partiyasi; Auyl)

Under the leadership of Gani Kaliev, Auyl was registered in the spring of 2000. A key component of this party's membership consists of farmers and rural residents.

COMMUNIST PARTY OF KAZAKHSTAN

(Kommunisticheskaya Partiya Kazakhstana; KPK)

This party was formed in September 1991 by members who opposed the reformist position of the other successor party to the Soviet-era KPK, the Socialist Party of Kazakhstan (SPK). Legally registered in March 1994, the KPK has had some difficulty in remaining a political force in Kazakhstan. For instance, the Ministry of Justice attempted to have the party banned because it favored reunification of the Soviet Union. Faced with this challenge, the KPK revised its platform to be more supportive of Kazakhstani independence. Nevertheless, it is still seen as a party that favors close ties with the other members of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). In addition, the KPK's platform includes maintaining state control of most of the economy as well as the continuation of the Soviet-era welfare state.

The party faced serious problems in early 2004 when the leadership split over charges of financial mismanagement. As for membership, the Communist Party is holding at 70,000 members. An offshoot party—the Communist People's Party of Kazakhstan—also claims to have 70,000 members, although it is less visible in the country.

PEOPLE'S CONGRESS OF KAZAKHSTAN

(Narodnyi Kongress Kazakhstana; NKK)

This was seen as one of the first real opposition parties to the SPK or KPK when it was founded in the fall of 1991. Headed by the popular writer Olzhas Suleymanov, the NKK at least initially had the backing of President Nazarbayev. However, the party's periodic criticisms of the president, as well as its growing popularity, prompted the president to part ways with Suleymanov. In August 1995 Suleymanov was appointed ambassador to Italy, effectively removing him from Kazakhstani domestic politics. The party won nine seats in the 1994 election, but it did not participate in the 1995 elections. The People's Congress lost its registration in the early 2000s. Efforts to regain legitimacy have been thwarted, generally on administrative and technical grounds.

DEMOCRATIC CHOICE OF KAZAKHSTAN

(Qazaqstannyn Demokratiyalyk Tandau)

This party remains associated with Galymzhan Zhakianov, the former Akim of Pavlodar who fell out of favor with the government in the early 2000s and was imprisoned for economic crimes; he was released from prison in 2004 and sent into internal exile. This party was founded in February 2004 and purported to have nearly 90,000 members. However, in early 2005 the Supreme Court ordered it to dissolve because of the party's actions in protesting the fairness of the 2004 elections.

Other Political Forces

ETHNIC MINORITIES

Without question, the strong Russian and non-Kazakh minority in the country will remain a significant force in the near future. Even if ethnic Kazakhs reach 60 percent of the total population, as is predicted (they totaled 53 percent as of 1999, the most recent census), the fact that there is a significant minority in the country suggests that the government will always have to be mindful of this force. The most significant minority population in Kazakhstan are Russian, at 30 percent of the Kazakhstani population. Living primarily along the Russo-Kazakhstani border, the Russians have expressed great concern about being "second-class citizens" in Kazakhstan. In particular, there have been vociferous debates over the language laws, which state that Kazakh is the official language of the republic, as well as the language taught in primary and secondary schools.

Nearly 20 percent Kazakhstan is made up of nearly 100 other listed minority groups, most of them too small to be of political importance. The exceptions are the Uighurs, Uzbeks, and Germans. The Uighurs are a Turkic minority that straddles the Sino-Kazakhstani

border and is more heavily represented in the People's Republic of China. The Uighurs have been a source of protests and concern in China over the past decade, and as these demonstrations increase in intensity, the PRC has become most concerned over what happens in Kazakhstan. This issue has become so sensitive that President Nazarbayev has banned several Uighur-language newspapers and does not allow political movements advocating Uighur rights to register, although several are reported to exist in Kazakhstan.

Finally, the German population represents a continuing trend for the ethnic minorities in Kazakhstan. The unification of Germany in 1990, combined with the opening of the former Soviet borders the following year, has resulted in a significant outmigration of ethnic Germans to Germany. German immigration to the Kazakh territories actually began during the czarist period, with the most significant inflow taking place in 1944 with the deportation of Volga Germans to Kazakhstan. In 1989 the German population in Kazakhstan was over 1 million. As a result of the outmigration, the population decreased by almost 50 percent, and it is now estimated that there are fewer than 600,000 ethnic Germans in Kazakhstan. Their importance, as well as that of ethnic Poles and Koreans, is that they are seen as links to these foreign countries and foundations for economic trade in the region. On the other hand, the emigration of these peoples also underscores the problems of Kazakh nationalism and the attempt to build a multiethnic Kazakhstani state.

Unlike the neighbors to the south, such as Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, Kazakhstan does not have a reputation for possessing a large, Islamic extremist threat. Indeed, the secular nature of Kazakhstani society and the multifaith environment in the country suggests that Islamic extremism will not be a concern for the country overall. Some Islamic groups may be active in southern Kazakhstan in the Shymkent region, but they are isolated.

National Prospects

The political future of Kazakhstan is open to some variation, although if Nazarbayev can maintain his hold on power, there should be no change at the top. However, unlike the situation in most other Central Asian states, there are legitimate challengers to his authority and potential coalition partners who would like nothing better than to defeat Nazarbayev in an open and fair election. One challenger, former prime minister Akezhan Kazhegeldin, was accused of illegal activities and thus prohibited from participating in the January 1999 presidential election. As a result, Nazarbayev was assured of an easy victory. In the early 2000s other potential challengers were also eliminated. For instance, Galymzhan Zhakianov of Democratic Choice was imprisoned in 2002; he was released in 2004 but placed in internal exile. In November 2005 another vocal critic of Nazarbayev, Zamanbek Nurkadilov, was found shot to death in his home.

A good deal of Nazarbayev's authority—and ability to stay in power—will increasingly be linked to his ability to turn the economy around and realize profits from energy exports. While he can pin the blame on others (as with former prime minister Kazhegeldin), such reasoning will eventually fall on deaf ears. Combining the ongoing tensions in the international energy market and the fact that the energy fields in Kazakhstan are beginning to realize their promise means that Kazakhstan should begin to profit from this natural resource. International companies are increasingly engaged in the new fields of Kashagan, for example, and pipeline routes continue to dominate the geopolitical discussions of the country. The question remains, though, whether the population as a whole will experience these benefits and thus acquiesce to the limited political opportunities in the country.

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REPUBLIC OF KENYA

(Djumhuri ya Kenya)

By Andrei I. Maximenko
Revised by Thomas P. Wolf, Ph.D.



The Republic of Kenya, a nation of about 34 million people (2005 est.), lies astride the equator on the east coast of Africa. As in much of the continent, the population figure represents nearly a threefold increase since independence some 40 years ago.

While Kenya was generally characterized as an economic success during its first two decades of independence, subsequent stagnation combined with relentless population growth (notwithstanding the more recent HIV/AIDS plague) has kept an increasing proportion of its population in dire poverty. The plague itself makes a substantial contribution to this poverty, having produced over 800,000 AIDS orphans by 2005.

Approximately 56 percent of the population lives in conditions that reflect income below the official poverty line. By 2002 just 10 percent of the population was earning 52 percent of total national income. Such a distribution of wealth/poverty contributes not only to a considerably high level of misery—and crime—but also to the patronage linkages that underwrite much of the actual practice of everyday politics. An integral part of such linkages is corruption.

Socioculturally, Kenya is comprised of some 40 ethnic groups, although the five largest (Kikuyu, Luhya, Luo, Kalenjin, and Kamba, in that order) constitute over two-thirds of the country's total population. Also of note is the fact that while over two-thirds of Kenya's surface area is home to various pastoralist communities, these constitute only about 10 percent of Kenya's population, due to the arid or semiarid nature of the regions they inhabit. In part a reflection of such vastness, coupled with the longstanding instability across most of its northern borders (e.g., northern Uganda, southern Sudan and Ethiopia, and Somalia), much of this area remains only partly within the "law-and-order" grasp of the state.

HISTORY

Following several decades as a protectorate (marked by a number of violent military campaigns of conquest and subjugation), Kenya was elevated to colonial status in 1905, receiving several waves of British settlers over the next few decades. The first significant African nationalist organization was the Kenya African Union (KAU, a successor to the Kikuyu Central Association, banned with the onset of World War II), founded in 1944. In 1947 Jomo Kenyatta (a Kikuyu like most KAU members) became its president. Upon eruption of the Mau-Mau (also known as the Land Freedom Army) revolt in 1952, Kenyatta (among others) was arrested and remained in detention in remote parts of the colony for nine years. Although this rebellion was crushed prior to his release, it left a pair of legacies that would impact heavily on the country's subsequent political and economic development: first, that implanted colonial privilege would be preserved, whoever came to occupy the new country's most important offices, and second, that the defeated Mau-Mau and those allied to them would possess a dangerously destabilizing potential these postcolonial rulers would have to confront. In more personal terms,

it also meant that the British government, to say nothing of that slice of the local settler community that was determined to stay, had to engage in a major "reinvention" of Kenyatta, as it became increasingly clear that no other leader was acceptable to the majority of the population.

Internal self-government arrived on June 1, 1963, following general elections the previous month, and full independence on December 12, 1963. Kenyatta, as leader of the Kenya African National Union (KANU), was initially prime minister, becoming president a year later when the constitution was changed to make Kenya a republic. At that time prominent members of the main opposition party, the Kenya African Democratic Union (KADU), were incorporated into the cabinet, whereupon this single opposition party dissolved itself. Significant in this regard was KADU's principal policy stance: "regionalism" (Swahili, *Majimbo*) with considerable powers shared between the center and the provinces (via elected legislators and governors and an upper house or Senate in Nairobi). These arrangements, too (most of which had never been fully implemented), disappeared with KADU's absorption, laying the foundation for an all-powerful executive and a political monopoly that lasted to 1992.

In the meantime, Kenyatta's waning health in the mid-1970s led to increasing tensions within the regime's inner circle itself. In 1976 an effort was launched to prevent the automatic succession of Vice President Daniel arap Moi to the presidency, should that office become vacant. Fortunately for Moi (and perhaps for the country's stability), this latter struggle was resolved in Moi's favor just a year before Kenyatta's death, leaving his path to the presidency largely unobstructed.

Moi, proclaimed president in October 1978 (having been serving in an acting capacity), was subsequently unchallenged as KANU's candidate for the party's presidential nomination prior to national elections held in November 1979. In the absence of any opposition party, or any national ballot for the presidency, Moi, like Kenyatta before him, needed only to retain his parliamentary seat (of Baringo Central, where he also enjoyed "unopposed" status, thus automatically capturing the seat, as he would continue to do until 1992).

In June 1982, responding to the perceived threat of the proposed launch of a new, Socialist-leaning party, the National Assembly officially declared Kenya a one-party state. Such a narrowing of political space, rather than achieving its purpose, only encouraged dissent. By the mid-1980s Mwakenya, an unofficial left-wing opposition group, emerged, taking credit for a number of "subversive pamphlets," though denying responsibility for several small-scale explosions in Nairobi's city center. This combination of growing corruption, repression, and popular discord was reflected in the 1988 elections, easily the least democratic in Kenya's history.

Within a month of those elections, President Moi shocked his own party faithful at a Special Delegates' Conference by calling for the reintroduction of a multiparty political system; a month later the National Assembly dutifully removed Section 2 (a) of the constitution that had been inserted 10 years earlier. Kenya was therefore once again a multiparty state.

Following two five-year terms (1992–97, 1997–2002), both pundits and politicians continued to wonder whether Moi would, after all, agree to exit public life. Three broad options were available should he decide not to do so: (1) to push through a constitutional amendment removing presidential term limits; (2) to legitimize an additional term by dissolving the Assembly and calling (and winning) a snap election before completing his second term, coupled with judicial sanction to block application of the "two five-year terms" constitutional provision; or (3) to violate the constitution and simply remain in office, including possible use of the military to do so.

While recurrent rumors and occasional reports by investigative journalists, along with periodic public statements by key supporters, gave some credence to each of the three options, by mid-2002 it was fairly certain that the president would, after all, retire. This was the general conclusion following Moi's surprise announcement in July that Uhuru Kenyatta, son of the country's first president, was his choice to be the ruling party's presidential candidate.

At the same time, the mainstream opposition, at work for several years trying to reach agreement on a collective election strategy, finally succeeded in doing so. Several factors contributed to this. First was the consensus that Mwai Kibaki (then serving as leader of the official opposition) should be the "compromise" presidential candidate. Coming from the largest ethnic community (the Kikuyu) and having the most senior political status given his long-serving cabinet and vice presidential experience (and the most extensive access to campaign funding), Kibaki was perhaps an obvious choice. But given widespread ambivalence about this ethnic community, such consensus depended upon two other informal conditions: that (especially considering his 70 years) he would serve for only one term, and that a new constitution would be enacted "within

one hundred days" that would downsize the presidency considerably by ceding authority to a prime minister and several deputies. As such, leaders of Kenya's other main opposition-leaning ethnic groups—the Luhya, the Luo, and the Kamba—could seek support from their followers on the basis of a more widely shared distribution of executive power.

In the 2002 elections the National Alliance Rainbow Coalition (NARC) and their candidate Kibaki easily defeated Kenyatta with 62 percent of the vote (though total turnout, surprisingly, was actually slightly lower than in the previous two elections, at 57 percent). Nearly the same margin obtained for parliamentary contests, with NARC netting 125 out 210 seats. KANU, with 68 seats, now became the official opposition. Despite a few problems, the election earned strong national and diplomatic endorsements.

Well into the government's second year, severe strains were showing over the stalled constitutional review process that had produced and then ratified a draft document that the government rejected (especially those provisions relating to the executive and devolution). Further, not only had few concrete steps been taken to address the wrongs committed by the previous regime, but several blatant cases of corruption involving prominent members of Kibaki's team had been revealed as well.

Taking all such developments into account, it remained unclear as to just which, if any, of the proposed changes to the current constitution would in fact ever be implemented and, if so, when. What did seem clear, however, was that the attempt to implement a sweeping reform agenda in the context of the current constitutional structure in which so much power remained largely unaccountable had little hope of success. In the meantime, with so much rancor continuing within NARC, and with Kibaki's health still in doubt even as his closest colleagues began to insist that he would, after all, seek a second term, it remained unclear what his government would actually be able to achieve, and how another winning electoral coalition could be put together in 2007.

The System of Government

Kenya's government functions as a unitary, formally multiparty (from 1992), quasi-democratic state, with a highly centralized set of political institutions situated around an executive presidency.

EXECUTIVE

The most striking feature of executive power in Kenya is the general absence of institutional checks and balances and, hence, of accountability. In large part, this stems from the country's hybrid constitutional structure, incorporating elements of both its original, parliamentary system and particular attributes of presidentialism that were added later. For example, while elections must be held at least every five years, the president (like a British prime minister) has the prerogative to dissolve the National Assembly at any time, triggering elections, which also follow a successful no-confidence vote. At the same time, the president must himself be an elected member of the National Assembly (though very rarely, aside from attending its State Opening, have presidents made personal appearances there). Although unlikely, the possibility thus exists that a successful presidential candidate could lose his parliamentary contest, thus triggering a constitutional crisis. All presidential candidates must also be at least 35 years of age and nominated by a registered political party; as with parliamentary races, independent candidates are not allowed.

As chief executive, the president is the head of state, head of government, and commander in chief of the armed forces. Both the vice president and cabinet ministers are appointed by the president from among members of the National Assembly, with the former alone required to be an elected rather than a nominated member. The president must command a majority in the National Assembly; losing a no-confidence vote triggers his resignation and new elections. If a president dies, or a vacancy otherwise occurs during a term, the vice president becomes interim president for up to 90 days while a successor is popularly elected. However, if for any reason the vice president is either unable or unwilling to assume this interim position, the cabinet meets and selects one of its own to fill it during this same 90-day period. One glaring omission is the absence of provisions for the actual handing over of power by an outgoing incumbent (a situation that bordered on chaos following the 2002 election). Most critically, however, is the dual personality of this branch of government, a central focus of the ongoing, if still highly uncertain, review process.

LEGISLATURE

The legislative branch consists of the unicameral National Assembly. The body consists of 224 members: 210 elected by popular vote for five-year terms; 12

nominated by the president based upon the numerical party strength of elected MPs; and the attorney general and speaker, who are ex-officio members. The attorney general may not vote. Its calendar (dates of sittings, as well as dissolution, within the five-year period) is determined by the president.

From the onset of independence, the executive has dominated the legislature. After the return to multipartyism in 1992, however, and given KANU's slim majority in both the seventh and eighth parliaments, it was necessary to make increasing use of various informal mechanisms, especially cash handouts and other forms of patronage, but also physical threats in some cases, to keep a sufficient number of MPs of various parties in check. Yet in the 1997 election the mounting din for constitutional and electoral reforms, coupled with the threat of an election boycott accompanied by public rallies that often attracted state violence, eventually forced a compromise set of reforms that offered two lessons to MPs and the wider public: 1) given sufficient pressure, the executive could be forced into making at least some concessions; 2) however great the country's political divisions, most MPs are prepared to bargain with each other (whatever the truth of allegations that money from various sources constitutes a critical element in such bargaining).

This same sort of inclination to compromise was evidenced subsequently in the agreement that incorporated major civil society elements into the Assembly's hitherto monopoly control over the constitutional review process in 2001. The Assembly's new-found muscle was perhaps most concretely expressed in the establishment of the Parliamentary Service Commission in that year, giving the Assembly for the first time power to determine its own budgetary and staff needs; a subsequent effort in 2002 to alter Sections 58 and 59 of the constitution so as to deprive the president of the power of dissolution and thus accord parliament with both fixed dates for its sittings and its overall duration, failed, however. In this case, the government used the argument that as the process of complete constitutional review was underway, it would be inappropriate to make any piecemeal changes in the meantime; whether a recent renewed attempt to alter these constitutional provisions will succeed, given the difficulties in the review process, remains to be seen. Other key pending elements in the ongoing effort of legislative strengthening include the power to vet key presidential appointments and financial estimates prior to the official presentation of the annual budget, and access to and similar vetting power over proposed expenditures in the heretofore undisclosed areas of the military and security services.

Finally, whatever additional measures are instituted to strengthen this branch of government, it can be agreed that following two massive increases in pay and benefits (that legislators awarded to themselves, one before and one immediately after the 2002 elections), Kenya's legislators are (in relative terms) among the best paid on the continent, if not the world.

JUDICIARY

Kenyan jurisprudence is based on English common law, African customary law, Islamic law, acts of the British Parliament before independence and of the National Assembly after 1963, and judicial precedent.

A chief justice and 11 puisne (associate) judges make up Kenya's High Court, which sits continuously in Nairobi, Mombasa, Nakuru, Kisumu, and Nyeri. The High Court supervises a system of subordinate courts, including provincial and district magistrates' courts and Muslim district courts, the latter ruling on questions of Islamic law relating to family and domestic affairs. The Court of Appeals issues the final verdict in contested civil and criminal cases. The president has the authority to appoint High Court and Court of Appeals judges, upon advice from the Judicial Service Commission, a body that was largely dormant during Moi's rule.

The courts are empowered to review government acts and legislation and to declare laws and acts null and void. However, the Kenyan judiciary's independence was seriously eroded through the passage in 1988 of constitutional amendments affecting the security of tenure of judges and the employment of expatriate judges who worked under contracts with the Kenyan government. During the political liberalization of the early 1990s, however, such security of tenure was restored.

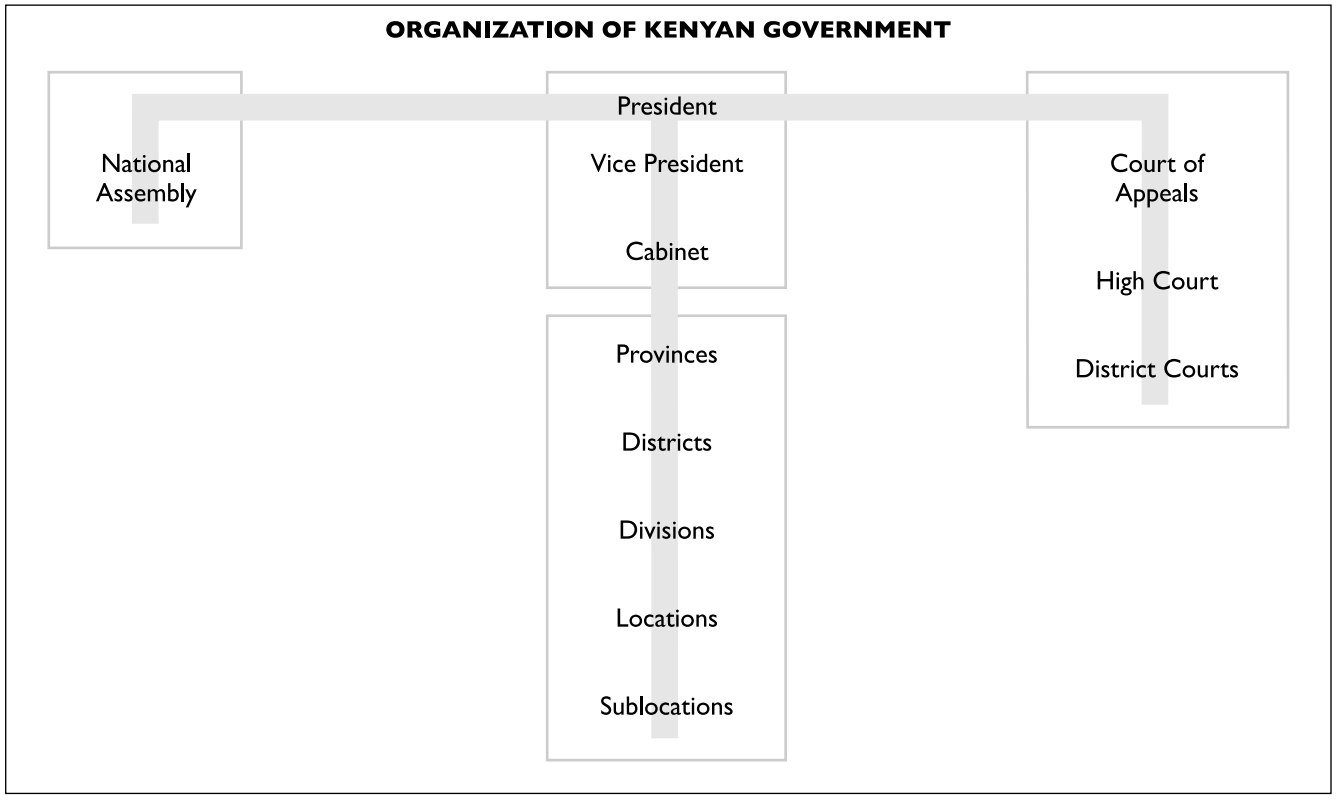
Given its severely tarnished reputation under Moi, upon assuming office the current NARC government sought to implement its promise of a thorough overhaul of the judiciary. Doing so led to the departure of nearly half of this branch's most senior judges (23 High Court and Court of Appeals justices) and a substantial number of lower-tier magistrates (82 out of 300). However, several senior judges successfully appealed their suspensions, and it remained unclear as to how thorough and fair such a cleansing process would be, especially pending a final resolution of the constitutional review process.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Kenya is divided administratively into provinces, districts, divisions, locations, and sublocations. Provincial commissioners oversee the country's eight provinces (Central, Coast, Eastern, North Eastern, Nyanza, Rift Valley, Western, and Nairobi). The commissioners oversee the implementation of government policies through the provincial, district, and divisional officers who work under them, representing all principal ministries and departments. Likewise, they chair provincial and district security committees. Districts and divisions within districts are headed, respectively, by district commissioners and district officers. As of 2004 there were 74 districts and some 215 divisions. Notwithstanding their geographic spread, however, these civil servants are directly responsible to the president and thus should be seen as extensions of executive authority, rather than providing a genuinely two-way avenue for the expression of local needs and opinions. It should be noted that the draft constitution that emerged from the review process early in 2004 called for the scrapping of the entire provincial administration system that had become closely associated with unaccountable and oppressive executive power and having its functions assigned to popularly elected local authorities organized in a three-tier (and, critics said, financially unsustainable) structure.

Local authorities are comprised of elected members (councilors) and administrative staff. They may be any of the following five types: municipal councils, town councils, county councils, urban councils, and area councils. Local councils, though largely dependent upon Treasury support (the Local Authority Transfer Fund, or LATF) for financial viability, raise modest revenues by levying taxes and other fees with which to build and maintain roads and public housing and provide health, welfare, and education, and various other social services. Since the late 1960s, and culminating in the passage of the Local Government Act of 1974, central government, particularly through the Ministry of Local Government, has exercised real power over all local authorities. This is so even if the onset of multiparty politics allowed for considerable de facto autonomy, especially with regard to corrupt practices that fed regime-based or aligned patronage networks.

Rural people especially have participated in local governmental processes by attending general meetings (*baraza*, in Swahili) convened most often by chiefs, assistant chiefs, or district officers. While these are often orchestrated so that only approved government



messages are communicated, they have become more spontaneous in recent years and do provide an increasingly important means of two-way communication between rulers and ruled.

The Electoral System

Under Kenya's constitution, regular presidential and legislative elections are held simultaneously every five years (or sooner, if parliament passes a motion of no-confidence or the president chooses to dissolve parliament). All citizens 18 years or older may vote. The president and members of the National Assembly are elected through direct popular vote by secret ballot. To be elected president, a candidate must receive a plurality of votes cast and at least 25 percent or more of the vote in at least five of eight provinces; failing this, a runoff contest must be held between the top two candidates within 30 days. Candidates to the National Assembly are elected in single-member districts.

As of 2005 there are 210 elected and 12 nominated members (plus the attorney general and speaker), a limit stipulated in the current constitution. With or without a new constitution, however, pressures are mounting to increase this number. As part of the pre-1997 reform package, nominated members are allocated to political parties according to the percentage of total parliamentary votes cast and received by the various parties. Previously, the allocation of these seats was a presidential prerogative. Gender should also be taken into account in these nominations and, to a large degree, has been.

Some two-thirds of those registered actually voted in the 1992 and 1997 elections, though claims of fraud in the registration and voting process in both contests cast some doubt on the accuracy of these figures. However, it is unclear just what percentage of eligible voters was actually registered.

From early 2003 the Electoral Commission put into practice a system of continuous voter registration, though access to national identity cards required for this has continued to be difficult in certain areas. Nevertheless, it is expected that whatever the national mood at the time of the next election, a significantly higher number of eligible Kenyans should find themselves on the voter rolls; whether they will return to the polls in numbers that reflect such enhanced ease of registration is another matter. Whatever the case, at least on the basis of the country's unbroken string of 11 national elections that culminated in the unprecedented change of regime in 2002, it seems reasonable to assume that this particular institution is firmly anchored in Kenya's political culture.

The Party System

Although it is more than a decade since the return to multiparty politics, the current state and certainly future content of the country's evolving party system remains unclear. This applies both to particular parties and to the way all of them function in relation to the country's key political institutions.

Kenya's 50-plus registered parties can be assigned to several categories. In the first are those that seek national power either individually or through preelection pacts or agreements with other parties. The second category includes those that seek parliamentary representation only, usually in terms of ethnic or, in some cases, regional identity. These may or may not field a presidential candidate (and their decision as to whether to do so may change from one election to another).

In the next category are those parties centered on a particular individual who merely seeks wider publicity that may or may not include actually contesting a parliamentary seat. Such individuals, too, may contest the presidency as well, again to attract publicity and to increase their chances in their constituency contests.

Fourth are those largely opportunistic or "parachute" parties. While initially registered mainly for personal or financial reasons, several of these have taken on a much more significant guise, when, following either a split in a major party or when one or more leading individuals within them fell out with those in control, the need for an alternative electoral vehicle arose.

A final category includes those parties that similarly have no realistic chance of winning any elective seats (even at the local government level) but are conceived in order to raise the public profile of an individual or group of individuals or a cause.

At the same time, in terms of holding and attracting support, during campaigns, and more generally, they all combine some mixture of patronage (especially when able to access state power) and populist appeals. In recent years these have been couched in terms of alleviating poverty and promoting development in general, as well as "bringing to book" those reputed to have been involved in economic and human rights crimes and abuses.

Major Political Parties

NATIONAL ALLIANCE RAINBOW COALITION (NARC)

The current ruling party, NARC, is the result of what has now been revealed as a rather fleeting inter-elite agreement for purposes of dislodging KANU. Several political parties united in a simple desire for power rather than in any vision of the purposes for which the power should be used. Two months before the 2002 election the National Alliance Party of Kenya (NAK), a working composite of over one dozen major and minor opposition parties, forged an alliance with the Liberal Democratic Party comprised of that faction of KANU that rejected Moi's imposition of Uhuru Kenyatta as his party's presidential candidate.

In this connection, suffering from increasing wrangling within his NARC party (especially from the "Rainbow" group), President Kibaki subsequently sought to shore up his parliamentary majority in June 2004 by bringing into his cabinet seven MPs from KANU and FORD–People. This move, one negotiated and agreed to by the individuals involved rather than by their parties, triggered a constitutional challenge on the grounds that it violated Kenya's identity as a "multiparty" state, even though the constitution allows the president to "appoint cabinet ministers from among Members of the National Assembly." (The High Court's judgment was pending at the time of writing.)

Indeed, in the wake of this development, one KANU Assembly member suggested publicly that should Kibaki stand again in the 2007 election, KANU would support him, and should he not, his own party leader, Uhuru Kenyatta, would be NARC's next presidential candidate.

KENYA AFRICAN NATIONAL UNION (KANU)

KANU, founded in 1960, held the reins of government from independence in 1963 to 2002. While President Kenyatta's government relegated the party as a distinct institution to the sidelines in favor of the Provincial Administration, Moi made much more active use of it, at both the national and the local levels.

Notwithstanding its long history, it is difficult to determine the true number of actual KANU members. Whatever its records may show, a national survey conducted seven months after its defeat in 2002 found only 4 percent of respondents willing to "identify with" the former ruling party (whereas 52 percent did so with NARC).

The future of KANU's leadership remains unclear since the 2002 election. The party constitution, ratified at its March 2002 conference, provided for Moi to continue as chairman after his exit from office. In the wake of its electoral disaster, however, Moi resigned early in 2003, following which Uhuru Kenyatta was confirmed as "acting chairman." In January 2005 Kenyatta won the election for the chairmanship, easily defeating Nicholas Biwott. Kenyatta has declared his opposition to the proposed new constitution.

Minor Political Parties

FORUM FOR THE RESTORATION OF DEMOCRACY–KENYA (FORD–KENYA)

Although it has the honor of being the first opposition party to be founded after the restoration of the multiparty competition system at the end of 1991 and for a brief period embodied the hopes of nearly all those determined to bring KANU rule to an end, FORD–Kenya today represents a much narrower slice of national politics. After the 1997 election the party nearly disappeared; as of 2005 it had only a single seat in the Assembly. Other offshoots of the original party include FORD–People and FORD–Asili.

Although the party lost its standing as the official opposition after the 1997 elections when its parliamentary numbers were overtaken by DP, it continued to have some attraction to that section of the population that was anti-KANU but disinclined to support either a Luo or a Kikuyu-led party. Some party stalwarts remain optimistic that it can recover much of the broader, national appeal that FORD had at the start of the modern multiparty era.

DEMOCRATIC PARTY (DP)

The Democratic Party, like FORD, was formed in 1991. Its founders were the former minister of health and vice president Mwai Kibaki and a group of disgruntled former civil servants and older politicians. Given the strong support role Kibaki played in the KANU government during its most repressive years, such a turnabout provoked some cynicism.

Given FORD's mass following at the time and its populist appeal, the conservative (and mainly Kikuyu, but also non-African) propertied business class was

clearly worried at the prospect of this "radical" party taking power. By the time of the 1992 elections, however, following FORD's split and KANU's partial resurgence, Kibaki's Nyeri District was the clear center of DP's strength, winning only a few seats elsewhere, especially in the Kamba-inhabited region of Eastern Province.

While Kibaki finished third in that presidential race, he climbed to second position in the 1997 contest, its parliamentary representation earning DP recognition as the official opposition. This reflected both the numerical clout of the Mt. Kenya communities (Kikuyu, Embu, and Meru) as well as the further fractioning of the opposition that occurred after the 1992 election. Based on his party's strength and personal seniority, he was thus its most commanding figure as the opposition strategized for the 2002 transition election, eventually gaining NARC's collective ("compromise") nomination. Like NARC's other composite members, DP's future is unclear, given the absence of a clear successor to Kibaki within the party itself.

OTHER MINOR PARTIES

Given the ethnic, elite-driven nature of Kenya's parties, a relatively minor or even unknown party today can become a most important one tomorrow. For example, the relatively obscure Social Democratic Party (SDP) for a time appeared to have the potential as a nonethnic, more policy-based (pro-reform) party. It made room for C. Ngilu when she fell out with Kibaki's DP before the 1997 election; she then ran as its presidential candidate. This enlarged profile helped boost SDP's overall parliamentary representation, while Ngilu retained her own seat. Subsequently, leadership wrangles emerged between Ngilu and the party's officials, forcing her eventual departure to a previously unknown entity, the National Party of Kenya, that later was transformed into NARC. SDP, in the meantime, has nearly vanished.

Another small party, Safina, had its registration attempts blocked by the government prior to the 1997 elections. It appears that the international stature of one of its central figures, Dr. Richard Leakey, and especially his perceived fund-raising potential, was the main reason for the regime's trepidation in this case. By the time the party was allowed to register, little time remained to organize, and it fielded no presidential candidate. Its candidates, several of whom were successful, found the party useful for two reasons: it had a more precise reform agenda than mainstream (ethnoregional) opposition parties, and it freed them from association with any ethnic identity via a party leader or presidential candidate. Although winning just a single seat in the 2002 election, it is likely that in a country such as Kenya where ethnic affiliation so dominates the political terrain, Safina, among other such marginal parties, will continue to provide useful alternative avenues of political mobility.

Other Political Forces

INTERNATIONAL DONORS

The (mainly Western) international community played an important role in promoting political changes in Kenya in the early 1990s, mainly through the withholding of development assistance and budgetary support. This led to an on-again, off-again relationship, particularly with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank, throughout the decade and into the early 2000s. Such failure to adhere to agreed conditions also added fuel to domestic calls for reform.

Reflecting such a souring of relations, especially from the mid-1990s, international donors gave substantial support to NGOs and other civil society groups active in the areas of human rights monitoring, civic education, constitutional reform, and election preparation and observation activities. Despite expectations to the contrary, donor relations with the new Kibaki government, while certainly improved, have yet to be completely restored. Well into 2004 the World Bank had restarted a number of projects previously halted, in addition to initiating new ones, but the IMF expressed less than complete confidence in the government's commitment to implementing all agreed reform measures.

Whatever the course of such relations, the fact remains that as long as the country's current account deficit (-$459 million as of 2004) remains so large and its development needs and popular expectations so high, no Kenya government can survive for long without external support.

THE MILITARY

The military's threat to constitutional (and possible civil) order can arise through a number of scenarios. Internally, the military may itself engineer a coup in which it formally takes power, or identify civilian actors through whom it may wield influence. Externally, civilian politicians may seek to use the military for their own purposes. In either case, such situations become particularly explosive when sections of the military disagree and fighting between two or more of them ensues.

In Kenya's case, however, the longer term political importance of Kenya's military lies in its general disinclination to exert influence over politics, and similarly, to allow itself to be used by civilian power-holders. Several reasons have been cited for this. One is the high level of professionalism, encouraged by close ties with Western military forces, especially those of Britain. While U.S. military assistance and other ties have been made more subject to the vagaries of the host country's governance performance, especially with regard to corruption in arms and related purchases, the 1998 al-Qaeda destruction of the U.S. embassy in Kenya provided a strong incentive for closer cooperation along these lines.

Perhaps most important of all, the political leadership has kept a close eye on the barracks. This has taken the form of appointing and promoting senior officers in whom it has a high level of trust. It has also entailed ensuring that even in times of severe budgetary constraints the needs of the troops are well catered for.

It was, perhaps, for its past political neutrality, as well as for the rumored refusal of the military to lend any assistance to possible efforts to block the transfer of power that accompanied the transition election of 2002, that 58 percent of Kenyans expressed high trust in this institution. One may conclude, therefore, that even if future conditions may not be as supportive in maintaining a clear divide between the military and political life as has been the case to date, the country's first 40 years of success do inspire considerable confidence in this regard.

UNDERGROUND GROUPS AND MILITIAS

Beginning especially with the Mau-Mau, Kenyan political society has been periodically populated by a variety of underground or shadow-state groups. The former have arisen in periods of intense political and economic frustration, the latter when those in power, nationally or locally, feel threatened and are able to exploit mainly jobless youth to pursue political objectives of which they may have only sketchy awareness, often for immediate (if minimal) material gain.

Minimal violence associated with such gangs occurred in the context of the 2002 elections, at least after the various (and often violent) party nominations were over. Some observers concluded that this stemmed primarily from two facts: that both leading presidential contenders (Kibaki and Kenyatta) were from the same (Kikuyu) ethnic group, thus defusing tensions on this basis, and that leading figures in KANU feared engaging in such blatantly illegal behavior, just in case their party lost.

Whatever the actual mix of reasons then, the next (2007) election will be a major test for the NARC government with regard to such militias, when once again, the stakes will be exceedingly high.

THE RELIGIOUS SECTOR

To speak of a religious "sector" in Kenya is somewhat misleading, since the positions taken by leaders of various denominations and institutions on public issues often vary as much as do those of competing politicians and parties. Yet the increased involvement of Christian and Muslim organizations and leaders is undeniable over recent years.

Direct church involvement in support of civil liberties began in 1986 with the National Council of Churches of Kenya (NCCK) speaking out publicly against the government's proposal to replace the secret ballot with a queuing system of voting (employed during the subsequent elections of 1988). These criticisms later broadened to encompass Moi's use of detention without trial and torture and the one-party system generally.

The Muslims, by contrast, were much slower to become so engaged. All Islamic organizations in Kenya are affiliated to the Supreme Council of Kenya Muslims (SUPKEM) that until the constitutional reform movement got underway in 1999 had been seen largely as KANU-leaning. Energized in part by local objections to certain security measures introduced in the aftermath of the 1998 U.S. embassy bombing and other threats, particular Muslim leaders and organizations became more vocal in a wide variety of national, secular debates.

UNIVERSITY STUDENTS AND FACULTY

At numerous times in Kenya's postcolonial history the universities, and particularly the University of Nairobi, have been flashpoints of political protest. On even more occasions, however, students have engaged in violent acts to express dissatisfaction with mundane issues closer to home, such as fee increases, poor dormitory food, and campus power failures. The underlying cause of many of the more recent outbursts was the massive and rapid expansion of the student body over the last 20 years, a process that had strong political overtones in terms of both the communities and the families that benefited most from it.

With the return to multiparty politics, certain political operators frequently sought student involvement in their campaigns and related activities, helping to imprint upon students the same kinds of divisions present in the Kenyan body politic at large.

THE URBAN POOR

Since independence Kenya's urban centers, especially Nairobi and Mombasa, have experienced very rapid growth. The country's urban population that stood at about 10 percent at independence is now nearly 30 percent. This increase reflects both steady natural growth within the urban population and steady rural-urban migration, in large part a consequence of the lack of income-earning opportunities in most rural areas. The bulk of these urban dwellers inhabit very low income areas and dwellings, many without basic necessities; Nairobi's Kibera slum alone has close to half a million residents. The wanton, often unannounced, destruction of shantytowns and expulsion of their dwellers for the benefit of politically connected developers have caused further suffering. Such oppressive conditions have made many among the urban poor extremely dissatisfied with the status quo and vulnerable to demagogic manipulation by elites, especially in exchange for material inducements, however modest. Sociocultural factors aside, however, the sober realities affecting the vast majority of residents in Nairobi and other urban centers constitute yet another extremely daunting challenge for the government.

ORGANIZED LABOR AND EMPLOYERS

Approximately half of Kenya's employees are members of the country's two dozen labor unions. With the exception of the Kenya National Union of Teachers (KNUT), all are affiliated to the Central Organization of Trade Unions (COTU). Throughout the KANU era, the government, through its Ministry of Labour, controlled union registration and also, to a large extent, internal union politics.

In the wake of NARC's electoral triumph, there was a small explosion of labor unrest, as many workers attempted to see how far they could go in improving their pay packages and working conditions, which in many cases were sorely wanting, even by local standards. By and large, the results were disappointing, with the government generally supporting employers who made only minimal concessions.

Once in office, the new NARC government, through especially the Ministry for Planning and National Development, established several advisory panels and other bodies to encourage private sector input into policy formulation and implementation. However, given its relatively small size and racial diversity, the "business community" is not likely to have much direct influence on formal political institutions, especially through the electoral process.

THE MEDIA

As in other less developed countries, most Kenyans have limited access to media, aside from medium-wave radio broadcasts. The 2003 Kenya Afrobarometer Survey revealed that while a full 77 percent of respondents listen to radio news on a daily basis, only 15 percent have access to newspapers.

Keeping this reality in mind, it should be stressed that even the more modest outreach of the press and television may have a significant impact, given that actual influence over public affairs is concentrated in the hands of relatively few people.

For their part, in both number and content, Kenya's nonstate media have reflected the prevailing political atmosphere in the country. This stems in large part from the fact that publishing or broadcasting requires a state license. The press, on the other hand, has always been in private hands. Even so, until the reopening of political competition in the early 1990s, it, too, had to stay within unofficial but clearly recognized limits, with regard to both the kind of stories covered and the editorial views expressed; several publications that demonstrated too much independence were silenced.

With regard to the electronic media, the government's Kenya Broadcasting Corporation (successor to the Voice of Kenya) continues as the only radio station with a truly national reach. It will perhaps not be until completion of the next electoral cycle before a firm judgment can be made as to how secure is this expanded freedom of expression.

National Prospects

Not since the immediate post–Mau Mau period has there been so much uncertainty in Kenyan public life. This relates to questions in three main areas: (1) whether the current set of economic policies can significantly improve the well-being of the vast majority of citizens; (2) what will be the shorter and longer term "menu" of political party choices, with what mix of individual and ethnic identity, as the next election approaches; and (3) to what extent the country's public institutions will be

restructured, whether through a more thorough constitutional review or through piecemeal reform by means of ordinary legislation and executive fiat.

The increasing attention to political advantage may undermine whatever possibilities for significant economic restructuring and growth the Kibaki government brought with it. In this connection, some fear that without marked growth, further polarization based on the country's yawning class distinctions will grow, straining relations not just between rich and poor but also between Africans as a whole and the small but critical non-African slice of the population. Economic hardship may also encourage calls for those associated with past economic and human rights abuses to be held accountable, further weakening national cohesion, whatever the merits of such an application of justice.

Finally, although expectations have dropped significantly in this regard, given the vast sums invested in the review process, popular demand for a new or substantially revised constitution remains high. The promised date for such a document is now long since past, although the Assembly did finally approve a draft in 2005. Meanwhile, a fierce debate continues as to (1) its final content regarding especially the executive, devolution, the Islamic kadhis' courts, and overall state financing, and (2) the most legitimate and efficient way out of the current procedural quagmire. Here the critical choices have to do with parliament's possible role in working out a compromise concerning the content of these outstanding issues, the method of adoption of whatever document may emerge, and the timing both of implementation and of the order of sequence of its various provisions. In view of the entrenched interests that have become increasingly evident since the election, some observers have concluded that the only actual issue remaining is who will be saddled with the blame for failure. The impact such an outcome would have is difficult to surmise. Although Kenya has long been noted for its political stability, the country is currently undergoing a process of fundamental, albeit slow, change to greater political freedom.

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REPUBLIC OF KIRIBATI

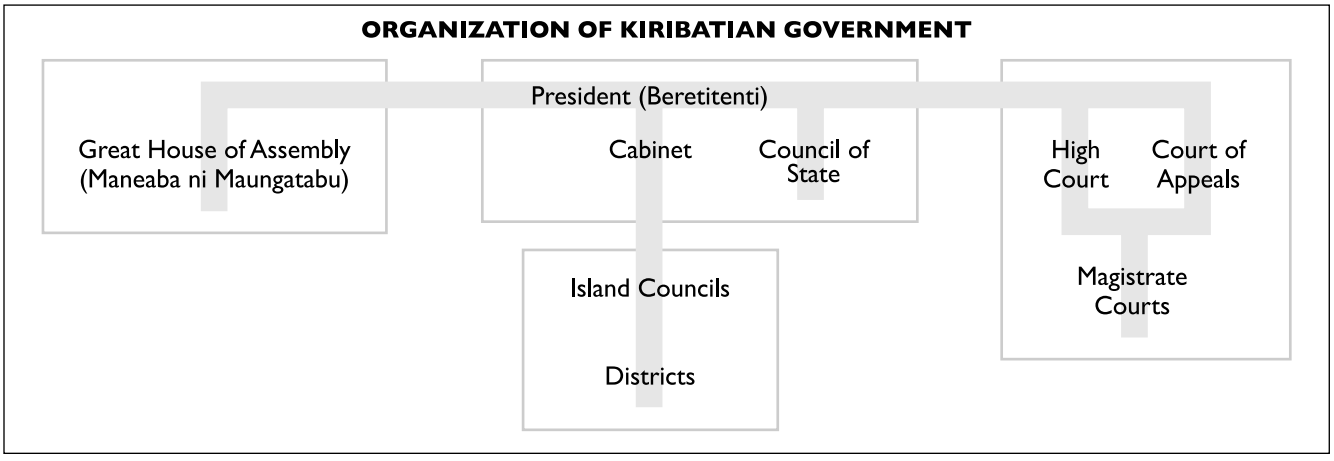
By Eugene Ogan, Ph.D.

The democratic republic of Kiribati was known as the Gilbert Islands until it achieved independence from Great Britain in 1979. Great Britain had administered the Gilbert Islands as part of a protectorate that included the Ellice Islands. In a referendum held in 1974, inhabitants of the latter voted to form a separate nation, now Tuvalu. Kiribati remains within the British Commonwealth.

Kiribati is made up of 33 islands, all of them coral atolls except Banaba, which had been a major producer of phosphate until operations ceased in the year of independence. Total land area is 823 square kilometers, including 103 square kilometers of uninhabited isles. In 2005 there were 103,000 residents, most of whom lived on the single island of South Tarawa. Population pressures have been recognized for decades, and migration to the Solomon Islands was encouraged by the former British administration. When phosphate on Banaba was exhausted and the island was no longer habitable, Banabans were relocated to Rabi, in the Fiji group.

The System of Government

A mixture of parliamentary and presidential systems, the Kiribati government is headed by a president, or Beretitenti. Kiribati has a unicameral legislature.



EXECUTIVE

The president is both head of state and head of government. The Great House of Assembly, or Maneaba ni Maungatabu, nominates up to four candidates from its membership, and one is chosen in a national election.

Presidents are elected to a normal term of four years and may be reelected twice. They can be removed by a no-confidence vote in the House of Assembly, in which case a Council of State serves until a new election can be held. The president selects a vice president, as many as eight ministers, and an attorney general who must be a lawyer and may or may not be elected a member of the Maneaba. These constitute the cabinet and, with the president, the executive authority.

In the 2003 election Anote Tong defeated his older brother, Harry, to win the presidency.

LEGISLATURE

Elections for the Maneaba are held every four years. It is a single-chamber legislative body, consisting of 42 total members: 40 members elected from 23 single-member or multimember constituencies; a representative of the Banaban community nominated by the Rabi Council in Fiji; and the attorney general, who serves ex officio. Each member must be elected by an overall majority of votes cast, and runoff elections are often necessary. A distinctive feature of the Maneaba is that the speaker is chosen from among persons who are not members. Except for cabinet ministers, members may be recalled by a petition of a majority of voters in their electorates.

JUDICIARY

Judicial authority is vested in a High Court, a Court of Appeals, and a system of magistrates' courts. The chief justice of the High Court is appointed by the president with the advice of the cabinet. There are 24 magistrates' courts serving every inhabited island; each has three magistrates. A primary function of magistrates' courts is dealing with land matters.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

There are 6 districts and 21 local government councils, including town or urban councils. Council members are elected for three-year terms, but Maneaba members also serve ex officio on councils located in their electorates.

The Electoral System

The voting age is 18, but candidates for the Maneaba and presidency must be at least 21.

The Party System

There is no tradition of formally organized political parties in Kiribati. Those parties that exist are loosely organized groups that lack formal party platforms and structures. There are two major parties, the Maneaban Te Mauri Party or MTM and the Boutokaan Te Koaua Party or BTK.

Major Political Parties

PROTECT THE MANEABA

(Maneaban Te Mauri Party; MTM)

This party holds a majority in parliament with 24 out of 42 seats after the 2003 legislative elections. Its presidential candidate, Harry Tong, lost the presidential election to his brother, Anote, of the BTK.

PILLARS OF TRUTH

(Boutokaan Te Koaua Party; BTK)

This party came in second in the 2003 legislative elections, winning 16 seats. However, its presidential candidate, Anote Tong, won the presidential election.

Minor Political Parties

Minor parties in Kiribati include the National Progressive Party and the Maurin Kiribati Party.

Other Political Forces

Kiribati has no armed forces to interfere in the political system. The media is small but generally independent and able to comment on political affairs without threat of harassment.

National Prospects

Kiribati's government is notable for its political stability as well as its financial prudence, especially when

compared with other Pacific Island nations. However, the country's economic situation remains gloomy. Since the exhaustion of the major phosphate deposits, fishing remains the resource with greatest potential. In 2001 Kiribati received over U.S. $15 million in aid, most of it from the United Kingdom and Japan.

Even more threatening are predictions of global warming and a consequent rise in sea level. There is much debate about the accuracy of these forecasts, but they represent a real danger for the low-lying atolls of Kiribati. If the worst-case scenario should occur, this Pacific Island nation might simply disappear.

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DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF KOREA

(Chosun Minjujueui Inmin Konghwaguk)

By Hun Joo Park, Ph.D.
Revised by Florina Laura Neculai, M.A.



The Democratic People's Republic of Korea, or North Korea, is a Stalinist single-party state that controls the northern half of the Korean Peninsula. Korea was divided between rival governments in the aftermath of the 35 years of Japan's colonial rule and World War II. North Korea, with a land mass of 122,370 square kilometers, about 55 percent of the total land area of the peninsula, shares a 1,025-kilometer border with the People's Republic of China along the Yalu and Tumen Rivers and a 16-kilometer border with Russia at the mouth of the Tumen River. Since the end of the Korean War in July 1953, the demilitarized zone (DMZ), a 4,000-meter-wide "no-man's-land" along the 38th parallel, has divided the Democratic People's Republic of Korea from the Republic of Korea (South Korea). As of 2005 North Korea's population stood at 22.9 million, which is about half the population of South Korea.

An examination of the history, both ancient and modern, of the Korean Peninsula sheds much light on the character and the preoccupations of the North Korean regime. Korea is an ancient country that has been a marching ground for the armies of its more powerful neighbors (China, the Mongols, Japan, the Manchus, and, to a lesser extent, Russia) and yet has managed, with great tenacity, to preserve its national identity. A tragic history has given the Korean people great determination and strength of character and has also made them highly suspicious of outsiders and, at times, rigidly conservative. The Yi dynasty, which despite foreign invasion and bitter internal rivalry between political factions lasted from 1392 to 1910, sought protection by becoming a tributary state of China, assiduously copying its political institutions and social practices. By closing itself off from all other foreign influences, it became what Westerners in the 19th century called the "hermit kingdom."

In 1876, however, Japan forcibly opened the country, in much the same manner as Japan itself was opened by the United States in 1853. The next three decades saw intense rivalry among Japan, China, and, to a far lesser extent, Russia for dominant influence in Korea, but Japan's control of Korea was set after its victories in the Sino-Japanese War of 1894–95. Although the Russo-Japanese War (1904–05) broke out primarily over their rivalry for Manchuria, Japan's victory over Russia sealed Korea's tragic fate. Japan's colonial rule, which officially began in 1910, combined policies of economic exploitation and systematic destruction of the Korean national identity. Koreans bitterly resented the Japanese, and their national resistance continued in various forms throughout the rule. The March 1, 1919, mass uprising was a culmination of such resistance.

The dream of Korean independence after the defeat of Japan in World War II gave way to the tragedy of dismemberment with the occupation of the peninsula by Soviet and American armed forces. Although the United Nations planned for Korea's reunification after nationwide elections, it never materialized. On August 15, 1945, with the early advance of Soviet troops into the peninsula, the United States proposed dividing Korea at the 38th parallel so the Japanese troops in

Korea could surrender. Stalin accepted the proposal, but that temporary division ironically hardened into two separate states. The Soviet-backed Democratic People's Republic of Korea, with its own constitution, was established on September 8, 1948, claiming control over the entire peninsula and accusing the rival Republic of Korea, established in August 1948, of being a "puppet" regime.

North Korea initiated the Korean War (June 1950 to July 1953) by invading South Korea. The war, which resulted in the death and dislocation of millions of people and the desolation of the entire peninsula, not only intensified and militarized the cold war but also locked the governments of the North and South into a stance of rigid hostility. For over four decades the peninsula has been one of the most militarized in the world.

Kim Il Sung, born near P'yongyang on April 15, 1912, fought with guerrilla units against the Japanese on the Soviet-Manchuria border between 1932 and 1945. He led the Korean Workers' Party (KWP), the ruling Communist party, after its founding in 1946, was premier after 1948, and, following the adoption of the 1972 constitution, president of the DPRK. By the early 1960s Kim had established unchallenged control of the Korean Workers' Party and thereby full state power. Kim could consolidate his position because his Kapsan guerrilla faction successfully purged every rival political faction in the North Korean government one by one. Kim first purged Pak Hon-yong's domestic faction, many of whom were Socialist intellectuals from the South who had fled to the North shortly before the Korean War. He blamed them for the failure of "liberating" the South and executed Pak. Exploiting the party membership registration issue, Kim then purged the Russian faction that Ho Ka-i led, a group neither well organized nor cohesive. Finally, Kim purged the Yenan faction, which had begun to criticize Kim's personality cult in light of the onset of de-Stalinization that took place in the Soviet Union in 1956.

Kim Il Sung built a monumental personality cult around himself, dwarfing that of Stalin or Mao. Kim then groomed his son Kim Jong Il (born February 16, 1942) as his own successor, and, beginning in 1975, he began referring to the younger Kim as the "Party Center." Kim Il Sung died of heart failure at the age of 82 on July 8, 1994, and Kim Jong Il succeeded his father as the leader of the country, thus establishing a Communist hereditary monarchy, a historically unprecedented phenomenon. The younger Kim continued his father's policies by building his own personality cult and ruthlessly controlling every aspect of North Korean society.

The System of Government

North Korea is a one-party dictatorship led by Kim Jong Il.

EXECUTIVE

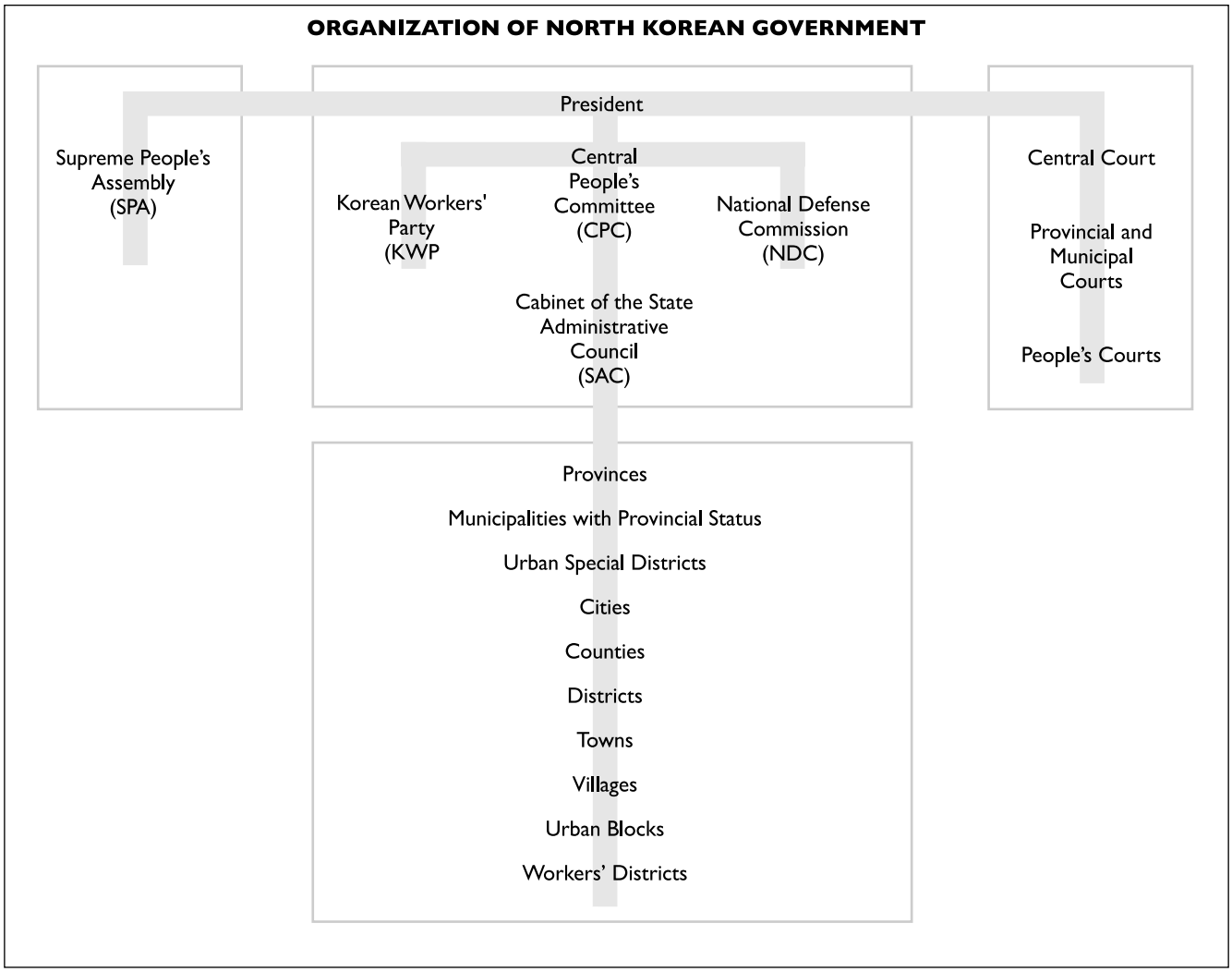
As in other Communist countries, the state organization of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is defined as subordinate to the ruling Korean Workers' Party. The state implements policy formulated by the party, which owes its dominant position to its role as representative and "vanguard" of the revolutionary working class. However, in practice, the constitutional changes in 1972 shifted the center of power from the party and its political committee to the presidency and the Central People's Committee (CPC), a kind of supra-cabinet that directs the large and unwieldy Cabinet of the State Administration Council (SAC). (The SAC has 32 ministries and 13 commissions, or supraministries.)

The head of state is the president. From 1972 when the office was established until his death in 1994, North Korea knew no other president than Kim Il Sung. The creation of this office marked the unrivaled supremacy of Kim, who was at the same time secretary-general of the Korean Workers' Party. Although the president is supposed to be elected for renewable four-year terms by the national legislature, the Supreme People's Assembly (SPA), he is in practice accountable to no one. The president is the commander of the armed forces, chief executive with control over the State Administration Council, and supreme legislator through his power to issue edicts with the force of law and the requirement that all other legislation be approved by him. The president is also responsible for approving treaties and agreements with foreign countries.

Kim Jong Il assumed the presidency in July 1994, upon his election as president of the National Defense Commission (NDC) and the Supreme People's Assembly. He was reelected to those posts in 1998. In 2003 the SPA reelected him as president of the NDC while making Pak Pong Ju premier. Despite Pak's position, virtually all power remains in the hands of Kim.

LEGISLATURE

Delegates to the unicameral Supreme People's Assembly are chosen for four-year terms in direct elections based on universal suffrage for those 17 and older. Each delegate represents a constituency of about



30,000 persons. The nominal powers of the SPA include the election of the president, the passing of laws, amendment of the constitution, and approval of the national budget and economic plans. Sessions are supposed to be held twice a year, in spring and late fall. When the SPA is not in session, its standing committee, elected by the deputies, acts in its name. Although the 1972 constitution defines the SPA as the "highest organ of state power," it is, in fact, a rubber-stamp organization.

The Central People's Committee, elected by the SPA for a four-year term, functions essentially as the link between party and state, the great majority of its members being members of the central political bureau (politburo) of the KWP. Its powers and responsibilities are broad, including the definition of domestic and foreign policy lines and control over the State Administration Council and Central People's Commissions dealing with national defense, foreign policy, state control, internal matters, and justice and security.

JUDICIARY

Central Court judges are elected by the SPA for three-year terms. They thus fall under the control of the state and party and have no independence. Furthermore, the procurator general, appointed by the SPA, exercises supervisory control over the court system down to the provincial and local people's courts.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The country is divided into nine provinces and four "special cities" (the capital, P'yongyang, Kaesong, Namp'o, and Ch'ongjin). Subnational units are divided into urban districts (the special cities and other large cities), regular cities, and some 152 counties. Each of these units has its own local people's assembly, local administration committee, and local people's committee, corresponding to the SPA, the State Administration Council, and the Central People's Committee on the national level. On the village level, there are no formal government organizations. Instead, administrative matters are the responsibility of the chairman of the local agricultural collective.

The Electoral System

Elections are managed by the party's umbrella organization, the Democratic Front for the Reunification of the Fatherland. A single slate of candidates approved by the party is presented to the electorate, and their election is automatic. Voter turnout routinely is reported at 100 percent. Most candidates are KWP members; other political groupings generally receive a few seats.

The Party System

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea is one of the most tightly regulated countries on earth, far closer in fact to the model of a totalitarian state than was the Soviet Union or the People's Republic of China. North Korea's small size facilitates efficient surveillance. Its continuing confrontation with South Korea creates a pervasive atmosphere of military discipline and mobilization. The Korean Workers' Party, which monopolizes political and state powers at both the national and the local levels, remains in total control of this isolated society.

Major Political Parties

THE KOREAN WORKERS' PARTY (KWP)

(Chosun Nodongdang)

HISTORY

The Korean Workers' Party was established in August 1946 as a coalition of diverse elements, including Korean Communists who had been based in the Soviet Union before and during World War II, particularly in the Maritime Province bordering Manchuria and Korea. Others had been in China and were closely associated with the Chinese Communist movement. A third group consisted of underground resistance fighters who had operated within Japanese-occupied Korea. The party structure and principles were modeled after those of the USSR's Communist Party; a number of its most prominent members had been members of the Soviet party. The party's development after 1946, however, was unambiguously in the direction of one-man rule under its secretary-general, Kim Il Sung. In the early years, Kim, who owed his position as KWP leader to Soviet support, had to recognize and deal with the somewhat divergent viewpoints of other party leaders even if no one seriously challenged his supremacy. As briefly discussed earlier, however, a series of purges eliminated other factions, so that by 1956 all sources of potential opposition to the Kapsan faction's dominance were eliminated. Kim reorganized the KWP and subjected it to intense and unremitting doses of ideological remolding. In the 1960s a campaign to idolize Kim and his revolutionary achievements was initiated and has remained the dominant theme of North Korean political life.

ORGANIZATION

The highest organ of the Korean Workers' Party is its party congress, whose delegates are elected by members of provincial and special city party congresses. Although it is supposed to be convened every four years, the congress has in fact met much less frequently. As is the case in other one-party systems, the congress, meeting so infrequently and with a membership of over 3,000, is not the effective locus of decision making but only a platform for the promulgation of decisions made by a much smaller group of leaders.

Power is concentrated in even smaller concentric circles. The central committee convenes the congress and acts in its name when it is not in session. Technocrats formed the largest single group in the central committee following the sixth party congress in 1980. The political bureau is elected by the central committee. The standing committee of the political bureau is composed of North Korea's most powerful leaders.

The secretariat is a national-level party organ that has nine secretaries heading different party departments, including the inspection committee (responsible for party discipline), an audit committee (responsible for finances), a military committee, and

a liaison bureau (in charge of relations with underground "revolutionary" elements in South Korea). Other central committee departments deal with a variety of matters such as agriculture, fisheries, science and education, and propaganda and agitation. The party publishes *Nodong Sinmum* (The Workers' News), a daily newspaper, and *Kulloja* (The Laborer), a theoretical journal.

There are party congresses, committees, and secretariats on all subnational levels as well as smaller party units in rural villages. The basic unit of the party on the local level is the cell, to which all party members must belong.

Important mass organizations include the Socialist Working Youth League, which schools future party members, and the Young Pioneer Corps for children. The Democratic Front for the Reunification of the Fatherland also comprises a number of groups coordinated by the party. Among them are the general association of Korean residents in Japan, which organizes support for the P'yongyang regime among Japan's more than 600,000 Korean nationals.

POLICY

Kim Il Sung is revered not only as the revolutionary leader who liberated Korea from the Japanese (the role of the Soviets being glossed over) but as the creator of the *Juch'e* (self-reliance or independence) ideology, originally conceived of as an adaptation of Marxist-Leninist ideology to the Korean context. *Juch'e* ideology is more consistent with traditional Korean Confucian thoughts or Korean nationalism than with proletarian internationalism. *Juch'e* somewhat repudiates Soviet and Chinese models of socialist construction, but it has also over time shown a tendency to depart from the theoretical foundation of the revolution, Marxism-Leninism. While the Chinese Communists have always modestly described "Mao Zedong Thought" as only an application of universal Marxist-Leninist truths, in the DPRK the thought of Kim is known as "Kim Il Sung *Jueui,*" a full-class "ism" equal and perhaps superior to Marxism-Leninism.

To understand the *Juch'e* ideology fully, one must look at the origins of the idea, which was the changing international political context of the 1960s. First, the Sino-Soviet rift became increasingly clear in the early 1960s. Second, once Soviet Communist Party leader Khrushchev's de-Stalinization campaign began in earnest, Kim's autocracy and personality cult began to be criticized. Third, during the Chinese Cultural Revolution in the late 1960s, the Red Guards openly criticized Kim as a bureaucratic revisionist who was indulging in a luxurious, decadent bourgeois lifestyle. It was in this context that Kim advocated *Juch'e* in order to maintain distance from the big Communist brothers. It also came at a time when economic aid from the Soviet Union and China was declining. It goes without saying that the idea of *Juch'e* has been stretched too far to justify the Kim family dictatorship and North Korea's extremely isolationist policies.

Kim pursued a policy of self-reliance in the military sphere as well. As a result, the military share of North Korea's government budgets increased, imposing a serious burden on the country's economy. The militarization of society has increased the importance of the military in North Korean politics, especially since Kim Il Sung's death. The appointment of Choe Gwang, the most prominent veteran military man, as defense minister in October 1995 also suggested that the military was increasingly the real locus of power in North Korea.

The great preoccupation of the P'yongyang government since the end of the Korean War has been its hostile and competitive relationship with the Republic of Korea. Technically, the peninsula is still in a state of war. The North Korean leaders, former guerrilla fighters, have turned their country into a tightly disciplined armed camp. No fewer than 1.2 million men are in military uniform in a total population of 23 million, and most of them are deployed offensively close to the demilitarized zone. DPRK actions against the South have included border provocations, armed infiltration of the Republic of Korea, and, most dramatically, terrorist acts such as the attempt to assassinate South Korean president Chun Doo Hwan on October 9, 1983. While on a state visit to Rangoon, Burma, Chun narrowly escaped death when a bomb set off by North Korean agents killed 17 South Koreans, including four cabinet ministers.

These hostile acts have alternated in a very unpredictable fashion with gestures of conciliation, such as the North Korean offers of rice, clothes, and medical supplies to South Korean victims of floods in September 1984. In 1985 people from both the North and the South were allowed to visit family members on the other side of the DMZ for the first time since the Korean War. Throughout the latter 1990s and early 2000s relations with South Korea improved somewhat. Kim Dae-jung, who was elected president of South Korea in 1997, established a "sunshine policy" of increasing engagement with North Korea. During these years South Korea supplied significant humanitarian aid to North Korea, which was experiencing a major famine.

In the 1990s North Korea played its nuclear card by withdrawing from the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty in March 1993. It apparently paid off, since in October 1994 South Korea, Japan, and the United States agreed to give North Korea $5 billion worth of nuclear power stations of the sort that cannot easily be used to make nuclear bombs and 500,000 tons of free fuel per year until the completion of the new reactors. North Korea agreed to engage in preliminary talks to hold four-party (North and South Korea, the United States, and China) peace talks, as South Korea and the United States jointly proposed in April 1996. North Korea's interests in agreeing to come to the negotiating table seemed to lie in its desire to normalize diplomatic relations with the United States as well as to secure more economic aid. North Korea's insistence on U.S. troop withdrawal from South Korea as a precondition to the four-party talks was a major stumbling block to further progress. In the early 2000s North Korea further antagonized its neighbors and the international community in general by expelling UN weapons inspectors and withdrawing from the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY

It is estimated that the number of KWP members could have been as high as 3.2 million at the time of the sixth party congress (1980), a sharp rise from the 2 million announced by the KWP in 1976. This could have been due to the induction of a large number of the "Three Revolution Workteams," a mass political mobilization movement. Overall, about 15 percent of the total population are party members. Recruits must be recommended by members in good standing and must serve a one-year probationary period.

Criteria for party membership include personal commitment to its ideology, loyalty to Kim Il Sung and now to Kim Jong Il, and proper class background. Former revolutionary fighters, workers, and poor peasants have generally been perceived as the most revolutionary classes and thus most eligible for party membership. In recent years, however, technical and administrative expertise has been seen as important as class background, and such skills play an increasingly central role in the selection of party cadres and management personnel. Schools for the training of KWP cadres include the college of people's economic management, the Kim Il Sung higher party school, and the Kumsong political college.

FINANCING

Information on party financing is unavailable. It can be assumed that as in other Communist states, party members pay a portion of their income in dues and that direct government support is considerable.

Minor Political Parties

Parties other than the KWP do exist, but they are completely subordinate to the KWP and must acknowledge its leadership. Two such parties are the Korean Social Democratic Party and the Young Friends Party (Ch'ondogyo Chongu). Ch'ondogyo is a religious movement founded in the 19th century.

Other Political Forces

There are no other political forces in North Korea.

National Prospects

North Korea is an ethnically homogenous population. Its dominant religions are Buddhism and Confucianism. It had a GDP of $40 billion in 2004. North Korea finds itself totally ill prepared to adapt to drastic changes that are taking place in the post–cold war era. North Korea's economy is in shambles, in part because the Soviet Union, its biggest aid donor and trade partner, collapsed, and in part because its Stalinist economic management has utterly failed. Both the Soviet Union in 1990 and China in 1992 normalized their diplomatic relations with South Korea, while the North still has no equivalent ties with the United States or Japan. It joined the United Nations together with South Korea in 1991, only because it became clear that it was no longer able to block the UN from accepting South Korea as a member. In the mid-1990s there was increasing evidence that North Korea was developing atomic weapons, but this crisis was overshadowed by the starvation crisis of the North Korean people. However, the international community's focus on the North Korean atomic weapons program remained, and in 2002 U.S. president George W. Bush said that North Korea was a part of the "axis of evil" (along with Iran and Iraq). In December 2002 North Korea expelled the UN weapons inspectors, and in January 2003 it withdrew from the Non-Proliferation Treaty. In 2004 the International Atomic Energy Agency announced that it had strong evidence that North Korea had provided Libya with uranium. Because of North Korea's insularity and Kim Jong Il's habit of employing highly antagonistic rhetoric toward the United States

and any other country that dared criticize it, the international community remained alarmed about North Korea's nuclear ambitions. As of 2005, however, neither the United States nor North Korea's neighbors had reached any consensus on how to deal with the nuclear threat from North Korea.

With regard to North Korea's future and the reunification of the two Koreas, various scenarios are conceivable. Any of these variants could materialize: the "big bang" scenario, as in the case of German unification or Romania's collapse; a military confrontation, although it would be suicidal for the North Korean regime; a stalemate; or a smooth transition to reunification. Only time will tell what will actually transpire. But given the fact that the North Korean regime has trouble even feeding its own people, the question of what kind of reunified Korea will be built on the peninsula is critically dependent upon how South Korea responds to this historic challenge.

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REPUBLIC OF KOREA

(Daehan Minguk)

By Hun Joo Park, Ph.D.
Revised by Mary Hendrickson, Ph.D.



The Republic of Korea (ROK), or South Korea, is a budding and prosperous democracy. Democratization has advanced considerably since 1987, when the shift to democracy occurred. The government consists of a system of power that is shared by a president and unicameral legislature. While the president has traditionally held the greater balance of power, recent assertions of power by the legislative branch may foreshadow a shifting equilibrium between the branches. The Republic of Korea is one of the most successful developing countries in the postwar era. Through some 30 years of condensed industrialization and modernization, it has evolved to rank among the largest 15 economies in the world. Its per capita GNP grew from one of the lowest to $11,000 by 2004. Korea maintains a favorable balance of trade with exports of $193.8 billion in 2003; its economy also performs well over time on other economic indicators. South Korea controls the southern half of the Korean Peninsula, with a land area of 98,477 square kilometers, or about 45 percent of the total area of the peninsula. Its population in 2005 was 48.4 million (about twice that of North Korea), with Seoul, the capital, one of the largest cities in the world, with 11 million inhabitants.

HISTORY

The ancient country of Korea, unified since 668 A.D. and with at least 2,000 years of continuous and distinct sociocultural history, has trodden a tough, if tragic, modernization path. Confronted with colonialism at the end of the 19th century, the 500-year-old Yi dynasty found itself unable to modernize the country and preserve independence. It fell under Japan's exploitative totalitarian rule in 1910, but, in reality, Japan's ruthless rule over Korea had already begun after the Sino-Japanese War of 1894–95. At the end of World War II Japan's surrender prompted the United States to propose to the Soviet Union the use of the 38th parallel as a temporary dividing line for governing the nation as part of an international trusteeship. That division hardened into two separate states: the Republic of Korea in the southern part of the peninsula and the Stalinist Democratic People's Republic of Korea, or North Korea, in the northern part.

The Korean War, which began in June 1950 with the invasion of the South by the armed forces of the North intent on "liberating" the entire Korean Peninsula, had a formative influence on the development of the political system of the Republic of Korea. Millions of people were dislocated, including an influx of refugees from North Korea and workers repatriated from Japan, which was a cause of great social and political instability in the postwar years. The threat of further aggression from the North led political leaders to establish a highly centralized, authoritarian order, under which dissent and opposition were linked with Communist subversion, often without justification. American military support of the Seoul government made South Korea the keystone of the U.S. defense perimeter in East Asia. Even today, after the fall of the

Soviet Union, the cold war continues on the Korean Peninsula.

During the period from 1948 to 1960, known as the First Republic, Syngman Rhee, a political science Ph.D. from Princeton University, was president of the Republic of Korea. Rhee was one of the most prominent leaders of the struggle for national independence. Having been the first president of the Korean government-in-exile in Shanghai in 1919, he enjoyed quite a bit of prestige. That he was descended from Yi Song-gye, founder of the Yi dynasty, gave him an added aura of legitimacy, particularly among the country's tradition-oriented peasants who made up the majority of the population. His anti-Communist credentials also gave him an edge in getting U.S. backing for his bid to become the country's first president. His administration, however, was marked by pervasive corruption and favoritism, and Rhee himself had no tolerance for critics or political opponents. Rhee was already 73 years old in the first year of his presidency. He refused to support the establishment of a parliamentary system of government in which the legislature would have supreme power, insisting instead on a centralized presidential system that would give him broad powers as chief executive. Rhee's first four-year term was to end in August 1952, and the National Assembly had defeated a constitutional amendment sponsored by him that would allow for a popularly elected president, rather than one chosen by the Assembly. Rhee declared martial law in May 1952 and forced the Assembly to pass the amendment. In 1955 a second constitutional amendment was passed, also through the use of dubious methods, to allow Rhee to succeed himself indefinitely. However, student and popular outrage over his autocratic and often brutal methods forced him to retire in 1960, after some 142 students were killed by the police during demonstrations early that year.

THE SECOND REPUBLIC AND MILITARY COUP

South Korea experienced a brief period of democratic rule during the Second Republic, which lasted from April 1960 to May 1961. The constitution was revised once again, this time to provide for a parliamentary form of government. Chang Myon, a leader of the opposition Democratic Party, was chosen as prime minister. Bitter struggles between Democratic Party factions and continued instability in the nation as a whole gave a small group of military officers under Major General Park Chung Hee the opportunity to seize power on May 16, 1961.

Park dissolved the National Assembly and established a junta, called the Supreme Council for National Reconstruction. Military officers took over high-level administrative positions in the government. Under martial law, all political activities were suspended, and many politicians of the Rhee era were "blacklisted." In June 1961 the Korean Central Intelligence Agency (KCIA) was established to carry out surveillance of civilian and military opponents of the new regime. Its founder and first director was Colonel Kim Jong Pil, a member of the junta and nephew of Major General Park through marriage. Kim also played a central role in organizing the government-sponsored Democratic Republican Party. Under the new constitution of the Third Republic, which allowed for popular election of the president, Park retired from the military and ran for election as the Democratic Republican Party candidate, winning narrowly in October 1963 against Yun Po-sun of the opposition New Democratic Party.

Spectacular economic growth during Park's 16-year rule as president transformed South Korea from a predominantly rural, agricultural country into an urbanized, industrial one exporting manufactured products to world markets. The South Korean "miracle" insured support for Park's regime, as individual incomes steadily rose. Close links with Japan were seen as essential for economic development, and thus a South Korea–Japan treaty normalizing relations between the two countries was ratified in June 1965. There had, however, been substantial opposition, particularly among students, given the history of Japanese colonialism, and violent demonstrations led to the imposition of martial law. Park won the presidential elections in 1967 and 1971 with rather narrow margins of votes against New Democratic Party candidates Yun Po-sun and Kim Dae Jung. Like Rhee in his time, Park had the constitution amended in 1969 to allow himself a third term in 1971.

The decade of the 1970s saw Park establish dictatorial authoritarian rule. In October 1972 he proclaimed martial law and dissolved the National Assembly. A month later, he held a national referendum on the *yushin,* or "revitalization," constitution that established the Fourth Republic. The new constitution gave absolute power to the president over the executive, legislative, and judiciary branches. The president was to be elected by an electoral college of the National Conference for Unification, a body consisting of some popularly elected 2,359 members, and there were no limits to the number of terms that one person could serve as president. In effect, the *yushin* constitution practically guaranteed Park's lifelong presidency.

Continued popular opposition caused Park to enact Emergency Measure Number Nine (May 1975), which made it a crime to criticize the *yushin* system or advocate its revision. The KCIA became increasingly powerful and feared as it used harsh methods to silence opposition, even among Koreans overseas. The most spectacular example was the KCIA kidnapping of the New Democratic Party leader, Kim Dae Jung, from a Tokyo hotel in August 1973, an event that caused a serious rupture in South Korean–Japanese relations and underlined the regime's increasingly poor human rights record. Thousands of South Koreans were jailed or put under house arrest, including the Second Republic president, Yun Posun, and the dissident poet Kim Chi Ha; many were subjected to brutal treatment.

The domestic and international crises of the late 1970s hastened the downfall of Park's rule. By then, there were clear signs of failure of the heavy and chemical industrialization drive, on which President Park staked so much political capital. Inflation was rampant, unemployment soared, and the ruling party for the first time failed to win more popular votes than the opposition in the 1978 National Assembly election, despite the less than perfectly free and fair electoral environment. In 1979 Korean exports experienced a negative growth in real terms, the second oil shock hit, and, in 1980, Korea's economy contracted by 4.8 percent.

As antigovernment demonstrations erupted across the country, Park's lieutenants split into hard-liners and moderates. The head of the hard-liner camp was Cha Ji Chul, chief of the presidential security forces, who argued for harsher repression to crack down on any form of antiregime opposition. Kim Jae Gyu, director of the KCIA, took a more pragmatic stance and advocated dialogue rather than outright confrontation with the opposition and demonstrators. Park generally leaned toward Cha Ji Chul's side. During a party on October 26, 1979, Kim Jae Gyu shot both Park and Cha in a desperate plot to change course. The assassination of Park led to the collapse of the *yushin* (reform) system and the brief restoration of civilian rule under an acting president, Choi Kyu Ha. In December 1979 Choi abolished Emergency Measure Number Nine and released a large number of political prisoners who had been jailed under its provisions. These included Kim Dae Jung, who had been under house arrest following his kidnapping from Tokyo to Seoul. The political scene was enlivened as both the Democratic Republican Party under Kim Jong Pil and the New Democratic Party under Kim Young Sam and Kim Dae Jung began jostling in anticipation of presidential and National Assembly elections, which were to follow the promised establishment of a more liberal constitutional order.

Factional struggles within the parties, strikes by workers demanding higher wages and better working conditions, and a wave of student unrest, however, provided the military with yet another opportunity to establish its dominance over the political system. Major General Chun Doo Hwan, head of the Defense Security Command, established his control over the military by leading younger generals in a successful move to oust the chief of staff, General Chung Seung Hwa, and other Park-era senior military officers, on December 12, 1979. On May 17, 1980, Chun reacted to increased student militancy, aimed at removing the military from politics, by proclaiming martial law. His decree banned all forms of political activity, closed the headquarters of political parties, outlawed strikes, and muzzled journalists. The universities were closed, and the National Assembly suspended. Opposition leaders were arrested on charges of corruption and sedition. In Kwangju, the capital of South Cholla Province, Kim Dae Jung's home region and long a center of opposition sentiment, the brutal treatment of student demonstrators by the police and army paratroopers sparked a revolt by the general populace that lasted nine days and reportedly resulted in the death of up to 2,000 people. The official death toll was 189.

The junta established the Special Committee for National Security Measures with power in the hands of four men: Generals Chun Doo Hwan, Cha Kyu Hun, Roh Tae Woo, and Chung Ho Yung. A campaign of "social purification" was initiated. Some 9,000 people—members of the National Assembly, government officials, managers of state-run corporations, and educators—were fired from their posts. Nearly 200 magazines and newspapers were closed, and several hundred journalists were sacked for promoting "corrupt influences." Kim Dae Jung and a number of his supporters were tried by a military court; Kim was sentenced to death on charges of subversion in September 1980.

THE FIFTH REPUBLIC

President Choi Kyu Ha resigned on August 16, and Chun, now a five-star general, retired from the military to run for the presidency. With the support of the military, Chun was approved as interim president by the National Conference for Unification, which acted as an electoral college. Chun's new constitution (the Fifth Republic), ratified in a referendum on October

22, 1980, constituted only a slight modification of the *yushin* constitution. The Chun constitution abolished the National Conference for Unification, limited the presidency to a single, nonrenewable seven-year term, and made it more difficult for the president to proclaim martial law and dissolve the National Assembly. Both the Chun and *yushin* constitutions, however, provided for indirect, rather than direct, election of the chief executive.

After three years of harsh repression of all political activities unauthorized by the state, South Korean politics entered a period of softening by 1984. No authoritarian regime can rule by coercion alone. As Korea's economy had recovered its confidence and the GNP growth rates started to pick up again, Chun took a much more conciliatory attitude. By combining carrots and sticks, Chun tried to prolong his own grip on state powers. Despite the pent-up societal demand for democracy and the direct presidential election system, Chun attempted to maintain the existing rules of the game at least until after the election of his hand-picked successor. In April 1987 Chun issued an order to prohibit any discussion of constitutional changes. But 1987 was not 1980.

In the mass demonstrations that followed Chun's order, office workers as well as students and factory workers in Seoul took to the streets to demand democracy. Against such a backdrop came the famous June 29, 1987, declaration by Roh Tae Woo, then the official presidential candidate of Chun's Democratic Justice Party (DJP). The eight points that the declaration contained included the restoration of Kim Dae Jung's political rights and constitutional revision for a directly elected presidential system. Given the ruling party's incumbency premium of about 35 percent and the popularity of the two Kims (Kim Dae Jung and Kim Young Sam), the DJP's strategy must have been to divide the opposition and rule. No matter what the political calculation behind the June 29th declaration, it laid the groundwork for Korea's transition to democracy.

The outcome of the first presidential election under the Sixth Republic in 1987 turned out to be disastrous not only to the two Kims but to those who wished to see the end of the military domination of the country's politics. Roh, who helped Chun to seize power by illegally bringing his front-line division to Seoul, was elected to the presidency with 36 percent of the popular vote. Kim Dae Jung and Kim Young Sam split the opposition vote by getting 27 percent and 28 percent, respectively. Nonetheless, the process of democratization was now set in motion.

TRANSITION TO DEMOCRACY

In the National Assembly elections of 1988, the governing party, for the first time in the nation's history, failed to obtain a simple majority. In order to resolve the ruling party's minority dilemma in the legislature, Roh merged the Democratic Justice Party with Kim Young Sam's party to form the Liberal Democratic Party, a grand conservative coalition. Subsequently, Kim Young Sam managed to win the presidential nomination of the ruling party through an open competition and thereby the presidential election in 1992.

In December 1997 the former political prisoner Kim Dae Jung of the National Congress for New Politics Party was elected the eighth president, serving a single term. His presidency marked the first instance of a peaceful transition from an opposition party. Kim had a reputation as a courageous political dissident who championed democratic causes. Kim's enemies made numerous assassination attempts; he completed two jail sentences, and he was exiled for a time to the United States. The agenda of his presidency was economic recovery and reform. Notably, though, his historic efforts to reengage with North Korea earned him a Nobel Peace Prize in 2000. A summit between North Korea's leader Kim Jong Il and President Kim resulted in the North-South Declaration of Cooperation aimed at joint humanitarian and economic endeavors.

Roh Moo-hyun was narrowly elected president in December 2002 and assumed the presidency in February 2003. Roh is a former human rights activist and labor lawyer. His initial period in office proved challenging and controversial. Public confidence in his leadership sank during his first year in office amid a faltering economy and a labor strike that Roh failed to manage decisively. On March 12, 2004, parliament voted to impeach Roh, coinciding with a dip below 40 percent in his public approval ratings. Prime Minister Goh Kun temporarily assumed the presidency while the impeachment case was heard. Grounds for impeachment were weak, resulting in a public outcry against an act the people considered to be blatantly political. In parliamentary elections in April 2004, the Uri Party, associated with Roh, benefited from the anti-impeachment sentiments, winning a majority of parliamentary seats. The Millennium Party, which sponsored the impeachment measure, was reduced to only nine seats, and the Grand National Party (GNP) lost its majority. In May 2004 the Constitutional Court overturned the impeachment and returned Roh to office.

The System of Government

South Korea is a democratic republic with a strong president and a unicameral legislature.

EXECUTIVE

The constitution provides that the president is head of state, commander in chief of the military, and chief executive. Since 1987 the president is directly elected to a single, nonrenewable, five-year term. The president appoints the State Council (cabinet), which, in addition to the president, includes the cabinet ministers, the prime minister, and deputy prime ministers. The prime minister is appointed by the president with approval of the National Assembly.

Korea is a presidential system of government, with a system of separation of powers incorporated into the constitution, based upon the American model. While power was traditionally concentrated in the executive branch and the presidency, legislative powers expanded under the Sixth Republic's 1987 constitution. Executive dominance is historically rooted in Confucian state-centric tradition, which found strong reinforcement in the Japanese "colonial totalitarianism" and the subsequent military authoritarianism. The *yushin* constitution, for example, afforded the president the power to dissolve the National Assembly and to appoint one-third of its members, which assured a majority for the ruling party. In addition, the president appointed Supreme Court justices and could issue emergency decrees without approval of the National Assembly.

The 1987 constitution stripped the president of the powers to dissolve and appoint members to the National Assembly, to appoint judges, and to issue emergency degrees without legislative approval. The national assembly retains the right of consent to matters that lie mainly within the executive realm, such as ratification of treaties and declaration of war. Aside from the stronger powers of the National Assembly under the 1987 constitution, there is evidence that the strong powers of the presidency may be giving way to a greater balance of powers, as evidenced by parliament's assertion of power in the attempted impeachment of President Roh in 2004.

The State Council, chaired by the president with the prime minister as vice chair, deliberates on policies within the purview of the executive branch. Members include the executive (cabinet) ministers and the ministers without portfolio. Matters referred to the State Council, according to the constitution, include declarations of war, foreign policy issues, proposals to hold national referenda, proposed treaties, budget proposals, emergency orders, and certain appointments.

The National Security Council advises the president on the formulation of foreign policy and national security, and a National Economic Advisory Council assists in formulation of economic policies. In accordance with the constitution, an Advisory Council of Elder Statesmen may be established, chaired by the immediate former president or another individual appointed by the president.

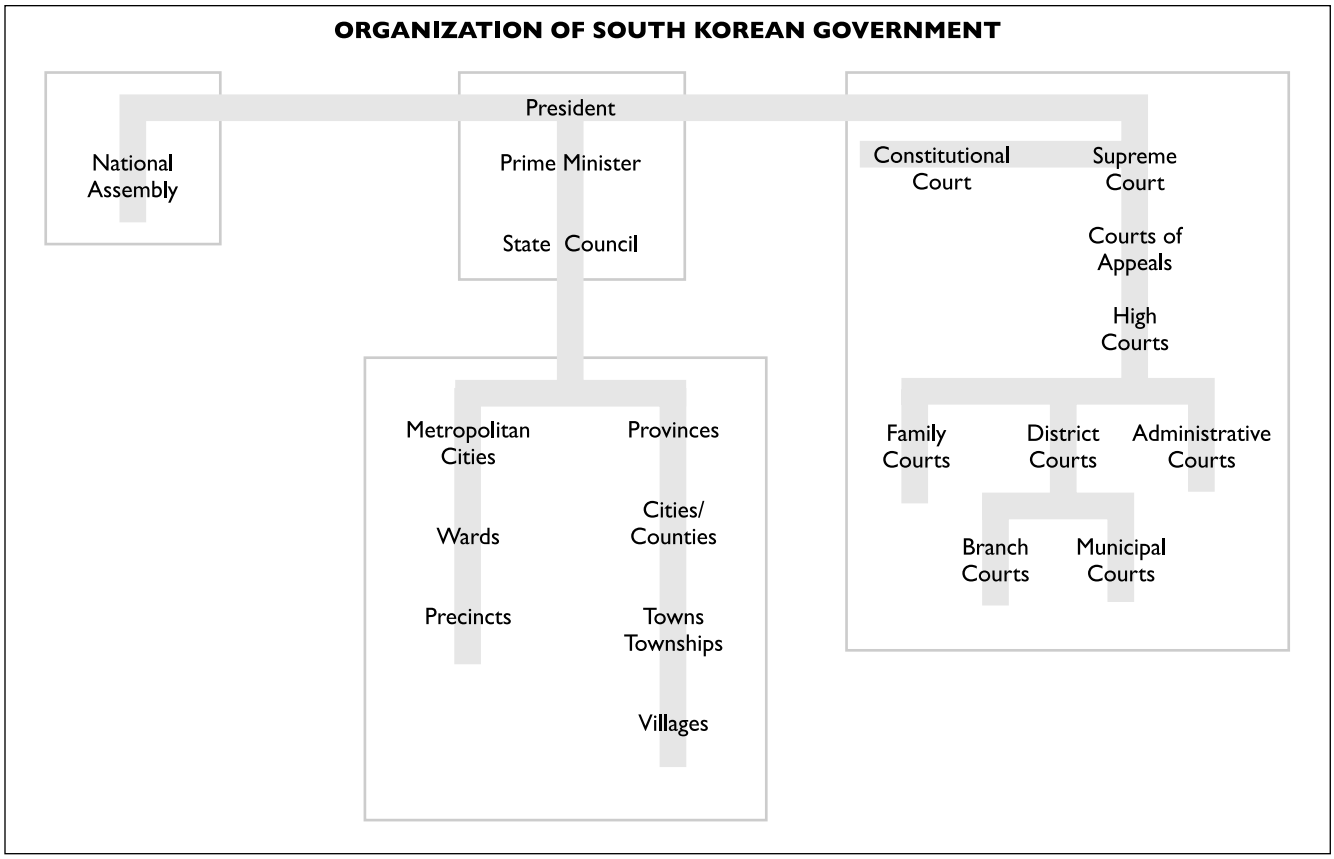
LEGISLATURE

The National Assembly is a unicameral body consisting of a minimum of 200 members, elected by popular vote to four-year terms. Most members are elected from single-member districts, with the remainder appointed by political parties through a proportional representation system based on the number of seats won by each party. Bills may be introduced by either the National Assembly or the executive branch. The constitution provides that bills passed by parliament be promulgated by the president within 15 days unless he vetoes the bill. In that case, the bill is returned to the National Assembly with an appended explanation of objections. The president may request that the National Assembly reconsider the bill. The legislature may override the president's objections by two-thirds votes. Bills automatically become law if the president fails to promulgate them within five days.

The National Assembly's powers grew following the Fifth Republic. As previously stated, the president's power to dissolve the Assembly was eliminated in 1987. In addition, sessions of the Assembly were increased in length and may be easily convened by a smaller number of members. The Assembly's powers have been enlarged, including its ability to investigate administrative affairs and approve emergency measures put into effect by the president.

JUDICIARY

The Constitutional Court, the supreme organ of judicial review, was established in the 1988 constitution. The nine justices serve six-year renewable terms. The president of the Court is appointed by the president with consent of the National Assembly. The constitution prohibits justices from joining any political party or participating in politics. Jurisdiction of the Court extends to judicial review of legislation and governmental acts, impeachment, and decisions relating to dissolution of political parties. In passing judgment



on these matters, six justices must be in agreement. Despite its relative infancy, the Court had by July 2002 declared 228 laws or decrees unconstitutional and revoked approximately 160 government acts.

The court system in South Korea also consists of a Supreme Court, intermediate appellate courts, and courts of original jurisdiction. The Supreme Court is the highest court, hearing appeals from the High Courts and appellate divisions of the district courts and the Family Court. The High Courts are intermediate appellate courts. The District Courts are courts of original and general jurisdiction. The Family Court and Administrative Court are specialized courts of original jurisdiction. The District Courts and High Courts are divided into geographic districts to hear cases. District Courts have appellate divisions that hear cases from Branch Courts, Municipal Courts, or single-judge District Courts.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

South Korea is a unitary system of government in which the central government possesses authority to determine the geographical boundaries and powers of subnational units. Under a revised Law on Local Autonomy passed in 1986, local governments were granted more autonomy from the national government. The local elections of June 1995, under President Kim Young-Sam, marked the beginning of a new era for local autonomy in South Korea. Funds for local governments have increased, although most of the budgets for these governments come from the national level, creating a dependent relationship.

The Republic of Korea is divided into nine provinces, the special city of Seoul, and five other special cities: Pusan, Taegu, Inch'on, Kwangju, and Taejon. Each has a legislative council that is elected by popular vote. The special cities and other large cities are divided into wards and precincts, while the provinces are divided into cities and counties. Provincial governors and mayors of province-level cities are also elected by popular vote. Counties are divided into towns, townships, and villages.

The Electoral System

The Central Election Management Commission was established in 1963 to oversee the management of elections and referenda campaigns, the voting process, and

vote counts. Prior to 1987, along with democratization, the commission's independence was compromised by interference from government officials. The Commission is created by the 1987 Constitution and consists of nine members appointed for six-year terms by the president (3), National Assembly (3), and chief justice of the Supreme Court (3). The chairperson, the chief justice by custom, is elected from among the members. Members of the Commission are prohibited from joining political parties or participating in politics. The Commission oversees and appoints district commissions that, in turn, manage local elections involving heads of local government and council members. The Commission has the right to investigate allegations of election improprieties or irregularities, including corruption, bribery, publication of false information, misuse of election funds, and breach of election campaign regulations.

The constitution provides for direct election by secret ballot of the president and National Assembly by voters who are at least 20 years old. Prior to 1987 presidential elections were direct only in the periods of 1952–60 and 1963–71. Indirect systems of election were previously used. The one-term presidency and four-year term without limits for the National Assembly were established in 1987 as well. Presidential candidates must be at least 40 years of age and have lived for at least five years in the country. The system of elections to the National Assembly is changeable by legislative act, but, in recent years, three-quarters of the members are selected by plurality in single-member districts, with the remainder elected through proportional representation. Candidates in single-member districts may be either nominated by political parties or run as independents.

The Party System

ORIGINS OF THE PARTIES

Political parties first appeared in South Korea at the end of World War II. The decade of the 1950s was marked by the struggle between the Liberal Party, which Syngman Rhee established in 1951, and the Democratic Party, which originally supported Rhee but opposed his altering of the constitution to establish a strong presidency. The short-lived Second Republic saw the Democratic Party in power, but much weakened by factional infighting. Between 1963 and 1972, the first decade of Park Chung Hee's presidency, the dominant group was the government-sponsored Democratic Republican Party (DRP). During this period, relatively fair and open competition existed between the DRP and the opposition New Democratic Party (NDP). The establishment of the *yushin* system in 1972, however, undercut party politics. The president was now selected by the National Conference for Unification, whose members could not be affiliated with political parties, and the powers of the National Assembly were curtailed. The DRP itself became, in a sense, superfluous, and a battery of emergency regulations put a tight lid on the activities of opposition groups.

The unsettled period between the assassination of Park in October 1979 and Chun Doo Hwan's complete control of state powers in May 1980 saw increased activities by political parties, particularly the NDP, although at this time it was split into rival factions led by Kim Young Sam and Kim Dae Jung. On May 17, 1980, however, Chun Doo Hwan's military extended martial law to the entire nation, dissolved the National Assembly, prohibited all political activities and assembly, imposed tight censorship on press and media, closed universities, made labor strikes illegal, and banned rumors, slanders, or defamation of the government. Chun's harsh political repression continued unabated until 1984.

THE PARTIES IN LAW

Under the Political Party Act as amended on December 27, 1993, a group of 20 or more initiators who are not teachers, public officials, or other persons with the status of public officials can legally start the process of founding a political party. But any political party must have district parties that number one-tenth or more of the total regional election districts for the National Assembly members, which means 26 or more branch chapters. Moreover, any party's registration can be revoked if it does not obtain seats in the general election for the National Assembly members and does not get more than two-hundredths of the total effective votes.

To register as candidates for the election of the National Assembly members, party nominees need nomination letters and a deposit of 10 million won. In addition to the deposit money, independent candidates are required to submit recommendations from 300 to 500 voters.

The Political Funds Act on March 16, 1994, was revised in 1999 to increase regulation of campaign contributions. Among other things, virtually all major campaign funds continue to flow to candidates by way of political parties. It is so in part because the

law prohibits individuals' direct contributions or "independent" expenditures to affect electoral outcomes, while it does not regulate political parties' expenditures "on behalf of" candidates.

The Election for Public Office and Election Malpractice Prevention Act of March 16, 1994, meticulously and strictly regulates the manner in which the elections take place through the Central Election Management Committee. For instance, the law stipulates that the period of the presidential, National Assembly, and local elections be 23 days, 17 days, and 14 days, respectively.

CAMPAIGNS AND ELECTIONS

Regionalism continues to be a major factor in voter preference. For example, in the 1996 election to the National Assembly, the New Korea Party of President Kim Young Sam won all 21 seats contested in Pusan, which is near Kim's hometown; the ruling New Korea Party (NKP) Party also picked up 17 out of 23 seats in the president's native province of South Kyongsang. In contrast, the National Council for New Politics, Cholla Province–based Kim Dae Jung's party, captured 36 out of 37 seats in Kwangju and the two Cholla Provinces. Further, Kim Jong Pil's United Liberal Democrats won 17 out of 21 sets in his native region, the two Ch'ungch'ong Provinces.

The election of President Roh Moo-hyun in 2002 represented the first left-leaning government in South Korea's history, drawing upon support of young voters in an election campaign that featured approval for continuing relations with North Korea, governmental programs to address social problems, as well as anti-American sentiments. Roh was selected as the Millennium Party's nominee in the first national primary held in South Korea. He went on to be narrowly elected and subsequently changed political parties to join the new Uri Party. Roh, a relative unknown prior to the election, successfully campaigned to young voters using electronic democracy, including a "fan club" for Roh on the Internet, illustrating the growing importance of the Internet and cell phones as a new vehicle for reaching voters in a country with an exceptionally high concentration of homes connected to the Internet. Increased use of televised candidate debates in 2002 also provided Roh with the opportunity to present his issues directly to the voters. The Central Election Management Commission also used its Web site to publicize extensive candidate information, including voting records and campaign sources, and created a special section of the Web site that appealed to young voters.

Major Political Parties

Political parties in South Korea tend to be centralized, revolving around a dominant politician who draws support on a regionalist basis. Candidate selection for parliament tends to be the prerogative of a small group of party leaders. Members do not pay dues or participate in the formation of the party platform. While the Uri Party has a slightly more leftist orientation, major Korean parties generally adhere to centrist positions that are not easily differentiated by the voter.

URI PARTY

(Uri Dang; UP)

The Uri Party was established in November 2003 as a splinter group from the Millennium Democratic Party in support of then-president Roh Moo-hyun. The party stunned the Korean establishment by winning 152 parliamentary seats in the 2004 elections, the largest number of seats in parliament; UP became the first left-leaning party to hold a parliamentary majority in South Korea. The party is a reform-oriented, liberal/social democratic party that has gained its support from young people, students, city dwellers, and voters in the Jeolla region. While the party won seats based upon a slight anti–United States bent, Roh has agreed to work with the United States in negotiations concerning North Korean nuclear weapons, and the president sent soldiers to Iraq as part of a peacekeeping mission led by the United States.

The UP's power decreased in 2005, as it failed to capture a single seat in by-elections held in six electoral districts.

GRAND NATIONAL PARTY

(Hannara Dang; HD)

Grand National Party is a coalition of the old New Korea Party and the Democratic Party. On January 23, 1990, in order to break from the problem of a "ruling minority and opposition majority" (*yoso yadae*), President Roh Tae Woo merged his ruling Democratic Justice Party with two opposition parties, Kim Young Sam's Reunification and Democracy Party (RDP) and Kim Jong Pil's New Democratic Republican Party (NDRP), into a grand conservative alliance to create the Democratic Liberal Party. The creation of DLP in the image of Japan's Liberal Democratic Party was not well received by the public. However, by taking the chance to merge his party with the ruling DJP, Kim Young Sam, who had perpetually been in the opposition, subsequently won

the governing DLP's nomination for the presidency in 1992. After suffering a big loss in the local elections in 1995, President Kim renamed the party the New Korea Party.

During the 1997 presidential campaign, the contender Lee Hoi Chang changed the New Korea Party's name to Grand National Party. This was seen as Lee Hoi Chang's attempt to remake the party in his own image, since he was in the middle of an unsuccessful campaign and then-president Kim had been only lukewarm about supporting his candidacy.

Although figures on party membership are not readily available, both the 1992 presidential election and the 1996 National Assembly election showed that popular support for the party was generally more balanced throughout the nation than for the opposition parties. Because of the government's pro–Kyongsang province development policies that have been in effect since Park Chung Hee seized power in 1961, political support for the ruling party in the two Kyongsang provinces remains pronounced.

The party supports a close ROK alliance with the United States, and it expressed concern over U.S. withdrawal of some of its troops from South Korea in 2004. The GNP describes itself as a "conservative-progressive" party. Major policy concerns include maintaining close relations with the United States, strengthening a free-market economy, and moving cautiously toward greater cooperation with North Korea. In 2004 the GNP captured 121 of 299 seats in the National Assembly, becoming the main opposition party to a new majority party, URI. It gained back six seats in by-elections held in October 2005.

Minor Political Parties

MILLENNIUM DEMOCRATIC PARTY (MDP)

(Saechonnyon Minju Dang)

Founded by Kim Dae Jung as the National Congress for New Politics, the party became the Millennium Democratic Party in 2000. Kim was elected president in 1997, pursuing improved relations with North Korea, for which he received the Nobel Peace Prize. President Roh Moo-hyun also pursued the presidency as an MDP candidate, succeeding Kim in February 2003. However, supporters of Roh left the party in 2003 to form the Uri Party. The Millennium Party is a liberal party that has lost support over the issue of impeachment of Roh, which it supported.

UNITED LIBERAL PARTY

(Jayu Minju Yonmaeng)

The United Liberal Party is a right-wing conservative party that is supported by a rural constituency and favors stronger government at the regional and local levels. The party was founded in 1995 by farmers and fishermen. It held four seats in parliament in 2004.

DEMOCRATIC LABOR PARTY (DLP)

(Minkook Dang)

The Democratic Labor Party is a left-wing social democratic party that attracts support from farmers, factory workers, and the urban poor. The party was organized by the Korean Federation of Trade Unions in 1997 and had 10 seats in the National Assembly in 2004.

Other Political Forces

MILITARY

The dominant role of the military in the political system has been a feature that the Republic of Korea shares with many developing countries; yet, in light of Korea's long history, it is something of an aberration. Traditionally, it has been civilian scholar-officials versed in the Confucian classics, rather than military officers, who have held political power. Popular disapproval of the military, particularly among students and intellectuals, grew out of the conviction that military rule per se was illegitimate, no matter what its accomplishments. Yet the ruling military circle saw itself as the only group in society with the training, discipline, and organization needed to run the state in an efficient manner. It has taken credit, with much justification, for the spectacular modernization of South Korea in the post-1961 period.

The army was established in November 1948. All male youths are required to undertake some form of military service.

In contrast to the situation in the early 1960s when South Korea lacked trained administrators and professionals and officers took over a broad range of functions, there is now a large, highly educated class of civil servants, technocrats, and managers with whom the military must cooperate in the national interest. The election of Kim Young Sam, the first civilian president since 1961, and his successful purge of politicized

military officers, who centered around the Chun Doo Hwan–controlled secret military society *Hanahoe* (literally, One Society) signaled the end of the prolonged military dominance of South Korean politics.

UNITED STATES

The Republic of Korea's most important foreign relations have been with the United States. The United States has supported South Korea militarily and economically since before the outbreak of the Korean War, and a continued U.S. commitment to the peninsula has been seen both in Washington and in Seoul as essential to the country's security. During the administration of President Jimmy Carter, there was talk of a phased withdrawal of ground troops, the most visible sign of American commitment. But when intelligence reports in 1978 and 1979 revealed that North Korea had greater military strength than was previously estimated, this idea was dropped. Although the Reagan administration's support of Korea's new military regime under the leadership of Chun Doo Hwan aroused significant anti-American feelings, especially among intellectuals and militant students during the 1980s, the continued presence of American troops undoubtedly has played an important role in keeping peace and stability intact. In the post–cold war era, the United States has reaffirmed its security commitments to South Korea by deciding to maintain troops, albeit at a somewhat reduced level.

JAPAN

The specter of 35 years of Japan's colonial rule over Korea still haunts the relations between Japan and South Korea. The years since 1965 have seen close cooperation between the two neighboring countries, particularly in the economic sphere. The two countries co-hosted the World Cup in 2002. However, the rise of Japan's military capability and the gradual increase of its willingness to use its forces overseas in the post–cold war era cause concern to South Korea as well as to China. It is all the more the case given Japan's lack of reflection on its past militarism. There is no doubt that Japan remains one of South Korea's most important allies and partners. But Japan's position on Korean unification seems to remain ambiguous, as it does not wish to see a unified, strong Korea.

CHINA

While maintaining its traditional relations of comradeship with North Korea, China has been rapidly deepening its economic relations with South Korea, particularly since the establishment of diplomatic ties in 1992. The trade volume between the two countries reached about $60 billion by 2000, and is estimated to reach $100 billion by 2008. China seems to seek closer links with prosperous South Korea because both nations fear the possibility of the rise of a Japan-centered order in East Asia. Concerning the Korean unification issue, China clearly does not want to see the collapse of the North Korean regime and the consequent instability and trouble on its border, but it may not want to see Korea united soon either.

National Prospects

The Republic of Korea has come a long way in modernizing the country in terms of both economic and political development. Ever since its initial, if belated, efforts at modernization were hijacked by Japan, the nation has suffered many traumatic experiences, including Japan's colonial rule, which systematically tried to degrade and destroy the Korean identity; the Korean War, which caused excruciating societal pain, dislocation, and turmoil; and the wrenching process of condensed, if desperate, economic development. To South Korea, which has found its own path to modernization and present-day prosperity and thereby regained some of its national confidence, the two issues that seem to be most critical and challenging are Korean identity and national reunification.

In the midst of growing globalization pressures that appear to drive the convergence of diverse political economies, Korea finds itself undergoing a crucial historical moment when it can and must make strategic choices on how to continue to modernize the country. Yet, the popularity of liberal parties, such as Uri, suggests the possibility of a mixed economy that incorporates some welfare state measures. The American model of high productivity and competitiveness by deregulation and freer market competition appears tough to resist. But the questions remain: Which social path do South Koreans want to pursue? What do they as a people value most?

The reunification problem is tied, in part, to national security issues. Negotiations over North Korea's nuclear weapons program have involved the United States, Japan, China, as well as Russia and North and South Korea. In the end, reunification may well be a matter of time, given the nation's long history as a unified country and the people's strong desire for

reunification. But what kind of country will unified Korea be? Unification would have unanticipated consequences, despite careful planning, politically, culturally, and economically.

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KUWAIT

(Dawlat Al-Kuwayt)

By Jill Crystal, M.A.
Revised by Ghassan Salame, Ph.D.
Further revision by Curtis R. Ryan, Ph.D.



Kuwait is a nation of more than 2.3 million people (2005 est.) at the northwest end of the Persian Gulf. It is governed by an emir from the Sabah family. Kuwait first emerged as a semiautonomous political unit in the early 18th century when it was settled by the Bani Utub branch of the Arabian Anazah confederation. The ascendancy of the Sabah family dates from about 1756, when the leading families appointed a Sabah sheikh to represent them in dealings with the Ottoman Empire. In the 19th century Kuwaiti rulers, caught on the fringes of empires and fearing Ottoman, Persian, and Wahhabi incursions, acquiesced to the growing British influence in the Gulf region. In 1899 Sheikh Mubarak (founder of the current ruling line) negotiated a treaty with Great Britain that secured Kuwait's independence from the Ottomans in exchange for British control over its foreign relations. The association with Great Britain, which continued until independence in 1961, consolidated the Sabah family's control over domestic politics.

The Kuwaiti constitution was promulgated on November 11, 1962. In international politics, Kuwait's existence as an independent state remained tenuous. Its current borders were established at the 1922 Uqair Conference attended by Britain, Iraq, and Saudi Arabia. Kuwait remains threatened by its neighbors, however, particularly by Iraq, which laid claim to the sheikhdom's territory in a 1961 proclamation. That claim has been revived on many occasions and resulted, ultimately, in the August 2, 1990, Iraqi invasion and conquest of Kuwait. Following months of regional and international tension, the emirate was liberated by a U.S.-led coalition in the 1991 Gulf War.

Kuwait, originally a pearling and trading economy, became increasingly dependent on oil after World War II. In 1936 Sheikh Ahmad had granted a concession to the Kuwait Oil Company (jointly owned by British Petroleum and Gulf Oil). In 1973 Kuwait acquired a 25 percent share in the company and took over full ownership in 1976. Production rose to 1.076 billion barrels a year by 1972 but fell to 607 million barrels in 1980 in line with the state's conservationist policy following the 1973 price increases. Kuwait's current reserves are among the highest in the world and, at current production levels, will last for over a century. The consequences of a transformation to an oil-based economy were to give Kuwait one of the highest per capita incomes in the world (almost $20,000) and to increase its dependence on foreign trade and foreign laborers (who now constitute more than half the population). The large revenues, paid directly to the rulers, freed the Sabahs from much of their historical dependence on merchant allies and financed a large bureaucracy to administer new welfare and development projects and to redistribute wealth through state employment.

The System of Government

Kuwait is a semiconstitutional monarchy governed by an emir from the Sabah family who rules in conjunc-

tion with senior family members through an appointed Council of Ministers.

EXECUTIVE

In accordance with the 1962 constitution, Kuwait's chief executive, the emir, is chosen from male descendants of Sheikh Mubarak. Since 1915 all of Kuwait's emirs but one have been chosen alternately from the Salim and Jabir branches of the Sabah family. The actual selection is made privately by senior family members. In this manner, Kuwait's present emir, Sheikh Jabir al-Ahmad al-Sabah (born 1928 in the Jabir line), was named heir apparent and crown prince in 1966. He acceded to power peacefully in December 1977 on the death of the emir Sheikh Sabah al-Salim al-Sabah (of the Salim line). The present crown prince (a Salim), appointed February 1978, is Sheikh Jabir's second cousin, Sa'ad Abdullah al-Salim al-Sabah. The crown prince held the title of prime minister until 2003, when the emir named Sheikh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Sabah as prime minister.

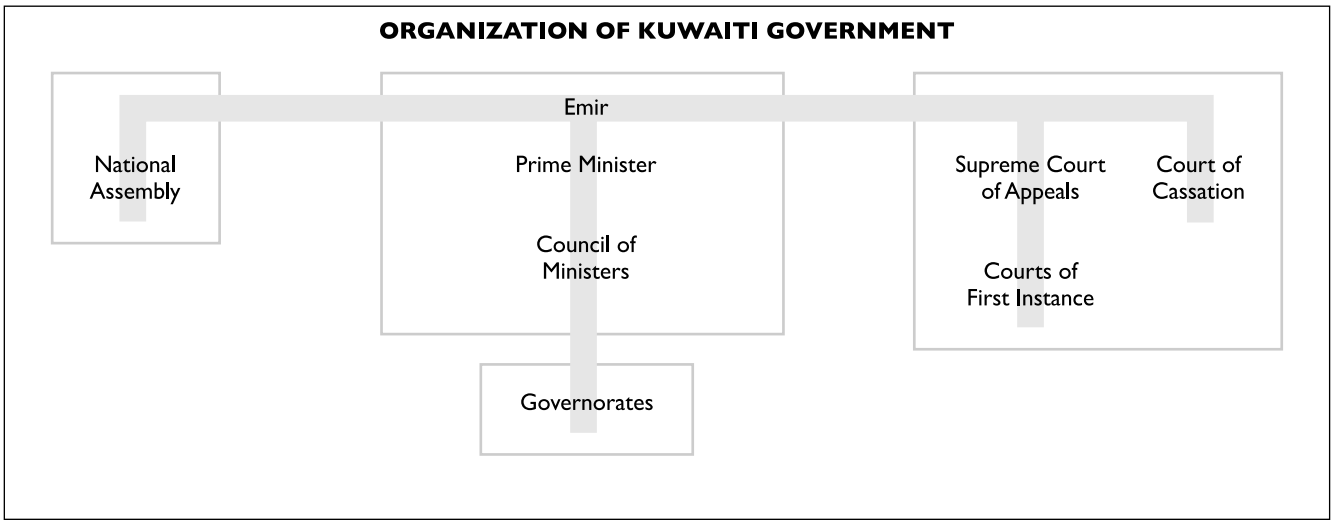
The emir has very broad powers but governs within the informal constraints set by family consensus. Intrafamily disagreements are managed and family control assured by the direct recruitment of family members into the highest and most sensitive administrative posts.

LEGISLATURE

Kuwait's National Assembly (Majlis al-Umma) was first elected in 1963. Subsequent elections were held in 1967, 1971, and 1975. In August 1976 the Assembly was dissolved and several articles of the constitution suspended by decree of the emir. The Assembly's functions were assumed by six appointed legislative committees under the Council of Ministers.

Several factors led to the suspension of the National Assembly in 1976. The Assembly had grown popular as a forum for public opinion and criticism of government policies. Debates over oil company agreements and production levels and over social policy (especially housing) sometimes included verbal attacks on members of the Sabah family. The government had become concerned about internal security problems precipitated by terrorist activity and the rise of a leftist opposition. The Assembly had also become an effective forum for Middle Eastern issues, of particular importance to the country's non-Kuwaiti majority, who at the time included 300,000 resident Palestinians. Just prior to its dissolution, the Assembly adopted pro-Palestinian resolutions condemning Syrian involvement in the Lebanese civil war, in opposition to the government's officially neutral position. The dissolution of the Assembly was accompanied by press curbs, the introduction of new censorship rules, the arrest of several leftists, and the dissolution or suspension of several newspapers, social clubs, and professional and trade unions.

In February 1981 new elections were held and the Assembly reconvened with new guidelines. The Assembly consists of 50 seats, two in each of 25 constituencies. Election is by simple plurality for four-year terms. The majority of seats were filled, as in previous elections, by conservative government loyalists and members of traditionally allied families. Within this group, some observers saw a shift in predominance from the established commercial elite toward tribal bedouin leaders (who took 23 of the 50 seats), toward



younger technocrats (who took 13 seats), and toward Sunni Muslim "fundamentalists" (5 seats). The election was viewed as a defeat for more radical Arab nationalists who, under the leadership of Dr. Ahmad al-Khatib of the Arab Nationalist Movement, had held a third of the seats in the 1976 Assembly but won no seats in the 1981 election. It was also a defeat for the Shiite Muslims, who ran several candidates but won only four seats.

This realignment was partly attributable to a redistricting that affected many previously radical and Shiite areas. New elections were held on February 20, 1985. The results showed a reemergence of the secular Arab nationalist movement led by Dr. Ahmad al-Khatib (5 seats) and some erosion of the Islamic fundamentalist group, two of whose leaders were defeated.

Following the liberation of the emirate from Iraqi occupation, new Assembly elections were held in 1992 in which most of the new representatives were opponents—or at least critics—of the regime. This Assembly, and its successors, included a strong Islamist influence that has been demonstrated in a number of pieces of legislation. In 1994, 39 of the 50 delegates backed a request from the Assembly to the government to make the sharia the only legal system in the emirate. This was promptly rejected by the government. But in 1996 an Islamist-sponsored proposal to introduce gender segregation in colleges and universities was passed in the National Assembly.

The issue of women's suffrage came before parliament twice again in 1999 but ultimately was defeated. After the first bill was defeated by a mere two votes, the emir shocked many even in the feminist movement by granting women full political rights by royal decree. Yet this too remained subject to a parliamentary vote for its confirmation as law, and once again the legislature defeated the proposal, this time by a much larger margin. The anti-suffrage vote was based largely on an alliance within parliament of Islamists and traditional tribal MPs. Liberal activists and many Shiite MPs supported the measure but with insufficient numbers to win a legislative majority. The surprise support of the monarchy, however, led many observers to conclude that women's political rights would now be inevitable, even if subject to further delays. In 2005 the parliament finally approved constitutional amendments that granted full political rights to women. The first female cabinet minister was appointed in June 2005.

JUDICIARY

Kuwait's judicial system, as reorganized in 1980, has three levels. The highest court is the Supreme Court of Appeals, although the emir can act as a de facto final appeals court. There is the national Court of First Instance and summary courts in each administrative district. The legal code is drawn primarily from the Egyptian and Ottoman codes, with the constitutional stipulation that legislation not conflict with the shariah (Islamic law). "Acts of Government" are outside the jurisdiction of the courts.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Kuwait's administration is highly centralized. However, Kuwait City, Ahmadi, Jahra, and Hawalli are, administratively, provincial governorates, with governors and municipal councils appointed by the emir. Smaller administrative divisions are the same as electoral constituencies.

The Electoral System

Suffrage is restricted to adult (age 21), literate, male Kuwaiti citizens; beginning in 2007 women age 21 and over will likewise have the right to vote. Citizens are defined as persons whose families lived in Kuwait before 1921. Members of the police and armed forces cannot vote, nor can foreigners, some 60 percent of the population. Kuwait's National Assembly includes 50 parliamentary seats, with two seats for each of the emirate's 25 electoral districts. The 15 members of the Kuwaiti cabinet serve also as ex officio members of parliament and are permitted to vote in the chamber's deliberations. For the elected full members of parliament, however, districts range greatly in population size. For this reason the topic of redistricting to a more demographically even format is a perennial issue of debate within Kuwaiti politics. Islamists in particular argue that the system of uneven districts weighs against more rural and conservative voters, and hence against much of their political base. In the 2003 elections, however, Islamist candidates continued to do well, winning 21 seats compared to 14 seats to pro-government candidates, 12 for independents, and most surprisingly a mere 3 seats for liberal MPs.

The Party System

Candidates run on individual platforms since political parties are illegal in Kuwait.

Major Political Parties

There are no political parties in Kuwait.

Minor Political Parties

There are no political parties in Kuwait.

Other Political Forces

POLITICAL BLOCS

In the 1990s, despite the continuing ban on political parties, a number of political "tendencies" did emerge. These political tendencies, if not political parties, include two predominantly Sunni Muslim groupings: the Islamic Constitutional Movement and the Islamic Popular Group. The former is the more moderate of the two and may have ties to the Muslim Brotherhood in various Arab countries. Both the Islamic Constitutional Movement and the Islamic Popular Group had some success in the 1992 and 1996 elections, and both have been represented in the Kuwaiti Council of Ministers. Other political tendencies include the Kuwaiti Democratic Forum, a secular liberal grouping pressing for an end to corruption and royal nepotism in political life, and the Islamic National Alliance, which is the main group organizing Kuwait's Shiite Muslims. Since 1997 the liberal Kuwaiti Democratic Forum has been increasingly superceded by the National Democratic Forum (NDF). The NDF is a secular bloc that supports women's suffrage and other liberal reforms.

RULING-FAMILY, TRIBAL, AND MERCHANT LEADERS

Kuwait has had more success than neighboring Gulf sheikhdoms in settling intrafamily disputes peaceably. Since the time of Mubarak, succession has been confined, relatively smoothly, to the Jabir and Salim lines. Personal ambitions within the family, loosely associated with either traditionalist or more modern points of view, are the primary sources of dispute.

Tribal and merchant families, whose input into the decision-making process has declined since the development of an oil economy, have not presented an overt challenge to the regime. Nonetheless, these somewhat overlapping groups may offer the greatest potential threat to regime stability. They have been mollified economically by the business opportunities associated with increased oil revenues. Politically, they have been partially co-opted into the state through the Assembly and ministerial posts. Still, their autonomous corporate existence, their own media—notably *Al-Qabas*, a daily newspaper—and historical claim to political participation could provide the basis for a loyal or disloyal opposition. This became especially clear following the withdrawal of Iraqi forces from Kuwait in 1991. Kuwait's mercantile and technocratic elites in particular pushed for democratization in the emirate, many contesting the elections of the reconstituted National Assembly in 1992. In that first post–Gulf War election, critics of the regime took a majority of the new Assembly's seats.

WOMEN

Kuwait women played a major role in the resistance to Iraqi occupation in 1990–91 by conveying messages, harboring dissidents, and smuggling supplies. Since then the regime has frequently cited their heroism, yet their demands for political rights were thwarted just as often. This remained all the more glaring given the widespread social rights that Kuwaiti women enjoy, including universal education and fairly extensive job opportunities. Women comprise a clear majority of university students in the country and also hold jobs as professionals in the government and private sector. In the continuing quest for full political rights, Kuwaiti women organized a pro-suffrage movement through networks such as the Women's Cultural and Social Society, a longstanding feminist organization. They also organized through more recent political creations such as the Women's Issues Committee and through support of the National Democratic Forum. Their efforts paid off in 2005, when the Assembly passed constitutional amendments giving women full political rights by 2007.

MILITARY

The military is subject to firm, and personal, Sabah control. Disturbances have been reported in recent years within the police force and at the infantry school. There is some potential for a disenchanted prince within the military establishment to use his position in alliance with other groups to create opposition for the regime.

SHIITE MUSLIMS

Estimates of the number of Shiite in Kuwait vary. Some 10 percent of the total population may be Shiite, while

the number of Kuwaiti nationals who are Shiite may be as high as 20 percent. Most of these latter are probably Persian in origin. While a small portion of the Shiite community is influentially placed in commerce, the community's impact on policy has been slight. Still, Kuwaiti Shiites are increasingly organized in backing candidates from the Islamic National Alliance in elections to the National Assembly.

NON-NATIONALS

The citizens of Kuwait remain a minority in the emirate, constituting at the most 45 percent of the population. Palestinians and Indians have historically formed the two largest groups of non-nationals. Crucial to the economy, these non-nationals, some now of several generations' standing, have few political rights and little chance of acquiring them through citizenship. They cannot organize independent trade unions; they cannot own property, stock in Kuwaiti businesses, or companies without a Kuwaiti partner. They enjoy only limited access to the benefits of the welfare state.

Non-nationals, however, have so far provided only sporadic opposition to the regime. Their capacity to organize is minimized by internal cleavages (language, culture, and occupation), fear of deportation, and self-interest in keeping lucrative if insecure jobs. Their long-term threat to the regime lies, first, in their potential nuisance value in alliance with other disaffected groups, and, second, in their contacts abroad. The Kuwaiti border with Iraq is difficult to close effectively against the movement of people, money, weapons, and ideas. Activities of the Palestine Liberation Organization, while financially supported by Kuwait outside its borders, have long worried the Kuwaiti regime, given the large Palestinian population in the emirate up until the 1991 Gulf War.

Kuwait's rulers are well aware of the trade-offs involved in having such a large non-national population. In the months surrounding the constitutional crisis of 1976, the government deported thousands of foreign (primarily Arab) workers. New deportations (mainly Iranian this time) took place in 1985. At the same time, the government made some social services available to foreigners and opened a few loopholes for acquiring Kuwaiti citizenship.

The 1991 Gulf War, however, changed the situation for Palestinians in particular. Following Iraq's defeat and withdrawal, groups of Kuwaiti vigilante groups executed an unknown number of people accused of collaborating with Iraq, and many of those accused and executed were Palestinians. Upon reassuming power in Kuwait, the restored Sabah regime took vengeance on the Arab regimes and organizations it viewed as supportive of Iraq, such as Jordan, Yemen, and the PLO. Kuwait promptly expelled tens of thousands of Jordanian, Palestinian, and Yemeni guest workers (whose positions were largely filled by workers from other Arab states and from South Asia).

National Prospects

Thus far Kuwait has maintained a high degree of political stability through a combination of cautious leadership, a cohesive ruling coalition, government largesse, and alliances with powerful external states—such as Great Britain and the United States. Domestically, merchant and tribal allies of the regime have profited from business ventures, while the bulk of the Kuwaiti population has benefited from the massive distribution of oil wealth in the form of direct transfer payments, guaranteed state employment (the state is Kuwait's largest employer), and free or subsidized housing, health care, and education. As extensive social services have become the norm, however, they may be seen less as examples of the rulers' largesse and more as rights that the individual, as a citizen, can claim from the state.

Kuwait's leaders also face possible trouble from the internalization of external threats. Iraqi claims to Kuwait and its oil had been a recurrent problem even before the 1990 invasion and could easily be revived by any regime in Baghdad. The Arab-Israeli conflict, which insinuated itself into local politics, most notably in the 1976 Assembly suspension, continues to be monitored closely by Palestinians and other Arabs. After the Iranian revolution and subsequent Iran-Iraq War (1980–88), Kuwait also had to contend with growing Shiite unrest (manifested in demonstrations and bombing incidents) and with security problems associated directly with the war itself. Iran bombed Kuwaiti refineries and tankers several times during the war, as a warning against aid to Iraq.

This sensitivity to the regional political environment, coupled with potential internal threats, became much more evident after 1983. On December 12, 1983, a truck bomb exploded in the vicinity of the American embassy and other bombs exploded at five other sites. Attempts against the life of the editors of two Kuwaiti newspapers (*Al-Anba* and *As-Siyassa*) followed, as did the assassination of an Iraqi diplomat. On May 25, 1985, the emir escaped an attack on his motorcade in which at least four people were killed.

Six weeks later bombs were planted in two popular cafés, killing 10 people and injuring 56. Kuwaiti courts and government officials accused pro-Iranian Shiite militants of having perpetrated these acts. Iran systematically denied any involvement, but Kuwait deported thousands of Iranians and Lebanese and Iraqi Shiites from the emirate.

These internal security concerns of the 1970s and 1980s, however, paled in comparison with the external security threat demonstrated in Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in 1990. But even after the U.S.-led coalition defeated and expelled Iraq from Kuwait, both domestic and regional security tensions remained very real for the Sabah regime. The Sabahs attempted to rectify any resurgent external threats by completing a string of alliances with major world powers, including military defense commitments from the United States, United Kingdom, France, and Russia and an agreement on military cooperation with the Peoples' Republic of China. In short, Kuwait had established military linkages to all five permanent members of the UN Security Council. In addition, since 1981 Kuwait has been a member of the Gulf Cooperation Council along with Bahrain, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates.

In 2003 Kuwait was among the very few Arab states to support the U.S. invasion of Iraq. While the emirate refused to send troops to participate in the U.S. occupation, the regime did strongly support the overthrow of Saddam Hussein. After the war, however, Kuwait's security situation actually declined, as terrorism increased in Iraq and throughout the region, due in large part to local hostility to the U.S. occupation. That hostility also extended to regimes (such as the Kuwaiti monarchy) that are perceived to be too close to the United States.

On the domestic front, the key recent issues have been conservative pressures from Islamist members of the National Assembly, on the one hand, and liberalizing pressures from groups supporting women's suffrage and political rights, on the other. A third key issue continues to be the conflict between reformers seeking to clean up public life and resisting members of the "old guard" of Kuwaiti politics. A June 1997 assassination attempt on Abdullah al-Naybari, a leading reformer in the National Assembly, served to underscore this line of tension. Naybari had led the first post–Gulf War investigations into charges of corruption and embezzlement within the government. Several Kuwaitis and Iranians were arrested for the attack, but many Kuwaiti democracy advocates took the attack to mean that the continuing investigations were coming too close to powerful government figures.

Kuwait's small size, vulnerable strategic location, and dependence on foreign labor all render it particularly susceptible to domestic unrest and especially to external disputes in the Persian Gulf region. The granting of suffrage to women beginning in 2007 should ease one pressure on the regime, but the tension with Islamic militants remains significant, as evidenced by the January 2005 skirmishes between militants and police.

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KYRGYZ REPUBLIC

(Kyrgyz Respublikasy)

By Eugene Huskey, Ph.D.



Kyrgyzstan is a small, mountainous country in Central Asia. Bordered by China on the east, Uzbekistan on the west, Kazakstan on the north, and Tajikistan on the south, Kyrgyzstan has a population of 5.1 million (2005 est.) living in a territory roughly the size of England.

The country takes its name from the indigenous ethnic group, the Kyrgyz, who account for almost 65 percent of the population. Historically a nomadic people, the Kyrgyz belong ethnically and linguistically to the Turkic world, whose members populate territories stretching from Manchuria and Siberia in the east to Bulgaria and Turkey in the west. Islam is the dominant religion among the Kyrgyz, though its influence is far more evident in the south than in the north of the country. Among the other ethnic groups in Kyrgyzstan are several indigenous Central Asian peoples, such as the Uzbeks (18 percent), as well as numerous European settlers, including Russians (12 percent), Ukrainians (1 percent), and Germans (1 percent). The European groups migrated to the region during the past century while the country was under Russian and later Soviet rule. Whatever their ethnic background, citizens of the country are known as Kyrgyzstanis.

One of the 15 former republics of the USSR, Kyrgyzstan claimed state sovereignty in August 1991, though complete independence arrived only with the final collapse of the Soviet Union in December 1991. Unlike several other Soviet republics, Kyrgyzstan had never experienced statehood before. Indeed, it acquired the status of a territory in the Soviet Union only in 1936. Although the Kyrgyz trace their roots as a people to the 1,000-year-old legendary figure of Manas, Kyrgyzstan's statehood is an unintended by-product of the Soviet colonial era.

In the transition from Communist rule, the political leadership of Kyrgyzstan has sought to establish a new identity for the country by abandoning the Soviet political inheritance and lessening Russian cultural influence. The indigenization of cultural policy, for example, led to the replacement of Russian place names with Kyrgyz counterparts. The country's name changed from Kirgizia (sometimes spelled Khirgizia) to Kyrgyzstan. The main street in the capital of Bishkek (formerly Frunze), which previously bore the name of the Soviet secret police chief, Dzerzhinsky, became Erkindik (Freedom) Prospect. To revive the Kyrgyz language, which had gone into decline in the Soviet era, the parliament of Kyrgyzstan passed a language law that favored Kyrgyz at the expense of Russian. These and other measures prompted such a large exodus of highly trained Russians and other Europeans that the president of Kyrgyzstan scaled back the indigenization campaign in 1994 to stem the tide. Recent concessions to the dwindling Russian population include the passage of legislation designating Russian as an official language. Kyrgyz remains the country's state language.

The System of Government

Like France and Russia, Kyrgyzstan has adopted semi-presidential institutional arrangements, which divide

executive authority between a directly elected president and an appointed prime minister who requires the confidence of parliament. Thus, where the president is the head of state, the prime minister is the head of the government.

EXECUTIVE

The Kyrgyzstan constitution of 1993, the first in the independence era, grants the president broad powers over the shaping and execution of domestic and foreign policy. He has the authority to appoint—with the consent of parliament—the leading figures in the government and the judiciary, he may declare war or introduce a state of emergency, he has the right to submit issues to popular referendum, and he enjoys wide decree-making powers. After a referendum expressing a lack of popular confidence in parliament, the president may dissolve the legislature and call new elections.

The president maintains a staff of approximately 100 officials to assist him in overseeing the work of the prime minister and his government (Council of Ministers) and the regional authorities beneath them. In 2004 the government was composed of 25 members besides the prime minister, including three vice premiers, twelve ministers, and numerous heads of state committees and agencies. Approximately 17,000 civil servants work in the country's ministries and local administrations.

Like French president Charles de Gaulle at the beginning of the Fifth Republic, the first president of Kyrgyzstan, Askar Akaev, helped to define the office of the presidency. A Kyrgyz physicist and computer specialist who spent his early adult life in Leningrad (now St. Petersburg), Akaev made the presidency the institutional engine of economic and political reform in Kyrgyzstan. At the same time, he championed the politics of inclusion, serving as a mediator among various political, ethnic, and regional interests. As a result, in terms of its political power, the presidency towered above the government, the legislature, and the judiciary during his tenure in office. However, in 2005, widespread dissatisfaction with his government, including suspicions that he had interfered with the legislative elections of early 2005, led to massive street protests (known as the "Tulip Revolution") that forced him into exile in March; Kurmanbek Bakiev was named interim president in advance of presidential elections in July. Bakiev won those elections and became the country's second post-independence president. However, the immediate post-election period was filled with political unrest and street violence, leaving his authority in question.

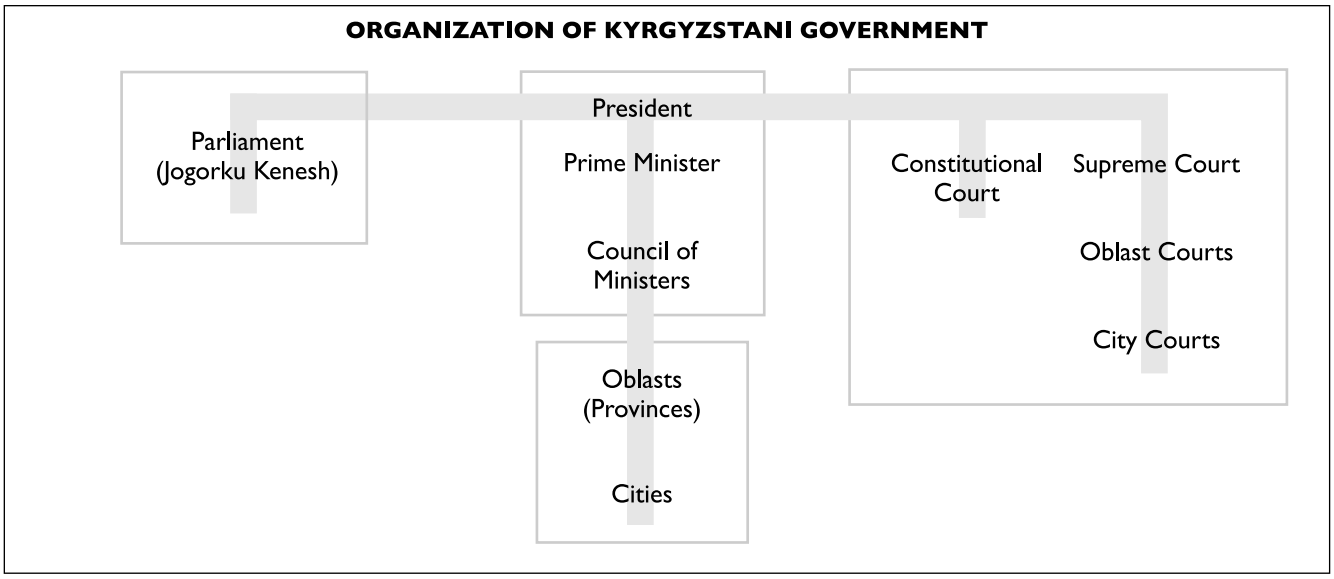
LEGISLATURE

Through referendums engineered by the country's president, Kyrgyzstan has periodically altered the structure, size, and powers of its national legislature. Following the introduction of the constitution of 1993 and the passage of a referendum in October 1994, Kyrgyzstan replaced a 350-person legislature inherited from the Soviet era with a smaller bicameral parliament, known as the Jogorku Kenesh, or Supreme Soviet. A successful referendum in February 2003 led to yet another revision of the legislative framework of the country. With the February and March 2005 elections the Jogorku Kenesh became a unicameral legislature with only 75 deputies. The elections were widely denounced as unfair, and the resulting protests forced President Akaev into exile. The new parliament named Kurmanbek Bakiev as interim president and prime minister, and Bakiev and the new parliament agreed to a deal in which he would retain the interim executive posts until a July presidential election, and in return the old parliament would dissolve in favor of the new 75-member body.

JUDICIARY

Kyrgyzstan inherited from the Soviet era a variant of the Continental civil law system. Although president and parliament have remade the country's legislation in recent years through the issuance of new laws and decrees, they have left virtually intact the structure of legal institutions. Criminal proceedings as well as civil disputes between individuals are heard in courts of general jurisdiction, which operate at every administrative level, from the district and city courts at the bottom of the judicial hierarchy to the Supreme Court at the top. The only significant structural change to the Soviet judicial inheritance was the recent elimination of a separate hierarchy of courts to hear commercial cases. Commercial disputes, which had previously been decided in special arbitrazh courts, are now heard in the courts of general jurisdiction.

Conflicts between branches or levels of government are matters for the new nine-person Constitutional Court in Bishkek, which has thus far been reluctant to challenge powerful political interests. There are also courts of elders *(aksakal),* designed to revive traditional Kyrgyz justice in less serious cases.



All judges are nominated by the president and confirmed by parliament, though the justices on the country's highest courts are said to be "elected" by the legislature. Constitutional Court justices serve 15-year terms, while members of the Supreme Court have 10-year terms of office. All other judges serve 7-year terms after an initial probationary term of three years. Higher court judges may be removed from office for high treason and other crimes by a two-thirds vote of parliament, based on a finding of wrongdoing by the Constitutional Court. Lower court judges enjoy no such security in office. They may be removed administratively for disreputable conduct or failing a performance evaluation or judicially on the basis of a conviction in a higher court.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Kyrgyzstan is a unitary government divided into seven regions—Batken, Chu, Issyk-Kul (or Ysyk-Kol), Jalal-Abad, Naryn, Osh, and Talas—and the capital city of Bishkek. The regions are in turn divided into a total of 51 major cities and rural districts. Formerly part of the Osh region, Batken was created in 2000 in the wake of recent incursions by armed Islamists into this southwestern region of the country.

Each region has its own governor, known as an *akim,* and a legislative assembly, or *kenesh*. Within the regions, there is an *akim* and *kenesh* in each rural district and major city as well as a kenesh in each village and settlement. Whereas the *kenesh* are popularly elected, an *akim* serves at the pleasure of the executive official at the next administrative level. Thus, President Akaev appoints the regional governors, and they in turn select the *akimy* in the cities and districts beneath them. Only in the case of Bishkek is the *akim* directly elected by the population, a novelty in all of Central Asia. In this executive-dominated system, the *akimy* wield almost unlimited power in their locales; the role of the *kenesh* is consultative at best.

Despite President Akaev's ability to appoint and dismiss the regional governors, he was able to impose a tight rein on local bureaucracies, an indication of the weakness of the state in Kyrgyzstan. With their own bases of local support as well as political allies among deputies and executive officials in Bishkek, the regional akimy became power brokers in Kyrgyzstani politics. Thus, the most effective check on presidential power comes not from the legislature or the courts but from the regional elites.

The Electoral System

Members of the 75-seat parliament are elected every five years in single-member districts. The districts are of roughly equal size, ranging from 31,000 to more than 36,000 voters. Contests for parliamentary seats are decided by a two-round system similar to that governing presidential elections.

The president of Kyrgyzstan is elected for a five-year term and may not hold the office for more than two terms in succession. However, in 1998 the Constitutional Court ruled—contrary to its Russian counter-

part—that for electoral purposes President Akaev's first term would not count because it commenced before the adoption of the constitution; he was thus able to extend his tenure until being forced from office in 2005. Eligibility for the presidency is limited to Kyrgyz-speaking persons between the ages of 35 and 65 at the time of election. In addition, they must have lived in the country for not less than 15 years prior to nomination. To stand for the presidency, candidates must receive no fewer than 50,000 signatures from the electorate. If a candidate obtains an outright majority in the first round of the presidential election, he or she is declared the winner. If no candidate receives a majority, the top two vote getters proceed to the second round, where the candidate with the most votes wins. In both instances, elections are only valid if no less than half of the electorate has voted.

Direct presidential elections have taken place in Kyrgyzstan in October 1991, December 1995, October 2000, and July 2005. In the first election, Askar Akaev ran unopposed; in the second, he won with minimal opposition, garnering almost 72 percent of the vote. Prior to the 1995 contest the president's desire to avoid the risks and unpleasantness of an election campaign led him to seek a second term a year early by popular referendum, which would have asked the electorate to vote "Yes" or "No" on extending his tenure for another five years. Facing parliamentary opposition to this unconstitutional move, Akaev accepted a compromise: he would stand in a contested election a year before the expiration of his first term. With his popularity buoyant in the fall of 1995, in part because of the national celebrations of the Manas millennium, Akaev did not wish to lose the political advantages of the moment, especially given the economic downtown that was expected the following year.

In the October 2000 election, Akaev was re-elected to a third term after receiving almost 75 percent of the vote in an election in which over 77 percent of the eligible voters cast ballots. Even more than in the previous election, the President and his supporters employed the power of the state to prevent a free and fair electoral contest. The president's most potent challengers were denied access to the ballot and the remaining contenders were unable to reach the electorate because of steps taken by the president's camp to limit their exposure through the mass media.

Frustration with Akaev's actions and with the country's economic malaise, combined with suspicions that the president interfered in legislative elections in February and March 2005, led to street protests that forced him into exile. Kurmanbek Bakiev was named interim president and prime minister. In the presidential elections held in July, Bakiev won a landslide victory. Felix Kulov became prime minister.

The Party System

Party development, which is still in its infancy in Kyrgyzstan, has been hampered by the remoteness of many regions of the country, by an electoral system that encourages regional rather than party loyalties, and by Akiev, who found it easier to dominate a country that has a multitude of weak, fractious parties. Of the more than 40 parties registered with the Ministry of Justice in 2004, most were groups of notables with little support outside the capital. Although official documents indicate that several parties have more than 10,000 members, the accuracy of those figures is in question. In the 1990s the Communists maintained the only party that had a sizable membership (25,000 in 1997) as well as constituency organizations throughout the country, but the Communist Party was never able to transform its organizational advantages into parliamentary seats. In 1995 only three of the 105 members of the Jogorku Kenesh were elected on the Communist ticket.

Throughout the latter half of the 1990s, the most successful parliamentary faction was the Social Democratic Party. Founded in December 1994, just in time to contest the 1995 parliamentary elections, the Social Democrats represented the interests of Kyrgyzstan's regional political elites and officialdom. They won 14 seats in the new parliament, far more than any of their rivals. Trailing the Social Democrats, with four seats each, were the Unity of Kyrgyzstan Party and the Party of National Renewal "Asaba" (Flag). The former, registered in June 1994, is a Westernizing party committed to "a decisive continuation of economic reform." Its leader is Amangel'dy Muraliev, appointed governor of the Osh region in 1996. Asaba, on the other hand, has championed the defense of ethnic Kyrgyz interests. Registered in the last days of the Soviet era, Asaba has pressed for the revival of Kyrgyz language and culture.

In the campaigns preceding the local elections of 2004 and the parliamentary elections of 2005, the most active parties were Adilet (Justice), Moia strana (My Country), the Communist Party of Kyrgystan, and Alga, Kyrgyzstan! (Forward, Kyrgyzstan!). Although most parliamentary seats were contested by several national parties, elections for the regional, district, and village assemblies were far more likely to

be nonpartisan. National parties are only just beginning to recruit candidates for subnational elections.

Major Political Parties

ADILET

(Justice)

Claiming a membership of 35,000 persons, Adilet was allied to Akaev's administration and was working with Moia Strana and Alga, Kyrgyztan! to assure the election of persons associated with President Akaev in 2005. The honorary chairman of the party is Chingiz Aitmatov, the famous Kyrgyz novelist who has been residing for some years in Europe.

ALGA, KYRGYZSTAN!

(Forward, Kyrgyzstan)

Formed in September 2003 to present candidates in the 2004–05 election cycle, Alga, Kyrgyzstan! is the latest incarnation of a pro-presidential party in Kyrgyzstan. It brings together several former parties and electoral blocs into what is called in Russia a "party of power," that is, a party whose primary social base is the existing political and administrative elite. Like parties of power elsewhere in the post-Communist world, such as United Russia, it lacks a clear ideology and is oriented instead toward the maintenance in power of the current ruling group. Whereas the party claims to have 40,000 members, independent observers put the figure at approximately 7,500.

AR-NAMYS

(Dignity)

Headed by President Akaev's most formidable adversary, Felix Kulov, Ar-Namys enjoyed very limited electoral success up until 2005, in large part because Kulov remained in prison, a victim of the prosecutorial politics of the Akaev administration. His release from prison following the ouster of Akaev was followed by his appointment as prime minister in September 2005. Registered in August 1999, Ar-Namys reportedly has 11,000 members, several of whom live in exile in the West.

MOIA STRANA

(My Country)

A pro-Akaev party founded in 1998, Moia Strana is headed by the deputy prime minister in charge of trade and development, Dzhoomart Otorbaev. The party reports a membership of 3,000 persons.

NARODNOE DVIZHENIE KYRGYZSTANA

(Popular Movement of Kyrgyzstan)

Founded in 2004, this movement brought together nine opposition parties that rallied behind Kurmanbek Bakiev as their common candidate for the 2005 presidential election. This political bloc was remarkable for the diversity of the parties involved, which ranged from those on the right, such as the Republican Party, to those on the left, such as both of the Communist Parties of Kyrgyzstan. It was a measure of the frustration, and perhaps desperation, of the opposition to Akaev's rule that it was willing to put aside its philosophical and personal differences to support a common candidate. Bakiev was named interim president following Akaev's ouster, and in the July 2005 presidential election Bakiev coasted to victory with 88 percent of the vote.

COMMUNIST PARTY OF KYRGYZSTAN/PARTY OF COMMUNISTS OF KYRGYZSTAN

The Communists in Kyrgystan divided at the end of the 1990s into two parties: the Party of Communists of Kyrgyzstan and the Communist Party of Kyrgyzstan. Where the former reportedly has 25,000 members, the latter has only 10,000. Until his death in August 2004, the former head of the Kyrgyz Communist Party in the Soviet era, Absamat Masaliev, was the leader of the Party of Communists of Kyrgyzstan.

Minor Political Parties

Unlike many mature Western democracies, in which vibrant minor parties exist alongside two or three major political parties, Kyrgyzstan's smaller parties play a minor role in the country's political life. They are often little more than a circle of political associates based in the capital who have the ambition, but little means, to participate in electoral and parliamentary politics. Among such parties are the Party of Urbanites of Bishkek and the Republican Popular Party of Kyrgyzstan. Given the new electoral rules and smaller parliament, minor parties are likely to fare even less well in the future.

Other Political Forces

Although Kyrgyzstan's civil society is more developed and active than that of neighboring Central Asian countries, it lacks the diversity and financial and political autonomy that one finds in the West. There is a rich assortment of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) in Kyrgyzstan, whose concerns range from women's issues to the environment, but they are heavily funded by sources outside of Kyrgyzstan, which raises questions about the NGOs' long-term viability. Among the more visible social groups are those that represent the interests of the country's many ethnic communities. Akaev's government was intent, however, on co-opting these and other social groups into a coalition of institutions supportive of the president. One vehicle for this co-optation was the Assembly of Peoples of Kyrgyzstan, which brought together representatives from all of the country's ethnic communities. Such "pocket groups" may not be considered, however, as independent political forces. As a result of the limited vitality of society itself, most politics takes place within the state, especially at its epicenter, in the presidential administration.

National Prospects

During its first years of independence, Kyrgyzstan earned a reputation as an oasis of democracy in the authoritarian desert of inner Asia. The new state promoted a free press, private political associations, and a market economy and in so doing attracted the sympathy and financial assistance of the West. Yet the very openness and competitiveness of the new politics in Kyrgyzstan made the country difficult to govern at a time of declining economic production and increasing social stratification and ethnic tension.

In the mid-1990s President Akaev began to resort to authoritarian measures as a means of imposing discipline on an ever-more-fractured state and society. During the summer and fall of 1994, he closed two opposition newspapers and—in violation of the constitution—revised institutional arrangements by plebiscite and engineered the early dissolution of parliament. Although the new, and more corrupt, parliament elected in February 1995 did not contain a presidential majority, it was so divided that it presented only a weak challenge to presidential rule.

Akaev's dominance of Kyrgystani politics and society was further entrenched by his reelection in 1995 and 2000 and by the passage of numerous referendums that increased the powers of the presidency. His dramatic ouster in the Tulip Revolution of March 2005 reflected the growing tumult of the political scene in the country, a fact that was further in evidence in the months following the revolution, when several members of parliament were assassinated.

In the fall of 2005 it was unclear whether President Bakiev could retain his authority amid the continuing political violence in the country. If he does, he will face formidable challenges in reviving a moribund economy. An infusion of money and expertise from the IMF and other Western institutions has enabled Kyrgyzstan to introduce its own currency, tame inflation, and put in place part of the infrastructure of a market economy. But as elsewhere in the former Soviet territories, large-scale corruption has accompanied the privatization of the economy, as business and bureaucratic interests conspire to protect their own ventures against competition. Moreover, without a renegotiation of the external loans received in the early and mid-1990s, servicing the national debt may force Kyrgyzstan to make deeper, and politically dangerous, cuts in state spending on essential services such as health, education, and welfare. The question for the future is whether political democratization in Kyrgyzstan can survive and advance amid a painful economic and political transition.

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LAO PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC

(Sāthālanalat Paxāthipatai Paxāxon Lao)

By Martin Stuart-Fox, Ph.D.



Laos, a nation of 6.2 million people (2005 est.) on the Southeast Asian mainland, is a member state of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). More than 60 percent of the population are lowland ethnic Lao; the rest comprise more than 40 different mountain tribes (including upland Tai and Hmong). The present regime seized power on December 2, 1975, when the forced abdication of King Savāngvatthanā brought the six-century-old Lao monarchy to an end.

The System of Government

Laos is a single-party Communist state. Government is the monopoly of the Lao People's Revolutionary Party (LPRP), which directed the Lao Communist movement in its revolutionary struggle against both French colonial domination and the former Royal Lao regime. In this it was strongly supported by neighboring Communist North Vietnam.

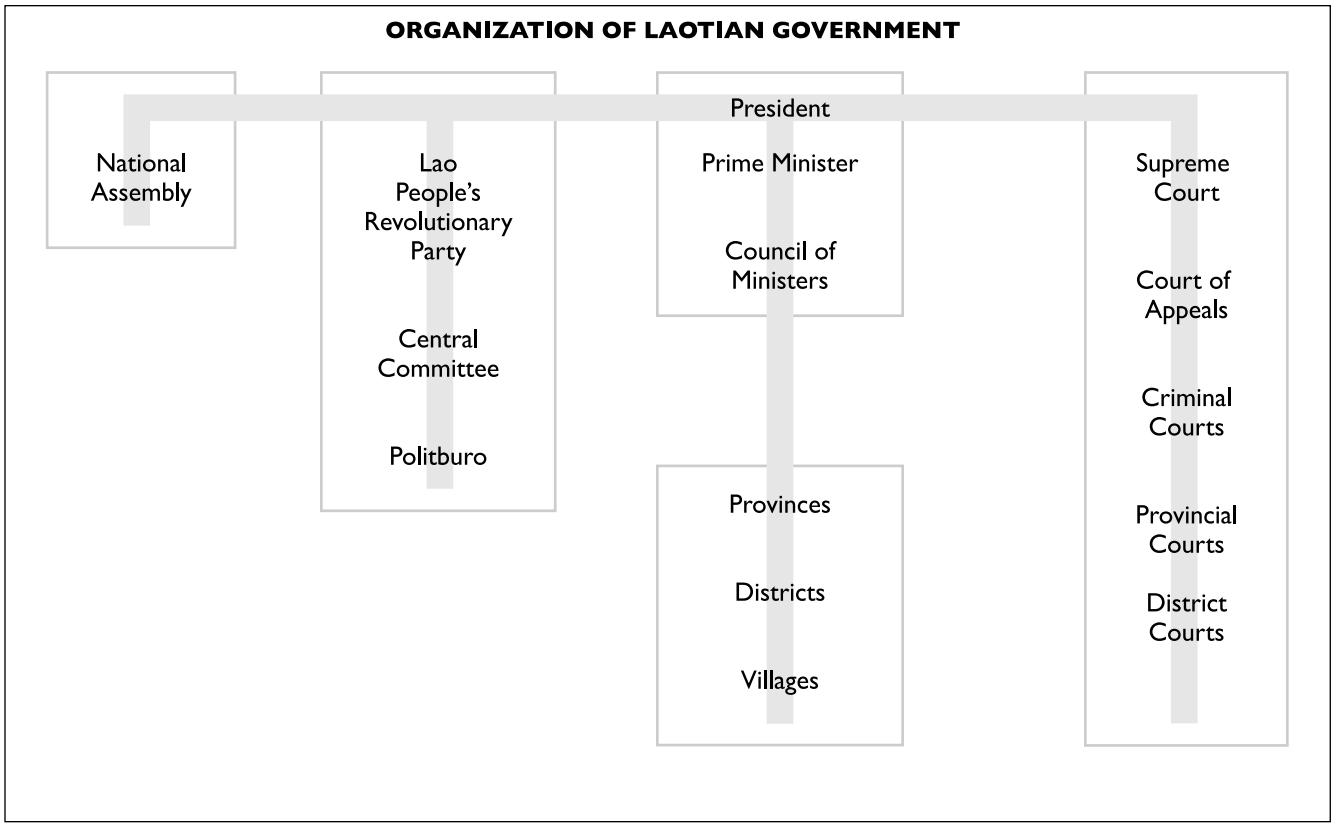
EXECUTIVE

The party controls all three arms of government, but under the Lao constitution, enacted in 1991, the state president wields more than just symbolic power. Elected by a two-thirds vote of the National Assembly, he or she issues decrees, appoints the prime minister, and decides on promotions in the judiciary and the military (as head of the armed forces). This position was first held by the powerful secretary-general (subsequently president) of the LPRP, Kaisôn Phomvihān. After Kaisôn's death in 1992, power was shared between the state president and the president of the party, but after 1998 the two positions were again combined.

The state president appoints the prime minister, who in turn nominates a cabinet of 13 ministers and a president of the Committee for Planning and Cooperation. All appointments must be endorsed by the National Assembly.

LEGISLATURE

The National Assembly (Saphāthaeng Xāt) is the supreme legislative body. Elections to the 109-member Assembly take place every five years, the most recent being in February 2002. Members of government are not, however, drawn from the National Assembly; they are appointed by the prime minister. All have been members of the LPRP; with the single exception of one long serving "neutralist minister." The government is defined as "the administrative organization of the state" and is responsible for drafting laws, strategic development plans, and national budgets (in accordance with the policies of the party) for ratification by the National Assembly. Though some debate does take place, the National Assembly essentially provides a rubber stamp for party and government decisions. Six committees of the National Assembly oversee its work: law; economic planning and finance; social and cultural affairs;



ethnic affairs; national defense and securities; and foreign affairs. A Standing Committee, consisting of the president, three vice presidents, and two other members, meets when the Assembly is not in session.

JUDICIARY

The president of the People's Supreme Court and the Public Prosecutor General are appointed (and can be dismissed) by the National Assembly. Not until 1989, however, was a recognizable judicial system formally adopted and the courts separated from the State Prosecutor's Office. Criminal and civil codes followed, and since 1993 all laws have been published in the trilingual judicial gazette (in Lao, English, and French). Thus a legal framework is painstakingly coming into being to replace the arbitrary use of state power in people's courts. Provincial and district courts function at those levels of administration, though there the new legal framework is less likely to be observed.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

From 1975 until 1991 people's councils in all 16 provinces and the municipality of Viang Chan (Vientiane) and at the district level were popularly elected, all candidates being "vetted" by the party. The new constitution, however, eliminated elected bodies at both these levels of administration. The reason for this appears to have been twofold: to strengthen central government control in the face of continuing regionalism and to strengthen the "leading role" of the party. Province governors and district and village chiefs are appointed by the party, though not without some popular consultation. They have responsibility for implementing decisions taken at each higher level.

The Electoral System

Elections are straightforward in the LPDR. They take place at the national level only in single-member constituencies. The winners are those who poll the largest number of votes. Not all candidates must be members of the LPRP, but party endorsement is required through the Lao Front for National Construction. This ensures that only a limited number of candidates contest any seat.

The Party System

Laos is a Communist state with a single legal political party, the Lao People's Revolutionary Party (Phak Paxāxon Pativat Lao).

Major Political Parties

LAO PEOPLE'S REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

(Phak Paxāxon Pativat Lao)

HISTORY

The party traces its history back to the Indochina Communist Party (the ICP), founded in 1930 by the veteran Vietnamese Communist Ho Chi Minh. With the breakup of the ICP in 1951, Lao members began organizing their own party, with Vietnamese assistance. In 1955 they formed the Lao People's Party, forerunner of the LPRP (the name adopted at the party's second congress in 1972). The party concealed its existence, however, behind the facade of the Lao Patriotic Front (Naeo Lao Sang Xāt), led by the charismatic Prince Suphanuvong. Real power meanwhile lay in the hands of the party secretary-general, Kaisôn Phomvihān, son of a Vietnamese father and a Lao mother.

Under the provisions of the 1954 Geneva Agreements that brought the First Indochina War (against French colonialism) to an end, two provinces were set aside for regroupment of Communist (Pathēt Lao) guerrillas. Not until 1959 was the country reunited through formation of a coalition government that included two Communist ministers. Such a coalition, in the context of the cold war, was not acceptable to the United States, which engineered its overthrow. Three years later, as the country descended into civil war, the incoming Kennedy administration agreed to the neutralization of Laos at another conference at Geneva that endorsed formation of a second coalition government in 1962.

Very soon, however, Laos became caught up in the Second Indochina (Vietnam) War. For a decade, until the cease-fire of 1973, the Pathēt Lao, directed by the LPRP and with the support of its North Vietnamese allies, fought the U.S.-supported Royal Lao regime. In 1974 a third coalition government was formed, this one with half the ministerial positions going to the LPRP (to reflect the fact that the Pathēt Lao by then controlled fully two-thirds of the country, though less than half the population). Following Communist victories in Cambodia and Vietnam in April 1975, the LPRP moved to seize full power. Royal Lao bureaucrats and military officers were interned in reeducation camps, and in a bloodless coup on December 2, 1975, the LPRP declared the formation of the Lao People's Democratic Republic.

ORGANIZATION AND MEMBERSHIP

From some 300 to 400 members in 1955, the LPRP grew to a membership of 25,000 by the time it seized power in 1975, and to 100,000 when it held its seventh congress in 2001 (still accounting for less than 2 percent of the population). It is organized, as are other Communist parties, on a Leninist basis with cells at all administrative levels and throughout the bureaucracy, the military, and mass organizations. Party committees function at the local, district, and provincial levels, each electing members to the next higher committee. At the apex stands the central committee of 53 members elected at the seventh party congress in March 2001, who in turn elected the 11-member political bureau (politburo), where actual power within the party resides.

At the seventh party congress, the dominance of the army within the party was confirmed. Of the 11 politburo members, no fewer than seven were generals or former generals and one was a former colonel. Just as significant, three of the 11 members were from ethnic minorities, while regions outside the capital were well represented in both the politburo and the central committee. Educational standards of members also improved, with a majority claiming postsecondary qualifications of one kind or another.

LEADERSHIP

At the seventh party congress, General Khamtai Siphandôn (concurrently state president) was elected president of the LPRP with General Samān Vinyakēt, president of the National Assembly, and General Chummali Xainyasôn, state vice president, at numbers two and three. Former state president Nuhak Phūmsavan retired from the politburo, which was increased in size from nine to 11 members.

POLICY

The LPRP claims to exercise power on behalf of the worker-peasant alliance (the Lao proletariat is minute) through the system of democratic centralism in the name of Marxism-Leninism. What this means in practice is that all decisions are made by the politburo and central committee and communicated down the

party hierarchy to be implemented, not to ensure the victory of Marxist-Leninist ideology (which has been largely forgotten) but to ensure that the party retains its monopoly of political power.

To this end the party keeps as tight control over all the media as it can. There is no press freedom. The party publishes its own newspaper, *Paxāxon* (The People), as do some mass organizations and the army. An English-language paper, *The Vientiane Times,* appears three times a week, and there is a French publication. The most popular magazine (*Vannasin*) features short stories and articles on Lao culture. The medium the party cannot control is television beamed into Laos from Thailand. Lao and Thai are closely similar languages; all Lao understand Thai, and most Lao prefer Thai TV to their own rather dowdy single government channel.

Minor Political Parties

There are no other political parties in Laos.

Other Political Forces

MASS ORGANIZATIONS

The principal mass organization is the Lao Front for National Construction (Naeo Lao Sang Xāt), which has branches all over the country and representatives from all ethnic and religious groups. Its purpose, along with that of other mass organizations, according to the constitution, is to "unite and mobilize" the people to build a new and modern Lao society as directed by the LPRP. This it does by developing political consciousness among all the multiethnic Lao people and among all social classes.

The other sanctioned mass organizations are the Federation of Trade Unions for the benefit of the Lao working class, the Lao Women's Union grouping women's organizations, and the Lao People's Revolutionary Youth Union for young people.

OPPOSITION

With the ending of the cold war and inclusion of both Laos and Vietnam in ASEAN, Thailand no longer supports armed opposition to the Lao regime. Lao and Hmong refugee camps in Thailand have been closed down. Hmong were blamed for two attacks on buses in 2002 that left two dozen dead. But only a dwindling handful of diehard Hmong continue to oppose the government from their mountain hideouts south of the Plain of Jars.

Internal opposition surfaced briefly in the late 1980s when a group of intellectuals called for introduction of multiparty social democracy. Three ringleaders were arrested, charged with plotting against the government, and sentenced to 14 years' imprisonment. All calls for their release have been ignored, and one of the three has subsequently died.

In 2004 an organization calling itself the Free Democratic People's Government of Laos claimed responsibility for a series of small bombs in Viang Chan and southern Laos that killed one person and injured several more. This movement claims to represent internal opposition to the Lao regime but is probably based in Thailand.

Buddhism now flourishes in the LPDR, and it is not unusual to see members of the politburo on their knees as a mark of respect to Buddhist monks. Many temples have been repaired and refurbished, not least to encourage rapidly developing tourism. The modus vivendi that thus exists between Buddhism and the LPRP makes it most unlikely, therefore, that the Buddhist Sangha (monastic order) will become a vehicle for political opposition to the regime. The party is much more suspicious of Christianity, and the freedom of worship of Lao Christians has been curtailed.

Many Lao refugees abroad who previously opposed the regime have since 1990 returned to visit their homeland. Some have invested money, and some have returned to live in Laos. The regime has generally welcomed returnees, providing they do not involve themselves in politics. What prevents more Lao returning is the "nationality law," which prohibits dual nationality: Lao who live abroad are most reluctant to relinquish their acquired nationalities. While many Lao abroad still detest the regime, more now seek to compromise with it rather than plot its violent overthrow.

National Prospects

Since 1989, when the last Vietnamese troops were finally withdrawn, Laos has resumed its traditional position as a neutral "buffer" state enjoying friendly relations with all its neighbors. While relations with Vietnam remain close, as fellow Communist states and wartime allies, relations with both Thailand and China have also become warm and friendly. Laos has

also actively developed its relations with both Burma (Myanmar) and Cambodia.

As a member of ASEAN, Laos will inevitably develop ever-closer ties with its neighbors. In April 1994 the first bridge was opened across the Mekong River between Thailand and Laos; two more followed and more are planned. Road and bridge building are priorities for the Lao government, and for foreign aid donors, as these will link Vietnam with Thailand and Thailand with southern China (Yunnan). A feasibility study has been carried out for a rail line from Thailand to Yunnan to pass through Laos.

This growing transport network will assist in integrating the states of mainland Southeast Asia into a single expanding market, linked to both the rest of ASEAN and to southern China. The strategic position of Laos makes it central to such a project, which holds out opportunities for future growth and development.

At present, however, Laos remains one of the UN's "Least Developed Nations," with an annual per capita income of only about U.S. $1,900. The value of imports is double that of exports, and the country is heavily dependent on foreign aid and soft loans from the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank. Some light industry is in production (especially textiles), but the principal exports are hydropower and timber, with gold and copper set to increase. In late 2004 the country gained the status of Normal Trade Relations with the United States, which will lower tariffs on exports.

Laos has great potential as an exporter of electricity and has an ambitious program to build a series of huge dams on fast-flowing tributaries of the Mekong. In 2005 the World Bank approved a loan for one such dam. Timber, minerals, and agriculture provide other opportunities for investment and development that promise to turn around the Lao trade deficit in the longer term.

In conclusion, therefore, the prospects are for steady if not spectacular economic growth and for continued political stability under the watchful eye of a party that is now Communist only in name—provided further economic reforms are implemented and corruption contained.

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REPUBLIC OF LATVIA

(Latvijas Republika)

By Jeffrey K. Hass, Ph.D.



On August 21, 1991, following the failed Soviet putsch, the Latvian Supreme Soviet declared Latvia independent of the Soviet Union, beginning the process of building democracy. Like its two Baltic neighbors, Lithuania and Estonia, Latvia has enjoyed a happier transition to democracy and capitalism than other former Eastern bloc or Soviet republics. While disputes over policy, territorial boundaries, economic policy, and definition of citizenship have been problematic and while Latvia's economy bottomed out in 1992 and 1993, the country has enjoyed relative political calm and recent economic growth.

While it may perhaps be early to talk about a stable, never-changing political system, Latvia's polity has come closer to institutionalization than other post-Soviet states except Estonia.

Culturally Latvia is far from homogeneous—a potential political problem in the past, present, and future. According to official data, "Latvians" (ethnically defined) make up 57.7 percent of the population; Russians are 29.6 percent (a result of migration from other Soviet republics before 1991). The official language is Lettish ("Latvian"); Lithuanian and Russian are prevalent as well.

The System of Government

Latvia is a parliamentary republic with a strong, unicameral legislature and a weak president.

EXECUTIVE

The executive branch is headed by two figures, the president and the prime minister. The president, who sits for a three-year term (and who cannot sit for more than two consecutive terms), is the nominal head of state but is not a powerful figure in Latvian politics; the constitution holds the president as a figurehead who represents Latvia in the international arena and has other circumscribed powers. For example, no bill can come into force with a presidential signature alone; the prime minister must countersign bills. The constitution gives the president unilateral political power only in two cases: inviting a figure to become prime minister and form a government and suggesting that the parliament he dissolved. In the first case, the president can invite a prime minister to form a government only after the previous prime minister has resigned or failed to survive a parliamentary no-confidence vote. In the second case, the president may suggest that the Saeima (parliament) be dissolved; however, such a decision must go to a nationwide referendum. If the referendum receives a majority of votes cast, the Saeima is dissolved and new elections will be forthcoming. If, however, the referendum does not receive majority support and fails, then the president is dismissed from office and the Saeima elects a new president to serve out the remainder of the three-year term. Unlike some countries, such as Russia, where the president has the power to dissolve the legislature, the Latvian constitution makes such an

action a double-edged sword, forcing the president not to take such action lightly.

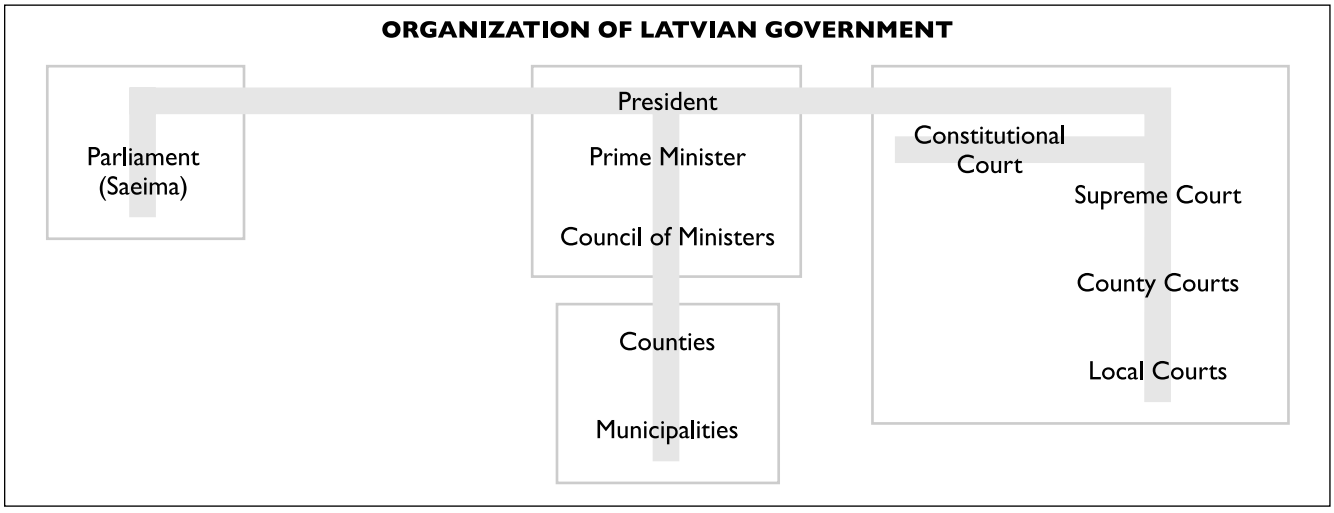
In spite of such institutional obstacles to a strong presidency, the first president, Guntis Ulmanis, tried to move beyond his legal means—not confining himself to the presidential bully pulpit or his duties in the realm of diplomacy and foreign policy (including talks with Russia about removing troops and bringing Latvia closer to NATO and the European Union). In 1995 the Saeima was divided into two roughly equal groups to the right and to the left, making support for a prime minister and government difficult; Ulmanis attempted to play power broker to put in his favorite for prime minister but finally had to turn to a compromise candidate (Andris Skele) on the third try. The law gives only so much room for presidential maneuver.

The prime minister is the head of the government and as such answers to the Saeima concerning the status and outcomes of policies and for problems within the government and Council of Ministers. In essence this makes the prime minister, rather than the president, the real executive authority. First, legislation becomes law only with the prime minister's cosignature. Second, by heading the ministries that form the apex of the government, the prime minister and the Council of Ministers have direct control over policy implementation and day-to-day operations (albeit at some bureaucratic distance). Third, in cases of urgent need occurring between sessions of parliament, the Council of Ministers has the right to issue temporary decrees with the force of law. However, the Council cannot issue such decrees on just any subject. For example, Council decrees cannot, among other matters, amend elections, judicial procedures, the state budget, or laws passed by a sitting parliament.

The president and the prime minister are not only beholden to parliament to account for their actions; they owe their positions to parliamentary election. The prime minister must be approved and can lose office to a vote of no confidence. In Latvia, the president is not elected by direct popular vote but by parliament. Presidential "elections" were held in 1993 and 1996. In July 1993, at the convocation of the first pure post-Soviet parliament, three individuals came forward as presidential candidates: Guntis Ulmanis won on the third ballot; the second post-Soviet presidential election saw parties in the Saeima challenge Ulmanis. Ulmanis maintained a moderate policy program, and this helped him win 53 of 97 ballots in the first round of voting, returning him to the presidency for a second term. In 1999 Vaira Vike-Freiberga, a women of Canadian and Latvian extraction and an academic, succeeded Ulmanis to the presidency.

LEGISLATURE

The Saeima, or parliament, is the locus of political power in Latvia. The Saeima is a unicameral body composed of 100 seats and is elected for a term of four years. When a newly elected parliament meets for the first time, the deputies elect a board that acts as the organizing head of the Saeima. This board consists of a chairman, two deputy chairmen, and two secretaries; the chairman acts in the role of speaker of parliament. The Saeima also has 10 committees that make up 100 positions; thus, in theory every Saeima member can become a member of a parliamentary committee. These committees are one path for submitting legislation; if five or more members of a committee so act, they can present a bill for a vote in parliament. (A bill can also



be brought up by the president, Cabinet of Ministers, or one-tenth of eligible voters.)

Parliament wields not only legislative power but ultimate political sovereignty. The president is selected by the Saeima, and the prime minister must answer to parliament. If the president dies, the next in line is not the prime minister, as in some countries (such as Russia); instead, power goes to the chairman of the Saeima. While the executive branch proposes and implements administrative policy, these policies are embedded in the legal framework formed by Saeima decisions. Parliamentary deputies enjoy not only immunity from criminal prosecution but also from recall: according to the constitution, deputies cannot be recalled from their office and can be disciplined only by the Saeima itself. (Only in the case of defamation or revealing information about another's private life can deputies become liable to prosecution.) Even in cases of criminal activity, a Saeima member cannot be prosecuted until the Saeima decides to sanction such prosecution.

Legislation is the primary duty of the Saeima. Laws pass if they receive a majority vote (51 votes). While the president can send legislation back to the Saeima for reconsideration, the Saeima can override the veto with a simply majority (51) a second time in support of the proposed bill. The president then cannot raise his initial objections a second time, that is, the president cannot veto a bill with the same objections twice. One-third of the Saeima can motion to suspend implementation of a law for two months or can request the president to suspend implementation. The law in question is then submitted to a nationwide referendum if one-tenth of the voters request it; otherwise, the law goes into force at the end of the two-month waiting period. If in the referendum a majority does not support the draft law, then it will not go into force.

Only laws and measures on the budget, on taxes and customs duties, on military service, on declaration of war or peace, on a state of emergence, and on foreign treaties cannot be subject to a nationwide referendum. Further, two-thirds of the Saeima may vote that a law is "urgent," which means that the president may not demand a second review of the law and a referendum cannot be called to judge it. Finally, the Saeima can amend the constitution if new articles are passed by a two-thirds majority after three readings; two-thirds of Saeima deputies must be present for such constitutional changes to be valid.

JUDICIARY

The judiciary is in the process of being reorganized. For the first half of the 1990s, Latvia used the system it inherited from its Soviet past, namely, district, regional, and administrative courts, along with a newly created Supreme Court. Each level handles both criminal cases and civil cases (disputes), and appeals move up the chain to the Supreme Court, which is the final arbiter of legal conflict. The Constitutional Court has the right to determine the constitutionality or unconstitutionality of laws.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Latvia is divided into 26 counties (*rajons*) and seven municipalities. At the local level, the highest political body is the local council, ranging from 15 to 120 members (depending on the region) and sitting for a five-year term. The council is run by a chairman and board elected by the council deputies. In local politics, members of the Latvian National Independence Movement have faired well and dominate, whereas candidates linked to the Communist Party have fared poorly.

The Electoral System

The Latvian Constitution holds that election to the Saeima is through proportional means—that is, voters receive a list with parties and then vote for a party. Those parties receiving more than 5 percent of votes cast receive a number of seats equal to the percentage of votes they received out of the total votes cast for parties that overcame the 5 percent barrier; votes for parties that do not cross the 5 percent barrier are, therefore, wasted votes.

Latvia has not been blessed with stable governments, reflecting fragmentation in parliament—not unusual when many different parties are represented (a problem in Italy suffered for decades)—and unstable power bases. Anatolijs Gorbunovs was the first post-Soviet parliamentary chairman, backed by a majority coalition led by Latvia's Way. This coalition soon splintered, and Latvia's Way tried several times to build a successful, stable coalition. The 1994 elections led to another round of negotiations to form a new government, and, after several rounds of voting, businessman Andris Skele became prime minister. After the 1998 elections Latvia's Way was again heading the ruling coalition in alliance with nationalist

parties For Fatherland and LNNK (FF/LNNK) and the center-left New Party. Villis Kristopans was named prime minister, but he survived only nine months due to constant political crises. Skele returned, leading a coalition of FF/LNNK and the new People's Party. This government succumbed to internal rivalries and disputes over privatization and collapsed in 2000. The 1998 coalition returned with a new leader and prime minister, Riga's mayor, Andris Berzins—which survived until the 2002 elections. In 2002 Latvia's Way, the leading party in the 1990s, failed to overcome the 5 percent barrier. The New Era Party won the largest number of seats (26), followed by the coalition For Human Rights in a United Latvia. Einars Repše of the New Era Party became prime minister at the head of a center-right coalition. In February 2004 Repše's coalition collapsed, and Repše resigned his post. A coalition led by the Greens and Farmers Union formed a new government, with Indulis Emsis becoming the first European prime minister from a Green party. However, Emsis's government lasted only nine months before collapsing after the parliament rejected his government's budget. Aigars Kalvitis of the People's Party became the new prime minister, heading a four-party coalition.

The Party System

As in other former Communist countries, talking about coherent "parties" is difficult. While there are formal party groupings, parties in Latvia may disappear and new parties sometimes are created, making the party landscape somewhat in flux. Further, the last few years have seen shifting coalitions of parties, who ally or merge in order to increase their potential electoral support and voting power in the Saeima. Finally, party organization and discipline do not always seem very strong, since candidates may run on their party's list in one district and on a list for a coalition in a district where that party is weaker. Hence, there may be a low correlation between the "rank and file" (which may be rather low), programmatic stance, positions of deputies in parliamentary debates, and leadership within one party.

In the 1990s the two dominant parties were Latvia's Way (Latvijas celsh) and Saimnieks, but both suffered reversals of fortune: Saimnieks lost all its parliamentary seats in the 1998 election, and in 2002 Latvia's Way lost all its seats as well (it had 21 in 1998). Latvia's Way was founded in 1993 on the basis of political organizations that had championed Latvian independence from the USSR. Aiming for support from entrepreneurs and the middle class, Latvian's Way promoted radical economic reform, but this created backlash. Saimnieks, which drew support from the *nomenklatura* (Soviet-era economic elite), was founded for the 1995 parliamentary elections and merged with the Democratic Party. It joined a coalition government after the 1995 election but left the coalition in 1998. It strongly supported a change in Latvia's citizenship laws and successfully obtained such a change. This was its last success, as it lost all its seats in the 1998 election and has not reappeared since.

On the left a coalition emerged to maximize electoral success: For Human Rights in a United Latvia (Par Cilveka Tiesibam Vienota Latvija). The electoral alliance received the second largest number of votes (18.9 percent) and seats (25) in the 2002 elections. It was made up of three parties, the People's Harmony Party (Tautas Saskanas Partija), the Latvian Socialist Party, and the minor partner Lidztiesiba Savieniba. For Human Rights gained much of its support from the Russian-speaking population. By itself the People's Harmony Party achieved electoral representation (5.6 percent of the vote and 6 seats in 1995), but the coalition had better success. In 2002 another left-wing party, the Latvian Social Democratic Workers' Party, lost all 14 seats it won in the 1998 elections.

In the center is the New Era (Jaunais laiks) Party, and toward the center-right are the People's Party, the Latvian Farmers' Union, and the Green Party of Latvia. Further along the right-wing nationalist spectrum are two formerly important parties who merged to form For Fatherland and Freedom/Latvian Independence Movement.

Major Political Parties

NEW ERA PARTY

(Jaunais laiks)

This party was founded in 2000 by Einars Repše and in 2002 won the most seats in the legislative elections. Repše formed a coalition government and served as prime minister until 2004, when the coalition collapsed and he resigned. Linked to domestic and foreign (especially Scandinavian) businessmen, New Era enjoys healthy financial support, and its recruitment of cultural figures to its ranks has helped its popular image as well. The party's platform addresses issues primarily of corruption but also market development.

PEOPLE'S PARTY

(Tautas Partija)

This center-right party was founded in 1998 by Andris Skele and populated by deserters of Latvia's Way, the Christian Democratic Union, and LNNK. Like the right-wing parties from which it originated, People's Party focuses on right-wing populist issues such as supporting society's moral fiber, protecting the traditional family, and defending the nation. People's Party nationalism is not total, however: it has ties with Russian business. The party won 20 seats in the 2002 legislative elections, and in 2004 it formed a new coalition government, with Aigars Kalvitis as the new prime minister.

LATVIAN FARMERS' UNION

(Latvijas Zemnieku savien ba)

The Farmers' Union is conservative and protectionist, and while it has taken on board former Communists from other defunct parties, the party remains center-right. This party joined a coalition with the Greens in 2002, and in 2004 the alliance formed a brief government with Green Party leader Emsis Lemulis as prime minister.

GREEN PARTY OF LATVIA

(Latvijas Zaļā partija)

Founded in 1990, this party formed an alliance with the Latvian Farmers' Union in 2002 that captured 12 seats in parliament. In 2004 the Green Party's Emsis Lemulis became the first Green Party prime minister in European history when he formed a brief minority government. The government collapsed after only nine months, and a new center-right coalition came to power.

FOR FATHERLAND AND FREEDOM/LATVIAN NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE MOVEMENT

(Apvieniba Tevzemei un Brivibaik/LNNK)

In 1995 For Fatherland and the Latvian National Independence Movement received 12 percent and 6.3 percent of the vote, respectively; in 2002 they merged to form For Fatherland and Freedom/Latvian National Independence Movement (Apvieniba Tevzemei un Brivibaik/LNNK) and promptly received only 5.4 percent of the vote. Both promoted nationalist issues, including nationalist citizenship laws, and rejected diplomatic compromises with Russia.

PEOPLE'S HARMONY PARTY

(Tautas Saskanas Partija)

This party was formed in 1994 by Jānis Jurkāns, who has remained its leader since then. It has long been popular with ethnic Russians. In 1998 it joined the For Human Rights in a United Latvia coalition, which won 25 seats in the 2002 parliamentary elections. However, People's Harmony pulled out of the coalition in 2003.

LATVIAN SOCIALIST PARTY

(Latvijas Sociālistiskā partija)

This party was founded in 1994 and has long drawn its strength from the Russian-speaking population. In 1998 it joined with two other Russian-oriented parties, People's Harmony and Equal Rights, to form the For Human Rights in a United Latvia coalition. The coalition enjoyed significant success in the 2002 elections but gradually fell apart, with People's Harmony pulling out in 2003 and the Latvian Socialist Party following not long after.

EQUAL RIGHTS

(Lidztiesiba Savieniba)

Like its former coalition partners in For Human Rights, this party gets its support from the Russian-speaking population.

Minor Political Parties

There are numerous smaller parties in Latvia, most of which have no representation in the Saeima. These include the Peoples Movement for Latvia on the far right, the Democratic Party on the center-left, and the Latvian Unity Party on the left.

Other Political Forces

The tensions between ethnic Latvians and Russians have been a factor in the country's political system since independence, and will likely remain one into the future.

National Prospects

Latvia has two major political problems, those having to do with ethnic issues and those having to do with political gridlock. On the ethnic front, the problems are mainly between ethnic Latvians and Russians, who make up one-third of the Latvian population. While citizenship had been a thorny issue, it appears to have been solved for the present. While some groups claim political abuse, the actual abuse is not particularly abominable.

The second potential problem is political gridlock. With most parties hovering around a center ground, political disputes are more like those in the United States—conflicts between rival political ambitions rather than over different ideological views and policies. With the Saeima split in half, forging political coalitions and bold political policies has proven to be difficult. However, if viewed in the context of politics in other former Soviet nations, perhaps such political gridlock of the American variety is a sign that Latvia is in good shape.

Perhaps Latvia's crowning achievement after independence has been its invitations into two important Western families: NATO and the European Union. NATO membership has caused some tension with Russia, but it also offers a modicum of security Latvians had long desired. EU membership promises access to markets and provides opportunities for labor mobility that likely will help Latvia's post-Socialist economic development.

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REPUBLIC OF LEBANON

(Al-Jumhuriyyah AI-Lubnaniyyah)

By As'ad Abukhalil, Ph.D.
Revised by Rima Habasch, Ph.D.



This small but strategically located country has long served as a link between one region and another: in modern times it has linked the Arab world and the Mediterranean world. It consists of some 130 miles of coastline on the Mediterranean sea and comprises with its mountains some 4,000 square miles. It has been an integral part of the Arab East, or the Levant, for much of its recent history. Its location has shaped its history and society: Lebanon's relatively isolated mountainous environment has allowed various sectarian groups from throughout the region to seek haven on its territory to avoid fear and persecution. This history of welcoming various peoples is probably responsible for the richly diverse composition of its population.

The last official census was conducted by the French in 1932, and successive governments have considered the sectarian distribution of the population a state secret that could potentially destabilize the country. In reality, the Christian establishment avoided conducting a new census because it did not want to confirm the fact that Muslims now form the overwhelming majority of the Lebanese population, contrary to the French figures in 1932. Population figures are important because the political posts in government are still distributed along sectarian lines, with the Christians enjoying significant privileges, including the post of president of the republic.

Lebanon is a modern creation; it was fashioned from the legacy of the Ottoman Empire in part as a response to European demands for a Christian entity tied to the West. The League of Nations granted France mandate authority over Greater Syria, an area that included Lebanon. The French designed the political system of Lebanon and shaped the constitution, which was enacted in 1926. Lebanon was established as a republic, and the Christians were given supreme political positions. In 1932 the French announced the result of a comprehensive census that found the Christians to be the majority of the population. In response, political posts were divided according to an arithmetic formula of sectarian weights, to the advantage of the Maronites and of the Christians in general. Lebanon won its independence in 1943, and the Sunni and Maronite elites reached an understanding that become known as the National Pact. This unwritten agreement was essential for the operation of the political system from 1943 until the civil war in 1975.

According to the terms of the National Pact, the Christians were to promise not to seek foreign, that is, Western Christian, protection and to accept Lebanon's Arab "face," a partial recognition of Lebanon's ties to its Arab surroundings and its gratitude to its Arab/Islamic heritage. In return, the Muslims were to agree to recognize Lebanon's independence and the legitimacy of the state with its 1920 boundaries and to renounce aspirations of a union with Syria or with any other Arab country. The pact also reinforced the sectarian division of political powers: it specified that the Maronites will have the presidency, the Shiites the ceremonial speakership of parliament, and the Sunnis the prime ministership. Other top security positions were also reserved for Maronites. Until the outbreak of

the civil war in 1975, representation in the parliament was based on a 6:5 ratio of Christians to Muslims. The Ta'if Accord changed this ratio to 1 to 1.

In 1975 a civil war broke out that was to last for at least 16 years. While the Lebanese government officially declared the end of the war, one can still disagree with the notion that all sources of conflict have been amicably resolved in that country. The war began as the product of acute socioeconomic injustices and as a result of the distribution of political power according to an outmoded formula of sectarian (im)balance. Shiites, among other groups, became increasing unhappy over their small share of power given their large demographic share of the population. Leftists battled rightists, and some Muslims battled some Christians, while outsiders (primarily Israel and Syria) intervened heavily on this side or that. The PLO in Lebanon also fought alongside the leftist/Muslim coalition of forces. Syrian troops intervened heavily in Lebanon in 1976 to crush the power of the PLO and its Lebanese leftist allies, while Israel intervened at several times and invaded the country in 1982 to install its ally Bashir Gemayyel as president and to expel PLO forces from Lebanon. The civil war caused significant damage to the national economy and the Lebanese currency and was marked by assassination, kidnappings, massacres, and mutilation of bodies.

In September 1989 the Lebanese Parliament met in special sessions in the city of Ta'if in Saudi Arabia to discuss formulas and plans for constitutional and political reforms. These sessions were attended by 31 Christian and 31 Muslim deputies out of the 73 surviving members of the 1972 parliament. They met again in October 1889 in an effort to put an end to the civil war and to respond to popular demands for serious constitutional reforms.

The resulting agreement, known as the Ta'if Accord, shifted some powers from the president to the Council of Ministers and called for equal sectarian representation of Christian and Muslims in parliament. The agreement also promised to end "political sectarianism," although no firm timetable was specified. The agreement also included a comprehensive settlement of the Lebanese civil war, which entailed the dissolution of all militias in Lebanon. The identity of Lebanon was declared to be Arab and Lebanon's relations with Syria were officially and juridically characterized as "distinctive." The agreement included a promise of Syrian evacuation of troops from Lebanon. Thereafter, the administration of Ilyas Hrawi adopted the agreement and parliament amended the constitution to incorporate those reforms. Observers still disagree whether the Ta'if agreement was actually implemented and whether those reforms are sufficient to end national discord in Lebanon.

While important provisions of the Ta'if Accord were implemented, others have not been addressed. For example, decentralization of government has yet to be fully implemented. Furthermore, the Council for Economic and Social Development, which is foreseen in the Ta'if Accord, has not been created as of the early 2000s.

Other provisions of the Ta'if Accord have been changed or not fully implemented. For example, the increase in the number of parliamentary seats from 108 to 128 as stipulated by the Ta'if Accord is viewed by some as a violation of the accord. The Ta'if Accord foresaw the establishment of a Constitutional Council, whose role is to verify the constitutionality of new laws upon request of 10 members of parliament.

In 2005 Syria's influence and presence in Lebanon generated international headlines. In February, former Lebanese prime minister Rafik Hariri was killed in a car bomb attack in Beirut. Many observers, both domestic and foreign, suspected that Syrian elements were behind the attack. Huge anti-Syria protests combined with international outrage at the assassination finally forced Syria to withdraw its troops from Lebanon, a process that was completed in April. However, violence along the pro- and anti-Syrian divide in Lebanon continued in subsequent months.

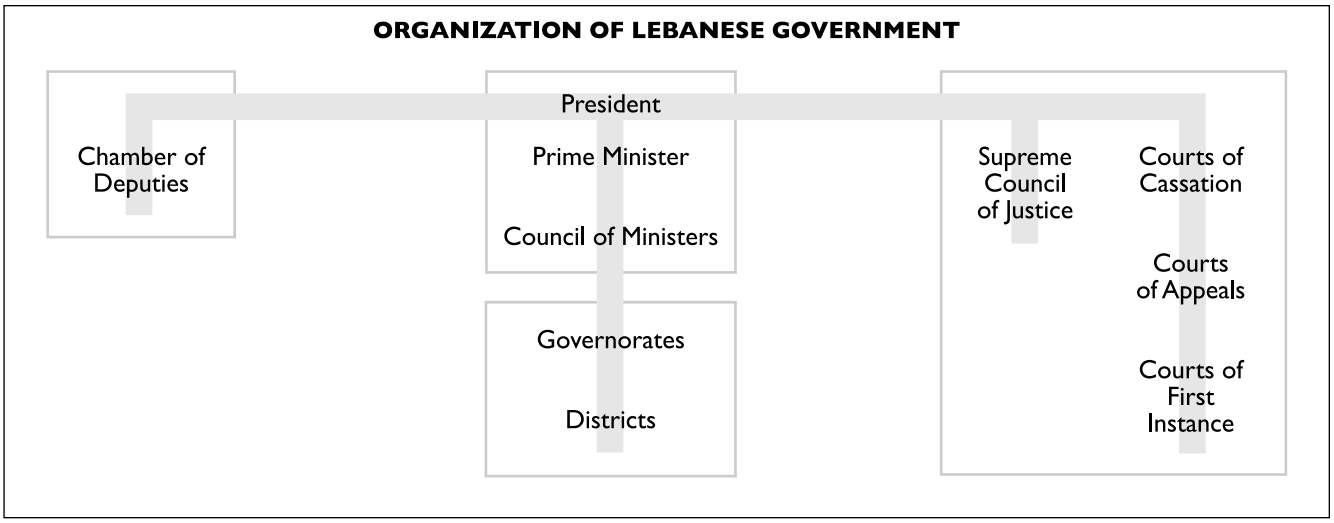
The System of Government

Lebanon is a parliamentary republic with a strong president and a unicameral legislature.

EXECUTIVE

The original constitution gives great powers to the president. He or she is commander in chief of the army and security forces; can appoint and dismiss the prime minister and cabinet; promulgates laws passed by parliament and may also propose laws, enact urgent legislation by decree, and veto bills; and can dissolve parliament under certain circumstances. The president also has powers over the government bureaucracy.

The sectarian system, however, puts some constraints on the powers of the president because national concord requires mutual agreement among the various sects. The Ta'if agreement has transferred some of the



powers of the president to the collective Council of Ministers, over which he or she presides. Furthermore, the Maronite president has to try to obtain the support of the Sunni Muslim prime minister.

The president is elected by parliament, and not by a direct vote of the citizenry. This has facilitated corrupt practices such as bribery of members of parliament. The president serves for a six-year term and may not succeed himself, although the constitution may be amended toward that end, as was the case with Bisharah Al-Khuri and recently with Emile Lahoud, whose term was to end in 2004 but was extended by parliament for an additional three years. A quorum of two-thirds of the deputies is required to hold a special session for the election of the president, and a two-thirds majority of deputies attending is required for the president to be elected on the first ballot. In the second round, a simple majority suffices.

The Ta'if agreement strengthened the powers of the Council of Ministers, which includes the president, the prime minister, and the ministers. The president consults with the deputies before naming a prime minister. The designated prime minister then conducts his own consultation before designating the ministers. Sectarian sensibilities and the terms of the National Pact are often more important criteria than specialization and merit. The prime minister is the highest Muslim official in the country and can bring great authority to the position, as did billionaire Rafik Hariri during his two terms (1992–98 and 2000–04). The prime minister presides over the Council of Ministers and is responsible for running the day-to-day affairs of the government. The powers of the prime minister, however, vary by personality. Some presidents have selected weak individuals with no power bases as subservient political tools. The Ta'if Accord extended the term of the speaker of parliament from one to four years.

The country is theoretically administered through the Council of Ministers, although the president, the prime minister, and the speaker of parliament often reach decisions in informal meetings without consulting with the cabinet members. Ministers do not necessarily mind as long as they receive support for their pet projects and as long as they are able to serve their own personal and political objectives.

LEGISLATURE

Legislative power is vested in a unicameral Chamber of Deputies, which has seldom exercised its legislative authority because the president, with or without the Council of Ministers, often legislates by special decree. The constitution gives parliament powers for dealing with budgetary oversight and amendment of the constitution, but the president can easily manipulate the deputies through an exploitation of the sectarian system and through direct dealing with the sectarian political bosses, known as *zu'ama'*.

Deputies are elected every four years by popular vote, but according to a strict sectarian formula that designates the sectarian affiliation of every candidate for every seat. The citizens are then forced to select according to sectarian/political considerations.

The civil war disrupted parliamentary life in Lebanon, and no election was held from 1972 until 1992. The credibility of the 1992 election was questioned by many because many Christians boycotted it in protest of Syrian influence in Lebanon. The 1996 elections,

however, were more representative, although they too were marred by fraud and irregularities. Party politics have played a small part in electoral politics because sectarian leaders dominate the list making and campaigning. The electoral system also discourages nonsectarian parties.

To be eligible for election, an individual has to be at least 25 years of age. The number of seats in parliament accorded with a 6-to-5 formula, to the advantage of Christians, but the formula is now 50-50, that is, 50 percent Muslim and 50 percent Christian.

The most recent parliamentary elections were held in 2005. The anti-Syrian Rafik Hariri Martyr List won 72 out of the 128 seats. The Amal-Hezbollah alliance won 35 seats.

JUDICIARY

The judicial system is supposed to mirror that of France; the Ministry of Justice has official authority over the judicial system. But the Supreme Council of Justice, an independent body appointed by the Council of Ministers, exercises actual jurisdiction over the various courts. There are 56 courts of first instance, with 17 in Beirut alone. Cases from these courts can be appealed to one of 11 courts of appeals, each of which has a three-judge panel. Above these are four courts of cassation, on which sit three judges each. Three of these courts adjudicate civil cases, and one hears criminal complaints.

Several other courts exist outside of this framework. There are, for example, an appeals court for administrative matters and the Judicial Council, which includes the most senior judge of the courts of cassation and four other judges appointed by the government and which rules on cases of public security. Other specialized courts exist to deal with matters relating to the military, the press, and business affairs.

While the French legal system inspired the organization of the judiciary, personal status laws remain the domain of the sectarian religious leadership within each community. In issues dealing with marriage, divorce, burial, and inheritance, the state has given total control to the clerical establishment. Secularists and feminists regard this monopoly over personal status laws as harmful to the cause of equality and liberty; it also impedes the process of national construction of one identity. The clerical establishments encourage the perpetuation of sectarian identities, and they insist on commanding the loyalty of the various sectarian groups.

In a country known for sectarian loyalties, patronage, and elite rivalries, political interference in judicial affairs is quite common. Judicial appointments, even in the era of the so-called second republic (in reference to post–civil war Lebanon), are the product of sectarian considerations. Informal meetings between the president, the prime minister, and the Speaker decide very crucial appointments, with each of them thinking about the interests of the sect. Thus, the judge in question is loyal to the individual leader who was responsible for his or her appointment. This minimizes the independence of the judiciary and makes it susceptible to political and sectarian pressures.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The operation of the government in Lebanon has been highly centralized; citizens from outside the capital often complain that simple governmental transactions require a visit to the capital. The state has not tried to ease the burden by decentralizing its structure. The civil war heightened fears of partition of the country and demands by right-wing groups of decentralization intended to split the country into Christian and Muslim sectors. After the political defeat of the Maronite-oriented groups, the state has insisted on a unified Lebanon, which only weakens the operation of local governments.

The country is divided into six provinces, or governorates (*muhafadhah*): Beirut, Al-Biqa‘, Mount Lebanon, the South, the North, and Jabal‘Amil. The last one was created in the 1980s to satisfy Shiite demands. All governorates, except Beirut, are divided into districts (*qada‘*). The Ministry of Interior has oversight and fiscal responsibility over the local administrations. The governor, who is appointed by the Council of Ministers, is the highest-ranking official in each province. He or she must come from a region different from that of the region he or she is assigned to administer. The governor heads the Council of the Governorate, which includes a representative of the Ministry of Finance and the deputy governors (*qa‘immaqam*), who are also appointed by the Council of Ministers.

The Ta’if Accord emphasized the strengthening of local government and the decentralization at the governorate level. There has been, however, little parliamentary consensus or support on this issue. A law that increased fiscal autonomy of municipalities was passed in 1997. However, the more than 30 sources of funding, on which municipalities have been relying, make local planning and budgeting difficult. The system of government structure remains centralized, and most municipalities suffer from a lack of resources. Many

local development projects continue to be undertaken by the central government.

The first municipal elections after the Ta'if Accord—the first after more than 25 years—were held in 1998 after numerous postponements. The elections saw a high voter turnout of an average of 60 percent. The single most important outcome of the elections was the increased strength of Hezbollah and the weakening of Christian parties. In 2001 municipal elections were held for the first time since 1963 in the newly liberated areas in South Lebanon.

The most recent mayoral and municipal elections were held in May 2004. Voter turnout was low, especially in Beirut. In Mount Lebanon and South Lebanon voter turnout was higher. Considered as a test of the existing powers, the elections saw the defeat of the list supported by Hariri in his home town Saida.

The Electoral System

The Ta'if Accord stipulated the electoral district be based on the *muhafaza* (governorate), rather than on the smaller *qada* (district). In the election of 1996 electoral districts were based on both the *muhafaza* (governorate) and the *qada*, as for example was the case of Beirut. Taking the *muhafaza* as the basis would have reduced the number of electoral districts from 26 to 6. More importantly, as the *muhafaza* constitutes a multisectarian district, candidates would need the support of all sects rather than relying solely on one or two sects, as would be the case for the smaller *qada*.

Suffrage is extended to all males age 21 and over, with voting being compulsory, and to all females age 21 and over with an elementary school education.

The Party System

The study of Lebanese political parties is made difficult due to the fragmentation of the political culture into narrow, sectarian subcultures. Most Lebanese political parties and organizations, not to mention political leaders, mobilize members of a particular sectarian group. The explosion of the civil war in 1975 only reinforced sectarian political identities and marginalized those parties that championed secular reforms of the political system. This excessive fragmentation, which goes beyond the Muslim-Christian distinction to include denominations within each of the two religions, requires a typology of parties based on the type of sectarian identity promoted by the party and on the sectarian composition of party members.

Origins of Lebanese political parties predate the founding of independent Lebanon in 1943: some existing political parties in Lebanon trace their roots to the 1920s and 1930s. This era witnessed the formation of small political identities following centuries of grand identities based on either Islam or pan-Arabism. To be sure, identities based on sectarian loyalties have been a feature of Lebanese society for centuries, but those identities were only channeled in modern political formations in this century. The formation of political parties reflected an attempt by sectarian leaders to adjust to the consequences of the creation of the Lebanese republic. They wanted to mask their sectarian agendas behind an ostensible national outlook encompassing the whole of Lebanon and its people. Also, the Lebanese electoral system sometimes required the election of a leader by a multisectarian constituency, although the narrow sectarian districts often served the interests of sectarian agitation and representation.

Major Political Parties

CURRENT FOR THE FUTURE

(Tayyar Al Mustaqbal)

This party formed the main faction of the Rafik Hariri Martyr List for the 2005 parliamentary elections. In the aftermath of Hariri's assassination and the withdrawal of Syria's military troops from Lebanon, the party won 36 seats, the most of any party, and led the larger coalition to a resounding victory. The party is led by Rafik Hariri's son Saad, who appears poised to take his father's place on the country's political scene.

LEBANESE PHALANGIST PARTY

(Hizb Al-Kata'ib Al-Lubnaniyyah)

One of the oldest parties in Lebanon, this party was founded in 1936 by Pierre Gemayyel in imitation of Nazi youth organizations, which he observed in Germany. The party was formed to reject calls for uniting Lebanon with its neighbors and insisted on a special Christian identity for Lebanon. The party became a sophisticated political machine benefiting from its blatant sectarian agenda, which was useful during the 1958 sectarian civil war. The party's motto emphasized allegiance to "God, homeland, and family," and it has promoted a conservative political agenda that blamed Lebanon's problems

on outsiders (Syrians, Egyptians, Iranians, Palestinians, and others). It has been recently revealed that the party had benefited from secret ties to Israel, which helped fund the party's electoral campaigns. It professed its dedication to democracy, private property, and the free-enterprise system, and it consistently expressed its detestation of communism and Arab nationalism. Members of the party have been predominantly Christians, and Maronites have led the party over the years.

It founded one of the early militias in Lebanon and succeeded in attracting members by provoking clashes with the PLO forces in the country. It was one of the main fighting forces on the right during the civil war, and the Lebanese army helped it in training and the supply of matériel. Pierre's son, Bashir, emerged as the main right-wing leader in Lebanon in the wake of the 1975–76 phase of the civil war. The 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon boosted the fortunes of the party, and the Israeli occupation army ensured the election of Bashir as president, although he was assassinated days after his election. He was succeeded by his brother Amin, who led Lebanon in one of the worst periods of its contemporary history. Many Lebanese still blame him for intensifying the conflict and for worsening Lebanon's economic problems. Pierre died in 1984, and the party never recovered. It was later headed by the former deputy George Sa'adah, who failed to reunite the party. Many former leaders and members formed their own organizations and refused to acknowledge the leadership of Sa'adah, who failed in the 1996 elections. He died in 1998. The leader of the Phalangist Party, Amin Gemayyel, returned from his long stay in France in 2000.

In 2005 the party joined the anti-Syrian Rafik Hariri Martyr List, which won the elections.

LEBANESE FORCES

(Al-Quwwat Al-Lubnaniyyah)

This coalition of right-wing militias was officially established in the summer of 1976 in the wake of the death of William Hawi, the head of the military apparatus of the Lebanese Phalanges Party. Bashir Gemayyel wanted to unify "the Christian rifle" to end the competition and wars between the various Christian militias in East Beirut. He also wanted to ensure utmost loyalty and obedience by Christian fighters. The role of the Forces gradually grew from that of a joint command of militias to that of a political-military apparatus with a large budget. It soon dominated the political leadership in East Beirut and marginalized the roles of other parties, organizations, and personalities. Bashir eliminated by force the presence of rival militias and arranged for the killing of rivals.

The Lebanese Forces was supported and financed by Israel and paved the way for the 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon. The election of Bashir to the presidency brought more prestige to the Forces, although his death brought about a decline in its effectiveness; previously dormant parties were revived and the leadership of the Christian camps was no longer monopolized by one man. The Lebanese Forces was tied to the massacres of Sabra and Shatila in 1982, which resulted in the death of innocent Palestinians residing in refugee camps. The Forces was briefly aligned with the Syrian regime under the leadership of Elie Hubayqah, but he was ousted and replaced by Samir Ja'ja' in 1986. Ja'ja' led the Forces through the difficult wars with General Michel Aoun, but he was arrested in 1994 for plotting the assassination of a rival and the bombing of a church. Like other militias, the Forces was disbanded but was then registered as a new political party. Ja'ja' was pardoned in 2005 and moved to France. In the 2005 parliamentary elections the party won six seats and was part of the Rafik Hariri Martyr List.

PROGRESSIVE SOCIALIST PARTY

(Al-Hizb At-Taqaddumi Al-Ishtiraki; PSP)

This party was founded by the famed Druze leader Kamal Jumblat in 1949. He invited a group of multisectarian intellectuals to form the leadership, but the party quickly became a sectarian Druze party despite its secular agenda. It served as a political vehicle for this influential Druze *za'im*. Jumblat was a key parliamentary leader and played a crucial role in the 1958 civil war. By 1975 Jumblat had emerged as one of the most important opposition leaders in the country, and he founded and headed the Lebanese National Movement, which supported political reforms and the PLO in Lebanon. Jumblat wanted to defeat the Phalangist-led forces in Lebanon but was thwarted in his efforts by the Syrian regime. He was assassinated in 1977 and was immediately succeeded by his son Walid.

Walid quickly ended the feud with the Syrian regime and reorganized the PSP's militia in preparation for a major showdown with the Lebanese Forces. In the 1983–84 War of the Mountain, Jumblat consolidated his leadership within the Druze community and the party emerged as one of the most effective militias in the country. The party won seats in the 1992, 1996, 2000, and 2005 elections; in the latter it joined the Rafik Hariri Martyr List. The party does not serve as more than a tool for Walid Jumblat.

AMAL MOVEMENT

(Harakat Amal)

The original name of this organization is Harakat Al-Mahrumin (Movement of the Disinherited), but its name after 1978 became known by the acronym of its military arm Afwaj Al-Muqawamah A1-Lubnaniyyah (Detachments of the Lebanese Resistance), or AMAL. The word also means "hope" in Arabic.

The history of this movement is closely associated with the role of its founder Imam Musa As-Sadr, who came to Lebanon from Iran in 1959 and organized the political movement of the Shiite community. Israeli bombardment of South Lebanon in the 1960s, when the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) was emerging as a political and military force in Lebanon, radicalized the community, which was—and is—the poorest community in the country. As-Sadr called on the Lebanese state to defend the villages of South Lebanon and to bring about economic improvement in the lives of Shiites. The role of As-Sadr was boosted in 1969 when he was elected chairman of the Higher Islamic Shiite Council. He founded the council to separate the demands of the Shiites from the political demands of other Muslim sects in the country; he wanted to assert an independent Shiite voice after decades of Sunni leadership of all Muslim sects in Lebanon. While As-Sadr did not call for a revolution, he supported "armed struggle" to fight back against Israeli forces in Lebanon.

The civil war did not help the cause of the movement: its role was marginalized as many Shiites flocked to Lebanese and Palestinian radical organizations that offered them arms and ideologies. In 1976 the movement was ejected from areas under the control of the PLO and its Lebanese allies because it supported Syrian military intervention in the country. The movement was dormant until 1978 when pro-Syrian As-Sadr "disappeared" while on an official visit to Libya. His supporters blamed the Libyan regime, while the regime denied responsibility. This coincided with two other important developments that affected the Shiite political culture: the PLO rule in South Lebanon was growing increasingly unpopular due to various acts of misconduct and thuggery (committed by both Lebanese and Palestinian gunmen), and the Islamic revolution in Iran was popularizing a form of religious-inspired mobilization. This propelled the movement again into prominence, and the Shiite sectarian identity became the cornerstone of the movement's ideology.

The movement's strong pro-Syrian orientations were confirmed and consolidated in 1980 when Nabih Birri assumed the leadership of the movement, which has been under his command ever since. The Israeli invasion of 1982 produced a split in the movement, but Birri succeeded in steering the organization away from Iranian hegemony. The movement launched a war against the Palestinian refugee camps in 1987, which dragged on for three years. Birri became a minister in 1984 and was elected to the Speakership of parliament (the highest Shiite post in the government) in 1992. Birri was elected speaker of parliament for a third term in 2000. The movement was disarmed along with other militias during the first administration of Ilyas Hrawi (1989–95). The movement won four parliamentary seats in the 1992 elections, and its list won overwhelmingly in the South in the 1996 parliamentary election, in which Amal and Hezbollah unified their list. In the parliamentary elections of 2000 the Amal-Hezbollah list achieved a landslide victory, but in 2005, in the wake of Syria's withdrawal of its troops from Lebanon, the list was soundly defeated by the Rafik Hariri Martyr List.

PARTY OF GOD

(Hezbollah)

This party was officially established in the wake of the Israeli invasion of 1982, but its formation can be traced back to the 1960s, when militant Shiites expressed unhappiness with the moderate agenda of Imam Musa As-Sadr. The party was formed in opposition to the Amal movement, and the Islamic republic in Iran played a key role in its formation. The existence of the party was announced in 1984. Shaykh Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah, who has been considered the spiritual guide of the party, has played a major role in the party's history and in widening its appeal among Lebanon's Shiites. While the party stressed the need for an Islamic republic in Lebanon, it has been mostly known through press reports linking it to anti-American acts of violence in Lebanon, including the kidnapping of American hostages in Lebanon in the 1980s. The party has refused to disarm and continues to launch acts of national resistance against the Israeli occupation of South Lebanon.

In the parliamentary elections of 2000 the Amal-Hezbollah list achieved a landslide victory and won all 23 seats allocated for South Lebanon. It is believed that without a joint list with Amal, Hezbollah, which took 12 of the 23 seats, would have gained more seats. In 2005 the alliance again won all 23 seats in South Lebanon, but nationally it was soundly defeated by the anti-Syrian Rafik Hariri Martyr List.

Minor Political Parties

SYRIAN SOCIAL NATIONAL PARTY

(Al-Hizb As-Suri Al-Qawmi Al-Ijtima'i)

This is one of the oldest parties in the country. It was founded by Antun Sa'adah in 1932 and quickly became one of the most influential parties in the entire Arab East, attracting scores of intellectuals and workers. The party advocated the unity of Greater Syria, which includes the Fertile Crescent and Cyprus. Sa'adah coined the slogan "Syria is for the Syrians and the Syrians form one nation" to summarize his vision. He opposed sectarianism and called for Christian-Muslim brotherhood within the context of Syrian nationalism. He strongly denounced the clerical establishment in Lebanon.

The party clearly reflected fascist organizations of the time: this can be seen in its ideology and organizational structure, which focuses on blind allegiance to the personality of the leader (Sa'adah). The party's ideology is virulently anti-Semitic, and Sa'adah understood nationalism in racial terms. Sa'adah declared an armed revolt against the Lebanese state, and he was executed without trial in 1949. The party recovered from the death of its founder and continued to expand in the region. It was originally right-wing and supported Kamil Sham'un in the 1958 revolt. The most serious crisis in the party's history was the coup attempt—the only one of its kind in Lebanon—launched by the party in 1961. The coup failed and the Shihabi regime led a brutal campaign against party members, which resulted in its temporary exclusion from Lebanese political life. While in jail, many party leaders decided to move the party in a more leftist direction and to express solidarity with Arab nationalist parties in Lebanon. Party leaders were released from jail in 1969, and they worked to revive party activity.

The party suffered from many splits in its history and from conflicting claims of allegiance to the personality of Sa'adah, and all party members are required to salute his picture before party meetings. The party participated in the Lebanese civil war as a member of the Lebanese National Movement and received aid from the PLO. A pro-Syrian branch of the party opposed the Lebanese National Movement, especially when the latter fought against the Syrian army in 1976. The two factions were temporarily reunited in 1978, but other splits continued to tear the party apart. There are now at least two parties that use the name of the party and both claim to be the authentic heirs of Sa'adah. The major party won two seats in the 2005 parliamentary elections.

FREE PATRIOTIC MOVEMENT

(Tayyar Al-Watani Al-Horr)

This party was founded in 2005 by General Michel Aoun, who served as prime minister between 1988 and 1990 and who was exiled to France for many years before returning to Lebanon in May 2005. The party draws support from both Muslim and Christians and claims to be the only major party in Lebanon not based on a religion. In the 2005 elections the party won 14 seats, and it also formed a larger alliance (the Aoun Alliance) that captured a total of 21 seats.

Other Political Forces

Opposition against government policy increased in the early 2000s over issues related to socioeconomic policies, absence of the rule of law, and the growing corruption in the Lebanese government. The most vocal opposition to government policies, the General Confederation of Lebanese Workers, was muted by government intervention and manipulation of its presidential elections.

Syria has long played a central role in Lebanon's political scene. This role dimmed somewhat in 2005 following the assassination of former prime minister Rafik Hariri, which many blamed on Syrian military police. Domestic and international outrage pressured Syria into withdrawing all of its troops from the country, but there is little doubt that Syria still retains a significant presence in the country. That presence is supported by a large number of Lebanese, as evidenced by the massive demonstrations in favor of the Syrian presence in the aftermath of Hariri's assassination.

National Prospects

As Lebanon continues on the path of reconstruction and national conciliation, some people remain skeptical about its ability to end once and for all the national discord and sectarian hatred. The government of President Emile Lahoud was largely overshadowed by the prominent personality of his prime minister, Rafik Hariri. Hariri had emerged as the single most important architect of postwar Lebanon, and his international reputation had secured him a stable political status

that few prime ministers have had in modern Lebanon history. His reconstruction plans, however, earned him the hostility of advocates of the poor in Lebanon. It is widely believed that his plans for postwar Lebanon were based on the old economic formula for prewar Lebanon, which stressed the service sector of the economy at the expense of agriculture and industry, where most of the poor are employed. In addition, his plans did not address the problem of acute centralization that has characterized modern Lebanon. Poor Lebanese residing in remote areas of the country still depend on the services and government agencies centered in Beirut. His assassination in 2005 opened a new round of political upheaval in Lebanon and led both to the withdrawal of Syrian troops from Lebanon and a huge victory for pro-Hariri parties in the 2005 legislative elections.

The formula of political reform known as the Ta'if Accord also created resentment on the part of large segments of the Christian population, which felt that Syrian political dominance in Lebanon caused a reduction of their political power. They especially criticized the marginalization of important opposition figures, such as General Michel Aoun, who was in exile in France until May 2005. Many Christian leaders cheered the withdrawal of Syrian troops from Lebanon in 2005, a move they had long called for.

The single most important achievement of the Ta'if Accord was the reestablishment of internal security. With the exception of Hezbollah, the major militias were integrated into the army.

The current challenges faced by the government include increasing levels of poverty. The funding of the ambitious postwar reconstruction program through borrowing has made Lebanon one of the most indebted states in the world. Economic decline and the government's failure to address the growing gap between rich and poor and corruption at the governmental level have added to the socioeconomic distress. Whether the new government of Prime Minister Fouad Siniora, which was organized following the 2005 legislative elections, can address these issues remains to be seen.

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KINGDOM OF LESOTHO
(Mmuso wa Lesotho)

By B. David Meyers, Ph.D.



Lesotho, a nation of slightly fewer than 2 million people, is completely surrounded by South Africa. Most of the nation's GNP is provided by citizens working in South Africa. The country's tumultuous political history has seen a series of clashes involving the king, partisan leaders, the military, and the forces of neighboring states.

Formerly the British territory of Basutoland, Lesotho received its independence in October 1966. Moshoeshoe II, the paramount chief of the Basotho, was recognized as king of a constitutional monarchy. In the last elections before independence, the Basotho National Party (BNP), helped by funds from South Africa, narrowly defeated the Basotho Congress Party (BCP), and the BNP's leader, Chief Leabua Jonathan, became the nation's prime minister.

Relations between Jonathan and King Moshoeshoe were often turbulent, and, by 1970 the king had once been placed under house arrest and, another time, sent overseas in the first of three periods of exile. When he returned from exile, the king agreed to respect the constitutional nature of the monarchy and to refrain from any political activities. Jonathan, meanwhile, further consolidated his own power. In January 1970, when the opposition BCP had seemingly won a majority of seats in elections to the National Assembly, Jonathan suspended the constitution, jailed his opponents, and established rule by decree.

In 1986 South Africa, angered that Lesotho had given sanctuary to antiapartheid African National Congress guerrillas, imposed a blockade on its tiny neighbor. The blockade sparked a military coup, led by General Metsing Lekhanya, who seized power from Jonathan and agreed to expel the guerrillas. In March 1990, following a power struggle between the king and the general, the military government again exiled Moshoeshoe. After seven months the king returned, but rather than refrain from politics, he insisted that military rule be ended and elections held. Lekhanya again deposed him, and the nation's senior chiefs put his son, Letsie III, who promised to keep out of politics, on the throne.

In 1991 another coup, led by Colonel Phisoane Ramaema, ousted Lekhanya and announced that the army would return to barracks following free elections. After a number of postponements, these elections were held in March 1993, and a new government took power.

This elected government, headed by Prime Minister Ntsu Mokhehle, quickly ran into problems with the military as armed units fought one another, killed the deputy prime minister, and killed or abducted other cabinet members. Intervention by neighboring Botswana, South Africa, and Zimbabwe was needed to diffuse these crises. In August 1994, after a series of such violent disturbances, King Letsie dissolved parliament, dismissed the Mokhehle government, and replaced it with one that included the leader of the opposition BNP. Intervention by leaders of the same neighboring states restored the elected government, forced Letsie to abdicate, and reinstated his father, Moshoeshoe.

On January 15, 1996, King Moshoeshoe was killed in an automobile accident and was, again, succeeded by Letsie. In February there was another unsuccessful coup attempt.

Violence again racked Lesotho in 1998. In that year's elections the Lesotho Congress for Democracy (LCD) won 60 percent of the popular vote, which resulted in the capture of 79 of the 80 seats in the National Assembly. Opposition parties claimed the polling was rigged, and thousands of angry people took to the streets. Reports of another attempted military coup followed by the arrest of a number of officers increased the widespread disorder. In September, South African and Botswanan soldiers, who had entered Lesotho to quell the unrest, fought pitched battles with members of the Lesotho Defense Force.

Although neutral observers denied the opposition's claims of electoral fraud, it was widely agreed that there was an explosive asymmetry between the opposition's 40 percent of the popular vote and the resultant single Assembly seat. In an effort to reduce this discrepancy, before the 2002 elections 40 additional seats (known as Proportional Representation seats) were added to the Assembly. These were divided among the minority parties in proportion with their polling strength.

The System of Government

Lesotho is a constitutional monarchy in which the king plays mainly a ceremonial role. The legislature is bicameral.

EXECUTIVE

The Lesotho king is intended to reign as a ceremonial head of state with no executive power. In theory such a constitutional monarch provides continuity and stability to a political system. Only in the last decade has this been the case in Lesotho as both Letsie and his father, despite promises to the contrary, were politically active. Since his return to the throne in 1996, Letsie has refrained from interfering in the political process.

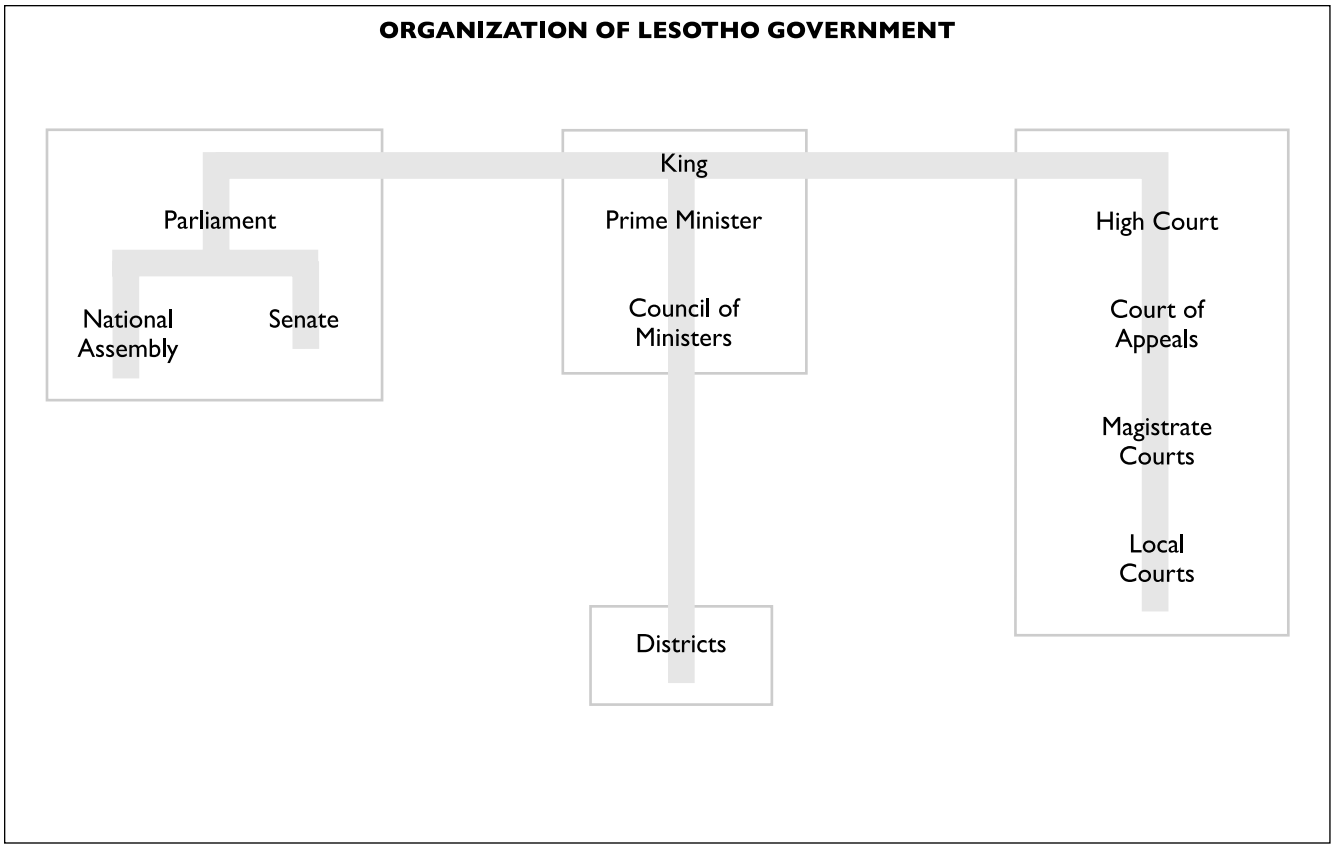
Executive authority is vested in the Council of Ministers, which is headed by a prime minister who is the leader of the majority party in the National Assembly. Ntsu Mokhehle, leader of the Basotho Congress Party and later its virtual successor, the Lesotho Congress for Democracy (LCD), served as prime minister from 1993 to 1998. When he stepped down in May 1998, he was replaced by Pakalitha Mosisili, who won a second term in 2002.

LEGISLATURE

Lesotho has a bicameral legislature consisting of a Senate and National Assembly. The Senate includes the country's 22 principal chiefs and 11 members appointed by the government. In efforts to increase popular support, the composition of the more important National Assembly has twice been altered. In 1993 the Lesotho Congress for Democracy (LCD) won all 65 seats, completely excluding the opposition. In 1998 the Assembly was expanded to 80 single-member constituencies, but LCD's 60 percent of the popular vote was sufficient to capture all but one of them. As part of the effort to avoid the violence that followed that election, the composition of the Assembly was again altered by adding 40 seats that are proportionately distributed among the minority parties. In the 2002 elections the LCD again won 79 of the contested seats and thus maintained control of the Assembly and government. The Basotho National Party (BNP), which had received 22.4 percent of the popular vote, was awarded 21 of the Proportional

LESOTHO NATIONAL ASSEMBLY: PERCENT OF POPULAR VOTE AND SEATS BY PARTY, 2002

Party	% Vote	Seats
Lesotho Congress for Democracy	54.9	79
Basotho National Party	22. 4	21
Lesotho Peoples' Congress	5.8	5
National Independent Party	5.5	5
Basutoland African Congress	2.9	3
Basutoland Congress Party	2.6	3
Lesotho Workers Party	1.4	1
Marematlou Freedom Party	1.2	1
Khoeetsa ea Sechaba/ Popular Front for Democracy	1.1	1
National Progressive Party	0.7	1



Representation seats, while eight other parties divided the remaining 19.

JUDICIARY

At the top of the judicial system is a High Court that has the power of judicial review of legislative acts. Below it is a Court of Appeals and a number of subordinate magistrate's courts. Members of the two high courts are chosen by the government and appointed by the king.

The legal system is based on English common law and Roman-Dutch law. There is a movement to change the Roman-Dutch legal system as it is thought to discriminate against women. At the local level courts administer customary tribal law.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The nation is divided into 10 administrative districts. Outside of the urban areas, the country is divided into numerous chiefdoms, whose traditional leaders fulfill many of the functions of local government. Local elections were held in 2005 for the first time since independence.

The Electoral System

Since the election law changes of 2002, there is popular polling for the 80 single-member, first-past-the-post seats and then the distribution of 40 additional seats among the minority parties. This system encouraged 19 parties to participate in that year's National Assembly contests. Postelection recriminations were considerably less frequent than previously, and most observers believed that the elections were fair. Voters must be 18 years of age.

The Party System

ORIGINS OF THE PARTIES

Political parties in Lesotho began with the formation of the BCP in 1952, more than a decade before independence. Lesotho's conservatives saw the BCP programs as radical and formed their own party, the BNP, to protect their positions and beliefs as the country moved toward independence. With the exception of the period of military rule when political activity was suspended, one or the other of these two parties

controlled the government from independence until the rise to dominance of the Lesotho Congress for Democracy (LCD).

CAMPAIGNING

In the most recent elections, most party platforms were highly similar as ideological and other differences were subordinated to a focus on the national problems of the deteriorating economy, AIDS, and growing famine. In their campaigns, politicians discussed both national and local concerns but seldom offered clear-cut alternative policies. Posters focused on the party leaders, and a part of LCD's success was often linked to the personal popularity of former prime minister Ntsu Mokhehle.

Major Political Parties

LESOTHO CONGRESS FOR DEMOCRACY (LCD)

The LCD was organized in June 1997 by Ntsu Mokhehle, who was at the time the nation's prime minister and the leader of the Basotho Congress Party (BCP). Mokhehle quit the BCP, which he had founded, in reply to a challenge launched by young, self-proclaimed "progressives," who wished to remove him from the party leadership. Almost half of the BCP's members of parliament followed Mokhehle into the new party. Pakalitha Mosisili, who had been Mokhehle's deputy as both party leader and prime minister, was among those who made the switch. When age and ill health forced Mokhehle's retirement, Mosisili assumed both the government and the party offices.

The LCD supports the development of a Socialist economy and favors the limitation or abolition of the governmental role of chiefs. In recent elections it campaigned, as did the other major parties, on the promise of more jobs and a continued fight against poverty.

BASOTHO CONGRESS PARTY (BCP)

The BCP was formed in 1952 under the leadership of Ntsu Mokhehle. From the time of its founding, the party encouraged Lesotho's national independence and opposed the advancement of ties to neighboring South Africa. Party policies have also included the development of a socialist economy and have supported efforts to limit or abolish the governmental roles of the traditional chiefs.

The BCP won the 1960 elections but lost to the BNP in 1965, the last elections before independence. It was apparently winning in 1970 when Jonathan annulled the election results and arrested Mokhehle and other BCP leaders. During the years of Jonathan's rule, the BCP temporarily split between those who chose to accept participation in his government of national unity and those who followed Mokhehle into exile.

The 1997 split left the once-powerful party with a minority of its former members. In the 1998 elections the BCP came in third in the popular vote and captured no seats in the Assembly. In 2002 it received 2.6 percent of the vote and was awarded three of the Proportional Representation seats. The BCP is headed by Tseliso Makhakhe.

BASOTHO NATIONAL PARTY (BNP)

The BNP was formed in 1958 under the leadership of Leabua Jonathan, a minor chief. Originally much more conservative than its BCP rival, it supported the traditional chiefs, opposed communism, and sought good relations with South Africa. With the support of the chiefs and their followers and the Catholic Church, and with financial support from South Africa, BNP won the 1965 elections and led the country at independence. During the 1970s and early 1980s the BNP dominated Lesotho politics. During this period Jonathan became an opponent of South African apartheid, and there were clashes between the two countries. The growing problems with South Africa and the rise in power of the BNP's radical Youth League were the major reasons for the 1986 military coup that removed the party and its leader from power. Jonathan died about a year later.

In the 1993 elections the BNP, under the leadership of Evaristus Sekhonyana, received only 16 percent of the popular vote and won no seats. Its prospects were further damaged when Sekhonyana supported King Letsie's brief dismissal of the elected government in August 1994. It is widely believed that the BNP's leaders have been involved with numerous military efforts to overthrow the government.

The BNP remains the most conservative of Lesotho's major parties. In 1998 it received 24 percent of the popular vote but captured only one Assembly seat. In 2002 it again came in a distant second place, winning 22.4 percent of the popular vote and being awarded 21 of the Proportional Representation seats. The party is led by Major General Justine Metsing.

Minor Political Parties

In addition to the three major parties, 16 minor parties contested the 2002 elections. Seven of them gained at least one of the Proportional Representation seats in the Assembly, while some of the others disappeared almost immediately after the polling was completed. Of the minor parties, only one, the Marematlou Freedom Party (MFP), has ever held a directly elected Assembly seat. The MFP, a royalist party, has the support of some of the chiefs but has been unable to move Lesotho's more traditional/conservative voters from their support of the BNP. In 1992 the MFP received only 1.2 percent of the popular vote and was awarded one PR seat. The party is led by Vincent Malebo.

Other Political Forces

Within Lesotho, the 2,000-strong army has been, and seemingly remains, a powerful political actor. The army's long distaste for the governing party comes originally from its years of bloody struggle against the BCP's armed wing. In recent years the regular forces have mutinied over demands for a pay raise. The army has continually resisted the government's efforts to exert control and has killed some political leaders and held others captive. Only threats of South African intervention have prevented, pacified, or ended various army threats to, and actions against, the elected government.

During the 1960s the Roman Catholic Church was politically powerful and was supportive of the BNP. More recently, church leaders have issued calls for internal peace and for holding a national conference on peace, democracy, and stability, but, in general, they appear peripheral to the political system. Lesotho's labor unions have often compounded the nation's problems with their own strikes and economic demands.

More than anything else, Lesotho's political fate has often been largely in the hands of neighboring South Africa. The decision by South Africa to use fewer foreign miners has hurt Lesotho's already-poor economy, while South African diplomatic and military power has diffused or decided its series of political crises.

National Prospects

After years of lurching from crisis to crisis, Lesotho has recently enjoyed a measure of political stability. Unfortunately, the LCD government has been unable to alleviate the continued problems of a deteriorating economy, widespread shortages of food, and an AIDS pandemic.

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REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA

By Elizabeth L. Normandy, Ph.D.
Revised by Dora Ioveva



Liberia is located in West Africa. It lies between Sierra Leone and Ivory Coast (Côte d'Ivoire) and borders the North Atlantic Ocean. It has a land area of 38,250 square miles, slightly larger than the state of Tennessee.

Liberia's population is estimated at 3.4 million people (2005 est.), excluding the approximately 1.4 million refugees residing in the surrounding countries of Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Ghana, Sierra Leone, and Nigeria. Approximately 160,000 Liberians died between 1990 and 1997 as a result of the civil war. In addition, at least 7,000 refugees from Sierra Leone fled into Liberia as the result of a May 1997 coup in Sierra Leone.

Indigenous African ethnic groups make up 95 percent of Liberia's population. These groups include the Kpelle, Bassa, Gio, Kru, Grebo, Mano, Krahn, Gola, Gbandi, Loma, Kissi, Vai, and Bella. Americo-Liberians, descendants of the African Americans who settled the territory in the 19th century, make up 5 percent of the population. Those who practice traditional African religions are 70 percent of the population, while 20 percent of the remainder are Muslim and 10 percent are Christian.

Liberia has a republican form of government established in 1847 and patterned after the United States. From 1877 to 1980 Liberia was ruled by the True Whig Party (TWP), which was dominated by the Americo-Liberian elite. Americo-Liberian domination of Liberian politics ended in April 1980, when a coup brought a military regime, led by Samuel K. Doe, to power. Doe was elected to the post of president in 1985, returning Liberia to a civilian republican form of government. An armed insurrection in 1989 resulted in the death of Doe and brought to power a series of interim governments that held office between 1990 and 1997, as an expanding array of rebel factions carried out a bloody struggle for control of the country. In July 1997 Charles Taylor, leader of the rebel faction that began the insurrection, was elected to the presidency in the first multiparty elections since 1985. However, the civil war continued until 2003, when the United Nations finally brokered an end to the conflict. As part of the agreement, Taylor under heavy international criticism for meddling in Sierra Leone's civil war was exiled to Nigeria, and an interim government known as the National Transitional Government of Liberia was installed. Gyude Bryant was named interim president. New presidential and legislative elections were scheduled for 2005.

The System of Government

Liberia is a unitary republic. The constitution of 1984 calls for a strong presidential system with a bicameral legislature.

EXECUTIVE

Under Liberia's constitution, approved by a national referendum in 1984, executive power is vested in a president who is head of state, head of government, and commander in chief of the armed forces. The president

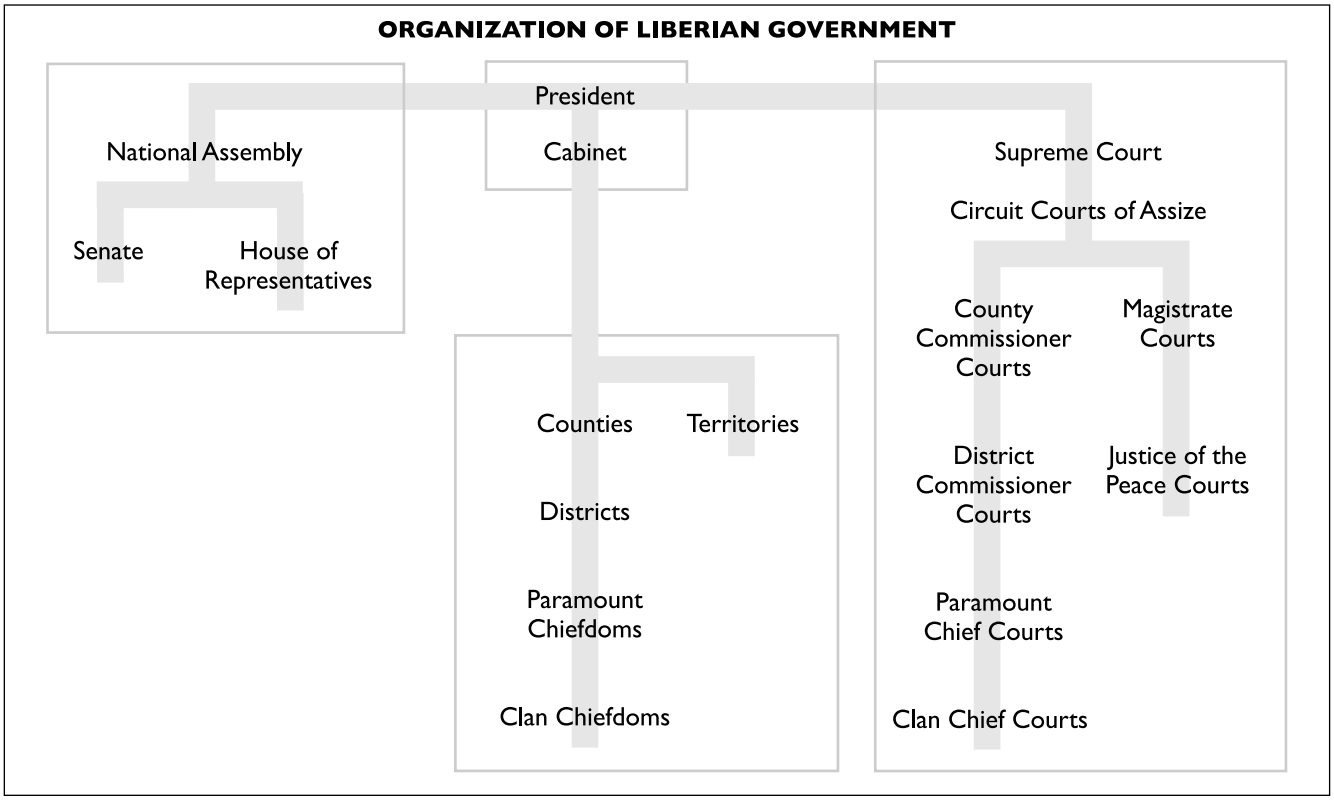
is elected through universal suffrage for a six-year term. The president appoints a 16-member cabinet.

Following the death of Samuel Doe in 1990, Amos Sawyer was inaugurated as interim president. The Interim Government of National Unity (IGNU) was backed by ECOWAS, a regional organization of West African states that had put an 8,000-member peacekeeping force known as ECOMOG into the country. The Sawyer government entered into a cease-fire with the rebel forces, a truce that lasted for two years until October 1992. A July 1993 peace accord created a five-member transitional authority, the Liberian National Transitional Government (LNTG), to rule until elections were held. The council contained representatives of the three major factions in the war and two independent members agreeable to the principal factions. Presidential aspirants were barred from membership on the interim council, and transitional officeholders were prohibited from running for president.

Amid bickering over the composition and leadership of the transitional government, David Kpormikor was named chairman of the council. An amendment to the 1993 peace accord in December 1994 provided for the replacement of the transitional government, and in September 1995 Wilton Sankawulo became the head of the five-member council until elections could be held in August 1996. The council included representatives of at least three rebel factions in the civil war, and the leaders of the major factions influenced the selection of the cabinet. Continued fighting prevented elections from being held, and, in August 1996 Ruth Perry was selected to serve as interim leader until elections in 1997. In July 1997 Charles Taylor defeated Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf and 11 other candidates to become president. Taylor's cabinet included some of his former adversaries. As part of the U.N.-brokered peace agreement in 2003, Taylor resigned the presidency and went into exile. Gyude Bryant was named interim president. Bryant appointed the cabinet, with members drawn from among the groups participating in the peace agreement. New presidential elections held in 2005 indicated that Johnson-Sirleaf won the voting. She was thus poised to become the first female president of an African country.

LEGISLATURE

Liberia's 1984 constitution provides for a bicameral legislature. The 30 members of the upper house, the Senate, are elected for a nine-year term. Members of the 64-seat House of Representatives are elected for six-year terms. There is no limit on the number of terms a legislator may serve.



There are two seats for each of Liberia's 15 counties in the Senate and one representative for every 20,000 people in the House of Representatives. The passage of laws requires the approval of both houses and the president. The president has veto power, but a presidential veto can be overridden by a two-thirds majority of both houses.

Liberia does not have a strong tradition of legislative independence. Until the election of Samuel Doe, the True Whig Party dominated the executive and the legislative branches.

In March 1994 a unicameral Transitional Legislative Assembly was established. Members of the 35-seat body were appointed by the leaders of the major factions in the civil war. In July 1997 Charles Taylor's National Patriotic Party (NPP) captured a majority of the 90 seats in the bicameral legislature. When the U.N.-brokered peace agreement was reached in 2003, the legislature was suspended, and an interim Legislative Assembly was installed. It contained 76 members drawn from among the various factions that signed the peace agreement. The interim legislature was dissolved in 2005, following legislative elections for both houses to reinstate the permanent legislature. The Congress for a Democratic Change (CDC) won 15 seats in the House of Representatives, the Liberty Party won nine, and the Unity Party and the Coalition for the Transformation of Liberia each won eight.

JUDICIARY

The constitution of Liberia provides for an independent judiciary with power vested in the People's Supreme Court and several lower courts. Magistrates' courts and circuit courts exist at the local level. The Supreme Court comprises a chief justice and four associate justices. They and the judges of the lower courts are appointed by the president and approved by the Senate. Traditionally, Liberia has maintained a dual legal system: statutory law based on Anglo-American common law for the modern sector, and customary law based on unwritten tribal practices for the indigenous sector. Efforts to unify the legal system have not been successful.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Liberia is divided into 15 counties administered by superintendents who are the direct representatives of the president. They are appointed by the president and approved by the Senate. Each county also has a county council. The capital city of each county is governed by a mayor and a city council. The counties are divided into districts administered by district commissioners. The districts are further divided into smaller units administered by paramount, clan, and town chiefs who are locally elected. Monrovia, the capital city, is administered by a city corporation that levies and collects taxes on real property within the city limits. Historically, local governments have had very little fiscal or administrative autonomy from the central government.

The Electoral System

Liberia's constitution calls for a multiparty system and an Elections Commission to conduct and supervise all elections for public office. Election is by universal suffrage exercised by citizens 18 years of age or older. Citizenship is available only to people of black ancestry and is conferred by birth or naturalization.

During the 2005 elections, which marked the end of the transitional government, voter turnout was estimated at nearly 75 percent for the first round of presidential voting and 61 percent in the second round. Losing presidential candidate George Weah claimed that the election was marred by voter fraud, but international observers including the United Nations, European Union, and Carter Center declared that the elections were for the most part free and fair.

The Party System

For more than a century, Liberia was effectively a one-party state dominated by the True Whig Party. In the years preceding the 1980 coup, the most significant opposition came from the Progressive Alliance of Liberia (PAL) and the Movement for Justice in Africa (MOJA). Headed by Gabriel Baccus Mathews, PAL was founded by Liberian students in the United States and began functioning in Liberia in 1978. In early 1980 PAL registered as a political party under the name Progressive People's Party (PPP). Formed in Liberia in 1973 as a campus-based intellectual movement, MOJA was a pressure group led by Drs. Togba Nah Tipoteh and Amos Sawyer from the faculty of the University of Liberia. It focused on labor grievances and endorsed industrial action.

The 1980 military coup resulted in the destruction of the True Whig Party. When the ban on political parties was lifted in 1984, the Americo-Liberians combined with indigenous Liberians to form the Liberian Action Party (LAP). In the 1985 elections four parties, Doe's NDPL, the LAP, the Unity Party (UP), and the Liberia Unification Party (LUP), won seats. Two other parties and their leaders were banned. These were the Liberia People's Party (LPP) headed by Amos Sawyer and the United People's Party (UPP) headed by Gabriel Baccus Mathews.

By 1996 the political party system consisted of many of the same parties that had existed in 1985 plus the newly created party of Charles Taylor, the National Patriotic Party (NPP). These parties were the National Democratic Party of Liberia (NDPL), led by Augustus Caine and formerly the party of Samuel Doe; the Liberian Action Party (LAP), led by Emmanuel Kromah and formerly supported by Americo-Liberian elements; the Unity Party (UP), led by Joseph Kofa and preparing to run Johnson-Sirleaf for president in 1997; the United Peoples Party (UPP), led by Gabriel Baccus Mathews and banned in the 1985 election; and the Liberia People's Party (LPP), led by Dusty Wolokollie and formerly headed by Amos Sawyer, interim president of Liberia from 1990 to 1993.

By 2005 all of these same parties were still in existence. They were joined by the Congress for Democratic Change (CDC), which won the most seats (15) in the 2005 House elections, and the Liberty Party, which won nine House seats.

Major Political Parties

CONGRESS FOR DEMOCRATIC CHANGE (CDC)

The CDC was led by George Weah, a former football (soccer) player who contested the 2005 presidential election. In the first round of voting he came in first, but in the second round he received fewer votes than the UP's Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf. The party won 15 seats in the 2005 House election and three seats in the Senate election.

LIBERTY PARTY (LP)

The LP's candidate in the 2005 presidential election, Charles Brumskine, came in third in the first round of voting and was thus eliminated from the second round. The party won nine House seats and three Senate seats in the 2005 legislative elections.

UNITY PARTY (UP)

The UP's Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf ran unsuccessfully for president in 1997, but in 2005 she scored a landmark victory, apparently becoming the first democratically elected women to head an African country. Educated at Harvard, Johnson-Sirleaf later became an economist for the World Bank. Her educational an professional credentials appeared to play a large role in her 2005 victory, as her opponent, the football star George Weah, lacked any such credentials. The UP won eight House seats and three Senate seats in the 2005 legislative elections.

LIBERIAN ACTION PARTY (LAP)

The LAP joined the four-party Coalition for the Transformation of Liberia (COTOL) ahead of the 2005 elections. The coalition won eight House seats and seven Senate seats in the elections.

LIBERIAN UNIFICATION PARTY (LUP)

The LUP likewise joined the COTOL alliance for the 2005 elections. The coalition won eight House seats and seven Senate seats in the elections.

UNITED PEOPLE'S PARTY (UPP)

For the 2005 legislative elections the UPP joined the LPP in the Alliance for Peace and Democracy. The coalition won five House seats and three Senate seats.

LIBERIA PEOPLE'S PARTY (LPP)

The LPP was the second member of the two-party Alliance for Peace and Democracy in the 2005 legislative elections. The coalition won five House seats and three Senate seats.

Minor Political Parties

Other parties with representation in the legislature following the 2005 elections include the NPP (four House and four Senate seats), the NDPL (one House and two Senate seats), the New Deal Movement (three House seats), and the All Liberia Coalition Party (two House seats and one Senate seat).

Other Political Forces

The United Nations, through a unit known as the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL), played a key role in helping to end the 14-year civil war in 2003. UNMIL retained a strong presence in the country even after working with the warring factions to disarm, a process that was completed in late 2004.

National Prospects

The new government of Liberia, presumably to be led by Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, faces a number of formidable challenges. It must rebuild the economic infrastructure destroyed by the civil war. It must repatriate refugees and restore water, electricity, and social services. And it must maintain peace and stability. The international community was heavily involved in the rebuilding efforts and in providing basic humanitarian assistance. In February 2004 the United States pledged $200 million in relief aid and rebuilding efforts to the country, with other nations pledging an additional $320 million.

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SOCIALIST PEOPLE'S LIBYAN ARAB JAMAHIRIYA

(Al-Jamahiriya al-Arabiya al-Libiya al-Sha'abiya al-Ishtirakiya)

By Ronald Bruce St. John, Ph.D.
Revised by Curtis R. Ryan, Ph.D.



The Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, a nation of 5.7 million people (2005 est.), is a unitary state governed by a unique organization of congresses and committees. This system of government evolved slowly after the Libyan Free Unionist Officers Movement, led by a Central Committee of 12 officers, executed a well-planned coup d'état on September 1, 1969, and overthrew the monarchy that had ruled the United Kingdom of Libya since independence in 1951.

The Central Committee soon renamed itself the Revolutionary Command Council (RCC), and, on December 11, 1969, it replaced the 1951 constitution with a Constitutional Proclamation, which described the Libyan Arab Republic as a free Arab democratic republic constituting part of the Arab nation, with Islam as the religion of the state and Arab unity as its overall objective.

The System of Government

Libya is essentially a military dictatorship under the control of Colonel Muammar al-Qaddafi. The RCC is designated the highest authority in the country and exercises both executive and legislative functions. As such, it is empowered to take whatever measures it deems necessary to protect the regime or the revolution. Such measures may take the form of proclamations, laws, orders, or resolutions. The Constitutional Proclamation specifically gives the RCC power to declare war, conclude and ratify treaties, appoint diplomatic envoys and receive diplomatic missions, proclaim martial law, and control the armed forces.

The RCC is further empowered to appoint a Council of Ministers consisting of a prime minister and ministers; the Council's function is to implement the state's general policy as defined by the RCC. The RCC may also dismiss the prime minister and ministers; the prime minister's resignation automatically results in the resignation of the entire Council of Ministers.

The 1969 Constitutional Proclamation was to remain in force until the completion of the so-called nationalist democratic revolution, when it would be superseded by a permanent constitution. This has never occurred, and since Libya's political system has experienced continuous change since the overthrow of the monarchy, the system functioning today bears little resemblance to the one detailed in the proclamation. Moreover, there is some doubt as to whether the Constitutional Proclamation will ever be replaced by a constitution. The Green Book, the economic and political manifesto of Qaddafi, describes human-made law, including constitutions, as illogical and invalid, concluding that the genuine law of any society is either tradition (custom) or religion.

EXECUTIVE

Qaddafi, initially chairman of the RCC, is the head of state. The general secretary of the General People's

Congress (GPC) is the chief executive, and the General Secretariat of the GPC is the chief executive's staff and advisory body. The General People's Committee (or General Popular Committee), comprised of a general secretary and 19 secretaries, serves as a cabinet, replacing the former Council of Ministers, which was abolished in 1977.

Qaddafi was the general secretary of the GPC from 1977 until early 1979, when he relinquished the post to concentrate on what he described as "revolutionary activities with the masses." He has retained his position as de facto commander in chief of the armed forces and adopted the new title of leader of the revolution. During Qaddafi's tenure as general secretary of the GPC, the remaining members of the RCC initially formed its General Secretariat. They also resigned their posts in 1979 to focus on revolutionary activities. Regardless of position or title, Qaddafi and the former members of the RCC control and direct the Libyan government. Members of the General Secretariat of the General People's Congress are selected by them and serve at their convenience. Members of the General Secretariat, in turn, appoint members of the General People's Committee who serve three-year terms.

The objectives of the revolution have remained constant since the overthrow of the monarchy and can best be summarized within the major goal statements of freedom, socialism, and unity. The emphasis on freedom is the result of Libya's long history of foreign domination and exploitation. In practical terms, it means complete political and economic independence from any foreign direction or control. Through socialism, more often referred to as social justice, the revolution seeks to insure equal access to law and justice, to achieve a more equitable distribution of wealth, and to eliminate class differences. With the issuance of part two of Qaddafi's Green Book in 1977, the socioeconomic revolution in Libya became increasingly radical and pervasive. Unity is sought both domestically and internationally. On the national level, the objective is to unite society in purpose and effort by a centralized political authority. Internationally, the goal is overall Arab unity, and, in pursuit of it, the government repeatedly has proposed mergers with neighboring Arab states.

LEGISLATURE

The national-level representative body is called the General People's Congress (GPC), which was created in 1976. Delegates to the GPC are usually the chairpersons of the basic people's congresses and the branch or municipal people's committees, as well as representatives from the university student unions and the national federation of unions and professional associations. The number of delegates varies from session to session but generally approximates 1,000.

Scheduled to meet annually, normally for two weeks in January or February, the GPC is the major arena in which the plans, programs, and policies of the government are discussed and ratified. Formal ratification carries with it the responsibility of implementation by



the people's committees, people's congresses, and trade unions and associations. At its first session in 1976, the General Secretariat of the GPC began submitting major government policies and plans to the GPC for review and authorization. Both the general administrative budget and the 1976–80 development budget were submitted, for example, as well as several major domestic and foreign policy items. This practice was continued thereafter. At the fifth session of the GPC (January 1–6, 1980), for example, a progress report on the 1976–80 five-year plan and a draft of the 1981–2000 national socioeconomic plan were discussed, as were a wide range of other domestic policy and foreign policy questions ranging from an amendment to the social security law to the bilateral pacts that Libya had concluded with other states in 1979. Nevertheless, there are limits to the subjects the head of state will allow on the GPC agenda. Libya's intervention in Chad, for example, was not discussed at the sixth session of the GPC (January 3–7, 1981).

With the abolition of the RCC and the Council of Ministers in 1977, both executive and legislative power was theoretically vested in the GPC. In reality, the GPC has delegated much of its major responsibility to the General Secretariat and the General People's Committee. In December 1978, for example, the GPC authorized the General People's Committee to appoint ambassadors and the secretary of foreign affairs to receive the credentials of foreign diplomats.

The fourth session of the GPC (December 1978) illustrated some of the limits of its power and authority. In the first two days of the Congress, several representatives called for an increase in salaries, although the recently published second part of the Green Book had called for their abolition. Other representatives demanded an end to the military draft after the General Secretariat had announced universal conscription for all young people. As a result of these and similar actions, the meeting was adjourned on the third day, officially out of respect for the death of the president of Algeria. Unofficially, delegate independence convinced the general secretary and the General Secretariat that they had to reassert their control over the revolution. After the adjournment, several people's committees were told to select new members before the GPC reconvened, and mobile election teams representing the government were dispatched to monitor those reelections. Similarly, when the ninth session of the GPC (February 1984) opposed three key proposals put forward by Qaddafi, he criticized the reactionary nature of the body and later revised the delegate makeup to ensure that such opposition was not repeated.

While the General Secretariat closely supervises the activities of the General People's Congress, the GPC does serve as a clearinghouse and sounding board for the views of the Libyan people as transmitted by their representatives on the congresses, committees, and functional organizations. Moreover, for the first time in the nation's history, subnational government requires popular participation in the selection of local leadership and allows popular involvement in the local policymaking process. At the same time, it provides an effective organization for the national leadership to communicate its ideas and objectives to the people. In this regard, while Qaddafi and the former members of the RCC remain the primary decision makers, the current political system has produced a level of representation and participation hitherto unknown in Libya.

JUDICIARY

From the beginning, the RCC indicated that it intended to place the nation's entire juridical system in an Islamic context. On October 28, 1971, the RCC established a Legislative Review and Amendment Committee, composed of the leading legal experts in Libya, to make existing laws conform with the basic tenets of the Islamic code of law, the sharia. Two years later, the RCC promulgated a law that merged the existing civil and sharia courts into a single juridical system.

The revised court system consists of four levels: Summary Courts, Courts of First Instance, Courts of Appeals, and the Supreme Court. The Summary Courts, existing in most villages and towns, are the primary level of the system. The Courts of First Instance serve as a court of appeal for the Summary Courts. In addition, they are the court of original jurisdiction for all matters involving more than 100 Libyan dinars. A Court of Appeals sits in each of three cities: Tripoli, Benghazi, and Sabhah. As its name suggests, it hears cases referred from a Court of First Instance. The Court of Appeals has no original jurisdiction except for cases involving felonies or high crimes. The Supreme Court sits in Tripoli and is composed of five chambers specializing in civil and commercial, criminal, administrative, constitutional, and personal matters. Each chamber consists of a five-judge panel with the majority establishing a decision. Before its formal abolition, the RCC appointed all judges; now, they are appointed by the GPC with the General Secretariat and the secretary of justice probably making the actual decision. With the exception of political cases, both judicial independence

and due process of law generally appear to have been respected since 1969.

In addition to the regular court system, certain other bodies are involved in the administration or enforcement of justice. The Supreme Court for Judicial Authorities plays an administrative role, supervising and coordinating the various courts. The prime responsibility of the Council of State is to deliver advisory legal opinions for government bodies on draft legislation or other actions or regulations they are contemplating. A People's Court has been convened periodically to try crimes against the state. Plots and conspiracies against the state have also been referred to special ad hoc military courts convened for that purpose.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

There are three levels of subnational government in Libya: the zone, the municipality or branch municipality, and the national. At the lowest level, zone residents elect a zone people's committee (or popular committee) to administer the affairs of the zone. The zone does not include a congress or legislative body.

The next echelon of government is the municipality. In the case of Libya's larger urban areas, municipalities are divided into branch municipalities; Tripoli, for instance, is divided into five branches. There are approximately 190 municipalities or branch municipalities, although the total number fluctuates. All zones are components of either a municipality or a branch municipality. Each municipality or branch municipality elects a legislative assembly known as the basic people's congress (BPC). Meeting quarterly, the BPC makes recommendations or decisions on administrative matters within its jurisdiction, such as roads, sewage, water, and public clinics. The BPC also debates the agenda of the GPC in advance of its annual meeting. The BPC selects its own chairman as well as a five-member people's committee, which has day-to-day administrative responsibility. All voting in the BPC is public; it is either a show of hands or a division into yes-or-no camps.

In those instances where a municipality is divided into two or more branches, a municipal People's Leadership Committee is established to coordinate the activities of the branch people's committees. The municipal people's leadership committee is made up of the chairperson and deputy chair of the branch people's committees. They select one of their number to be chair, who is, effectively, the mayor of the municipality. In those municipalities not large enough to be divided into branches, the chair of the municipal people's committee serves as mayor of the municipality. In 1978 the General People's Committee at the national level was decentralized to include a similar structure at the municipal level. Municipal general people's committees are elected by the BPC for a term of three years. They are responsible for the coordination of activities between the General People's Committee and the BPC.

In addition to the zone and municipal committees and congresses, Libyan workers are organized into unions or professional associations. Each union or professional association elects its own people's committee (also known as popular committee) to administer its affairs. In turn, these People's Committees participate in the federation of unions at the national level. The national federation of unions and professional associations sends representatives to the GPC to address issues of special relevance to the unions, but these representatives are not allowed to vote on major policy issues. While the unions and professional associations bring necessary expertise to selected issues, Qaddafi has insisted that their views as citizens be represented through the people's committees and the BPCs.

Libyan universities are managed to a large degree by student unions. Under this system, each college or faculty in Libya's three universities (Tripoli, Benghazi, and Beida) elects a chairperson and a committee (also known as cabinet) to administer the college. Representatives of these committees form the university student union, which, along with the president of the university, is responsible for running the university. The president of the university serves at the pleasure of the members of the student union. Like unions and professional associations, university student unions attend the GPC in a nonvoting capacity.

A completely new echelon of subnational government, the revolutionary committee, was also established in 1979. Revolutionary committees now exist in virtually all government departments and agencies as well as within the BPCs, the people's committees of the union and professional associations, the university student unions, and the armed forces.

The revolutionary-committee system was established to raise the political consciousness of the people, especially in those areas that seemed to be influenced by traditional or petit bourgeois ideas or individuals. It was also expected to counter the growing tendency of BPCs to advocate parochial interests and concerns instead of taking a broader view of the nation's needs. Examples of this latter tendency were the excessive budgetary demands made by BPCs at the Fourth General People's Congress and the reluctance of people's committees west of Tripoli to support the reallocation of coastal farming land.

Revolutionary committees report directly to Qaddafi. He convenes the revolutionary committees both individually and en masse. Since all members are self-proclaimed zealots, the revolutionary committees have become the true cadres of the revolution. In the words of Qaddafi, "the People's Committees exercise administrative responsibilities while the Revolutionary Committees exercise revolutionary control."

The Electoral System

The Declaration of the Establishment of the People's Authority declares that direct popular authority is the basis for the political system in the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya. The people exercise their authority through the people's committees, people's congresses, unions and professional associations, and the General People's Congress. Elections are direct, and all voting consists of a show of hands or a division into yes-or-no camps. Suffrage and committee/congress membership are open to all Libyan citizens 18 years of age or older in good legal and political standing.

In theory, the residents of each zone elect their own people's committee. Similarly, the residents of each branch municipality or municipality elect their own basic people's congress. The members of a BPC then elect a chairman and a five-member branch or municipal people's committee. The General People's Congress is made up of the chairmen of the BPC, the branch and municipal people's committees, and representatives of the people's committees for unions, professional associations, and student unions.

In reality, the revolutionary committees severely limit the democratic process by closely supervising committee and congress elections at the branch and municipal levels of government. Revolutionary committees scrutinize the professional and revolutionary credentials of all candidates for the basic people's congresses, professional people's committees, and the municipal General People's Committees; only approved candidates actually stand for election.

The Party System

The RCC has continued the monarchy's ban on the organization and operation of political parties. The only exception to this was the 1971 formation of the Arab Socialist Union (ASU) modeled after the Egyptian ASU under Nasser. But even by the mid-1970s, the ASU disappeared from the Libyan political scene. In effect, the December 1969 Decision on the Protection of the Revolution, the penal code, and law number 71 of 1972 render political party activity of any sort a crime and constitute a strict legal injunction against unauthorized political activity.

Like many Islamic thinkers, Qaddafi rejects the political party system. This is not because it is fundamentally incompatible with the Koran or the sharia but rather because he is unfavorably impressed with party organization and competition. In the Green Book, he describes the political party as the modern dictatorial instrument of governing and the party system as an overt form of dictatorship.

Qaddafi's condemnation of the political party system is multifaceted. He argues that political parties, because they are generally made up of people of similar beliefs, represent and promote the interests of only a segment of society. Such segments form parties to attain their ends and impose their doctrines on society as a whole. Moreover, in such a system, competition between parties frequently escalates, often resulting in the dominant party or parties ignoring the rights and interests of minority-party members. In a final criticism, Qaddafi argues that political parties, in their struggle to gain power, often destroy the accomplishments of their predecessors, even if those accomplishments were for the general good. His solution to these dilemmas is the system of congresses and committees that he has established.

GENERAL PEOPLE'S CONGRESS SYSTEM

The development of Libya's current political system has been an evolutionary process that very likely is still incomplete. To understand this system and how it functions, it is necessary to trace its progress from the traditional, tribal-based monarchy, which the RCC overthrew in 1969, to the formal Declaration of the Establishment of the People's Authority in 1977.

The members of the Revolutionary Command Council shared similar backgrounds, motivations, and worldviews. Most were from lower-middle-class families and minor tribes and attended the Libyan military academy at a time when a military career offered opportunities for higher education and upward socioeconomic mobility. The language of the RCC was the language of Arab nationalism guided by the precepts of the Koran and sharia, strengthened by a conviction that only the revolutionary government understood and spoke for the masses.

The September 1, 1969, coup d'état was completed without the participation of any organized civilian groups, and initially the RCC maintained the military character of the revolution. In the early days, it exercised both executive and legislative functions, enshrining its right to do so in the December 1969 Constitutional Proclamation. Later, the RCC appointed civilians to the Council of Ministers to help operate the government, but even then it reserved supreme authority in all fields for itself. It sat at the top of the pyramid, issuing proclamations, laws, and resolutions; insuring support of the armed forces; overseeing the activities of the government; and creating new institutions to promote the objectives of the revolution.

The RCC's chairman, Qaddafi, quickly became the dominant figure in the revolutionary government. While never given formal authority over his RCC colleagues, Qaddafi was able to impose his will through a combination of personality and argument. In theory, the RCC functioned as a collegial body with the members discussing issues and policies until enough of a consensus evolved to establish a unified position. In practice, as the revolution unfolded, Qaddafi increasingly exercised the final choice in major decisions and Libyans increasingly looked to his public statements to guide their own behavior. In late 1975 he issued part one of the Green Book, titled "The Solution to the Problem of Democracy." Part two followed in the fall of 1977 and part three in early 1979.

The executive-legislative system comprised of the RCC and the Council of Ministers operated into 1977; however, on September 1, 1976, the seventh anniversary of the revolution, Qaddafi introduced a plan to reorganize the government. The key feature of his proposal was the creation of a new, national-level representative body called the General People's Congress (GPC) to replace the RCC as the supreme instrument of government. The details of the plan were included in the Declaration of the Establishment of the People's Authority issued on March 2, 1977, which fundamentally revised the governmental organization described in the 1969 Constitutional Proclamation. The March 1977 declaration also changed the name of the country to the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya. *Jamahiriya* was a newly coined Arabic word with no official definition but unofficially has been translated as "people's power" or "state of the masses."

Qaddafi was designated general secretary of the GPC, and the remaining members of the now-defunct RCC made up the General Secretariat. A General People's Committee was also named to replace the Council of Ministers, whose 26 members were termed secretaries instead of ministers.

On June 11, 1971, Colonel Qaddafi announced the formation of the Arab Socialist Union (ASU), an official mass-mobilization organization patterned after the Egyptian counterpart of the same name. The ASU system was envisioned as an organization from local to national level that would provide the masses with an opportunity to participate in the establishment and execution of local policies; it also could function as a pervasive network of organizations throughout Libyan society, capable both of monitoring citizens at all levels and of becoming a source of support for revolutionary policies.

The ASU was organized at the national, governorate, and basic (local) levels. Both the basic and *muhafaza* units consisted of two main organizations: a congress (or conference) representing the general membership and a committee for leadership. Membership was based both on geography (places of residence) and function (occupation or workplace). Application for membership was made either where the individual lived (a *mudiriya* or *mahalat*) or at the workplace; however, the individual could not join the ASU at both levels. The basic committee consisted of 10 people elected by and from the basic congress to serve as its executive body. The governorate congress consisted of two or more representatives elected from each basic unit, with the actual number elected depending on the size of the basic unit's membership. The governorate committee consisted of 20 people elected by and from the congress members.

Membership in the ASU was open to any Libyan citizen of the working people who was 18 or more years of age, in good legal standing and sound mental health, and not a member of the royal family or associated with the previous monarchical government or specifically barred by the RCC. The charter of the ASU specified that 50 percent of all ASU members must be workers and farmers.

The ASU structure at the national level was the National General Congress (or Conference), a forerunner of the General People's Congress. The Congress was made up of 10, 14, or 20 representatives from each governorate, as well as members of the RCC, the Council of Ministers, and delegates from the army, police, youth and women's organizations, professional associations, and trade unions. The term of the National General Congress, scheduled to meet every two years, was six years. The ASU was firmly controlled by the RCC with Qaddafi serving as president and the other

members of the RCC designated the Supreme Leading Authority of the Arab Socialist Union.

By 1972 the ASU was dismantled, since the RCC's rigid direction and control stifled local initiative and suffocated local leadership. The former district and subdistrict divisions were abolished, thus reducing subnational administration to the governorate and municipality. The principal organ of local government at both levels became the council, which had both executive and legislative powers. At the governorate level, executive power was exercised by the governor; at the municipal level, by the mayor. Both governors and mayors were appointed by the RCC.

On April 15, 1973, Qaddafi proclaimed a popular revolution and called for the Libyan people to elect people's committees. Like the ASU, the people's committee structure was given both a geographical and a functional basis. Geographically, committees were formed at the zone, municipal, and governorate levels. At the zone level, direct popular elections were used to fill the seats on the people's committee. Later in 1973 the RCC promulgated Law No. 78 to clarify the administrative responsibilities of the people's committees. The law transferred the functions and authority of the governorate and municipal councils established in 1972 to the people's committees at the same levels. The chairs of the governorate people's committees, in effect, became the governors and the chairs of the municipal people's committees became the mayors. The RCC also authorized the election of people's committees in public corporations, institutions, companies, and universities as well as in other sectors, such as hospitals, convalescent homes, and government printing plants.

The creation of the people's committee system was a significant stage in Libya's political evolution. For the first time in Libya's history, the subnational political system actively encouraged popular participation in the selection of local leadership and allowed substantial local involvement in the local policymaking process. With its formation, the RCC increased the political involvement and experience of the Libyan people and focused their attention on the issues of most importance to the local community.

Still not satisfied with the level of popular involvement and participation, Qaddafi at the 1974 National Congress called for a further refinement of the subnational administrative machinery. The Congress responded by stressing the primacy of the people's committees in administrative affairs and by recommending the elimination of the governorates. In February 1975 the RCC issued a law abolishing the governorates and reestablishing a Ministry of Municipalities. Within five years, another RCC law formally established the municipality as the single geographical and administrative subdivision in Libya.

Major Political Parties

There are no political parties in Libya.

Minor Political Parties

There are no political parties in Libya.

Other Political Forces

THE MILITARY

The September 1969 coup d'état was totally military in conception, planning, and execution. It was accomplished without the participation or even knowledge of organized civilian groups. In the early years the RCC insisted on maintaining the military direction of the revolution. Under attack from all facets of the former elite structure, the RCC worked to create a reliable coercive arm capable of sustaining the revolution.

To a certain degree, the military has become the most representative institution in the country; it now draws its membership from all strata of society. Recognizing this fact, Qaddafi has integrated the armed forces and sought to instill in them a spirit of unity, discipline, and professionalism. Within a year of the coup, the military establishment tripled in size, largely due to the merger of regional and specialized security forces; it continued to grow in quantity and quality throughout the 1970s. In May 1978 the government issued a conscription law making military service compulsory; in January 1979 it was announced that women would be conscripted along with men. Expenditures for equipment also increased dramatically throughout the decade, and Libya's armed forces entered the 1980s with the highest ratio of military equipment to manpower in the developing world. As of 1999, the latest figures available, Libya spent nearly 4 percent of its gross domestic product on military-related items.

Military opposition has grown as Qaddafi has increasingly advocated a people's militia to offset the power of a professional military organization. His insistence on compulsory military service for women, a measure opposed by the GPC in 1984, was especially

unpopular in the military. Most observers agree that any significant challenge to the revolution will probably originate within the armed forces, particularly the army, as the military is the only group in the country with the required power and organization.

Qaddafi's strongest bases of support are the military and also the revolutionary youth committees designed to socialize youth into the Green Book principles and to guard these "revolutionary" principles zealously. But one of the paradoxes of Libyan politics is that just as the armed forces remain the strongest source of regime support, they are also the most likely source of any successful opposition. There have, indeed, been numerous coup attempts since the original 1969 coup d'état itself. In 1975 groups of army officers rebelled against Qaddafi but were repressed. In 1984 army units linked to opposition Libyan exiles attacked Qaddafi's own military stronghold but were beaten back in a bloody fight. And in 1993 units revolted in several locations throughout the country, but they too were ultimately defeated by loyalist military forces.

PETIT BOURGEOISIE

After 1977 the regime followed an increasingly radical socioeconomic policy that included housing redistribution and currency exchange, leading to the state takeover of all import, export, and distribution functions by the end of 1981. The resultant widespread redistribution of wealth and power directly affected the economic well-being of different sectors of the population, activating dormant political opposition. Particularly affected were the members of the petit bourgeoisie, which had prospered after 1969 as the revolutionary government's emphasis on the service and housing sectors created lucrative opportunities in trade, real estate, and small consumer manufacture.

Opposition is not limited to a single socioeconomic group; it also includes farmers, the educated elite, and even middle-level and senior-level government officials. Outside the country, opposition exists among student groups and self-imposed exiles, with a number of organized opposition groups operating in Western Europe and the Middle East. The largest and most active of these groups is the National Front for the Salvation of Libya (NFSL), founded in Khartoum in 1981 and since then operating out of Egypt and the United States. The attempted military coup of 1984 was instigated by military officers sympathetic to the NFSL.

However, the opposition is badly fragmented and must deal with a considerable amount of support for the regime, especially among the younger, less well-to-do elements of society. This support has been generated by Qaddafi's charismatic leadership and the regime's distributive economic policies. Qaddafi has taken extraordinary and often violent measures to stifle opposition at home and abroad and to limit any collaboration between domestic and foreign opponents. The regime has in particular taken aim at Libya's growing Islamist movement. The regime began to reemphasize the role of the sharia in Libyan political life in the 1990s while also cracking down on those suspected of having Islamist sympathies. In this regard, the Qaddafi regime may have been deeply influenced by the unrest and violence between government and Islamists in neighboring Algeria.

National Prospects

After more than 30 years in power, Qaddafi is the longest-serving ruler in the Middle East. While Libya's political system has seen little change under Qaddafi's rule, the same cannot be said for foreign relations. After decades of overt and mutual hostility, Qaddafi's regime abruptly changed directions in its foreign policy beginning in the late 1990s. The shift in Libyan policy became clear in 1999 when the Qaddafi regime agreed to extradite to the United Kingdom two former Libyan intelligence agents. The agents then stood trial for the 1988 bombing of Pan Am Flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland, which killed 270 people. Following the extradition of the agents, which had been a longstanding demand of the British government, Britain then restored diplomatic relations with Libya.

The Qaddafi regime had been subjected to severe economic sanctions by the United States, the European Union, and the United Nations, which together served to cripple Libya's economic development and in particular its oil industry. Due in large part to these external constraints, and the internal domestic political pressures that they generated, the regime chose to dramatically shift its foreign policy in hopes of ending the sanctions and ensuring its own survival. Qaddafi had long used the wealth generated by the national oil industry to tacitly and sometimes quite explicitly buy off key sectors in Libyan society. The longer the sanctions cut into Libyan economic development, and, more importantly, into government revenue, the more problematic this domestic cooptation process became. Ultimately, the regime was forced to change its external strategies in order to end its pariah status.

In 2003 this process continued as the Libyan government agreed to a deal with the United States under

which Libya would accept responsibility for the 1988 bombing over Lockerbie, thereby removing the last obstacle to a financial compensation plan for the families of the victims. The U.S. government then removed most of its economic sanctions on Libya in exchange for Libya's cooperation in disclosing and destroying its programs for weapons of mass destruction (WMD). The European Union then quickly followed suit, as the EU also lifted its 18-year embargo against Libya.

Yet just as Libya's international standing appeared to be improving dramatically, some suggested that Qaddafi's regime may have been involved in a foiled attempt to assassinate Crown Prince Abdullah of Saudi Arabia. Still, in the absence of conclusive evidence regarding either Libyan guilt or innocence, the normalization process continued between Libya, the United States, and the European Union. The question remained, however, whether this amounted to the beginning of the end for the Qaddafi regime, or whether it had indeed secured a new lease on life, by shifting its external relations in order to avoid domestic political reform.

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PRINCIPALITY OF LIECHTENSTEIN

(Fürstentum Liechtenstein)

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The Principality of Liechtenstein, located between Switzerland and Austria, is a 160-square-kilometer sovereign state with a population of 33,717 (2005 est.). The Principality of Liechtenstein is the result of the unification in 1719 of the earldom of Vaduz and the domain of Schellenberg by Prince Johann Adam Andreas von Liechtenstein. However, the territory is historically known to have been inhabited since the 3rd millennium BCE. In the period from 1815 to 1866 the principality was part of the German Confederation. In 1852 Liechtenstein concluded a customs union with Austro-Hungary that lasted until 1919, when the dualist empire collapsed. In 1924 the Principality of Liechtenstein joined a customs union with Switzerland and adopted the Swiss currency, a union that continues to the present day. Over the years, Liechtenstein has become a member of the Council of Europe (1978), United Nations (1990), European Free Trade Association (1991), European Economic Area (1995), and the World Trade Organization (1995).

The System of Government

Liechtenstein is a hereditary constitutional monarchy ruled by the princes of the House of Liechtenstein, which is one of Europe's oldest noble families (the first mention dates from 1136) and has over 100 members, some of whom still live in Liechtenstein. The prince, Hans-Adam II, born in 1945, assumed executive authority in 1984 and succeeded his father, Prince Franz Josef, to the throne upon his death in November 1989. On August 15, 2004, Prince Hans-Adam II delegated day-to-day running of the country to his eldest son, Prince Alois.

EXECUTIVE

The powers of the prince are stated in the Constitution of 1921 that was finally modified in 2003 after discussions about reform that had been taking place since 1992. According to the Constitution of 2003, the prince is the head of the state and the representative of the state abroad, but both the prince and the people govern the state. The prince has the power to convene and dismiss parliament or to prorogue or discontinue it for three months and to make government appointments upon parliamentary recommendation. Under the new constitution, the government loses its mandate if it loses the confidence of those to whom it is responsible, that is, the sovereign and parliament. The same rule applies for any member of the government if s/he loses the confidence of the prince and parliament. In this case, a joint decision of dismissal of both the prince and parliament is required.

These new constitutional provisions raised concern about the increasing power of the prince over the government. However, the prince, who also has the right of veto over legislation, usually works with the government, particularly with the head of government, until they reach an agreement. The reigning prince also has

the power to nominate the magistrates, to pass emergency decrees, and to release prisoners. The Constitution of 2003 maintains the immunity of the prince's person but makes the prince subject to a vote of no confidence from the people who, from now on, also have the right to vote for abolition of the monarchy.

LEGISLATURE

The sovereign executes legislative power in conjunction with the unicameral legislature, the Landtag. The Constitution of 1921 provided for a 15-member parliament, but following a 1988 amendment membership was increased to 25 members who serve a four-year term. The members of parliament are elected from among the citizens according to a proportional representation system. The president of parliament is the highest representative of the people. The official opening of parliament is made either by the prince himself or by a person delegated by him. Parliament makes the laws and the state treaties; it has sovereign decision rights in the field of finance, and it controls the government and the administration of the country. According to the Constitution of 2003 the right to initiate legislation belongs to the prince, but parliament and the communes have an equal right to initiate legislation through the mechanisms of popular initiative and direct democracy. The government can also initiate laws but only after discussing its initiatives with the prince.

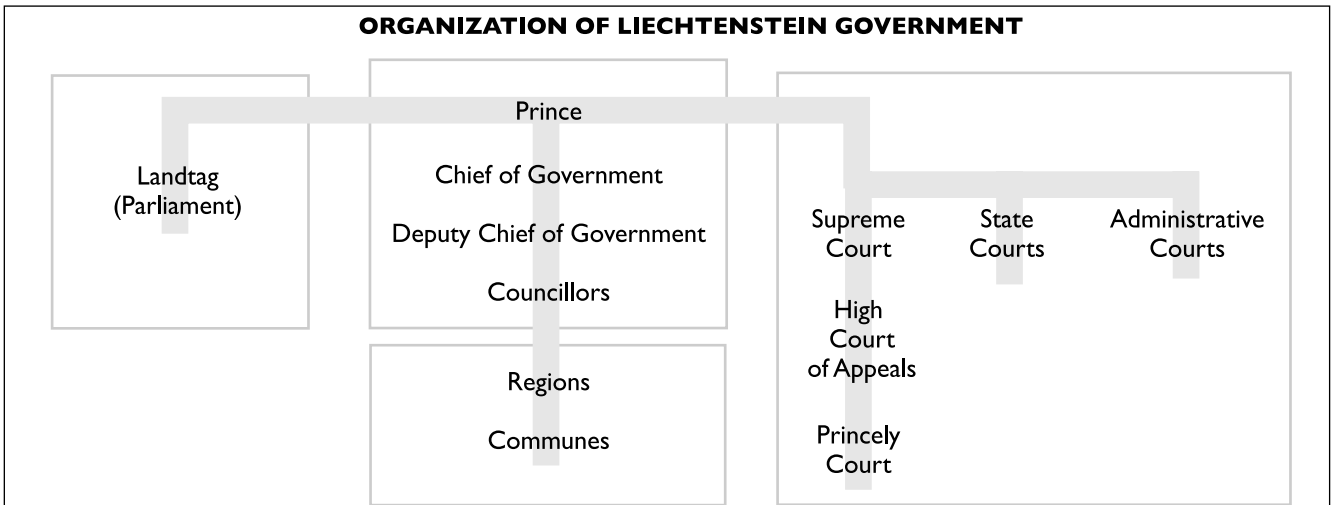
JUDICIARY

Liechtenstein has a modern judiciary system. A peculiarity of the judicial system of Liechtenstein consists in the fact that it comprises both Austrian and Swiss citizens. The Constitution of 2003 stipulates that jurisdiction is exercised in the first instance by the Princely Court (Fürstliche Landgericht) in Vaduz, where the judges work full-time and are usually Austrian and Swiss citizens in order to ensure impartiality. They are appointed until their retirement age, either by a permanent contract or a temporary but renewable one. The second instance is the High Court of Appeals (Fürstliche Obergericht) in Vaduz that has, under the new constitution, three Senates, instead of two, in order to better deal with the increased work provided by the financial sector. The president of the Court of Appeals is a Swiss citizen, while his deputy is Austrian. The third instance is the Supreme Court (Fürstlichen Obersten Gerichtshof) formed by judges who work part-time and whose president is an Austrian citizen, aided by an assistant who is a Swiss national. Both the High Court of Appeal and the Supreme Court are collegial judicial bodies.

The judicial system of Liechtenstein also comprises two other courts: the Administrative Court, which plays an important role in public life by judging all the decisions of the government, and the State Court, which makes sure that the rights of citizens guaranteed by the constitution are respected and that the decisions of parliament are in accordance with the constitution. The State Court is a disciplinary body for government members and can play the role of an electoral tribunal.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The Principality of Liechtenstein consists of two regions (Oberland and Unterland) and of 11 communes with independent administrative bodies: Vaduz, Balzers, Eschen, Gamprin, Mauren, Planken, Ruggell, Schaan,



Schellenberg, Triesenberg, and Triesen. Vaduz, the capital of the principality, is situated in the region of Oberland; it is the residence of the reigning prince and the headquarters of both the government and parliament. The communes of Triesenberg and Planken were founded approximately 700 years ago by emigrants coming from the Swiss Valley; with a population of almost 400 inhabitants, the commune of Planken is the smallest commune of all. The autonomy of the communes is guaranteed by the constitution. The voters of each commune elect the council of the commune, which is run by a mayor. The citizens (one-sixth of the electorate of a commune) may propose or contest the decision of the council by a referendum. The mayors are elected with absolute majority vote to serve a four-year mandate; they can work either part-time or full-time. The councilors' election is subject to a proportional representation vote. Law forbids the relatives of those who are members of the council to run for the position of mayor of the commune.

The communes are responsible for administering local affairs and imposing additional taxes. The communes are also the beneficiaries of state financial endowments used to facilitate the accomplishment of particular tasks. To exercise full citizenship rights, all citizens of Liechtenstein must also be citizens of a commune.

The Electoral System

Suffrage is universal for all citizens of Liechtenstein aged 18 and over. Parliament has 25 members elected by proportional representation in two constituencies. Voters may also directly participate in the legislative process through the use of the initiative and referendum.

In the 2005 elections the Progressive Citizens' Party (Fortschrittliche Bürgerpartei, FBP) won the elections with 48.7 and 12 seats in the Landtag; the Fatherland Union (Vaterländische Union, VU) got 38.2 percent of the vote and 10 seats; the Free List (Freie List, FL) got 13 percent and three seats. Otmar Hasler of the FBP, who had been prime minister since 2001, formed a new coalition government following the 2005 elections.

The Party System

The political spectrum of the Principality of Liechtenstein is formed by two main political parties, the Fatherland Union (VU) and the Progressive Citizens' Party (FBP); three small parties, the Free List (FL), the Christian Social Party (CSP), and the Liechtenstein Non-Party List (ULL); and pressure groups. Starting in 1984 all political parties that get at least 3 percent of the votes of the electorate receive yearly financial support from the state to the amount of 180,000 Swiss francs. Political parties are also allowed to receive financial support from donations and membership fees, which actually constitute their main source of revenues.

Major Political Parties

PROGRESSIVE CITIZENS' PARTY

(Fortschrittliche Bürgerpartei; FBP)

The Progressive Citizens' Party (FBP) was created in 1918 by the supporters of the existing political and social order, mainly from the communes that had economic relations with Austria. It also has at its origins a newspaper, the *Liechtensteiner Volksblatt*, that was first published in 1878 under clerical auspices. The main political goals of the FBP were opposite to those of the VU, whose aims were perceived by the FBP as a threat to the monarchy and to the independence of the country itself. Although these two political parties are rival parties labeling each other "Reds" (VU) and "Blacks" (FBP), the difference between the two is not fundamental in ideology. Both are Catholic and conservative-based parties, which make both parties members of the same party at the European Union level, the Christian Democrat and Conservative European Democratic Union (EDU).

FATHERLAND UNION

(Vaterländische Union; VU)

The Fatherland Union (VU) was founded by Wilhelm Beck, a lawyer from Triesenberg educated in Switzerland and influenced by the Swiss in both democracy and political conservatism. He founded a newspaper, the "Upper Rhine News" (*Oberrheinische Nachrichten*) espousing the institutional and economic progress of Liechtenstein. In 1918, he founded the Christian-Social People's Party (Christlich-Soziale Volkspartei) whose political aims were to occupy official posts with native Liechtenstein citizens and to have citizens elect the parliament of Liechtenstein. The main supporters of the VU were the southern communes that had different ties with Switzerland and the citizens of Liechtenstein who were working in Switzerland.

Minor Political Parties

FREE LIST

(Freie Liste; FL)

Free List (FL), called also "the Whites," originated in the Art Museum ("Kunsthaus") initiative and in the campaign for women suffrage. It was constituted as an alternative to the FBP and the VU, and it has participated in elections since 1986. It usually gets either one or two seats, but in the 2005 elections the FL obtained three seats.

CHRISTIAN SOCIAL PARTY

(Christlich-Soziale Partei; CSP)

The Christian Social Party (CSP) was founded in the 1970s as an alternative to the main political parties, the FBP and the VU, but it never succeeded in getting any parliamentary seat, neither when the threshold was 18 percent nor when it was 8 percent, mainly because the CSP did not have a distinct political platform.

LIECHTENSTEIN NON-PARTY LIST

(Liechtenstein Überparteiliche Liste; ULL)

Liechtenstein Non-Party List (ULL) competed in national elections for the first time in 1989. It has many points in common with the FL, from origins in the Art Museum initiative to political views, but they still consider each other political rivals.

Other Political Forces

The process of decision making in Liechtenstein is shaped by a large number of organized civic associations, given the size of the country, that are consulted on a wide range of issues regarding the national well-being. These organizations focus on different areas of lobbying and have a more or less long tradition, such as the Liechtenstein Loyal Union (1939), the Liechtenstein Forum (1994), the Democracy Secretariat (1991), the Dual Liechtenstein Citizens' Movement (2002), and the Constitution Peace Initiative (2002).

National Prospects

Liechtenstein is the fourth smallest country in Europe but has developed a highly industrialized, free-enterprise economy with a financial service sector and living standards on a par with its large European neighbors. The nation's GDP derives to a large extent from the revenues of its citizens working abroad. Although the principality's primary economic partners are its neighbors in Western Europe, Liechtenstein also has significant economic relations with the North American countries.

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REPUBLIK OF LITHUANIA

(Lietuvos Respublika)

By Jeffrey K. Hass, Ph.D.



The System of Government

Formally Lithuania is a republic. The national government is composed of three branches—executive, legislative, and judiciary. Lithuania has a stronger presidency than the other Baltic countries and is referred to as a "presidential democracy" that has come to resemble the French system, where the president presides over policymaking and the parliament (Seimas) is weakened by divisions between several parties and factions; however, this strength may be illusory for institutional reasons.

EXECUTIVE

Lithuania did not initially have a president after independence from the Soviet Union; instead, the country had a prime minister and a speaker of parliament. Before 1993 the prime minister ran the government—essentially heading the bureaucracy and implementing policy—and was joined by the speaker of parliament (Vytautis Landsbergis in 1991–93) as head of state. However, Landsbergis felt himself to be a captive of parliament, which was particularly troublesome when the majority Sajudis coalition began to fragment. To free the figurative head of state from parliament, Landsbergis campaigned for a strong presidency that would head the executive branch, effectively taking the place of the prime minister. A presidential position was created in the 1992 constitution, passed by a national referendum.

The president's powers are, however, weak. As in other Eastern European countries, the president is a figurehead, representing Lithuania in the international arena. Along with this responsibility are the president's powers to appoint and dismiss diplomatic personnel. However, the president is not as weak as in Estonia or Latvia, and presidential powers do extend somewhat beyond diplomacy. When a new government must be created, the president selects the prime minister for approval in the Seimas. The president has the use of a weak veto to send legislation back either to the Seimas for reconsideration or to the Constitutional Court to check the constitutionality of laws; only with an absolute majority can parliament override the veto. Further, the president has the power to dissolve the Seimas in two situations: when the Seimas refuses to approve the governmental budget within a 60-day period, and when parliament passes a vote of no confidence in the prime minister and his government. Such power of threat over parliament is a double-edged sword, however, for parliament also holds the right to call early presidential elections, and a parliament following in the footsteps of one dissolved by the president may decide to call early elections as punishment.

Formally the president is picked by popular election, except in 1993, when the Seimas chose the president. (This is the opposite of Estonia.) A president may serve only two terms in office. To be elected, a candidate must win more than 50 percent of votes cast, and

50 percent of registered voters must participate in the election. If fewer than 50 percent of voters cast ballots, then the candidate with the most votes (plurality) wins, unless the number of votes received is less than one-third of votes cast. If no candidate wins a majority (or more than one-third for a weak voter turnout), the two candidates who garnered the most votes move on to a second round held within two weeks, where the winner needs to receive only a plurality.

While the president is an important figure, he is also not, strictly speaking, the head of the executive. While he performs executive duties, he is almost above politics. The head of the executive branch (meaning the head of the state bureaucracy of police, ministries, and representatives of the federal government) is the prime minister, who is formally the head of the government. The prime minister is assisted in policy and administration by his deputy ministers and heads of ministries, who together make up the Council of Ministers.

LEGISLATURE

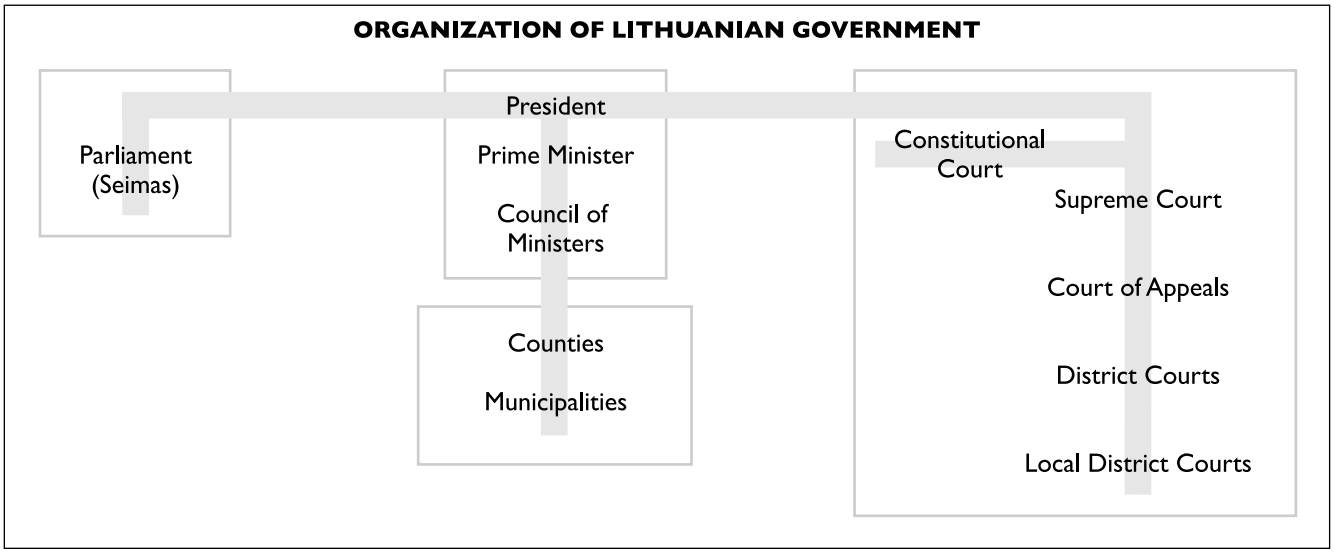
The legislative branch is headed by parliament (Seimas), a unicameral body that holds the majority of political power. As in the other two Baltic countries, parliament is the most important governmental body. Parliament holds the most power of all three branches of government, it has the final say on legislative matters, and it both wields greater responsibilities than the executive and holds the power of accountability over the executive to a much greater degree than in most Eastern European countries.

The Seimas is made up of 141 seats, which come up for election every four years. Of these seats, 70 are reserved for party lists and 71 for single-member voting. That is, 71 deputies are chosen in single-mandate elections (where individuals campaign against each other and are chosen by local voters), and 70 are chosen on the basis of votes cast for political parties. For the single-mandate positions, a candidate must win more than 50 percent of votes cast; otherwise, a runoff between the top two is held.

For the party lists, a party must receive 5 percent or more of the total votes cast (except for the 1992 elections, when the barrier was 4 percent); the barrier is 7 percent for coalitions of parties running together. Those parties or coalitions that do not overcome this barrier do not receive any of the 70 party-specified places; a party or coalition that *does* overcome the barrier receives a proportion of seats equal to the proportion of votes it received out of votes cast for parties that overcame the barrier. (This means that if some parties do not overcome the barrier, a successful party's seats will be a percentage of 70 greater than its percentage of total votes received; consequently, a vote cast for a party that does not overcome the barrier is a wasted vote.) Finally, parties representing ethnic minorities do not need to overcome the 5 percent barrier.

JUDICIARY

Lithuania's judiciary follows the civil law tradition of continental Europe; precedent does not play an important role in judicial review or in defining laws and policies. Instead, court decisions are made for individual cases of conflict or contestation. The three levels of courts, which are local, district, and the Court of Appeals, are the stages through which conflict between



parties or prosecution of criminals moves. Local courts are the first stage, and appeals move up the judicial ladder. Above the Court of Appeals is the Supreme Court, whose decisions either on criminal cases or on arbitration between conflicting parties is the final judgment.

In general, only the Constitutional Court has the power to review legislation. Expressly created for this purpose and separate from the other courts, the Constitutional Court is based on the American model of the Supreme Court. In Lithuania, the Constitutional Court acts as a watchdog for rights and freedoms from a vantage point beyond the everyday political process. Other courts neither review nor interpret legislation. Courts act as arbitrators in cases of legal conflict, applying the law to individual cases (there is no precedent, as in Anglo-American common law), and mete out justice in the case of criminal trials.

Three of the nine members of the Constitutional Court and all members of the Supreme Court are nominated by the president and must be confirmed by the Seimas. According to the constitution, members of the Constitutional Court serve for a nine-year period, and every three years three judges must come up for reappointment.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Lithuania consists of 10 counties and 60 municipalities; the latter have directly elected councils. These councils sit for a term of two years and upon convocation select an executive board, which acts as the head of the local-level executive—responsible for implementation of local policies and of national laws and policies handed down by the Seimas. Recently, local authorities have battled with the central authorities for more autonomy in decision making. Reminiscent of the Soviet era, the central government in Vilnius had increased its presence in localities, even with the prime minister appointing governors. Also, local officials have been unhappy with the Lithuanian tax system (which gives collection power to the central government) and with the dearth of funding coming the locals' way from Vilnius; because of the way taxes are collected, the lion's share goes to Vilnius and then is redistributed to the regions.

The Electoral System

Before the 1992 elections the important political players were the Lithuanian Communist Party and its successor, the Lithuanian Democratic Labor Party (LDLP), and Sajudis, the nationalist movement for liberation of Lithuania from Soviet domination. At the top of politics (in the Supreme Soviet), Sajudis, which is not a party but a movement of several nationalist partiers, was the most powerful, while the LDLP controlled political offices at the local level. Sajudis was headed by Vytautis Landsbergis, whose nationalist defiance of Mikhail Gorbachev set the tone for Lithuanian politics up to the failed August 1991 coup in the USSR.

Landsbergis and Sajudis attempted to pass a law denying office to any who had held some position within the Communist Party. Landsbergis's confrontational tactics, however, backfired; Sajudis suffered a surprising defeat in the 1992 parliamentary elections, and the LDLP went on to become the party of power in Lithuania. This change in power occurred for several reasons: because of Landsbergis's anti-Communist virulence; because the LDLP had a stronger presence in the localities; because conflicts within the movement had led to political paralysis and conflict in the Seimas; because of the negative effects of economic reform; and because the LDLP, while preferring more gradualist economic reforms and compromise and moderation with Russia, remained committed to Lithuanian independence and held a more moderate rhetorical line. A vote for LDLP was not a vote for return to the pre-1991 status quo but rather for a kinder, gentler Lithuania.

In 1992 the LDLP received 42.6 percent of votes and 73 seats in the Seimas, to only 30 seats for anti-Communist Sajudis. However, LDDP was less than competent with economic reforms, and a severe banking crisis in 1995 led to their defeat in 1996. In that year the right-leaning faction of Sajudis returned in a new form, the Homeland Union/Conservatives of Lithuania coalition (Tevynes Sajunga/Lietuvos Konservatoriai, TS-LK). Homeland Union had a stable ruling government until 1998, when policy differences created tensions between Prime Minister Gediminas Vagnorius and newly elected president Valdas Adamkus. Vagnorius resigned in 1998 and was replaced by Vilnius mayor Rolandas Paksas, who resigned five months later after a scandal over the sale of an oil firm. While Homeland enjoyed some stability, their austerity policies bred popular backlash. In the 2000 elections the Social Democratic coalition, uniting four leftist parties and led by the LDLP, appeared to be triumphant. However, a centrist coalition led by the Lithuanian Liberal Union and New Union managed to scrape up just enough votes for a majority in parliament and the

chance to form a new government. However, this ruling coalition lasted only eight months, and it collapsed from internal discord over energy privatization. New Union joined with the new Lithuanian Social Democratic Party to form the new government. Meanwhile, Homeland Union's fortunes continued to fade: in contrast to its dominance in 1996, when it had 70 seats, after 2000 the party had only nine.

In the 2004 elections no party won a majority of seats in parliament, although a new party, the Labor Party (Darbo Partija; DP), emerged with the most number of seats, 39. The DP joined a new coalition government led by the Social Democrats. Algirdas Brazauskas, who had been prime minister since 2001, carried on in the position following the 2004 elections. Valdus Adamkus won the presidential election.

Voting for a party does not mean voting for a particular ideology or policy. This leads to the interpretation that Lithuanians do not vote for political programs but rather for appealing personalities. (Some observers claim that all Baltic peoples have been antiparty since independence in the 1990s, ignoring party appeals and platforms.) As in the other two Baltic nations, parties in Lithuania are connected more to the personalities of those leading them.

The Party System

Lithuania's parties fall on a typical spectrum from left to right, although there remains instability, with parties likely to go into sudden decline.

Major Political Parties

LITHUANIAN SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC COALITION

(Lietuvos Socialdemokratu Koalicija)

This coalition was formed for the 2000 elections. Bringing together the most important left-wing parties under Prime Minister Algirdas Brazauskas's leadership, this bloc gained the most votes and seats, although they did not manage to form a majority coalition. Key players are the Lithuanian Social Democratic Party (Lietuvos Socialdemokratu Partija, LSDP), the Lithuanian Democratic Labor Party (Lietuvos Demokratine Darbo Partija, LDDP), and the leftist New Democratic Party and the Lithuanian Russian Union. LDDP is the Communist party, but as in other post-Socialist countries changed its name and ideology. Their initial appeal came from promises of security in the context of economic collapse in the early 1990s, but their policies when in power did little to help the country. Recently the party has taken a pro-market role, supporting an export-oriented economy and privatization, although agriculture should receive state aid. While precise data are unavailable, LDDP has the largest popular base and grassroots structure of all Lithuania's parties. In the 2004 elections the coalition 20.7 percent of the vote and 20 seats in parliament, coming in third behind the DP and the Homeland Union. However, Brazauskas was able to retain the prime ministership at the head of a governing coalition.

LABOR PARTY

(Darbo Partija; DP)

This party was formed in 2003 by Russian-born business tycoon Viktor Uspaskich. In the 2004 elections the party won the most seats in parliament, 39, and joined the coalition government led by Brazauskas. Uspaskich became the new ecnomics minister, but he was forced to resign in 2005 when a state inspector ruled that his business ties to Russia represented a conflict of interest. However, the party remained part of the governing coalition.

HOMELAND UNION

(Tevynes Sajunga)

The quintessential and original party on Lithuania's right is Homeland Union. The heir to Sajudis, Homeland ideology was anti-Communist and championed returning to prewar owners property confiscated after the Soviet invasion. However, Homeland Union gained a populist streak, seen in their advocacy of agricultural subsidies, increasing pensions, and raising state officials' salaries. In the 2004 elections the party won 14.6 percent of the vote and 25 seats.

FOR ORDER AND JUSTICE

(Uz Tvarka Ir Teisinguma)

This coalition was formed prior to the 2004 elections and includes the Liberal Democrats and the Lithuanian People's Union, an offshoot of the Lithuanian Liberal Union. In the 2004 elections it won 11.4 percent of the vote and 11 seats in parliament.

LIBERAL AND CENTER UNION

(Liberalu Ir Centro Sajunga)

This party was formed in 2003 from the merger of the Lithuanian Liberal Union, the Center Union of Lithuania, and the Modern Christian-Democratic Union. In the 2004 elections the party won 9.1 percent of the vote and 18 seats in parliament.

UNION OF FARMERS AND NEW DEMOCRACY

(Valstieciu Ir Naujosios Demokratijos partiju Sajungos)

This conservative party is led by former prime minister Kazimiera Prunskiene. In the 2004 elections it won 6.6 percent of the vote and 10 seats in parliament.

Minor Political Parties

Among the other smaller political parties in Lithuania are the Social Union of Christian Conservatives and the Young Lithuania and New Nationalists.

Other Political Forces

Lithuania's entry into the European Union (EU) in 2004 will likely play a large role in the country's political process in coming years. Internally, the military does not interfere in the political process. Following a 2002 agreement labor unions gained important rights related to collective bargaining. The three major trade unions are the Confederation of Lithuanian Trade Unions, the Lithuanian Trade Union "Solidarity" (the former Workers' Union), and the Lithuanian Work Federation.

National Prospects

The first Soviet republic to challenge Soviet domination, Lithuania has undergone a bumpy transition to a democracy and capitalism, although the transition here has been smoother than in other former Soviet republics. While former Communists enjoyed a brief return to power (as in other Eastern European nations), they have since lost power to more nationalist promarket forces.

The Lithuanian government has pushed strong reform in privatization (industry and most housing) and fiscal discipline (reducing inflation). Lithuania relies on imports for its raw materials and fuel and has focused on creating an export economy. Prior to EU membership in 2004 the country experienced strong economic growth and low inflation. The entrance into the EU and NATO promises to offer Lithuania continuing economic development and some security vis-à-vis Russia.

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GRAND DUCHY OF LUXEMBOURG

(Grand-Duché de Luxembourg)

By William G. Andrews, Ph.D.
Revised by Tom Michael



Situated in northwestern Europe, Luxembourg is one of the smallest countries in the world. With an area of less than 1,000 square miles, it has a population of approximately 468,000 (2005 est.). Though the majority of the population is made up of native Luxemburgers, there are significant minorities of other Europeans, notably from Portugal, Italy, and Belgium.

The System of Government

Luxembourg is a constitutional monarchy with a parliamentary form of government. The Grand Duchy was created in 1815 with the Dutch king as the first grand duke. Following Belgium's secession from the Netherlands (1830), part of the duchy became autonomous (1839), while the rest became the Belgian county of Luxembourg. Full independence came in 1867, and the present constitution dates from 1868. The present grand ducal family, the House of Nassau, ascended the throne in 1890.

EXECUTIVE

The position of grand duke is hereditary and its powers primarily formal. As chief of state, the grand duke appoints the prime minister. Real executive power, however, lies with the prime minister and cabinet, who are responsible to the Chamber of Deputies.

LEGISLATURE

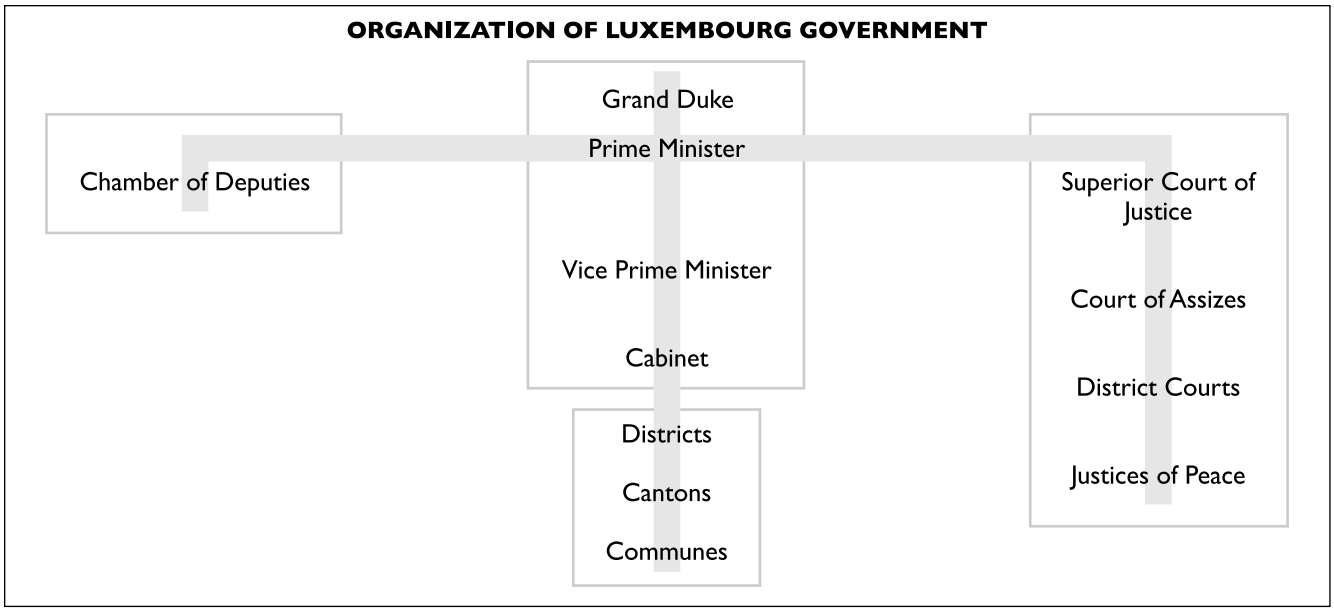
The 60-member Chamber of Deputies is the unicameral legislature. However, the constitution requires that it reaffirm legislation after three months, unless the Administrative Council of State waives that rule. In practice, the vast majority of bills are exempted from the second reading. The Council of State, 21 members appointed for life by the grand duke, gives advisory opinions on all bills before they go to the Chamber and on any subsequent amendments. Also, the Chamber must consult one of six corporatist "chambers" on all bills that affect directly a trade or profession.

JUDICIARY

The highest court is the Superior Court of Justice. Its 16 full members are appointed for life by the grand duke on advice of the Superior Court itself. The Superior Court also nominates judges for the lower courts, whose members can be removed only by the Superior Court. The Superior Court, when sitting as a court of review, has jurisdiction over questions of law, but no general power to disallow legislation. Below the Superior Court are the Court of Assizes, district courts, and justices of the peace.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Luxembourg is divided into three main districts that are subdivided into 12 administrative units (cantons).



Below them are about 118 municipalities (communes) with councils elected for six-year terms and mayors (burgomasters) appointed by the councils. Politically, the larger communes are miniatures of the nation, with elections based on proportional representation and party lists. As a result, interparty cooperation and coalition are essential. In smaller communes, council members are elected by simple majorities and personality is usually more significant than party affiliation.

ELECTIONS TO THE CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES (1994–2004)

	1994		1999		2004	
	%		%		%	
CSV	31.4	21	29.8	19	36.1	24
LSAP	24.8	17	23.8	13	23.4	14
DP	18.9	12	21.6	15	16.1	10
Greens	10.9	5	9.1	5	11.6	7
ADR	8.2	5	10.4	6	10.0	5
Others	5.8	—	5.3	2	2.8	—

The Electoral System

The Chamber of Deputies has a five-year term but may be dissolved early if the prime minister chooses or if the government loses the confidence of the Chamber. However, no special election has been held early since World War II. Seats are allocated from party lists in four electoral districts using proportional representation. Voting is compulsory for all citizens age 18 or older. Each voter has as many votes as that district has seats and may cast them all for a single party list or distribute them among candidates from several parties. The latter option, known as *panachage*, affects the representation of parties and the ranking of candidates on the party lists. This "personalization" benefits well-known politicians, thereby aiding bourgeois parties at the expense of the left.

The Party System

ORIGINS OF THE PARTIES

The modern party system dates from the formation of the Socialist Workers' Party (LSAP) in 1902. Under electoral pressure from the LSAP, the previously unstructured personalist coalitions of bourgeois interests coalesced into the Party of the Right in 1914, and the oldest political formation in Luxembourg, the Liberals, followed suit.

THE PARTIES IN LAW

The parties are not specifically mentioned in the constitution, although they are safeguarded by its general provisions. A series of electoral laws, begin-

ning with the adoption of proportional representation in 1919, determines in detail the conduct and form of elections, especially the presentation of party lists. Otherwise, the parties are free concerning their internal organization and financing.

PARTY ORGANIZATION

Parties are organized at both the communal and the national levels. Party congresses (usually annual) constitute the primary authority. The strength of cantonal politics means that even the smaller parties are active locally. However, party membership is never very large, so activists tend to determine party policy. The parties' relationships with nonparty organizations—the Catholic Church and trade unions (separate confessional, secular, and salaried employee associations)—are very important.

CAMPAIGNING

Despite the coalition basis of politics, campaigns are hard fought. Partly, given the electoral system, competition is a matter of personality, but left and right have sharp ideological differences. Party newspapers play a significant part in campaigns.

INDEPENDENT VOTERS

The influence of the Catholic Church and the organized labor movement ensures that party identification is high. However, because the voting system permits voters to cross party lines, they tend to give some votes to attractive candidates of parties not sharply opposed to their preferred party.

Major Political Parties

CHRISTIAN SOCIAL PEOPLE'S PARTY

(Chrëschtlich Sozial Vollekspartei; CSV)

Founded as the Party of the Right (Partei der Rechten) in 1914, the CSV took its present name in 1944. It has been the "natural" party of government for many years. It has been represented in every government since 1919 and has supplied every prime minister since 1945, except for a stint in the opposition in 1974–79. The LSAP and the Democratic Party (DP) alternate as junior coalition partners.

In an overwhelmingly Catholic country (95 percent), the CSV enjoys widespread support, fairly evenly distributed among all ages and classes throughout the country, although the party is affected adversely by urban encroachment and the declining importance of agriculture. Party membership (9,500) is higher than for the other parties. CSV finance depends partly on membership dues, but it also gets help from such organizations as the Christian trade union movement and benefits from its close association with the Catholic Church and from the support of the country's leading daily newspaper.

For decades, the party was dominated by Pierre Werner (prime minister 1959–74, 1979–84). He retired after the 1984 elections and was succeeded by Jacques Santer, who had been finance minister under Werner. When Santer became president of the European Commission in 1995, Jean-Claude Juncker, born in 1955, his finance minister, took over. He led a coalition government from 1999 (with DP) and from 2004 (with LSAP).

The CSV's proven record in office and its unswerving anti-Socialist policy helped, in the more conservative decades at the end of the 20th century, to counter a long-term decline in the social bases of its support. The CSV president is François Biltgen.

DEMOCRATIC PARTY

(Demokratesch Partei; DP)

The Democratic Party was founded in 1945, based partly on the anti-German resistance movement. It was characterized by a strong anticlericalism that it inherited from its forerunner, the prewar Liberal Party. The DP is fully in the mainstream of European progressive liberalism and joined with the LSAP in 1974–79 to implement a program of social reform. The party appears to have a secure electoral base in the middle classes and among white-collar employees, especially in Luxembourg City. The party is also attractive to floating voters who make use of *panachage*. Party membership is only about 3,500, so finance from this source is low.

The party favors free enterprise and, in the liberal tradition, stands close to industry. The DP publishes its own daily newspaper. The DP leader until 1980 was the widely popular Gaston Thorn, born in 1928, prime minister from 1974 to 1979. In 1981 he became president of the European Commission. His successor as DP leader was Colette Flesch, born 1937. The current president is Lydie Polfer. By its character and its location on the political spectrum, the DP has become a sort of "party of government." In 1979 it switched alliances from the Socialists to the Christian Democrats and remained in the ministry. In 1984 it defied unsuccessfully the Luxembourg convention

relegating to opposition parties that loose seats in an election. In any case, a DP-LSAP combination rarely has an overall majority in the assembly. A DP-CSV coalition was crafted following the 1999 elections. The DP was unable to duplicate its 1999 success in the 2004 elections.

LUXEMBOURG SOCIALIST WORKERS' PARTY

(Letzeburger Sozialistisch Arbrechterpartei; LSAP)

Founded in 1902, the LSAP is determinedly "working class," with little sign of ideological weakening. The party has very close links with the trade union movement, especially the Independent Trade Union Federation of Luxembourg (Onofhängege Gewerkscheftsbond Lëtzebuerg), the left wing of a union movement that is deeply divided ideologically and between Catholic and secular organizations. During the 1974–79 coalition, the LSAP promoted programs to increase the authority and unity of the trade union movement. Despite that stance, the LSAP has joined several coalition governments with the CSV, both before and after its 1974–79 partnership with the DP—not surprising given the affiliation of the Christian unions to the CSV. The party has overtaken the CSV in share of the vote only once (1964) but came within 1.3 percentage points in 1984. In the 1999 elections the LSAP was eclipsed by the DP but regained the lost ground with the 2004 elections.

Party support and membership comes largely from trade unionists, especially manual occupations. The LSAP has approximately 6,000 members. Party finance relies on membership dues and trade union support. The LSAP publishes a daily newspaper with a relatively large circulation. Unlike the CSV and the DP, the LSAP lacks a significant personality as leader, reflecting the nature of the party. Its present leader is Jacques F. Poos, foreign minister and a banker. The party president is Jean Asselborn.

Minor Political Parties

THE GREENS

(Déi Gréng)

Environmental parties appeared on the Luxembourg scene in the late 1970s. The "Alternative List," a loose coalition favoring the "new politics" of environmental and antinuclear concerns, attracted only about 1 percent of the vote in 1979 but increased to 5.2 percent and two deputies in 1984. The Greens survived a fractious period between the mid-1980s and mid-1990s. By 1994 they had 10.9 percent and five seats. The Greens constitute the more moderate wing of the movement, advocating grassroots democracy, social concerns, and increased foreign development aid, along with environmentalism.

ACTION COMMITTEE FOR DEMOCRACY AND PENSION JUSTICE

(Aktiounskomitee fir Demokratie a Rentegerechtegkeet; ADR)

The ADR was founded in 1987 as a special-interest party to campaign for improved pensions for private-sector employees. Since then it has broadened its policy concerns somewhat but continues to place heavy emphasis on economic equity for pensioners. In its first national electoral appearance, it polled 7.1 percent of the vote and won four seats in the 1989 parliamentary elections. Its share rose to 8.2 percent and five seats in 1994, and it emerged under the Juncker government as the most active opposition party. Rohy Mehlen has been national president since 1991, and Fernand Greisen is general secretary. Both are also ADR members of parliament.

THE LEFT

(Déi Lénk)

In 1999 the Left was formed by former adherents of the Communist Party. It promotes a far-left, "post-Communist" platform, advocating, among other planks, the complete redistribution of wealth. Luxembourg also has had some ephemeral, special-interest minor parties. The Conscriptees movement ran a common list with independent Socialists in 1979 that won 7 percent of the vote. However, its only MP defected to the CSP before the 1984 elections, and the party disappeared. It was an interest group for persons forcibly recruited into the German army during World War II.

Other Political Forces

Luxembourg maintains an active military force of less than 1,000 troops, made up entirely of an army; it has no air force or navy. Compulsory military service was

abandoned in 1967. The country uses less than 1 percent of its GNP to fund its military. Luxembourgers contribute to international peacekeeping missions, notably through the Eurocorps for the European Union and NATO.

Labor relations are generally good, which help to attract foreign investment. The largest trade unions are the Luxembourg Confederation of Independent Trade Unions (Onofhängege Gewerkschafts-Bond Lëtzebuerg) and the Luxembourg Confederation of Christian Trade Unions (Lëtzebuerger Chrëschtleche Gewerkschafts-Bond). In the early 21st century these trade unions claimed about 57,000 and 38,000 members, respectively. They have strong links with the Christian Social People's Party (CSV) and the Luxembourg Socialist Workers' Party (LSAP). At one time the Federation of Private Sector White-Collar Employees (Fédération des Employés Privés) was seen as an alternative to the two main groups, but it has since fallen into decline.

In 2003 a new trade union alliance was formed from four smaller "white-collar" trade unions, anchored by the Luxembourg Association of Bank Staffs (Association luxembourgeoise des employés de banque, ALEBA). Claiming political independence, ALEBA joined forces with the Union of Private Sector White-Collar Employees (Union des employés privés), the Neutral Union of Luxembourg Workers (Neutral Gewerkschaft Luxembourg), and the National Union of Private Sector White-Collar Employees (Syndicat national des employés privés-Rénovateurs). In total, the federation has a membership of 20,000. The main employers' association is the Fédération des Industriels Luxembourgeois. It is made up of about 450 companies in two dozen business sectors.

National Prospects

Luxembourgers pride themselves on their stable, consensual politics. Governments rarely fall between elections, and all major parties are potential coalition partners. The general economic slump precipitated by the oil crises has been followed by unprecedented prosperity, making Luxembourg the wealthiest country in Europe per capita. However, the low unemployment and relative prosperity attracted an influx of immigrants, who now constitute about two-fifths of the population. Perhaps the biggest question confronting nativists in the Grand Duchy is whether, with so many foreigners in residence, it will remain true to the national motto, "We want to be what we are."

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REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA

(Republika Makedonija)

By Stephen Markovich, Ph.D.
Revised by Auron Dodi



Macedonia is a small, landlocked country situated in the central part of the Balkan Peninsula. Bordered by the Serbian part of Serbia and Montenegro, Bulgaria, Greece, and Albania, it covers 25,713 square kilometers and has about 2 million people (2005 est.). Some three-fifths of the population are ethnic Macedonians; about one-fourth are Albanians, and there are smaller percentages of Turks and Roma (Gypsies). More than one-half the population are Serbian (Macedonian) Orthodox, but Sunni Muslims make up about one-third of the population.

Macedonia became an independent democratic republic in 1991, though the development of democracy has been a difficult process. Internal ethnic, political, and economic differences have hampered the firm establishment of a fundamental consensus in the country; externally, problems with all of its neighbors—Yugoslavia (since 2003, Serbia and Montenegro), Bulgaria, Greece, and Albania—have also slowed progressive development. (Even the awkward international name of the country, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, resulted in Greek objections to the use of *Macedonia*.)

Macedonia's moderate policies eased relations with its neighbors in the 1990s, but in March 1999, when NATO forces began the bombing campaign against Yugoslavia because of that country's treatment of the Albanians of Kosovo, tensions also rose in Macedonia. The Macedonian government opened its border to hundreds of thousands of Albanian refugees expelled from their houses in Kosovo. The Kosovo refugees left Macedonia a few months later, when Yugoslavia signed an international peace accord. But the armed struggle of the Albanians of Kosovo taught other Albanians that fundamental rights can be achieved even by waging a war. Other Albanians of the region also became familiar with the "war business."

OHRID FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT

As long as the Yugoslav Federation existed, Albanians of Macedonia had enjoyed a better treatment by the Macedonian state than the Albanians of Kosovo by Serbia. But after the secession of Macedonia from the Yugoslav Federation, the relationships between Slav Macedonians and ethnic Albanians became problematic. The Albanians opposed the new constitution in 1991, and, in a nonofficial referendum in 1992, they demanded territorial autonomy. Different Albanian parties joined the government coalitions of Macedonia, but many Albanians thought that they did not have enough power to achieve equal treatment because the state was set up in their disfavor. They complained that they were underrepresented in the government structures and that they were forbidden to display their national symbols in public life. In 1996 in Tetovo, Albanians demanded official recognition of the Albanian language at the city's university.

Growing tensions in February 2001 led to armed clashes involving both ethnic Albanian rebels and the government forces. Armed Albanians, through the

National Liberation Army, clamored for constitutional reforms and reorganization of the Macedonian state in order to have greater rights as a minority. The uprising, which lasted several months, led the country to the verge of civil war. Non-Albanians, discontented with what they considered a soft attitude toward the Albanian rebels, attacked the parliament. However, the demands of the rebels had achieved international political support, especially after they declared that they supported the maintenance of Macedonian state integrity.

The Albanian uprising ended through international mediation in August 2001, when a peace agreement was signed in Ohrid. The main political parties of Macedonia promised to promote the position of minorities, especially of the Albanian minority, and in exchange the armed rebels agreed to hand over about thousands of weapons to NATO forces. As a result of the agreement, a NATO peacekeeping mission was established in September 2001. The Government of National Unity led by Prime Minister Ljubco Georgevski declared an amnesty to former members of the National Liberation Army, which then disbanded. Most of its members joined the new Albanian political party Democratic Union for Integration (DUI), which joined the government coalition after parliamentary elections in September 2002.

To implement the Ohrid Peace Agreement, the Macedonian parliament made important amendments to the constitution. The new constitution recognized the Albanian language as an official language and increased access for ethnic Albanians in administration, police, and other areas. The implementation of the laws based on the constitutional amendments was carried out generally without problems. But in August 2004 the parliament passed the "Law about the Territorial Organization" of the country, a critical final element from the Ohrid Framework Agreement. According to this law, the total number of municipalities would have decreased from 123 to 84 and have redrawn municipal boundaries to increase the number of municipalities inhabited by an Albanian majority. The government agreed to test acceptance of the law with a referendum, for which the World Macedonian Congress collected signatures. The referendum was held in November 2004. The attempt to overturn the new law failed due to low turnout—slightly more than a quarter of voters cast ballots, far shy of the required 50 percent minimum needed to make the vote valid—and because of clear international warnings that rejection of the law would lead to negative consequences for Macedonia, especially as far as its future integration to important international organizations was concerned. Macedonia aimed at joining the European Union (EU), after signing an Agreement of Stabilization-Association in April 2001.

The System of Government

Macedonia is a parliamentary democracy with a unicameral legislature.

EXECUTIVE

Macedonia has a dual executive consisting of a president and a prime minister. The president is elected by the people for a term of five years, and the prime minister is the head of the party or coalition of parties that has a majority in parliament. Constitutionally, the president is the head of state and the prime minister is the head of government.

The constitution states that the president represents the republic, signs bills into law, nominates the prime minister, appoints several governmental and judicial offices—usually in consultation with the government and with approval by parliament—grants decorations and honors, and serves as commander in chief. In signing bills into law, the president may veto a bill and send it back to the Assembly for reconsideration; if the Assembly reconsiders the bill and passes it by an absolute majority, then the president is obliged to sign it. Apart from this discretion on bills and possibly the role as commander in chief, the presidential powers collectively, as they are presented in the constitution, provide that the president act more as a formal head of state than as a political leader of the country.

In practice, however, in the early years of the new Macedonia, the first president, Kiro Gligorov, was active in leading the country and therefore served as something more than simply a formal head of state. An experienced politician with a strong sense of leadership, he achieved a revered status in Macedonia as the father of the new Macedonia and the symbol of political reform. This status enabled him to win the parliamentary election for president in 1991 and the popular election for that office in 1994.

The stability of Gligorov's leadership was particularly significant in light of the latent instability in the coalition governments that ran the country. The first coalition government, headed by Prime Minister

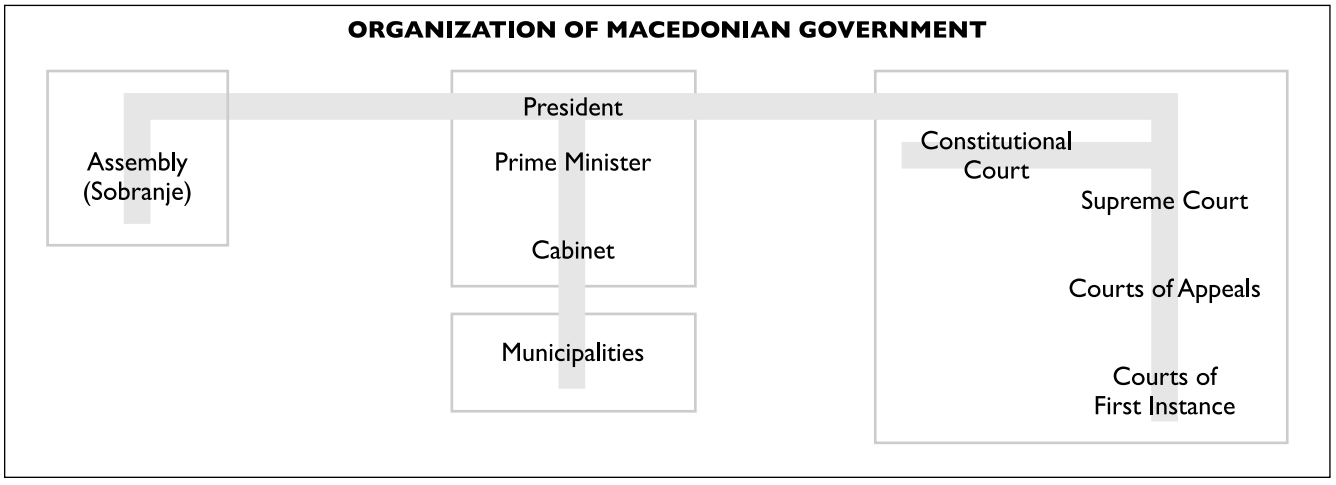
Nikola Kljusev, lost a vote of confidence in 1992 and had to resign after a little more than a year in office. The second coalition government, headed by Branko Crvenkovski, survived a vote of confidence after several months in office and went on to run the country for several years. Still, to stay in office Crvenkovski had to manage broad coalitions that were fragile partnerships, and he needed both to balance his ministerial assignments among three or four parties and placate the Albanian elements in his coalitions. By 1998 his coalition could not withstand the vigorous challenge by the opposition, forcing Crvenkovski to resign as prime minister. He was replaced by Ljubco Georgievski, who formed an inclusive coalition government that included Albanian parties, but he had to reshuffle his cabinet often. Following the Albanian uprising in the country, Georgievski set up in May 2001 a broad government of national unity. In subsequent parliamentary elections in 2002, Georgievski's coalition lost, and Crvenkovski returned to office (in 2004 Crvenkovski became president of Macedonia). The role of the president of the state proved to be of special importance for Macedonia even after the Gligorov era, especially during the time when ethnic tensions flared up. President Boris Trajkovski (elected in December 1999, killed in a plane crash in February 2004) led the peace process in Macedonia, despite opposition in the country. He played a decisive role in efforts to control the interethnic tensions during a dangerous time for Macedonia. In general, his moderating role had an impact on the functioning of the country's institutions and on prospects for Macedonia's integration into Europe.

Now, as long as a prime minister can maintain a stable cabinet, he and his cabinet are in a strong position to govern, as the constitution gives them sufficient powers. Article 91 states that the government determines policies, introduces laws, proposes the budget, establishes relations with foreign nations, and appoints a series of officials including diplomatic officers and public prosecutors. For the government proposals to be enacted, they have to be passed by the Assembly, but this is usually pro forma in a parliamentary system when a majority party or coalition controls the legislature. While Macedonian governments have more often than not managed to maintain themselves in power, they have frequently had to do considerable maneuvering to retain this control and sustain the support of the Assembly.

LEGISLATURE

The Macedonian legislature is a unicameral parliament called the Assembly (or Sobranie) and consists of 120 representatives elected to four-year terms. Representatives who accept ministerial posts in the government must resign their legislative seats.

According to Article 68 of the constitution, the Assembly can enact laws, adopt the budget, elect the government, elect judges and other officials, amend the constitution, ratify international agreements, and decide on war and peace. It can also reject the government through a vote of no confidence. So far the Assembly has forced one government to resign and forced another to defend itself against legislative challenges. Until the parliamentary elections in 2002, the Assembly complicated the passing of law packages resulting from the Ohrid Framework Agreement. In general the Assembly has taken all of its legislative powers seriously and has vigorously exercised them,



and has consequently acted as a viable branch in the political system.

JUDICIARY

For regular judicial matters, the legislature has established 27 courts of first instance, three courts of appeals, and a Supreme Court. These courts cover all civil and criminal matters, the lower courts hearing original cases and the upper courts hearing appeals; in addition to considering appeals, the Supreme Court also monitors the uniform application of laws. A special Constitutional Court of Macedonia decides on the constitutionality of laws, on jurisdictional disputes between the branches of government, on conflicts between national and local governments, and on cases involving individual freedoms.

Judges for the regular courts are nominated for life terms by the Republican Judicial Council, a seven-member board of prestigious legal experts, and confirmed by a majority of the Assembly. The nine judges on the Constitutional Court are elected by the Assembly for nine-year terms and cannot be reelected.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The provisions for local government are laid out in section V of the constitution and in the Law for Local Self-Government enacted in 1995. This law was partially amended in 1996. These provisions allow municipalities to be governed by elected mayors and councils, but their governing jurisdictions are limited to local matters and are subject to supervision by the national government. Until the 1995 law was passed, there was considerable tension between the national government and the municipal councils, particularly between national bodies and Albanian municipalities. What generated this tension were disputes over which languages could be officially used in municipal transactions. In January 2002 the Assembly decided to give more powers to local government, and in August 2004 it passed the law on territorial reorganization, compiled to replace the law of 1996. The proposed law, which would have redrawn municipal boundaries, reduced the number of municipalities and provided local government institutions with new powers. However, the implementation of the new law was impeded for many months, and the law was put to a referendum vote in November 2004. The referendum failed to reach the minimum turnout required to make the vote valid, thus allowing the new law to be implemented.

The Electoral System

All citizens at least age 18 are entitled to vote. On the national level this vote may be exercised in elections for president and parliament. In the 1990 parliamentary elections, the first free elections held in Macedonia prior to independence, more than four-fifths of eligible voters turned out to cast their ballots for more than 20 parties. In 1994 turnout stood at about four-fifths of the electorate in the first round but only three-fifths in the second—a drop attributed to the boycott of the second round by some parties. Subsequent national elections saw turnout of about 70 to 75 percent.

Under the new constitution the president of the republic is elected directly by the people for a five-year term. There are, potentially, two rounds of voting. For a candidate to be elected in the first round, he or she must win a majority of the votes; if no candidate wins a majority on this ballot, then a second ballot or runoff between the top two candidates is held two weeks later. In the presidential elections of October 1994, there was no need for a second ballot as the popular Kiro Gligorov, the incumbent president, garnered 78 percent of the votes cast. In 1999 and 2004, however, a second ballot was required. Elections in 1994 for the 120 seats in the Assembly also employed the double ballot system, and winning one of the seats in the first round proved to be a rarity—only 10 candidates escaped a second-round runoff. Despite some irregularities in the electoral process and despite the advantages that the incumbent government had with the media, international observers judged that the elections overall were free and fair and that they contributed significantly to democratic development in Macedonia.

The elections in 1998 were also considered free and fair, though they had to be repeated in seven districts due to irregularities, but both the electoral system and the results were different from 1994. Legislation had altered the electoral system, providing that 35 seats would be allocated based on proportional representation, while the other 85 seats (still conducted in a double-ballot fashion) would be individual districts represented by a single member of the Assembly. To achieve representation for the 35 proportional seats, a party had to surpass a 5 percent threshold. The parliamentary elections of 2002 were the first after the end of the armed conflict. Brutal incidents, threats, and accusations were part of the electoral campaign of different political forces. However, international observers judged that the elections were conducted largely in accordance with international standards for democratic elections. In spite of some isolated incidents,

Macedonians successfully passed their first test after the end of interethnic conflict. For the 2002 elections the electoral system was altered again. This time, the country was split into six constituencies, each electing 20 MPs, and the seats were apportioned based on the percentage of votes that a party received.

The Party System

Once the one-party Communist monopoly ended in Macedonia, multiparty elections were scheduled in late 1990. Numerous parties were formed—though many did not even last long enough to register as official parties. By the time the first round of balloting took place, there were 20 parties registered, and 16 of these participated in the elections; when the elections were over, only 10 parties or party coalitions had gained legislative seats and only 4 of these had seats in double figures. In the 1994 elections only 9 of 31 registered parties won any representation and only 3 of them won in double figures; and for the 1998 elections 39 parties were registered, 17 parties/coalitions participated, and 5 won some seats—again only 3 in double figures. In the elections of 2002, 38 parties/coalitions and independent candidates were registered. Of these only 19 parties and party coalitions took part in the elections. Based on the 2002 elections, major political parties of Macedonia may be considered the Social Democrat Union of Macedonia (SDUM), the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization—Democratic Party of Macedonian National Unity (IMRO-DPMU), and the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP). As for the Albanian political parties, the major players currently are Democratic Union for Integration (DUI), Democratic Party of Albanians (DPA), and Party for Democratic Prosperity (PDP).

Major Political Parties

SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC UNION OF MACEDONIA (SDUM)

(Socijaldemokratski Sojuz Makedonije)

The Social Democrats are the successors to the reform Communists of Macedonia. In 1989, when Yugoslavia was still intact, they established their party as the League of Communists of Macedonia–Party of Democratic Transformation but later changed it to Social Democratic Union. As reform Communists they had to convince the people that they did in fact favor fundamental political and economic changes rather than cosmetic touch-ups of Titoism. To be convincing, therefore, they made firm commitments to democratic pluralism and a market economy, and then lived up to these commitments.

Though Kiro Gligorov was one of the original reform Communists, in his role as president he rose above party politics. As pluralism began to emerge in Macedonia, Gligorov began to drift from partisan positions and leave party politics to others. The first leader of the reform Communists was Peter Gosev, but he was supplanted by Branko Crvenkovski, who became leader of the party in 1991 and prime minister of the country in 1992. While Crvenkovski's Social Democrats were not able to win a majority on their own, they were able to sustain themselves as the major centrist party and as the senior partner in the coalition governments that ruled Macedonia from 1992 to 1998. The party has enjoyed success, attracted more than 100,000 members to its local organizations throughout the country and convincing voters and observers that their transformation from Yugoslav Communists to Macedonian democrats was complete. By 1998, however, the voters wanted a change and consequently voted the Social Democrats out of office. The Social Democrats decided to join the Government of National Unity under Ljubco Georgievski, but they later left the government. Together with other parties, the Social Democrats signed the Ohrid Framework Agreement, and in 2002 the party led a coalition that won that year's parliamentary elections. It got 43 seats in parliament and its coalition won 60 seats. The party leader, Crvenovski, was prime minister until the early presidential elections of April 2004, when he was elected president of the state.

INTERNAL MACEDONIAN REVOLUTIONARY ORGANIZATION–DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF MACEDONIAN NATIONAL UNITY (IMRO-DPMNU)

(Vnatresno-Makedonska Revolucionerna Organizacija–Demokratska Partija za Makedonsko Nacionalno Edinstvo)

The Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization (IMRO) was first founded in 1983 to promote Macedonian nationalism and became a legendary organization among Macedonians for its role in establishing a Macedonian identity. In promoting its goals, IMRO resorted to terrorist activities so frequently that it was often

referred to as a terrorist group. When today's IMRO-DPMNU was founded in 1990, its leaders assumed the goals of the original IMRO but not the means; that is, they established a legitimate party that eschewed terrorist means yet remained stridently nationalistic.

The strident nationalism and legendary name of the party paid dividends in the 1990 elections but not in the 1994 elections. The success of the party in 1990 was surprising to everyone, including its own leaders, when it led all political parties with 38 seats. In 1994, however, the IMRO-DPMNU faltered. The party was ineffective in the first round of voting and pulled out of the second round because of alleged electoral irregularities. Moreover, its party leader, Ljubco Georgievski, gained only 22 percent of the vote to Gligorov's 78 percent. After pulling out of the political arena, the IMRO-DPMNU was forced to convey its views and criticisms through public speeches and press releases, which proved a less effective way to further party interests. Nevertheless, since it had a solid organization and over 100,000 members, the party survived its self-imposed isolation and rebounded dramatically in the 1998 elections, winning 62 seats with its electoral partner, the Democratic Alternative (DA), and becoming the dominant partner in the new coalition government. Its success was due partly to its large membership and core support and partly to its shift to moderation and inclusiveness, an inclusiveness that accepted the Albanians in their government. In 1999 Boris Trajkovski, the successor of President Gligorov, was nominated president by this party. IMRO-DPMNU together with other parties signed the Ohrid Framework Agreement. In the 2002 elections it formed an electoral coalition with LPM (Liberal Party of Macedonia), winning 29 seats in parliament (33 together with LPM). After its failure, Georgievski resigned as party leader.

DEMOCRATIC UNION FOR INTEGRATION

(Demokratska Unija za Integracija—Bashkimi Demokratik për Integrim)

The Democratic Union for Integration is an Albanian Party founded after the end of the interethnic armed conflict. Although the party was formed only a few months before the general elections of 2002, it succeeded in getting most of the votes from the Albanian population and won 16 seats in the Assembly, joining the coalition government led by SDUM. Former fighters of the National Liberation Army, following its disbandment, founded DUI. It is estimated that about half the members of the party fought in the armed conflict. The others are former members of different Albanian parties and people who had not been members of other parties before. This specific membership spectrum has brought about frequent internal discussions over party policy. Nevertheless, the position of this party and of its leader (the former commander of the National Liberation Army, Ali Ahmeti) has remained moderate and can be defined as closer to social democracy.

The program of DUI includes the quick implementation of the obligations of the Ohrid Framework Agreement: interethnic reconciliation and the economic development of the country. DUI supports the integration of Macedonia in international structures, such as the European Union and NATO. Despite the fact that the government of Georgievski accused the DUI leader of terrorism, wanted to arrest him, and would not let him participate in the electoral campaign for the 2002 general elections, the former rebel Ahmeti declared that his party will always respect the Macedonian constitution and that there is no alternative but to implement the Ohrid Framework Agreement.

LIBERAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY (LDP)

(Liberalno Demokratska Partija)

The Liberal Democratic Party was formed in 1997 through the merger of the Liberal Party and the Democratic Party in an attempt to stay the faltering fortunes of the once-successful Liberal Party. After the Liberal Party itself was created in 1991, it did very well as a small but influential party. Although it numbered about 10,000 adherents, most of these members were successful businesspeople who strongly supported the transformation to a market economy and heavily promoted privatization in the country. Their influence in the economic sector was nearly matched by their role in the government; as partners in coalition governments from 1992 to 1996, members of the party held important posts in both the cabinet and the legislature, posts which allowed them some say in the policy-making process.

One of the important posts, president of the Assembly, was held by a party leader, Stojan Andov, from 1991 to 1996. From this post Andov could affect governmental policies and decisions and, concomitantly, because of his governmental power, manage his party in a disciplined and authoritarian manner. Much of this power vanished when differences between Andov and Crvenkovski came to a head in 1996. Because of these differences Andov had to resign

his position as Assembly president, and his Liberal colleagues lost their ministerial posts in a cabinet reshuffle engineered by Crvenkovski. Once they were removed from ruling posts, the Liberal's influence and support dropped precipitously. Whereas they won 24 percent of the popular vote and 29 parliamentary seats as the single Liberal Party in 1994, they won only 7 percent of the vote and four seats as the united Liberal Democratic Party in 1998. The new party will have to generate a dramatic comeback to repeat the earlier Liberal successes or, more pointedly, even to survive as a viable party. In the parliamentary elections of 2002 it was second among the Macedonian parties, winning 11 seats and joining the governing coalition.

ALBANIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY

(Demokratska Partija na Albancite—Partia Demokratike Shqiptare)

DPA seceded in 1994 from the Party for Democratic Prosperity (1990) of the Albanians in Macedonia. It gained a political profile and sympathy among Albanians by defending their national and cultural demands especially in 1995–96. In the parliamentary elections of 1998 it won the greatest number of votes from the Albanians and joined the Macedonian government coalition headed by IMRO-DPMNU. During this time the Albanian votes for the first time became decisive for the election of the president of the state. The coalition of this party with IMRO-DPMNU—parties where the nationalistic tones were present—eventually created conditions thatradicalized the situation in Macedonia. During the armed conflict in 2001 DPA did not officially support the National Liberation Army (NLA), but many members of this party joined the NLA. DPA with other parties signed the Ohrid Framework Agreement. In the parliamentary elections of 2002 this was the only party that openly insisted on the independence of Kosovo, considering it as a precondition for the stability of Macedonia. Though it only won seven seats in the Assembly in 2002, most of the leaders of municipalities with an Albanian majority are members of this party. The party has sought to place Macedonia under an international protectorate.

Minor Political Parties

In 1995 the Assembly passed a law that required a party to have 500 citizens signed as members before it could be registered. This law served to reduce the number of parties from about 60 proclaimed parties to 38 registered parties.

The Party for Democratic Prosperity (PDP) is a party of the Albanian minority that won two seats in the 2002 elections. This party signed the Ohrid Framework Agreement. The National Democratic Party (NDP) is a small Albanian party that has one seat in parliament. The Democratic Party of Turks (DPTM) has two seats in the new parliament, while the Democratic League of Bosniaks (DLBM), the Democratic Party of Serbs (DPSM), and the OPRM (United Party of Romas in Macedonia) each have one seat in parliament.

There are many other parties that have registered, but their support in elections is diminishing rather than increasing, and consequently their prospects are not encouraging.

Other Political Forces

Macedonia, as a small post-Communist country, has something in common with other post-Communist Balkan countries: other political forces, besides political parties, are still weak and do not have much influence on everyday life. The army remains very weak. There exist nongovernmental organizations and organized labor (in 2004 a "parliament of nongovernmental bodies" was constituted), but everything is very new and no distinguished role has emerged for any of these bodies. Outside influences, particularly the European Union and NATO, are particularly important in Macedonia.

National Prospects

Ten years after the secession from Yugoslavia and the declaration of independence, Macedonia was threatened by an armed interethnic conflict. The outbreak of the civil war between the ethnic Macedonian majority and the ethnic Albanian minority was prevented only by a timely and coordinated intervention of the United States, the European Union, and NATO. Together with the parties in conflict, they outlined, in the Ohrid Peace Agreement, a political compromise that, it was hoped, would guarantee the future of the Macedonian state. This agreement was also supported through deployment of peace-keeping missions by NATO and the European Union. The Ohrid Framework Agreement, the constitutional reform, and new laws deriving from it have so far proved a successful instrument for the preservation of peace in the country.

However, the question of decentralization and territorial organization increased tensions during the last months of 2004 and became another test for the Peace Agreement and the stability of the country. A referendum to reverse the decentralization law in November 2004 failed due to low voter turnout and as a result of clear international warnings of consequences for Macedonia, especially concerning its future integration to important international organizations.

The interethnic issue remains explosive, and it is the gravest problem for Macedonia at the moment: the gap between different ethnicities (the Macedonians, Albanians, Serbs, Turks, and others) has become larger since the end of the armed conflict. Voices from the opposition and the minorities increasingly announce the failure of the multiethnic state and demand a division of the country. In 2005 the Assembly passed legislation enabling the flying of the Albanian flag in areas where Albanians predominate; the future effects of this law—whether it will reduce or increase ethnic tensions—will play an important role in determining the country's future.

The party system is undergoing a process of change after the split of the largest opposition party IMRO-DPMNU, the changes at the leadership of the SDUM, and the foundation of the new minority parties. As far as Macedonia's neighbors are concerned, during the armed conflict they respected or supported the official line of the United States, NATO, and the EU for maintenance of the territorial integrity of Macedonia. Although some problems with neighbors still exist, relationships with them have been continually improving. At present there are ongoing negotiations with Greece to finally clarify the name-question for Macedonia. Aiming to support the consolidation of the Macedonian state, in November 2004 the United States and the German Bundestag (parliament) decided to refer to the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia simply as the "Republic of Macedonia." These positions were later moderated, leaving this question to the United Nations; the intention of the international community, however, remains clear.

International diplomacy is helping to further stabilize Macedonia either by concrete steps or by promising to facilitate the country's membership in organizations such as NATO and the European Union. Through their diplomats in Skopje, they observe political developments and alert the government if they notice deviations from the international agenda that calls for the stabilization of the country. Indeed, the European Commission was so impressed with Macedonia's efforts that in November 2005 it recommended that the country become a candidate for membership in the European Union.

Economic questions still pose a problem for the country, but political forces are at the moment little involved in discussions of these issues. In this area, progress has been slow, and it has almost stopped because of the ethnic conflict. Although economic reforms remain a priority of the government program, the economic status quo might be transformed into a destabilizing factor for the country.

Finally, it can be said that progress has been made after the end of the armed conflict, and therefore there is some hope for the future. If the political actors are successful in reconciling hostile ethnicities, and if the economic problems are taken seriously, then Macedonia will have a good chance to survive as a state in its present form.

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REPUBLIC OF MADAGASCAR

(Repoblikan'i Madagasikara)

(République de Madagascar)

By B. David Meyers, Ph.D.



The Republic of Madagascar is an island country in the southwestern Indian Ocean. The population of more than 18 million people (2005 est.) is divided between the *Merina*, persons of Malayo-Indonesian descent who make up about one-fourth of the population, and the *cotiers*, coastal people of African descent who make up the majority. Malagasy, a language that resembles Malay and Indonesian, is spoken throughout the country.

During the late 19th century *Merina* kings, who controlled the entire island, lost a series of wars to the French, and in 1896 Madagascar became a French colony. On June 26, 1960, the country regained independence as the Malagasy Republic. Philibert Tsiranana, who played a leading role in securing independence for Madagascar, became its first president, serving in office until 1972.

In May 1972 the First Republic ended as popular discontent with inflation and continued French influence caused Tsiranana to resign in favor of a military government. The new, leftist government nationalized French holdings, closed French military bases and an American space-tracking station, and accepted foreign aid from a number of Communist states. The highly authoritarian, Socialist, military government expelled foreigners, suppressed strikes, and arrested its opponents. In June 1975 Didier Ratsiraka, a naval officer of *cotier* background, became the fourth in a series of military leaders to head the government. Both in and out of power, he remained Madagascar's dominant political figure for the next 25 years.

In a June 1975 referendum 95 percent of the voters favored changing the name of the country to Madagascar, adopting a new constitution that proclaiming the Second Republic, and confirming Ratsiraka as president. In 1977 Ratsiraka allowed parliamentary elections, and, in 1982 and 1989 presidential elections were held that Ratsiraka won—though opposition parties were banned for these elections. During these years Ratsiraka's unsuccessful attempts to bring about a socialist revolution further damaged the country's already-troubled economy.

During 1990–91 Madagascar suffered widespread civil unrest. After failing to quell the unrest by force, Ratsiraka agreed to surrender some of his powers. In August 1992 a new constitution, which created the Third Republic, was quickly written and then endorsed by a national referendum. This constitution replaced Madagascar's presidential government with a parliamentary system. Under the constitution, the presidency, still held by Ratsiraka, became a largely ceremonial position, with governing power being exercised by a prime minister chosen by the National Assembly. In another liberalizing change there was a return to multiparty politics.

In national elections held in 1993, Ratsiraka's rule temporarily ended, as Albert Zafy was elected president. Hopes that Madagascar was on the path to becoming a successful parliamentary democracy were soon dashed as the new president got into a series of clashes with the National Assembly and the prime minister. In September 1995 Zafy called for—and won—a national referen-

dum on a constitutional amendment that again allowed the president to appoint the prime minister, essentially returning the political system to presidential rule.

Zafy's actions angered members of the National Assembly who had previously supported him. In 1996 he was impeached by the legislature and removed from office by the Constitutional Court. New presidential elections then became necessary.

Fifteen candidates, including both Ratsiraka and Zafy, filed for the vacant office. The first round of presidential elections, held on November 3, 1996, failed to achieve the required absolute majority but led to the elimination of 13 of the candidates. In the second polling, an aged and infirm Ratsiraka narrowly defeated Zafy and was returned to power.

The Madagascan political system was again altered in 1998 when the public once again approved a new constitution, proposed by Ratsiraka. This created a federal system with a strong president and a weak legislature. Ratsiraka's position was further strengthened when his supporters won the majority of seats in the National Assembly.

By 2001 Ratsiraka had again become unpopular in many parts of the country. The presidential elections that began in December 2001 developed into a political crisis that included bloodshed, threats of secession, efforts at foreign mediation, and, finally, intervention by the Constitutional High Court. From February 2002 until July, when Ratsiraka fled the country, Madagascar had two governments, with Ratsiraka controlling most of the countryside and his ultimately successful rival, Marc Ravalomanana, the capital and most of the other urban areas. In sharp contrast, National Assembly elections held a few months later, and municipal elections in November 2003, were quiet and peaceful. While in exile in France in 2003, Ratsiraka was convicted of embezzling public funds and sentenced to 10 years hard labor.

The System of Government

Madagascar is a federal republic with a bicameral legislature.

EXECUTIVE

The 1998 constitution essentially provides a legal basis for the strong presidential regimes that had, in fact, already been the rule. The prime minister and cabinet members, who carry out the day-to-day management of the government, are chosen by, and responsible to, the president. According to the constitution the president is elected popularly for a five-year term. If no candidate obtains a majority of the overall vote, a second round of voting takes place within 30 days of the publication of the results of the first ballot.

The tumultuous 2001 presidential election initially drew six candidates. Following the first round of balloting, both major candidates claimed to have crossed the 50 percent threshold. The government declared Ratsiraka the winner, but Ravalomanana contested the results. In February 2002 both were separately sworn in and violence flared as their supporters ignored calls for a second round of balloting. By summer Ravalomanana's forces controlled most of the island and the High Constitutional Court announced that, according to a recount, he had gained 51.5 percent of the vote and had been elected as president. Shortly thereafter, Ratsiraka's prime minister was arrested and Jacques Sylla was appointed to that position.

LEGISLATURE

Madagascar's legislature has undergone frequent changes. The National Assembly, until recently the only house of parliament, has, since 1990, twice been increased in size, and its composition has been changed from a system where all of the members were chosen by proportional representation to one that includes both single-member and two-member constituencies. In 2002 the legislature became bicameral with the addition of a Senate consisting of 90 senators, two-thirds chosen by regional legislators and one-third appointed.

Despite changes in its structure and composition, Madagascar's parliament has, with only one exception, remained unimportant. The exception was its impeachment of then-president Zafy in 1996. The impeachment vote aside, the Madagascan tradition of authoritarian presidents and fractious parties left the National Assembly powerless. Its debates dramatize problems but seldom accomplish much toward their solution.

The 1998 Assembly elections had assured President Ratsiraka a comfortable majority in parliament as his party (AREMA) captured 63 seats, while allied parties, most importantly Leader-Fanilo, which held 16 seats, and a number of supportive independents won enough to assure control.

The National Assembly elections held in 2001 produced an overwhelming victory for the parties that

supported Ravalomanana (i.e., his own TIM [I Love Madagascar] and its allies FP and RPSD) and a defeat for those who had been associated with Ratsiraka (i.e., AREMA and Leader-Fanilo).

MADAGASCAR NATIONAL ASSEMBLY: SEATS BY PARTY, 2002

Party	Seats
Tiako I Madagasikara (TIM)	103
Firaisankinam-Pirenena (FP)	22
Rénaissance du Parti Social-Démocratique (RPSD)	5
AREMA	3
LEADER-Fanilo	2
other parties	3
independents	22
Total	160

JUDICIARY

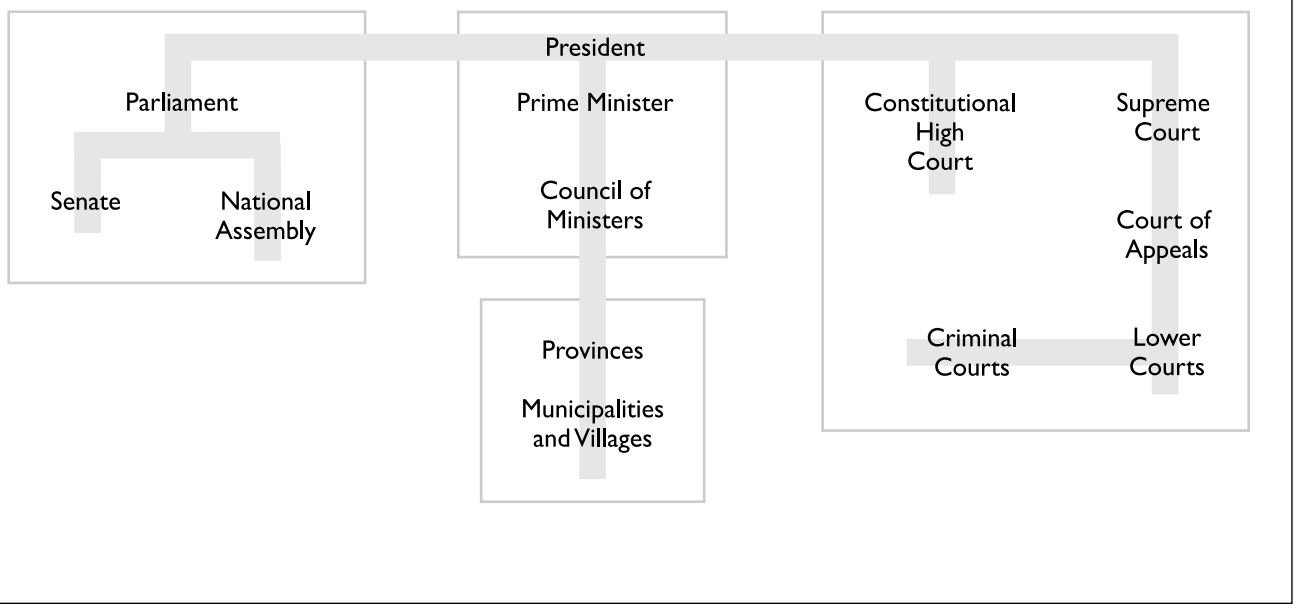
The apex of Madagascar's legal system is a Constitutional High Court comprised of seven judges who are elected by the National Assembly. The Court has the power of judicial review, in that it interprets the Madagascan constitution and rules on the constitutionality of new laws. Often it has served as the final arbiter of political differences, including electoral disputes and conflicts between central and local authorities. The Court supported and, in effect, finalized Zafy's impeachment in 1996, certified Ratsiraka's extremely narrow comeback victory in 1997, and endorsed Ravalomanana's claim to power in 2002.

In addition to the Constitutional Court, there is a Supreme Court, a Court of Appeals, and a large number of local lower courts, some of which have highly specialized jurisdiction. The legal system is largely based on French legal codes and practices with the addition of some practices from traditional Malagasy law.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Madagascar's poor communications and transportation infrastructures have made it difficult for any regime to effectively link the capital to the outlying areas. A popular federalist movement received renewed momentum when, during the 1996 presidential elections, Ratsiraka promised that a national referendum on federalism would be held in the near future. In March 1998 a federal system was adopted as part of the new constitution. There are six autonomous provinces, each with an elected governor and legislative council. The provinces have great financial autonomy.

ORGANIZATION OF MADAGASCAN GOVERNMENT



Local government in Madagascar has been based on traditional village assemblies (*fokonolona*) and elected urban district councils (*fokontany*) headed by mayors.

The Electoral System

There is universal suffrage in Madagascar for those aged 18 or older. National elections are held for the office of the presidency and members National Assembly, and there are elections for provincial and local leaders, recall elections, and constitutional referendums. As illiteracy is widespread, ballots have usually been marked with party symbols and colors. Elections are often accompanied by claims of fraud. In May 1997 the National Assembly passed a law making an identity card necessary to register on voting lists and take part in elections.

Presidential candidates file with a deposit that is returned to candidates who receive at least 10 percent of the vote. If no candidate receives a majority on the first ballot, the two highest finishers compete in a runoff a month after the first-round results are officially announced.

Members of the National Assembly are chosen in elections that are separate from the presidential balloting. Members are chosen from either single- or two-member constituencies.

The Party System

Political parties in colonial Madagascar were originally developed in the mid-1940s but were suppressed by the French following widespread violence in 1947. Parties reemerged in preparation for elections in 1958. As was typical in French Africa, most were affiliates of parties found within France. The most important of these parties was the Social Democratic Party (PSD) of Philibert Tsiranana, the country's first president. PSD remained the governing party throughout the First Republic. Its major opposition was the Congress Party for the Independence of Madagascar (AKFM), which wanted complete independence rather than internal self-government within the French Community. In general, PSD support came from the coastal tribes, AKFM's from the *Merina*.

As one of the new, "revolutionary" institutions of the Second Republic, Ratsiraka created his own party, the Vanguard of the Malagasy Revolution (AREMA). AREMA formed the nucleus of a fractious coalition called the National Front for the Defense of the Revolution (FNDR). Under the constitution, the FNDR was the only legal political organization. All political parties had to be within the Front, which offered a single list of candidates to the voters. Ratsiraka's efforts to create a viable one-party system were, however, thwarted by conflicts among the groups and individuals supposedly united within the Front.

In March 1990 the Ratsiraka government, recognizing the disintegration of the Front and faced with popular demands for democratic change, agreed to the resumption of multiparty politics. The lifting of the ban was codified in the constitution, which guarantees freedom of political organization in political parties and associations. In an effort to avoid communal-based politics that might threaten national unity, parties that advocate ethnic, tribal, or religious segregation were prohibited.

Since then, parties have abounded as new ones formed and older ones were reconstituted. Over 120 parties contested the 1993 Assembly elections, and more than 150 participated in 1998 and 2002. Only a few of these parties run candidates throughout the country and most lack any permanent organization or officials. Not surprisingly, few have ever captured a single seat. The larger and more successful parties are only relatively more organized and stable. Party members move from one party to another and allegiance to a local leader is often stronger than party affiliation.

With a few exceptions, Madagascan parties frequently fracture and combine, change names, and disappear only to reappear again. In general, the parties have tended to form broad, fluid coalitions that either support or oppose the nation's president.

CAMPAIGNING

Political and economic programs are often largely absent or meaninglessly vague in political campaigns. Candidates appeal to popular dissent and clamors for radical change. Many of Madagascar's voters have little party loyalty but rather appear increasingly inclined to defeat incumbents. Ratsiraka's electoral success in 1996 may have had less to do with his previous experience or his extensive personal campaigning than it did with popular dissatisfaction with President Zafy, under whom the economy had worsened. Voters again turned out incumbents in the 2001 presidential and 2002 National Assembly elections. Ravalomanana promised reforms, claimed to have a much-needed antipoverty program, and had the support of other big-city mayors, but, probably most importantly, was seen as "a new face."

Major Political Parties

The strength of political parties can change greatly from election to election; those discussed below are, or recently have been, the most significant. Parties are not usually distinguished on the basis of ideology or policy issues but, rather, whether they support or oppose the president.

I LOVE MADAGASCAR

(Tiako I Madagasikara; TIM)

TIM was created in 1999 to support businessman Marc Ravalomanana's candidacy for mayor of Antananarivo. The party supported him in the 2001 presidential election. In 2002 TIM presented Assembly candidates in all six provinces, winning 34 percent of the popular vote and 103 of the 160 seats.

Somewhat stronger in the urban areas and among the *Merina* people, the party has had, despite some talk of political reform and economic development, no clear ideology or purpose other than support for Ravalomanana.

NATIONAL SOLIDARITY

(Firaisankinam-Pirenena; FP)

The FP was created in 2002 and was supportive of Ravalomanana. In the 2002 elections it won 22 seats in the National Assembly and joined the governing coalition.

VANGUARD OF THE MALAGASY REVOLUTION

(Avant-Garde de la Révolution Malagasy; AREMA)

AREMA was established by then-president Ratsiraka as one of the new revolutionary institutions of the Second Republic. It formed the core group of the FNDR and served as the electoral instrument for the president, most members of the National Assembly, and the majority of elected local government officials. It included youth and women's groups and was closely tied to organized labor. Its ability to coordinate and govern was, however, continually compromised by internal factions. Its members held differing images of Socialism, disagreed strongly about its application, and had varying reactions to the president's slide from Socialist revolutionary toward reluctant free marketeer.

The party was temporarily dissolved following Ratsiraka's defeat in the February 1993 presidential elections. AREMA did not participate in the June 1993 elections to the National Assembly. By the mid-1990s AREMA was reconstituted by Ratsiraka, and the party served as his vehicle in the successful 1996 presidential elections. The party's national strength was demonstrated in the 1998 National Assembly elections when it fielded candidates in every constituency and won four times as many seats as its closest rival.

The party was badly weakened, but not destroyed, when Ratsiraka and many of his major political supporters chose exile in 2002. Before 2002 National Assembly elections the party split, one faction calling for a boycott while another fielded 94 candidates. In the elections the AREMA candidates won slightly less than 5 percent of the popular vote, the most of any opposition party, and captured three seats.

TORCH

(Leader-Fanilo)

Leader-Fanilo was organized in 1992 as a party of "nonpoliticians." Its founder and was Herizo Razafimahaleo, a businessman who had previously served as an adviser to Ratsiraka. In the 1993 National Assembly elections it captured 13 seats. The party was one of the more powerful members of the coalition of parties that regularly opposed then-president Zafy.

The party maintained close ties to Ratsiraka. In 1996, for example, Razafimahaleo received 15 percent of the vote in the first round of the 1996 presidential balloting, and in the second round he asked his supporters to back Ratsiraka. Razafimahaleo was subsequently chosen as a deputy prime minister, and three other party members received cabinet portfolios.

In 1998 Leader-Fanilo was the only party other than AREMA to contest all of the National Assembly seats. It won 16 seats, making it the second largest in the Assembly. The party opposes Ravalomanana and, like its ally AREMA, has seen its appeal decline precipitously. In the 2001 presidential election Razafimahaleo received only 4 percent of the popular vote. In the 2002 National Assembly elections it fielded only 74 candidates and captured only two seats.

REBIRTH OF THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY

(Rénaissance du l Parti Social-Démocratique; RPSD)

Formerly known as the Rally for Social Democracy, the RPSD, which has roots going back to the former

president Philibert Tsiranana's PSD, was established in 1993. A social democratic party, often critical of Ratsiraka, it was supportive of President Ravalomanana. The RPSD won 8 seats in 1993, 11 in 1998, and 5 in 2002.

NATIONAL UNION FOR DEVELOPMENT AND DEMOCRACY

(Union Nationale pour le Developpement et la Démocratie; UNDD)

The UNDD was created by Albert Zafy in 1991 to oppose the Ratsiraka regime, which it denounced as despotic and corrupt. Its electoral slogan was simple: "Ratsiraka out." With support from Catholic and Protestant church groups, it promised to effect a peaceful democratic revolution.

The UNDD became a core member of the anti-Ratsiraka Coalition of Living Forces. In May 1993, following his election as Madagascar's president, Zafy resigned as UNDD's president but accepted the title of "honorary president" and remained the party's leader.

Zafy's impeachment and subsequent loss in the presidential elections and the party's unsuccessful opposition to the 1998 constitution left the party's future, at best, uncertain. The UNDD boycotted the 1998 National Assembly elections. In 2001 Zafy received only 5 percent of the popular vote, and in 2002 the party captured no Assembly seats.

Minor Political Parties

Madagascar has had as many as 150 different parties active at the same time. Usually less than a dozen of these offer candidates in more than one province. Asa Vita Ifampitsanara (Work Finished by Solidarity, AVI), a moderate party founded by former prime minister Norbert Ratsirhonana, provides a good example of the rapid rise and decline of parties in Madagascar. The party was created in 1998 and won 14 seats in that year's elections to the National Assembly. By 2002, however, most of its supporters had moved elsewhere: the party fielded candidates in only two provinces, won no seats, and retained a core of members only in the city of Antananarivo.

Toamasina Tonga Saina (TTS) is organized only in Toamasina Province and, even there, is found almost exclusively in the city of the same name. This small party, which successfully elected two members to the National Assembly in the 2002 elections, is notable primarily because its leader, Roland Ratsiraka, the mayor of the city of Toamasina, is the nephew of the exiled former president and is sometimes considered as his in-country spokesman.

Other Political Forces

CHRISTIAN CHURCHES

Many of Madagascar's churches are organized in the politically active, staunchly democratic National Council of Christian Churches. During the early 1990s they supported Zafy and the movement for democratic reform. In 1998 they opposed the new constitution, which they claimed would create a presidential dictatorship. Their opposition is believed by many observers to be the major reason why the new constitution was adopted by only the slimmest majority of voters.

MILITARY

Madagascar's military, including the regular army, gendarmes, and a presidential guard, have long been highly politicized. The military overthrew the First Republic and installed its own leaders, including Ratsiraka as president. During these years the military was responsible for internal security and frequently turned its guns on political protesters. More recently, the military's role has been less overt, but if strife breaks out, it could again become the final political arbiter.

FEDERALIST MOVEMENT

A movement that has long been in existence to devolve some government powers to provincial and local authorities apparently has the support of President Ravalomanana.

NEWSPAPERS

Press censorship has often been the rule in Madagascar. During the Third Republic, however, Madagascar has enjoyed a free press. Unfortunately, illiteracy, poverty, and the isolation of many communities have limited its readership.

National Prospects

It is difficult to predict Madagascar's prospects. The tumultuous nature of Madagascar's politics reached the point of violence following the most recent presidential election. Since then, however, National

Assembly and local elections have been peaceful. TIM's ability to field candidates, and win Assembly and local contests throughout the country, is another positive sign. The economy may be the primary determinant of Madagascar's future. Ravalomanana is continuing his predecessor's efforts to diversify the economy and to obtain international aid and debt forgiveness. He achieved important successes in his first term as president. For example, in 2004 the World Bank and International Monetary Fund agreed to write off about half of the country's $4 billion external debt, and the United States in 2005 made Madagascar the first recipient of a program aimed at providing assistance to countries pursuing democratic and market reforms.

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REPUBLIC OF MALAWI

(Dziko ia Malai)

By Christopher J. Lee, M.A., Ph.D.



Malawi is a country of some 12 million people (2005 est.). In the late 19th century the territory that is now Malawi became a British protectorate, alternatively named the Nyasaland Districts Protectorate, British Central Africa Protectorate, and Nyasaland (1907–53). In 1953 Malawi became part of the British-ruled Federation of Rhodesia (present-day Zimbabwe and Zambia) and Nyasaland. After a period of active African opposition to both the federation and colonial power, the former was dissolved in 1963. Malawi formerly achieved independence the following year, on July 6, 1964.

In 1966 Malawi became a one-party republic under President Dr. Hastings Banda, who was named president for life in 1971. The political system was dominated by Banda and his Malawi Congress Party (MCP) until 1994, when internal pressures forced the regime to hold multiparty elections and adopt a new constitution. The rule of the Banda regime finally came to an end when Bakili Muluzi won the presidency by defeating Banda in 1994.

The System of Government

Malawi is a multiparty democratic republic with a unicameral legislature.

EXECUTIVE

Executive power is exercised by the president. The president is both head of state and head of the government and is elected for a five-year term by universal adult suffrage. The government consists of the president, two vice presidents, and a cabinet comprising several dozen members. In 2004 Bingu wa Mutharika of the ruling United Democratic Front (UDF) was elected president, though some observers considered the election unfair.

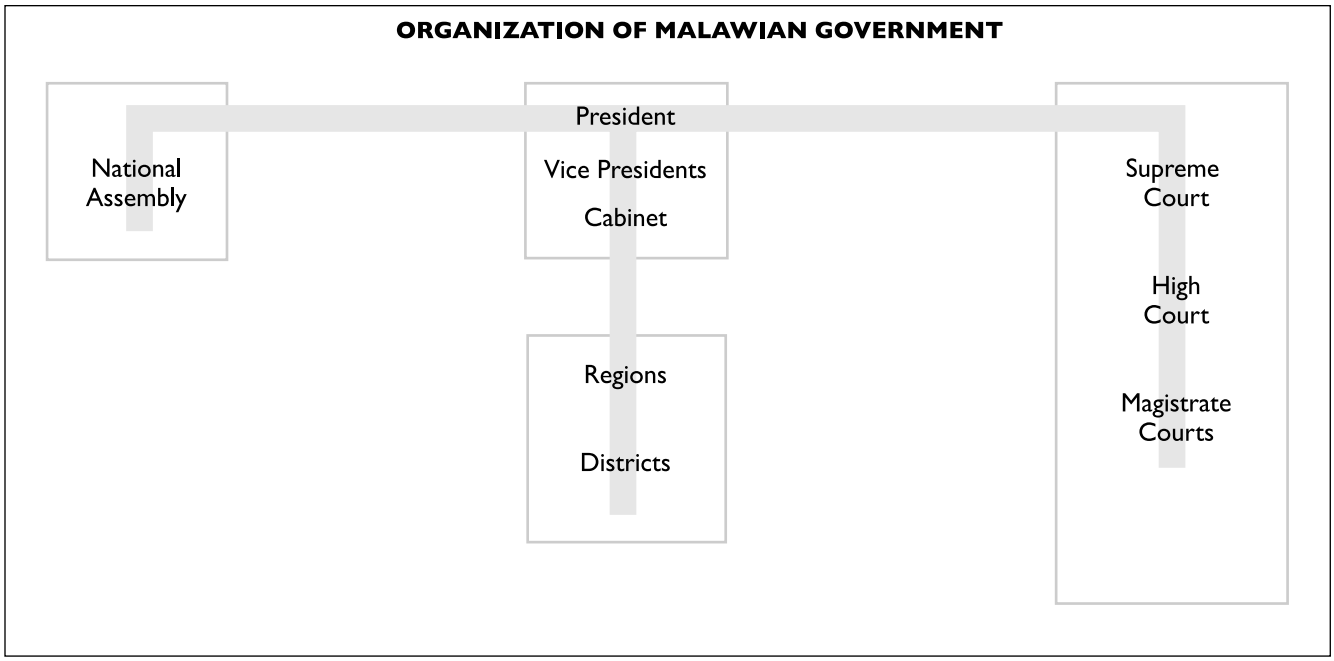
LEGISLATURE

Parliament comprises the unicameral National Assembly, which has 193 members elected for five-year terms. The speaker is chosen from among the members of the Assembly. The Assembly also has the power to change the constitution with a two-thirds vote. In the mid-1990s there were plans to establish an upper legislative house, but these plans were scrapped in 2001.

The president has the right to refuse the assent of any bill in the Assembly. In the event that a bill is resubmitted and passed within a six-month period, the president has the right to dissolve the legislature and call new elections. Both constitutionally and in the view of the party system, the legislature is dominated by the executive branch.

JUDICIARY

The court system in Malawi includes the Supreme Court of Appeal, the High Court, and magistrate's courts. Formally, the highest court is the Supreme Court, which hears appeals against decisions of the High Court. It is headed by the chief justice, who is a presidential appointee. The High Court has full jurisdiction over civil and criminal cases. It consists of a



chief justice and five puisne judges. Magistrate's courts handle criminal and civil matters at the regional and local levels. Traditional courts were established in 1970 by the Banda regime and were presided over by local chiefs. These were abolished by the 1994 constitution.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Malawi is divided into three major areas, the Southern, the Central, and the Northern Regions. Each is represented in the national cabinet by an appointed regional minister. The regions, in turn, are divided into a total of 27 districts that include the cities of Blantyre and Lilongwe, the municipality of Zomba, and several towns. While local councils are elected, all are supervised by the Ministry of Local Government, which also controls the allocations of money to all levels.

Elections since 1994 have revealed regional and ethnic differences in the support of the major political parties. The UDF has had its strongest showing in the heavily populated south, whereas former President Banda's MCP maintains support in the center, and the Alliance for Democracy (AFORD) holds the north.

The Electoral System

Deputies to the National Assembly are directly elected in single-member districts. The ballot is secret, although the high level of illiteracy requires voters to show their preferences by placing slips of paper in a separate box for each candidate. Eligibility for voting is universal for those age 18 or older.

Elections in 1971 and 1976 were uncontested, but in 1978, 47 of 87 electoral districts were contested. Although all candidates were from the MCP, no fewer than 31 sitting MPs were replaced. President Banda stated that he would use the election to reshuffle his cabinet and was pleased with the defeat of so many MPs. The 1978 elections was Malawi's first experiment with electoral competition. However, it was regarded with skepticism by Western observers and opposition parties, since it provided Malawians a choice among competing personalities, not policies.

Elections held in 1981 and 1987 followed a similar pattern. In 1981, 75 of 101 seats were contested, and, in 1987, 69 of 112 seats. Again, all candidates were MCP members. In 1983 and 1984 Banda appointed a number of additional members to the National Assembly, bringing the total to 124 seats. In 1992 elections took place for an enlarged legislature that now consisted of 141 seats; 91 were contested as 62 former members lost their seats. Banda also nominated 10 members. The government claimed a voter turnout of 80 percent, but other observers gave much lower figures.

The most significant election in recent history was the national referendum on multiparty democracy in 1993. Although the government tried to disrupt the process and the activities of opposition groups, the measure

passed with over 63 percent of the vote. Banda opposed the immediate creation of a government of national unity but agreed to establish a multiparty national executive council to oversee the transition to multiparty democracy and to draft a new constitution. Legislative elections were scheduled to take place in 1994. It is widely believed that the Banda regime agreed to the referendum after international donors cut economic aid in response to the government's human rights violations.

The country's first multiparty elections were held in May 1994. The elections brought almost 3 million Malawians to the polls and resulted in the election of Bakili Muluzi (UDF) as president with 1.4 million votes (47 percent). His party also captured 84 seats in parliament. Dr. Hastings Banda and the MCP came in second with 1 million votes (33.5 percent) and 55 parliamentary seats, while Chakufwa Chihana (AFORD) came in third with 550,000 votes (18.6 percent) and 36 parliamentary seats. Elections in two of the legislative districts were invalidated but were later repeated to give the UDF and MCP one additional seat each. Turnout in elections in the early 21st century has been modest, with usually slightly more than half the electorate participating.

The Party System

Dr. Hastings Banda and the Malawi Congress Party ruled Malawi from 1964 to 1994, making both Banda and his party one of the most enduring political institutions in Africa. Between 1963 and 1993 all opposition parties to the MCP were banned. But since 1993, when opposition parties were legalized, several parties have been formed. In addition to the MCP, there are two other major political parties in Malawi: the Alliance for Democracy (AFORD) and the United Democratic Front (UDF). The UDF emerged victorious in the 1994 elections and held power continuously into the early 21st century.

Despite recent political changes in the country, it is important to place the political future of the country in the historical context of the autocratic rule of Dr. Hastings Banda and the Malawi Congress Party.

Major Political Parties

MALAWI CONGRESS PARTY (MCP)

HISTORY

The MCP was established in 1959 under Banda's leadership to fight for the end of the federation with Rhodesia and for independence from British colonial rule. The party's early success stemmed from Banda's ability to secure independence and create successful programs of economic development. From 1965 until the mid-1990s political opposition was virtually nonexistent. The party suffered losses following the legalization of opposition parties, but in the 2004 parliamentary elections it emerged as the largest party in the National Assembly.

ORGANIZATION

The party was more of an organization for promoting support for the regime than a forum for debating policy issues. Officially, party policy was made by the annual party convention composed of party officials from national, regional, and district levels, members of parliament, some traditional chiefs, chairmen of the district councils, and representatives of other organizations.

In the past, the convention's role was at best advisory and at worst ceremonial. But, given the party's poor electoral showing in the mid-1990s and the passing of Banda, the party has been reorganized in a more democratic fashion.

POLICY

Banda was responsible for setting MCP policy while alive. In foreign affairs, Malawi was distinguished from other sub-Saharan Africa states by its willingness to remain on good terms with South Africa during that country's apartheid era.

Despite its relationship to South Africa, Malawi joined the South African Development Co-ordination Conference (SADCC) in 1980 to decrease its economic dependence on South Africa. Internally, Banda sought to encourage the growth of private industry, especially commercial agriculture and small-scale industrial development. These ventures were financed and promoted through foreign investment and by the Malawi Development Corporation (MDC), a state-owned development organization.

MEMBERSHIP

All Malawi adults were required to join the MCP, but few took an active part. It was a strictly disciplined organization that was reorganized several times to exclude threats to party integrity. Although recent political changes have reduced the size of the party, it remains a major political force and maintains a large following. No membership figures are available.

UNITED DEMOCRATIC FRONT (UDF)

HISTORY

The UDF was formed in September 1992 as an opposition group to the Banda government. The party was organized by Bakili Muluzi and other former MCP members who favored political and economic reforms. Together with the Alliance for Democracy (AFORD), the UDF was instrumental in promoting the referendum on multiparty democracy and constitutional reform in 1993 and the multiparty elections that followed in 1994.

ORGANIZATION

The UDF is well financed and organized, advantages that derive from the fact that much of the party leadership consists of business leaders and former MCP government officials. The MCP links helped the party to establish an instant national foothold that carried it to victory in 1994. The party is especially strong in the south, but superior party organization and financing have also given it a solid presence in the traditional MCP stronghold of the Central Region.

POLICY

One of the party's principal issues has been the promotion of democratic and political reforms. In this respect it differs little from AFORD. But since the party does have closer links to commercial interests, there is a greater emphasis on the role that the private sector plays in this process. The UDF has sought political and financial support from numerous European nations and solicited international organizations to help liberalize the economy. The party is fully in support of IMF policies of privatization, tariff cuts, and currency devaluations.

MEMBERSHIP

Party membership consists largely of individuals who formerly supported the MCP. As Banda's grip on the government and economy created intolerable conditions in the country, many MCP members moved to support the newly created UDF in 1992. Many of the party's members are younger people who felt that democratic reforms were the only alternative to the autocratic rule that was quickly coming to an end in Malawi and the rest of Africa. The UDF's support of economic liberalization has also made it popular among the business class, including most of the country's Asian population. No membership figures are available.

FINANCING

The party derives much of its financial support from its members, who include many prominent Malawians in commerce and government. The party's strong political position and its promotion of internal reforms have also brought it international financial support from governments and institutions that are in sympathy with these policy positions.

LEADERSHIP

In the early 21st century the party was led by President Bingu wa Mutharika. But cracks began to emerge in the party, and soon after being elected president in 2004, he embarked upon a campaign to stamp out corruption. Three officials in the party were convicted of treason for carrying guns to a meeting with the president (they were later pardoned), and in 2005 Mutharika resigned from the party, claiming that his reform policies were being met with opposition from within the party. He formed a new party, the Democratic Progressive Party. Mutharika's defection casts doubt on his own political future as well as that of the UDF.

ALLIANCE FOR DEMOCRACY (AFORD)

HISTORY

AFORD was formed in September 1992 under the leadership of Chakufwa Chihana shortly before the organization of the UDF. Together with the UDF it pressured the Banda regime into the political reforms that came to fruition in 1994. After the formation of the party in 1992, it absorbed the membership of the Malawi Freedom Movement (MAFREMO), another outspoken political opposition group.

ORGANIZATION

The party, as organized by Chihana, sought to be truly national in scope, attracting support from the country's different regions. Although its strength lies mainly in the north, AFORD has brought many of its key members from the Central and Southern Regions. Despite these efforts, the party still suffers considerable organizational weakness due to financial and institutional deficiencies.

POLICY

AFORD was originally organized around a platform that sought to implement multiparty democracy with a mixed economy. During the elections of 1994, the party also identified itself with moral issues such as

human rights and political freedom. While AFORD supports IMF liberalization and donor aid programs, it retains stronger links to labor movements and hence a more social democratic vision of democracy than either of its rivals.

One of the important positions of the party with respect to the democratization process is that it sees itself as the true representative of democracy in Malawi. Unlike the MCP or the UDF, AFORD's members have always operated in opposition to the Malawian political system. This distinction led Chihana to attack the UDF as "recycled politicians" and members of the "Malawi Congress Party B" during election campaigns. This legacy also led to Chihana's refusal to unite with the UDF in a broad political coalition against the MCP. Yet, after a vitriolic campaign and the UDF victory in 1994, AFORD joined the ruling party to resolve the country's many socioeconomic and political problems. Nevertheless, in the 1999 election AFORD ran on a joint slate with the MCP to defeat the UDF.

MEMBERSHIP

AFORD is distinct from the UDF and the MCP in that it has drawn its leadership from outside the Malawian political system. Its membership also reflects this, in that it appeals to those citizens who have been peripheral to the national political and economic system. As such, much of the party's membership is based on ethnic and regional affiliation with the more isolated north. Moreover, given Chihana's career as a trade union leader and the party's strident positions on human rights and political freedom, it has been popular in urban areas among workers, religious groups, students, intellectuals, and journalists. No membership figures are available.

FINANCING

Without strong links to the political and economic institutions of the country, AFORD has had greater difficulty in raising money than its competitors. Much of the party's funds seem to come from loyal supporters.

Minor Political Parties

There were eight political parties authorized to participate in the 1994 elections. The impact of the smaller parties has generally been negligible, though in the 2004 elections the National Democratic Alliance outpaced AFORD, winning eight seats to AFORD's six, and a coalition of several parties captured 27 of the National Assembly's 193 seats.

Other Political Forces

Internal forces outside of organized political movements have had a minimal role in shaping the nation's political system. The military has remained subservient to the state. Although the country contains several ethnic groups, the only conflict to arise occurred when the capital was moved from Zombe to Lilongwe in 1975. This caused resentment among ethnic groups in the more prosperous Southern Region of the country. They saw the decision to move the capital to the center of the country as bias toward the Chewa people, whose language has become dominant throughout the country. The role of labor and religious factions in political matters has had some impact, particularly during the transition of the mid-1990s, though party politics has frequently taken precedent over these elements of civil society. External influences, particularly international donor agencies, have had an impact on the country.

National Prospects

Despite the claims of its opponents, the Banda regime was responsible for creating economic and political stability during its period of rule. For this reason it maintained fairly high levels of popular support. More recently, however, internal and external factors have significantly altered Malawi's political and socioeconomic situation. Political change in South Africa affected Malawi's economic and security status in southern Africa. As the charismatic Hastings Banda began to fade from the political scene, the creation of a competitive multiparty system became a logical next step.

The election of 1994 signalled a major watershed in Malawi's political history. The victory of Bakili Muluzi as a freely elected president marked the beginning of a new era in Malawi in which the country has struggled to create a new identity and direction after decades of one-party rule. Despite the massive political changes, the internal obstacles to political and socioeconomic transformation remain tremendous. Lack of infrastructure and natural resources and massive poverty will undoubtedly plague future regimes, and corruption—being combated by Mutha-

rika—has been rife. The government continues to face the daunting task of rebuilding political and social institutions, many of which have collapsed or still operate under the distortions and corruption created by decades of Banda's influence. HIV/AIDS—which has helped reduce life expectancy to under 40 and prompted the government in 2004 to announce a program to provide free anti-viral drugs to AIDS patients—and widespread poverty also persist as significant social issues.

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FEDERATION OF MALAYSIA

(Persekutuan Tanan Malaysia)

By Peter Dawson
Revised by Carlo Bonura, Jr.
Further revision by Joel Selway



Malaysia comprises the 11 states of the Malay Peninsula and the states of Sabah and Sarawak on the island of Borneo, along with a federal territory with three components: Kuala Lumpur, the capital, Labuan Island, and Putrajay. The country has a population of some 24 million (2005 est.), of whom some three-fifths are Malay and other indigenous, one-fourth Chinese, and about one-fourteenth Indian. It achieved independence from British colonial rule on August 31, 1957, as the Malayan Federation, then consisting of the states of the peninsula only. In September 1963 Sabah, Sarawak, and Singapore joined the federation, but Singapore seceded on August 9, 1965. The federal territory of Kuala Lumpur was created in 1974.

The System of Government

Malaysia is a federal constitutional monarchy. The present constitution has been effective from 1957, with only limited subsequent alterations. It provides for a parliamentary and cabinet system closely modeled on that of the United Kingdom.

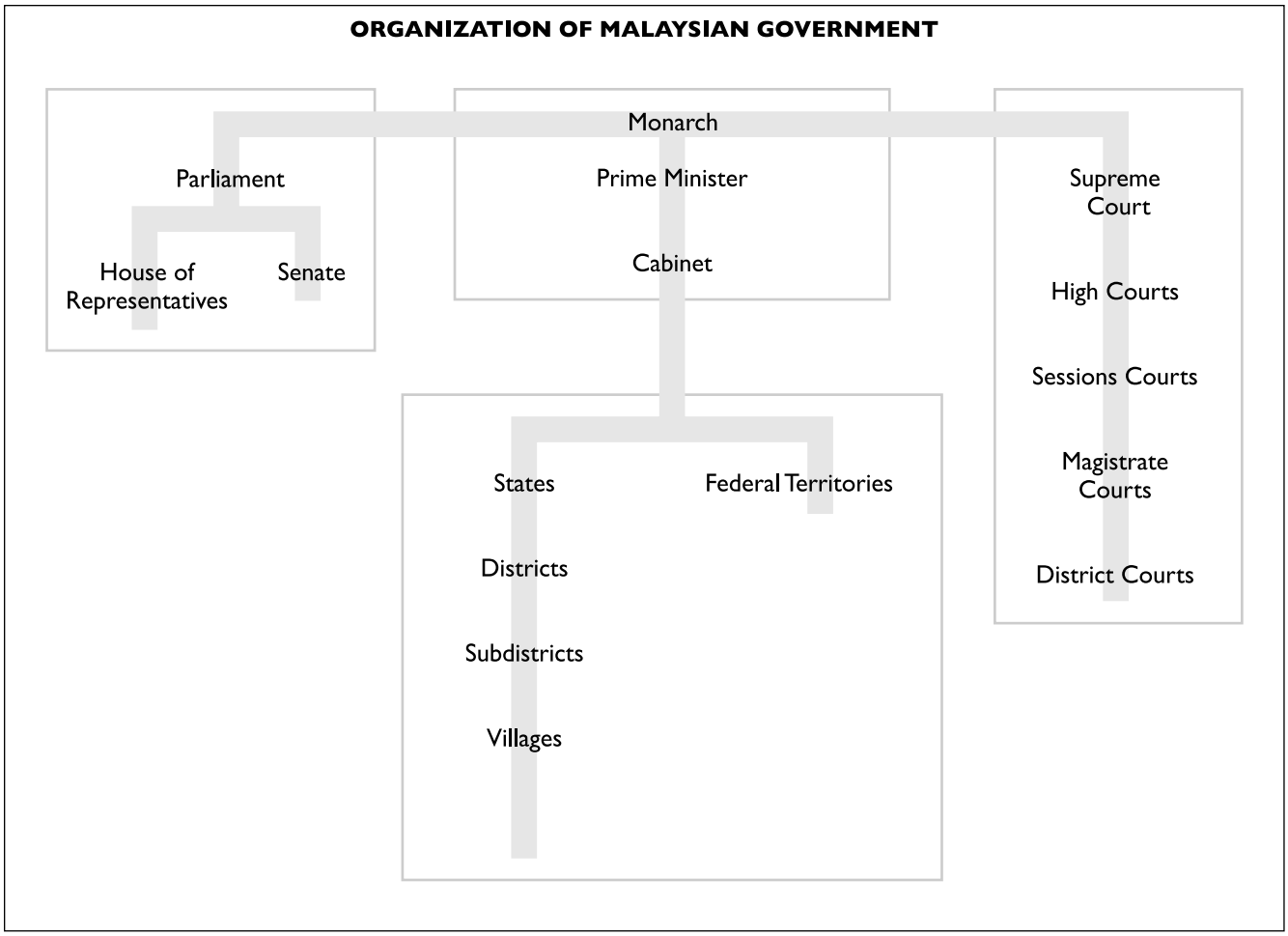
EXECUTIVE

The head of state is the Yang di-Pertuan Agong (or king), who serves for a term of five years. The office rotates according to precedence among the royal rulers of nine of the 13 states of the federation, but accession to the office is confirmed by election among these nine rulers. The office thus constitutes a unique combination of monarchic, rotation, and elective principles. Although formally the head of government, the king is in practice a constitutional monarch with only very limited discretionary power.

The effective head of government is the Perdana Mentri (prime minister), working with and through the Juma'ah Mentri (cabinet). The king appoints as prime minister the member of the Dewan Rakyat (House of Representatives) likely to command the confidence of a majority in the House, normally the leader of the majority party. Members of the cabinet are appointed by the king from either of the two houses of Parliament on the advice of the prime minister. The cabinet is required by the constitution to be collectively responsible to parliament. In June 2002 Asia's longest serving prime minister, Mahathir bin Mohamad, announced he was stepping down as head of the largest party in the ruling coalition, UMNO. After 22 years under Mahathir, the population—including members of the ruling party, UMNO—was shocked at the announcement. UMNO party elders persuaded Mahathir to continue until the following year. In October 2003 Abdullah Badawi was sworn in as Malaysia's fifth prime minister since independence.

LEGISLATURE

The legislature consists of the king and the two *majlis* (councils): the Dewan Negara (Senate) and the



Dewan Rakyat (House of Representatives). The king, however, takes no active part in the proceedings of parliament. The Senate, which is the less powerful of the two houses, has some 70 members. Each of the 13 state legislatures elects two members, while the king, acting on advice from the prime minister, appoints an additional 44, including two to represent the federal territory.

Senators serve for three year-terms (they may serve a maximum of two terms), their term being unaffected by a dissolution of the House of Representatives. Senators tend to be prominent older figures in public life, representative of occupational and ethnic groupings, although in recent years Senate seats have sometimes been used to groom younger, rising politicians. Despite the minority group of territorial representatives, the Senate has never been active in promoting states' rights against those of the federation.

The House of Representatives, which changes in size, had at the 2004 elections 219 members directly elected from single-member constituencies by simple majorities. The minimum qualifying age for membership is 21. Dual membership of the two federal houses is forbidden as is simultaneous representation of two federal constituencies, but several federal legislators also hold seats or office in their state assemblies. The maximum life of the House of Representatives is five years, but it may be dissolved at any time by the king acting upon the request of the prime minister. The king does have the power, never used so far, to refuse such a request.

A simple majority in both houses is sufficient to carry legislation. The Senate has a delaying power of one month over money bills and of one year over other bills. Most constitutional amendments require a two-thirds majority, while certain articles of the constitution cannot be amended without the consent of the Majlis Raja Raja (Conference of Rulers). The Majlis Raja Raja, which meets three or four times a year, comprises the 13 rulers of the states of the federation, including the nine hereditary royal rulers and the governors of Penang, Malacca, Sabah, and Sarawak. It acts as a third house of parliament on amendments to certain sections of the constitution (especially Article

153, which protects the position of Malays), the extension of Islamic religious practices, and the making of certain major state appointments (such as judges of the Supreme Court), as well as on legislation affecting the position of rulers and the boundaries of states. The nine royal rulers, sitting within the Conference of Rulers, are responsible also for the election of the king and his deputy.

Since independence, the government coalition, the National Front, dominated by the United Malays National Organization, has always held an absolute majority of the seats in the House of Representatives. Opposition groups have achieved only limited success

JUDICIARY

The Supreme Court is the highest judicial authority in Malaysia. It has the power to interpret the constitution and to adjudicate in disputes between states or between any state and the federal government. It is also the highest court of appeal in criminal cases for the federation. Beneath the Supreme Court are two High Courts, one for West and one for East Malaysia, which have original jurisdiction in their areas in both civil and criminal cases as well as appeal from subordinate courts. The lord president, who heads the Supreme Court, is appointed by the king, who must act on the advice of the prime minister after consulting the Conference of Rulers. Other senior judges are similarly appointed with the lord president also being consulted. The independence of the judiciary is maintained by this means as well as by the stipulation of legal qualifications, a high security of tenure and remuneration, and restrictions on discussion of judicial conduct in the legislatures. In numerous cases, the judiciary has displayed a very high standard of independence from political influence. The legal system is largely based on English common law.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Each of Malaysia's 13 states is governed by a *mentri besar* (chief minister) responsible to a unicameral legislative assembly whose members are directly elected, except in Sabah, which retains a limited number of nominated members. The relations among the state ruler or governor, the chief minister, and the assembly are broadly similar to those that prevail at the federal level among the king, the prime minister, and parliament. But the powers of states are limited, being confined principally to land and natural-resource management and the oversight of local government. Sabah and Sarawak, however, enjoy some powers not available to the states of West Malaysia. The federal government is the main taxing authority and controls the borrowing powers of states so that apart from land revenue, states enjoy no significant sources of income. Since state legislatures are now dominated by political parties that are members of the governing coalition at the federal level, a further degree of state and federal harmonization is achieved.

The Electoral System

All members of the House of Representatives are directly elected by a simple majority within each of the 219 single-member constituencies. Of the 70 members of the Senate, 26 are elected by their state legislatures with 44 members appointed. All citizens age 21 or older (other than those detained as being of "unsound mind" or serving a prison sentence or who have been sentenced to death or imprisonment of more than 12 months) are eligible to vote by secret ballot in elections for the House of Representatives or legislative assemblies. Malaysia has adopted a simple plurality system more commonly known as first-past-the-post. Candidates with more votes than any other are elected in a series of single-member constituencies. For administrative purposes, each parliamentary constituency represents a registration area. Each registration area is broken up into smaller units known as polling districts, which are subsequently broken up into subunits known as localities.

The Election Commission conducts elections and prepares and annually revises electoral rolls. It is also responsible every 8 to 10 years for reviewing and recommending changes to the boundaries of state and national constituencies. Registration of voters is neither automatic nor compulsory. The ballot paper in each constituency lists all the candidates and their party symbols; voters indicate their choice by marking an X. Votes are counted centrally within each constituency in the presence of candidates and their agents. Turnout is usually above 60 percent. The system is in the main fair and equitable, although various technical factors relating to voter registration and constituency delimitation together with the effects of the simple-majority method have produced, in all national elections, a highly disproportionate number of seats for the governing coalition.

The Party System

ORIGINS OF THE PARTIES

The most distinctive feature of Malaysian political parties is that they are communally based, but a second major feature is a tendency toward consolidation and coalition. The communal divisions not only are racial but are also reinforced by language, religion, culture, and, to a considerable extent, economic role. With Malays constituting more than half of the total population, Chinese approximately one-quarter, and people of Indian descent about one-fourteenth, parties that represent the interests of these groups are assured of substantial support. The three major communally based parties—the United Malays National Organization, Malayan Chinese Association, and Malayan Indian Congress (UMNO, MCA, and MIC)—all came into existence in the late 1940s specifically to defend their respective ethnic communities against threats perceived in the various constitutional proposals advanced by the colonial government. A coalition they had formed well before independence in 1957 was formally registered as the Alliance Party in 1958. The Alliance collapsed in the wake of communal rioting after the 1969 election, which had shown a growth in support for non-Alliance parties and thus an erosion of the claim by the Alliance to represent a national interest.

After a period of emergency rule, during which electoral and parliamentary activity was suspended, the coalition was reconstituted in 1971 as the National Front (Barisan Nasional; BN). At the same time, it was broadened to include several smaller parties, previously in opposition, so that the Malay and Chinese communities were now represented by more than one party within the front. The United Malays National Organization (UMNO) has always been the dominant participant. With intercommunal harmony the overriding aim of government throughout Malaysia's history, the BN has achieved this aim by private interparty compromise. However, resentment among some sections of the population against this process of elite adjustment has sustained support for several opposition parties.

THE PARTIES IN LAW

The constitution makes no reference to political parties, but under separate legislation (the Societies Act of 1966) all organizations seeking to contest elections must be formally registered. On a few occasions, the refusal of registration has effectively suppressed the activities of some smaller opposition parties. A 1981 amendment to the Societies Act requires all clubs, societies, and associations to register as either political or nonpolitical. This has been seen as limiting the capacity of pressure groups to campaign and lobby to secure changes in government policy. From time to time, security and sedition laws have been used to detain members of opposition parties either because of suspected communist links or because their activities were deemed to be subversive. Parties receive no direct, formal state support. Any qualified election candidate whose nomination has been properly made can be included on the ballot whether or not he or she is a representative of a political party.

PARTY ORGANIZATION

Malaysian parties are too numerous, too different in size, and in several cases too limited to particular regions for many substantial generalizations to be possible. The parties are permanent associations sustained by membership dues and private donations. Most maintain a three-tiered organization at the constituency, state, and national levels. They are identifiable principally by communal characteristics, although different parties drawing their membership from the same community may be distinguished by socioeconomic and, to a limited degree, ideological differences. The major support for the Democratic Action Party, for example, comes from the poorer stratum of Chinese, while the Malayan Chinese Association is more substantially supported by the more affluent. The participation of the major parties in the National Front and the dependence of all—except the United Malays National Organization—on that membership for access to Cabinet office and the consequent benefits to their communities necessitate keeping close central control over subordinate levels. A major instrument of this control for parties within the National Front is the patronage exercised by the chief ministers of states. Although the principal parties hold annual conferences at which major policy issues are determined and national officers are chosen, these processes are usually closely and successfully regulated. Nevertheless, despite this consistent pattern of central and elite domination, some opportunity remains for local leaders to develop local support. For the wealthier, especially within Chinese and urban Malay communities, contributions to community projects, such as schools and places of worship, may generate prestige and power. For all aspirants to party office or candidacy, the role of broker representing constituents' interests within the multiple and many-layered processes of governmental bureaucracy is

universally expected. Thus, education and experience of working within bureaucracies are important factors determining election at the local level.

CAMPAIGNING

A fear of threats to public order has led the government, in recent elections, to ban large public rallies by any party. The preferred method of campaigning has been to hold meetings within private houses at which a largely invited audience participates in a process akin to a seminar, with an address by a speaker followed by questions and discussion. This method, where it is used, permits issues to be presented in a way that is specific to particular areas or occupational groups. In addition, door-to-door canvassing occurs, and pamphlets and posters are widely distributed and displayed although their influence, if any, is difficult to assess. The press has an important role. Seven newspapers, published in local languages as well as in English, have an influence that is generally felt to be substantial, their effect being usually to enhance support for candidates representing the ruling National Front.

It is difficult to determine accurately the full expenditure of parties during election campaigns. Local party branches are in all cases dependent on central party funds derived either from voluntary contributions or from levies on holders of well-paid posts that have been secured by party intervention. The larger parties, most of which are in the National Front, are by far the richer and can thus readily afford the costs of publicity, transport for party workers, and other necessary expenses.

There is usually no close national party control of local campaigns. With the larger parties, preexisting party cohesion encourages a uniformity of approach, although the fact that state assembly elections are held at the same time as those for the national legislature will often ensure that wholly local issues may be promoted in a manner that conflicts with the national party's line.

INDEPENDENT VOTERS

The existence of the National Front as an electoral, as well as a governing, coalition may present some voters with a dilemma when the National Front-endorsed candidate is not from their own ethnic community. In that event, if a candidate from their own community is standing for an opposition party, a conflict arises between the desire to vote for the coalition that almost inevitably enjoys a national majority and is regarded as the source of many material benefits and the wish to assert communal solidarity. There has been some evidence of differential voting for national and for state assemblymen.

Major Political Parties

NATIONAL FRONT

(Barisan Nasional; BN)

This interparty organization is broadly known by its Malay title, Barisan Nasional, or BN. Although registered for legal purposes as a political party, the BN is an electoral and governing coalition comprising more than a dozen and has no organizational structure of its own. In the early 21st century its constituent parties were (in general order of strength) the United Malays National Organization, Malaysian Chinese Association, United Traditional Bumiputra Party, Gerakan, Malaysian Indian Congress, Sarawak Dayak People's Party, Sarawak United People's Party, United Sabah Party, Sarawak Progressive Democrat Party, United Pasokmomogun Kadazandusun Murut Organization, Sabah Progressive Party, People's Progressive Party, the Sabah People's Union, and the Liberal Democrat Party. Most—but not all—of the parties have representation in the legislature. The BN, in some ways, acts like a government body. Parties regularly join and leave the organization in such a manner that the BN seems responsive to voters' demands. Nowhere is this more apparent than in Sabah. Prior to 1985 the Sabah People's Union (PBRS), part of the BN machinery, was the most dominant party in Sabah. Following a split where an ex-PBRS politician set up his own party—the United Sabah Party—the BN began to lose seats in both state and general elections in Sabah. Consequently, the BN soon brought the PBS on board, thus maintaining its power on Sabah. Today, the once fiercely contending Sabahnese parties are both members of the encompassing BN organization.

UNITED MALAYS NATIONAL ORGANIZATION

(Pertubohan Kebangsaan Melayu Bersatu; UMNO)

HISTORY

The UMNO was founded in May 1946 by Dato Onn bin Ja'afar, a leader in the effort in the country's independence movement, to resist the introduction by the British colonial administration of a unitary form of

government throughout peninsular Malaya. The British efforts were seen by Malays and especially by their hereditary rulers as detrimental to Malay interests. The UMNO was not formally registered as a political party until April 1950. Throughout Malaysia's history, it has been the largest national party and the dominant party of government. All four of Malaysia's prime ministers since 1957 have been the leaders of UMNO. Onn's attempts in 1950 to widen UMNO membership to include non-Malays and to introduce other reforms were strongly opposed and led to his resignation and replacement as party president in 1951 by Tunku Abdul Rahman. An ad hoc coalition between UMNO and the MCA to fight the Kuala Lumpur municipal Malaysian Chinese Association elections in 1952 led to the establishment a year later of the Alliance coalition that also included the MIC. Tunku Abdul Rahman became Malaysian Indian Congress prime minister following the first general election in 1955 and led the country to independence in 1957, becoming independent Malaya's first prime minister. Throughout the 1960s his attempts to hold the Alliance together and placate ultranationalist Malays in his own Alliance Party weakened his position. The decline in support for both UMNO and the Alliance revealed by the 1969 election results and the communal rioting that followed led to Rahman's resignation, both as prime minister and as party president, and his replacement by Tun Abdul Razak.

After a period of emergency rule during which parliament was suspended, Razak was able to put together a wider governing coalition of nine parties, including some that had previously been in opposition. This Barisan Nasional was registered as a political party on June 1, 1974. In the parliamentary elections that followed, the front won 135 out of the 154 seats. Other major measures taken during the emergency period included the introduction of the New Economic Policy (NEP), which sought to promote substantially the economic advancement of the Malay population, and the passing of a constitutional amendment that declared seditious any questioning of Malay privileges, the status of Malay as the national language, and such issues as citizenship and the position of traditional rulers. Important controversies were thus barred from public debate, even in parliament, and the grounds on which opposition parties might base their criticisms were denied to them.

The death of Tun Abdul Razak in 1976 and the succession of Hussein Onn were followed by a brief period of factional fighting within UMNO. In part, the conflict was between older members of the party, who had been associates of Tunku Abdul Rahman, and younger members, technocratically inclined, who had been brought to prominence by Tun Abdul Razak. The outcome involved the arrest of several of the latter group for alleged Communist activities, although much of the evidence, including their confessions, appeared fragile. At the same time, others of Tun Abdul Razak's protégés, untainted by any Communist association, survived. Of this group, Dr. Mahathir bin Mohamad, who in 1970 had been expelled from the party's supreme council, was appointed to the deputy premiership over the heads of more senior men. A major casualty of this period was Datuk Harun, the chief minister of Selangor. His control over the massive patronage of his state and his support in the youth wing of the party constituted a threat to the leadership of Razak and then of Datuk Hussein Onn. He was charged with corruption in late 1975. Over the next two years, he was successively stripped of office, expelled from the party, and tried and sentenced to a term of imprisonment, thus demonstrating Hussein Onn's growing control of the party. But in August 1982 he was granted a royal pardon and resumed party activity.

In July 1981 Hussein Onn was succeeded as prime minister by Mahathir, who within a year led his party into a general election, the results of which reemphasized UMNO's continuing dominance in the political life of Malaysia. The UMNO general assembly reelected him five successive times as party president, and he remained prime minister of Mahathir until 2003. Despite Mahathir's long tenure, his leadership of UMNO did not go uncontested. His largest threat came from within the party in 1986 and 1987. The beginnings of UMNO's "split" arose in the general assembly of 1984 when, as minister of education, Dutak Musa Hitam successfully defeated Tengku Razaleigh for the position of party deputy president. In late 1985 Mahathir chose to offer Tengku Tazaleigh the powerful position of minister of finance within the prime minister's cabinet. Dutak Musa Hitam resisted the move and saw it as a direct affront to his status within UMNO. As the crisis progressed, both Dutak Musa Hitam and Tengku Razaleigh resigned their positions in the cabinet to cooperate in opposing the reelection bid of the UMNO president, Mahathir, and his new selection for deputy president, Gafar Baba, at the 1986 general assembly. Mahathir and Baba successfully won the hotly contested election. This victory resulted in a legal challenge brought against UMNO by Musa and Razaleigh. In a surprising outcome, a judge sided in their favor and declared UMNO to be an illegal society under the Societies Act, which regulates the activities of all political parties. Old UMNO leadership's response was to reconstitute the party under the name New UMNO

(UMNO Baru). In the wake of UMNO's quick recovery from its decertification as a party, Razaleigh three years later would form the party Semangat 46 and organize an oppositional coalition against the BN in the 1991 general elections.

During this time Anwar Ibrahim, the finance minister, began to gain considerable respect and power within UMNO. Recruited by the UMNO president, Mahathir, in 1982 to join the party, Anwar left his activist leadership position in the Angkatan Belia Islam Malaysia (Malaysian Islamic Youth Movement). During the 1980s Anwar's status within UMNO increased with considerable speed to the amazement of many and the dismay of some (such as Dutak Musa Hitam). After the 1995 election the position of deputy prime minister was added to Anwar's finance portfolio. But in 1998, during the East Asian financial crisis, the once-buoyant Malaysian economy contracted by an estimated 7 percent. Anwar and Mahathir had a bitter falling out over economic policy, with Anwar supporting a more open-market approach. In September, Mahathir dismissed Anwar from both his posts, provoking public demonstrations of support for Anwar. Anwar was then arrested under the Internal Security Act, released, and almost immediately brought up on charges of corruption and sodomy, to which he pleaded complete innocence.

In 1999 Anwar was sentenced to six years incarceration for corruption in a highly controversial trial. In 2000 another nine years was added to this term for sodomy. Anwar maintained his innocence throughout the trial, and his supporters were thrown into disarray. To prevent any further disruption in the party, Mahathir had several supporters arrested over the next year, a move that led to mass, but peaceful, demonstrations in April 2001. For now, the party wounds seem healed, even if but artificially.

In 2002 Mahathir, Asia's longest serving leader, announced he would resign from his position as prime minister. The reins were handed over to a more moderate leader, Abdullah Badawi, who was sworn in as party leader in October 2003. His first task was to gain support within UMNO and the BN coalition. The mild-mannered man Abdullah is affectionately called *Pak Lah* (roughly meaning "Uncle Abdullah). He immediately set a different tone from his predecessor Mahathir. Preferring quiet public appearances, Abdullah focused on the needs of the poorer segments of society. He moved in the opposite direction from the mega-projects of Mahathir, and promised to tackle corruption, develop small businesses and agriculture, and prioritize rural development. The Malaysian public responded by giving Abdullah a strong mandate (BN won over 90 percent of the seats in Parliament). In September 2004, reflecting a new political climate, Malaysia's highest court overturned the sodomy charges against Anwar Ibrahim and promptly released him. It is already evident that both UMNO and Malaysia have entered a new era.

ORGANIZATION

The UMNO is a cadre party, exclusively Malay in membership, which has succeeded through its extensive organization in every state and penetration to the village level in uniting Malay interests across region and class. As an exclusively Malay party, UMNO enjoys a high degree of homogeneity. It is distinguished also by being the only party with branches throughout the federation, including Sabah and Sarawak. It is relatively highly structured with a president, deputy president, and several vice presidents. The heads of the party's youth wing and its women's wing (Wanita UMNO) are automatically vice presidents, the remaining three being elected by the party's general assembly. Together with other appointed and elected members, including a secretary-general, treasurer, and publicity chief, they constitute the principal power center of the party.

The dual roles of party president and prime minister have been employed in a mutually enhancing manner by all four incumbents, whose positions have usually been supported by the senior party officers, who are also cabinet ministers. The youth and women's wings enjoy a semi-autonomous status, at times acting as pressure groups within the party. They have both performed vitally important functions during elections in organizing campaigns at the local level.

POLICY

The principal objectives of UMNO policy have consistently been UMNO dominance and Malay unity. The one is seen as reinforcing the other. These aims are secured by maintaining tight central control of the party while securing the widest possible electoral and governing coalition with Malay and non-Malay parties. These two strategies have at times been felt to conflict, leading to strains within the party, notably in 1969. Since 1991 the party has promoted the New Development Policy (NDP), successor to the New Economic Policy of 1971–91, which uses active discriminatory measures to advance the material well-being of Malays. This policy has coincided with a more strident assertion of economic nationalism that has led the government to buy its way into many of the large expatriate corporations, especially in the mining and plantation industries.

The NDP has been enacted in conjunction with Vision 2020 (*Wawasan 2020*), a development strategy that promises to achieve full development by the year 2020. Determinedly anticommunist both at home and abroad, the party's and government's foreign policy has been characterized by active membership in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, an increasing concern to promote cooperation among Islamic countries, very cautious relations with China, the assertion of ostensibly anti-British sentiment coupled with a more markedly amenable attitude toward Japan, and lately a more critical and outspoken diplomatic stance against the United States.

UMNO policy has taken a new direction under Abdullah Badawi. Political prisoners have been released; focus is turning to the ordinary people, and ethnic relations are improving. In an early speech as prime minister, Abdullah announced that he was one-quarter Chinese—just like Malaysia. This marks a sharp turn around from Mahathir's ethnonationalistic policy. Abdullah has repeatedly stated that Malaysia is as much for Chinese and Indians as it is for Malays. Furthermore, foreign relations have improved. A rapprochement has begun with its closest neighbor Singapore after years of mudslinging by Mahathir. Much of Mahathir's economic policy is still in place, however, as Malaysia is vying to become the top outsourcing country for Western firms.

MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY

No information is available on the size of the membership of UMNO. The party's supporters include most of the Malays of West Malaysia and many in Sabah and Sarawak. Only those Malays whose political views are most influenced by their Islamic faith support other parties in any appreciable number.

PROSPECTS

While the party's leadership remains acutely sensitive to any threat to its hegemony, especially from rival Malay parties, it is extremely difficult to envisage displacement of UMNO as the governing party.

MALAYAN CHINESE ASSOCIATION (MCA)

The MCA was founded in 1949 to protect the interests of the Chinese people living in Malaya, in the face of what were regarded as markedly pro-Malay policies of the British colonial government. Officially registered as a party in 1952, the MCA cooperated with UMNO at an electoral level and, in 1953, became a member, together with the MIC, of the Alliance coalition. The MCA is again a member of the front, but the inclusion as well of Gerakan, a rival Chinese party, has reduced the MCA's standing, since it can no longer claim to be the sole representative of Chinese interests in the government. While it has a widespread organization throughout Malaysia, it does not control any state assembly—unlike Gerakan, which controls Penang. Although from its inception it attempted to be a mass-membership party, it is seen as representing the interests of the better-off among the Chinese community and is vulnerable to the more populist appeal of some of the opposition parties among the poorer Chinese. These difficulties as well as the party's overall dependence on UMNO leadership were reflected in a sharp factional struggle through the 1970s and 1980s between some of the older founding members of the party and younger and more radical elements. With 31 seats in the federal Parliament as of the 2004 election, it is the second largest coalition partner, but its freedom to formulate policy is powerfully circumscribed by its membership in the front. In order to protect its position and that of its members, it must acquiesce in policies, especially with regard to Malay advancement, that cannot always be regarded as being in the immediate interest of its members.

Organizationally, the MCA is very similar to UMNO, with a powerful central committee comprising members elected by a general assembly or nominated by the party president. It has a strong state-level organization with subordinate levels down toward branches.

UNITED TRADITIONAL BUMIPUTRA PARTY

(Parti Pesaka Bumiputra Bersaut; PBB)

The PBB is a Sarawak-based party established in 1973 within the front. It obtained 11 seats in the 2004 federal election, making it the most powerful of BN parties in Sarawak. Its appeal is to the Malay and Melanau population of that state. In terms of current parliamentary seats, it is the third largest party in the BN coalition.

MALAYAN INDIAN CONGRESS (MIC)

From its inception in 1946, the MIC has been faced by the difficulty of sustaining unity in the face of divisions within the Indian community, which constitutes less than 10 percent of the population and is clustered in geographically scattered locations or thinly spread in urban centers. A member of the Alliance Party and

subsequently of the Barisan Nasional, it commands support from the Indian population, but because the Indian population accounts for no more than 25 percent of the voters in any constituency, without the constituencies and seats allocated to it by the front it could not hope to survive politically as a significant group. It won nine seats in the federal parliament in 2004.

MALAYSIAN PEOPLE'S MOVEMENT (GERAKAN)

(Parti Gerakan Rakyat Malaysia)

The party is universally known as Gerakan, but its full name can be loosely translated as Malaysian People's Movement. It was founded in 1968 by Dr. Lim Chong Eu and is pledged to a program of noncommunalism, moderate Socialism, and democracy. It entered the BN in 1972. Despite the presence of Malays on the party committee, it is still seen as a Chinese party. Its power base is in Penang, where it controls the state government with the patronage that entails, but it also has a few branches elsewhere. It won 10 parliamentary seats in the 2004 election.

SARAWAK UNITED PEOPLE'S PARTY (SUPP)

The oldest Sarawak party in the front was founded in 1959. Its Barisan Nasional support is predominantly from the Chinese population. It has six seats in the federal parliament.

SARAWAK DAYAK PEOPLE'S PARTY

(Parti Bansa Dayak Sarawak; PBDS)

Formed in July 1983 by federal MPs who had broken away from the Sarawak National Action Party, it successfully won six seats in 2004. Prior to the 1986 general election the PBDS left the BN to contest Sarawak's elections independently. In 1991, however, after it failed to win a majority of votes in the Sarawak state assembly, the party reentered the BN. Its major objective is to represent the interests of the indigenous Dayak community.

PEOPLE'S PROGRESSIVE PARTY OF MALAYSIA (PPP)

Originally founded in 1953 as the Perak Progressive Party, it changed to its present name in 1956. Its appeal is restricted mainly to non-Malays in the Ipoh area. It survives as a party within the Perak state assembly, where its appeal to poorer Chinese offsets some of the advantage that might otherwise accrue to the DAP, one of the two Democratic Action Party opposition parties in that state. The PPP won one federal parliamentary seat in 2004.

SABAH PEOPLE'S UNION

(Bersatu Rakyat Jelata Sabah; Berjaya)

Berjaya was founded in 1975 and from 1976 until its defeat in 1985 held an overwhelming majority of seats in the state assembly. In the wake of this defeat, which significantly changed the makeup of Sabah state politics, the party has lost considerable political power. It was regarded as one of the few multicommunal parties in Malaysia, but its 1985 defeat was largely the result of the belief, on the part of the majority Christian Kadazan population, that it had become more markedly pro-Muslim in its policies. Berjaya remains a member of the BN, but picked up only one seat at the 2004 general elections.

UNITED SABAH PARTY

(Parti Bersatu Sabah; PBS)

Parti Bersatu Sabah (PBS) was registered as a political party on March 5, 1985, by Datuk Seri Panglima Joseph Pairin Kitingan who was forced out of the ruling Berjaya Party. In the April 1985 state election, PBS won 26 of the 48 Legislative Assembly seats. It formed the new state government with Datuk Seri Panglima Pairin as chief minister. PBS subsequently won 34 and 36 seats in the 1986 and 1990 state elections. It won a fourth term in office in 1994, but this time by only a close margin of 25 to BN's 23. Two weeks later, with some questionably undemocratic maneuverings, PBS was forced out of office by Barisan Nasional. A majority of PBS assemblymen defected to BN parties. In the 1995 general parliamentary election, PBS won eight 8 of the 20 parliamentary seats in Sabah. PBS's power has waned due to the internal problems that came about in 1994. Ten years later, in 2004, PBS won only half the parliamentary seats it won in 1995. Its state seats had also declined**.** The PBS first entered the BN in 1986, but left in 1990 after the government detained several PBS leaders under the Internal Security Act. PBS returned to the BN fold at the end of 2002.

UNITED PASOKMOMOGUN KADAZANDUSUN MURUT ORGANISATION (UPKO)

UPKO was formed in May 1964 when two political parties, the United Kadazan National Organization

(UNKO) and the United Pasok Momogun Organization (PASOK), combined. UPKO seeks to represent and protect the rights of the native Kadazandusun Murut of Sabah.

SABAH PROGRESSIVE PARTY (SAPP)

The SAPP was formed on January 22, 1994. Its founder was Datuk Yong, a former PBS politician who had left the party just days earlier upon the PBS leadership announcing the dissolution of the State Assembly for the fourth time in five years. The SAPP is made up of ex-PBS Chinese leaders although it claims to represent the interests of all races in Sabah.

Minor Political Parties

Smaller parties in the BN are the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) and the Sarawak Progressive Democratic Party. The LDP failed to win any seats in the 2004 elections. While the SPDP won four seats, very little is known about this organization.

OPPOSITION PARTIES

DEMOCRATIC ACTION PARTY (DAP)

Founded in 1966 in the wake of Singapore's secession from the federation, the DAP was the Malayan version of the People's Action Party, Lee Kuan Yew's Singapore-based party. DAP's objective was and is to establish a democratic and socialist society in Malaysia. It analyzes Malaysian society in class rather than communal terms, and while its support comes mainly from urban, working-class Chinese, it retains an appeal for many disaffected non-Malays, including some of the intelligentsia. Although it is efficiently organized, the competition from rival Chinese parties, MCA and Gerakan, and its inability to secure any substantial Malayan Chinese Association support in rural areas have denied it control of any state assembly and thus substantially limited its capacity to secure federal parliamentary seats. The DAP won 12 seats in the 2004 elections, making it the largest opposition party.

PAN-MALAYSIAN ISLAMIC PARTY (PARTAI ISLAM SE MALAYSIA; PAS)

Known variously by its English (PMIP) or Malay/Arabic acronym, the PAS originated in the early 1950s as an Islamic promotional group within UMNO. In 1951, alienated by UMNO concessions to non-Malays, it was established as a separate party. A Malay nationalist party, its primary appeal is to poorer, especially rural, Malays. It seeks to combine Islamic traditions with a modernizing thrust and some elements of Socialism. Islam is regarded as a force for national unity. Religious teachers are active in its campaigning, and religious themes are interwoven with political assertions. PAS may represent the only significant potential threat to UMNO's dominance, partly because the rural poor as a whole have derived the least benefit from the substantial economic changes since independence, partly because PAS may be ready to accommodate the interests of other racial groups, and partly because its appeal echoes the success of radical Islamic movements elsewhere. In 1973 PAS entered the BN for four years until it left again in 1977. Since 1982 the role of the Islamic "theocratic" element in the party has been greatly strengthened. Attacks by fundamentalist elements on the party's president, Datuk Haji Mohamed Asri bin Haji Muda, led to his resignation in 1983. Four of the five federal MPs resigned with him to form a new party, Hamim. In 1991 it won a major victory in both the Kelantan state assembly and in national parliamentary elections. Under the leadership of Nik Aziz, PAS used its victory to consolidate its power and embark on a new policy of Islamicization. This statewide program included the introduction of Islamic legal codes into the Kelantan state court system. Subsequently, the BN has made a substantial effort to regain its lost influence in the state. In the 1995 general election PAS lost some seats at both the state and the federal levels, but in the 1999 elections PAS made big gains. It increased its seats in parliament to 27 from 8, largely as a result of support from Malays who had previously voted for the UMNO. However, 2004 saw a reversal of fortunes for PAS. First, the country became strongly skeptical of anything resembling a fundamentalist Islamic party in the wake of the terrorist attacks on the United States and the resulting moderate Islam rhetoric by Mahathir. Second, PAS suffered from the popularity of the new prime minister, Abdullah Badwai, particularly as he attempted to address the problems of the rural electorate—the PAS strongholds. PAS lost 20 seats in 2004, leaving it with a mere seven seats, a shock that will cause the party leadership to do some serious rethinking.

NATIONAL JUSTICE PARTY

(Parti Keadilan Nasional; ADIL)

The National Justice Party was founded by Anwar Ibrahim, just after his fall from grace in UMNO. Following Ibrahim's arrest and subsequent imprisonment,

his wife, Wan Azizah Wan Ismail, took over the party. With Ibrahim's release, Keadilan will most likely be built up as a multiracial opposition party with a moderate Muslim core. However, the release of Ibrahim may have done more for Abdullah's image than it will for the future of Keadilan.

Other Political Forces

Formal groups other than political parties are not of significance in Malaysian politics. The principal parties are capable of articulating within themselves and within the governing coalition many of the demands and pressures that would elsewhere find separate institutional expression. Traditional social structures within the main communal groups provide a further channel for meeting demands, while extensive networks of patronage and clientelism within and outside the public sector perform the same function. Another important factor inhibiting the rise of other political organizations has been the 1981 amendment to the Societies Act, which forbids political activity to groups not registered as political. This has severely inhibited overt political activities on the part of all nonparty groups. A similar tool for limiting oppositional activities exists in the Internal Security Act, which allows for detention without charge. In 1987 the Malaysian government carried out Operation Lalang, resulting in the detention of more than 100 party leaders, academics, religious leaders, and political activists. The ISA has been used over time to remove central figures within oppositional movements.

ORGANIZED LABOR

Trade unions provide only a very limited exception to these generalizations. Their membership is drawn principally from the Chinese and Indian communities. Subject to strict government control, not affiliated with any political party, and with the joint holding of union and political party office forbidden, unions have had their role restricted to localized place-of-work bargaining with employers. They have no impact on national political activity.

Ethnic occupational groups also exist, such as the Chinese Chambers of Commerce or the United Chinese School Teachers' Association, but a largely overlapping membership with the Malayan Chinese Association ensures that collective interests are promoted within and through the party.

Briefly, during the early to mid-1970s, student organizations, notably the University of Malaya Students Union, were active in making political assertions, especially on behalf of poor peasant communities, but separate legislation making political activity on university campuses a punishable offense and the more general restraints referred to above have served to preempt any further student role in national or local parties.

National Prospects

Since 1969 Malaysia's political system has been remarkably stable and relatively peaceful, even though its party system is predominantly based on ethnic differences. The government and the unique political arrangement of the National Front have worked to maintain communal peace by any means necessary. The drastic impact of the global financial crisis and the destabilizing effects of Anwar Ibrahim's removal from office, his trial, and the resulting protest movement seemed to have robbed Malaysia of potentially positive prospects for the future. However, with the change of guard in 2003 and release of Ibrahim a year later, Malaysia seems to be heading on a course toward a more open and democratic system. Nevertheless, the overwhelming dominance of the BN and especially UMNO cannot be understated. It will be some time before such a formidable power structure can be dismantled. Another problem that continues to beset Malaysia is the ethnic mixture of the country. The year 2001 saw Malaysia's worst civic clashes between ethnic Malays and Indians. For Malaysia to achieve unhindered progress, it must successfully incorporate all ethnic groups into the political process. Abdullah has made it a part of his image to be more accepting of other ethnic groups, but there are significant institutionalized barriers to success for non-Malays that must be rethought if true harmony is to be achieved. The signs are positive for the new millennium. Malaysia's economy continues to surge ahead, and with Abdullah's commitment to rural development and the needy, Malaysia may become the role model for Southeast Asian nations.

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REPUBLIC OF MALDIVES

(Divehi Raajjeyge Jumhuriyya)

By Robert J. Griffiths, Ph.D.



The Republic of Maldives is a string of some 1,300 small islands and sandbanks stretching for more than 500 miles in a north to south orientation southwest of India and Sri Lanka. The some 200 inhabited islands have an estimated population of some 350,000 people (2005) and are divided for administrative purposes into 19 atolls. Islam is the state religion and most of the inhabitants of the Maldives' are Sunni Muslims. The government, although constitutional, has been dominated in recent decades by a small elite. The Maldives became independent in 1965, and its first constitution was approved in 1968. The constitution has undergone several changes, and the most recent constitution dates from 1998.

The System of Government

The Maldives is a federal republic with a unicameral legislature.

EXECUTIVE

Executive power is vested in the president (who serves as both the head of government and head of state), who is designated by the Majlis and approved by popular referendum for a renewable five-year term. The president appoints major government officials including those with the responsibility for overseeing the legal system. The president governs with the assistance of a cabinet responsible to the Majlis. Since the country's first constitution was adopted, the Maldives has had only two presidents, Ibrahim Nasir (1968–78) and Maumoon Abdul Gayoom (1978–present), who has won election six times (most recently in 2003).

LEGISLATURE

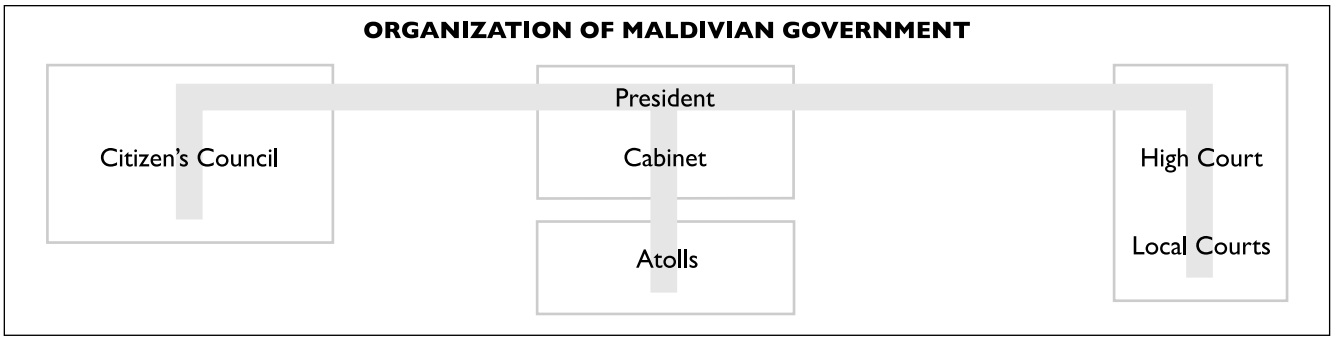
Legislative authority rests in a 50-member legislature, the Citizen's Council (Majlis). Forty-two members are directly elected, and eight are selected by the president. Each of the country's 20 atolls elected two members, as does Male island. Their term of office is five years.

JUDICIARY

The Maldives legal system is based on Islamic law. The most important court is the High Court. The president appoints all judges.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The country is divided into 19 administrative districts, corresponding to the main atolls, plus the capital. Each atoll is administered by a presidentially appointed chief (*verin*) advised by an elected committee. Each island is administered by a headman (*kateeb*), a number of assistants, and a mosque representative.



The Electoral System

The president is nominated by the Majlis and approved by popular referendum for a five-year term. Members of the unicameral legislature also serve five-year terms. Until 2005 parties were prohibited, and as a result all candidates ran as independents. All citizens age 21 or older are eligible to vote.

The long-serving Gayoom provided the country with stability, though he survived various coup attempts and a serious challenge, in 1993, to his presidency by his brother-in-law and minister of atolls administration, Ilyas Ibrahim.

In 1994 President Gayoom outlined further reforms including greater responsibility and autonomy for cabinet officials, greater accountability for civil servants, democratic elections for island development and atoll committees, and formation of a law commission to reform the judicial system. The possibility of multiple candidate presidential elections and constitutional reforms was discussed, but no action was taken. Optimism regarding political reform increased in 1995 when the president told the Majlis that he would introduce legislation to increase public confidence in the electoral system. Prompted by reports that the conservative Muslim Wahabi sect was gaining adherents, the government also promised measures to combat religious extremism. In 1996 the president reshuffled his cabinet and reorganized government bodies, which included the establishment of a Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs to advise the president.

In October 1998 President Gayoom was reelected to a fifth term in office with 90.9 percent of the vote. This was the country's first election under its new constitution, adopted earlier in the year. In his inaugural speech, Gayoom emphasized the importance of strengthening national unity and identity, reinforcing family values, preserving social harmony and cultural traditions, and empowering women. He also announced plans to address the need for building better housing, ensuring safe drinking water, deepening the country's ports, and diversifying the economy. Gayoom was elected to a sixth term in 2003 with 90.3 percent of the vote, defeating three candidates.

The Party System

From independence until the early 21st century political parties were prohibited. In 2001 an effort to register a political party, the Maldivian Democratic Party (MDP), was blocked by the Majlis. The MDP, prevented from operating at home, set up operations in Sri Lanka and continued to voice its displeasure with the government. Political unrest broke out in February 2004 when the government arrested eight democracy activists planning to hold a demonstration to demand press freedom, the release of political prisoners, prison reform, and to call attention to the government's human rights record. In August 2004 a state of emergency was declared, and some 100 democracy activists were arrested and authorities used tear gas to break up an antigovernment demonstration. The government charged that the protests were aimed at toppling the government. Seven members of a constitutional reform committee were arrested for joining the demonstration.

In June 2004 President Gayoom offered changes in the constitution that would limit the president's powers and restrict the president to two terms in office, allow political parties to operate freely, and create the post of prime minister. In 2005 the Majlis voted unanimously to legalize political parties.

Major Political Parties

Despite the prohibition on political parties, the Maldivian Democratic Party endorsed candidates, and in the

2005 Majlis election (postponed because of the 2004 tsunami), its candidates won 31 percent of the vote and 18 of the 42 contested seats. It was officially registered as a party in June 2005. Other political parties that are registered include Maldivian Peoples Party, the Islamic Democratic Party and the Adhaalath Party.

Minor Political Parties

Because of the recent legalization of political parties, the relative importance of political parties and their success will be established over time.

Other Political Forces

Given the lack of political parties for much of the country's history, political activity in the Maldives has often taken the form of protest, though such pro-democracy and antigovernment protests were sometimes met with a harsh crackdown and arrests. For example, a prison protest over the death of an inmate in September 2003 brought a violent response from government forces resulting in two more inmate deaths. This set off large protests against the government, the first time this had occurred during Gayoom's 26-year rule. Amnesty International was particularly vocal in its criticism of political repression by the government.

National Prospects

Tourism has become the islands' largest source of foreign exchange, and infrastructure projects are under way to improve the islands' facilities. Political unrest may have a substantial impact on the country's economy because of the Maldives heavy reliance on tourism. The Indian Ocean tsunami of 2004 devastated the economy and forced the delay of legislative elections. Given that the low-lying islands are situated at or only slight above sea level, the country is particularly susceptible to such occurrences, and there have been fears that if the ocean levels rise that the country could be wiped away. The country has been in the forefront of a movement of island nations, the Alliance of Small Island States (ASIS), concerned with rising sea levels attributed to global warming. In 1994 President Gayoom called for action to address what he termed a global problem. This issue remains an important one in the Republic of the Maldives.

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REPUBLIC OF MALI

(République du Mali)

By Pascal James Imperato
Revised by Emmanuel Nwagboso



Mali, a landlocked country of 12.2 million people in the heart of West Africa, is one of the poorest nations in the world. At 1.25 million square kilometers, 65 percent of which is desert or semidesert, Mali is a predominantly Muslim country.

Mali's first fully democratic elections in over 30 years were held in early 1992. These elections effectively ended a 23-year military dictatorship and represented an important step in Mali's development of a democratic government following the ouster of General Moussa Traoré on March 26, 1991. Traoré came to power through a coup d'état on November 19, 1968 (eight years after the country gained its independence from France), which ousted Mali's then one-party Marxist president, Modibo Keita.

Traoré initially ruled Mali with military colleagues through a Military Committee of National Liberation (CMLN). In 1979 this committee was dissolved, and Traoré ruled through a political party, the Democratic Union of Malian People (UDPM), in which the military held important posts. Although legislative elections were regularly held, the military continued to hold onto power through ministerial posts and the central committee of the UDPM.

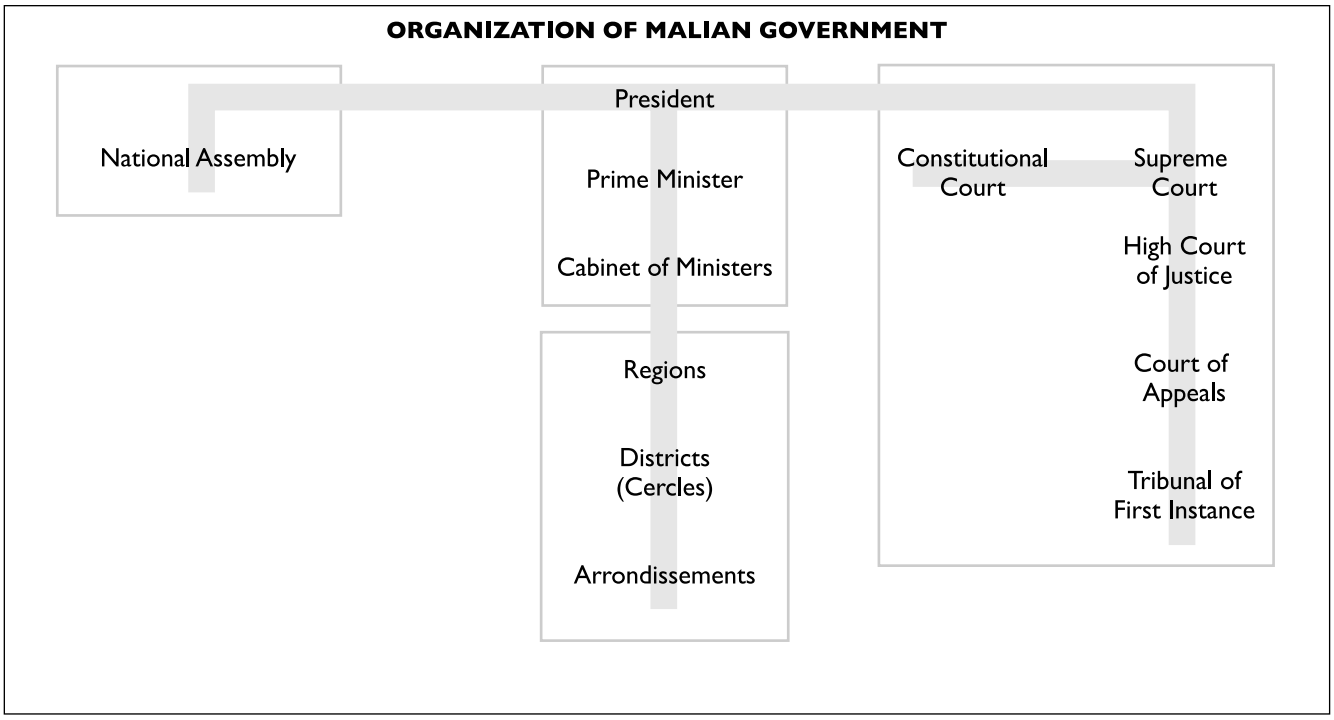
During 1990 and 1991, pro-democracy groups in Mali placed increasing pressure on Traoré for multiparty democracy. He rejected their demands and insisted on the expression of politically diverse views within the context of the UDPM. Pro-democracy groups were then joined by students, trade unionists, and the unemployed in a series of violent demonstrations that culminated in an opportunistic coup d'état against Traoré by Lieutenant Colonel Amadou Toumani Touré and his military associates. Touré and his clique formed a Military Council of National Reconciliation (CRN). However, under pressure from pro-democracy groups and external donors, they quickly stepped aside and established a 25-member Transition Committee for the Health of the People (CTSP). This joint civilian-military committee guided Mali to multiparty elections in early 1992. Touré returned to power by winning the presidential election of 2002.

The System of Government

Mali is a multiparty state with a civilian government. The government functions under the constitution of the Third Republic, which was adopted through a referendum held on January 12, 1992. This provides for a president elected by universal adult suffrage, a prime minister appointed by the president, a unicameral National Assembly with 147 deputies, and an independent judiciary.

EXECUTIVE

Under Mali's constitution, the president is both head of state and commander in chief of the armed forces.



The president is elected to a five-year term and can serve no more than two terms. The first president under the new constitution was Alpha Konaré, who served between 1992 and 2002. In the latter year Amadou Touré was elected president.

LEGISLATURE

Parliament consists of the unicameral National Assembly, which has 147 members who are elected to five-year terms. From 1992 until 2002 the leading party in the National Assembly was the Alliance for Democracy in Mali (ADEMA). In 1997 ADEMA captured an overwhelming number of seats (130), but the elections were marred by irregularities and boycotted by several opposition parties. All parties participated in the 2002 elections, during which ADEMA lost its parliamentary majority to the Rally for Mali Party (RPM) and its Hope 2002 coalition. The coalition won 66 seats to ADEMA's 51.

JUDICIARY

The 1992 constitution provides for an independent judiciary consisting of a Supreme Court, a Constitutional Court, a High Court of Justice, a Court of Appeals, and lower courts. The Supreme Court consists of three sections: judicial, administrative, and accounts. The Constitutional Court, comprised of nine members, rules on the constitutionality of laws. The High Court of Justice judges the president and ministers accused before the National Assembly of treason, crimes, or offenses committed in the course of discharging their responsibilities.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Mali is divided into eight regions and the District of Bamako surrounding the capital. The regions in turn are divided into *cercles* (districts) comprised of smaller units known as *arrondissements*. Larger towns have elected councils and mayors while the *cercles* and *arrondissements* are headed by central government appointees. Each region is headed by a governor who reports to the minister of territorial administration and internal security. *Cercles* are administered by commandants and *arrondissements* by chiefs.

The Electoral System

Candidates for local and national government positions are selected by individual political parties. The selection process varies greatly among these various political parties.

The Party System

Political parties were first organized in Mali in the immediate post–World War II era. The strongly anticolonial and Marxist Sudanese Union (Union Soudanaise-Rassemblement Démocratique Africain; US-RDA) was founded in 1946 by Mamadou Konaté and Modibo Keita. Its chief opponent was the Sudanese Progressive Party (Parti Progressiste Soudanais; PPS) established by Fily Dabo Sissoko the same year. It drew much of its support from traders and merchants. Faced with overwhelming popular support for the US-RDA, Sissoko and the PPS merged with the former in 1959. Following independence in 1960, the US-RDA was the only political party in the country. Under Modibo Keita, it pushed forward with radical Marxist domestic and foreign policies. In 1962 Keita moved to eliminate Sissoko by charging him with treason and attempting a coup during a July 20 riot in Bamako, the capital, by merchants protesting Mali's new nonconvertible currency. Sissoko was arrested, tried by a "popular tribunal," and later shot in a remote northern district of the country. Keita launched a cultural revolution in 1967 during which he purged many party and government leaders and activated a Popular Militia that terrorized the population.

The 1968 military coup by Moussa Traoré and his associates essentially ended all political activity in the country. The military initially ruled through a committee. However, in 1979, Traoré formally established a new political party, the Democratic Union of the Malian People (Union Démocratique du Peuple Malien; UDPM). The UDPM was structured along Marxist-Leninist lines. Although the party was organized down to the grassroots level, the military controlled it and the one-party National Assembly. The UDPM effectively served to give legitimacy to Traoré's military rule. While he used the party apparatus and the National Assembly to build consensus with regard to policy formulation, he and his military supporters remained firmly in control.

Ex-government employees, students, and graduates without hope of future government or private-sector employment and pro-democracy groups galvanized in 1990 to put increasing pressure on Traoré and the UDPM for political reform and an end to gross corruption. Continuous bloody demonstrations in March 1991 led to a military coup d'état and the disbanding of the UDPM. Traoré was sentenced to death for blood crimes and for embezzling 2 billion dollars, an amount equal to Mali's external debt. The sentence was not carried out.The 1992 constitution provides for a multiparty democracy; parties based on ethnic, religious, geographical, or gender lines are illegal. Currently, there are eight political parties represented in the National Assembly although two parties (ADEMA and RPM) hold 117 of a possible 147 seats. Several minor political parties are predominantly active on a local level.

Major Political Parties

ALLIANCE FOR DEMOCRACY IN MALI–AFRICAN PARTY FOR SOLIDARITY AND JUSTICE

(Alliance Pour La Démocratie au Mali–Parti Africain Pour La Solidarité et La Justice; ADEMA)

This party was originally founded in 1990 as a pro-democracy movement by Alpha Oumar Konaré, who had also established Jamana, a cultural cooperative. ADEMA drew its political support from civil servants and the rural population and its financial support from groups in France. Konaré was elected president in 1992 and again in 1997. Diouncenda Traoré subsequently headed the party, which has a vocal left wing.

RALLY FOR MALI

(Rassemblement Pour le Mali; RPM)

This party was established by Ibrahim Keita, who remained party chairman into 2005. It captured the majority in the National Assembly in the 2002 elections by forming a coalition known as Hope 2002.

Minor Political Parties

Other parties in Mali include the Block of Alternative for the Renewal of Africa, led by Yoro Diakite; the Democratic and Social Convention, led by Mamadou Sangare; the Movement for the Independence, Renaissance and Integration of Africa, led by Mohamed Traoré and Mouhamedou Dicko; the National Congress for Democratic Initiative, led by Mountaga Tall; the Party for Democracy and Progress, led by Me Traoré; the Party for National Renewal, led by Yoro Diakite and Tiebile Drame; the Rally for Democracy and Labor, led by Ali Gnangado; the Rally for Democracy and Progress, led by Almamy Sylla; the Sudanese Union/African Democratic Rally, led by Mamadou Touré; the Union of Democratic

Forces for Progress, led by Youssouf Touré, and the Union for Democracy and Development, led by Moussa Coulibaly.

Other Political Forces

MILITARY

Mali's army is equipped primarily with Soviet arms. There were several attempted military coups during the Traoré regime, in 1969, 1976, 1978, and 1981, and finally a successful one in 1991. Hard-line officers opposed to the transition to multiparty rule and the loss of their special privileges organized a successful coup on July 15, 1991. The threats posed by strong internal popular opposition and external repercussions from donors have since served to hinder the military from launching coups.

ORGANIZED LABOR

Unions are federated in the National Union of Malian Workers (Union Nationale des Travailleurs Maliens; UNTM). The UNTM was sequentially controlled by the US-RDA and then later by the UDPM. Since the advent of multiparty democracy, the UNTM is completely independent of any party control.

STUDENTS

Since the late 1970s, student groups have emerged in Mali as an independent and fairly powerful political force. Students were first politically galvanized when the Traoré government intervened to stem the upward flow of students into higher levels by giving tougher examinations. Although students rallied around slogans praising scientific socialism, the real issue was future guaranteed government employment.

Student protests in 1979–81 were organized by an independent union, the National Union of Students and Pupils of Mali (Union Nationale des Etudiants et des Elèves du Mali; UNEEM). Although proscribed by the government, the union effectively boycotted classes and organized demonstrations. The union was finally broken in 1981 through concessions and hard-line retaliation.

In 1990 students banded together in another independent union, the Association of Pupils and Students of Mali (Association des Elèves et Etudiants du Mali; AEEM). Their leader, Oumar Mariko, an ardent Marxist, mobilized large numbers around the issue of perceived inadequate student entitlements and the government's refusal to agree to guarantee future employment. During 1990 and early 1991, AEEM along with pro-democracy groups and the unemployed organized a number of demonstrations that eventually led to the fall of the Traoré regime.

The Konaré government also had to deal with violent student protests. In March and April 1993, serious clashes took place as students rebelled over the government's austerity measures with regard to their stipends. They burned public buildings and attacked the state radio station. A month later, even more violent clashes took place as they attempted to burn the National Assembly building, the headquarters of ADEMA, and other government buildings. In this case, they were protesting the government's alleged attempt to impose a new leader on their union. This protest led to the resignation of Prime Minister Abdoulaye Sékou Sow. In the final analysis, AEEM succeeded in forcing the resignation of Konaré's first government. Student protests continued throughout 1994–96, during which government and foreign diplomatic facilities were attacked.

Malian student demands for government stipends and guaranteed state employment cannot be met by any government. Concessions around the periphery of these issues have served to defuse them for the short term. However, until Mali develops a free-market economy full of employment opportunities, students will continue to look to the government to guarantee their welfare. The prospects for greater private-sector employment are poor. Thus, students will continue to press their case and confront the government through violent means.

ETHNIC GROUPS

Until recently, there was little ethnic rivalry among Mali's several ethnic groups. The Bambara, Dogon, Malinké, Minianka, Senufo, and Songhay are farmers; the Bozo and Sorko fishermen; the Peul and Tuareg herdsmen; and the Sarakolé merchants. Population growth and a stagnant economy have led to a breakdown in longstanding harmonious and complementary economic relationships. As increasing numbers of people compete for limited resources, they move into economic spheres once the traditional reserve of specific ethnic groups. Thus, the increased ethnic rivalry occurring in Mali is in many ways an expression of economic competition.

Mali's population is 90 percent Muslim. However, syncretic practices combining older indigenous religious beliefs and Islam are common. Indigenous religions

have been in steady retreat before Islam for many decades. There are fewer than 100,000 Christians, of whom 20 percent belong to various Protestant groups and 80 percent are Roman Catholic. Christians are actively discriminated against by the Muslim majority, especially in towns and the capital, Bamako.

The Berber Tuareg of the north have been the victims of government policies that have denied them access to education, health services, and development. Both the Keita and Traoré governments also persecuted the Tuareg in a variety of ways. Their livestock were often confiscated, and they were actively encouraged to migrate into Algeria during periods of drought. Government officials have often been vocal and public in claiming that a "white race" such as the Tuareg have no place in a black African state. This position has been strongly denounced by pro-democracy groups in the country. The Tuareg see themselves as the victims of racist government policies. Their armed rebellion of the 1990s forced the government to reverse longstanding policies and meet many of their demands.

National Prospects

By the end of 1998 Mali had made a remarkable political transition from three decades of one-party dictatorial rule to a multiparty democracy. President Alpha Oumar Konaré, respected for his integrity and honesty, successfully built political consensus both within his own party and by reaching out to radical opposition groups. The peaceful transition of power in 2002 to newly elected Amadou Touré further solidified the country's democratic institutions and its international reputation. The country's major problems remain a weak economy highly dependent on agriculture and insecurity in the north where Tuareg splinter groups continue their military operations.

Agricultural output has grown in recent years, largely due to development schemes such as Mali Sud and Opération Haute-Vallée. However, annual production levels depend on rainfall. During the past two decades, weather cycles have included periods of severe drought that greatly affect food and cash crop production. Declines in food crops have also been influenced by conversion to cotton production in certain areas. In 2004 a locust plague depleted the cereal harvest by 45 percent, resulting in extreme food shortages.

Official corruption was rampant during the years of the Traoré regime. This problem, while still present to some degree, has been vigorously addressed by Touré's government, which is widely perceived as being honest. Like Konaré before him, Touré has shown flexibility in following the requirements of major aid donors. He has held the line on public-sector employment and encouraged the development of a free-market economy as had his predecessor.

Manufacturing activity contributes about 8 percent to the gross domestic product. Most manufacturing meets national demands. Although there has been much investment in gold mining by foreign concerns in recent years, overall production is insufficient to alter Mali's basic dependence on agriculture and livestock raising. The construction of hydroelectric dams at Selingué and at Manantali during the 1980s has provided Mali with cheap electricity that could be harnessed in the future to support industrial development.

The country has worked closely with the International Monetary Fund to restructure the country's debt and to modernize the tax system. In September 2002 France agreed to forgive 40 percent of the debts owed to it by Mali, resulting in a reprieve of roughly $79 million. In 2003, as part of an international effort to provide debt relief to developing nations, Mali was able to begin applying debt payments to antipoverty programs. The survival of multiparty democracy in Mali is very much dependent on the government's ability to build political consensus concerning major issues and to successfully address some of the country's pressing economic problems.

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REPUBLIC OF MALTA

(Repubblika ta' Malta)

By Kenneth E. Bauzon, Ph.D.
Revised by Piotr Mikuli, Ph.D.



Malta is an island country in the Mediterranean consisting of the inhabited islands of Malta, Gozo, and Comino as well as the tiny uninhabited islands of Cominotto and Filfla. It is one of the most densely populated countries in the world with a population of 398,000 (2005 est.) and a total land area of 122 square miles. Its population is predominantly of Carthaginian and Phoenician background, and its culture is a mix of Arab, Italian, French, and English traditions. This population mix reflects Maltese history in which the country has been, throughout the centuries, under the control of the Roman and Byzantine Empires (212 B.C.E. and 870 C.E., respectively), the Normans (1020), the Knights of Malta (1523), the French (1798), and the British (1814). The major religion is Roman Catholicism, subscribed to by 98 percent of the Maltese population. Official languages are Maltese and English, although Italian is also widely spoken. The seat of government is in the port city of Valletta, located on the island of Malta.

Until its political independence from Great Britain in September 1964, Malta was a constitutional monarchy with the queen of England as its titular head. In December 1964 the Malta independence constitution was proclaimed, transforming Malta into an autonomous liberal parliamentary democracy within the British Commonwealth. While maintaining the centralized character of the government, this new constitution provided safeguards for the human rights of citizens, guaranteed a degree of power separation among the branches of government, and ensured periodic elections based on universal suffrage. Under this constitution, the governor-general retained his power to appoint the prime minister and the Cabinet from among members of parliament. In 1974 this constitution was revised to transform Malta into an independent republic. The amendment retained the Westminster model of government, which provided for the president—of Maltese citizenship—as the constitutional head of state, with a term of five years, to be indirectly elected through parliament. The office of the president replaced the office of the governor-general, who, up to that time, represented the British royal crown as de jure head of state. In 1987 the constitution was once again amended to modify the electoral law so that the party garnering the majority in a popular election would have a parliamentary majority by being awarded additional parliamentary seats, if necessary.

After the country officially joined the European Union (EU) in May 2004, the parliament of Malta ratified the EU constitution in July 2005.

The System of Government

Malta is a parliamentary republic with a unicameral legislature.

EXECUTIVE

Under the current constitution, the president is elected to a five-year term by parliament. The president wields

formal executive authority and assents to bills, prorogues and dissolves parliament, and acts on the advice of the prime minister. The president can be removed from office by Resolution of the House of Representatives on the ground of inability to perform the functions of the office or for misbehavior. Dr. Edward Fenech Adami currently holds the office of president. He was elected to office on March 29, 2004.

The prime minister is both the effective head of government and chief executive officer. The prime minister, as leader of the majority party in parliament, exercises prerogative in filling ministry positions in the cabinet, although the president formally appoints this body. The government consists of ministers who must be nominated from among the members of the House of Representatives. The office of the minister becomes vacant if he or she ceases to be a member of parliament. After Adami retired from the post of prime minister to campaign for president, Lawrence Gonzi was appointed in replacement as leader of the National Party, which won a majority of seats in the legislative elections held on April 12, 2003.

The cabinet is responsible for the general direction and control of the government of Malta and is collectively responsible to parliament. The president may remove the prime minister from office if a majority of the House of Representatives passes a vote of no confidence.

LEGISLATURE

Under the constitution the legislature formally consists of the president of the Republic and a House of Representatives, analogous to the British concept of "King in the Parliament." Members of the House are elected by universal suffrage for a maximum of five years on the basis of proportional representation. The majority party forms a government consisting of the prime minister and a cabinet formally appointed by the president. The party with a majority of popular votes may be awarded additional seats in the House to ensure a legislative majority.

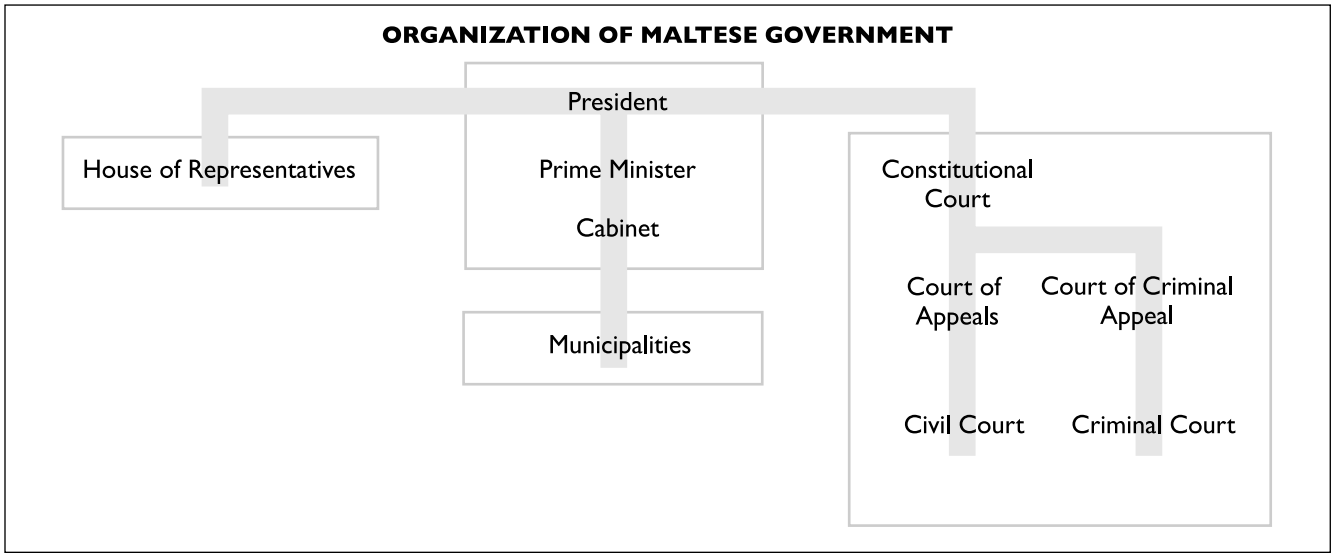
Parliament may make laws in conformity with full respect for human rights, generally accepted principles of international law, and Malta's international and regional obligations—in particular those assumed by the treaty of accession to the EU signed in Athens on April 16, 2003, and those dictated by the EU constitution ratified in July 2005.

Members of parliament are elected from electoral divisions. Each division is represented by at least five but not more than seven members, as determined from time to time by parliament, to ensure equal and proportional representation of the divisions. The Speaker of the House is elected from among its members.

In the Maltese parliament the office of the leader of the Opposition is formally appointed by the president of the Republic.

JUDICIARY

The Maltese judicial system is basically a two-tier system. The superior courts are the Court of Appeals and its subsidiary, the Court of Criminal Appeal, and the Constitutional Court. The heads of all three courts are appointed by the president based on the recommendation of the prime minister. The Court of Appeals and the Court of Criminal Appeal review the judgments of



lower courts in civil and criminal cases, respectively. The Constitutional Court considers cases involving alleged violations of human rights, the interpretation of the Constitution, and the invalidity of laws. It also has jurisdiction to decide questions as to membership in the House of Representatives and any electoral issues related to that body.

The Commission for the Administration of Justice is designed to be an independent body. It supervises the work of both the superior courts and the lower courts; formulates recommendations to be submitted to the minister of justice related to the operation, administration, and organization of the courts; provides advice to the president on appointments; draws up a code of ethics to govern the behavior of members of the judiciary, legal practitioners, and procurators; and draws attention to any judge or magistrate whose performance may be hampering the efficient and proper functioning of his office. This commission is headed by the president of the Republic and is composed of nine other members including the chief justice, the attorney general, two members elected by the judges of the Superior Courts for a period of four years, two members elected by the magistrates of the lower courts for a period of four years, one member appointed by the prime minister for a period of four years, and another member nominated by the leader of the opposition as well as the president of the Chamber of Advocates.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Prior to 1993 there were no local governments per se in Malta, with the exception of the island of Gozo, which was governed by a civic council. In 1993, however, through an act of parliament, municipal councils in various localities throughout the country were created. According to the amendment of the Constitution of April 24, 2001, the State shall be divided into such number of localities as may by law be from time to time determined. Each locality has to be administered by a local council elected by the residents of the locality. Elections of local councilors are held every three years by means of the system of proportional representation using the single transferable vote. Today, there are 68 such councils elected popularly, serving as local governments charged with the administration of the local police, post office, medical facilities, and other government programs. They also assist in the administration and enforcement of national laws. Ultimately, however, they are advisory in nature and depend for their budgetary allocation on, and are answerable to, the central government.

The Electoral System

Malta's unusual electoral system, adopted in 1921, is based on the method called single transferable vote. Ireland is the only other country that uses this system.

The method seems complex but is not. At election time, voters, who must be at least 18 years of age and registered, are asked to rank numerically the candidates, regardless of political party affiliation, whose names appear on the ballot. To qualify for a parliamentary seat, a candidate must fill a specified "quota" in the electoral division or district in which he or she is a candidate. This quota is determined on the basis of the total number of valid votes cast divided by the number of seats allotted for that district, plus one. If in a particular district, for instance, five parliamentary seats are open to competition, and 12,000 votes have been cast (assuming they are all valid), then the quota of votes that a candidate must fill would be 12,000 divided by 6 (i.e., 5 + 1), or 2,000 votes.

Any candidate who meets the quota after the initial vote count is declared a winner. If that winning candidate has received votes in excess of the required minimum needed to meet the quota, as frequently happens, these excess votes are then transferred and added on to the votes of the next-highest-ranked candidate indicated by the voters. It is in this context that the method is called "transferable" because the excess or, more appropriately, the "surplus" votes are used to help the next-highest-preferred candidate attain the quota instead of being discarded.

The Party System

Malta's political party system has evolved from that of a multiparty one to that of a dominant two-party system. The two main parties have their origins in a dispute over the use of English in schools. Those who favored the use of English and acquired the distinction as liberals later formed the Malta Labour Party. On the other hand, those who supported the retention of Italian earned the label of conservatives and eventually formed the core of the Nationalist Party.

Although these two parties dominate political life, Malta is still a multiparty state. Political party competition in Malta is characterized by intense and vigorous partisanship. Their strong party loyalty and allegiance distinguish voters themselves. Even though the electoral system allows them to cross party lines, they

rarely do so. Thus, crossover votes tend to constitute a very small portion of the overall votes cast during any given election (or since the 1971 elections).

Despite sharp differences on issues, however, all political parties are agreed on the democratic premises of the Maltese constitution, primary of which is the parliamentary means to political power through competitive elections. There is no underground revolutionary movement seeking the overthrow of the political system.

Major Political Parties

MALTA LABOUR PARTY

(Partit Laburista)

Paul Boffa established the Malta Labour Party officially in 1921. Its unique structure explains in large measure its durability and cohesiveness. At the village level, it maintains a network of village committees. Members of these committees are elected annually by dues-paying party members. Each village committee in turn elects one representative to the district committee. The district committee is responsible for preparing campaign materials as well as organizing and mobilizing support for the national party within the district. At the national level sits an executive committee consisting of representatives from the various districts as well as from the Labour Youth League, incumbent members of parliament who are party members, and representatives from the national party conference, which convenes annually. The national conference is composed of delegates from village committees nationwide.

The party platform of the Malta Labour Party envisions a Socialist future. Throughout the years it has been in power, the Malta Labour Party has adopted policies oriented toward the equalization of social wealth. A key component of this orientation is the nationalization of key sectors of the Maltese economy, including banking, insurance, and shipping. With the assertion of the public sector in the economy, particularly through governmental and quasi-governmental corporations, it has increased the number of those employed in governmental departments and governmental-controlled corporations to nearly 40 percent of the overall labor force. It also has adopted progressive social policies with regard to social freedom, employment, and education. It has frequently complained about church intrusion into state affairs and has pushed for greater appropriation of church property.

The Malta Labour Party was opposed to Malta's membership in the EU. Its leaders argued that membership of the EU would weaken national autonomy and would violate Malta's neutrality status. In 1996 the party's leader, Alfred Sant, who at the time was the country's prime minister, stopped the country's application for EU membership. Although the membership application was later successfully restarted, the party long maintained that free trade agreements with the EU would better have served Malta's interests than accession.

At the 2003 general elections the Malta Labour Party lost power to the Nationalist Party, obtaining 30 of the 65 seats in the Maltese House of Representatives, with a 47.5 percent share of the vote.

NATIONALIST PARTY

(Partit Nazzjonalista)

The Nationalist Party, unlike the Malta Labour Party, has a loose national organization. It relies largely on the semi-autonomous organizations organized by its candidates, members, and supporters at the local level; these are usually prominent local personalities (mainly religious leaders, business entrepreneurs, or white-collar professionals) who have built up extensive networks of supporting clients in their respective municipalities or districts. While the national party organization does not generally maintain permanent local committees, these are supplemented by the local or district networks of clients that designate representatives to form a sort of executive body at the national level; this body, in turn, serves to formulate policies and strategies for adoption by the party as a whole.

The party platform of the Nationalist Party may be described as conservative. It favors the retention of traditional Roman Catholic values in Maltese religious and social life. It is protective of the church's preeminent role in the country by deferring to its influence in the policy-making process, particularly in the area of education and in the matter of church property. While standing for liberal democratic beliefs of the Western European variety, it has particularly advocated electoral reforms that would achieve both "proportionality and ability to govern" in obvious response to the 1981 election in which the Nationalist Party garnered more popular votes than the Malta Labour Party but failed to secure a majority of parliamentary seats. In this reform effort, it succeeded only in achieving the proportionality segment of the reform package because Labour Party parliamentarians contended that inclusion of the

"ability to govern" segment would have allowed one-party dictatorship in government.

In economic matters, the Nationalist Party has always stood for the principle of free enterprise. In pursuit of this principle, it has dedicated efforts and resources to attract foreign investors into the country. It has promoted an investment code, officially adopted in October 1987, liberalizing rules on tariffs and repatriation of profits by foreign companies. These companies currently invest and generate employment in such areas as light engineering, footwear and clothing, automotive spare parts, electrical goods and devices, medical and health care-related products, among others. The long-term goal was to transform Malta into a center for overseas banking, insurance, and financial services; it also sought to make Malta a shipping capital in the Mediterranean. To help accomplish this, the Nationalist-led government retained the services of a U.S.-based financial institution, the Chase Manhattan Bank Corporation, in late 1987 as a consultant in the formulation of appropriate legislation.

The leaders of the party have always been strong supporters of European integration. After returning to power in 1998, the party revived the application to enter the EU. When the EU initiative finally reached voters in 2003, it passed with a slight majority—only 53 percent of vote. The party also won the elections in 2003 and as of 2005 held 35 seats in the 65-member House of Representatives.

Minor Political Parties

DEMOCRATIC ALTERNATIVE

(Alternattiva Demokratika)

Founded only shortly prior to the 1992 elections, the Democratic Alternative advocates environmentalism. It managed to get a 1.7 percent share of the popular vote in the 1992 balloting but gained no parliamentary seat. In the 2003 elections it won less than 1 percent of the popular vote.

COMMUNIST PARTY OF MALTA

(Partit Komunista Malti)

The Communist Party of Malta is a legal, aboveground Marxist-oriented political party. It adopted a pro-Soviet stance in the context of the cold war. Instead of fielding its own candidates to run in the elections of 1987 and 1992, it deferred to Malta Labour Party candidates, presumably so as not to take away votes from the latter. In the 1996 elections it did field a candidate who managed to get only a little over 100 votes altogether. Consequently, it has never secured any legislative seat. The party did not participate in the 2003 elections.

MALTA DEMOCRATIC PARTY

The Malta Democratic Party was founded in 1986 on the basis of the principles of environmentalism, administrative decentralization, and political pluralism. Although it has fielded candidates since the 1987 elections, it has never had significant grassroots support or any parliamentary representation.

EUROPEAN EMPIRE

(Imperium Europa)

Founded in 2000 by Norman Lowell, this party is a controversial far-right political group that received less than 0.6 percent of the vote during the 2003 elections. The party espouses a pro-environmental, pro-libertarian, patriotic, and nationalistic platform, and it also strongly opposes the immigration of non-whites and seeks to reduce the number of African immigrants allowed to enter the country.

Other Political Forces

In Malta there are various interests groups that aim to have influence over political and public issues. Among the most important such groups are the General Workers' Union, the Malta Employers' Association, and the Chamber of Commerce and Enterprise.

The General Workers' Union (GWU) was formed in 1943. It is now the largest trade union in Malta. It should be mentioned that the General Workers' Union has played a crucial role in the country's political life. GWU took part in a national strike against the British colonial government in 1958. The Malta Employers' Association (MEA), in turn, was set up in 1965 following a merger between the Association of Employers and the Malta Employers' Confederation. MEA represents interests of entrepreneurs in many types of businesses. The parallel organization, the Chamber of Commerce and Enterprise, was founded as a voluntary constituted body and was officially recognized in 1948. Its main object is to promote and protect interests of commerce, industry, shipping, insurance, tourism and other types of businesses in Malta.

The interest groups in Malta regularly cooperate with political parties. In particular, the General Workers' Association is strongly connected with the Malta Labour Party, whereas the Malta Employers' Association collaborates with the Nationalist Party.

Due to a 98 percent Catholic population, the Roman Catholic Church is also highly influential in Malta.

National Prospects

Malta's dominant-two-party system is well entrenched. Despite the appearance of third parties in recent years, these have not been significant enough to pose a serious challenge to the hegemony of the Malta Labour Party and the Nationalist Party on the national political scene. The current political arrangement in Malta and the consolidation of political control between the Malta Labour Party and the Nationalist Party has had a stabilizing effect on the country's political system.

The Maltese parliament, has demonstrated the capacity to persist and survive. The two major political parties are aware of this parliamentary function and, thus, would be unlikely to initiate a political agenda that would veer too far in any direction from the center. This is especially true given the country's recent entrance into the EU.

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REPUBLIC OF THE MARSHALL ISLANDS

(Aolepān Aorōkin Ṃajeḷ)

By Eugene Ogan, Ph.D.



The Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) was one of the Pacific Island nations created in 1986 from what had been the United Nations Trust Territory of the Pacific (TTPI). It comprises 29 coral atolls and five islands (some of which are uninhabited),. These form two roughly parallel chains, called *Ratak* (Sunrise) and *Ralik* (Sunset). Though the Marshall Islands spread over 1.95 million square kilometers of eastern Pacific Ocean, the combined land mass is 181.3 square kilometers. The population is 59,000 (2005 est.), almost all of whom are ethnically Micronesian.

The islands have a long colonial history. Beginning in 1885, they were successively administered by the Spanish, Germans, and Japanese; the last ruled under a mandate of the League of Nations. World War II had a terrible impact on the islands as fighting killed many Marshallese while bombing devastated the landscape. After establishing military control in 1944, the United States regarded the islands as having strategic importance (the government used various atolls as nuclear test sites). This perspective shaped American administration when the United States became trustee of TTPI and continues to affect political developments in the modern republic.

The Compact of Free Association that produced RMI was the result of long negotiation with Marshallese and others in the trust territory. In these negotiations, Marshallese chose by referendum to be a nation separate from the other TTPI groups. Although the Compact became effective in 1986, it is still subject to interpretation. This fact has not prevented the Marshallese from establishing their own political institutions.

The System of Government

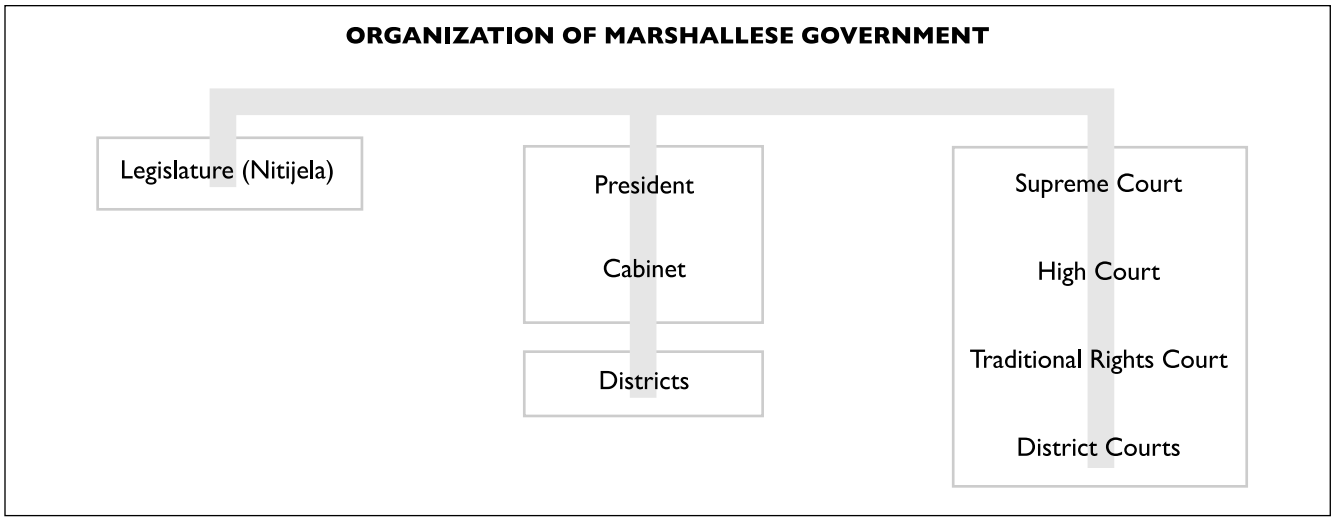
The Marshall Islands is governed by a mixed parliamentary-presidential system.

EXECUTIVE

The executive branch is made up of the president and the cabinet, but true executive authority lies with the cabinet. The members of the legislature, which is known as the Nitijela, elect the president from among their ranks, and he in turn appoints from 6 to 10 Nitijela members as cabinet ministers. In contrast to a true presidential system, the Marshallese president cannot veto bills passed by the legislature. His only power in case of serious disagreement is to dissolve the Nitijela, forcing a general election. The president, however, is both head of state *and* head of government.

LEGISLATURE

The Nitijela is the key political institution. This chamber at present consists of 33 members who are elected to four-year terms. The members are elected by 24 electoral districts that correspond approximately to each atoll. The Nitijela elect the president from among their



number; he then vacates his legislative seat, which is filled by special election.

Traditional Marshallese society was built around tribal chiefs (*iroij*), some of whom were recognized as paramount in their islands (*iroijlaplap*). Their status is institutionalized in the Council of Iroij, which is considered the upper house of the Marshall Islands bicameral parliament (the Nitijela is the elected lower house). The Council is technically an advisory body with special concern for Marshallese culture, and although the council has no veto power, every bill passed by the Nitijela must be sent for its consideration. The council is composed of 12 "eligible persons," five from the Ralik chain of islands, seven from the Ratak chain. Eligible persons are *iroij*, or equivalent, eligible to vote in general elections but not members of the Nitijela.

JUDICIARY

The constitution provides that the judiciary is independent of the executive and legislative branches. There is a Supreme Court, High Court, Traditional Rights Court, and a system of subordinate courts. The High Court is both a trial court and an appellate court for cases from lower courts; appeals from its decisions go to the Supreme Court, which may take appeals from lower courts. Judges of both courts are appointed by the cabinet, acting on recommendation of the Judicial Service Commission and with Nitijela approval. Despite its name, the Traditional Rights Court does not have jurisdiction over such issues as composition of the Council of Iroij or the declaration of customary law and may be regarded as a body ancillary to the rest of the system.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Four of the twenty-four districts (those that are the most populated) are run by a mayor and a locally elected council.

The Electoral System

Suffrage is universal for Marshallese over the age of 18. However, candidates for the Nitijela must be 21 or older.

The Party System

Traditionally, there have been no formal political parties in the Marshall Islands. However, two groupings are now generally recognized as parties: Ailin Kein Ad (Our Islands) and the United Democratic Party.

Major Political Parties

UNITED DEMOCRATIC PARTY (UDP)

The UDP is the dominant political party and is led by Kessai Note, who won the 1999 presidential elections and was reelected in 2003. He is the first commoner to lead the country.

Minor Political Parties

Another political party is the Our Islands Party.

Other Political Forces

There are no other political forces in the Marshall Islands, although the country depends heavily on financial support from the United States.

National Prospects

The election of Kessai Note as president in 1999 and his reelection to a second term in November 2003 marked a major change in Marshall Islands leadership. Note is the first president who is not an *iroij*. Indeed, his election brought an end to the domination of the Kabua family, two members of that family having served as president since the republic's inception. A member of the United Democratic Party, Note specifically campaigned on a reform platform that raised questions about corruption and nepotism. The successful renegotiation of the Compact of Free Association under Note's leadership insures continued American financial support for the Marshall Islands.

The Marshall Islands, however, faces major environmental issues; many studies predict that the entire nation will be underwater by the year 2030 as a result of climate change and subsequently rising sea levels. While the RMI has taken part in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, its future as a nation is uncertain.

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ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF MAURITANIA

(al Jumhūrīyât al-Islāmīyâ al-Mūrītānīyâ)

By Isla MacLean
Revised by Deborah A. Kaple, Ph.D.
Further Revision by Soeren Kern



Mauritania, which borders the Atlantic Ocean, the disputed area of Western Sahara, Algeria, Mali, and Senegal, is a link between the Arab Maghreb (a group of predominantly Muslim countries in Africa) and western sub-Saharan Africa. A largely desert country, Mauritania is very poor and heavily dependent on food and financial aid from other countries. It is predominantly Muslim, and its main languages are Arabic and French.

Mauritania's nearly 3.1 million people (2005 est.) are spread out across a vast and empty country the size of France and Spain combined; many of its people are nomads. Its population consists of two communities: one, in the north, is Arabic-speaking, with two components: the Baidhans (white Moors) and the Harattin (black Moors), who are descendants of former slaves of the Arabs but culturally and religiously completely Arabized. The south is black African, also essentially Muslim, and includes three ethic groupings (Fulani, Soninke, and Wolof). The three basic communities are roughly equal in number, with a slight advantage to the Harattin. Tensions between the groups continue to surface, with allegations of "Arabization" efforts and black slavery. Although Mauritania officially banned slavery in 1981, international human rights groups say the practice continues.

Mauritania became a French protectorate in 1903 and a French colony (within the former French West Africa, a federation of eight French territories) in 1920. In 1958 Mauritania became an autonomous republic within the French Community. It became independent on November 28, 1960. Moktar Ould Daddah, who led the independence fight, set up one-party rule and governed for 18 years. In 1964 all political parties merged into the Ould Daddah's party to form the now-defunct Party of the People of Mauritania (PPM). In 1978, after the Ould Daddah regime seized the southern part of Western Sahara, he was ousted in a bloodless coup by Lieutenant Colonel Mustapha Ould Salek. Ould Salek was replaced by Colonel Mohamed Khouna Ould Haidallah, who then was ousted in 1984 by Colonel Maaouiya Sid'Ahmed Ould Taya in a bloodless coup.

In June 2003 Ould Taya, a pro-Western strongman, faced the most serious challenge to his rule since 1984, when an attempted coup was put down after heavy fighting between loyal troops and rebel soldiers. The nine coup leaders were current or former army officers leading an armed rebel movement called the "Knights of Change" that advocated the overthrow of the Ould Taya regime. More than 125 soldiers were detained in connection with the coup attempt. Among those arrested were three leading opposition figures, including former president Ould Haidallah, who was also the main challenger to the head of state in the presidential election held in November 2003.

On August 3, 2005, when President Taya was out of the country, troops seized government buildings in a largely bloodless coup led by Colonel Ely Ould Mohamed Vall (who took on the presidential role) and the Military Council for Justice and Democracy. The council then appointed Sidy Mohamed Ould Boubacar as prime minister. The council, which said it acted

to end a "totalitarian" regime, has promised to hold presidential elections within two years. Many Mauritanians welcomed the coup, citing decades of repression under Taya's tenure.

The System of Government

Mauritania is formally a republic with a bicameral legislature, although it has been under military control for most of the period since independence.

EXECUTIVE

Mauritania is a highly centralized Islamic republic dominated by a strong presidency. According to the 1991 constitution, the president is elected by the people for a six-year term. There are no term limits, but elections have been suspended until 2007 (at the earliest) as a result of the 2005 coup. The president presides over the Council of Ministers. He is also the supreme chief of the armed forces and presides over the Superior National Defense Councils and Committees. The president is assisted by a High Islamic Council composed of five persons whom he appoints and whose role is vague. According to the 1991 constitution, the High Islamic Council "formulates opinions concerning the questions about which it has been consulted by the President of the Republic."

The head of government is the prime minister, who is also appointed by the president. Under the authority of the president, he defines the policy of the government and directs and coordinates the business of the government. He is responsible for dividing tasks among ministers.

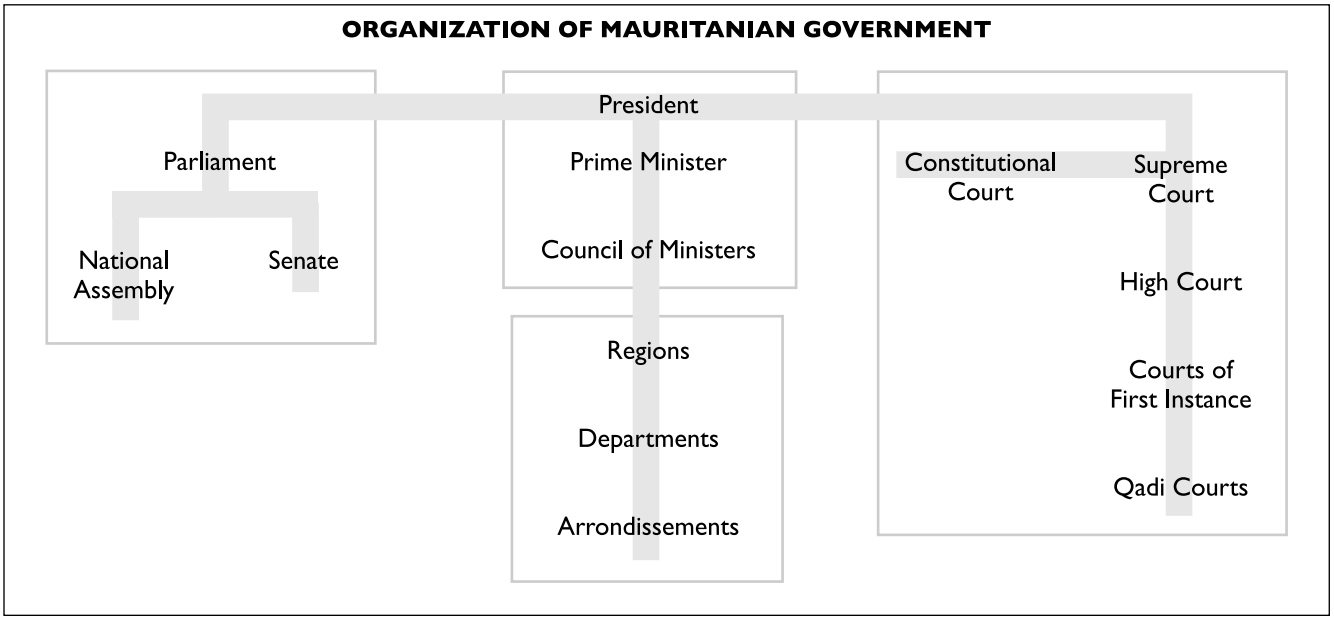
LEGISLATURE

The parliament has two chambers. The National Assembly (Al Jamiya al-Wataniyah/Assemblée Nationale) has 81 members who are popularly elected for a five-year term in single-seat constituencies. The Senate (Majlis al-Shuyukh/Sénat) has 56 members, 53 of whom are elected for six-year terms by municipal leaders. Among these, 17 are up for election every two years. Mauritanians abroad elect three members.

Parliament meets in regular session twice a year during the first two weeks of November and again during the first two weeks of May. The length of each ordinary session may not exceed two months.

JUDICIARY

Islamic Law (sharia) was introduced in 1980, and the Islamic Court of Justice was founded to try crimes against people and adjudicate in family matters. The first application of the sharia (a public execution and three hand amputations) was in September of that year. In June 1983 it was decided to apply the



sharia in all domains. The Special (Military) Court of Justice was set up in 1980 to investigate and try cases that threaten the security of the government and state. In 1985 the court was reorganized to include civilian magistrates and the right of appeal in civilian and commercial cases. This court was abolished in 1991.

The main courts include a Constitutional Court, the Supreme Court, a High Court, and courts of first instance. There are also traditional (Qadi) courts.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Mauritania is divided into 12 regions administered by governors who are appointed by the central government. Nouakchott, the capital, is administered directly by the central government. Within these regions, there are 53 departments and 216 prefectures with elected mayors.

Municipalities have taken on greater responsibility within the context of the government-promoted decentralization process. In January and February 1994, Mauritania had its first multiparty municipal elections, in which Ould Taya's political party, the Democratic and Social Republc Party (PRDS), took 172 of the 208 districts. Since then, the PRDS has dominated local governments.

The Electoral System

All Mauritanians 18 years or older may vote. Equal voting rights for civilians and military personnel were introduced in 2000. A second round of voting is required if no candidate wins more than 50 percent of the vote in the first round.

The Party System

The 1991 constitution guarantees "freedom of association" in Mauritania, and subsequent legislation provides for the formation of opposition political parties. Of the 31 authorized parties, only five are of significance in the political arena. In reality, however, Mauritania remains a one-party state. The governing PRDS controls both chambers of parliament by wide margins, and in the last presidential election, held in November 2003, the PRDS garnered 67 percent of the vote.

Major Political Parties

DEMOCRATIC AND SOCIAL REPUBLIC PARTY

(Parti Républican Démocratique et Social; PRDS)

The PRDS is a coalition of conservative political forces and the direct heir of the pre-1990 military state of emergency regime. After the new constitution was promulgated in 1991, the PRDS was one of the first parties to be accorded official status. The PRDS is the official government party and has been criticized by opposition groups for its close relationship with the state apparatus.

The PRDS is the only party so far to have structured its organization at a national level, and it more or less controls the media in Mauritania. It is supported by two other parties in the government coalition: the center-right Rally for Democracy and Unity (RDU) and the right-wing and economically liberal Union for Democracy and Progress (UDP).

Minor Political Parties

Despite the legalization of political parties in 1991, opposition parties in Mauritania have been largely ineffectual in elections or campaigns. Historically, the military coup has been the only method effective in the transfer of political power.,

Of the 81 seats in the National Assembly, 64 are held by the governing party, the PRDS, and 17 by the opposition parties. In the Senate, all but two of the 56 seats belong to the governing PRDS.

RALLY FOR DEMOCRACY

(Rassemblement des Forces Démocratiques; RFD)

The center-right nationalist RFD is the successor party to the Union of Democratic Forces–New Era (Union des Forces Démocratiques; UFD/EN). It is supported by the Arab bourgeoisie who are economically liberal.
The UFD was legalized in 1991 and used to be the most important opposition party. The UFD had been highly critical of the government. It was banned in October 2000 for "damaging the country's reputation and interests" and for "incitement to intolerance and violence." It comprised a diverse cross

section of political groupings that were all united in the goal of ousting the Ould Taya regime. Ould Daddah obtained over 30 percent of the vote in the 1992 election but boycotted the 1997 poll. However, his chances in 2003 were undermined by the fact that 23 prominent members of his party, critical of his leadership style, defected to support former president Ould Haidallah.

UNION OF PROGRESS FORCES

(Union des Forces du Progrès; UFP)

The UFP was established in July 1998 after splitting with the principal opposition party, the UFD/EN (now the RFD), of which it was the left wing. Supported largely by formerly Marxist-Maoist elements, the UFP now caters to a multiethnic democratic revolutionary left. The UFP is the only opposition party to have secured elected representatives by direct election in single-member constituencies outside the major cities in which proportional representation was used for the first time.

RALLY FOR DEMOCRACY AND UNITY

(Rassemblement pour la Démocratie et l'Unité; RDU)

The RDU is a pro-presidential party aligned with the ruling PRDS.

UNION FOR DEMOCRACY AND PROGRESS

(Union pour la Démocratie et le Progrès; UDP)

The UDP is a pro-presidential party aligned with the ruling PRDS. The UDP is chaired by a woman, Naha Bent Meknass.

POPULAR FRONT

(Front Populaire Mauritanien; FP)

The centrist FP was established in early 1998 after splitting with the Rally for Democracy and Unity (RDU). FP leader Mohamed Lemine Shbih Ould Cheikh Melainine was held in detention between April 2001 and August 2003. Ould Shbih was sentenced to five years imprisonment in June 2001 for "setting up a criminal association" in constitutionally questionable proceedings. Shbih was released early by presidential decree in August 2003, partly because of the political pressure exerted by foreign governments and international human rights organizations.

ACTION FOR CHANGE

(Action pour le Changement; AC)

The AC was granted full legal status in 1995, after splitting with the UFD/EN, but it was banned by the government in January 2002 because the party's allegedly racist and extremist language was said to be a threat to national unity. A left-wing nationalist party, the AC includes some of the most militant parts of the black-Moorish and Negro Mauritanian population. The party's leader is Messoud Ould Boulkheir, who now heads the Arab Nationalist Popular Progressive Alliance (APP), a coalition of nine opposition groups. He has presented himself as a candidate of the poor. Ould Boulkheir has been one of the most vocal critics of the U.S. military intervention in Iraq.

Other Political Forces

BA'THISTS

Since the dissolution of diplomatic relations with Iraq and the establishment of full diplomatic relations with Israel in 1999, the government has attempted to suppress opposition from Mauritanian Ba'thists. The Ba'thist Taliaa Party and its student associations have been banned since November 1999, but Mauritania's outspoken support of the U.S.-led war on Iraq has further antagonized remaining Ba'thist factions within the Arab-Berber elite.

ETHNIC GROUPS

About 70 percent of Mauritanians are Arabic-speaking Moors of mixed Arab, Berber, and black Berber African stock. They are divided into numerous tribal groups and into the White Moors, the dominant class, and the Black Moors, the ex-slaves also known as Harattin. Some 30 percent of the population is black African. The dominant position occupied by White Moors in the past is being eroded, and Black Moors now constitute a sizable portion of the free labor force and urban shantytown dwellers. The black African population is growing at a faster rate than the Moorish population. Black demands for greater representation and protests at the "Arabization" of

education have erupted into violence. Periodically, organizations have been formed in the south to seek an independent black state.

The fragile unity of the country is maintained through a common adherence to Islam and, more importantly, an intricate power-balancing process. The government includes representatives of the various ethnic groups, although White Moors still predominate.

HUMAN RIGHTS GROUPS

There are three Mauritanian organizations concerned with human rights issues. The oldest is the Mauritanian League for Human Rights (LMDH), an independent, government-recognized body. A second organization, the Mauritanian Association for Human Rights (AMDH), is not officially recognized. While not affiliated with the opposition, the AMDH had many opposition members, and the AMDH has been more critical of the government than the LMDH. The International Study and Research Group on Democracy and Economic and Social Development in Africa (GERDDES-Africa) is not officially recognized either. The government position is that these organizations are illegal because they are ethnically based; however, the unrecognized organizations carry out their activities unimpeded.

MILITARY

Undoubtedly the most powerful of the non-traditional political forces, the military has been responsible for several coups since the country's independence in 1960 and has been the only organization responsible for marked political change.

RELIGIOUS LEADERS

Although 100 percent of the country's population is reportedly Muslim, the constitution proscribes religious political parties and the use of mosques for political activity of any kind. However, most Mauritanians, black and Moor, are followers of one or another marabout (traditional religious figures who gain their position partly by inheritance and partly by their reputations for wisdom and piety) and frequently consult that marabout on all matters. Given their dominant role in society, the marabouts are essentially a conservative political force. They favored introduction of the sharia, and many opposed the abolition of slavery on the grounds that the practice is sanctioned in the Koran.

National Prospects

Mauritania has faced extreme economic difficulties for many years, their per capita GNP is estimated at $430 (2003, World Bank). In February 2000 Mauritania qualified for $1.1 billion in debt relief under the World Bank's Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative. In December 2001 a number of Paris Club creditors promised debt relief beyond that provided under the HIPC initiative.

Poor management of state enterprises had led to Mauritania being heavily indebted. A new investment code was approved in December 2001 and improved the opportunities for direct foreign investment. Ongoing negotiations with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) involve problems of economic reforms and fiscal discipline. Structural measures in the form of price liberalization; the privatization, liquidation, or restructuring of several public enterprises; and agricultural sector reforms have been undertaken in an attempt to reduce debts.

Mauritania has extensive deposits of iron ore, which account for nearly 40 percent of total exports. The decline in world demand for this ore, however, has led to cutbacks in production. The country's coastal waters are among the richest fishing areas in the world, but overexploitation threatens this key source of revenue. Moreover, a devastating invasion by locusts in 2004 destroyed half of all crops and much of the pasture used by nomads to graze their animals. Destitute farmers drifted away from their villages to join the mass of urban unemployed living in slums around the country's main towns.

The government has also initiated a number of public works projects to create jobs. New projects include dams, roads, water supply, electricity plants, and 53 public libraries. A new $36 million terminal for offloading oil products at the port of Nouakchott and a new tank farm have tripled the size of its oil storage facilities. These new facilities should help to relieve Mauritania's chronic fuel shortages as the country joins the ranks of Africa's new oil exporters.

The government is pinning its hopes on two offshore oil tracts. The Chinguetti field is the first to come on stream, producing around 75,000 barrels per day for export by 2006; it is expected to yield some 120 million barrels of oil and gas reserves of several trillion cubic feet. Oil exports are expected to add about US$100 million to Mauritanian government revenues by 2008. Mauritania is one of four West African countries with an operating refinery.

Ultimately, the country's future as a republic rests on the promise of the current government leaders. Whether they will step down and allow elections to resume in 2007 remains to be seen.

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REPUBLIC OF MAURITIUS

(République de Maurice)

By B. David Meyers, Ph.D.



Most of Mauritius's 1.2 million citizens live on the Indian Ocean island of that name, while 35,000 reside, some 300 miles away, on the much smaller island of Rodrigues. Mauritius also claims Tromelin, an island held by France, and Diego Garcia, a strategically important, mid-ocean atoll, administered by the United Kingdom.

This former French and, more recently, British, colony is an ethnically diverse society of religious, color, caste, class, and linguistic differences. A majority of the population is Hindu, descendants of persons brought from India to work the sugar plantations. Other ethnic communities include white Franco-Mauritians, Creoles (persons of mixed, white and African, descent), Africans, Muslims, and Chinese.

Since gaining its independence from Britain, Mauritius has successfully maintained a stable government and economy. Elections have been held regularly, and power has been transferred peacefully. In contrast with this stability, the multiparty system, which reflects the complexity of Mauritian society, demonstrates an ever-shifting pattern of consolidation, fragmentation, and reassembly.

The System of Government

Mauritius is a parliamentary democracy with a unicameral legislature.

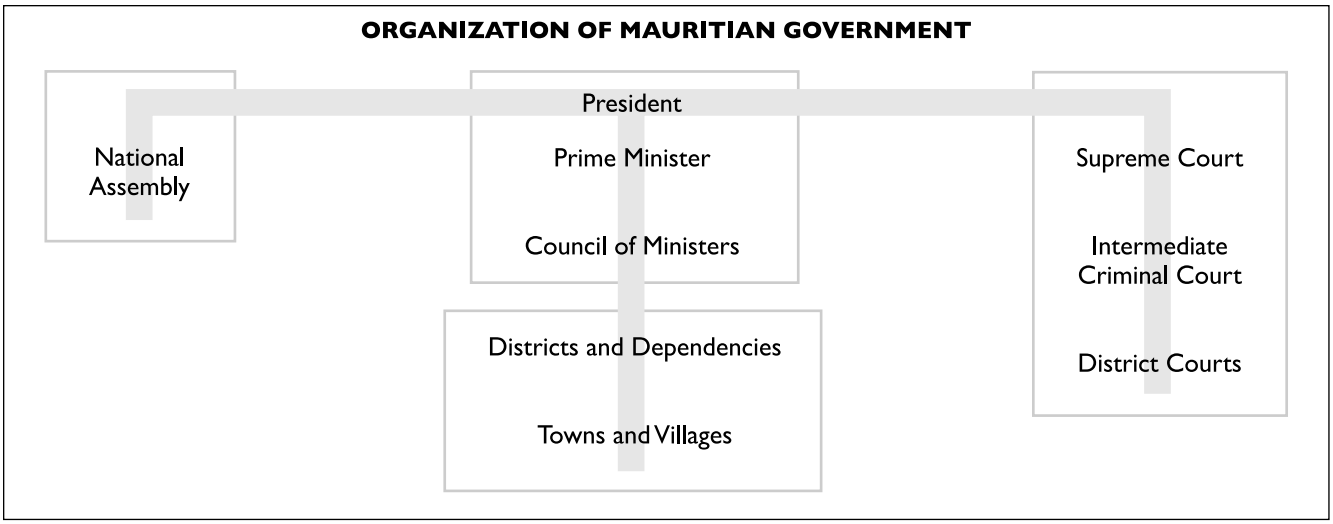
EXECUTIVE

The head of state is a ceremonial president, elected for a five-year term by a simple majority of the National Assembly. The vice-president is also elected in this manner. Executive power is vested in a prime minister, who leads the majority party or coalition in the legislature. Other members of the governing Council of Ministers are appointed by the president on the recommendation of the prime minister. The Council of Ministers is responsible to the National Assembly.

In 2000 the winning electoral coalition of the Mauritian Militant Movement (MMM) and the Mauritian Socialist Movement (MSM) included an agreement between party leaders Sir Anerood Jugnanth (MSM) and Paul Berenger (MMM) that, at mid-term, one would replace the other as prime minister. Accordingly, in September 2003 Berenger replaced Jugnanth as prime minister. A month later, Jugnanth became the nation's president. While Jugnanth remains president, the prime minister who replaced Berenger, Navin Ramgoolam, was elected to office in 2005. He had already served as the country's prime minister between 1995 and 2000.

LEGISLATURE

Legislative authority is vested in a unicameral National Assembly presided over by a Speaker. Ordinary legislation requires a majority vote, constitutional amendments require the approval of three-quarters of the deputies.



Sixty members of the Assembly are elected by receiving the three highest vote totals in 20 three-member districts, two additional members are elected from Rodrigues, and four to eight additional seats are allotted to "best losers."

In 2005 the Alliance Sociale (which is a partnership between the Mauritian Labour Party [MLP] and the Mauritian Party of Xavier Duval [PMXD]) won 38 seats. The MSM/MMM/Mauritian Social Democratic Party (PMSD) coalition won 22 seats. The two remaining seats for Rodrigues were won by Organization of the People of Rodrigues (OPR) candidates. With the remaining seats awarded to "best losers," an additional four seats went to the Alliance Sociale, two seats went to the MSM/MMM/PMSD, and two more seats went to the OPR.

JUDICIARY

The legal system is based on French civil law together with some elements of English common law. There is a Supreme Court whose judges preside additionally in lower courts. The Supreme Court, which has the authority to find legislation unconstitutional, has been a powerful, independent institution.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

There are nine administrative districts on Mauritius and a resident commissioner for Rodrigues. There are elected town councils in the urban areas and district and village councils in the rural areas.

The Electoral System

The Mauritian electoral system is complicated and unique but it has continued to serve the country well. Two independent supervising bodies, an Electoral Boundaries Commission and an Electoral Supervisory Committee, define the districts, supervise voter registration, and oversee polling. Elections are scheduled every five years but can be called earlier by the government. Voter turnout is high and the polling results and the decisions of the independent supervising bodies are accepted by everyone.

Mauritius is divided into 20 Assembly districts wherein the three highest vote-getters receive seats. The island of Rodrigues is a single two-seat district. Following the polling, the Electoral Supervisory Commission does a statistical analysis of the votes and awards seats to between four and eight "best losers" to balance ethnic and political minorities.

The elections attract participation by numerous political parties and independent candidates, most of whom have no chance of victory. Elections boil down to contests between two competing alliances struck by the three or four major, centrist, parties.

The Party System

Political parties in Mauritius go back to 1947, 21 years before independence, with the founding of the MLP by Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam. The MLP was overwhelmingly a party of the Indo-Mauritian community; other communal-based parties, one for Indo-Mauritian Muslims and another for Franco-Mauritians and Creoles, were organized shortly thereafter. As the number of parties

proliferated, still others were formed on the basis of class, region, ideology, and individual personalities. In recent years the major parties have become increasingly pragmatic, more centrist, and less based in either a particular ethnic community or economic class. None of the major parties is organized in all of the Assembly districts.

Campaigns are vibrant with massive rallies and streets covered with party pennants and posters. The campaigning is extensively covered by local newspapers and radio. All candidates receive free time on the government-owned television station.

As ethnicity and class have become less important political factors, Mauritian voters have increasingly been inclined to switch party allegiances every five years and to vote out the governing coalition.

Major Political Parties

MAURITIAN LABOUR PARTY

(Parti Travailliste; MLP)

Over the years, the MLP has been Mauritius's most successful political party. Alone, or in coalition, it controlled the government from independence in 1968 until 1982, from 1995 to 2000, and took control again in 2005. The party still gets most of its support from the Hindu community. Once strictly a supporter of free-market economic policy, it now promotes a mixed economy with widespread social welfare benefits. It is led by Navinchandra Ramgoolam, the son of the party founder and the nation's first prime minister. In coalition with the Mauritian Militant Movement, it won all 60 contested Mauritian Assembly seats in 1995 and formed the government. In 2000, this time in alliance with the Mauritian Party of Xavier Duval (PMXD), it captured only six seats. In 2005, maintaining the PMXD cooperative under the Alliance Sociale, the party won a total of 42 seats, once again becoming the assembly majority.

MAURITIAN MILITANT MOVEMENT

(Mouvement Militant Mauricien; MMM)

The MMM was founded in 1969 by Paul Berenger (the country's former prime minister), who remains its leader. Its constituency was based on Franco-Mauritian and Creole urbanites and trade union members. Over the years its Socialist ideology has been increasingly moderated. For the 2000 elections it allied with the Mauritian Socialist Movement and captured slightly over 52 percent of the vote, winning 54 of the contested seats. In 2005 the combined parties won only 24 seats.

MAURITIAN SOCIALIST MOVEMENT

(Mouvement Socialist Mauricien; MSM)

Still led by its founder, Sir Anerood Jugnauth (the current president), the MSM originated as a moderate splinter party from the MMM. Its ideology is social democratic. In 2000 it was part of the winning electoral coalition.

Minor Political Parties

ORGANIZATION OF THE PEOPLE OF RODRIGUES

(Organisation du People Rodriguais; OPR)

This is the most successful regionalist party as it usually wins the island's two Assembly seats. It then often joins the governing coalition and tries to represent the special interests of the island's inhabitants.

MAURITIAN PARTY OF XAVIER DUVAL

(Parti Mauricien Xavier-Luc Duval; PMXD)

The PMXD is a conservative party that allied with MLP for the 2000 and 2005 elections. Its leader is Charles Duval, son of Xavier Duval the party's founder and namesake. Originally known as the Social Democratic Party its declining support has traditionally come from Creoles and whites concerned with perceived Hindu political dominance.

MAURITIAN SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY

(Parti Mauricien Social-Démocrate; PMSD)

The PMSD predominantly represents the interests of the Franco-Mauritian and Creole landowning class. Once affiliated with the MLP it has now joined forces with the MSM and MMM.

HIZBULLAH

A Muslim party, Hizbullah alone has fielded a full electoral slate in every Assembly constituency. Although Muslims make up 17 percent of the population, most have not supported the party, which won only a single contested seat in 1995 and none in 2000 or 2005. The party is led by Cecil Mohamed Fakeemeeah.

Other Political Forces

The Mauritian press, subject to state censorship during the early 1970s, is now free and robust. Labor unions and communal groups are often politically active.

National Prospects

The Mauritian political system has remained stable and democratic while the economy has been transformed from one dependent solely on sugar plantations to a successful mix of agriculture, tourism, finance, and manufacturing. This country has been, and will probably remain, one of the developing world's success stories.

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UNITED MEXICAN STATES

(Estados Unidos Mexicanos)

By Dale Story, Ph.D.
Revised by David M. Goldberg, Ph.D.



Mexico occupies just over 1.25 million square miles connecting the land mass of North America to Central America. Mexico shares a nearly 2,000 mile-long border with the United States to the north and borders Belize and Guatemala to the south. With nearly 106 million people Mexico is the third most populous country in the hemisphere. The people of Mexico are majority mestizo or mixed race made up of a combination of Amerindian and European descendants. Nearly all of the population speaks Spanish although indigenous languages remain prevalent among some groups. The population remains overwhelmingly Roman Catholic although some Protestant denominations have recently made significant gains. The country is characterized by profound geographic diversity with deserts, rain forests, volcanoes, and fertile valleys.

Throughout its history Mexico has been dominated by strongly personalistic leaders called caudillos. From the rule of dictator Porfirio Díaz (1876–1911) to the presidents that dominated throughout the 20th century, Mexican politics has been shaped by the power and personalities of its strong leaders. In addition, the majority of the 20th century was dominated by a single party, the Institutional Ruling Party (Partido Institucional Revolucionario; PRI). From 1929 to 2000 the PRI never lost a presidential election and controlled most governors and state legislatures. Opposition parties did not win a gubernatorial election until 1989. No opposition party held a Senate seat until 1988. Incumbent presidents informally chose their successors usually based on experience, training, and their service to the PRI. The constitution guarantees federal government control over most areas of social and economic policy. The result was that the PRI dominated Mexican political life at all levels for seven decades.

In July 2000 Vicente Fox of the center-right National Action Party (PAN), surprised Mexico and international observers by upsetting the PRI candidate, Francisco Labastida, and won the presidency by more than 2.4 million votes. While the election was a shock domestically and internationally, the outcome was the result of a series of PRI defeats at the state and congressional levels and indicated the presence of growing party competition in Mexico.

In the lower house, the Chamber of Deputies, the PRI lost 31 seats in the 2000 election, Fox's Alliance for Change coalition increased its representation by nearly 8 percent to 205 seats. The leftist coalition led by Cárdenas and the PRD won 68 seats denying the PRI a majority.

EXPLAINING THE PRI DEFEAT

Fox's victory and the PRI's loss of the presidency were not singular events but the outcome of more than 12 years of national discontent with Mexican politics. The PRI had several ideological factions, some of which were unhappy with the direction of the party and called for internal reform. In 1985, after a failed attempt to democratize the PRI's candidate selection process, Lázaro Cárdenas left the party and challenged

its dominance in the 1988 presidential election. In that election the Cárdenas lead alliance officially won 32 percent of the vote while the PRI candidate Carlos Salinas won 51 percent. Plagued by irregularities and the appearance of fraud, supporters of Cárdenas accused the PRI of stealing the election. The impact was a confirmation of what many Mexicans already believed, namely, that the PRI would use whatever tactics necessary to remain in power. The Cárdenas lead alliance would go on to form the Party of the Democratic Revolution and win several governorships and a consistent, sizable minority standing in the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate. Cárdenas went on to become mayor of Mexico City while the PRD's fortunes declined due to infighting and the rise of the PAN.

In 1993 and 1996, partly in response to allegations of voter fraud, Presidents Carlos Salinas and Ernesto Zedillo initiated broad electoral reforms designed to create greater transparency in the electoral process and increase minority party representation. The Senate was expanded to 128 seats with each state getting two members and the remaining seats allocated based on proportional representation and the granting of some seats to minority parties. The most significant immediate reform was the creation of the independent Federal Electoral Institute (Instituto Federal Electoral; IFE). In 1994 the North American Free Trade Agreement was enacted while Mexico continued to undergo significant economic reform. In response to the lack of democracy and growing economic inequality, a new guerrilla uprising began in the southern state of Chiapas on January 1, 1994. The Zapatistas criticized PRI hegemony and called for legitimate political reform and an end to economic policies that they charged had created a two-tiered system of economic development.

On March 23, 1994, the PRI's presidential candidate, Luis Donaldo Colosio was assassinated under murky circumstances. Rumors of drug cartel involvement or an internal PRI conspiracy with conservative hard-liners behind the plot circulated with little closure on the matter a decade later. Colosio's campaign manager and former education minister Ernesto Zedillo was appointed the new candidate and won the election with 49 percent of the vote. The general perception among observers was that the election met accepted international standards and the Salinas reforms were viewed as effective.

The results of the 1997 legislative elections continued the trend of declining PRI dominance. In the Senate the PRI lost its two-thirds majority and its share of all seats declined from 74.2 percent in 1994 to 60.9 percent. In the Chamber of Deputies the PRI lost its majority and the share of total seats was reduced from 64 percent in 1991 to 47.8 percent in 1997. For the first time in the PRI's history divided government was a reality.

In 1997 Vicente Fox began his campaign as the PAN nominee for the presidency. Fox was a former governor of the state of Guanajuato and had risen through the ranks of the Coca-Cola Company to become the executive for Mexico and Central America. Along the way Fox developed a persona and politics that sharply contrasted with both the ruling PRI and the leftist ideology of Cárdenas and the PRD. He promoted free-market policies but was much less driven by ideology than others in his party. His reformist bent put him at odds with the PAN leadership. As governor of Guanajuato he created and broadened his personal base of support across the country, in part at the expense of building the PAN. Trade missions to the United States, Asia, Europe, and Latin America increased his visibility and popularity at home and abroad. Through his informal style, his ability to raise money and support outside the party, and his growing international presence Vicente Fox was poised to challenge the PRI in the upcoming elections.

The 2000 defeat was the result of growing dissatisfaction with PRI rule across broad sectors of the Mexican population. This dissatisfaction manifested itself with widespread criticism of the results of the 1988 presidential election, PRI defeats in legislative midterm elections, and the rise of Fox and the PAN as a viable alternative. Ironically, the viability of alternatives to the PRI was partly facilitated by the electoral reforms instituted by PRI presidents in the 1990s.

THE MEXICAN REVOLUTION AND ITS AFTERMATH

In order to understand the Mexican political landscape it is necessary to recognize the significance of the Mexican Revolution. The events of 1910 are symbolic beyond Mexico. The revolution was the first of its kind in the 20th century and reverberated throughout the hemisphere and ultimately the world. Prior to the revolution, General Porfirio Díaz had ruled Mexico as a repressive dictator from 1876 to 1911. The army and police maintained order through force. Díaz took land from political opponents and peasant villages, concentrating large farm-ranch-plantations (called haciendas) among a ruling elite. A few hundred hacienda owners controlled half of the nation's arable area. Some 90 percent of the rural population spent their lives working on the haciendas at marginal pay,

perennially in debt to their employers, virtually under feudal conditions.

The revolution began in November 1910 as a reaction to the political and economic dominance of Díaz. Over the following 10 years more than a million lives were sacrificed—almost one-tenth of the population. Francisco Madero, the first revolutionary president (1911–13), stressed a political agenda of "effective suffrage and no reelection." The peasant leader Emiliano Zapata emphasized the socioeconomic goals of "land and liberty." Venustiano Carranza spearheaded the writing of the 1917 constitution, which codified the aims of the revolution (including the secularization of education, nationalization of subsoil rights and other assets, agrarian reform, and extensive labor rights). The 1920s consolidated the power of the "Revolutionary Family," which was institutionalized in the creation of the precursor to the PRI in 1929. The rest of the century has seen the continued dominance of the ruling party through the continual election of its presidential candidates to six-year terms.

The "no reelection" clause limits the president to one six-year term, with no second term ever, and prohibits members of Congress, state legislatures, and municipal councils from serving two consecutive terms. After an intervening term, these lesser officials can run again for the same office. Thus the Mexican political structure is a "musical chairs" system under which PRI leaders rotate horizontally as well as vertically from one government position to another.

Between 1930 and 1994 14 Mexican presidential elections were won by the PRI. This continuity provided a tremendous amount of political stability in Mexico at a time when many of its neighbors were racked with instability. Political stability, however, came at the cost of a pluralistic, democratic political system.

The System of Government

According to the 1917 constitution, upon which the current government is founded, Mexico is a federal republic with a bicameral legislature. The country is comprised of 31 states and a federal district.

EXECUTIVE

Executive power is vested in the president as the head of government and head of state. Informally, the president has been the most important actor in Mexican politics since 1930. The president must be a native-born Mexican of native-born parents and at least 35 years of age. The president is limited to one six-year term in office and any and all reelection is prohibited by the constitution.

Formally and informally the president has a great deal of power that, under PRI rule, allowed for the dominance of both the executive and the legislative branches. The president can initiate legislation in both houses of the legislature and set legislative priorities. The president is dominant in the making and implementation of foreign policy. In the period since the PRI defeat in 2000 President Fox has experienced much greater difficulty in enacting his agenda than his predecessors.

The president can veto legislation. The president appoints the cabinet ministers, diplomats, high-ranking officers of the armed forces, and all federal judges, with Senate confirmation. The president can pardon anyone convicted of any felony, and chief executives have used this right freely in political matters to co-opt former opponents.

The constitution grants the chief executive the power to issue decree laws in most areas of public life. For example, the income tax was created by presidential decree, followed years later by congressional action. Presidential decrees have created cabinet ministers, government corporations, major public works projects, significant budget changes, and public policies ranging from family planning to nuclear energy, followed later by congressional legislation.

Under the PRI, the senior cabinet officer was the *Secretaría de Gobernación* (minister of internal affairs), who controls federal-state-municipal relations, liaison with Congress, elections, voter and party registration, immigration and emigration, motion picture production and theaters, television and radio noncommercial air time, the federal police, and federal prisons. More recently the economic ministries of planning and budget, finance, and commerce and industrial development have risen to the forefront due to the primacy of economic policy. Ranking next is the minister of foreign relations, who helps the president conduct foreign policy. Preceding their presidencies, many of Mexico's former leaders served in ministerial positions.

LEGISLATURE

The Mexican legislature is divided into an upper house (Senate) and a lower house (Chamber of Deputies). The Senate has 128 members each serving a six-year term. Members are prohibited from running for imme-

diate reelection but can run again after an interim term has transpired. The senators are chosen through a mixed electoral system. Three senators are elected from each state and the Federal District. Two are chosen through a plurality rule (the party that received the most votes) and the third seat is given to the party receiving the second highest vote total. The remaining 32 seats are chosen through proportional representation in a single national district.

The Chamber of Deputies has 500 members who serve three-year terms. Like the Senate, members may not seek immediate reelection but may run again after an intermediate term has expired. A total of 300 seats are elected from districts based on population in plurality elections. The remaining 200 seats are chosen through proportional representation. The table below illustrates the representation of the major parties since 1997. The most striking result is the PRI decline between 1997 and 2000 and the comparative resurgence in the 2003 elections.

Up until 1997 the PRI dominated Congress regardless of slight shifts in the number of minority-party deputy seats. Since the legislative branch debated the form rather than the substance of new laws, changes in bills received from the executive branch were generally cosmetic rather than substantive. Both houses put legislation in final form in committee hearings that follow the guidelines set down by the appropriate cabinet ministry. Floor debate serves as an escape valve for frustration but has had little effect on legislation.

Both houses of the legislature must hold two sessions per year. The first begins on September 1 and runs until December 15. The second begins on March 15 and ends April 30. In the interim a Standing Commission is formed, made up of 37 members from both houses. The Commission has the power to call the Congress back into session and approve presidential appointees but cannot pass legislation. Lacking the ability to serve in consecutive terms, members are appointed to committees based on length of service to the party rather than seniority in Congress.

Mexico's post-2000 experiment with divided government has yielded mixed results at best. As a result of the 2003 elections the PRI has been able to exert control over the legislative agenda and the president's priorities. The PRD's initial unwillingness to work with President Fox hurt both sides.

CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES PARTY REPRESENTATION 1997–2003 (IN PERCENTAGES)

Year	PRI	PAN	PRD*	Other
1997	47.6	24.2	25.2	3.0
2000	37.8	39.2	19.1*	3.9
2003	44.4	30.2	19.0	5.6

**In the 2000 elections the PRD lead the Alliance for Mexico coalition. While the PRD share of seats remained fairly constant, the share of seats for smaller leftist candidates with whom the PRD has allied increased. The impact was in increase in representation for leftist parties.*

Sources: Andreas Schedler, "Mexico's Victory: The Democratic Revelation," Journal of Democracy *11, no. 4 (2000): 5–19; And Instituto Federal Electoral.*

JUDICIARY

Mexico's federal court system has exclusive authority for all important civil litigation, leaving to the court system of each state civil jurisdiction over minor sums of money and divorce cases. Suits involving contracts, finance and banking, labor-management relations, corporations, and interstate and intrastate commerce are handled by federal courts. In criminal law, federal courts handle bank robberies, kidnappings, and most major felonies. Murder cases, however, are heard in state courts.

The one major restraint on presidential power is judicial, specifically the writ of *amparo* (relief), which can be issued by any federal judge on behalf of a citizen claiming his constitutional rights have been violated by a government official. The *amparo* can be directed against a government official at any level but can be obtained only from a federal court. This writ stays the disputed governmental action until an appeal can be heard by the federal Supreme Court. The *amparo* combines some of the judicial powers found in the Anglo-Saxon writs of injunction, mandamus, and habeas corpus. It may halt official action, compel officials to carry out constitutional obligations, or force judges to tell a defendant the specific charges against him in a criminal case. Political disputes over elections and campaigns are excluded from the authority of *amparos*.

From 1917 to 1980 some 5,000 writs of *amparo* involved the president and his cabinet ministers as defendants. In one-third of these cases, private citizens or groups won their Supreme Court appeal over presidential action. However, the court has never issued such a writ when political rights or economic policies were involved.

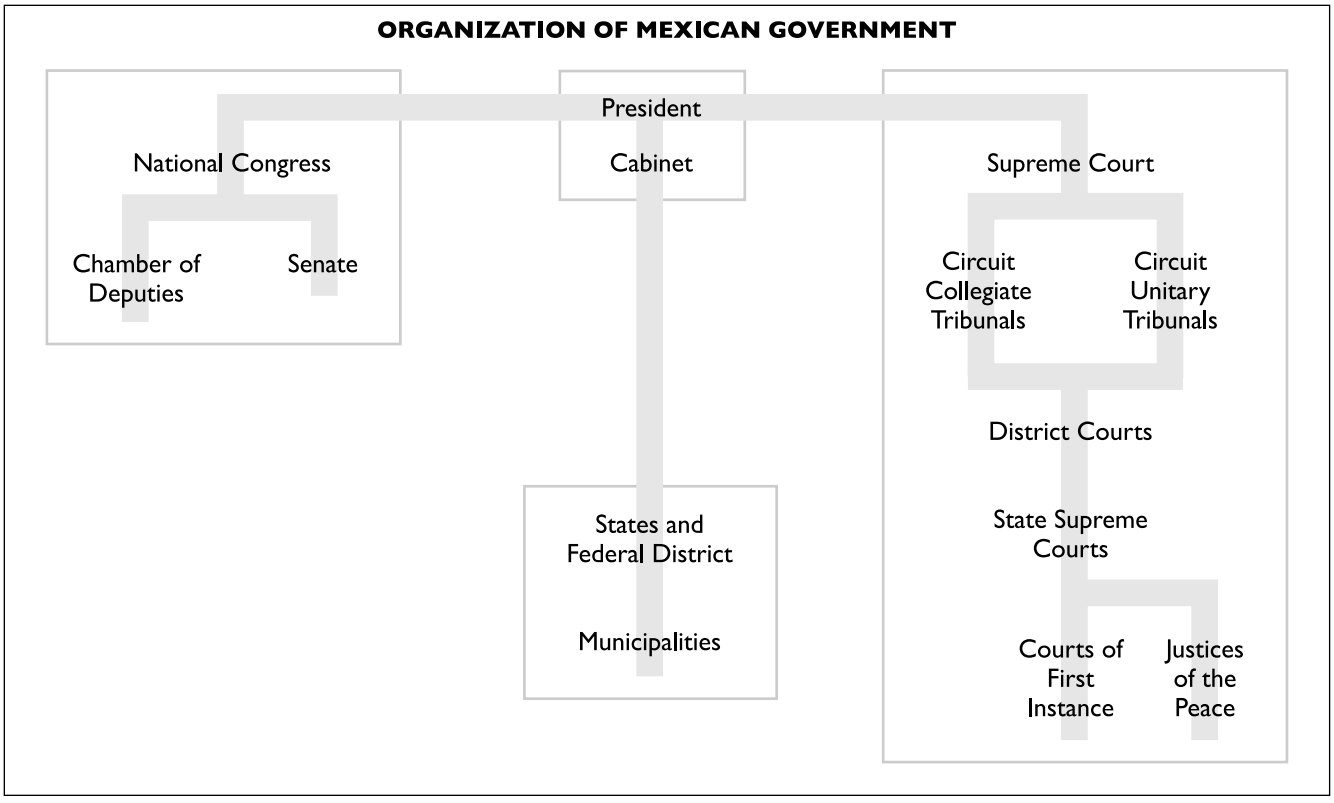
Reforms in 1994 reduced the size of the federal Supreme Court from 26 to 11 members and precluded individuals who have just left political office from being appointed to the court. Supreme Court justices must be native-born Mexicans and be at least 35 years old. The president appoints them with Senate confirmation. Ministers to the court serve 15-year terms. A justice must retire at age 65 or at any time after age 60 if he or she has completed 10 years of service. Since 1929 every justice has been a member of the PRI.

The intermediate federal judicial level is comprised by circuit courts of appeals, of which there are six. The Supreme Court selects appellate judges from among federal district court judges to serve four-year terms. The president can grant an appellate tenure until age 65. Each of the 31 states has a state supreme court (Supremo Tribunal de Justicia), ranging in size from three to eight justices. The governor selects these justices for six-year terms.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

In each of the 31 states, a governor is popularly elected for a six-year term and can never serve a second term. From 1929 until 1989 every governor was a member of the PRI. Despite the formality of state party conventions, the dominant party's inner circle in Mexico City has selected the candidate most likely to carry out the national administration's wishes. Except in six states, gubernatorial terms do not coincide with the presidential term. Under Article 76 of the constitution, the president can have the Senate remove the governor of any state in which law and order cannot be maintained. The chief executive then designates an interim governor to finish the term. From 1917 to 1964 presidents have removed an average of one governor per year. Since 1964 presidents have averaged only one removal per presidential term. However, each chief executive has pressured one to three other governors to voluntarily resign when political crises have gotten out of control.

Each state has a one-chamber legislature, with members elected for three-year terms, every other election coinciding with the election of the governor. State constitutions reserve most of the powers for the governor, making the legislature a rubber-stamp committee formalizing details of his programs. Legislatures vary from 9 to 25 members. In each state the legislature must approve all municipal budgets, which the governor's finance director coordinates. Mexico has 2,359 municipalities (*municipios*), which



are like counties in the United States. Every town and city within the *municipio* is governed by the municipal council (*ayuntamiento*). Councils range in size from 5 to 11 members who serve three-year terms. Mayors (*presidente municipal*) have the constitutional powers to dominate the councils.

The Electoral System

Elections at all levels of government are popular and direct and provide representation by a simple majority winner, except for the 200 seats in the federal Chamber of Deputies and 32 seats in the federal Senate, which are chosen by a system of proportional representation. Federal Chamber of Deputies districts and state legislative districts each have a single representative. For each senator and deputy, as well as state legislators and municipal council members, a substitute is also elected. This allows each party to reward its workers with nominations as substitutes. In the event of a vacancy between elections, the substitute immediately fills the post, obviating the need for an interim election.

With the PRI having dominated so many elections, voter apathy characterized most elections. Half of the eligible voters historically do not go to the polls in presidential elections (however, the 1994 election saw a record turnout of 78 percent); in congressional or municipal races with strong minority-party candidates, the turnout may reach 70 percent of the registered voters. PRI leaders encourage PRI voter turnout with promises of continuing welfare programs and patronage. Voter turnout in the 2000 presidential election approached 64 percent and in the 2003 legislative election was just over 62 percent. The rise of competitive multiparty elections appears to have a positive effect on voter turnout. Interestingly, universal suffrage is compulsory, but not enforced.

The Party System

ORIGINS OF THE PARTIES

After Mexico achieved independence from Spain in 1821, its party system consisted of several small parties, each a personalistic group following a strong leader. The real impetus for the institutionalization of parties and the end of more personalistic movements was the desire by the revolutionary leaders of the 1920s (particularly Plutarco Calles) to consolidate the victory of the revolutionary government in the context of an umbrella party—first known as the National Revolutionary Party (Partido Nacional Revolucionario; PNR).

THE PARTIES IN LAW

The federal Law of Political Organizations and Electoral Processes (Ley Federal de Organizaciones Politicas y Procesos Electorales, or LOPPE) gives Congress the authority to set requirements for a party to qualify for a place on the ballot. The LOPPE has required a party to have a minimal number of members and to win a similarly minimal percentage of the total national vote to retain its legal status. The standards have been interpreted loosely in order to promote the image of a multiparty system. Typically, as many as eight minority parties have participated as registered parties.

PARTY ORGANIZATION

The LOPPE requires each party to maintain a permanent national headquarters and a national executive committee. At least six months before an election, a party must hold a national convention to publicly announce its candidates for all offices it intends to contest. In practice, the standard procedure has been for each party's inner circle to choose its candidates. National officers of each party dominate state and local committees.

CAMPAIGNING

Electoral reforms through the 1980s and 1990s were directed at creating a more independent Federal Electoral Institute and providing a more level playing field for all parties to contest elections. The Federal Electoral Institute has increased in prominence and importance in recent elections. While considerable progress has been made in equalizing the resources available to parties, the PRI undoubtedly maintains a distinct advantage through its years of domination of the political system. For example, the PRI continues to garner a disproportionate share of media attention. A variety of factors contribute to the PRI's dominance of both television and print coverage. The ruling party enjoys a symbiotic relationship with the major networks and several newspapers. Even in cases of journalistic independence, the fact that the PRI dominates events that make the news explains its overwhelming lead in coverage.

SPECTRUM OF MEXICAN POLITICAL PARTIES

In 2003 the Federal Electoral Institute recognized 11 national political parties. Six parties registered and

received the necessary number of votes to participate in the federal legislative elections. Recognition is given to the parties that effectively win greater than 2 percent of the vote. Historically, parties have been divided into the right (PAN), center (PRI), and left (PRD). Increasingly the parties span the political spectrum and smaller parties, while still comparatively weak, have increased their share of seats in the last two elections.

Major Political Parties

INSTITUTIONAL REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

(Partido Revolucionario Institucional; PRI)

HISTORY

The dominant party of Mexico, the PRI, was originally founded as National Revolutionary Party (Partido Nacional Revolucionario; PNR) by the former Mexican president Plutarco Calles on March 4, 1929, in Querétaro. At this point in history, Calles can be credited for making two influential decisions. First, he announced in his state of the union address that he would not seek another term in office—thereby solidifying the concept of no reelection. Second, he outlined and enacted the plan to create a new national party to encompass all the revolutionary factions and to institutionalize the succession of power. After three "puppet" presidents between 1928 and 1933, Calles endorsed Lázaro Cárdenas as the presidential candidate of the PNR for the 1934 election. The decision proved as pivotal as that of creating the party. Cárdenas immediately began to shape the landscape of Mexican politics for decades to come. The new president demonstrated the powers of the office, declaring his independence from previous administrations and even sending Calles into exile in the United States. Fulfilling many of the aims of the revolution, Cárdenas redistributed land to peasants at levels unparalleled before or after his administration, organized more of the working class than ever before, and nationalized the petroleum and railroad industries. Finally, Cárdenas solidified the concept of the six-year presidential term, the unilateral selection of the next presidential candidate by the incumbent, and also the recognized independence and autonomy of the succeeding president.

The party's national assembly changed the name to the Institutional Revolutionary Party in 1946 to emphasize the continuing social and economic reforms to which it is committed. The renamed PRI was also organized along the corporate lines of economic sectoral representation. In this case, the PRI focused on bringing together three major sectors: labor, the peasantry, and the middle class. The umbrellas for both organized labor, the Confederation of Mexican Workers (Confederación de Trajabadores de México; CTM), and the peasantry, the National Peasant Confederation (Confederación Nacional Campesina; CNC), were already in place by the 1940s. President Manuel Avila Camacho in 1943 created the National Federation of Popular Organizations (Confederación Nacional de Organizaciones Populares; CNOP) as the sector for bureaucrats, professionals, housewives, merchants, and others of the growing middle class. These three groups became the institutional and organizational backbone of the party, with the CNOP subsequently becoming a dominant force in the party, overshadowing the labor and agrarian sectors in policymaking.

In a significant initiative in 1963, the party created an Institute of Political, Economic, and Social Studies (Instituto de Estudios Políticos, Económicos, y Sociales; IEPES) to research national needs and policy priorities. The IEPES coordinates PRI and government policy formulation. In 1964 the PRI elected as its president an attorney, Carlos Madrazo, former governor of Tabasco. He convinced the PRI to adopt a policy of party primaries to open nominations for state and local offices to those not tied to political cliques. Madrazo arranged party primaries in two states, Baja California Norte and Chihuahua. However, since its 1929 founding, the PRI has relied on an elite inner circle to select nominees. The inner circle, therefore, got the party's national executive committee to cancel the policy of primaries and forced Madrazo to resign in a major defeat to internal party reform efforts. While many other aspects of the political scene have been liberalized and reformed, the PRI has continued to use a closed system of selecting nominees.

ORGANIZATION

At the apex of the PRI's organization is the national executive committee (Comité Ejecutivo Nacional; CEN). The "inner circle" of the CEN includes the party president; the secretary-general; secretaries for agrarian, labor, and popular action; and two secretaries of political action (always one federal deputy and one senator). The CEN has 13 additional secretaries, who are designated by the inner circle. The next level is the national council, which has at least 60 representatives from each of the agrarian, labor, and popular sectors, plus the heads of the state committees from the 31 states and the Federal District. The CEN dominates the

council. The council guides state and municipal PRI assemblies and reports on them to four staff officers of the CEN: the director of administrative services, the director of adjudication, the director of electoral action, and the director of social activities. The lowest nationwide entity is the national assembly, in which about 2,000 representatives chosen from both the sectoral and the regional divisions of the party represent the general PRI membership. National assemblies meet every three or four years and merely ratify CEN policies. In addition, the PRI convenes a national convention every six years to formally ratify the presidential candidate whom the CEN already has announced.

As mentioned earlier, the agrarian sector is dominated by the National Confederation of Peasants, which grew from state-organized peasant leagues. The labor sector includes eight confederations, seven federations, and 19 independent unions, all under the umbrella of the Congress of Labor. The largest and most influential of these labor groups is the Mexican Confederation of Labor. The popular sector is headed by the National Confederation of Popular Organizations, with government employees being the dominant force.

POLICY

PRI's domestic policy stresses "no reelection," the revolutionary ban on continuation in one office. The party supports (some would say controls) the right to strike, even for those working for the government in essential services (except for the military). PRI economic policies have initiated many important social programs: minimum wages for all trades and for unskilled labor, social security, basic health care for the poor, public housing for workers, communal or individual farms for peasants, and profit sharing for private-sector workers. Yet the party has done much to placate the private sector, particularly in creating a stable economic environment and courting business confidence. PRI's foreign policy stresses Mexico's independence from the United States, the Soviet Union, and Europe. It favors cooperation with the Organization of American States to promote Latin American regional common markets and has consistently sympathized with left-of-center and even revolutionary Latin American governments.

A key to the success of the PRI has been its ability to maintain a sense of balance and equilibrium. Presidential administrations oscillate between leftist and rightist perspectives to mollify various constituencies. A perceived pro-business domestic bent in economic policy has been balanced with a perceived leftist favoritism in foreign policy.

MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY

PRI members have held all executive government posts from minister down through middle-level bureaucrats, all federal judgeships, and most governorships, Senate seats, and congressional district deputy seats. Civil service merit systems are only token, with the PRI's political patronage being the rule in public life. Government jobs are filled on the basis of the political clique (camarilla) system. A successful PRI politician's entourage is horizontal among peers who were classmates in school and vertical among rising administrators and their trusted assistants. Since a camarilla is based on close friendships and loyalty, as a camarilla leader rises in the PRI and in government, he has his associates promoted into higher-level offices. Among rank-and-file PRI members, extended family relationships form clusters within the party, based on lifelong friendships within each age group, class, and community.

FINANCING

Bureaucrats pay party dues equal to three days' pay a year. Other members pay token dues or are given credit for dues by performing various services for the party. Prominent politicians fund banquets and entertainment within their own cities and states, and, at every level of government, unaudited government contingency funds have long been suspected as financing for PRI activities.

PROSPECTS

The PRI has run the government since 1929 and dominates most facets of public life. In the 1960s and the 1970s communist guerrilla kidnappings and killings did selective damage to the PRI in a few cities. The most serious challenge to the PRI in this period came in 1968 when student demonstrators protested political repression, hoping to force the government to cancel the Olympics. Such a cancellation might have discredited the PRI enough to drive it from power, but the demonstrators were repressed violently by the government in the infamous Tlatelolco Massacre.

The late 1980s, however, saw the onset of a steady erosion of PRI electoral and popular support. Economic decline forced the PRI to yield ground in terms of political liberalization and also to lose political support to opposition parties. As described above, in presidential elections in 1988 and 1994 and in national congressional elections (particularly those of 1997), the ruling party's margin of victory has steadily declined to below 50 percent. Gains in the legislative elections of 2003, however, coupled with the loss of seats by the PAN, have made PRI consent necessary for nearly every presidential initiative.

NATIONAL ACTION PARTY

(Partido de Acción Nacional; PAN)

HISTORY

The political party seen as the chief opposition to the PRI in the postwar years has been the conservative National Action Party. The PAN was founded on September 14, 1939, by Manuel Gómez Morín, on a platform of Catholic social principles within the framework of the institutionalized revolution. Gómez Morín (1897–1972) was dean of the law school of the National University of Mexico and university president. The party's roots can be traced to a number of earlier political and social movements, although its initial leaders were primarily motivated by reactions against the anticlericalism of the 1920s and the perceived radicalism of the Cárdenas regime in the 1930s. The early *panistas* wanted to restore to the church many of its prerevolutionary powers, especially in the areas of religious education and political participation. When the PAN ran its first candidate in 1940, it marked the first time since 1914 that a conservative party could fully participate in revolutionary Mexico. In 1946 the PAN won four deputy seats in Congress and its first two municipal governments. In 1947 the PAN won its first seat in a state legislature in Michoacan. The national vote for the PAN has steadily increased from around 8 percent in the early 1950s to 15 percent in the 1980s and rose dramatically to 43 percent in the 2000 presidential election.

ORGANIZATION

The party president and secretary-general direct the national executive committee, which has secretaries for political action, public relations, finance, recruitment, and campaigning. The committee guides state and municipal chairmen. In 1958 PAN presidential candidate Luis H. Alvarez introduced into Mexico the first open party convention—an obvious contrast to the PRI's inner-circle selection of candidates. PAN's subsequent conventions also have been open contests. In 1976 the necessary 80 percent of delegates could not agree to nominate Pablo Emilio Madero, nephew of the father of the 1910 revolution, Francisco Madero. The party then voted not to offer a 1976 presidential candidate.

POLICY

On economic and social issues the PAN in recent years has not perfectly fit the model of a conservative party favoring free enterprise over economic justice and growth over equity. Certainly the party's philosophy has been pro-business and oriented toward private ownership. But at least since the 1960s the PAN has also stressed social consciousness. In an important document issued at the close of the party's 20th national convention in 1969, the PAN advocated a third path of development between capitalism and socialism: *solidarismo*, or, as described by one author, "political humanism." Private property is viewed as positive provided that it also contributes to the society at large.

MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY

The PAN has claimed upwards of 500,000 members, a majority undoubtedly coming from the middle class and upper class. A base of strength has always been northern Mexico, where an independent and conservative spirit has served as a fertile base for the PAN. However, the PAN has achieved successes in other regions of Mexico as well. Key early victories came in 1967 when the PAN took over local government in two state capitals, Hermosillo in Sonora and Mérida in Yucatán. As of 2004, the PAN controlled 9 governorships, 46 senators, 151 federal deputies and a host of state deputies and municipal mayors.

FINANCING

Three-fourths of the members pay voluntary, locally set dues. Political officeholders often contribute a portion of their salaries to the party. Catholic Action groups make contributions, as do many wealth entrepreneurs. The party holds fund-raising raffles, dances, and concerts to enhance its financial coffers and is well known for its past refusal to accept government financing as a sign of its fierce independence.

PROSPECTS

Fox's victory in the 2000 elections is undoubtedly the largest victory in the history of the PAN. In the 2003 legislative elections the PAN lost 9 percent of its seats creating a situation where the PRI was again the dominant force in the Mexican legislature. To the extent that the PAN's electoral fortunes are contingent on the success of President Fox the party's short-term electoral future looks negative.

PARTY OF THE DEMOCRATIC REVOLUTION

(Partido de la Revolución Democrática; PRD)

HISTORY

The political left in Mexico has had a long and torturous history of divide-and-rule control exercised by the

PRI. Only in the last decade, with the onset of the PRD (essentially as a splinter from the PRI), has the left achieved any considerable electoral success.

The history of today's PRD begins with the creation of the Communist Party of Mexico (Partido Comunista de México; PCM). Francisco Cervantes López, publisher of a weekly socialist newspaper, and Manabendra N. Roy, a Marxist from India, founded the PCM at a Mexico City socialist conference in September 1919. In 1920 the PCM began publishing its official organ, *Vida Nueva*, twice a month. In 1921 the party launched its communist youth of Mexico group, sent delegates to the third Comintern congress in Moscow, and held its own first party congress.

In 1922 the famous painters Diego Rivera and David Siqueiros joined the PCM and began its magazine, *El Machete*. However, from 1930 to 1935, the party was outlawed for its violence against the government. The Hitler-Stalin nonaggression pact in 1939 cost the PCM many members; and, in 1940, the PCM helped the French Stalinist Jacques Mornard assassinate Soviet dissident Leon Trotsky in Mexico City. In 1978 the PCM applied for conditional registration after 30 years of being denied legal status. Allied with three small parties, the PCM gained legal registration after the 1979 elections in which it won 5.4 percent of the vote and 18 proportional representation seats in the Chamber of Deputies. At a national party convention in November of 1981, the PCM officially dissolved itself; and a few days later the Unified Socialist Party of Mexico (Partido Socialista Unificado de México; PSUM) was created by the union of the old PCM and the other smaller parties. However, the PSUM did not fare any better in the 1982 presidential election, receiving less than 5 percent of the national vote.

Frustrated with the economic decline and the slow pace of political reform, in late 1985 a group of dissident *priista* leaders began to foment change, particularly in terms of a more open process of selecting nominees within the PRI. This group became known as the "Democratic Current" and was led by the key PRI leaders Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas and Porfirio Muñoz Ledo. The split within the PRI escalated throughout 1986 and 1987, culminating with Cárdenas and Muñoz Ledo leaving the PRI and Cárdenas accepting the presidential banner of a small opposition party. In January 1988, the National Democratic Front (FDN) was constituted as a coalition of leftist parties to support the *Cardenista* candidacy. While Cárdenas struck a very popular chord throughout Mexico, the PRI candidate (Carlos Salinas) won the presidency in July with just over 50 percent of the vote. The following year, the FDN dissolved—replaced by the PRD as the leading political party on the left. The PRD ran Cárdenas again for president in 1994 and won considerable electoral gains in the congressional (and Mexico City mayoralty) elections of 1997. Cárdenas's term as mayor of Mexico City was beset by crime and economic problems and was not generally viewed as a success for him or the party. He ran as the PRD's candidate in the 2000 election winning 17 percent of the vote, down considerably from his 1988 high of 32 percent but consistent with his 1994 share of the vote. After the 2003 legislative elections the PRD controlled 97 seats in the Chamber of Deputies, 16 in the senate, four governorships, and a variety of seats in state and local government.

ORGANIZATION

The PRD defines itself as a union of three political movements: the "Democratic Current" splinter from the PRI; the "Socialist Left" descending from the Mexican Socialist Party (PMS), the Mexican Worker's Party (PMT), the PSUM, the PCM, the Coalition of the Left, and the Movement of Popular Action; and the "Social Left" composed of independent worker, peasant, and civic action groups

The PRD was formed in and has been chiefly directed by national party congresses, of which there have been three (in 1990, 1993, and 1995).

POLICY

The traditional domestic policy of the PCM called for expropriation of all privately owned businesses, industries, and services under a Marxist government; party ownership of all media; and abolition of nonsocialist schools. Its foreign policy was anti–United States and pro–Soviet Union—supporting Cuba, the Sandinista government in Nicaragua, and the Democratic Revolutionary Front in El Salvador. The new reincarnation under the format of the PRD, however, has produced a much more moderate left, which has led to more successful electoral outcomes. While the party openly sympathizes with revolutionary movements, such as the Zapatistas, its domestic policies principally focus on moderate reforms, exemplified by efforts to reduce the value-added tax.

MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY

Somewhat akin to the dilemma of the PAN, the Mexican left has been challenged to find a significant electoral base in the Mexican political spectrum. With the PRI monopolizing the imagery of the Mexican Revolution and dominating the organizational bases of both labor and peasants, the left has had little room in which

to operate. However, with the economic decline of the 1980s and the resulting political misfortunes of the PRI, the more moderate leftist split from the PRI has come together in the PRD to represent a formidable alternative and challenge to the PRI. The remarkable increases in congressional representation in 1997 and the election of Cárdenas as mayor of Mexico City marked an apex in electoral success for leftists in Mexican history.

PROSPECTS

In part, the PRD is a victim of its own success. The party came into existence as an electoral and ideological challenge to PRI dominance. With the defeat of the PRI and the perception of a poor performance by Cárdenas as the first elected mayor of Mexico City, the party's standing has been hurt. The PRD has maintained its standing as the third largest party in both the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate but its future remains unclear.

Minor Political Parties

GREEN ECOLOGICAL PARTY OF MEXICO

(Partido Verde Ecologista de México; PVEM)

The Green Ecological Party or PVEM was founded in 1986 by Jorge González Torres. González was a former PRI loyalist who broke away from the party. The PVEM was registered and received recognition in February 1991. Given the many benefits afforded political parties and members of the legislature some suggested the party was created as a personal political base for González. Since his retirement from public life in 1991 the party has been ruled by his son Jorge Emilio González Martínez, affectionately known as *El Niño Verde* or the Green Kid.

After the 1988 election the PRI began to allow the formation of party alternatives in response to growing criticism against corruption and the party's rule. It was against this backdrop that the PVEM was created and managed to fashion a small niche for itself in Mexican electoral politics. The PVEM and several other smaller parties played the role of "loyal opposition," challenging PRI dominance more in form than substance by giving the appearance of a multiparty political system without demanding substantive reform.

The PVEM does have well-articulated policies on a variety of environmental and economic issues, but its recent past and future have been clouded by accusations of bribery, scandal, and impropriety. In February 2004 Emilio González Martínez was filmed negotiating a two million dollar bribe with developers in that PVEM-controlled municipality of Quintana Roo, where numerous towns and cities catering to foreign tourists are located.

In October 2003 the IFE levied a multimillion dollar fine on PVEM for violations of Mexican campaign finance law. In order for the PVEM to be a viable party in the future it needs to break away from the appearance of belonging to the González family and develop a legitimate party organization throughout the nation based on its principles.

In 2000 the PVEM formed an alliance with the PAN that contributed to the election of Fox. Since that time the alliance has collapsed and the PVEM is more closely allied with the PRI. After the 2003 elections the PVEM controlled 17 federal deputies, five senators, and several seats in state and local government.

LABOR PARTY

(Partido del Trabajo; PT)

The Labor Party was created in 1990 and registered with the IFE in February 2001. Ideologically, the party is similar to the PRD. It was formed by leaders with the some former ties to Maoist parties but this does not appear to exert a significant influence on the party's current activities. Critics allege that the PT was formed with the help of then- president Zedillo and the PRI for the purpose of weakening and dividing support for the PRD and other leftist parties in the 1994 presidential election. During PRI rule the PT was considered among the "loyal opposition" supporting the governments' initiatives more often than not.

The PT currently has six federal deputies and one Senate seat. Its commitment to building democracy and promoting economic equality may resonate with the Mexican public in future elections but there are other larger parties, which are better organized, that have a similar message.

CONVERGENCE OF CIVIL SOCIETY FOR DEMOCRACY

(Convergencia de Organismos Civiles por la Democracia; CD)

Convergence was created in 1990 as an umbrella network including over 121 different civil groups. The grouping includes organizations concerned with

human rights, economic development, democracy promotion, public health indigenous rights, and the environment, among others. A central goal is strengthening democracy through the inclusion of broad-based actors across the Mexican political landscape.

Convergence currently holds five federal deputy seats and has some representation at the state and local level.

ZAPATISTA NATIONAL LIBERATION ARMY

(Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional; EZLN)

While the Zapatistas do not hold any seats in the federal government they are an important actor that merits some attention. The Zapatistas came forward on January 1, 1994 (the same day that NAFTA went into effect), in the southern state of Chiapas to call for a broad range of reforms. Although they do have a militant wing and have engaged in brief encounters with the Mexican army, it is not their stated intention to take over power by force. Instead, they are primarily concerned with the profound economic inequality between the industrialized north and the largely rural, agricultural, indigenous southern part of Mexico. They were very critical of PRI dominance and called for legitimate democratic reforms. Various peace plans between the Zapatistas and the government have failed outright or stalled. While they do not command the attention and support they did during the 1990s many of the social and economic issues they first addressed have not received the necessary attention from the federal government. Like the PRD, the Zapatista message has in part been overshadowed by the electoral defeat of the PRI in 2000.

Other Political Forces

ORGANIZED MANAGEMENT

Under a 1941 law, every retail store or commercial company must join the local chamber of commerce. These chambers in turn must unite in the Confederation of National Chambers of Commerce (Confederación de Cámaras Nacionales de Comercio; CONCANACO). It has an executive council, holds annual general assemblies, and assesses dues on a scale based on annual sales.

Under the 1941 law, every manufacturer, wholesaler, and distributor within a nationwide industry must belong to that industry's national chamber. For example, every shoe manufacturer must belong to the National Chamber of the Shoe Industry; every radio and television station must belong to the National Chamber of Broadcasters, and so on. These industrywide chambers in turn must unite in the Confederation of Industrial Chambers (Confederación de Cámaras Industriales; CONCAMIN). It, too, has an executive council, holds an annual general assembly, and assesses dues on a scale based on annual sales.

Neither CONCANACO nor CONCAMIN are part of the PRI, but individual business and industrial executives may join the PRI. CONCAMIN and CONCANACO have full-time staffs of economists, lawyers, and other specialists who draft suggested policies, regulations, and procedures. They then lobby directly with the highest appropriate level of government concerned. These private-sector groups are widely recognized as the most autonomous and potentially the most powerful political organizations in Mexico.

ORGANIZED BUREAUCRACY

All federal government employees below the top five levels of administrators belong to unions. Thirty-one unions have members throughout the agencies and departments of the executive branch and among staff employees of the judicial and legislative branches. Since 1936 these unions have been united in the Federation of Unions of Workers in the Service of the State (Federación de Sindicatos de los Trabajadores en el Servicio del Estado; FSTSE). It has 1 million members.

The FSTSE dominates the popular sector of the PRI and helps formulate major government policies. Its well-disciplined members turn out for political rallies, campaign speeches, and elections. The FSTSE has its own Social Security Institute, which provides better pensions and health services than the social security system for workers in the private sector.

ORGANIZED LABOR

The largest group of unions is the Confederation of Mexican Workers (CTM), which helps formulate labor policy for the PRI and the government. Other federations less politically powerful have been the Revolutionary Federation of Workers and Peasants (Confederación Revolucionario de Obreros y Campesinos; CROC) and the National Workers Federation (Confederación Nacional Trabajadores; CNT). The Railroad Workers, Petroleum Workers, and Telephone Workers

Unions are semi-autonomous, having loose links to the CTM but operating independently. All federations and autonomous unions meet annually in the Congress of Labor, whose key committees articulate organized labor's needs and goals.

National Prospects

The presidential elections of 2000 ushered in a new era for Mexican politics. A country so rich in natural resources, diversity, and population is well positioned to increase its role as a regional power and to make great strides in domestic political and economic development. Indeed, Mexico stands at a unique place in its often tumultuous history. Due to PRI dominance for most of the past century the government formally and informally still mirrors that past. While the defeat was a tremendous victory for democracy in Mexico the aftermath has been more complicated.

President Fox's approval ratings have fallen substantially. His party lost a sizable number of seats in the 2003 elections, usually an indicator of discontent with the incumbent president. His efforts at economic and social reform have become mired in controversy or have failed outright. Upon coming to office he promised he would calm the Zapatistas right away but little progress has been made. The economy has drifted in large part due to greater dependence on the United States, which has been in a recession for most of Fox's term. Relations with the United States, which had initially seemed so optimistic, have moved at a glacial pace as the aftermath of September 11, 2001, and disagreements over immigration reform and the death penalty have soured much of the original good feeling.

In the past few years, gang wars related to narcotics trafficking have escalated to record levels and there is no foreseeable end to the violence. A general rise in crime has also occurred; the rate at which kidnappings take place is one of the highest in the world. Although Mexico is in a position to make great strides, it is also in a position to suffer great setbacks.

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FEDERATED STATES OF MICRONESIA

By Eugene Ogan, Ph.D.
Revised by Leon Newton, Ph.D.



The Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) is an island republic that developed out of the former United Nations Trust Territory of the Pacific. It was administered by the United States from 1947 to 1982, when a Compact of Free Association was signed between the two nations. FSM is made up of some 607 islands, including a number of tiny coral atolls, which were charted on the map as the Caroline Islands. (Another Caroline Island group now constitutes the Republic of Palau.) The total land area of 270.8 square miles contains a population estimated in 2005 at 108,000.

The Caroline Islands had a complicated colonial history, as they were administered successively by Spain, Germany, and Japan before the United States become trustee. During the long series of negotiations that reconstituted the UN Trust Territory as separate nations, four island groups decided to remain in a confederation to form the FSM. These are the present states of Kosrae, Pohnpei, Yap, and Chuuk. This history, combined with the islanders' general distrust of centralized authority, has produced a distinctive structure for a polity of such small size.

The System of Government

The FSM is a republic with a unicameral legislature.

EXECUTIVE

The FSM has a national government headed by a president who is both chief executive and head of state. He and his vice president must be from different states within the federation. They are chosen from the at-large members of congress by majority vote of that body; they must then resign their congressional seats, which are subsequently filled by special election. They cannot serve more than two consecutive terms of four years each. President Joseph Urusemal was elected in 2003. The next executive election is slated for 2007.

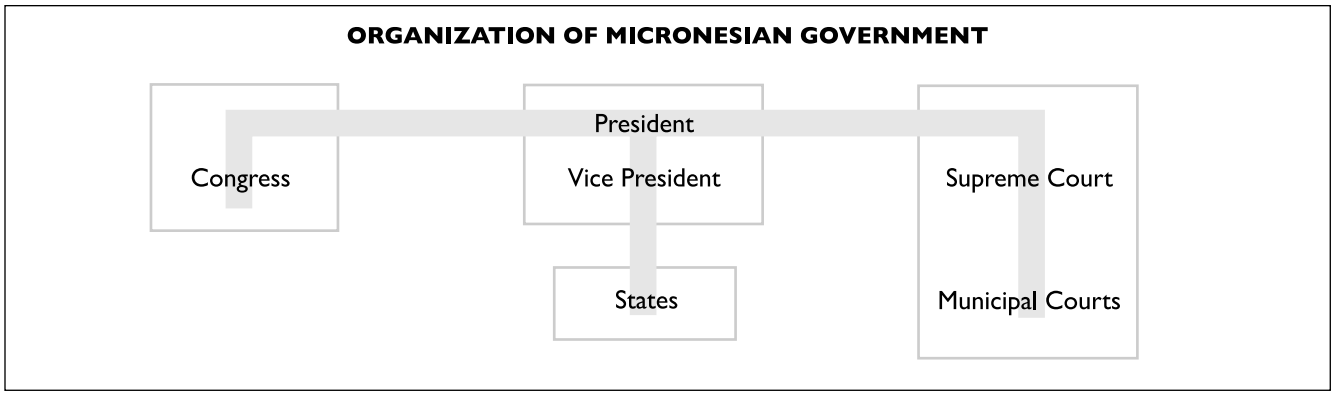
LEGISLATURE

The congress is unicameral, but the constitution provides for two kinds of members with different terms of office. Four at-large members are elected from each state for a four-year term. The 10 remaining members are elected for two-year terms from congressional districts within each state. Districts are based on population and each state must be assigned at least one district. Congress must reapportion districts at least every 10 years in order to accommodate for population fluctuations.

Members of congress must be at least 30 years old. Elections for four-year term seats will next be held in 2007; elections for two-year term seats were held March 2005 will be held again in 2007.

JUDICIARY

National judicial authority is vested in a Supreme Court, with both trial and appellate divisions. The chief justice and no more than five associate justices



are appointed by the president with the approval of two-thirds of Congress.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Each state has its own constitution, designating executive, legislative, and judicial powers. While the states differ in some detail from the others constitutionally, all states place executive authority in a popularly elected governor who serves for a four-year term. State legislatures vary in form, though all try to deal with the problem of balancing representation according to population numbers with appropriate attention to geographic and social configurations.

Only Chuuk's legislature is bicameral, and Yap is the only state with constitutionally established councils of traditional leaders. These councils have the power to veto legislation; otherwise, they are primarily advisory bodies. State judiciaries also vary. Unique to Yap are municipal courts in which presiding judges are the traditional leaders.

The Electoral System

Suffrage is universal to all those over 18 years of age. Presidential elections are held every four years. Congressional elections are held every four years and every two years depending on the length of term of the members being chosen.

The Party System

There are no formal political parties in the FSM. Political parties, however, are not banned. Political lines run along myriad nuanced tribal, family, and island-based affiliations.

Major Political Parties

There are no political parties in the FSM.

Minor Political Parties

There are no political parties in the FSM.

Other Political Forces

There are no other political forces that affect the direct elections or political climate.

National Prospects

The Compact of Free Association between the FSM and the United States was amended and renewed for an additional 20 years in 2003. However, financial support provided by the United States has not continued at the levels operating during its trusteeship. It remains to be seen if an economy based largely on gardening and fishing, in which the government is almost the sole employer paying monetary wages, will sustain the present political system. The burgeoning tourist industry offers some hope, but growth has been limited due to the country's geographical remoteness and weak infrastructure (supplies of electricity and potable water are limited and unreliable). Under the Compact of Free Association,

citizens of the FSM can live and work in the United States without being subject to the usual immigration procedures. It is possible that increasing numbers will take advantage of this opportunity and, like migrants from other Pacific Island nations, maintain a system of monetary remittances to support those who remain at home.

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REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

(Republica Moldova)

By William Crowther, Ph.D.
Revised by Tom Michael



The Republic of Moldova, which was established on August 27, 1991, is a relatively small country, with a territory of approximately 13,000 square miles and a population of about 4.4 million (2005 est.). Located in southeastern Europe, it is bordered on the north, east, and south by Ukraine, and on the west by Romania.

Moldova's political circumstances are largely consistent with those found in other former Soviet republics. Paralleling developments in the Baltic republics, Moldavian nationalists participated in the campaign for election to the Soviet Congress of People's Deputies of the USSR in 1989 and formed the nationalist-oriented Moldavian Popular Front. The Soviet Republic of Moldavia's first partly democratic elections for the Supreme Soviet, in February 1990, produced a majority of delegates aligned with the Popular Front. Competitive national elections have been held since independence: for the president of the republic since 1991 and for an entirely new post-Soviet parliament, beginning in 1994.

Among the key factors complicating the republic's current situation is its ethnic diversity. Many political parties that emerged following independence drew upon these ethnic differences. Ethnic Moldovans make up the largest group, comprising about three-quarters of the population. In 2004 the minority percentages were divided among Ukrainians (8.4 percent); Russians (5.8 percent); Bulgarians (1.9 percent); Romanians (2.1 percent); and the Turkic-Christian Gagauz community (4.4 percent).

Furthermore, Moldova's sovereignty was challenged by two active separatist movements initiated by Gagauzia and Transnistria. The so-called Gagauz Republic attempted to break away from southern Moldova, but the dispute was largely resolved in the mid-1990s through negotiation. The political situation of Transnistria, or Transdniester, was resolved in 2005 when parliament officially granted the region full autonomy (it is basically a country unto itself in all but name). As a result of this concession, Russian troops stationed in Transnistria for the purpose of keeping the peace have been ordered to withdraw.

The System of Government

The government of Moldova is a parliamentary republic with a unicameral legislature.

EXECUTIVE

The head of state of Moldova is the president of the republic. Under constitutional arrangements prevailing at the time of the 1990 national elections, the president was elected by the members of parliament. New provisions were introduced in 1991 calling for direct presidential elections. A constitutional amendment in 2000 returned the election of the president to members of parliament.

The president is elected for a term of four years. His election is validated by the Constitutional Court. He is charged with guaranteeing the independence and unity of the republic and overseeing the efficient functioning of public authorities. The president may be

impeached by vote of two-thirds of the total number of deputies elected to parliament. His case is then heard by the Supreme Court of Justice. The president can take part in meetings of the government and presides when he does so. He also can take part in the work of parliament and is called upon to deliver to parliament messages concerning issues of national concern. He names the prime minister following consultation with the parliamentary majority and names the government on the basis of a vote of confidence by parliament. The president can dissolve parliament for a period of 60 days if it fails to form a government. This can be done only once in one year, not during the last six months of the life of a parliament, and not during a state of emergency or war.

The government (or cabinet) of Moldova is made up of a prime minister, two deputy prime ministers, and approximately 20 ministers. This leadership directs the activities of 20 functionally organized ministries and seven departments of state. Members of the government are nominated by the president but must be confirmed by parliament before taking office. Once selected by the president, the prime minister selects a government and establishes a program that is then submitted to parliament for a vote of confidence. The government must submit to parliamentary questioning, if requested. Parliament is given the power to dismiss the government or an individual member thereof through a vote of no confidence by a majority vote of the members.

Moldova's first president was Mircea Snegur. He gained the position at the time of the transition to independence with the support of the Popular Front delegates in parliament. He retained it by winning the first popular election to the post in 1991, which he contested unopposed.

In 1996 President Snegur faced a reelection challenge from two prominent leaders with power bases in the legislative branch: the Socialist Party leader, Petru Luchinschi (president of parliament), and the Agrarian Democrat Andrei Sangheli (prime minister). Despite earlier cooperation with the Agrarians and the Socialist Party, Snegur found himself at a disadvantage to his former partners in vying for the support of moderate Moldovans and Russian-speakers in presidential elections. Forming his own political organization, the Party of Revival and Conciliation in Moldova, Snegur courted the pro-Romanian nationalist support formerly directed to the Popular Front but failed to achieve widespread appeal. Parliamentary speaker Luchinschi, benefiting from a combination of left-wing parties, eventually won the election with 54 percent of the vote over Snegur's 47 percent.

As president, Luchinschi sought a constitutional referendum to introduce greater presidential powers. He faced resistance from parliament, which in 2000 passed an amendment calling for Moldova to abandon its semipresidential system to become a parliamentary republic. Luchinschi responded by vetoing the law, but his veto was overturned. Under the new law, parliament was able to mount presidential elections but, when voting in them proved inconclusive, Luchinschi dissolved parliament. When in early 2001, general elections were finally held, unreformed Communists were returned to power—a first for any former Soviet republic. Communist leader Vladimir Voronin became the next president. He was reelected by parliament for an additional term in 2005.

LEGISLATURE

Moldova's legislative branch is a unicameral body referred to as the Parliament of Moldova (Parlamentul Moldovei). It is described in the constitution as the supreme representative body of the republic and is made up of 101 deputies elected to four-year terms by means of direct universal vote. It elects a president of the parliament by secret majority vote of the deputies and may remove him by a two-thirds vote. Leadership of parliament is vested in the president of parliament, two vice presidents, and a standing bureau of nine members (the preceding three officers are ex officio members). Parliament meets in four-month sessions, twice a year, and may be called into extraordinary session by the president of the republic, the president of parliament, or a two-thirds vote of the deputies. The parliament passes laws, may call for referenda, and exercises control over the executive as called for in the constitution. Permanent commissions consider legislation in the following areas: legal affairs and immunity; economy, industry, and privatization; budget and finance; state security and public order; foreign relations; human rights and national minorities; culture, science, education, and mass media; social and health protection and ecology; control and petitions.

Results of the 1994 legislative election marked a sharp reversal from the politics of the early post-Soviet transition. Turnout for the election was 79.3 percent. A total of 13 electoral blocs, political parties, and social political formations, as well as 20 independent candidates, contended for 104 legislative positions (in 2001 the number of seats were reduced to 101). The greatest beneficiaries of the election were the Agrarian Democrats, who won

43.2 percent of the vote and 56 of the 104 seats, providing them with an absolute majority. Another 28 seats were won by the Socialist Bloc, allies of the Agrarians, which captured 22 percent of the vote. The nationalist pro-Romanian parties suffered a massive defeat, while more moderate pro-Romanian parties fared somewhat better. The other two parties that won seats were the Bloc of Peasants and Intellectuals (9.2 percent, 11 seats) and the Popular Front Alliance (7.5 percent, 9 seats). None of the other nine parties and blocs that campaigned surpassed the threshold required for participation in the national legislature.

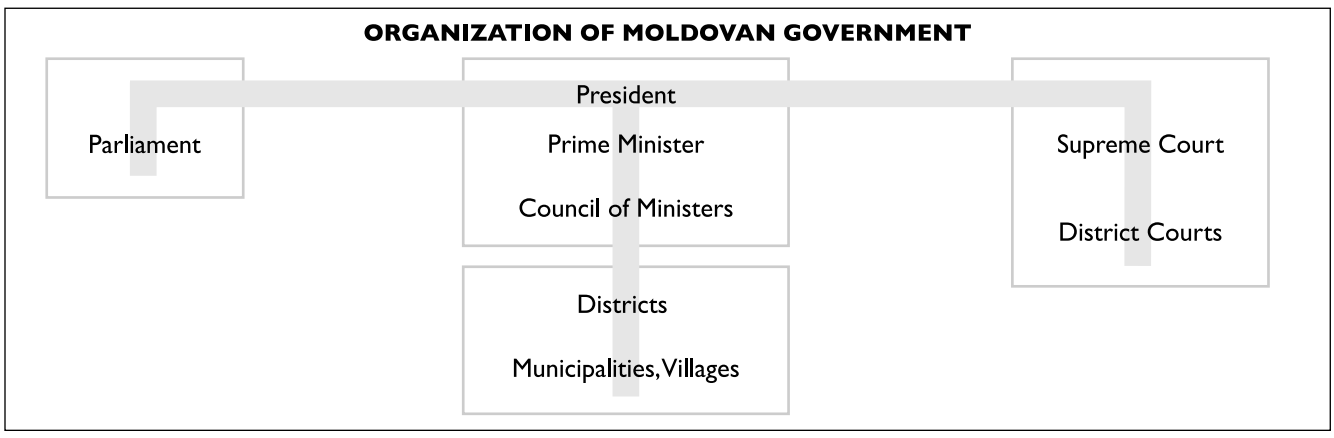
A second round of legislative elections in 1998 pitted a reconstituted Communist Party against parties on the political center and the right. In this contest, three parties and one electoral alliance, the Democratic Convention of Moldova, bringing together the former president Mircea Snegur's Party of Revival and Accord in Moldova and the Christian Democratic Popular Front, surpassed the 5 percent threshold for entry into parliament. The Communist Party of Moldova emerged with a substantial plurality: 30.1 percent of the national vote and 40 out of 104 parliamentary seats. The Bloc for a Democratic and Prosperous Moldova, strongest of the center parties, polled 18.1 percent of the vote and garnered 24 seats in Parliament. On the political right, the Democratic Convention of Moldova won 19.4 percent of the vote and 26 parliamentary seats. Finally, Valeriu Matei's center-right Party of Democratic Forces attracted 8.8 percent of the vote and won 11 seats in the legislature. Strikingly, the Agrarian Democratic Party, which overwhelmingly dominated the previous election, could attract only 3.6 percent of the vote and was not able to enter parliament.

The 2001 elections were a resounding victory for the Communist Party, which picked up 71 parliamentary seats after gaining 50.1 percent of the vote. Twelve seats and 13.4 percent of the vote were won by the center-left bloc Braghis Alliance, edging out the right-wing Christian Democratic Peoples Party, which captured 11 seats and 8.2 percent of the vote. The seven remaining seats (of 101 total) were divided among independents.

In 2005 the Communist Party retained the majority, albeit by a smaller margin; garnering 46.1 percent of the vote, they were awarded 56 seats. The Christian Democratic Peoples Party earned 9.1 percent of the vote and earned 11 seats. The most interesting change, however, is that the Democratic Moldova Bloc, which is made up of the Democratic Party of Moldova, the Our Moldova Alliance, and the Social Liberal Party, earned 28.4 percent of the votes and 34 seats.

JUDICIARY

The Moldovan judicial system consists of a Supreme Court of Justice, a Court of Appeals, subordinate tribunals, the Superior Council of the Magistracy, the Procuracy, and a Constitutional Court. The Superior Council of the Magistracy is made up of judges chosen by Parliament for five-year terms and is responsible for discipline in the judicial system. The Constitutional Court comprises nine deputies, three chosen by the president and six by parliament. It is named as the sole authority with constitutional jurisdiction in the republic and is described as entirely independent, subordinated only to the constitution itself. The Procuracy, which is headed by a procurator and a collegium, directs investigations, orders arrests, and administers the prosecution of criminal cases. It is also charged with administration of the justice system and insuring the legality of government actions. Below the national



level the judicial system is based on a network of local courts and higher-level appeals courts.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

After independence, Moldova retained a regional system of government not unlike the Soviet system: below the central government, there were 40 administrative districts, each of which was governed by a locally elected council. With the local elections of 1999, however, regional government was reformed and concentrated into nine provinces with two autonomous regions (Transnistria and Gagauzia). Further reform in 2003—harkening back to the Soviet system—replaced the provinces with 33 districts (*rayons*) and one municipality.

The Electoral System

The law on Moldovan legislative elections was passed on October 19, 1993. It called for the formation of a new national parliament that differed significantly from its initial legislature. In a key shift, it was decided that Moldova's first entirely post-Soviet legislature would comprise 104 delegates. After years of deadlock, republican leaders hoped that this smaller body would be more manageable than the 380-member Soviet institution, in which it was often difficult even to achieve a quorum. (By the 14th legislature, it was further reduced to 101 delegates.) Rules governing the electoral mechanism were also fundamentally altered. Under the new system, delegates were elected on the basis of proportional representation from closed party lists. A 4 percent threshold for participation in the legislature was established in order to avoid excessive fragmentation. In a move that distinguished it from the vast majority of proportional representation systems, the Moldovans adopted a single national electoral district for the 1994 elections. While not ensuring participation in the separatist region, this mechanism allowed elections to go forward, selecting a body of delegates whose constituency was the entire republic, regardless of their individual places of residence. Transnistrian leaders refused to allow voting in their region but did agree to permit those who wished to cross over into Moldovan territory in order to participate in the elections. Some 6,000 people took advantage of this opportunity to cross the Dniester and vote in specially established west bank polling places.

The president is chosen by agreement of at least three-fifths of the legislature. If no candidate achieves such a majority, a runoff between the top two candidates determines the outcome in the second round.

The Party System

The Communist Party of Moldavia (CPM) dominated the political life of the republic from its inception in 1944 until 1990. During that period CPM officials monopolized all politically significant positions. However, the party's power disintegrated with remarkable swiftness once democratic elections were held. The Communist Party was formally abolished in 1991, following the abortive August 1991 coup attempt in Moscow. But the CPM continued to dominate in Transnistria, which initially refused to recognize the legitimacy of the government of Moldova.

The character of party politics in Moldova after independence reflected the relatively recent emergence of competitive politics in the republic, the legacy of communism, and the existence of deeply divisive ethnic and linguistic issues. Party competition has focused on pro-reform/antireform and pro-CIS/pro-Romania orientations.

Major Political Parties

COMMUNIST PARTY OF THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

(Partidul Communist Republica Moldovei; PCRM)

The Communist Party of the Republic of Moldova is a direct successor of the Soviet-era Communist Party. It was outlawed until late 1994 and thus did not compete in the February 1994 parliamentary elections. After the party reentered political activity, it formed a parliamentary faction from among deputies who migrated to it from other left-wing party factions. It has since established itself as a powerful electoral force in the country, winning the majority of seats in parliament in 2001. It has strong support among industrial workers and Russian-speakers. It favors alliances with the Commonwealth of Independent States and a compromise with the leadership of Transnistria. The party is led by Vladimir Voronin.

CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S PARTY

(Partidul Popular Crestin Democrat; PPCD)

The Christian Democratic People's Party was formed in 1989 as the Popular Front of Moldova. The Popular Front emerged as an advocate of increased autonomy from the Soviet Union and of the rights of the ethnically Moldovan population of the republic. Following the Popular Front's success in the 1990 elections, delegates were able to dominate proceedings in the national legislature and secure government support of its agenda. The Popular Front is well organized nationally but is strongest in the capital and in the areas of the country most heavily populated by Moldovans. At its third congress, in February 1992, the Popular Front became explicitly committed to unification with Romania and changed its name to the Christian Democratic Popular Front. Popular reaction against the party's increasingly nationalist orientation led to defections of moderate party leaders and significant decline in popular support in the period leading up to the 1994 legislative elections.

For the 1998 elections, the party consolidated into a successful, right-wing, electoral bloc called the Democratic Convention of Moldova. In 1999 it took on its present name, and, in the 2001 elections, it again won parliamentary seats. The Christian Democrats emphasize Romanian alliances over Russian ones, pursue democratic reforms, and seek to curb the heightened power of the ruling Communist Party. In fact, the government temporarily suspended the Christian Democratic People's Party following their protests in opposition to the government in 2002. The party is led by Iurie Rosca.

DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF MOLDOVA

(Partidul Democrat din Moldova; PDM)

This centrist party was formed in 1997 as the Movement for a Democratic and Prosperous Moldova. It was created by members of parliament who supported the legislative agenda of President Petru Luchinschi. It favored European integration and market reforms. After modest victories in the 1998 elections, it participated in the government. In 2000 it was reconstituted under its present name, and later entered into an agreement with the opposition sides of the Social Liberal Party and the Braghis Alliance known as "Our Moldova." The party leader is Dumitru Diacov.

As of the 2005 elections the party has become a significant political force, holding a third of the parliamentary seats.

SOCIALIST UNITY/EDINSTVO

(Unitatea Sociulisla/Edinstvo)

Edinstvo was formed in 1989 as one of the "interfront" organizations that emerged among workers in many of the former Soviet republics in order to oppose the anti-Soviet independence movements. In the early transition it was politically conservative in the sense of supporting the status quo of the pre-1990 period and strongly pro-Russian and sympathetic to Transnistria. Edinstvo's main base of support is found in the ethnic Russian urban population. It is positively inclined toward the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). Its president is Petr Shornikov.

SOCIAL LIBERAL PARTY

(Partidul Social-Liberal; PSL)

This progressive party was formed in 2001, drawing from the Christian-Democratic Women's League, the National Youth League of Moldova, and other minority associations. In 2002 it drew in the Party of Democratic Forces, which had been formed in 1995 from the United Democratic Congress and was led by Valeriu Matei. In 2004 the Social Liberal Party entered the anticommunist "Our Moldova" electoral bloc along with the Democratic Party and the Braghis Alliance. The leader of the Social Liberals is Oleg Serebrean.

DEMOCRATIC AGRARIAN PARTY OF MOLDOVA

(Partidul Democrat Agrar din Moldova)

The democratic Agrarian Party was originally formed by deputies in the transition legislature elected in 1990. The Agrarians were able to maintain a remarkable degree of cohesion throughout the disruption that occurred within Parliament from 1990 through 1993, and they emerged as a powerful electoral force. They peaked with the 1994 elections, in which they earned 56 seats in Parliament. Their success was due in part to the close relationship of agribusiness with the Agrarian deputies, such as village mayors or collective farm managers, who also held cautious views on land reform. The party maintained a strong electoral base among rural Moldovans and many held common ideological views, as reform Communists. The Agrarian Party fell into swift decline in the late 1990s, however, particularly in the wake of their defeat in the 1998 general elections, in which they failed to win a parliamentary seat. For the 1999 local elections, the party formed a bloc with the

Communist Party and the Socialist Party, but in the parliamentary elections of 2001, the Agrarians campaigned alone and again did not cross the threshold of representation. The party is led by Anatol Popusoi.

PARTY FOR REVIVAL AND ACCORD OF MOLDOVA

(Partidul Pentru Renastere si Conciliere din Moldova)

The Party of Renaissance and Accord of Moldova was formed in July 1995 as an electoral vehicle through which the then incumbent president, Mircea Snegur, sought a second term in office in November 1996. Its original leadership was drawn from defectors of the Democratic Agrarian Party in Parliament. It sought the support of former constituents of the Christian Democratic Popular Front, which had fallen into decline by the mid-1990s. The platform of the Party for Revival and Accord was pro-Romanian and pro-reform.

For the 1998 elections the party joined an electoral bloc with the Democratic Party of Moldova and in 2002 it ceased to exist when it merged with others to create the Liberal Party. By 2004 the Liberals had entered into the "Our Moldova" Alliance.

Minor Political Parties

Since its inception, the new Moldova has seen the formation of several minor political parties. These include Alianta Civica "Furnica" (Civic Alliance "Ant"), Gagauz People's Party, League of Christian Democratic Women, National Liberal Party, National Peasant Party, National Christian Party, National Youth League, New Forces Movement, Party of Social and Economic Rights, Popular Democratic Party, the United Liberal Party of Moldova, the Congress of the Intellectuals, the Party of Democratic Forces, and the United Social Democratic Party of Moldova.

Other Political Forces

The country entered into a partnership and cooperation agreement with the European Union in 1998, and this agreement may eventually evolve into full membership; the process of negotiation and cooperation with the EU also will exert a strong influence in coming years.

National Prospects

The political party environment has been volatile in Moldova since independence. The interaction of ethnic conflict and pro-reform versus antireform political cleavages has complicated the process of party formation. A second negative factor has been the disjunction between elite political competition and mass-level politics. Individual leaders have both repeatedly abandoned their party affiliation and formed parties as vehicles for the pursuit of their individual ambitions. Both of these practices decrease the ability of the electorate to vote on the basis of stable expectations concerning leaders' behavior, and have hence undermined party institutionalization.

On the positive side, some parties, particularly those on the center-left, have remained stable despite these conditions. Moldova has carried out a series of competitive elections that have exhibited the peaceful change in power in both the legislative and executive branches. While substantial fragmentation remains, the Republic of Moldova thus appears to be moving in the direction of stable competitive politics, with the institutionalization of some parties.

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PRINCIPALITY OF MONACO

(Principauté de Monaco)

By Kenneth E. Bauzon, Ph.D.
Revised by Tom Michael



The sovereign country of Monaco is situated in western Europe, facing the Mediterranean Sea to the south. It is bordered on its other three sides by France, specifically the *département* of Alpes-Maritimes. It has a population of 32,000 (2005 est.) and occupies a land area of no more than three-quarters of a square mile. It is home to French, Italians, Swiss, and Belgians, as well as native Monegasques. The French make up the largest portion of the population, nearly half, while the native Monegasque comprise one-sixth and speak their own language, Monegasque, a cross between Italian and French. Roman Catholicism is the official religion, adhered to by nine-tenths of the population.

The System of Government

Monaco's government is a constitutional monarchy with a unicameral legislature.

EXECUTIVE

The prince of Monaco holds the title chief of state along with at least 20 other titles. Actual political power rests with the prince, and all powers vested with the legislature and the judiciary are derived from him. Executive authority is exercised jointly by the prince and the four-member Council of Government, which consists of three state councilors and the minister of state, who is head of the Council. The Council of Government derives its authority from the prince and is answerable to the prince. Further, two other bodies—the Council of State and the Council of the Crown—are also established for the purpose of providing advice to the prince.

LEGISLATURE

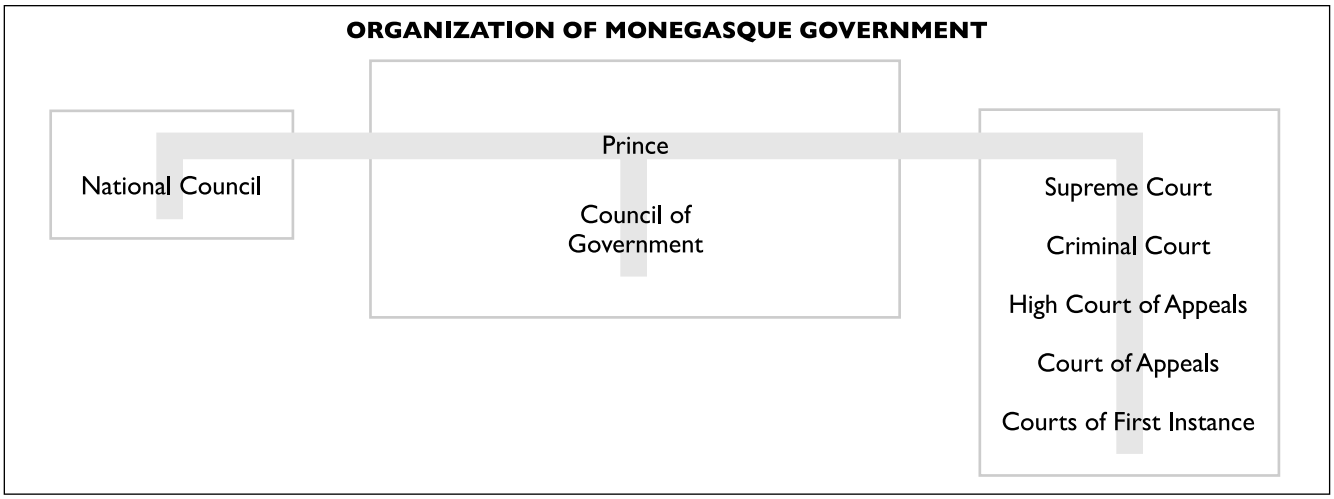
Legislative authority rests with a unicameral body, the National Council, which consists of 24 members who each serve a term of five years. These legislators are elected through a competitive electoral process based on universal adult suffrage. Sixteen of the 24 members are elected by list majority system, while the other eight are elected via proportional representation. Eligibility for election to this body requires Monegasque citizenship and at least 25 years in age.

JUDICIARY

The judicial branch consists of the Supreme Court (or Supreme Tribunal), the Criminal Court, the High Court of Appeals, the Court of Appeals, the Criminal Court, and the Courts of First Instance. Two other courts were established in 1946 and 1948, namely, the Industrial Court and the Higher Court of Arbitration of Collective Labor Disputes, respectively.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Due to the small size of the country, there is no regional or local government.



The Electoral System

Monaco's electoral system is currently based on universal direct adult suffrage at age 21, and women have had the right to vote since 1963.

The Party System

The political party system in Monaco is generally classified as a dominant-party system much like that of Mexico during the latter half of the twentieth century.

Major Political Parties

The National Democratic Union (Union Nationale et Démocratique; UND) has dominated the political scene for decades, but its control is not absolute and it has been successfully challenged on occasion by minority parties. For a long time, the UND existed mainly to articulate and support the wishes of the monarchy and the prince.

Minor Political Parties

In 1973 two seats in the National Council were shared between two minor political parties, and again, in the January 31, 1993, elections, three seats were shared. Another minor political party, the Monegasque Socialist Party (Parti Socialiste Monegasque; PSM) has been in existence but has never succeeded in electing a candidate to the National Council.

There was a great upheaval in the 2003 elections when an opposition party, Union for Monaco (UNAM), led by Stéphane Valéri, captured 58.5 percent of the vote and came into power with 21 of the 24 seats. Voters turned out in high numbers—about 80 percent of all eligible voters participated—because of their interest in the key issue of the election; the UNAM, as well as Prince Rainier III, advocated Monaco's entrance into the Council of Europe, while the ruling UND resisted the effort. The UND, with only 41.5 percent of the vote, was left with only three seats.

The most important functions of Monaco's political party system have been to secure and maintain the country's political stability and to validate and legitimize the monarchy. Prior to the 2003 elections, with the UND safely in control, most people did not engage in political activity, and although the party system gave the semblance of democratic choice, the perception of a foreordained outcome deterred many from voting. Some dissenting political parties, particularly those of Marxist orientation, have had little luck in Monaco. Visitors and citizens alike are always reminded of the ubiquitous presence of the police and how it safeguards the tiny principality from any disorder and the royal house from any criticism.

Other Political Forces

There are no other political forces.

National Prospects

The economic prosperity and political stability of Monaco may be attributed generally to the strict discipline and the conservative style with which the principality have been ruled. Propitious international conditions may also be credited, in particular, its protected status with France, which obviated the necessity of raising an army. According to a 1918 treaty, France can annex Monaco if the longtime ruling clan, the Grimaldi family, is unable to field an heir. Its conscious efforts to promote the principality as a tax haven have attracted significant businesses, for example, perfumes, pharmaceuticals, and ceramics, enough to transform it into an international business center. Also, the entire principality is a free trade zone without actually becoming a member of the European Union. In 2002 it abandoned the French franc for the common currency of the euro. Although long known for its gambling casinos, raceways, and pleasure-seeking visitors, Monaco has striven to diversify its image and enhance its international status. In addition to tourism, the economy relies upon banking and financial services, as well as light manufacturing.

The domestic political and administrative institutions show no sign of weakening or discontinuity. The ruling Grimaldi family celebrated 700 years of reign in Monaco in 1997. Barring the extinction of the Grimaldi clan or, unlikely, a radical shift in both domestic and international conditions, the Grimaldi family may yet lead the principality for another 700 years. This is especially likely due to the 2002 change in the constitution which allows for the throne to pass to a female Grimaldi when there are no male heirs.

Also, as of the 2002 a new treaty with France prevents Monaco from becoming a French principality. Under the previous 1918 treaty it was subject to French rule following the end of the male Grimaldi bloodline. These changes are timely given Prince Albert II's ascension to the throne after the death of his father Prince Rainier III on April 6, 2005. Prince Albert has no male heirs.

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MONGOLIA

(Mongol Uls)

By Paul Hyer, Ph.D.
Revised by Christopher P. Atwood, Ph.D.



The state of Mongolia, formerly the Mongolian People's Republic (MPR) until 1992, is a nation of 2.7 million people (2005 est.). A Communist state until the collapse of the Soviet Union, it made a rapid transition to democracy and a free-market system after 1990. The Mongolian economy was traditionally based on nomadic herding. In the early 2000s the country's main exports are animal products, such as cashmere and leather, textiles, and minerals, including semi-processed copper, molybdenum, zinc ores, fluorspar, gold, and crude oil. For 70 years Mongolia was characterized as a satellite of the Soviet Union; indeed, it was the prototype of the satellite system that later emerged in the Soviet bloc in Eastern Europe. Now it is the first Communist state in Asia to move toward democracy.

Mongolia was under the control of China's Manchu-Ching dynasty from 1691 to 1911, when it declared itself an independent monarchy under a traditionally powerful "reincarnated" Buddhist lama. Mongolia's Soviet-supported revolution (1921) was the first in Asia when it revolted against a continuing Chinese threat. Mongolia declared itself a People's Republic in 1924. From that time most Mongols believed that their independence from China required a strong link to the Soviet Union.

Mongolian politics were historically characterized by fragmented political power in the hands of a hereditary nobility paralleled and complemented by a powerful monastic clergy of lamas (Tibetan Buddhist monks). These elites dominated politics, and commoners had no active role.

The move toward independence in 1911 was followed by a decade of nationalistic fervor and continued political turbulence. In January 1920 radical Mongolian nationalists, encouraged by the victory of the Bolsheviks in Russia, organized the vanguard of a revolutionary party (Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party; MPRP). Support from the Soviet political cadre and the Red Army consolidated the party's dominance.

After gaining power in 1921, this party controlled Mongolia's political life for the next 70 years. It looked to the Soviet Union for direction and institutions to revolutionize the nation. As a satellite of the Soviet Union, its political control was ensured by Moscow.

During the 1920s there were great internal divisions among left-wing radicals, moderates, and conservatives. The nobility and clergy were neutralized if not liquidated, and covert competition for personal power continued within the party for many years. The late 1920s and the 1930s saw violent purges and an abortive attempt at collectivization of the countryside.

In 1936 Khorloogin Choibalsan, a dominating personality with a Stalinist approach to politics, emerged as the strongman. He ran the government with virtually no consultation with formal government bodies. Yumjaagiin Tsedenbal succeeded Choibalsan on his death in 1952. His administrative style, while still repressive, was much more staid and conventional; Tsedenbal remained in power until 1984, the eve of reforms. Collectivization of the countryside was completed in 1960 and urbanization accelerated in the 1970s and 1980s.

As a prelude to the cataclysmic changes of the 1990s, Mongolia saw the rise of a younger, nationalistic generation, anathema to Moscow and a worry to Marxist governmental leadership. There were occasional purges—no executions but simply removal from office. Despite this, there was considerable stability in government structure, dynamics, and personnel, accompanied by a fair amount of mobility or "changing of the guard." All this made the bloodless revolution of the 1990s a much less painful process.

With the breakup of the Soviet block in 1989, Mongolia's Communist rulers faced huge demonstrations for democracy and real independence. The leaders resigned, multiparty elections were held, and a younger generation of MPRP leaders led their party to a solid electoral victory. Several new parties, however, won seats in the new legislature. Decollectivization of the countryside and privatization of all but the largest state-owned businesses followed, despite a severe economic downturn from 1990 to 1995. Since the ratification of a new democratic constitution in 1992, the MPRP and a shifting coalition of more libertarian democratic parties have alternated in power. While the new reformist MPRP holds a more culturally conservative and economically statist stance, differences between it and the democratic opposition are not fundamental, and a reversion to authoritarian government or Socialist economics seems most unlikely.

The System of Government

The government of Mongolia is a mixed presidential/parliamentary system with a unicameral legislature.

EXECUTIVE

Mongolia's president is the head of state, the commander in chief of the armed forces, and the head of the National Security Council. Previously the president was elected by the State Great Hural (the nation's parliamentary body), which was manipulated by the Communist Party. Now he is popularly elected by a majority, for a four-year term and is limited to two terms. He is empowered to nominate a prime minister who must be confirmed by the parliament. The president may initiate legislation and veto all or part of the same. He may issue decrees and call for the government's dissolution. He directs foreign affairs and national defense and maintains public order through the police. In the absence, incapacity, or resignation of the president, the chairman of the State Great Hural exercises presidential power until the inauguration of a newly elected president.

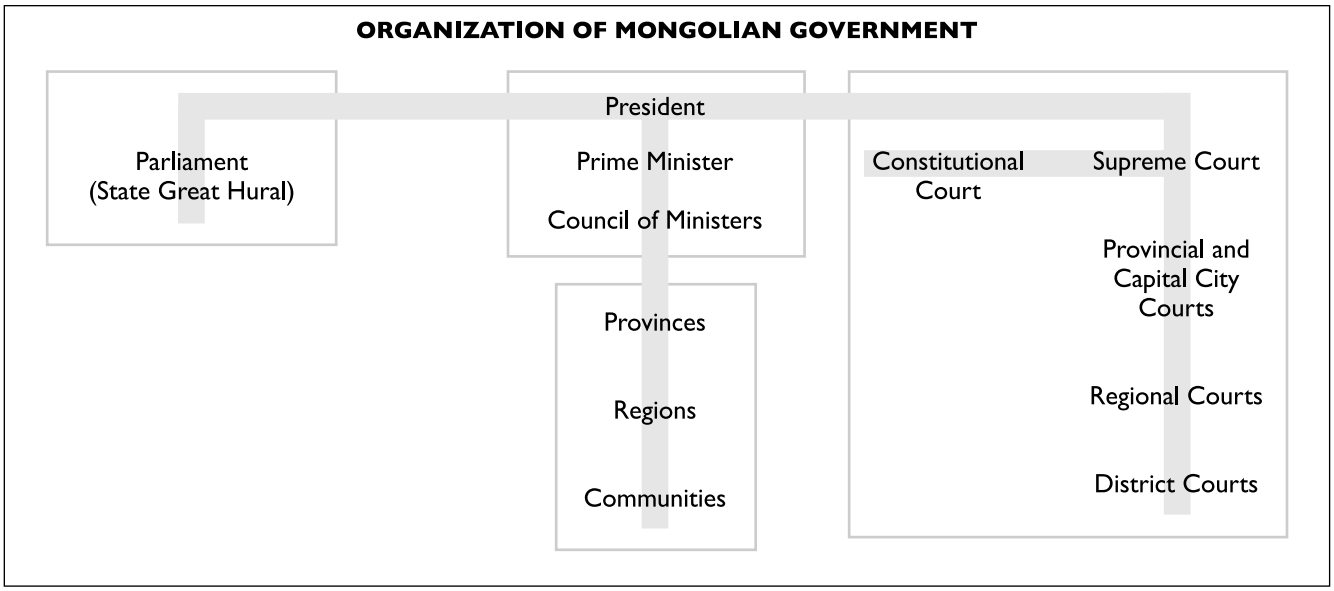
The office of the president includes the following services in suboffices: organization, correspondence, information services, an economic adviser, a legal adviser, a National Defense Council secretary, and an adviser on public order.

The prime minister is nominated by the president and confirmed by the parliament for a four-year term. He chooses a cabinet, also subject to parliamentary approval. Decrees issued by parliament become effective when signed by the president. In 1994 Prime Minister Puntsagiyn Jasray moved to combine or abolish many ministries in a radical change to reduce governmental expenses and bureaucratic agencies. This move had long been discussed and was supported by many groups, including independent economists.

After the upset victory of the Democratic Coalition in the 1996 elections, a constitutional controversy helped prevent a stable government. While previously the prime minister and government ministers had not been members of parliament, in the new government, a reshuffling of the coalition leadership in 1998 led to a proposed government with members of parliament as ministers, on the model of parliamentary government elsewhere. The Mongolian president, Natsagiin Bagabandi, refused to form such a government, citing both constitutional issues as well as ongoing investigations of corruption against the proposed prime minister. Not until after the defeat of the Democratic Coalition in 2000 and the formation of a new MPRP government was an amendment to the constitution approved explicitly authorizing parliamentary government.

LEGISLATURE

The State Great Hural, or parliament, is the supreme state authority. It is a democratic body organized in 1992 as a new unicameral legislature. Before 1990 there was a bicameral assembly that simply rubberstamped Communist Party policy and decisions. Seventy-six members are popularly elected for a four-year term. Meeting twice annually this assembly elects a chairman and a vice chairman to serve four-year terms. Its constitutional role is to enact and amend laws, determine domestic and foreign policy, ratify international agreements, and declare a state of emergency if necessary. The State Great Hural can override a presidential veto by a two-thirds majority vote. It may issue decrees that become effective with the president's



signature. A dissolution of the government occurs if the prime minister resigns, if half the cabinet resigns, or if it votes to dissolve itself.

JUDICIARY

The constitution inaugurated in January 1992 marked a new historical era for the country; it is more an expression of hope and aspiration than a reflection of the political realities of the country. Moreover, it resulted from some two years of intense debate over the issues and means of transforming the country from a Communist Party dictatorship to a pluralistic democracy and from a command economy to a free-market system. In addition to establishing Mongolia as an independent, sovereign republic the constitution guarantees a number of rights and freedoms. The new political structure of Mongolia mirrors Western democracies.

For some 70 years Mongolia's legal system was a blend of Mongolian, Russian, and Chinese elements and there was no provision for an independent judicial review of legislation. Now the 1992 constitution provides for an independent judiciary on the model of those found in democratic societies. The highest judiciary body is the Supreme Court. A General Council of Courts is empowered to nominate justices, who are then confirmed by the State Great Hural.

The Supreme Court is mandated to examine all lower court decisions upon appeal, and it is empowered by the constitution to interpret all laws except the constitution. This last function is reserved to a special Constitutional Court of nine members, including a chairman, appointed for terms of six years. Its sole function is to interpret the constitution.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Mongolia is divided administratively into 21 provinces and a capital city. The provinces are subdivided into regions, and the regions into communities. The capital city, Ulaanbaatar, is divided into districts, and the districts into neighborhoods. There are 380 local authorities, who elect their own councils in order to address problems and promote economic advancement.

The Electoral System

Until 1990 the Communist Party controlled elections to the Great State Hural; voting was usually by single candidate election lists. But now there is a plurality of parties and free, open elections. Suffrage is universal for all over 18 years of age. In the 2004 legislative elections 82 percent of the electorate was reported to have voted.

The Party System

In the 1990 democratic transition, three new political parties, all with broadly libertarian programs, arose: the Democratic Party, the Social Democrats, and the National Progress Party. Due to factional quarreling, these parties were unable to present a common program

when the MPRP leaders resigned and the ruling party suddenly agreed to free elections.

The first multiparty elections in Mongolia's history were held on July 26, 1990, and the MPRP, with the advantages of solid organization and sufficient time to prepare, gained 85 percent of the seats in the State Great Hural and took the presidency. But representatives of the major opposition parties were appointed to top positions in the new government.

Free parliamentary elections were held in June 1992 with a 92.7 percent turnout and a Communist Party landslide. It won 72 of 76 seats in the new parliament. One reason given for this rout is that the people had lost confidence in the opposition leaders due to their lack of experience and poor performance. It should be emphasized, however, that the "Communists" elected were *not* old party "hard-liners" but those of a younger generation.

President Punsalmaagiyn Ochirbat, elected in the 1993 presidential election, had switched from the former MPRP/Communist Party and ran as a candidate for the opposition. This was the first defeat for the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party.

In preparation for the 1996 election the Democratic Party and National Progress party merged as the National Democrats, and a coalition was formed with the Social Democrats. This united opposition won an upset victory against the MPRP on a program of faster privatization, and more economic openness. The government's slow response to destructive forest fires also helped the opposition. The Democratic Coalition pushed through a popular privatization of state-owned apartments, but after 1998 was paralyzed by internecine quarrels, constitutional controversies, and accusations of corruption. The *zud* (harsh weather leading to livestock deaths) during the winter of 1999–2000 added to their difficulties and the coalition forces again suffered a massive defeat in the 2000 election. The MPRP won 72 of 76 seats and most of the rest were held by small splinter parties.

From 2000 to 2004 the economic revival begun in 1995 and interrupted by the *zud*s of 2000 and 2001 resumed. The new MPRP administration of Nambaryn Enkhbayar completed privatization of farm and residential land in 2003 and sent troops to join U.S. forces in Iraq. By 2004 the country enjoyed a growth rate of 5 percent. Nevertheless, voters, reacting to perceived clumsy campaigning and a sense that the MPRP was too dominant, split the parliamentary vote that year almost exactly between the MPRP and the new Motherland-Democratic Coalition. This, of course, resulted in a political stalemate and it took several weeks for the parliament to appoint Prime Minister Tsakhia Elbegdorj (a member of the Democratic Coalition), who had previously been prime minister in 1998. The appointment was made with the agreement to reappoint a new prime minister in 2006.

Major Political Parties

MONGOLIAN PEOPLE'S REVOLUTIONARY PARTY (MPRP)

The Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party was Mongolia's only political party from 1920 to 1990, and since 1990 it has retained its position as the majority party. The MPRP was founded in 1920 as the Mongolian People's Party and was installed in power in Mongolia in 1921. In 1925 the party's name was changed to the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party. From 1940 to 1990 the MPRP was a Soviet-oriented Communist-style party exercising one-party rule in Mongolia. Membership expanded from less than 8,000 in 1934 to over 89,500 in 1989. Since the democratic transition in 1990, the MPRP has faced electoral opposition from the Democratic Party.

At present, the MPRP's program supports multiparty democracy, pluralism, and a market economy. Its electoral campaigns have stressed competence and a more statist version of democratic governance. Compared to the opposing Democratic Party, the MPRP has stronger support in the rural areas, especially in the west of the country, among the elderly, and among Buddhists. The MPRP is a member of the Socialist International, the world league of social democratic, Socialist, and labor parties. Membership in 2004 was estimated at over 100,000.

DEMOCRATIC PARTY

The Mongolian Democratic Party has been the main opposition party and the center of a number of opposition coalitions in Mongolia since the democratic transition of 1989–90.

The Mongolian Democratic Party was created in March 1990 on the basis of the Mongolian Democratic Association, which had been formed in December 1989 to lead the demonstrations against the one-party Communist-style rule of the MPRP. A number of other smaller parties also formed at the same time. In 1996 the Democratic Party merged with the smaller National Progress Party to form the Mongolian National Democratic Party (MNDP). The MNDP-led "Democratic Coalition" won the 1996 parliamentary elections. The coalition broke up before the 2000 elections and

the MNDP was swept out of power by the MPRP. In December of that year, the MNDP renamed itself the Mongolian Democratic Party. The party in 2004 led the "Motherland-Democratic Coalition" to win exactly half of the parliamentary seats in the 2004 election.

The Democratic Party has strong support among youth, urban dwellers, private businessmen, and religious and ethnic minorities (Christians, Kazakhs). It has a more libertarian program and a populist, anti-elitist image. In 2003 the Democratic Party counted a membership of about 160,000.

Minor Political Parties

Other political parties include the Civic Courage and the Mongolian New Socialist Party, which are members of the Motherland-Democratic Coalition, and the Republican Party, which counts one MP who generally votes with the MPRP.

Other Political Forces

MONGOLIA BETWEEN CHINA AND RUSSIA

Seventy years of dependence on the USSR, until the recent collapse of the Soviet empire, was crucial in both internal politics and foreign policy. Policy for decades was anti-Chinese but has now moderated, and Soviet troops stationed in Mongolia along the border with China have been withdrawn.

Mongolia now pursues an independent, nonaligned foreign policy. Previously, policy decisions made in Moscow were invariably echoed in Ulaanbaatar. Mongolia frequently reminds itself and others that, due to its land-locked position, it is essential to have good relations with both of its large neighbors. Long-term, fairly cooperative relations with Russia continue. Relations with China are more complex and are now of prime importance. During the period of Sino-Soviet confrontation Mongolia initially tried to maintain a neutral position. But in 1966, with the onset of China's Cultural Revolution and the dangers it posed, Mongolia signed agreements introducing large-scale Soviet ground forces in a buildup on the Mongolia-China frontier. As relations worsened, Mongolia began expelling the 7,000 ethnic Chinese contracted in the 1950s as construction workers.

The above moves were motivated by Mongolia's historical enmity for the Chinese; Chinese statements suggesting a desire to reannex Mongolia; continued border tension in spite of the 1964 demarcation agreements; Mongolia's heavy dependence on Soviet economic aid; and Russia's historical role in counterbalancing Chinese influence.

With the demise of the Soviet Union, Mongolia is particularly concerned with its relations with China, because its strategic trade access to the sea is via China and China is now the prime destination for Mongolian exports of minerals and animal products. With its new options in the late 1980s Mongolia reached consular agreements with China and cross-border trade is expanding. In 1989 Mongolia and China exchanged foreign minister visits. In 1990 Mongolia's head of state visited China, and in 1991 China's president, Yang Shangkun, visited Ulaanbaatar. Regular high-level visits have continued since then. Contacts have been established between a number of Mongolian and Chinese ministries, local areas, and private firms and their Chinese counterparts. Soviet troop withdrawals from Mongolia's China border began in 1987 and were completed in 1992.

Meanwhile, Mongolia has maintained close relations with Russia, including agreements for bilateral trade and cooperation, exemption of Mongolian exports from Russian customs duties, and the establishment of a commission to speed up important trade exchanges. The government of Vladimir Putin has emphasized rebuilding Russia's influence in Mongolia. Putin visited Mongolia in November 2000, the first visit by a Russian head of state since 1974. Russia still retains a significant share of Mongolia's imports and Mongolia's debt was settled on favorable terms in 2003. In 2004 Mongolia joined the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, formed by China and Russia, as an observer.

National Prospects

Of all former Soviet satellites Mongolia made the smoothest transition to new, more democratic institutions, and there is good cause to be optimistic for its political development in the future. The United States and Japan have worked closely with international organizations to assist Mongolia's transition. Numerous donor group meetings coordinated considerable financial and development assistance.

The Mongolian people face the great challenges of an inhospitable environment. The summer droughts of 2000, 2001, and 2002 significantly stunted the country's economic growth. Their agenda to change to an industrial and agricultural society has proceeded rapidly but is by no means complete. The majority of

the people are less than a generation removed from a pastoral-nomadic society.

A positive pattern has emerged in recent decades during which have a major increase in the percentage of the population has become involved in the political life of the country. It is the consensus of specialists that a higher percentage of the Mongolian people were represented in the power structure of Mongolia than in any other Communist nation—or indeed in most other Asian nations. This trend increased with the current move to democratization. Progress is due in part not only to Mongolia's sparse and relatively homogeneous population but also to improvements in education, communications, and transportation—developments that are essential in Mongolia's institutionalization of democracy, the rule of law, and the modernization of the nation.

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KINGDOM OF MOROCCO

(Al-Mamlakâ al-Magribīyā)

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The Kingdom of Morocco, in northern Africa, borders the North Atlantic Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea and lies between Algeria and Western Sahara. With a population of nearly 32.7 million (2005 est.), it is a constitutional monarchy, with the crown being hereditary and passed to the eldest son of the reigning king. Although all three of Morocco's postindependence constitutions (adopted in 1962, 1970, and 1972) enhanced rather than limited the king's power, the 1992 and 1996 constitutional revisions gave the prime minister more power, broadened the authority of the legislature, and established new constitutional councils.

Morocco has often come under the sway of various occupying powers in its history, but not until the seventh century when Islam made its appearance did any of them have an impact on Morocco's population. Since that time, both Arab and Berber peoples have united around Islam. Morocco was independent until 1912, when France and Spain made it a "protectorate," by the Treaty of Fez (1912). During this time, the foreign "protectors" endowed the sultan with enhanced powers so as to better control and rule through him. When they left in 1956, giving Morocco its independence, the sultan emerged as the sovereign figure in Moroccan politics. This created a tension that still exists today between the monarchy and political parties. In 1957 the country changed its name to the "Kingdom of Morocco."

In the 1990s King Hassan II attempted to liberalize Morocco. The king released many political prisoners, reduced censorship and curbed the power of the security services, initiated a new constitution, helped to force Morocco's 17 political parties into three main blocks, and called new elections for November and December 1997.

The center-left government that took over in March 1998 has been praised for setting the foundations of a civil society. The press has been a critical force, an active opposition has been allowed, and there have even been revelations about extrajudicial killings. In a year of political surprises, the king shocked everyone by choosing Abderrahmane Youssoufi, a well-known opposition Socialist and a former political prisoner, to be prime minister. Youssoufi's party, the Socialist Union of Popular Forces (USFP), controlled about a third of the parliamentary seats, and the seven-party coalition Cabinet was seen as fragile, though hopeful.

In 1999 Muhammad VI succeeded King Hassan II upon the latter's death. The 2002 parliamentary elections were considered to be free and transparent elections and were won by the Socialist Union of Popular Forces (USFP), which received a narrow victory. After the elections of 2002, the multiparty government was led by Driss Jettou, the prime minister appointed by the king.

The System of Government

The Morroccan system of government is a constitutional monarchy.

MONARCHY

The pivotal role of the monarch is spelled out in the 1996 amended constitution: "The King, Commander of the Faithful, shall be the Supreme Representative of the nation and the Symbol of its unity thereof. As defender of the Faith, he shall ensure respect for the Constitution." While the latest version of the constitution rather obliquely mentions the word "faith" and the previous ones mentioned that the king "ensures the observance of Islam and the Constitution," Article 6 states that "Islam shall be the state religion."

The constitutional powers of the king are wide-ranging. He appoints and dismisses the prime minister and the other ministers. He has the right to address the parliament: "The messages shall be read out before both Houses and shall not be subject to any debate." He is commander in chief of the armed forces and appoints the senior military officers. He controls the judiciary by virtue of his powers to appoint the judges and preside over the Supreme Council of Magistracy.

The king has the right to dissolve the two houses of parliament by decree and exercise its legislative powers until new elections, which must be held within three months. However, by virtue of Article 35 of the constitution, the king may declare a state of exception under which he may rule by decree for an indefinite period. Hassan II first invoked this right in 1965. The state of exception lasted almost five years, until the promulgation of the 1970 constitution. Hassan II was able once again to rule by decree without any elected legislative body between 1972 and 1977 simply by refusing to call general elections after the adoption of the 1972 constitution.

Constitutional revision, which can be initiated by the king without reference to the parliament, requires approval in a referendum, but the constitution specifies that "Neither the state system of monarchy nor the prescriptions related to the religion of Islam may be subject to a constitutional revision."

The king claims a divine right to rule, as *Amir al-Muminin*, or Commander of the Faithful; and it is this presumption to both the spiritual and temporal leadership of his subjects that sanctions his claim to ultimate control over the nation's political life. A rule of primogeniture is established in the constitution. If the king dies or abdicates before his successor reaches the age of 16, the king's powers are exercised by a regency council, composed primarily of royal appointees. Until the heir reaches his 20th birthday, it acts as a consultative body.

EXECUTIVE

The king retains primary executive power as the head of state, while the prime minister (appointed by the king) serves as the head of government. The cabinet is formed of ministers appointed by the monarch. The government is responsible to both the king and the parliament. The king is advised by a small, influential royal cabinet, a group of four or five royal counselors headed by a director-general, who are among the king's most trusted political allies.

LEGISLATURE

From 1977, when the first parliamentary elections were held under the 1972 constitution, until the constitutional revisions of 1996, Morocco had a unicameral legislature, known as the Chamber of Representatives (Majlis al-Nuwab). The 1996 constitution established a bicameral legislature, which was effected by adding a lower house, the Chamber of Councilors (Majlis al-Mustasharin).

Members of the Chamber of Representatives are elected for six-year terms by direct, universal suffrage; there are 325 members. For three-fifths of its 270 seats, members of the Chamber of Councilors are elected in each region by electoral colleges made up of elected members of local councils, and two-fifths of them are elected by the people. The parliament meets for two sessions a year. The first session begins on the second Friday of October and is presided over by the king. The second session starts on the second Friday of April. Parliament can also meet in special sessions that have a defined agenda and must end with a decree. The meetings of the two chambers of parliament are open to the public, but they can also be held as private meetings at the request of one-third of its members or at the request of the prime minister.

The parliament's legislative competence is relatively narrow. The constitution bars the legislature from adopting bills or amendments that reduce the state's revenue or raise public expenditure. If, by December 31, parliament has not approved the following year's budget, the government can simply proceed as if the budget had been approved. The deputies have the right to vote on the development plan but cannot amend it. With regard to the broad objectives of economic, social, and cultural policy, parliament can pass *lois cadres* (framework laws), but the details of such laws and all other subjects not specified as falling within the legislature's competence are considered to come under the government's administrative authority. The government is entitled to reject any legislative proposal passed by parliament

that it deems to be outside its legislative competence. In the event of a disagreement between parliament and the government in such a case, a ruling is made by the Constitutional Council of the Supreme Court.

JUDICIARY

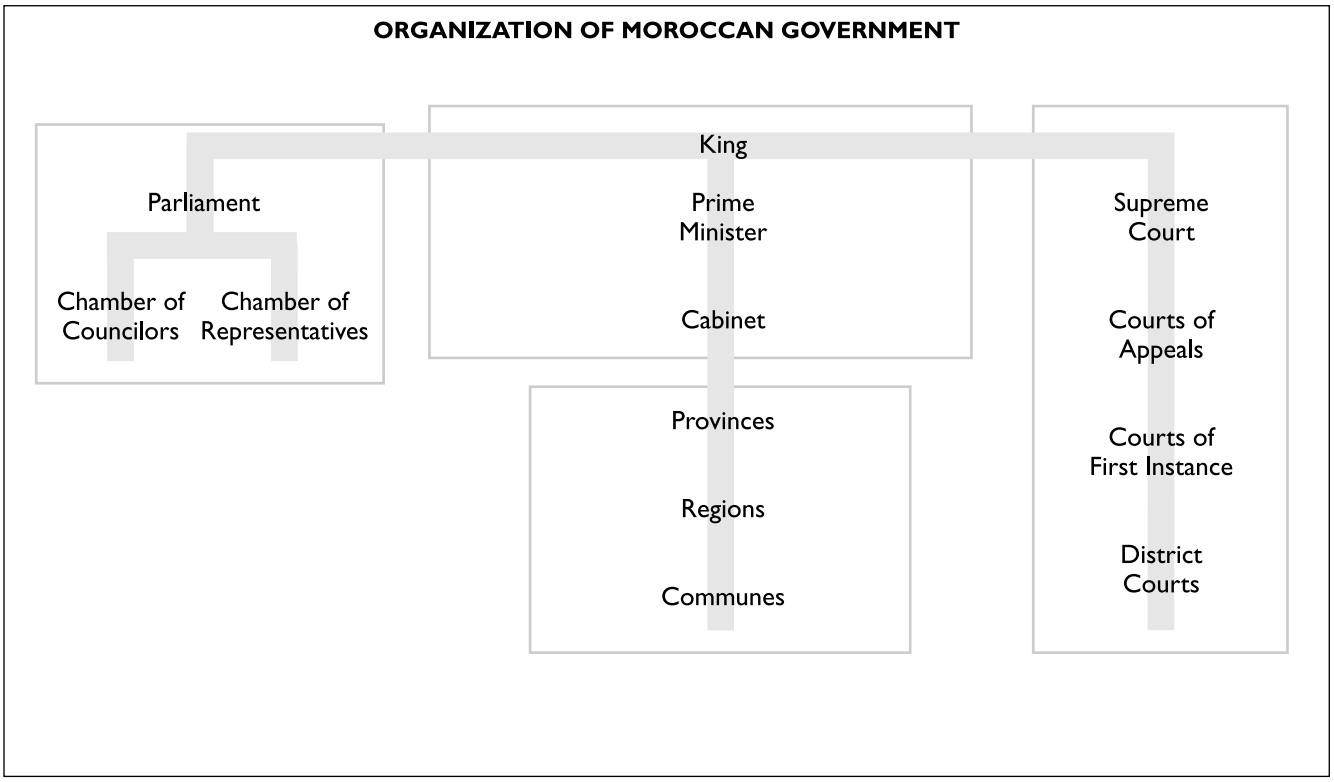
Although formally independent of the executive and the legislature, the judiciary is under the strong influence of the king, who appoints the judges and presides over the Supreme Council of Magistry, which supervises the judicial system. In political trials, sentences often appear to be predetermined by the Ministry of Justice; and Amnesty International has claimed that political prisoners frequently are not given a fair trial, often subjected to torture, and may be held incommunicado for months or years.

The court system includes communal and district courts for minor offenses, 30 tribunals of first instance, nine courts of appeals, a Supreme Court (with criminal, civil, administrative, social, and constitutional chambers), social courts for labor cases, the High Court for crimes committed by ministers in the exercise of their public functions, the Special Court of Justice for crimes committed by civil servants, and the Court of Justice, which judges serious state security and political cases.

However, Morocco's commitment to promote human rights materialized in the 1990s in the creation of a series of institutions such as the Consultative Council of Human Rights (1990), the Constitutional Council (1992), the High Commission for Disabled Persons (1994), and the "Integration of Woman in Development" Unit. There are also associations that deal only with human rights issues: Moroccan Human Rights League (1972), Moroccan Human Rights Associations (1979), Moroccan Human Rights Organization (1988), and Committee for the Defense of Human Rights (1992).

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

According to the constitution, local government consists of 37 provinces and two *wilayas*, with further subdivision into regions and rural communes. (A 1997 decentralization law created 16 new regions.) In each of these, local assemblies are democratically elected, and it is these assemblies that are responsible for managing the region. However, the governors, who "shall carry out decisions by provincial, prefectoral and regional assemblies in accordance with the conditions set by the law," also represent the state and "see to it that the law



ELECTIONS TO THE CHAMBER OF REPRESENTATIVES, SEPTEMBER 2002

Party	Seats
Socialist Union of Popular Forces (USFP)	50
Independence Party (IP)	48
Justice and Development Party (PJD)	42
National Assembly of Independents (RNI)	41
Popular Movement (MP)	27
National Popular Movement (MNP)	18
Constitutional Union (UC)	16
National Democratic Party (PND)	12
Front of the Democratic Forces (FFD)	12
Progress and Socialist Party (PPS)	11
Democratic Union (UD)	10
Other	38

is enforced" and that government decisions are implemented. The king appoints all of the governors.

The Electoral System

Suffrage is universal for Moroccan citizens age 18 and over. Suffrage was once granted at the age of 21, but this requirement was changed in 2003. The parliament, made up of two houses, the Chamber of Representatives and the Chamber of Councilors, holds various elections at which citizens may vote. Elections for the 325 members of the Chamber of Representatives are held every five years. The Chamber of Councilors's 270 members are elected for nine-year terms. One-third of the Chamber of Councilors is renewed every three years. Three-fifths of the councilors are elected by local councils, and two-fifths of them by the people.

The Party System

Parties first emerged in Morocco as a consequence of the nationalist struggle against French and Spanish rule, which began under the leadership of French-educated intellectuals and religious reformists (*Salafis*) and reached a mass scale in the late 1930s. In 1943, Ahmed Balafrej and other nationalists founded the Independence Party (Istiqlal), which was to spearhead the struggle for independence under the leadership of Allal el-Fassi.

The Istiqlal Party formed a close alliance with Sultan Mohammed V, whose Alawite dynasty had been forced to accept a Franco-Spanish "protectorate" in 1912. After about 1946, he refused to cooperate with the French authorities, who retaliated by exiling him to Madagascar in 1953. This step only fanned the flames of nationalist revolt. An Army of Liberation began guerrilla attacks in 1955, and France, which was already facing a rebellion in Algeria, decided to come to terms with the Moroccan nationalists. Mohammed V returned to Morocco as a national hero, and, in 1956, France and Spain ended their protectorate.

In granting Morocco independence, France and Spain returned full sovereignty to the sultan, who acquired the title of king. A struggle for primacy then ensued between the monarch and the more radical factions of the nationalist movement. The king retained

ELECTIONS TO THE CHAMBER OF COUNCILORS, DECEMBER 1997

Democratic Bloc	
Socialist Union of Popular Forces (USFP)	16
Independence Party (IP)	21
Party of Renewal and Progress (PRP)	7
Organization of Democratic and Popular Action (OADP)	—
National Entente	
Popular Movement (MP)	27
Constitutional Union (UC)	28
National Democratic Party (PND)	21
Center	
National Assembly of Independents (RNI)	42
Democratic and Social Movement (MDS)	33
National Popular Movement (MNP)	15
Other	60

all legislative powers and refused to hold elections or allow a constitution to be drafted. He also encouraged the emergence of royalist political movements. The king's enormous prestige stood him in good stead in this contest, as did the practical support of France, which helped to build up the king's Royal Armed Forces (FAR) and provided many of his government's civil servants for several years. Between 1956 and 1959, the irregulars of the Army of Liberation were gradually forced to hand over their arms, join the FAR, or disband. Though the Istiqlal Party was included in the postindependence government, the king tried to weaken it by giving cabinet posts to royalist independents and the small Democratic Independence Party (Parti Démocratique de l'Indépendance; PDI) and by encouraging the Berber-based MP after its creation in 1957. As little more than a loose alliance of factions united in support of independence, the Istiqlal Party was unable to check Mohammed V's tightening grip on power. In 1959 the party split, the more radical nationalists setting up the National Union of Popular Forces (Union Nationale des Forces Populaires; UNFP). By the time of Hassan II's ascent to the throne, in 1961, upon Mohammed V's death, the monarchy was well entrenched in power.

Multipartism is an essential characteristic of the current Moroccan political system. Today there are several political parties, most of which belong to one of the major groupings: the Democratic Bloc (Bloc Démocratique), the National Entente (Entente Nationale), and Center.

Major Political Parties

DEMOCRATIC BLOC

(Bloc Démocratique)

Founded in May 1992 to promote democracy within the framework of a constitutional monarchy, the Democratic Bloc currently includes the Socialist Union of Popular Forces (Union Socialistes des Forces Populaires; USFP), the Independence Party (Istiqlal; IP), the Party of Renewal and Progress (Parti du Renouveau et du Progrès; PRP), and the Organization of Democratic and Popular Action (Organisation de l'Action pour Démocratie et Peuple; OADP). Since its formation, it has tried to ensure that all political actions are legal and that elections are free and fair. In the 2002 Chamber of Representatives elections, the Democratic Bloc won 30 percent of the seats (98 of 325 available seats); in the 1997 Chamber of Councilors elections they won 16 percent of the seats (44 of 270 seats).

SOCIALIST UNION OF POPULAR FORCES

(Union Socialiste des Forces Populaires; USFP)

Founded in 1974, the USFP emerged from a split in the National Union of Popular Forces (UNFP) in 1972. The UNFP had itself split from the Istiqlal Party in 1959. Led by the more radical Istiqlal leaders, among them Mehdi Ben Barka, the UNFP was immediately harassed by the palace—first by its expulsion from the government in 1960, then by the mass trial of UNFP leaders in 1963. Two years later, Ben Barka was assassinated.

The loss of the party's most radical leaders led to the emergence of a more compromise-prone leadership, while the uneasy relations between the UNFP and Morocean Union of Labor (UMT) leaders led to a party split in 1972. One faction, led by Abderrahim Bouabid, broke ranks with a rival faction led by Abdallah Irbahim and the UMT's leader, Mahjoub Ben Seddik. Bouabid's "Rabat wing" of the UNFP was briefly banned in 1973 and 1974 but was relegalized as a result of the liberalization initiated by the king in 1974 changing its name to the Union Socialiste des Forces Populaires the same year. The party accused the government of fixing many of the results in the 1977 elections and has since remained in opposition. It was severely repressed after the June 1981 Casablanca riots and massacre. Its newspapers were immediately suppressed and had still not been allowed to restart publication a year later. Some 200 leaders of the party and its allied Democratic Labor Confederation (Confédération Démocratique du Travail; CDT) were jailed. Abderrahim Bouabid and two other members of the party's political bureau were imprisoned between September 1981 and March 1982. In May 1983 the king pardoned 22 of the imprisoned USFP and CDT members, and the USFP decided to participate in the local and national elections. In November 1983 Abderrahmin Bouabid, leader of the party, was included in the government as a minister of state.

Although it won a sizable number of seats in the 1993 legislative elections, USFP ultimately rejected the king's invitation to participate in a coalition government. In April 1995 the king again tried to convince leftist groups to join the government, but USFP declined. In the 1997 parliamentary elections USFP

garnered 57 seats, the largest number of seats of any party, in the Chamber of Representatives, and 16 seats in the Chamber of Councilors. In March 1998 the king appointed the prominent socialist USFP member Abderrahmane Youssoufi to be prime minister. In the 2002 Chamber of Representatives parliamentary elections USFP got 50 seats and Driss Jetton was appointed prime minister.

The USFP's political outlook is, broadly speaking, social democratic. It advocates reform of the constitution, civil liberties, and the liberation of political prisoners. It calls for the nationalization of the principal means of production, transport, exchange, and credit; land reform on the basis of "land to the tiller"; large-scale housing programs and the control of urban rents and property speculation; anticorruption measures; and wage increases.

Primarily urban-based, the USFP draws most of its members from the educated middle class. It is particularly strong among students, teachers, and lower-level civil servants, but it also recruits through the trade unions affiliated with the CDT, which it controls. In elections, it enjoys wide support in the cities from workers, the unemployed poor, students, and the middle class. The USFP has been liberally supported by its wealthier adherents. Its leaders include Noubir el-Amaoui, Mohamed el Yazghi, and Abdelwaheb Radi. Fathallah Oulaalou is the party's first secretary.

As the major left-wing party, the USFP seems to be growing in strength and influence. Although the repression it suffered off and on since June 1981 seriously handicapped the party and prevented it from capitalizing effectively on its political opportunities, it still has managed to garner an impressive number of seats in the current Parliament. Now, with the appointment of USFP's Driss Jetton as prime minister, the party's stock will certainly rise.

INDEPENDENCE PARTY (IP)

(Istiqlal)

Founded in 1943, the Istiqlal Party led the struggle for independence, in close alliance with Sultan Mohammed V. As a broad alliance united in pursuit of independence, it enjoyed overwhelming popular support, but it had no agreed program of policies for independent Morocco. It was unable to offer effective resistance to the consolidation of political power in the hands of the monarch. The party was greatly weakened by the split with the National Union of Popular Forces (Union Nationale des Forces Populaires; UNFP) in 1959, as well as by the palace's encouragement of ultraloyalist factions. In 1963 it was forced out of the government, in which it had participated since 1956, and it remained in opposition until 1977, when it reentered the government with eight Cabinet posts. It continued to maintain an important involvement in government after November 1983, when the new Cabinet was formed, although its strength has been somewhat reduced.

In the 1993 elections it was already allied with the Socialist Union of Popular Forces (USFP) into the newly formed Democratic Bloc. The bloc, a coalition of center-left opposition groups, garnered 99 parliamentary seats. In the 1997 elections, Istiqlal won 32 of 325 Chamber of Representatives seats and 21 of 270 Chamber of Councilors seats. In the 2002 Chamber of Representatives parliamentary elections Istiqlal won 48 of the 325 seats.

Between party congresses, which are held every two or three years with over 5,000 delegates attending, the party is headed by a 510-member national council. Day-to-day leadership is provided by the much smaller executive committee. The party publishes two daily newspapers, *Al-Alam* in Arabic and *L'Opinion* in French.

Party policy is strongly nationalist. In the immediate postindependence years, it championed the idea of "Greater Morocco"—the incorporation into Morocco of Western Sahara, Ifni, Mauritania, the Algerian Sahara, and northwestern Mali. The party objected strongly to King Hassan's recognition of Mauritania and to the de facto border with Algeria in 1969 to 1972. Istiqlal would be the most resistant to concessions to the Polisario Front in Western Sahara. The party has been noted for supporting full Arabization of education, strict adherence to Islamic principles, rejection of birth control, and denigration of "foreign ideologies" like Marxism.

Once pro-royalist, the party now is more reformist and only supports the king on a few issues. In fact, it has challenged the monarchy on human rights abuses and has begun to rally for improving living standards in Morocco.

The party is primarily urban and middle class and enjoys the support of much of the country's religious officialdom. It is weak among students and unionized workers, though it has a very small student organization and a labor organization.

Istiglal's funding traditionally has come from prominent bourgeois families. This support, however, has declined significantly since the early 1960s. Mohamed Douri is the party leader, and Mohamed Boucetta is the secretary-general.

Because of its participation in the Democratic Bloc, Istiqlal has changed its focus to one of reform and therefore garnered a sizable support. Its biggest challenge may be the tensions within the party between the aging members and the younger, more reform-minded members.

NATIONAL ENTENTE

(Entente Nationale)

The National Entente is made up of the Popular Movement (Mouvement Populaire), the Constitutional Union (Union Constitutionelle), and the National Democratic Party (Parti National-Démocrate). It is a center-right coalition whose parties had leading roles in the government in the 1985 to 1992 period. In 1993 when King Hassan tried (and failed) to entice other, more left-leaning parties to participate in the government, Entente parties were named to form the cabinet in 1995.

POPULAR MOVEMENT

(Mouvement Populaire; MP)

Created in 1957 and legalized in 1959, the MP exploited local rural grievances that lay behind rural rebellions in 1957 to 1959. It presented itself in the Berber-populated mountainous regions as a Berber alternative to the Arab-dominated, urban-based Istiqlal Party. It received encouragement from the palace, which saw the movement as a useful counterweight to the urban parties. It gave loyal support to the king and joined the FDIC in the 1960s. It received four posts in the government after the 1977 elections and was third-ranked after the 1984 and 1993 elections.

The MP's distinctive features are its royalism and Berberism. In 1986 an extraordinary party congress removed its founder and then secretary-general, Mahjoubi Aherdane (born 1921).

CONSTITUTIONAL UNION

(Union Constitutionnelle; UC)

This party was founded in April 1983 under the leadership of former prime minister M. Maati Bouabid after extensive preparation during the preceding three months. Between January and April 1983, M. Bouabid toured the country and held innumerable meetings with local officials, dignitaries, and other influential persons, with a view to constructing a broad-based, popular, yet conservative and loyalist, political alliance. The new alliance received support from the palace and was able to command very considerable electoral support both in the local elections of June 1983 and in the national elections of September–October 1984. In electoral terms it was the most popular party of all—in all stages of the elections—garnering more seats, both in the rural and the municipal commune councils and in the Chamber of Representatives, than any other party. In the 1997 parliamentary elections, as part of the National Entente, the UC garnered 50 Chamber of Representatives seats and 28 Chamber of Councilors seats. In the 2002 parliamentary election the UC got 16 of the 325 seats.

The UC declares that it is faithful to the country's constitutional traditions and to the monarchy. It seeks to mobilize a new alliance centered around a program "quite distinct from the demagogy of imported ideologies and destructive forces." Its major stated concern is to move beyond the politics of the immediate postindependence period and to develop a new "centrist" grouping. It is weak on specific economic and social policy.

Party members are drawn generally from the wealthy and middle classes, both urban and rural; landowners, industrialists, and business interests are represented, as are the professional middle classes. The electoral base is predominantly, but by no means exclusively, rural.

The financial support of its broad constituency covers the UC expenses. It may also receive support from the palace. The founder, Maati Bouabid, former prime minister, died in 1996. Current leaders are Abdellatif Semlali and Jalal Essaid.

As the major conservative, loyalist political grouping, with evident electoral support and the approval of the palace, the UC is no longer as popular and powerful as it once was. The death of founder Maati Bouabid in 1996 appears to have weakened the party's former internal unity.

NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY

(Parti National-Démocrate; PND)

Registered as a parliamentary group in April 1981 and as a political party a few weeks later, the National Democratic Party is a breakaway from the National Assembly of Independents (Rassemblement National des Indépendents; RNI). In the November 1981 Cabinet reshuffle, it increased its number of ministerial posts from three to five, while the RNI rump left the government. In the Cabinet of November 1983 its number of ministerial posts was back to three, while the RNI also obtained a ministerial presence. The PND

continues to attract electoral support, although to a significantly lesser extent than does the RNI. In the 1997 parliamentary elections, as part of the National Entente, the PND won only 10 Chamber of Representatives seats and 21 Chamber of Councilors seats. In the 2002 parliamentary elections the PND got 12 seats of the total of 325.

Like the RNI, the PND is strongly pro-royalist. It is anti-Socialist, pro-Western in foreign policy, and supportive of private business. But whereas the RNI rump tends to represent the interests of industry and commerce, the PND is supported by many of the large landowners and therefore supports policies favorable to the development of large-scale commercial farming. Nevertheless, it presents itself as the defender of the interests of the small farmer and peasant, claims to be progressive, and condemns those political tendencies and ideologies that encourage the division into left and right.

The leaders of the PND are generally wealthy and are often large landowners. Their electoral base is overwhelmingly rural. The financial support of its wealthy constituency covers most expenses. Abdelhamid Kassimi is the party leader, and Arsalane el-Jadidi is the party's secretary-general.

Although for a while, between 1981 and 1983, it seemed as though the PND would emerge as the favored conservative, loyalist grouping, its position has been seriously undermined by the Constitutional Union. The PND has as its mandate to remain loyal to the monarchy, yet to be a counterweight to the "old" parties. It is probable that its strongly rural base will weaken its claim to be a broad and unifying party.

CENTER

(Center)

Center consists of the National Assembly of Independents (Rassemblement National des Indépendents; RNI), the Democratic and Social Movement (Mouvement Démocratique et Social; MDS), and the National Popular Movement (Mouvement Nationale Populaire; MNP).

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF INDEPENDENTS

(Rassemblement National des Indépendents; RNI)

Founded in October 1978, the RNI was initially a loose coalition of the royalist "independents" who won the 1977 general elections. It had much in common with the earlier FDIC, the bloc of pro-royalist forces that held half the seats in the 1963–65 Parliament, although, unlike the FDIC, it did not include the MP. Like the FDIC, the RNI was soon beset by internal squabbles. Two rival factions emerged in 1980; and, in April 1981, 59 of the RNI's deputies announced that they were forming a new parliamentary group, known as the Democrat Independents. The RNI rump then suffered a serious setback when its six members in the government lost their ministerial posts in a cabinet reshuffle in November 1981. The Cabinet formed in November 1983, however, once again contained RNI ministers. However, its parliamentary representation fell to 41 in 1993.

The RNI is strongly pro-royalist. It is supportive of private business, strongly antisocialist, and pro-Western in foreign policy.

The party's top leaders come mainly from the wealthiest strata of Moroccan society. Many have important commercial or industrial interests or have served as senior technocrats in successive governments. The party enjoys support from members of the chambers of commerce and industry and such bodies as the employer's General Economic Confederation of Morocco (Confédération Generale Economique du Maroc; CGEM). Its electoral support is primarily rural.

The RNI is supported by the personal funds of its leading members. Ahmed Osman is the RNI's president. He is a brother-in-law of King Hassan and was prime minister from 1973 to 1979.

Despite continuing difficulties, the party maintains a presence in the government and commands considerable support among the electors. It is rumored that deep divisions exist in the RNI and that a new generation of party leaders is rising to challenge the charismatic Osnan.

Minor Political Parties

Among the smaller parties that have representation in parliament are the Front of the Democratic Forces, the Progress and Socialist Party, and the Democratic Union. However, the party that made the biggest gains in the 2002 elections was the Justice and Development Party (PJD), the only Islamic party allowed to compete in the elections. It won 42 seats in the Chamber of Representatives, even though it fielded candidates only in 56 of the 91 legislative districts.

Other Political Forces

OPPOSITION PARTIES

Morocco's multipartyism has traditionally not extended to include Islamist parties, which have no legal basis for existing. Justice and Welfare (Adl wal Ihsan), founded in 1980, is the country's leading Islamic fundamentalist organization. Its leader, Abd Assalam Yasine, has served several prison sentences, has been placed under house arrest, and has been under police protection since the 1970s. Other Islamist parties include Movement for Reform and Renewal, To the Future, and Islamic Youth.

These Islamist organizations denounce what they see as a decline in moral values and Morocco's deviation from the Muslim faith. They have not advocated violence, but their presence is a reminder to the king that his religious authority could be challenged.

ORGANIZED LABOR

Though French unions had had affiliates in Morocco for some years, the first Moroccan labor federation, the Moroccan Union of Labor (Union Marocaine du Travail; UMT) was founded in 1955 by supporters of the Istiqlal Party. Under Mahjoub Ben Seddik, the federation supported the UNFP's split from the party in 1959; but, from 1962, relations between the UMT and the UNFP were strained. The UMT, which was subsidized by the government, was generally unwilling to back the UNFP's political campaigns and concentrated on narrow trade union matters.

After the split in the UNFP in 1972, Ben Seddik retained links with the rump led by Abdallah Ibrahim. In consequence, the larger faction, which went on to form the USFP in 1974, set about building a rival trade union movement. From the beginning it had the support of the National Education Union (Syndicat National de l'Enseignement; SNE), which had been independent of the UMT since its creation in 1965, and the postal workers' union, which had split from the UMT in 1963. In 1978, eight USFP-led unions, representing teachers, phosphate workers, postal workers, health employees, sugar and tea workers, water and electricity workers, petroleum and gas workers, and some railwaymen, founded the Democratic Labor Confederation (Confédération Démocratique du Travail; CDT). By 1979 there were three more affiliates, representing workers in the tobacco industry, agriculture, and municipal administration; and although the UMT retained some of its traditional strength in basic industries, notably the railway and the electricity-generating industries, the CDT had become the more powerful of the two federations by 1981.

Morocco owes its profusion of trade unions to its pluralism of political parties. However, according to some observers, trade unions are still linked to the regime or to political parties, which means that patronage, clientelism, and power sharing still exist, thus undermining their power and role in society.

National Prospects

The 1990s in Morocco were a time of drastic change for this traditional monarchy-led Muslim country. Beginning with the political reforms that have led to the latest coalition government in March 1997, Morocco appears on its way to democratizing and reforming. However, critics quickly pointed out that King Hassan II still maintained supreme power in his country's political and economic matters.

Indeed, one of the country's main selling points is stability in a largely unstable Middle East. On the economic front, beginning in December 1989, Morocco dropped its state-centrist economic policy in favor of privatization. Now the country has begun to call for more reliance on private entrepreneurship and investment as tools for future economic growth. A new Moroccan middle class has appeared, and the privatization program has attracted foreign investment. In 2004 Morocco signed free trade agreements with the United States and the European Union.

However, Morocco is a developing country with 19 percent of the population living under the poverty line (1999 estimate) and an unemployment rate of 12.1 percent (2004 estimate). The majority of the labor forces are concentrated in the services sector (45 percent); 40 percent work in agriculture and 15 percent in the industry sector (2003 estimate). Morocco mainly exports to France (25.9 percent) and Spain (14 percent), but also to the United Kingdom (7.8 percent), Germany (5.7 percent), Italy (5.5 percent), and the United States (4.7 percent) (2002 estimate).

With all the political and economic reforms, however, the king still has the political legitimacy of descending from a dynasty and the religious legitimacy of descending from a prophet. As long as he is able to hold on to these status claims and, at the same time, oversee even limited economic and political reform, Morocco will be a bright spot of stability in the Middle East.

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REPUBLIC OF MOZAMBIQUE

(República de Moçambique)

By Robert J. Griffiths, Ph.D.



The Republic of Mozambique is located on the southeast coast of Africa with a population of 19,406,703 (2005 est.). After 17 years of single-party rule, Mozambique became a multiparty democracy with the October 1994 elections. The current president is Armando Guebuza.

Mozambique became independent on June 25, 1975, following more than a decade of guerrilla war against Portuguese colonial rule. The independence war was waged by the Front for the Liberation of Mozambique (Frelimo). The revolution in Portugal in 1974 led to a cease-fire and independence agreement on September 7. The agreement transferred power to a transitional government led by the then prime minister, Joaquim Chissano, and composed of Portuguese officers and representatives of Frelimo. The country became fully independent on June 25, 1975. After independence, Mozambique adopted a presidential system of government with Samora Machel as president and Chissano as foreign minister.

In 1977 the country was proclaimed a people's republic, with Marxism-Leninism as its official ideology and Frelimo as the only legal party. After achieving independence, Frelimo shifted its focus onto Mozambique's pressing economic and social problems. Frelimo's efforts to improve the nation's economy were complicated by its support for the nationalist movement in Rhodesia. In 1976 Mozambique closed its borders with Rhodesia in response to the international boycott of the Ian Smith regime. This boycott was extremely costly to Mozambique. The United Nations estimated that between 1976 and 1980 Mozambique lost $550 million in trade. In addition, the Rhodesians had trained and financed a counterrevolutionary movement, the Mozambican National Resistance (MNR, more popularly known as Renamo).

By 1980 Mozambique faced two major problems: a serious drought, which extended from Ethiopia to South Africa, and increased tension within South Africa. After independence, Frelimo was left with an economy that had been almost completely destroyed by the war and the attendant loss of the middle class. Also, the Mozambican economy was still dependent on income from migrant workers in South Africa and fees from South African goods exported from the Mozambican ports of Maputo and Beira. Drought compounded the country's difficulties. Second, rising conflict within South Africa led Pretoria to implement a destabilization campaign against neighboring countries from which antiapartheid forces were operating. Part of this campaign involved increased support for guerrilla groups in bordering countries. Although Renamo had lost its foreign support with the fall of the Smith regime and the independence of Zimbabwe in 1980, it began to receive aid from South Africa and waged a campaign of economic destruction, kidnapping, and killing of the civilian population.

Renamo activities increasingly escalated after 1980. No longer able to sustain the economic and human losses, Machel concluded the Nkomati Accords with South Africa on March 16, 1984. The Accords were a nonaggression treaty in which Mozambique agreed

to bar the African National Congress (ANC) from its territory and South Africa agreed to end its support for Renamo. The Nkomati Accords were controversial. The treaty was widely criticized as a concession to the white South African government. Machel's optimism about Mozambique's ability to make accommodations with South Africa proved to be ill-founded. By December 1984, ANC operations were no longer conducted from Mozambique, but Renamo operations had, in fact, increased and were receiving support from South African army personnel.

In October 1985 Mozambique conducted a joint military operation with Zimbabwe against Renamo. The government was able to overrun the rebel headquarters, and captured documents revealed that South Africa had continued to support Renamo in violation of the Nkomati Accords. Relations between Mozambique and South Africa worsened with President Samora Machel's death in an October 1986 plane crash. There was speculation that South Africa was involved, although this was never confirmed. Frelimo appointed the foreign minister, Joaquim Chissano, Machel's successor as president.

Relations between South Africa and Mozambique improved in 1987 with an agreement to jointly investigate a massacre allegedly carried out by Renamo. In 1988 the two countries agreed to revive the Nkomati Accords and reestablish the Joint Security Commission. Meetings between Chissano and the then South African president, P. W. Botha, produced further cooperation between Maputo and Pretoria.

In July 1989 Frelimo renounced its exclusive commitment to Marxism-Leninism, opened party membership to all citizens of the country, and adopted more pragmatic policies. In 1990 the government announced that it would present a new constitution to the Popular Assembly, and the document was adopted in November.

In the meantime, fighting between the government and Renamo continued. Efforts to find a negotiated settlement began with face-to-face talks in Rome in July 1990. The talks continued in December when a Joint Verification Commission was established and a partial cease-fire took effect. Several more rounds of talks took place before a General Peace Agreement (GPA) was finally signed on October 4, 1992. The agreement called for a cease-fire, demobilization of soldiers on both sides, and multiparty elections.

The United Nations sent approximately 8,000 peacekeepers to oversee the agreement. The UN operation (UNOMOZ) faced the difficult task of demobilizing soldiers on each side prior to elections. This was essential to avoid a repeat of the situation in Angola, another former Portuguese colony, where failure to demobilize the warring factions led to renewed fighting.

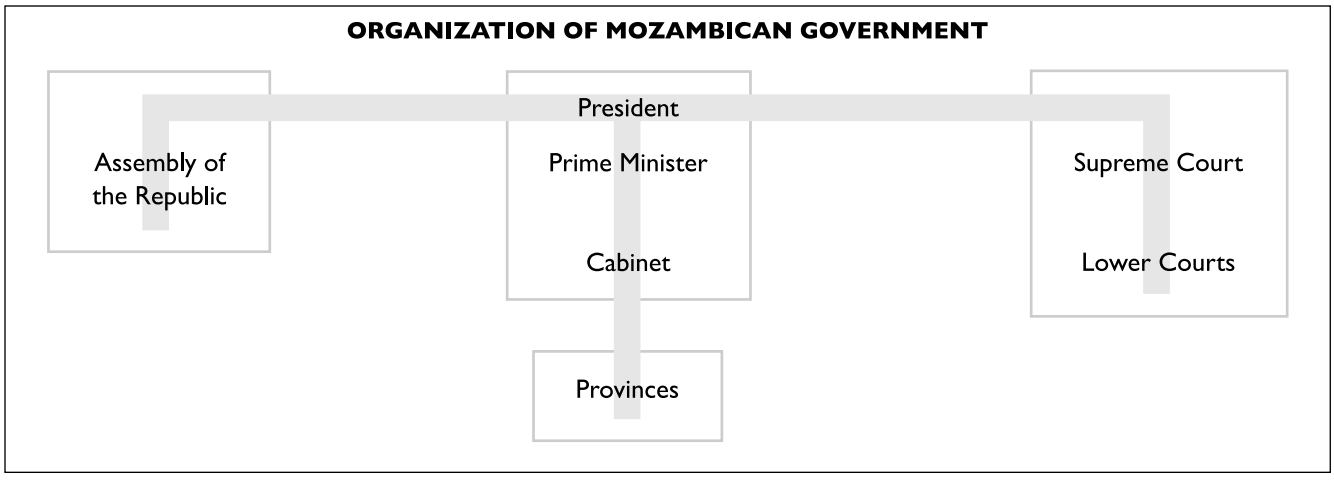
By mid-1995 nearly 1.7 million refugees who had fled Mozambique during the conflicts had returned to the country, and the ensuing period of political stability has contributed greatly to the country's development.

The System of Government

Mozambique is a republic with a unicameral legislature.

EXECUTIVE

The 1990 constitution provides for a popularly elected president who can serve a maximum of two consecutive five-year terms. The president is the head of government



and the state, as well as commander in chief of the armed forces. The Council of Ministers is headed by the prime minister, who is selected by the president. The prime minister assists and advises the president and puts forth the government's budget and programs to the legislature.

LEGISLATURE

The national legislature, the Assembly of the Republic, consists of 250 deputies elected on a multiparty basis according to a system of proportional representation. The deputies are elected for a five-year term, but the assembly can be dissolved by the president before its term expires. The assembly meets for two sessions each year.

JUDICIARY

Under the terms of the 1990 constitution, Mozambique has an independent judiciary. The Supreme Court is at the top of the system of courts provided for by the law on the judiciary. Some Supreme Court judges are elected by the assembly; the remainder is appointed by the president. The courts are subordinate to the Assembly of the Republic.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Mozambique is divided into 11 provinces. The capital, Maputo, has provincial status and, unlike the other provinces, is administered by a city council chairman. The other 10 provinces are presided over by a provincial governor, appointed by the president. Local assemblies are directly elected (a system that began in 1998) and choose representatives to district assemblies, which, in turn, select members of the provincial assemblies. Decisions of these bodies may be annulled by the president.

The Electoral System

The president is elected by popular vote and the assembly is elected by proportional representation. All elections are made by universal suffrage. Democratic elections in Mozambique were originally scheduled to take place within a year of the General Peace Accord. The run-up to Mozambique's first multiparty elections was long and complicated, and the election date had to be postponed. Troop demobilization was delayed as both sides tried to maintain a military advantage in case of a breakdown in the peace accord. Renamo stalled while it tried to transform itself from a guerrilla movement into a political party and sought to gain assurances that it would play a role in governing the country, whatever the outcome of elections.

THE 1994 ELECTIONS

Elections were finally scheduled for October 27–28, 1994. Renamo's leader, Afonso Dhlakama, threatened to boycott the elections just one day before they began, but international pressure forced Renamo to reconsider. Western diplomats also encouraged Mozambique's president, Joachim Chissano, to form a government of national unity with Renamo in order to avoid the winner-take-all formula that contributed to electoral failure in Angola, but President Chissano resisted this pressure.

The elections marked the culmination of the two-year process that began with the General Peace Accord of 1992. The UN-monitored process cost an estimated $1 billion and elections were judged to be substantially free and fair with over 80 percent voter turnout. Renamo received a surprising 38 percent of the popular vote, giving it 112 seats in the 250-seat Parliament. Its greatest strength was in the central and northern regions. Frelimo got 48 percent of the popular vote and 129 seats in Parliament. The remaining nine seats went to the Democratic Union party. Renamo also won a majority of the popular vote in five of the 11 provinces in the country. Renamo's leader, Afonso Dhlakama, was less successful in the presidential poll, receiving only 34 percent, compared with President Joachim Chissano's 53 percent. On the strength of Frelimo's electoral victory, Chissano appointed a government made up entirely of his Frelimo supporters, assuring continued political divisions.

THE 1999 ELECTIONS

Disputes between Frelimo and Renamo over local elections in June 1998 set the stage for Mozambique's second round of legislative and presidential elections in December 1999. In those elections Frelimo's Joachim Chissano defeated Renamo's Afonso Dhlakama with 52.3 percent of the vote. Frelimo also won 133 of the 250 seats in the Assembly of the Republic. Renamo-UE, an electoral coalition consisting of 11 opposition parties, won the remaining 117 seats. Renamo rejected the results of the election charging fraud. International observers judged the balloting to be free and fair and the Mozambique Supreme Court, performing the function of the Constitutional Council, rejected Renamo's appeal of the outcome. Nevertheless, Renamo supporters continued to protest the results and in a demonstration

in November 2000 41 were killed in clashes between Frelimo and Renamo supporters. Renamo also charged the government with responsibility in the deaths of 83 people arrested at the demonstrations. Although the government denied responsibility, a Mozambique Human Rights Association report supported the charge. Amid tensions between the two parties, Chissano and Dhlakama held their first talks since the elections in December 2000 to try to resolve differences between the parties. A second meeting was held in January 2001 but did not produce much progress.

In May 2001 Chissano announced that he would not run as Frelimo's candidate in the next elections. At a Renamo party congress in October 2001 Dhlakama was reelected party president and Joaquim Vaz was elected secretary-general. A 10-member political committee was also formed indicating Renamo's intentions to become a full-fledged political party. At the eighth Frelimo party congress in June 2002, Armando Guebuza was elected secretary-general and also became the party's candidate in the next presidential elections. The next month, Renamo's Dhlakama dismissed Vaz as secretary-general and dissolved the Political Committee. The turmoil within Renamo seemed to diminish with the appointment of Viana Magalhães as secretary-general in November but the party was soon embroiled in another controversy over the seating of five Renamo legislators who had resigned or been expelled from the party. Renamo also announced that it was going to contest the 2003 municipal elections alone. The remaining 10 opposition parties that had been part of the Renamo-UE founded a new coalition, the União Eleitoral. Frelimo won the municipal elections securing a majority in 29 municipalities and the mayorship in 28. Renamo won a majority in only four municipalities and claimed mayorships in five. A split emerged within Frelimo between supporters of Secretary-General Guebuza and Chissano supporters. In February 2004 the Frelimo government named Luisa Diogo prime minister. Diogo will also retain her portfolio as finance minister.

By June 2004 Frelimo and Renamo were at odds once again over changes to draft constitutional amendments drawn up by an ad hoc commission of the Assembly of the Republic charged with revising the 1990 constitution. National elections were scheduled for December 2004.

THE 2004 ELECTIONS

During the 2004 elections the power of the Frelimo party increased. Frelimo candidate Armando Guebuza took presidential office in February 2005 with 63.7 percent of the vote. In addition, Frelimo captured 160 assembly seats with 62 percent of the vote while Renamo was awarded the 90 remaining seats with 29.7 percent of the vote. Although the Renamo party once again contested the elections, their claims were dismissed by election monitors.

The Party System

The major parties in Mozambique, Frelimo and Renamo, were both born out of armed rebellions and have been in conflict with one another since the 1970s. Despite the transition from military group to political party that marked each organization after the General Peace Agreement in 1992, tensions have remained.

Major Political Parties

FRONT FOR THE LIBERATION OF MOZAMBIQUE

(Frente de Liberacão de Mozambique; Frelimo)

Frelimo was created on June 25, 1962, when Dr. Eduardo Mondlane unified three different movements headquartered in Dar es Salaam: Udenamo (National Democratic Union of Mozambique), Manu (Mozambican-Makonde Union), and Unami (National African Union of Independent Mozambique). He was then chosen as president of the umbrella group Frelimo but was subsequently assassinated in 1969. Frelimo pursued a Marxist-Leninist ideology in 1977 but retreated from this philosophy at its 1989 party congress, adopting a more pragmatic, free-market orientation.

MOZAMBIQUE NATIONAL RESISTANCE

(Resistencia Nacional Mocambicana; MNR, Renamo)

Renamo was established in the early 1970s by the Rhodesian government as an intelligence network to keep track of its opponents operating out of Mozambique. With the independence of Zimbabwe in 1980, South Africa took over as Renamo's patron and the organization engaged in a bloody, widespread guerrilla war against the Frelimo government. Locked into a stalemate with the government and under increasing pres-

sure to negotiate with the government, Renamo finally agreed to the General Peace Accord in October 1992. Renamo then set about to recast itself as a political party in order to contest the 1994 elections. The party remains in a state of some disarray.

Minor Political Parties

There are some 38 other parties active in Mozambique, but their support is limited.

Other Political Forces

ARMED FORCES

A critical component of the peace process was the demobilization of combatants and the creation of new armed forces. According to the General Peace Accord (GPA), troops from both sides were to assemble at separate designated areas. Those who wanted to enlist in the new armed forces were evaluated and processed while those who wished to return to civilian life were demobilized. The new army was to be composed of equal numbers of soldiers from both sides for a total troop population of 30,000. A commission was established consisting of representatives of Frelimo, Renamo, and the UN to oversee the creation of the new military. Demobilization and the formation of the Forcas Armadas de Defesa de Mocambique (FADM) was slow because of delays in deploying UN personnel, dissatisfaction on both sides over conditions in the camps, and mutual suspicion. The FADM came into existence in August 1994, but at well below the 30,000 troops envisioned. Although the GPA called for each side to contribute 15,000 troops, by the time the Cease-Fire Commission issued its final report in December 1994, a combined total of only 11,579 troops had enlisted in the FADM. In 1995 the government announced that it would introduce legislation to increase troop strength by 4,500 and that government policy, not the figure specified in the GPA, would determine troop strength. The armed forces are also contending with reduced budgets and continued dissatisfaction in the ranks. Current troop strength stands at 8,200 active members of the armed forces.

National Prospects

Despite the success of Mozambique's multiparty, democratic elections, the country continues to face formidable obstacles. In 1993 the per capita GNP was only $80, making Mozambique one of the poorest countries in the world. The 16-year civil war decimated the economy and infrastructure. Mozambique has also been plagued by substantial external debt, high inflation, lack of a coherent economic policy, and corruption in the bureaucracy. Although the 1987 Economic and Social Rehabilitation Program supported by the IMF and the World Bank helped reduce the deficit and curb inflation, the country still depends heavily on foreign aid. The lack of economic opportunity, particularly for demobilized soldiers, and the presence of large numbers of weapons left over from the war contributed to rising crime rates.

There are major legacies of the civil war to be overcome. By 1992 there had been approximately 1 million casualties Repatriation of refugees was both slow and expensive. A further legacy of the long civil war is the presence of an estimated 2 million land mines scattered throughout the country that threaten civilians and complicate vital agricultural production.

Mozambique emerged from the war as one of the poorest countries in the world; since then it has experienced substantial growth. In April 2000 Mozambique qualified for debt relief under the Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative. Subsequently, the country was approved for the Enhanced HIPC program and, as a result, Paris Club members agreed to reduce outstanding bilateral debt. The country's average growth rate between 1993 and 1999 was a healthy 6.7 percent and between 1997 and 1999 it averaged over 10 percent. Severe flooding in 2000 slowed growth and set the country's recovery back, but it recovered with a growth rate of 14.8 percent in 2001 and 8.3 percent in 2002. Extensive economic reforms have been carried out, including the privatization of state-owned enterprises, and investors have responded by pumping some $6 billion into the country's economy over the past two years. According to Prime Minister Diogo, who also holds the finance minister portfolio, Mozambique has become one of the top three investment destinations on the African continent.

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UNION OF MYANMAR

(Pyihtaungsu Myanmar Naingngandaw)

By Mary P. Callahan, Ph.D.
Revised by Kristin Marsh, Ph.D.



The largest country in mainland Southeast Asia, Myanmar encompasses 261,228 square miles and shares 4,016 miles of land borders with Thailand, Laos, China, India, and Bangladesh. Its coastline in the south rests along the Bay of Bengal and the Andaman Sea. The people of Myanmar are ethnically diverse, with minority groups estimated to make up at least one-third of Myanmar's total population of nearly 43 million. The Burmans, who reside mainly in the central agricultural valleys and in the southern coastal and delta regions, comprise the major ethnic group. Although an accurate census of the minority regions has not been attempted since 1931, most government and scholarly sources estimate that the ethnic makeup is as follows: 68 percent Burman, 9 percent Shan, 7 percent Karen, 4 percent Rakhine, 3 percent Chinese, 2 percent Mon, 2 percent Indian, along with small numbers of Assamese and Chin minority peoples. The official language of the state is Burmese, although other languages such as Karen, Chin, Shan, and Kachin are spoken in ethnic-minority regions. Theravada Buddhism is practiced by 89 percent of the population. Within Myanmar, there are also Christians (4 percent of the population), Muslims (4 percent), animists (1 percent), and other (2 percent).

The Union of Myanmar has been ruled by a military junta since the September 18, 1988, coup d'état, which brought a definitive end to 26 years of military-dominated, socialist rule. This junta, now called the State Peace and Development Council (Naingngandaw Ayechanthayaye Nint Phwinphyotothetye Counci) (SPDC), is made up of 19 senior military officers, most of whom also serve as members of the government's cabinet. Soon after taking power, the junta changed the name of the country from "Burma" to "Myanmar."

The territory that came to be known as "Burma" with the advent of British rule had never before been fully integrated or controlled by a single, central state. It was not until the late 18th century that a Burman king, Alaungpaya, was able to establish authority reaching out to many parts of the land.

In the 19th century, Britain began a gradual, three-stage takeover of all territory today considered part of Myanmar. The conquest was complete in 1886, when the last Burman king was deposed and Burma became a province of India. The colonial regime divided the country into two administrative zones. The central area was called "Ministerial Burma" and was home to most of the ethnic majority Burmans, while the "Frontier Areas" were located in the territory along the newly drawn borders and were populated mainly by other ethnic groups. The Frontier Areas were left largely untouched by the British rulers. In Ministerial Burma, the more intrusive, direct colonial rule sparked the emergence of an ethnic Burman-dominated nationalist movement (the Dobama Asiayone) in the 1920s and 1930s, demanding complete independence from Britain. The agitation by nationalist leaders, including Aung San, along with the wartime collapse of the British regime eventually led to the granting of independence on January 4, 1948.

From independence until 1958 and again from 1960 to 1962, the Union of Burma experienced civilian

rule with a parliamentary form of government. Former nationalist leader U Nu served as prime minister during most of this period. Political life was dominated by one party: the Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League (AFPFL). The early years of independence were characterized by a number of serious threats to survival, including internal ones (Communist and separatist ethnic rebellions) and external ones (the U.S.-backed Kuomintang incursions into Burma, where they prepared to stage an assault to retake mainland China from the Chinese Communists). Due to AFPFL infighting that threatened to aggravate the civil war and also due to poor economic performance, the military (in Burmese, the *tatmadaw*) stepped in to govern as a caretaker government in 1958, and then more permanently in March 1962 when the army again took power. Under the leadership of its commander in chief, General Ne Win, the coup group formed a Revolutionary Council of military officers to replace the cabinet and parliament. The Council suspended the 1947 constitution, established the Leninist-style Burma Socialist Program Party (BSPP), and outlawed all other political parties. Under its "Burmese Way to Socialism," the BSPP attempted to impose a central, command economy and to eliminate foreign control over business in Burma.

In 1974 a new constitution provided for a highly centralized, civilian, single-party form of government. The constitution vested state power in the unicameral People's Assembly, the State Council, the Council of Ministers, and the Council of People's Justice. At the national, state, township, and village levels, government administration was greatly influenced by the BSPP, which stepped up its efforts to build a mass following across the country. Most party and government leadership positions came to be occupied by the same military officers who had held them before 1974. As chairman of the State Council and party chairman, General Ne Win continued his hold on power into the 1980s.

In September 1987, following a series of unexpected demonetization measures that devastated the economy, student demonstrations erupted in Rangoon and continued sporadically into the following year. The police used harsh tactics to put down the demonstrations, one incident led to the suffocation deaths of 41 students in a police van. Public outcry over the incident led to further demonstrations, some of which began attracting participants from other walks of life. This led to the convening of an extraordinary BSPP congress in July, during which Ne Win and San Yu resigned from the party leadership. Nationwide demonstrations continued until September 18, when the army leadership took power directly and established the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC) under the chairmanship of the army commander and Ne Win follower General Saw Maung.

The SLORC suspended the 1974 constitution and abolished the presidency, State Council, Council of Ministers, and People's Assembly. Under SLORC's orders, the crack troops of the armed forces put an abrupt end to the popular pro-democracy demonstrations, killing thousands of unarmed civilians in the process. The SLORC distributed cabinet portfolios to senior military officers, with General Saw Maung assuming the responsibility of prime minister and defense minister. Saw Maung was replaced in April 1992 in a palace coup by the SLORC vice chair, General Than Shwe. In November 1997 the junta renamed itself the State Peace and Development Council.

The System of Government

Myanmar is governed by a military junta.

EXECUTIVE

After suspending the 1974 constitution, the SLORC took over executive authority in Myanmar in September 1988. Executive power is vested in the chief of state and head of government, Chairman of the SPDC Senior General Than Shwe (since April 23, 1992). Than Shwe also serves as commander in chief of the defense services and defense minister, and initially he also served as prime minister. In August 2003 General Knin Nyunt was appointed prime minister, only to be dismissed abruptly in October 2004. General Soe Win is currently the appointed prime minister. At present, there are no legal provisions that limit executive power. As the ruling junta, the SPDC consists of 19 members, including commanders of the service branches and regional military commands. SPDC members wield considerable power. Many, though not all, of the members also held ministerial positions. Beginning in 1992, the junta began appointing some civilians to the cabinet; in 1997, 27 portfolios were held by military officers, eight by civilians. Below the cabinet level, the executive is dominated by military or recently retired military officers who hold numerous director general and subordinate posts as well as crucial positions in economic ministries.

With apparently unlimited power, SPDC rules with an authoritarian fist in its pursuit of what it calls the "three main causes": nondisintegration of the Union, nondisintegration of the national solidarity, and perpetuation of national sovereignty.

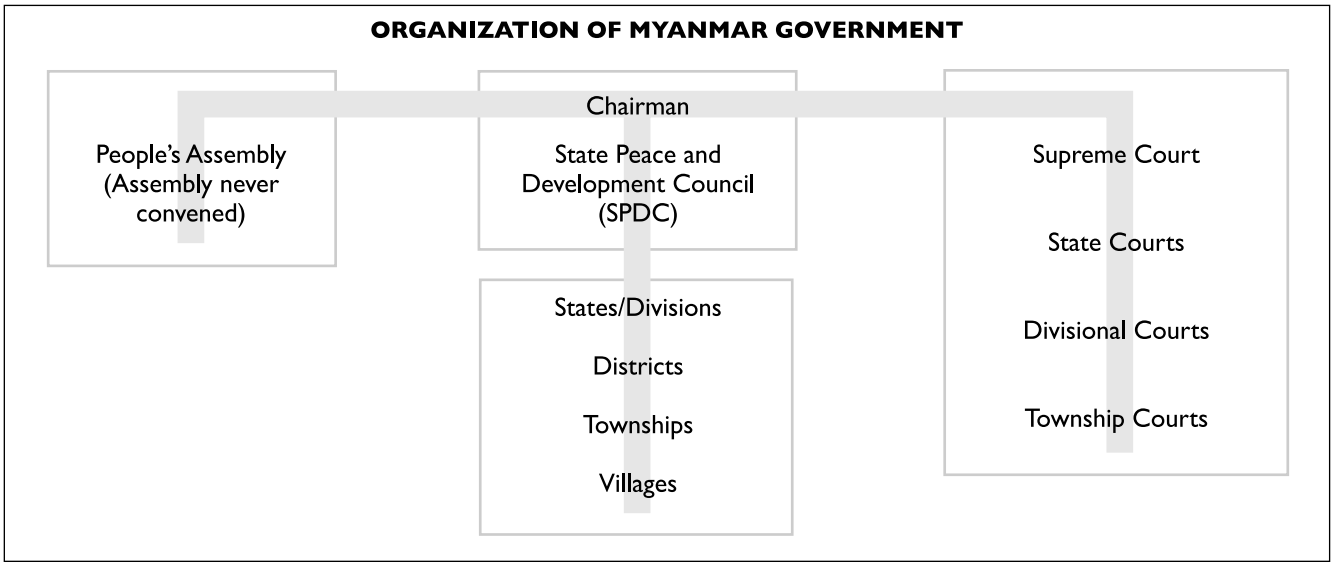
Upon assuming the chairmanship of the junta in 1992, Than Shwe called for a national convention to meet and draw up a new constitution. Opening on January 9, 1993, the National Convention (Amyotha Nyilagkan) consisted of 702 handpicked delegates. Although the National Convention witnessed sporadic dissension in its ranks, the discussions were tightly controlled by the regime and the proposed constitution that emerged continued to shore up the power of the military. The gathering produced a number of principles. It promised "a genuine multiparty democracy" but stressed the "basic principle" that the military would be guaranteed a "leading role" in national politics. The president would be chosen by an electoral college but would be required to have military as well as political experience. The military was to be represented at every level of the executive. Progress on the constitution stalled until May 2004, when the government convened a second constitutional convention. Meetings were once again tightly controlled and sporadic; breaking after two months, they are scheduled to begin again early in 2005.

LEGISLATURE

Under the present regime, there is no legislative branch of government. After abolishing the People's Assembly in September 1988, SLORC continued to allow political parties to prepare for the coming May 1990 elections, although the government banned all public gatherings of more than four individuals. Nonetheless, 223 parties were legalized and registered in 1989, the most significant of which were the National League for Democracy (led by Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, daughter of the national martyr Aung San) and the National Unity Party (the pro-government successor to the BSPP). In the remarkably free and fair election for the legislative assembly held on May 27, 1990, the NLD secured 392 of the 485 seats available (more than 80 percent of the vote), while the junta's NUP gained a miniscule 10 seats (2.1 percent). Since that election, SLORC set aside the results and disqualified, arrested, or drove into exile many of the elected candidates.

JUDICIARY

The judiciary in Myanmar functions as an appendage to the executive junta. SPDC appoints justices to the Supreme Court, and they in turn appoint lower court judges with the approval of SPDC. Courts are located at the national, state, division, and township levels of government. Although there are remnants of the British colonial-era legal system formally in place, in actual practice there is pervasive corruption that undermines the impartiality of the judiciary. Court trial procedures vary greatly according to whether a case is criminal or political. Due process protections are more likely to be upheld in criminal cases. More sensitive political cases are tried in private to avoid public scrutiny, and junta officials frequently dictate the outcome. In November 1994 the SPDC announced the release of nearly 4,000 political prisoners, including leaders of the NLD and student leader Min Ko Naing. While welcoming the release, the oppositional coalition government (NCGUB) called for broader steps toward reconciliation.



REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The regional configuration of states and divisions established under the 1974 constitution has been maintained under SPDC. There are seven states and seven divisions; the term "state" refers to an ethnic minority region, whereas "division" refers to a region in central Myanmar largely populated by ethnic Burmans. Each regional unit is governed by a state or division Peace and Development Council (PDC), which is dominated by locally based, senior military officers. Below the state level, there are district, township, and village PDCs—also under the leadership of active-duty or recently retired military officers—that administer local affairs. In most cases, the PDCs at all subnational levels simply were grafted onto the administrative structures left behind by the BSPP; in fact, in many cases, the same military officers who ran local-level BSPP administrative bodies or local party councils were reassigned to the PDCs of that same locality or region.

The Electoral System

No elections have been held in Myanmar since May 1990, and the results of that election were never realized. Because of the suspension of the 1974 constitution, there is neither an "electoral system" nor a "party system" enshrined in a constitution, government decree, or law. These aspects of the draft constitution have not been revealed at this writing.

The Party System

Despite the noninstitutionalized nature of party and electoral politics, two political organizations dominate the political landscape of Myanmar.

Major Political Parties

UNION SOLIDARITY DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION (USDA)

(Pyihtaungsu Kyankhainyeh Pwinphyotothetyeh Athin)

Although not registered as a political party, the Union Solidarity Development Association (Pyihtaungsu Kyankhainyeh Pwinphyotothetyeh Athin) has emerged as the government's heir apparent to the collapsed BSPP and the NUP (repudiated in the May 1990 election). According to the junta, the USDA was formed on September 15, 1993, to help the army fight against threats to the nation. In 1999 the government claimed 11.8 million members. Geared toward the mobilization of youths throughout the country, the USDA resembles a scout organization, stressing patriotism and good character. Additionally, the USDA has vast economic holdings throughout the country. But its most prominent characteristic is its mobilization of huge public rallies numbering in the hundreds of thousands, held to support government policies. While there is strong evidence that attendance at these rallies is coerced by local PDC officials, it is clear that the regime is preparing to develop a political party for the postjunta era.

NATIONAL LEAGUE FOR DEMOCRACY (NLD)

(Amyotha Democracy Apwehgyoke)

Founded in September 1988, the National League for Democracy (Amyotha Democracy Apwehgyoke) is the only viable opposition political party in Myanmar. The party is led by Aung San Suu Kyi (general secretary and spokeswoman), Brigadier General (ret.) Aung Shwe (chairman), and General (ret.) Tin Oo. Despite the disqualification and detention of its two national leaders (Suu Kyi and Tin Oo) and many of the local leadership as well, the NLD won a landslide electoral victory in the May 1990 legislative elections. After the release of Tin Oo (March 1995) and Suu Kyi (July 1995), the NLD attempted unsuccessfully to force the junta into a dialogue on future political arrangements. Frustrated with the conduct of the National Convention, the NLD boycotted the constitution-writing assembly in November 1995, and the government subsequently banned all its representatives from any future participation in the Convention. The NLD continues to attract support in Rangoon and other parts of the country, despite ongoing attempts by the regime to harass and frustrate the party leadership. The current constitutional convention convened without the participation of Suu Kyi or the NLD. The NLD has offered to take part when the convention resumes meetings in February 2005, but only under the conditions that Suu Kyi is freed and NLD offices are allowed to reopen.

Minor Political Parties

The National Unity Party (NUP) is the main pro-government political party. Replacing the Burma Socialist Program Party (BSPP) for the 1990 elections, the NUP was overwhelmingly defeated. Other opposition parties that participated in the 1990 elections and have representation on the CRPP include the Shan Nationalities League for Democracy (SNLD), the Arakon League for Democracy (ALD), the Mon National Democratic Front (MNDF), and the Zomi National Congress (ZNC).

Other Political Forces

In the 1990s rebel activity throughout Myanmar greatly diminished, in part because of the 1989 collapse of the Communist Party of Burma and in part because of the effort of the regime to reach cease-fire agreements with ethnic minority insurgent groups. By 1997 the regime had attained such agreements with 17 of the 21 largest armed opposition movements in the country. The remaining rebel groups do not pose a serious threat to the regime. Nevertheless, as many observers have noted, the cease-fires have broken down in a number of regions. Additionally, the agreements have provided ethnic groups with the authority to hold onto their arms, to police their territory, and to use their former rebel armies as private security forces to protect both legal and illegal business operations. This authority, however, is due to run out when the junta's handpicked National Convention completes its new constitution. At that point, it is difficult to imagine that SPDC will be able to convince ethnic warlords to turn in their weapons peacefully.

After the September 1988 and post–1990 election crackdowns on the popular pro-democracy movement, many of the participants fled to the Thai border region where they linked up with the ethnic minority groups who had set up rebel headquarters in the region. This alliance led to the formation of a parallel government, the National Coalition Government Union of Burma (NCGUB) and its governing body, the Committee Representing People's Parliament (CRPP). The CRPP's 18 current members include representatives from various political and civil rights organizations. U Aung Shwe (NLD) is the current chairman; U Aye Tha Aung and U Than Tun serve as secretaries. The NCGUB has campaigned in international arenas to bring pressure upon SPDC to respect the results of the 1990 election and to transfer power to elected officials.

National Prospects

The costs of over 17 years of oppressive military rule have been mounting, and the people of Myanmar find themselves facing continuing human rights abuses, environmental degradation, a growing AIDS problem associated with heroin use, and an economy largely dependent on international trade in heroin. International isolation, including economic and military sanctions, has had a mixed impact on social conditions. First, the international community has not been uniform in withholding economic and military support; second, while sanctions have been effective in putting pressure on the SPDC, international observers such as the Free Burma Coalition point out the damage that such sanctions inflict on both social and political conditions in Myanmar. And although Myanmar is reported to have escaped the high death rates of nearby countries from the December 2004 tsunami, the damage was considerable in the coastal areas, and this crisis will not find easy resolution.

The opposition, led by the charismatic Aung San Suu Kyi, continues to attract widespread popular support both within and outside the country. The military officers in SPDC show little inclination to step out of the political realm and back to their barracks or to discuss a possible transfer-of-power scenario with the NLD. Furthermore, the military's extensive involvement in the economy is an added incentive to hold onto the political power that can protect their economic holdings. Nevertheless, efforts toward potential dialogue between opposition groups and the SPDC persist, as work continues on the constitution and civil groups begin to express the need for compromise.

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REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

By Richard Dale, Ph.D.
Revised by Robert J. Griffiths, Ph.D.



The current political system of Namibia is the product of nearly a quarter century of a war of independence (1966–89) that pitted the government of the Republic of South Africa against the internal and external wings of the South West Africa People's Organization of Namibia (SWAPO). Originally the country had been a German colony (1885–1915) conquered primarily by South African forces (and to a lesser extent by Southern Rhodesian forces in the northeast) during the early part of the First World War.

From 1920 until 1966 Namibia was a League of Nations Mandate, administered by South Africa, whose political leaders refused to accede to numerous international requests to transform the Mandate into a United Nations Trusteeship Territory. The UN General Assembly and the Security Council asked the International Court of Justice on several occasions to determine the international standing of the territory. In 1966 the General Assembly declared the anomalous League Mandate to be ended, and the United Nations itself became the administrator of the territory, a position South Africa challenged.

Both the South African regime and its SWAPO opponents (often relying upon the United Nations Council for Namibia) claimed to be the sole legitimate authority in the territory. The legitimacy gap was characterized by the different names for the country, with the African nationalists terming it "Namibia" and the South Africans calling it "South West Africa." The South Africans employed both their police and defense forces in the bush war against the People's Liberation Army of Namibia (PLAN), which was SWAPO's army, and armed confrontations usually took place in the northern reaches of the territory and even in the southern parts of neighboring Angola, which served as a sanctuary for PLAN after the 1974 Portuguese coup d'état.

This war was fought on diplomatic, economic, and military battlefields and had a noticeable impact upon the domestic politics of South Africa. There was a small, albeit important, fallout among the English-speaking whites in South Africa, a number of whom took up the cause of conscientious objection with respect to the South African Defense Force (SADF). In the final stages of the war, concern about the number of white SADF casualties in Namibia was an important consideration, as was the dire combat state of the South African Air Force, which bore the brunt of international arms sanctions. The war became increasingly localized by the use of South West African units, known as the South West Africa Territorial Force (SWATF), as well as internationalized when PLAN was able to take advantage of Cuban forces and aircraft and Soviet and Eastern-bloc military advisers. International negotiations involving the Cubans, the Angolans, and the South Africans, under the aegis of the United States (and to a much smaller extent the Soviet Union), brought the hostilities to an end, with the Cuban forces vacating Angola and the SADF leaving Namibia. Military and civilian components of the United Nations oversaw and legitimated the 1989–90

phase of international decolonization ending in independence on March 21, 1990.

SWAPO won the first two national elections, handily sweeping independence leader Shafilsona Samuel "Sam" Nujoma to the presidency. After Nujoma's reelection as party president in 1997, SWAPO pushed through a constitutional amendment that would allow him to run for a third term as Namibia's president. The opposition criticized this idea, but the amendment was approved in October 1998. In the 1999 presidential and legislative elections Nujoma again won a resounding victory, capturing 76.8 percent of the vote. Ben Ulenga of the Congress of Democrats (CoD) got 10.5 percent and the Democratic Turnhalle Alliance's (DTA) Katutire Kaura received 9.6 percent of the vote. SWAPO secured 55 seats in the National Assembly, while the CoD and the DTA each won seven seats.

President Nujoma announced in November 2001 that he would not run for a fourth term as president but that he would continue to serve as party president until 2007. As party president, Nujoma engineered the nomination of SWAPO's vice president, Land Minister Hifikepunye Pohamba, as the party's presidential candidate for the 2004 elections, although the party rejected his effort to restrict the field to a single candidate for the nomination. Other candidates for the nomination included Foreign Minister Hidipo Hamutenya and Higher Education Minister Nahas Angula. At the May 2004 SWAPO party congress Nujoma undermined Pohamba's main challenger, Hamutenya, by dismissing him as foreign minister and charging him with encouraging disunity. Pohamba easily won the election for SWAPO's presidential nomination and faced the CoD's Ben Ulenga and the DTA's Katuutire Kaura in elections held in November 2004. Pohamba won in a landslide, garnering 76 percent of the vote.

The System of Government

Namibia is a democratic republic with a bicameral legislature.

EXECUTIVE

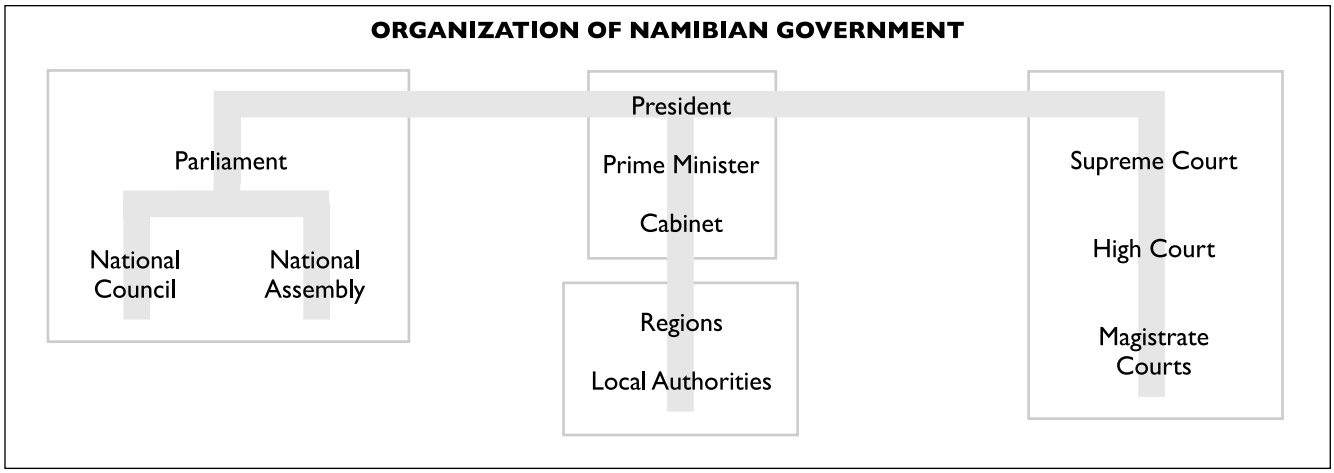
The executive branch in Namibia includes the head of state (the president), the head of government (the prime minister), the cabinet, and the civil service. The president is no mere figurehead, as sometimes occurs in nations with a dual executive. The president serves a five-year term and is limited to two terms. The duties of the president include the appointment of the prime minister and cabinet ministers as well as six special, nonvoting members of the National Assembly, and the president serves as commander in chief of the Namibian Defense Force (NDF). In addition the president enjoys a veto power with respect to legislation and can use certain circumscribed powers in a declared national emergency. There is, however, a constitutional provision for the impeachment of the president.

LEGISLATURE

Effectively Namibia has a unicameral system embodied in a National Assembly, although in early 1993 a second chamber, known as the National Council, became operational. The 26 National Council members, who have six-year terms, represent the 13 different elected regional councils, and hence its members are indirectly elected. The Council can be seen as an institutional mechanism to reflect loyal diversity without adopting a federal system. The National Assembly, which includes 72 elected and six nonvoting members appointed by the president, is the senior legislative body, with the National Council playing a secondary role, although it can turn down a bill passed by the National Assembly. It did so for the first time in 1996. As in the Westminster (British) model the National Assembly, whose members enjoy five-year terms, has the customary question period and provides a forum for the criticism (and defense) of government policies through departmental budget debates and various types of motions. Parliamentary debates are conducted in English, the official language.

JUDICIARY

The president of Namibia is responsible for appointing judges and the ombudsman pursuant to the recommendations of a Judicial Service Commission. The judicial system includes both a Supreme Court and a High Court, along with lower courts, such as traditional courts and magistrates' courts. There is demonstrable concern for human rights in the Namibian political system that reflects not only many Namibians' revulsion against the authoritarian aspects of the preindependence regime, which were exacerbated during the war of independence, but also international concern about the treatment of individuals once majority rule took effect. Observers



have generally been satisfied with the quality of the constitution and of its implementation.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Namibia has a unitary system of government, which is a reflection of the African nationalists' desire for a unified, rather than a fragmented, state. These nationalists were reacting to the earlier German and South African policies of dividing the country into African and non-African areas and controlling the movement of Africans into what was called the Police Zone (that is, the area occupied by the white inhabitants in the central and southern part of Namibia). Under the system of apartheid (practiced in fact by the Germans and in law by the South Africans) there were exclusive African areas, particularly in the north, which served as catchment areas for African migrant workers for the white-owned farms and mines in the central and southern portions of Namibia. As apartheid came to be applied more systematically in the 1960s under the Odendaal Plan, some of these areas, especially in the north, were granted self-government in the name of separate development, and they became employment havens for civil servants, many of whom were posted to the country from metropolitan South Africa.

The bicameral legislature with its regionally oriented 26-member National Council has become an institutional device for taking into consideration the geographic and ethnic diversity of this generally thinly settled land without adopting a federal system. Ethnic balancing and arithmetic come into play in the Namibian cabinet, as they also do, for instance, in the cabinet (rather than in the parliament) of the Canadian federal system.

The Electoral System

Elections in Namibia are held for local, regional, and national offices. In 1992 elections were held on the first two levels, and in 1994 the postindependence national elections took place, with international monitors as in the 1989 Constituent Assembly elections. In the elections for the National Assembly the system of party lists is combined with a system of proportional representation. In 1996 a select committee of the National Assembly proposed that the state underwrite the political parties, which would benefit both SWAPO and the DTA, but not the smaller political parties. This recommendation reflected distaste for foreign bankrolling of political parties. Suffrage is universal for all citizens age 18 and older.

The Party System

The political party system can be dated to the early period of the League of Nations Mandate system, when the Pretoria government (following the German precedent) granted the white inhabitants of the territory a limited system of self-government. The principal lines of cleavage were between the German-speaking inhabitants (who were granted South African citizenship) and the South African (primarily Afrikaans-speaking) inhabitants; the former looked to Berlin for civic protection and the latter to Pretoria for cultural comfort and public goods. During World War II many German-speakers were placed in South African internment camps, and once the war ended, some were slated for deportation to Germany.

Following the accession of the National Party to power in the 1948 South African general elections, the

Afrikaner government of Dr. Daniel F. Malan demonstrated its concern for these Germans because of their fundamental anglophobia, dating back to the 1899–1902 Anglo-Boer War. Thereafter the Germans in the territory aligned themselves with the local National Party, which held a hegemonic position in the Legislative Assembly in Windhoek.

Political parties catering to African, rather than to white, needs developed much later. A political protoparty organization termed the Ovamboland People's Congress (OPC) was formed by expatriate Namibian workers and students in Cape Town in 1958. The next year the OPC changed its name to the Ovamboland People's Organization (OPO). Also in 1959 the South West Africa National Union (SWANU) began. Some of SWANU's founding members also had been involved in the OPC. By 1960 OPO had evolved into yet another political grouping called the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO), which served as the foremost mobilizing agent for the majority African population. It was able to capitalize on the Africans' grievances against the migrant labor system, which had its greatest and most deleterious impact upon the Ovambo people, the largest single ethnic cluster in the country.

Major Political Parties

SOUTH WEST AFRICA PEOPLE'S ORGANIZATION OF NAMIBIA (SWAPO)

In many postcolonial nations the premier nationalist party attempts to wrap itself in the mantle of legitimacy and to portray itself as the herald and protector of independence. Such behavior is characteristic of SWAPO, which was able to secure recognition from the United Nations General Assembly (but not the Security Council) as the authentic, as well as sole, representative of the Namibian people, a status it was loath to lose. As part of the international understanding worked out between South Africa and the Western Contact Group (composed of diplomats from Canada, France, the Federal Republic of Germany, the United Kingdom, and the United States), SWAPO forfeited its position of nationalist and symbolic hegemony and its access to UN funding in the United Nations–monitored 1989 elections for the Constituent Assembly. This assembly, whose members drafted the constitution of Namibia, was reconstituted as the National Assembly. In the 1989 election SWAPO won 57.3 percent of the votes (and 41 of the 72 legislative seats) but failed to achieve the two-thirds majority that would have permitted it to write its own version of the constitution.

One reason SWAPO did not secure electoral paramountcy had to do with unanswered allegations that it had mistreated quite a number of Namibians who fled to SWAPO enclaves in Angola. This maltreatment stemmed from wartime fears that South African spies and agents had infiltrated refugee groups, and SWAPO was concerned about its own security and vulnerability. These charges were ventilated both in the 1989 electoral campaign and in the National Assembly, where passions ran high on the issue. Nevertheless, SWAPO has dominated the political landscape since independence. In the 2004 legislative elections it won 55 of the 72 National Assembly seats.

Minor Political Parties

Other political parties with representation in the National Assembly include the Congress of Democrats (CoD) with five seats, the Democratic Turnhalle Alliance (DTA) with four seats, the United Democratic Front (UDF) with three seats, and the Monitor Action Group (MAG) with one seat. There are also several minor parties without representation in the National Assembly. The Caprivi National Union, the political arm of the Caprivi Liberation Army (CLA), operates from Denmark.

Other Political Forces

As is the case with Botswana, transnational mining corporations are influential political players in the political economy of Namibia. Foreign public aid donors, especially Germany and the Scandinavian states, are significant, the former because of its historic links with its erstwhile colony and the latter because of their support for SWAPO during the war for independence. Since independence the government has actively courted foreign private investors, signing agreements with the United States, Switzerland, and Germany to create an attractive investment climate. Job creation in the private sector is vital, and some argue that the public sector is demonstrably overstaffed. The NDF, which the country created with British military assistance, is an amalgam of former enemies in PLAN and the SWATF. As yet it is not an intrusive force in Namibian

politics, but it might become one in future, as have the armed forces in neighboring states.

National Prospects

Namibia has struggled with a secessionist movement in the Caprivi Strip. In August 1999 a group calling itself the Caprivi Liberation Army (CLA) launched an attack against the regional capital of Katima Mulilo, leading President Nujoma to declare a state of emergency in the area. Instability continued, exacerbated by the conflicts in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Angola. There was speculation that the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) supported the Caprivi rebels as a way to divert Namibia's support for the Kabila government in the DRC. Namibia deployed up to 2,000 troops in support of Kabila, who was also supported by Angola, which hoped that the DRC would deny UNITA a base from which to launch attacks. Stability in the region improved after the cease-fire agreement between the Angolan government and UNITA in mid-2002. Namibia withdrew all its troops from the DRC by the end of 2002. In August 2004 the government opened its case against 120 people charged with trying to overthrow the government for their part in the 1999 Caprivi attack.

A key issue in Namibia is land reform. White commercial farmers control the majority of the good farmland. The government has pursued a "willing seller, willing buyer" program to purchase land and redistribute it to black farmers. However, critics complain that the pace of reform has been too slow. In July 2003 the National Assembly passed a law giving the government the authority to acquire agricultural land "in the public interest for resettlement purposes." This power has not been used yet, but there are growing concerns that the government may be on the verge of expropriating land. There have been threats from the farm workers' union to begin seizing land, and Prime Minister Theo-Ben Gurirab said in February 2004 that the government would begin seizing land from white farmers. The government has issued some expropriation notices and encouraged farmers to set a price for their land. If the government and the farmers cannot agree on a price, the government will proceed with expropriation, paying the landowners what it considers a just price. There is concern that this will lead to a disastrous land reform policy similar to the one that plunged Zimbabwe into a crisis.

Namibia is seeking investment from abroad and has a well-developed infrastructure and resources upon which to expand its economy. Its political stability makes it an attractive investment opportunity, provided the new direction of the land redistribution program does not scare off investors.

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REPUBLIC OF NAURU

(Republik Naoero)

By Eugene Ogan, Ph.D.



The island republic of Nauru is a single raised atoll with an area of 8 square miles. Nauruans are ethnically Micronesian, but it is difficult to establish accurate population figures for the nation. Of some 13,000 island residents, more than 2,000 are there temporarily as contract officers and laborers. These include Europeans, Filipinos, Indians, and other Pacific Islanders. At the same time, the wealth enjoyed by indigenous Nauruans permits them to migrate and travel widely.

Nauru gained its independence in January 1968. Because of its rich phosphate deposits the island had been governed by outsiders for the preceding 80 years. Initially annexed by Germany, Nauru came under the joint administration of Australia, New Zealand, and Britain as a League of Nations Mandate after the First World War. It became a United Nations Trusteeship, administered by Australia on behalf of the other two trust powers, after World War II.

The System of Government

Nauru is a parliamentary republic with a unicameral legislature.

EXECUTIVE

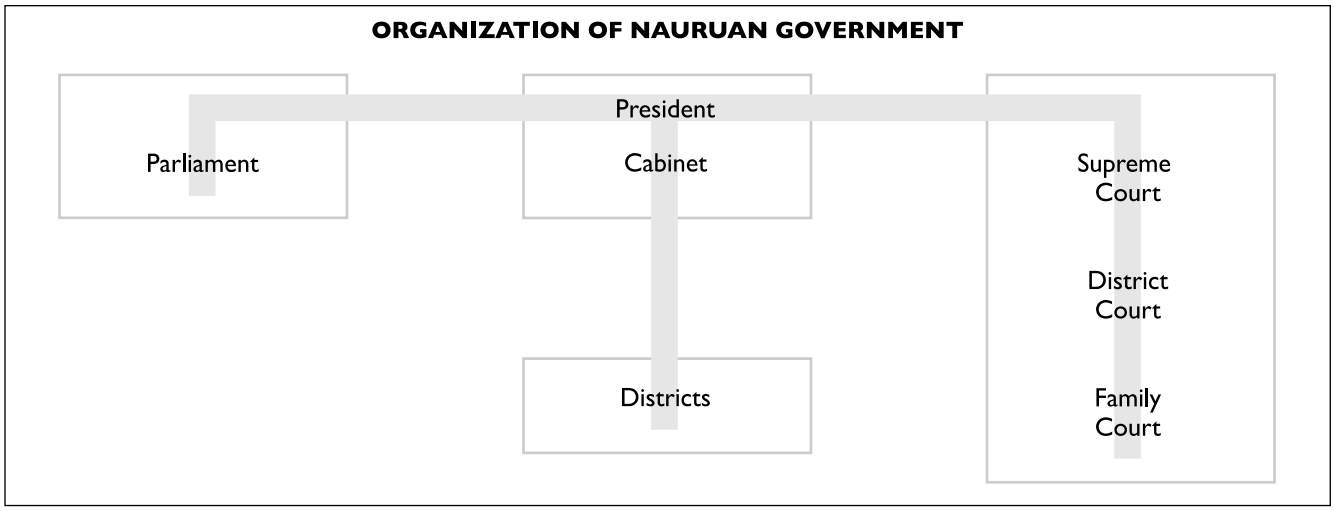
At independence Nauru's constitution established the nation as a republic with a parliamentary system of government. The president is de facto head of state as well as head of government. He is elected by Parliament from among its elected members and is the most important authority in the system, since legislation tends over time to vest more power in that office. He appoints and removes the four or five ministers who make up the cabinet. The cabinet is collectively responsible to Parliament, which can remove them along with the president by a no-confidence vote of at least half its members. If it fails to choose a new president within seven days, Parliament itself is dissolved.

LEGISLATURE

The unicameral Parliament consists of 18 members. They are elected from eight constituencies for three-year terms, unless Parliament is dissolved earlier. Seven of the constituencies elect two members each, except Ubenide, which is made up of four smaller districts and elects four members. Parliament elects one of its members to preside as Speaker; the Speaker cannot at the same time be a member of the cabinet.

JUDICIARY

Judicial authority is vested in a Supreme Court with a chief justice (and other judges, if any) appointed by the president. A Supreme Court judge must have been entitled to practice as a barrister or solicitor in Nauru for at least five years and



must retire at the age of 65. The Courts Act also establishes a District Court headed by a resident magistrate with the same qualifications as a Supreme Court judge. He too is appointed by the president, after consultation with the chief justice. A family court also operates.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The Nauru Local Government Council was originally responsible for matters relating to land ownership and the provision of public services. However, after independence it took over ownership and control of many of the country's numerous enterprises and investments, including a national airline and extensive real estate holdings in Australia and Hawaii. The Local Government Council was abolished in 1992, and the Nauru Island Council was formed to handle these functions.

The Electoral System

Voting is compulsory for all Nauruan citizens over the age of 20.

The Party System

There is a very loose party system, and the parties that exist are informally organized. In the 2004 legislative elections the 18 members elected to Parliament were all independents.

Major Political Parties

The main political parties are the Democratic Party, the Nauru Party, and the Nauru First Party.

Minor Political Parties

There are no minor political parties in Nauru.

National Prospects

Based on control of phosphate revenues, Nauru once enjoyed the highest per capita income of any Pacific Island nation and one of the highest in the world, estimated in 1985 at more than $8,000 for every Nauruan. However, in large part because of the "revolving door" presidency—three different presidents in 2003 alone—the once-prosperous country has gone bankrupt. One current estimate is of more than $2 billion wasted on ill-advised investments, including a short-lived London play based on the love life of Leonardo da Vinci.

Corruption has also taken a toll. The U.S. Treasury has forbidden American banks to do business with their Nauruan counterparts because the latter have laundered Russian mafia money. Phosphate revenues are almost exhausted, and creditors have begun to foreclose on Nauru's extensive property holdings in Australia.

Ludwig Scotty succeeded René Harris as president on the latter's death in June 2004, but observers see

little reason for optimism that new leadership can restore Nauru's once-secure economic position.

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KINGDOM OF NEPAL
(Nēpāl Adhirājya)

By Kanak Mani Dixit, M.A.
Revised by N. Koirala
Further Revision by Deborah A. Kaple, Ph.D.
Further Revision by Leon Newton, Ph.D.



Nepal, a nation of 27.6 million people (2005 est.) in the Himalaya Mountains north of India, has been a monarchy since the country was unified two centuries ago. There have been extended periods when the king was merely a figurehead while the country was ruled by various oligarchs, the last of whom was ousted in 1951. King Mahendra initiated a brief experiment in parliamentary democracy in 1959 but terminated it in December 1960. In 1990 several political parties and coalitions exerted pressure on the government to introduce multiparty elections and to end its age-old system of government. After a very rocky few years the king accepted the draft of a new basic law that provided for multiparty elections. Since November 9, 1990, Nepal has been a parliamentary democracy with a constitutional monarchy.

HISTORY

In 1961 King Mahendra developed the *panchayat* system of guided "partyless democracy" to facilitate his direct involvement in national politics. The *panchayat* system was based on the king's vehement objections to party politics. Parties were said to foster factionalism, and their internecine feuds were thought to distract the national consciousness from the tasks of development. The *panchayat* system was initially a four-tiered structure (later reduced to three) leading up from village assemblies to a national legislature of indirectly elected and appointed members representing localities, the king, and class and professional organizations (of women, peasants, and ex-servicemen). Party alignments of any form were prohibited. In 1975 the system was further restricted when the class and professional organizations were disbanded and all candidates for the national legislature were selected by a government body.

In May 1979 King Birendra, Mahendra's son, who had ascended the throne in 1972, announced a national plebiscite that gave the people a choice between a "suitably reformed" *panchayat* system and a multiparty system of government. The announcement followed large-scale agitation in Katmandu, the capital, and in other towns. In 1980 the majority (54.7 percent) of the 6 million eligible voters opted for the *panchayat* system. The monarchy's close association with the *panchayat* system to a large extent explains the outcome of the plebiscite. Despite his bold step in announcing the exercise, King Birendra failed to disassociate himself from the issues. As a result the "multiparty" proponents were pitted not only against the *panchayat* status quo but also against kingship.

In February 1990 thousands of Nepalese took to the streets to demand an end to the *panchayat* system. Later that year the king announced a new constitution that basically replaced the *panchayat* system with a mostly elected bicameral legislature and a multiparty system of government. In the 1991 general elections, the country's first multiparty general election since 1959, the Nepalese Congress Party (NCP) won control of the House of Representatives with 110 seats. The other main political party, the Communisty Party of Nepal–Unified Marxist Leninists (UML), which was a

merger of the Communist Party of Nepal–Marxist and the Communist Party of Nepal–Leninists, won 69 seats. Girija Prasad Koirala was elected prime minister.

Since 1991 there have been tensions between the two leading political parties, as the Communists constantly suspect the government of colluding with the NCP in order to keep Communists out. The radical left continues to hold strikes and protests in Katmandu against price rises, water shortages, and corruption. In response the NCP has become more authoritarian in its internal party politics and has helped facilitate the government's rehabilitation of old *panchayat* officials. In the 1999 elections the Communists garnered 69 seats, while the NCP received 113. The coalition governments that have formed and re-formed since this election have been troubled by the seemingly inescapable ideological differences between these two major parties.

King Gyanendra was proclaimed king in June 2001, following the assassination of his brother, King Birendra, and Queen Aishwarya and several other royals by Crown Prince Dipendra, who then killed himself. In October 2002 Gyanendra removed Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba and assumed executive power, citing Deuba's failure in dealing with the country's Maoist insurgency. The entire Council of Ministers was dissolved, as was the House of Representatives. Gyanendra reappointed Deuba in 2004 but removed him and again assumed executive power in 2005. In September 2005 Gyanendra and the Maoist rebels announced a cease-fire, and in November the rebels and the main opposition parties agreed to a tentative program to restore democracy to Nepal.

The System of Government

Nepal is a constitutional monarchy with a bicameral legislature.

EXECUTIVE

The 1990 constitution vested executive power of the Kingdom of Nepal in the monarch and the Council of Ministers. The powers of the king are theoretically exercised upon the recommendation and advice and with the consent of the Council of Ministers. Such recommendation, advice, and consent are submitted through the prime minister. The king appoints the leader of the party that commands a majority in the House of Representatives as the prime minister, and he chairs the Council of Ministers. In addition the king, on the recommendation of the prime minister, appoints state ministers from among the members of parliament.

LEGISLATURE

The constitution provides for a parliament (Sansad) that has two chambers. The House of Representatives (Pratinidhi Sabha) has 205 members, who are elected by popular vote for five-year terms in single-seat constituencies. The House of States (Rashtriya Sabha) has 60 members, 35 of whom are elected by the House of Representatives, 15 of whom are elected by an electoral college, and 10 of whom are appointed by the king. One-third of the members are elected every two years to serve six-year terms.

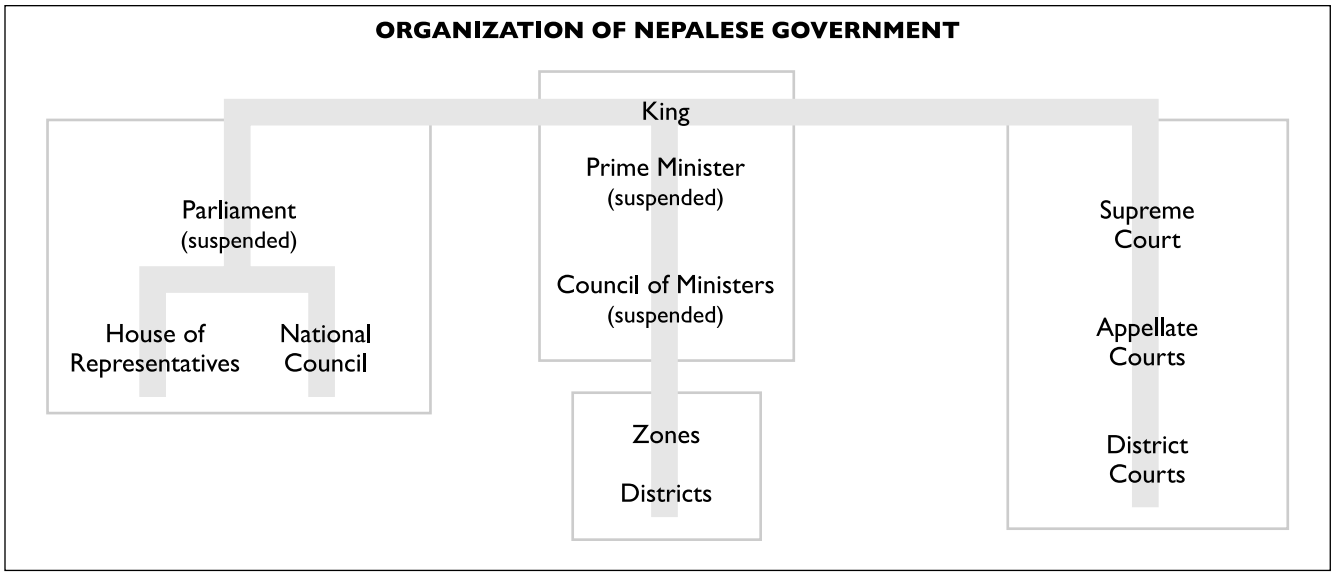
The king must summon a session of Parliament within one month after the elections to the House of Representatives are held. Thereafter he can summon other sessions as he sees fit, provided that the interval between two consecutive sessions is not more than six months. The king may also dissolve the House of Representatives on the recommendation of the prime minister. If the king dissolves the House, then he must specify a date within six months for new elections to the House of Representatives.

In the most recent parliamentary elections, which took place in May 1999, the UML and the NCP took the majority of the seats. King Gyanendra dissolved Parliament in 2002. There is no legislature in Nepal as of 2005.

JUDICIARY

According to the 1990 constitution, courts in the Kingdom of Nepal consist of the following three tiers: the Supreme Court, the Appellate Court, and the District Court.

The Supreme Court is the highest court in the judicial hierarchy. All other courts and judicial institutions of Nepal, other than the Military Court, are under the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court may inspect, supervise, and give directives to its subordinate courts and other judicial institutions. The Supreme Court also functions as a Court of Record. It may initiate proceedings and impose punishment in accordance with law for contempt of itself and of its subordinate courts or judicial institutions. In addition to the chief justice, there is a maximum of 14 other judges.



The king appoints the chief justice of Nepal on the recommendation of the Constitutional Council and appoints other judges of the Supreme Court on the recommendation of the Judicial Council. (This council makes recommendations and gives advice concerning appointment of, transfer of, disciplinary action against, and dismissal of judges and concerning other matters related to judicial administration.)

The tenure of office of the chief justice is seven years from the date of appointment. On the recommendation of the Judicial Council, the king also appoints any chief judge and judges of the appellate courts and any judges of the district courts of the Judicial Council.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Nepal is divided into 14 zones and subdivided into 75 districts. Zonal commissioners are appointed by the king and serve as executive heads within the zones. Central district officers, who are assigned from the Home Ministry of Katmandu, handle individual districts. In 2002 King Gyanendra authorized district administrators to punish offenders outside courts of law.

The Electoral System

According to the constitution, elections to the national legislature are direct and based on universal adult (age 18) suffrage. The Election Commission, which conducts, supervises, directs, and controls the elections to Parliament and local elections in villages, towns, and districts, consists of a chief election commissioner and others. The chief election commissioner, who is the chairman of the Election Commission, is appointed by the king. The term of office of the chief election commissioner and other election commissioners is six years from the date of appointment.

In the 1994 national parliamentary elections 61.9 percent of the electorate turned out to vote. Elections have been suspended since 2002.

The Party System

Political parties made their debut in the late 1940s and early 1950s and were strongly influenced in policy and structure by the parties of neighboring India, which gained independence from the British in 1947. While the Indian parties were preoccupied with shedding colonialism, the Nepali parties were engaged in ousting the Rana family, whose oligarchy finally collapsed in 1951.

Prior to the royal coup of 1960 a host of minor parties existed, primarily as personal vehicles for ambitious individuals. With the banning of parties these groups disappeared as the leaders began to bargain individually with the king for ministerial positions. The exceptions were the Congress Party and

the Communist Party, which continued to maintain a shadowy existence as their leaders went either underground or into exile in India. These two constitute major parties today.

Major Political Parties

COMMUNIST PARTY OF NEPAL–UNIFIED MARXIST LENINISTS (UML)

Formed in January 1991 as a merger of Communist Party of Nepal-Marxist and Communist Party of Nepal-Leninists, this party is an amalgamation of various Communist and Socialist parties. In May 1991 Man Mohan Adhikari, the party leader was elected to Parliament and became the leader of the opposition, but he resigned in September 1994. In November 1994 he was reelected parliamentary leader but was obliged to resign in September 1995 after losing a no-confidence vote.

In the 1999 parliamentary elections UML garnered 69 of the 205 seats. Despite its name, the UML advocates social democracy and had called for an end to the absolute monarchy in Nepal. The Communists are committed to economic liberalization and advocate land reform to break up large landholdings.

NEPALESE CONGRESS PARTY (NCP)

The Nepalese Congress Party originated in the late 1940s as a movement against the feudalistic Rana oligarchs in Nepal. The party won an absolute majority in the first general elections of 1959. With the dissolution of parliamentary democracy in December 1960, Congress activists were prosecuted under the *panchayat* system as they provided the most potent threat to the newly established *panchayat* regime.

The party weathered several decades underground or in exile and the defection and the co-option of some of its leaders to emerge as a still-viable entity. It abandoned its confrontationist policy with the king when its leader, B. P. Koirala, called for national reconciliation and returned to Nepal from exile in India. Although constitutionally banned, the party was allowed to function in a semilegal fashion. In the 1999 parliamentary elections this party garnered 113 seats of the 205.

Minor Political Parties

In the 1999 parliamentary elections five minor parties earned seats: the National Democratic Party earned 11; the National People's Front, 5; the Nepal Goodwill Party, 5; the Workers and Peasants Party, 1; and the United People's Front, 1.

Other Political Forces

No political party in Nepal has held power for more than two consecutive years since 1991. Some critics argued that government reforms did not improve the situation because the new government was extremely corrupt. In 1996 one of the Maoist parties, the Maoist United People's Front, started a bid to replace the parliamentary system with a Socialist republic using a "revolutionary" strategy called a people's war. A civil war resulted and continued into 2005, when the rebels and King Gyanendra announced a cease-fire. During the early 2000s Gyanendra tried to exert more control over the rebels by declaring martial law, dissolving the government, and sending the military after the insurgents. This violent insurgency has affected most of the country and has resulted in over 10,000 deaths. As of 2005 the rebels controlled two-thirds of the countryside and had in effect set up a shadow government. In November 2005 the rebels agreed with the country's main opposition parties on a tentative plan to restore democracy to Nepal.

National Prospects

Nepal is one of the poorest and least-developed countries in the world. Its economy is largely agricultural, engaging about 80 percent of the Nepalese population. Around 60 percent of the population lives below the poverty line. Although the government in the 1990s had been trying to encourage foreign investment and trade to bolster its economy, Nepal's landlocked and remote location and its susceptibility to natural disasters do not bode well for foreign investment and economic reform.

Nepal made the transition from constitutional to parliamentary democracy in the 1990s. However, the Maoist insurgency and the unilateral actions by King Gyanendra to control the government have erased that progress. Plagued by governmental instability and a

violent civil war, the country has much work to do to regain its democratic footing.

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KINGDOM OF THE NETHERLANDS

(Koninkrijk der Nederlanden)

By William G. Andrews, Ph.D.
Revised by Chris Palazzolo



The Netherlands (population about 16.4 million in 2005) as a unified state dates to the late sixteenth century, especially with the institutionalization of the States General in 1579. That system was replaced in 1815 with the adoption of a new constitution and the accession to the throne of William of Orange-Nassau as monarch of the north and south Netherlands. The fragile union was broken when the south seceded and became the independent state of Belgium in 1831.

The king ruled as a constitutional monarch through representation by estates until direct, but limited, suffrage was introduced in 1849. Adult suffrage became universal in 1919. Until very recently Dutch politics and government were based very solidly on a system of four highly articulated subcultures: Catholic, Protestant, socialist, and liberal. Most Netherlanders carried out all social activities within organizations, institutions, and enterprises of one of those groups, and making public policy was largely a carefully modulated balancing act among them. However, that so-called pillarization has declined significantly in recent years, and the cultures no longer monopolize Dutch political life.

The System of Government

The Netherlands is a constitutional monarchy with a bicameral legislature.

EXECUTIVE

The House of Orange is a hereditary monarchy in a unitary state. Since 1890 three successive queens have reigned, Wilhemina (1890–1948), Juliana (1948–80), and Beatrix (1980–). Following the Napoleonic tradition of strong central administration, the Netherlands emphasizes executive authority. Until 1849 the king was the dominant executive. Thereafter the principle of representative government gained recognition and the scope for active intervention by the monarch gradually diminished. Effective executive authority now resides with the prime minister and cabinet, though the monarch still plays a key role in the process of forming a government and sometimes exerts effective influence over cabinet policy in private. The prime minister is more a cabinet coordinator than a true chief executive.

The government is formally responsible to both houses of the bicameral States General (Staten-Generaal), but in practice only the directly elected lower house, the Second Chamber, wields that authority. Once a government is formed, it becomes distinct from the legislature, and ministers must relinquish their seats in the States General on appointment. Also, government ministers may be nonpolitical experts or public officials, although over the years parliamentary recruitment has become paramount. Dutch government is distinctive by the degree to which it incorporates interest-group representatives into the policy-making and implementing processes—an extreme form of "corporatism."

After an election the monarch appoints an *informateur* to identify the combination of parties that can provide the basis for a governing majority in the Second Chamber. Those parties negotiate a formal policy agreement as a sort of governmental contract. After the government is formed, the agreement becomes its policy program. Such accords have become increasingly long and detailed, resulting in longer periods of governmental paralysis but greater cabinet stability. Between 1971 and 1982 three prime ministers headed six governments with six different sets of coalition partners, but from 1982 to 1994 only one prime minister led three governments with two different coalitions. The prime minister (Wim Kok) and government that took office in August 1994 was still there through 1998. From 1998 to 2002 there were no major changes in the executive save for brief period when the D66 (Democrats 66) left the so-called "purple coalition," only to return later. The inclusion of the Lijst Pim Fortuyn (LPF) in a governing coalition in 2002 engendered some significant instability, and a new election in 2003 eventually led to a more stable cabinet without the LPF. This tradition of stability was accentuated until 1994 by the presence in every government since 1917 of one party (Catholic), which had also provided most prime ministers.

LEGISLATURE

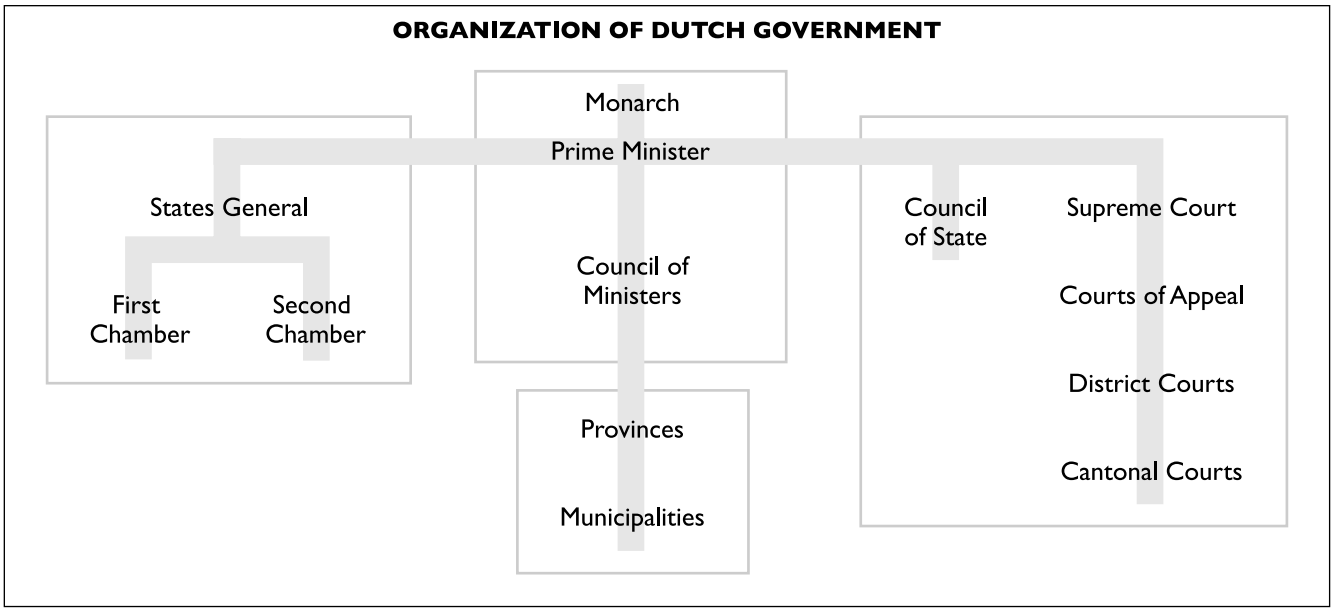
Legislative power is shared between the First and Second Chambers, but the popularly elected Second Chamber, with 150 members, has primary authority. The First Chamber, with 75 members, has general veto power but cannot initiate legislation or propose amendments. Its principal function is to review bills for constitutionality and proper legislative form. Also, only the Second Chamber exercises significant administrative oversight.

The government initiates most legislation, which it submits to the Second Chamber after review by the independent administrative Council of State for consistency and compatibility with existing law. Normally the government's legislative program prevails. The deputies adhere closely to party discipline in voting on bills, though recent years have seen a marked increase in the number of private member's bills and amendments to government bills. Nevertheless, disagreements are much more likely among government parties than within them. For proposed constitutional changes to be adopted, elections must be held for the Second Chamber and the revisions passed thereafter by a two-thirds majority in both houses. A 1995 amendment permits popular referendums to reverse parliamentary laws.

The two chambers can disagree but rarely do, since their party composition is similar. The First Chamber is chosen for four-year-terms by an electoral college composed of all members of the provincial assemblies voting by proportional representation. The Second Chamber is elected for four years by direct, universal adult suffrage but may be dissolved early. Second Chamber members are full-time, meeting in plenary session Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays, whereas the First Chamber is a part-time institution, meeting only on Tuesdays.

ELECTIONS TO THE SECOND CHAMBER OF THE STATES GENERAL (NETHERLANDS)

	Percent of Popular Vote (Seats)		
	1998	**2002**	**2003**
Christian Democratic Appeal (CDA)	18.4 (29)	28.0 (43)	28.6 (44)
Center Democrats (CU)	0.6 (0)	2.5 (4)	2.1 (3)
Democrats 66 (D66)	9.0 (14)	5.1 (7)	4.1 (6)
Green Left (GL)	7.3 (11)	7.0 (10)	5.1 (8)
Liberal Party (VVD)	24.7 (38)	15.4 (24)	17.9 (28)
Liveable Netherlands (LN)	—	1.6 (2)	0.4 (0)
Pim Fortuyn List (LPF)	—	17.0 (26)	5.7 (8)
Labor Party (PvdA)	29.0 (45)	15.1 (23)	27.3 (42)
State Reform Party (SGP)	1.8 (3)	1.7 (2)	1.6 (2)
Socialist Party (SP)	3.5 (5)	5.9 (9)	6.3 (9)
Reformational Political Federation (RPF)	2.0 (3)	—	—
Reformed Political Union (GPV)	1.3 (2)	—	—
General Union of the Elderly (AOV)	0.5 (0)	—	—
Others	1.9 (0)	0.7 (0)	0.9 (0)



JUDICIARY

The Supreme Court, with 20 judges appointed for life (in practice, the retirement age is 70), is the ultimate court of appeal. It cannot review a law or treaty for constitutionality. This limitation places the onus for protecting basic rights on the States General and the government, with the judiciary concerned solely with correct application of the law. Lower courts include five courts of appeal, 19 district courts of justice, and 62 cantonal courts. A separate court system handles administrative litigation.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Dutch local government consists of 12 provinces and about 636 municipalities, the latter grouped into 62 "cooperation districts." The municipal level is the more important, though both may be controlled closely by the national executive. Provinces and municipalities have elective councils serving four-year terms. Both types of council elect executive committees from among their members. Commissioners for provinces and mayors for municipalities are appointed by the central government to preside over both the executives and the councils at both levels.

Mayors are career officials serving more or less permanently. However, in making appointments the central government gives due weight to local factors—especially religious and political-party considerations. Local party collaboration is fairly close, for one party rarely has an absolute majority on a council and executive committees are usually coalitions. Moreover, the mayors lack formal political attachment, helping to ensure partisan neutrality.

The Electoral System

The Dutch electoral system is one of the "purest" examples of proportional representation, as each party obtains precisely the same share of seats in the Second Chamber as it received of popular votes. Exact proportionality is achieved by treating the country as a single constituency, so that a party's representation depends entirely on its aggregated national vote. The electoral quotient—the number of votes needed to win a seat—is calculated by dividing the number of votes cast in the election by the number of seats in the Second Chamber (150). Thus each party that polls at least 0.67 percent of the national vote (about 60,000 votes) is represented. The Netherlands does not require parties to reach a threshold (say, 5 percent of the total vote) to qualify for parliamentary seats. As a result minor parties always win seats and multipartism is a permanent feature of Dutch political life.

Voting is entirely by party lists, whose preparation is controlled closely by the party leaders. Voters may change the presented order but rarely do. The country forms 19 electoral districts. Parties offer lists in as many districts as they wish, and the nominees may vary by district. However, such variations do not

affect the principle of national proportionality. Seats are first allocated on a regional level and then nationally. A 1995 constitutional amendment provided that half the members are elected on regional lists and half on national lists. Seats that are unallocated in the first distribution are allotted on the basis of the "highest average," that is, to the parties with the highest averages of votes to seats already won.

One consequence of the Dutch electoral system is that deputies represent the nation at large, rather than being attached to regional or local interests. Interest in elections is considerable, with turnout exceeding 70 percent, a decline from the level before compulsory voting was abolished in 1970.

The Party System

ORIGINS OF THE PARTIES

Before the franchise was expanded in 1887, only about 3 percent of the population could vote, Conservatives and Liberals held political power, and parties were very loosely organized. The modern party system began emerging in the 1880s, taking shape around the complex, especially religious, cleavages in Dutch society. One line of separation lay between Protestants (Calvinists) and Roman Catholics, and another divided the religious from the secular forces in society. The latter in turn were split between the anticlerical, bourgeois liberals, and the organized working-class movement.

Various factors prevented the system from fragmenting. One was the absence of a single state church, so that religious pluralism fostered political pluralism. A second reason was the 1917 fundamental compromise on the "schools issue": denominational schools thereafter received state subsidies, removing a contentious issue for the religious parties. A third reason was that no single political grouping constituted a majority, requiring alliances and accommodation. This conciliatory impulse has remained a hallmark of Dutch political life.

Five parties were dominant from 1919 until recently, providing the pattern of governing coalitions and accounting for up to 90 percent of the popular vote. Three were religious parties; the others were the Liberals (later the People's Party for Freedom and Democracy—Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie; VVD) and the Social Democrats (now the Labor Party—Partij ven de Arbeid; PvdA). Despite the number of parties—no fewer than 54 parties contested the 1933 election—the inherent stability of Dutch parliamentary democracy was never in doubt.

Two changes have become evident since the 1960s. One is the long-term decline of the religious parties, a development that led to the amalgamation of the three major ones in 1980. A second, possibly related change has been the growth of parties that oppose the lack of electoral influence on the formation of the government. The direction of voting frequently has little influence on the composition of the governing coalition that ultimately results. Parties that lose voting strength often increase their governmental strength.

THE PARTIES IN LAW

Very little restricts the formation and operation of Dutch parties. The electoral law is the main regulator by penalizing very small parties: those that fail to win 75 percent of the national electoral quotient lose their deposits. During election campaigns the parties have access to the public broadcasting media; the parliamentary blocs in the States General receive assistance for their parliamentary work. The executive has an important restrictive power in that it can ban extremist parties without involving the Supreme Court, though it has been more tolerant than the parliamentary majority.

PARTY ORGANIZATION

The large number and range in the size of the parties have produced wide variations in organization. At the local level all major parties have district associations that are active for local, provincial, and parliamentary elections. Typically an annual delegate congress is the supreme party organ to which an executive committee is responsible, and a party council exercises the authority of the congress between its sessions. Dutch parties are membership parties, but their size has declined since the mid-1960s. The larger ones number fewer than 100,000 members, while the smaller ones represented in the States General count perhaps 10,000. On average the ratio of members to voters is rather low and declining. However, an important contribution to the vitality of the parties is made by a political "infrastructure" of social organizations: the churches, church-related organizations, and the trade unions.

All parties represented in the States General receive government subsidies proportionate to their respective shares of the popular vote. Most parties also rely heavily on membership dues and contributions and assessments on party members who hold salaried public office. The Liberals receive substantial income from gifts, but the other parties do not. Research and

educational foundations affiliated with parties receive modest subsidies from the government. Declining membership has inevitably given the parties major financial problems.

CAMPAIGNING

Election campaigns in the Netherlands are relatively short, since polling takes place 43 days after the nomination of candidates. Television and radio broadcasting is relied on heavily, and the leaders of the larger parties are the major contestants. Most parties can also rely on the support of at least one national daily newspaper, although official party publications are weeklies or magazines and journals. Campaigning concentrates on mobilizing support among adherents, since structural and historical factors determine party loyalties and these are not weakened in the course of a single campaign. Moreover, elections are primarily about the choice of parties rather than a choice of government. As a result party leaders are regarded primarily as party representatives rather than potential national leaders. This emphasis may be changing, since even if recent elections have been indeterminate in their outcome, increasingly the parties have been forced to spell out their coalition preferences during the election campaign.

INDEPENDENT VOTERS

The best single predictor of voting behavior remains religion, and practicing members of the Protestant and Catholic churches tend to support one or another of the religious parties. But since the end of "pillarization" in the 1960s such connections have declined significantly. In 1956, for instance, 95 percent of practicing Catholic voters cast their ballots for the Catholic party, but the corresponding figure in 1989 was only 72. The scale of the decline of the main confessional parties—from about 50 percent of the vote in the 1950s to 30–35 percent in the 1970s and 1980s and 23 percent in 1998—indicates that party identification has weakened considerably. Nor is it safe to rely on social-class variables, since parties tend to be interclass in their appeal. Thus, while the Labor Party attracts about half the working-class vote, the Christian Democratic Appeal takes about a third. A third variable, urban-rural differences, also reveals less than might be supposed, for although the religious parties tend to fare better in rural communities and the Liberals and Labor in the cities and suburbs, all the major parties are strongly competitive in all types of communities.

These factors all point to considerable flux in electoral behavior now that the formerly strong segmentation of Dutch society with its "spiritual families" is in decay. Evidence of the growing volatility has been seen in the rise of "protest" parties, such as Democrats 66. They are particularly attractive to younger voters and draw support from all sections of the electorate.

Major Political Parties

CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC APPEAL

(Christen Democratisch Appel; CDA)

HISTORY

The CDA was formed as a unified party in 1980. It amalgamated the three main religious parties—the Catholic People's Party (KVP) and two Protestant groups, the Anti-Revolutionary Party (ARP) and the Christian-Historical Union (CHU). The ARP, founded in 1879, was the oldest Dutch party; the CHU was formed in 1908; and the Catholic party was based on the League of Roman Catholic Voters' Clubs established in 1904. The KVP, the largest of the three, was formed in 1946 as the successor to the more exclusive Roman Catholic State Party (founded in 1926). It was consistently the strongest single party in the States General until the 1970s, when the three parties all experienced a downturn in membership and in their electoral appeal. The first moves to create the CDA began in the early 1970s, and the three parties fought the 1977 election as a loose federation.

ORGANIZATION

After the full merger in 1980 the constituent parties gradually harmonized their structures, which are now fully integrated. The basic units (municipal, district, or village departments) may be organized by any 10 CDA members and exist in almost every municipality. The departments are grouped in 12 areas, corresponding to the provinces. The sovereign body at the national level is the party congress, which meets at least biennially. Its authority is exercised in the interim by the party council, which meets twice a year. A 30-member party executive manages the political and organizational activities and delegates 11 of its members as an executive board, responsible for day-to-day management. An "Informal Management Bureau," consisting of the president, the two vice presidents, the secretary-treasurer, and the director, meets weekly. The party's affiliated organizations include women's and youth groups, an association of local councilors, a research

institute and educational institute, and a foreign outreach foundation.

POLICY

The CDA is a center party, advocating the application of Christian principles to political life and professing that its "political creed is established in a constant dialogue with the Bible." Its basic concepts are legal and social justice; domestic and international solidarity; differentiated responsibility to give individuals, families, and organizations specific duties; and personal stewardship. The party favors orthodox financial and economic management and economic austerity, especially curbs on social security expenditures. The CDA supports NATO and has been a leader in the construction of the European Union.

MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY

The CDA is the largest party in the Netherlands. Its most loyal supporters are professed Christians who are independent tradespeople and farmers, but it draws nearly equal support from all social classes. The CDA is strongest in smaller towns and rural areas.

FINANCING

The party depends on membership dues for 90 percent of its income.

PROSPECTS

Ruud Lubbers's dynamic leadership from 1982 to 1994 reinvigorated the CDA and made him the most popular politician in the country. The party's solid organization and basis of support in the religious communities were other valuable assets, despite the declining intensity of religious commitment in the Dutch population. However, in 1994 and 1998 the party suffered several severe losses, losing over half of the peak vote share it had achieved in 1989. Much of this decline resulted from the party's very unpopular proposals to reform the pension system. The outcome of 1994 election also marked the first time that the CDA (or any of its Catholic predecessors) had not been a member of the governing coalition since 1917. Between 1998 and 2002 the party regained some support in provincial and European elections, partly due to softening its conservative attitude on several social issues. The increase in support in the provincial councils substantially impacted the standing of ruling government in the First Chamber (since the provincial elections help to determine the constitution of the First Chamber). In the 2002 general elections the CDA made a significant comeback under the leadership of Jan-Peter Balkenende. The CDA formed a coalition with the VVD, along with the extreme-right LPF. The CDA maintained its support and control of the premiership in 2003 after the dissolution of the unstable CDA-VVD-LPF coalition.

DEMOCRATS 66

(Democraten 66; D66)

HISTORY

A long tradition of "free-thinking democratic" political organizations led to the formation of D66 in 1966 as a constitutional reform party. As a pragmatic, modernizing, reformist party it contributed significantly to the decline of "pillarization." After initial successes the party lost momentum but grew again in three successive elections from 1986 to a peak of 15.5 percent of the vote in 1994, before declining again in 1998 and the early 2000s.

ORGANIZATION

The party structure is very open and democratic. All members can attend the annual national congress and vote on all issues. Elected officials and local units are not bound by those decisions so long as their positions conform to the party's basic policy program. Between congresses the party is run by a chairman and a 21-member national board elected for two-year terms by the congress. The executive, formed by nine board members, is responsible for day-to-day management. The other 12 represent the board to the regions. The party chairman has organizational but not political responsibilities.

POLICY

A liberal-radical party, D66 finds a natural ally in the PvdA. The party argues that the political system fails to alter governments to reflect the wishes of the voters. It advocates the abolition of proportional representation and the direct election of the prime minister. It also wants the parties to set forth their coalition commitments before elections so the voters can choose clearly among potential governments. The party also actively promotes an environmental protection program. The party's social policies are progressive, but its economic policies fit with the CDA's better than with the Labor Party's.

MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY

D66 is predominantly an urban party with a strong base in Amsterdam. Its staunchest supporters tend to be younger than average, upwardly mobile, and relatively well educated.

FINANCING
With its small membership D66 is financially hard-pressed and depends more on small contributions and volunteer effort than most parties.

PROSPECTS
D66's overall support has waned rather severely since 1994 when its charismatic leader, Hans van Mierlo, stepped down. However, its pivotal place on the political spectrum and its electoral growth enable it to arbitrate among its larger rivals and maximize its influence. In particular the party has been able to influence policy to some degree by acting as a junior member of both PvdA and CDA-led coalitions.

LABOR PARTY
(Partij ven de Arbeid; PvdA)

HISTORY
The PvdA was founded in 1946, succeeding the Social Democratic Workers' Party, which had begun in 1894 as an orthodox Marxist organization. During the interwar period it became reformist, and it reorganized under its present name as a more broadly based movement to include progressive Christians and members of resistance groups. The PvdA served in various coalitions, always with the KVP until 1994, and has provided prime ministers Willem Drees (1948–58), Joop Den Uyl (1973–77), and Wim Kok (1994–2002). The PvdA benefited from the gradual weakening of the religious parties, becoming the largest single party in the Second Chamber in 1971. Elections since then have given the party approximate parity with the CDA. After the 2003 elections it held 42 seats in the Second Chamber, behind only the CDA's 44.

ORGANIZATION
Although unusually susceptible to schisms, the PvdA is the best-organized Dutch party, with some 500 local committees and the full panoply of regional and national organizations. The annual congress decides policy, formulates the party's election platform, selects the parliamentary candidates, and elects biennially the 23-member national board executive, which oversees party management between congresses.

POLICY
The PvdA advocates a "personal socialism" that emphasizes religious and humanist commitments to socialism. Between 1966 and 1986 the party was strongly influenced by a New Left movement that turned it sharply to the left. Some of the moderate old guard left to form the Democratic Socialists in 1970. Since 1986 it has become more moderate, seeking to create a new, modern form of social democracy without the ideological baggage of the past. The PvdA stresses a search for solutions within the free-market system to the persistent unemployment and advocates reform and protection of the social security system. Internationally it has supported European integration but wants more emphasis on social cohesion and less on purely economic matters. It promotes a strong United Nations and increased international development aid. It has switched from main critic to supporter of economic austerity programs, combined with extra measures to improve the Dutch infrastructure, environmental protection, and suppression of crime. Under the leadership of Wouter Bos the PvdA has been moving somewhat more to the left, particularly in relation to economic and public-sector issues such as healthcare.

MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY
The party's supporters come from all sectors of the population, but its most faithful members tend to be urban working-class people without religious ties and middle-class professionals. It also draws heavily on white-collar workers. Support for the party is fairly evenly spread through all age groups.

FINANCING
The party is considerably better financed than the others. Most of its income derives from government subsidies and income-based membership dues of a maximum of 2 percent of gross annual income.

PROSPECTS
The PvdA is at a disadvantage in comparison with other European Socialist parties in that the structure of Dutch politics and parties, particularly the religious ones, operates against a purely class-based party, so that the PvdA lags in growth despite the disappearance of the Communist Party. At the same time, the party, with its natural alliance partners, D66 and the VVD, does not produce a parliamentary majority. Therefore, until 1994 the PvdA could only come to office in coalition with the CDA, a combination not likely to produce the legislation the PvdA most wanted to see enacted. From 1994 to 2002 the PvdA led the "purple coalition" along with the VVD and D66. The coalition supported rather tight fiscal policies, reducing public expenditures in many key areas. With stable growth in 1998 the purple coalition was able to renew its mandate. However, in 2002 the PvdA suffered a severe setback, losing almost

half of its seats in the Second Chamber. The reasons behind this setback were multiple: (1) growing opposition from key supporters of its neglect of its traditional social issues program, (2) a slower economy that hurt its support of tight fiscal policies, (3) the publication of a report that blamed the Dutch government for not preventing the massacre of over 7,000 Muslims in the Bosnian city of Srebenica (the entire Council of Ministers resigned after the report), and (4) the rise of the immigration issue as accentuated by the rise of Pim Fortuyn. However, the PvdA regained significant support in 2003 under the charismatic new leadership of Wouter Bos, who was able to sway working-class voters back from the disintegrating LPF. The PvdA was poised to join the CDA as a coalition partner after the 2003 election, but disagreements over support for the U.S.-led military campaign against Iraq and over fiscal spending cuts to boost the economy have led the PvdA to remain in the opposition.

Nevertheless, the party's solid organization and membership base are likely to ensure that it will continue to claim nearly a third of the vote and will remain a major force in the States General.

PEOPLE'S PARTY FOR FREEDOM AND DEMOCRACY

(Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie; VVD)

HISTORY

The Liberals dominated Dutch politics from the 1848 beginning of constitutional rule until the 1917 extension of the franchise and adoption of proportional representation. Then they went into partial eclipse. The original Liberal movement, loosely organized in several parties, was decidedly anticlerical. In 1948 a single Liberal party emerged and took its present name. Until 1972 the party hovered around 10 percent of the vote. Under Hans Wiegel's leadership it shed its anticlerical image, became more progressive while remaining middle-class, and reemerged as a major party, usually drawing votes in the 15–20 percent range. It was the largest party in the 1995 local elections with 27 percent of the vote and second-largest in the 1998 parliamentary elections with 25 percent. In 2003 it garnered 18 percent of the vote, third behind the CDA and PvdA.

ORGANIZATION

The VVD is fairly decentralized, especially for candidate selection, over which the party congress has some say. The party is also notable for limiting the influence of parliamentary deputies on the party executive. Otherwise the VVD's organization is similar to that of the other parties. The general assembly is the supreme authority, but the smaller national executive committee elected by the assembly has more practical day-to-day influence on the party executive.

POLICY

On many counts the VVD is the most conservative Dutch party. However, it advocates worker participation in profits and management. It supports the social security programs in principle but advocates cutting benefits to help get control of the budget. The VVD represents a moderately polarizing force in the Dutch context, particularly in its attachment to free enterprise and to a restrictive view of government economic intervention. Its secular orientation has not prevented the VVD from cooperating with the religious parties in governing coalitions. Although generally supportive of the European Union and the single currency, the VVD has expressed some criticisms of the growing European federal structure. In recent years the VVD also has begun to espouse a more anti-immigrant policy.

MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY

The VVD's primary appeal is to the upper and middle classes, but it also draws support from white-collar workers. Like the PvdA, the party attracts the support of those with no religious attachment.

FINANCING

To a greater extent than any other party the VVD can depend on substantial contributions from business and industry and therefore does not rely as much on government subsidies and membership dues.

PROSPECTS

The decline of the religious parties over the years has probably contributed to the VVD's success. That trend is likely to continue, though perhaps at a slower pace than recently. For many years the party's conservative policies made it unacceptable as a coalition partner to the PvdA, but the latter's evolution toward the center made possible the 1994 coalition. The CDA is ambivalent toward it. Its electoral strength and central location on the political spectrum give it a continuing role in most Dutch governments.

The VVD suffered great losses in 2002 with the rise of the LPF, which advocated harsher immigration policies and fiscal policies. It regained some of these seats in 2003 and is again a coalition partner with the CDA and D66.

Minor Political Parties

LIST PIM FORTUYN

(Lijst Pim Fortuyn; LPF)

The LPF, primarily a protest party with a xenophobic focus, was created in 2002 under the leadership of a radical sociology professor, Pim Fortuyn, known as a harsh critic of the government. Prior to the establishment of the List, Fortuyn had been fired as the head candidate on the ticket of the Leefbar Nederland (Liveable Netherlands), another protest party. Fortuyn was assassinated nine days before the May 2002 elections by a radical animal-rights and environmentalist activist. The party subsequently surprised most commentators by taking 17 percent of the popular vote and 26 seats in the election. Along with the CDA and the VVD, the LPF formed a coalition government.

It soon became rather evident that the party had been built primarily around Pim Fortuyn. Significant conflict and scandals soon erupted among the party's new leaders (many of whom had little if any prior political experience). Due to the instability posed by their coalition partner, the CDA and PvdA agreed to call for new elections less than three months after the initial election. In January 2003 new elections were held and the LPF lost 18 of its 26 seats as well as its status as a coalition partner. As of 2005 the party was viewed as a lingering protest party whose support has been steadily waning. The LPF's platform primarily centers on toughening immigration policies and crime laws and reducing public spending. In particular, the party (at least under its original incarnation with Fortuyn as leader) called for tougher policies toward those immigrants who did not assimilate into Dutch culture and for a quota to prevent Muslims from entering the Netherlands.

GREEN LEFT

(Groen Links)

Four leftist parties that had suffered declining influence in the preceding elections—the Communist Party of the Netherlands (CPN), the Evangelical People's Party (EPP), the Radical Political Party (RPP), and the Pacifist Socialist Party (PSP)—merged in 1989 as the Green Left. The CPN was a traditional Marxist-Leninist party that had broken away from the predecessor of the PvdA and adopted a more moderate Euro-Communist stance in the 1960s. The EPP was formed by the merger in 1980 of leftist dissidents of the major Christian parties. The RPP were young, activist, anti-nuclear Catholics who defected from the KVP during the widespread student disorders in 1968. The PSP was formed in 1957 by radical, pacifist leftists who objected to the moderate positions of the PvdA. Green Left won 11 seats in 1998, 10 seats in 2002, and eight seats in 2003. A change in leadership has recently taken place, potentially giving the party a more radical edge. It is the leading environmentalist party in the Netherlands, takes leftist positions on most social issues, and is the only Dutch party to oppose privatization.

SOCIALIST PARTY

(Socialistische Partij; SP)

The SP was founded in 1972 by social democrats opposed to the leftward drift of the PvdA. Although a small party for many years, the SP has become the fourth-largest party in the Netherlands (even beating D66). The party has been particularly critical of the conservative VVD. It won nine seats in the 2003 elections.

REFORMATIONAL POLITICAL FEDERATION

(Reformatorische Politieke Federatie; RPF)

The RPF is the newest of the three very small Calvinist parties represented in the States General. It was formed in 1975 by the National Evangelical Association, largely as a splinter off the Anti-Revolutionary Party, arguing that Calvinist teachings should be more directly applied to political and social problems. It three seats in the 1994 and the 1998 elections but failed to win any in 2002 and 2003.

REFORMED POLITICAL UNION

(Gereformeerd Politiek Verbond; GPV)

The GPV, founded in 1948, is a fundamentalist religious party that looks back to the national Calvinism of the seventeenth century for its political doctrine, holding that the Anti-Revolutionary Party diluted these ideas with liberalism and socialism. It favors severe governmental restrictions on immoral social behavior, supports NATO and a strong defense policy, but opposes supranationalism. The GPV has a small but consistent following and is usually represented in the Second Chamber with two seats. However, the party won no seats in either 2002 or 2003.

STATE REFORM PARTY

(Staatkundig Gereformeerde Partij; SGP)

The SGP is the oldest and largest of the Calvinist parties and like the others was a split (in 1918) from the Anti-Revolutionary Party. The SGP is ultraconservative in outlook, drawing its support mainly from fundamentalist members of the Dutch Reformed Church. It has the distinction of having banned female members in 1993. The party consistently wins about 2 percent of the vote and two or three seats in the States General.

GENERAL UNION OF THE ELDERLY

(Algemeen Ouderen Verbond; AOV)
(Unie 55+)

These are really interest groups for the elderly that formed to protest governmental proposals to freeze state pensions. They first appeared in national elections in 1994 but had split into three squabbling groups by 1997. The AOV won six seats and Unie 55+ one in 1994, but they lost them all in 1998.

Other Political Forces

Trade unions and other labor organizations continue to be important players in Dutch politics. The so-called polder model has been the traditional means of negotiating economic change in the Netherlands. Very similar to the corporatist model, it typically involves consensus-building negotiations among government, trade unions, and employers. This model had been rather successful in the 1980s and 1990s. However, such agreements have broken down somewhat in recent years due to slow economic growth. The current Christian Democrat–led coalition has attempted to push through welfare reforms and increased labor-market liberalization. Such reform efforts have led to a much more tenuous relationship between trade unions and the government.

National Prospects

The Dutch party and political systems can best be described as being "in transition." The "pillarization" of society has been giving way to secularization. This change became especially evident in the negotiations following the 1994 elections, in which the three leading parties (Labor, Liberal, and D66) excluded the CDA from the government for the first time since 1917 by forming a "purple," or secular, coalition. This development suggested, also, that the "clubbiness" of the past may have broken down definitively.

The disjunction between voting shifts and the eventual makeup of coalition governments shows clearly in the difficulties surrounding coalition building in recent elections. It has become normal that the voting results give no clear guide to the coalition outcome and that interparty negotiations take several months. In fact it was not until the middle of 2003 that the official governing coalition emerged from the January 2003 elections. Although such an impasse is serious, it also serves to underline the stability of Dutch politics: In spite of serious problems with government cohesion, a high degree of tolerance and social consensus holds the system together and diffuses political tension.

Several specific problems have plagued the Dutch political scene in recent years. Immigration and crime have been key issues. The quick rise (and rapid demise) of the LPF took many of the mainstream parties by surprise. The PvdA in particular suffered from the movement of working-class voters to the LPF. With the LPF's decline the PvdA and CDA have been forced to more significantly address such contentious issues. General economic policies (public spending, unemployment, and the deficit) and health care continue to be important issues for the Dutch electorate. In terms of the European Union, there seems to be a growing skepticism, and in June 2005 the public rejected the proposed European Constitution in a referendum.

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NEW ZEALAND

(Aotearoa)

By Peter Aimer, Ph.D.



New Zealand is a small, South Pacific unitary state with a population in 2005 of 4 million people. Of these, more than half a million claim descent from the indigenous population, the Maori. Much smaller non-European minorities reflect patterns of immigration by different Pacific Island peoples since 1950, and more recently from Asia. Most European settlement dates from the nineteenth century, and Britain claimed New Zealand as a colony after a negotiated treaty with a number of Maori chiefs in 1840.

The System of Government

New Zealand is a constitutional monarchy with a unicameral legislature. The core of the constitution is contained in the Constitution Act of 1986, which codifies the basic institutions and practices associated with a Westminster model of parliamentary democracy. New Zealand's colonial status gave way to dominion status in 1907, and complete autonomy was achieved in 1947. New Zealand is currently one of the community of sovereign states making up the Commonwealth of Nations.

EXECUTIVE

The formal head of state is the British monarch, represented by a governor-general appointed by the monarch on the advice of the New Zealand government, usually for a term of five years. All governors-general since the 1970s have been resident New Zealanders. Among them, the first Maori to hold office was Sir Paul Reeves (1985–90) and the first woman was Dame Catherine Tizard (1990–96). The governor-general's constitutional duties include assenting to bills, appointing and dismissing judges and cabinet ministers, dissolving or opening Parliament, and attending meetings of the Executive Council, consisting of cabinet ministers. The governors-general perform these duties on the advice of ministers. The head of state's reserve powers over the appointment and dismissal of ministers and the dissolution of Parliament remain vague and unused.

Effective executive power resides in a single or multiparty cabinet headed by the prime minister. The cabinet functions according to the convention of collective responsibility. Only elected members of Parliament may hold portfolios in the cabinet of 15 to 20 or outer ministry of five or six. A government remains in office as long as it has the confidence of a majority of elected members of Parliament and can secure the passage through Parliament of the necessary supply (money) bills. The business of government is conducted by public servants organized in departments of state headed by nonpartisan chief executive officers appointed by the State Services Commission.

LEGISLATURE

Parliament has been unicameral since the abolition of the appointed Legislative Council in 1950. The 120-member

House of Representatives is elected for a maximum term of three years. The prime minister may advise the calling of an election at any time. It is usual, however, for Parliaments to run their full term, with elections normally being held in October or November.

Parliament's principal presiding officer is the speaker, usually, though not necessarily, elected from one of the governing parties. Once elected, the speaker is expected to be nonpartisan. Cabinet ministers continue to sit as elected members of Parliament. MPs sit in party blocks, with government ministers and senior opposition spokespersons occupying their respective parties' front benches.

Parliament is required to meet within six weeks of the return of the writs following a general election. The parliamentary year normally runs from February to December, with sittings usually on three days a week (Tuesday through Thursday) for three weeks out of four. Regular cabinet meetings are scheduled for Mondays, and party caucuses customarily meet on Tuesday mornings, when Parliament is in session.

Most legislation is introduced by ministers as part of government business. Provision is also made for a limited number of members' bills to be introduced. Passage of these and other nongovernmental bills depends, however, on the leave of a majority of members of Parliament. As well as being debated in detail, bills are sent to select committees, enabling public submissions and possible amendment of the original bill. Since the passage of the Bill of Rights Act in 1990 all draft legislation must be scrutinized for consistency with the basic civil and political rights of citizens specified in that act.

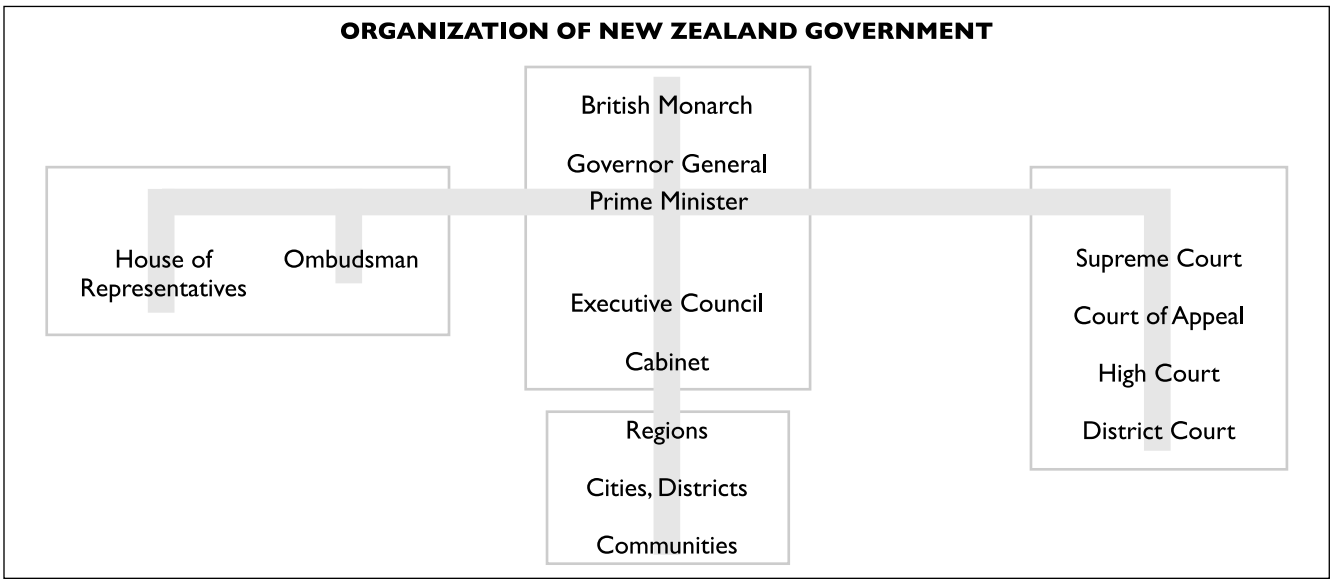
Legislative power, while formally located in the plenary sessions of Parliament, effectively flows from the cabinet and from the parliamentary select committees. Cabinet collective responsibility, combined with strict party discipline, normally ensures the passage of government-sponsored legislation, with minimal legislative influence by opposition parties.

Elections since 1987 have been marked by a weakening of the two-party system and the growing share of the vote dispersed among minor parties. This trend was accelerated by the adoption of proportional representation in 1996. The single-party, National or Labour, majority governments manufactured by the plurality electoral system gave way under proportional representation to coalition or minority government. Another result of the introduction of proportional representation was an increase in the representation of women and Maori.

Since 1993 citizens have been able to initiate referenda on submission of a petition to Parliament supported by at least 10 percent of eligible electors. The result of such a referendum, however, is not binding on the government.

JUDICIARY

The judicial branch of government is derived from the British system. Most civil matters involving interpretation of the law are handled at the level of the lowest tier of the judiciary, the district court and associated specialist courts—the family court, youth court, environment court, Maori land court, and employment court. More serious cases, including appeals from the district courts, are determined in the High Court.



Appeals against the High Court are dealt with by the Court of Appeal, with final recourse to the Supreme Court, established in 2004 to replace appeals to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council in England.

Appointments to the judiciary are formally made by the executive, after a process of consultation. Such appointments are not regarded as being influenced by partisan considerations, and judges may be removed only by a directive to the governor-general from Parliament.

Since 1962 ombudsmen have been appointed as officers of Parliament, independent of the executive. The ombudsmen function as intermediaries between citizens and the various branches of government administration, offering citizens the possibility of redress of grievances and making procedural recommendations. The office of the ombudsmen receives on average about 6,000 complaints a year. The success of the institution has led to the establishment of private-sector ombudsmen in the consumer-sensitive areas of banking and insurance.

Other quasi-judicial watchdog bodies dealing with the rights of citizens are the Human Rights Commission, which includes a separate privacy commissioner and race relations conciliator, and a parliamentary commissioner for the environment. All are independent of the executive and report annually to Parliament.

A distinctive and highly significant statutory body is the Waitangi tribunal, which takes its name from the Treaty of Waitangi (1840), the founding document of modern New Zealand history. The Waitangi tribunal was enacted in 1975 to hear and recommend on grievances relating to Maori land and resources. The Treaty of Waitangi broadly ceded sovereignty to the British Crown in return for a guarantee to the Maori of the retention and use of their land and legal equality between Maori and immigrant settlers. Subsequently, however, much land was alienated from the Maori by illegal and often violent means. The tribunal has significant power in relation to state land and assets on the land and has been an important catalyst in the negotiation of settlements of several major grievances between the state and the Maori. The Waitangi tribunal has established itself as a central institution in the politics of race relations in New Zealand.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

New Zealand is constitutionally a unitary state. Subnational units of government exist on the basis of statutes passed by the central government. Since 1989 there are three categories of local government—region, city and district, and community. All three categories are directly elected by citizens on the general electoral roll and residents within the boundaries of the authority concerned. Terms of office are for three years, and mayors of the city and district authorities are elected directly and separately from councillors.

Political parties may stand tickets of candidates, but the partisan patterns and allegiances of national politics are only loosely if at all replicated in the arena of local government. Participation rates in local elections fall well below those in national elections, leading some local authorities to introduce postal voting in elections. City and district authorities perform a wide range of regulatory and service functions close to the daily life of citizens, levying rates on property in order to finance the supply and maintenance of such basic utilities as local roads, water supply, sewerage, libraries, and recreational facilities.

Regional councils are primarily concerned with the planning and management of natural resources over larger geographic areas. Community boards have little power and function as channels for parochial interests, linking citizens with their larger elected territorial authority.

The Electoral System

In 1996, after more than 80 years of first-past-the-post (winner-take-all) elections, New Zealand switched to a form of proportional representation modeled on the German system and known in New Zealand as mixed-member proportional (MMP). MMP had been recommended by a royal commission in 1986 and after much controversy was affirmed by 54 percent of the voters in a referendum in 1993.

MMP combines single-member electorate representation with party list representation. The total number of members of Parliament is fixed at 120. The country is divided into general territorial electorates, and also into a smaller number of Maori territorial electorates, guaranteeing representation of New Zealand's indigenous ethnic minority. Each territorial electorate returns one representative to Parliament. From 2002 there were a total of 68 territorial electorates (seven of which were Maori electorates) and 52 list seats. An increase in the number of either general or Maori electorates results in a similar decrease in the number of list MPs. Under MMP registered electors have two votes, one for an electorate MP, the second for a political party on the nationwide list of parties.

Electors vote by attending a designated polling place in their local community on election day, traditionally a Saturday, and ticking a circle opposite the chosen candidate or party. Provision is made for electors who cannot visit a polling place to cast a special vote.

Electorate MPs are elected by first-past-the-post contests in each electorate. Proportional representation in Parliament is achieved by calculating the total number of parliamentary seats each party is eligible for on the basis of its nationwide party vote, using the St. Lague formula for this purpose. Party candidates who have won electorate contests are automatically elected to Parliament. If necessary this number is then topped up from candidates on the parties' ranked lists until each party's rightful share is reached. If a party has won more electorate seats than its party vote entitles it, the party retains the seats and Parliament is temporarily increased in numbers.

To qualify for a proportional allocation of seats in Parliament a party is required to win either one electorate or 5 percent of the total party vote. Only registered political parties are eligible to compete for party votes. To register, a party must satisfy the Electoral Commission, the overseeing body, that it has at least 500 financial members. Independent (nonparty) and unregistered party candidates may contest electorates only.

The age of eligibility to vote in general and local elections is 18. Registration is required by law, though it is not rigorously enforced. Rather, publicity campaigns are used to encourage newly eligible citizens to register. Maori (being defined as people of Maori descent who identify as Maori) may choose to register on either the general roll or the separate Maori roll. This Maori option is revised every five years. Since 1993 the number of Maori electorates, formerly fixed at four, has been determined by the number of Maori registering on the Maori roll.

Electorate boundaries are redrawn after every fifth-yearly census to take account of changes in population distribution. This is the task of a seven-member, largely nonpartisan Representation Commission. Boundaries are drawn, having regard for specified community, geographic, and demographic criteria, and the maximum permissible population variance among electorates is 5 percent. The number of South Island electorates is pegged at 16. The population of the South Island is divided by 16 to identify the population quota for general electorates. Following the 2001 census the population quota for general electorates was 54,296.

Turnout in general elections is between 80 and 90 percent of registered electors. The trend, however, is one of decline. Election campaigns are normally four to six weeks in duration. Legal limitations on the parties' electoral expenses are, however, calculated over a period of three months before election day. The maximum expenditure permitted for registered parties is $1 million plus an additional $20,000 for every electorate candidate nominated by the party. While there is no direct state funding of political parties, broadcasting time and money are allocated on the basis of defined criteria, the object being to provide greater equality of access to powerful mass media.

The Party System

ORIGINS OF THE PARTIES

The left-right dimension remains the predominant organizing principle of the party system, reflecting the historical cleavage between advocates of an active versus a diminishing economic and social role for the state. Rural sectionalism has for long been absorbed into a broad coalition of the right. Religious cleavages have not contributed significantly to party divisions. Since the 1970s this rather simple pattern of conflict has been only slightly blurred by the emergence of a postmaterialist dimension in the form of environmentalism and by the development of a clearer ethnic cleavage based on Maori political interests. The main influence on political thinking and practice since the 1970s has been the upsurge of neoliberal doctrines.

Labour and National, the traditional adversaries of the left and right, remain the main political actors under MMP and the anchors of the left and right blocks, respectively. The two parties converge in terms of ideology and political objectives, competing for the so-called moderate center ground of New Zealand politics. Both parties experience internal tensions between those who favor a central tendency and those who advocate either a stronger pursuit of free-market policies (in National) or social democratic policies (in Labour). Both parties suffered splits in the transition to proportional representation, as MPs weighed their future prospects under the restructured electorate boundaries and reassessed their relations with their parties in the light of their own ideological leanings.

State funding of parties has been recommended, but since it has been resisted by some parties and is widely unpopular, no state funding formula has yet been adopted. Instead all parties rely on internal sources of finance and donations from sympa-

thetic interest groups, some of which donate to more than one party. The law requires public disclosure of national donations of more than $10,000 and single electorate donations of more than $1,000.

PARTY ORGANIZATION

All parties broadly follow the same principles of organization, with a loosely defined membership organized into local branches and electorate or regional structures lying between the grassroots and the central party executives. Party membership has tended to decline over the years. To register and compete for a proportional share of the seats in Parliament, however, a party must provide evidence to the Electoral Commission that it has at least 500 financial members. Parties are also expected to select and rank their lists of candidates in a manner compatible with democratic practices, and to avoid conflict and damaging publicity, it is in their interests to do so. This means that candidates must be either selected by the party membership directly or by selection committees that themselves have been democratically selected by members.

Among all parties the most representative and constitutionally authoritative unit of organization is the annual conference. As the conferences have tended to become the public showpieces for the parties, so their agendas and proceedings have become more structured and managed by the party leadership. Nevertheless, the conferences remain vital arenas for the interaction of the party hierarchies with their grass roots and of the members of Parliament with the active members of the organization. Conferences set the direction of party policies, thus binding the party leadership to varying degrees, but the linkage between party policy and conference remits has loosened, especially in the Labour Party in recent years. Party conferences also have the important function of electing the powerful party executives and the officers of the organization. Organizational leaders are not precluded from also being MPs, but such role duplication is rare. Parliamentary leaders are chosen by and from the respective party caucuses.

The main parties all have a central office serviced by a small body of paid clerical staff answerable to the chief executive or general secretary. The larger parties also maintain regional offices and, depending on the state of their finances, employ a small number of field staff or organizers. In addition, parties represented in Parliament qualify for state-funded research staff and clerical assistance, as well as printing and postage entitlements.

CAMPAIGNING

Party campaigns are fought at both the electorate and the national levels. Electorate campaigns are organized locally by active party members or personal supporters of the candidate and consist of public meetings, door-to-door canvassing, the distribution of leaflets to households, and other candidate-centered activities. Except in the case of unusual contests little media attention is given to individual electorates. The main media focus is on the national level of the campaign, centered on the party leaders. To the extent that the parties' resources permit, their campaign themes and tactics are adjusted to the results of public-opinion polls, private party polling, or focus group research and the advice of professional agencies. One or two televised leaders' debates have become a normal feature of campaigns and may have a significant influence on the fortunes of individual party leaders and parties. Under MMP, party resources focus more on the national campaigns, with less concentration on the few key marginal electorates, which determined election outcomes under the previous winner-take-all electoral system. However, the strength of the leading parties' local organizations in the marginal electorates act as a check on the centralization of the campaign and ensure that some local contests continue to be vigorously fought.

In survey research around 40 percent of electors decline to identify themselves as "usually" aligned to one party or another. Nevertheless, people vote for parties and party candidates. Independent candidates contesting electorates usually attract less than 1 percent of the total electorate votes.

Major Political Parties

LABOUR PARTY

HISTORY

The New Zealand Labour Party (NZLP) was formed in 1916 at a conference of delegates from trade unions and radical and moderately reformist political groups. It contested its first general election in 1919. By 1922 it had captured a large share of the urban wage earners' vote and that of miners and timber workers in more rural electorates. A more moderate image and program under the leadership of Michael Joseph Savage after 1933 and the widespread effects of the world depression brought the Labour Party to power in 1935. The first Labour government greatly expanded the welfare

state with innovative policies in housing, public works, social welfare, public health, and price support for farm commodities. Labour retained its electoral popularity in 1938 but lost votes and seats in the 1940s, its problems compounded by the death of the popular Savage and bitter internal conflict. Amid a mood of rejection of continued wartime state controls and restrictions, Peter Fraser lost the 1949 election, which was the beginning of a long period of National political dominance in New Zealand politics.

In 1957 the second Labour government, under Walter Nash, was elected, but with only a one-seat majority. Faced with a severe balance-of-payments crisis, the government introduced the infamous "Black Budget," which raised taxes on beer and cigarettes and deeply antagonized many Labour supporters. The Nash government was voted out in 1960. The third Labour government (1972–75), led by Norman Kirk, similarly faced severe economic problems associated with the world oil crisis. It was further destabilized by Kirk's sudden death in 1974 and by the highly effective attack mounted by the pugnacious leader of the opposition National Party, Robert Muldoon. Labour was heavily defeated in 1975. Although it recovered to receive more votes than National in 1978 and 1981, under the first-past-the-post electoral system it failed to attain a parliamentary majority. In 1984, however, in a rare snap election, a largely new generation of tertiary-educated and professional Labour politicians, led by David Lange, won in a landslide rejection of the National government. Lange's Labour government stunned its traditional supporters by commencing a program of radical economic reform involving financial deregulation, increased competition, a removal of rural subsidies, public-service restructuring, and micropolitical reforms more consistent with a neoliberal than a social democratic agenda. Although Labour was returned in 1987, its natural constituency was already eroding and rapidly declined further in the face of a deep split in the cabinet between supporters of the treasurer, Roger Douglas, who wished to continue the program of economic reform, and Lange, who advocated a slowing of the pace. The party split extended through caucus and into the party organization. In 1989 Lange resigned as party leader and PM. He was replaced by his deputy, Geoffrey Palmer, who in turn stepped down in 1990 in favor of Mike Moore. The change of leadership could not save the government, which was swept from office in the 1990 election.

The party slowly recovered electoral ground in the 1990s and in 1999 recaptured government office in coalition with the small left-wing Alliance Party. Labour was again returned to government in 2002, in a minority coalition with the Progressives (a splinter from the Alliance), supported on essential supply and confidence votes by the centrist United Future Party. Following new elections in 2005 Labour once again led a coalition government with the Progressives. In office Labour has led governments that have combined fiscal caution with mildly redistributive and socially liberal policies.

ORGANIZATION

The formal structure of the party is based on branches, defined as at least 10 eligible persons. Reflecting the party's historical origins, unions may affiliate with the party. The resulting voting power of union affiliates, formerly a contentious issue, has lessened in recent years owing to declining union membership and disaffiliation of some unions. Besides general branches there is provision for special branches associated with women, youth, Maori, Pacific Islanders, and the universities. Branches appoint delegates to electorate committees, which coordinate election campaigns at the local level. Groups of electorates may be designated as a region, and regions may combine to hold conferences whose policy remits are channeled to the party's central annual conference. The supreme governing body, with formal jurisdiction over constitutional and policy matters, is the annual conference of delegates representing all constituent sections of the party. Executive power within the party is held by the New Zealand Council of 17 members. Another powerful group is the policy council, which prepares policies for inclusion in the party's election manifesto. Elected members of Parliament are influential at all levels of organization, have speaking and voting rights at the annual conference, and are represented on the New Zealand Council and the policy committee.

MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY

Party membership is secret. The long-term trend has been toward a decline in both affiliated and dues-paying members. Numbers fluctuate according to the party's political circumstances, dropping after periods of unpopular government, as in 1957–60 and 1987–90, and rising again as the party's political fortunes revive. Although historical patterns of class voting have blurred in the postwar period, Labour retains its electoral base among manual occupations and also receives disproportionate support among state-sector white-collar occupations, Maori and Pacific Island voters, welfare beneficiaries, and low-income earners.

POLICY

Official party policy is contained in the election manifesto. The manifesto evolves within an elaborate framework of policy committees, the policy council, and the annual conference. Labour governments are expected to make progress on implementing the manifesto. Departures from policy are reported by the policy council to the annual conference. Although party policy is presented in the name of democratic socialist principles, this must be interpreted in practice in the context of a modern, competitive, capitalist, largely deregulated, and globally influenced economy. The party not only eschews socialism but is now associated with the radical neoliberal reforms of the fourth Labour government. As a self-designated center-left party it proposes a moderately more redistributive tax policy than center-right and right parties, greater expenditure on health, housing, education, and welfare, and employment policies offering more protection to the wage earner, along with a stronger commitment to achieving gender equality in the workforce. Labour's distinctive antinuclear policy has been adopted by other parties. Its post–cold war foreign policy stresses regional alignments, especially with Australia, in the South Pacific and Southeast Asia, participation in multilateral peacekeeping roles, a continued liberalization of international trade and investment, and a more vigorous pursuit of international environmental protection programs.

FINANCING

Like membership, the party's finances are secret. Intraparty and union sources have declined as a share of the total party income. Also like membership, income fluctuates with the political environment. In 1987, for example, the private financial sector gave generously in acknowledgment of the fourth Labour government's deregulative and generally pro-business policies. By 1990 both these and party sources had contracted again, leaving the party in debt after the election.

LEADERSHIP

The party president is elected by the annual conference. Caucus elects the parliamentary party leader and deputy leader, usually with some regard to a North Island–South Island spread of leadership. After narrowly losing the 1993 election, Mike Moore was successfully challenged by his deputy, Helen Clark, the party's first woman leader, a graduate in political science and former university lecturer who represents an Auckland electorate. Her deputy, Dr. Michael Cullen, also a former academic, represented a Dunedin (South Island) electorate before moving north to stand as a list member only.

PROSPECTS

During the transition to proportional representation and the lead-up to the 1996 election Labour's electoral status according to opinion polls fell to a historic low, due largely to internal tensions following the change of leadership. Labour's dominance of the center-left was at this time under challenge by the Alliance and New Zealand First Parties. The 1996 election turned both the party's and the leader's fortunes around. Labour is guaranteed to be the dominant center-left party in the new MMP-based multiparty system for the foreseeable future. Nevertheless, its governing prospects are contingent on the aggregate strength of the center-left block, leading to either a Labour-led coalition or Labour minority government, supported by one or more small parties.

NATIONAL PARTY

HISTORY

After Labour's electoral success in 1935 the two non-Labour parliamentary opposition parties—Reform and United—merged to form the National Party in 1936. They were joined by a newer grouping, the Democrats, to create the foundations of a single conservative party spanning rural and wealthier city interests. The formation of National marked also the beginning of a long period of two-party dominance in parliamentary politics, which, although weakening after the 1970s, lasted effectively until the transition to proportional representation after 1993.

National remained in opposition under its first leader, Adam Hamilton, but began to make electoral advances under S. G. Holland in the 1940s, first winning back the rural electorates it had lost to Labour in 1935 and 1938 and finally attaining a parliamentary majority in 1949. By 1999 National had governed alone or in coalition for nearly 40 of the last 50 years. This parliamentary dominance owed much to the first-past-the-post electoral system, which enabled the party to achieve clear parliamentary majorities despite only once, in 1951, winning a majority of votes. A second reason for National's disproportionate tenure of office was its pragmatic moderation in government, administering a regulated mixed economy strongly tied to the protected British commodity market until the 1970s and maintaining the welfare state developed by the first Labour government. Thirdly, National benefited from the stable, effective leadership associated with Sir

Keith Holyoake (1957–72) and Sir Robert Muldoon (1974–84).

Out of office for only two separate single terms, 1957–60 and 1972–75, National's dominance was finally undermined not only by the Labour opposition but from within the party by those who had begun to subscribe to the free-market, small-state thinking in the late twentieth century. Attacked from the right and the left, National was defeated in 1984, only to return in a landslide win in 1990. Since then it has proceeded along the path of economic reform and restructuring initiated by the fourth Labour government. After the first MMP election in 1996 National continued to govern in a majority coalition with New Zealand First. The coalition proved both unstable and unpopular. National's defeat in 1999 was followed by a period of internal strife, a change of leadership, and a disastrous electoral collapse in 2002. After another change of leadership National has recovered its historical place as one of the two major parties in a two-party dominant system. In 2005 National made a strong showing in the elections, winning 48 seats—an increase of 21 seats over 2002—to the Labour Party's 50 seats.

ORGANIZATION

Members, defined as those eligible to vote who pay a subscription to the party, are organized in geographical branches of at least 20 members within electorates. The electorate committees, consisting of representatives of branches, are, however, the basic effective units of the grassroots level of organization. National's regional organization is more developed and influential than Labour's. National's five regional divisions model the overall party organization, holding annual conferences, electing officers, dealing with policy matters, and since 1996 ranking list candidates from within the region. The activities of the divisions are initiated and coordinated by elected divisional councils and executives. The party's annual conference comprises representatives of the electorate and divisional levels of organization. The conference elects the officers of the party, considers selected policy remits, and ratifies any constitutional changes. It is not as influential in policy matters as Labour's conference. Provision is made within the party for separate structures for youth, women, Maori, and Pacific people.

After National's disastrous election in 2002, constitutional changes were made to strengthen central control of the party, to some extent at the expense of the regions. The central governing body of the party is a powerful nine-member board of directors, consisting the party leader, a second representative of the parliamentary caucus, and seven members elected by the annual conference. The party's annual conference comprises representatives of electorates, the regional chairs, the board of directors, and representatives of the youth branch. The conference elects the majority of board members, considers policy remits, and ratifies constitutional changes. It is not as influential in policy matters as Labour's conference. Policy formulation is the responsibility of the policy consultation committee, assisted by a number of advisory groups. Final approval of policy is in the hands of the board of directors.

MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY

National has been more successful than Labour in mobilizing and maintaining a mass membership. As with Labour, however, the long-term trend is one of erratic decline, from a high of 246,000 to fewer than 40,000. National's constituency is strongest in rural regions and among the self-employed, higher-income groups, private-sector employees, and churchgoers and is slightly stronger among men than women.

POLICY

In its revised constitution (2003) National lists "values" central to the party's purpose. These include: "national and personal security; equal citizenship and equal opportunity; individual freedom and choice; personal responsibility; competitive enterprise and rewards for achievement; limited government; strong families and caring communities; sustainable development of the environment." At the rhetorical level there is little in these to distinguish National from Labour. In opposition National has taken strong stands against policies which might benefit Maori on the basis of ethnicity rather than need, advocates a more punitive approach to law and order; and resists labour laws sympathetic to trade unionism. In government National would move toward a flatter income tax regime and keep a tight reign on welfare costs and benefit levels. Although National aspires to a closer defense relationship with the United States and Australia, in practice there is little difference between National's and Labour's pro-Western foreign policies or their pro–free trade policies. Once heavily influenced by a powerful rural lobby, National is now more closely aligned with business interests.

FINANCING

Sources and amounts are secret. However, National has usually been the wealthier of the two major parties, sustained by personal contributions and fund-raising

among its substantial membership, along with donations from business and wealthy supporters.

LEADERSHIP

The party leader is elected by the National members of Parliament from among their ranks. The party's record of stable leadership during its postwar period of electoral dominance changed in the mid-1990s. Since then electoral setbacks have triggered a series of leadership changes. In 1997 the prime minister, Jim Bolger, was replaced by Jenny Shipley, who thus became National's first woman leader and New Zealand's first woman prime minister. After losing to Labour in 1999 Shipley was ousted by her deputy, Bill English, who in turn suffered a major electoral defeat in 2002. He was successfully challenged soon after by Dr. Don Brash, a first-term list member of Parliament and a former governor of the Reserve Bank. The party president, who heads the extraparliamentary organization, is elected by the annual conference.

PROSPECTS

National has survived the transition to proportional representation to become the dominant party of the center-right block, but with its future governing status dependent on the parliamentary strength of potential coalition partners or parties prepared to support a minority National government. Its electoral and parliamentary presence is contingent also on its ability to check the development of an assertive free-market party to its right while at the same time maintaining the support of its more moderate, pragmatic constituency.

Minor Political Parties

ALLIANCE

The Alliance originated in 1989 as a splinter party, called New Labour, formed and led by a Labour MP, Jim Anderton, in protest at the neoliberal direction of the Labour government's policies. New Labour formed a coalition with four other minor parties on the left to become the Alliance Party. The grouping was forged before the 1993 election in an attempt to surmount the disadvantages of small parties under the first-past-the-post electoral system. Reaching 18 percent of the vote in 1993, the Alliance aspired to replace Labour as the main opposition party to National. More realistically the Alliance's place in the political spectrum was as Labour's coalition partner or support party. It fulfilled this role in the Labour-led coalition of 1999–2002. The experience of sharing government proved disastrous. Overshadowed by Labour, falling in the opinion polls, frustrated at its failure to achieve significant progress on its policy aims, and divided over the government's decision to send troops to Afghanistan, the Alliance split. The party was virtually destroyed in the 2002 election, losing all its members of Parliament.

GREENS

The Green Party originated in 1972 as the Values Party. It was re-formed as the Aotearoa Green Party to contest the 1990 election, when it attained nearly 7 percent of the vote. It contested the 1993 and 1996 elections as one of the five constituent parties making up the Alliance. Three of the 13 Alliance MPs elected in 1996 were members of the Green Party. In November 1997 the party withdrew from the Alliance, judging that under the new proportional electoral system (MMP) it stood a good chance of attaining the 5 percent of the national vote needed for representation in its own right. The move paid off. In 1999 the Green vote entitled it to seven seats in parliament, rising to nine in 2002 but falling back to six in 2005. The Greens have taken strong stands on environmental, energy, transport, defense, and Maori issues. They have led opposition to the release of genetically modified organisms into the environment. Too uncompromising to be an easy coalition partner for Labour, the Greens still play a significant role on the left of the political spectrum, backing Labour-led governments against parties of the right.

NEW ZEALAND FIRST

The party is synonymous with its founder and leader, Winston Peters, a Maori and a former National MP who, after a short stormy period as minister of Maori affairs, was dismissed from the cabinet in 1991 and expelled from the caucus in 1992; he finally split from his party in 1993 by resigning from Parliament and forcing a by-election in his seat of Tauranga. Peters, whom polls identified as the country's most popular politician, easily won the by-election and founded his own party, New Zealand First, in July 1993. The party won 8.4 percent of the vote in the general election a few months later, and Peters was again returned to Parliament. In the unstable transition to MMP between 1993 and 1996 Peters capitalized on his continuing personal standing, his espousal of populist issues, and a widespread sense of discontent with the major parties to place his party electorally in a pivotal balance-of-power position between Labour and National. New

Zealand First won 13.4 percent of the vote in 1996. In a historic realignment of Maori partisanship New Zealand First candidates won all five Maori electorates. After prolonged negotiations with both Labour and National, Peters entered into a majority coalition with National, securing for himself the roles of treasurer and deputy prime minister and a further eight ministerial positions for his party. Within months his and the party's ratings had slumped to very low levels. Although New Zealand First was able to slow the pace of National's economic liberalization program, a majority of New Zealand First voters had expected Peters to help end the National government, not join it. The image of New Zealand First was also damaged by the inexperience of its ministerial members and the aggressive performance of the Maori MPs.

In 1998 the coalition with National was dissolved and half the New Zealand First MPs left the party. In 1999 the party suffered a major electoral setback. All Maori electorates returned to Labour, and the party fell below the threshold of 5 percent of the national vote. However, Peters narrowly retained his Tauranga seat, qualifying the party for proportional representation under the rules of MMP. In 2002 New Zealand First recovered lost ground, increasing its parliamentary representation from 5 to 13 MPs, the third largest parliamentary grouping. But in 2005 the party lost six seats to put its total at seven. The party continues to play a centrist role, critical of parties on both the left and right. But the forthright and uncompromising style of Peters tends to reduce the party's coalition potential despite its pivotal place in the party spectrum.

UNITED FUTURE NEW ZEALAND

In the transition to MMP some saw a need for a party of the center to mediate between Labour and National. In 1995 three Labour or ex-Labour and five National MPs left their parties to form the United Party. It was a dismal failure, winning less than 1 percent of the vote in 1996. One member, however, Peter Dunne, retained his electorate seat and thus became the party's sole MP. His firm grip on his electorate seat was a valuable resource under the rules of MMP, which did not go unnoticed. In 2000 Dunne was approached by leaders of the Future New Zealand Party, a descendant of the now-defunct 1996 Christian Democrats. A merger of the two parties was negotiated, and United was renamed United Future New Zealand. It contested the 2002 election as a center party, stressing "common sense" in politics, but also finding sympathy for its emphasis on "family values." Dunne, an experienced politician and assured of his own seat, campaigned effectively, attracting support among a socially conservative, often Christian, section of the electorate. The outcome was a surprise to most people. United Future secured nearly 7 percent of the vote, and Dunne was joined in Parliament by another seven MPs. While holding a strategic pivotal position Dunne acknowledged Labour as the overall winner of the election and undertook to secure the minority Labour-Progressive coalition in the interest of governmental stability. In 2005, however, the party's total dropped to three seats. The party is frequently critical of government policies, however, and depending on election results is equally prepared underpin a government of the right. United Future's electoral position remains insecure, and very dependent on Dunne's electorate seat to maintain a parliamentary presence.

ACT NEW ZEALAND

ACT is evidence of the deep impact on the partisan structure of New Zealand politics of neoliberal thinking and the move to proportional representation. ACT began as a lobby group advocating further market liberalization and small state politics. Roger Douglas, the reforming treasurer of the fourth Labour government, was a founding member. He was joined by people from both Labour and National backgrounds, including Richard Prebble, a former Labour cabinet minister who led the party from 1996 to 2004, and Derek Quigley, a former National minister forced from the cabinet for his free-market advocacy in 1982. Generously funded from business sources, ACT has consistently secured 6–8 percent of the vote to maintain a parliamentary presence since 1996. Located on the right of the political spectrum, ACT provides a potential coalition partner or support party for National. In 2004, however, the National Party, on the basis of its new leadership and stronger stands on ethnic issues, social conservatism, and law and order, was attracting sufficient electoral support away from ACT to cast doubt on its future. In the 2005 elections the party saw its number of seats dwindle to two.

PROGRESSIVE PARTY

The Progressive Party has its origin in the rancorous breakup of the Alliance in 2002. One faction of the Alliance remained loyal to the party's founding leader, Jim Anderton, and contested the election under a new party banner—Jim Anderton's Progressive Coalition, since shortened to Progressive Party. Anderton, the deputy prime minister in the Labour-Alliance coalition,

and the Progressives remained loyal to the continuing coalition with Labour. While the new party attracted less than 2 percent of the overall vote, Anderton was secure in his own electorate seat, and under the rules of MMP brought one other MP into Parliament on the Progressive list. The two MPs promptly joined Labour in a minority center-left coalition, where they were little more than an appendage of the dominant Labour Party. In 2005 the party won seat but remained part of the governing coalition with Labour.

MAORI PARTY

In 2003 an issue arose over the ownership of the foreshore and seabed. The Court of Appeal judged that the Maori Land Court was competent to hear claims of ownership by Maori applicants. The government, concerned at the scale of a possible backlash by non-Maori citizens proposed legislation that would effectively place the seabed and foreshores in public ownership. Maori opposition was widespread and prolonged. By 2004 Maori Labour MPs faced great pressure to oppose the legislation. One of the MPs, Tariana Turia, an associate minister outside cabinet, and known for her radical views, resigned from Parliament to successfully contest her seat in a by-election under the banner of the new Maori Party, of which she became the coleader. The party became a threat to Labour's traditional grip on the Maori territorial electorates, and in fact in 2005 the party won four seats in Parliament.

Other Political Forces

Parties and governments in New Zealand function in a pluralistic, secular, democratic environment comprising a great variety of interest groups, an influential bureaucracy, and media independent of any political party. Interest groups and ideologically committed promotional groups extend across the political spectrum. The most powerful, in terms of their influence on public policy, are the long-established peak organizations representing the various sectors of a capitalist economy, such as the Council of Trade Unions, Business New Zealand, Federated Farmers, and the Bankers' Association. Also influential in molding the climate of opinion in which public policy is formulated are well-funded "think tanks" such as the Business Roundtable (neoliberal economics), the Maxim Institute (Christian conservatism), and the New Zealand Institute (unaligned pragmatism). Vigorous in articulating their concerns are associations speaking for various occupational groups, such as the Law Society, the Medical Association, the Nurses Organization, and the several teachers' unions. Other groups have organized around ethnic and gender interests, pensioners, various branches of sport and leisure, and environmental issues.

With the exception of Labour's provision for trade unions to affiliate with the party, the relationship between groups and parties is informal. Ideological affinity and overlapping memberships may align different parties more closely to some groups rather than to others—business and farmer groups with the National Party, for example, or environmental groups with the Greens. The Labour case notwithstanding, no significant political party functions as the political arm of a pressure group or groups. While membership in blue- or white-collar unions still figures more frequently in the background of Labour politicians than those of the political right, the historical links between the Labour Party and the trade unions have weakened to the extent that the party is no longer commonly perceived as the instrument of organized labor.

The traditional churches generally stand aside from partisan politics, only rarely entering directly into political debate when issues such as poverty, gay rights, abortion, and divorce raise emotion-laden moral concerns. Newer, more fundamentalist church groups, however, are less constrained in their advocacy of moral conservatism.

No branch of the media is either under state direction or directly affiliated to a political party. Yet the media collectively, far from being a neutral element in the conduct of politics, catering for a variety of prejudices, have become overt political actors through a trend to a more opinionated style of print journalism, paralleled in the electronic media by talk radio, and celebrity-based television news presentation. In this way the media influence the style and tenor of political debate, cultivating intense, short-term, personality-based perspectives on current issues, which contribute to the electorally volatile, politically cynical climate within which the parties compete.

National Prospects

Despite the switch to proportional representation in 1996 the contours of the two-party-dominant, Labour-National party system remain strong. MMP, as expected, greatly enhanced the electoral and parliamentary prospects of the small parties. Their participation in coalition politics, however, has so far proved

destructive of their cohesion and electoral bases, and they are vulnerable to resurgent major parties. Consequently there is still considerable electoral instability among the aspiring small parties. The prospects for a revitalized left, either from a reconstituted Alliance or invigorated Progressive Party, appear slight. Within the party spectrum the Greens have filled the space on the left. On the political right ACT is sorely challenged to surmount the 5 percent threshold for representation in Parliament. Ethnic issues have gained in salience, and a new Maori Party has threatened the long-standing loyalty of Maori voters to Labour. Consequently Labour's grip on the Maori electorates, already overturned once, in 1996–99, by New Zealand First, appears less certain. Yet the very existence of separate Maori electorates, which were established in 1867, is being challenged by New Zealand First, National, and ACT. Although a parliamentary review of the MMP electoral system in 2002 recommended no significant changes, it is still not fully supported by National, whose leadership prefers a less proportional allocation of list seats and advocates opening up the issue again through referendum.

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REPUBLIC OF NICARAGUA

(República de Nicaragua)

By John A. Booth, Ph.D.



The Republic of Nicaragua (2005 population approximately 5.5 million) spans the Central American isthmus between Honduras and Costa Rica. From the 1970s through the early 1990s Nicaragua experienced repeated economic crises, two civil wars, and a massive foreign intervention as it passed from rightist dictatorship through Marxist-led revolution to electoral democracy. The Somoza dynasty (1936–79) ruled Nicaragua using the National Guard and the Liberal Nationalist Party (PLN) as its instruments of control. A violent 1978–79 insurrection toppled the Somozas and brought to power a revolutionary coalition dominated by the Sandinista National Liberation Front (Frente Sandinista de Liberación Nacional; FSLN). The Marxist-Leninist FSLN, led by its National Directorate, dominated the new regime and revolution and promoted extensive sociopolitical change. Opposition grew and some FSLN allies broke with the revolution. Various forces encouraged and backed by the United States rebelled against the regime. In the 1980s civil war disrupted the economy and polarized Nicaraguans as the Sandinista government mobilized to defend the revolution against these counterrevolutionary ("contra") forces.

Until 1984 the FSLN governed de facto through a multimember junta guided by the FSLN National Directorate. Despite Sandinista dominance of public policy, other parties participated in the junta, cabinet, and bureaucracy. Opposition parties existed openly. In 1984 the revolutionary government held a national election in which FSLN candidate Daniel Ortega Saavedra won the presidency and the FSLN captured about 60 percent of the new National Assembly. The Assembly drafted a new constitution, effective in 1987. It established a republican, presidential government with a strong executive but with some checks and balances.

The counterrevolutionary war, the antagonism of the Reagan and Bush administrations (including an economic embargo and diplomatic opposition), economic problems aggravated by the war, embargo, and revolutionary policies, and restrictions on civil liberties deepened polarization and discontent. Pursuant to the 1987 Central American Peace Accord the government forged a cease-fire with the contras in 1989. It also imposed draconian economic stabilization measures in the late 1980s, but to little avail. In the 1990 election 20 opposition parties formed the U.S.-backed Nicaraguan Opposition Union (Unión Nicaragüense Opositora; UNO) coalition that nominated Violeta Barrios de Chamorro for the presidency. Winning 54 percent of the vote, Chamorro defeated incumbent Ortega, and the Sandinistas relinquished power.

Chamorro settled the war, demobilized the contras, and dramatically trimmed the armed forces. Her government liberalized the economy and shrank the public sector to curtail inflation, but conflict over property confiscated during the revolution blocked economic recovery. The UNO coalition in the National Assembly collapsed, leaving President Chamorro to legislate by forging transitory alliances with other parties, often including the FLSN.

In the 1996 election the Liberal Alliance (AL), led by the former Managua mayor Arnoldo Alemán

Lacayo, won the presidency with 51 percent of the vote, handing Daniel Ortega of the Sandinistas his second successive defeat. Nicaragua's third national election since the overthrow of the Somozas and second peaceful exchange of power from an incumbent to the opposition definitively signaled the end of the Sandinista revolution. In 2001, despite a major corruption scandal in the Alemán administration, Liberal Alliance candidate Enrique Bolaños Geyer captured the presidency with 56 percent of the vote, with the FSLN's Ortega again defeated.

The System of Government

Nicaragua is a democratic republic with a strong presidential system and a unicameral legislature.

EXECUTIVE

The 1987 constitution vested great executive authority in a reelectable presidency with a six-tear term. The president had a virtual monopoly on budgeting and enjoyed decree authority. Combined with the strong FSLN majority in the National Assembly, these powers weakened formal constitutional checks upon executive authority. The FSLN's defeat in 1990 triggered a struggle to curtail presidential power. Reform efforts, resisted by President Chamorro, sparked a protracted legislative-constitutional crisis. Legislation and constitutional amendments trimming executive authority finally passed in 1996.

Nicaragua's president now serves for five years, may not seek immediate reelection, and has a two-term maximum. The president appoints cabinet ministers and ambassadors and shares with the National Assembly both the appointment of the Supreme Court and Supreme Electoral Council and budgeting and fiscal authority. The 1996 reforms divide presidential military and decree powers with the National Assembly, which also won new powers to hold executive officials accountable.

Restructured by the revolution in the 1980s and again by UNO in the 1990s, the Nicaraguan executive branch has experienced dramatic alterations in its size and mission. The revolution expanded government's size and scope with new economic and welfare functions. Neoliberal reforms, begun in the late 1980s and extended by subsequent government, radically retrenched the public sector, curtailing services, state economic regulation and ownership, and the government's budget and payroll. The government slashed spending, privatized hundreds of state-owned firms, and ended its banking monopoly. The military and police, dominated by the FSLN during the revolution, were depoliticized. The police were civilianized and the army's forces cut by 80 percent.

LEGISLATURE

Nicaragua's legislature is the unicameral National Assembly (Asamblea Nacional). In 1996 the Assembly's term of office increased to five years. The body has 90 regular seats for deputies (*diputados*) plus one additional seat for the runner-up in the last presidential race and one seat for previous president. The Assembly in 2002 lifted the legislative immunity from prosecution of former president Arnoldo Alemán. The courts convicted Alemán of corruption in 2003, and he was imprisoned.

Nicaraguans elect deputies from two lists: the 20-seat national list is allocated among the parties in proportion to their share of the national list vote; 70 regular departmental seats are elected from party slates from each of the 15 departments and two autonomous regions, apportioned by population. Distribution of winning seats within each department/region is in proportion to party vote share.

The National Assembly is presided over by a president, secretary, and other officers elected by the membership. Subject-area committees handle legislation; their makeup is distributed in rough proportion to parties' shares of deputies. The larger parties' caucuses shape legislation through committee action and maintaining voting discipline. The FLSN caucus has sometimes boycotted Assembly sessions to block a quorum and thus prevent legislation.

The Assembly's partisan makeup has changed since 1990. President Alemán assembled a broad anti-Sandinista coalition in the 1996–2001 Assembly, but in 1999 Alemán's PLC and the Sandinistas led by Daniel Ortega forged a broad pact to reform the constitution and electoral law. The Alemán-Ortega pact strengthened both party leaders within their own parties and especially advantaged the PLC and FSLN at the expense of smaller parties and political movements. One impact was to decrease sharply the number of small-party deputies elected to the 2001–2006 Assembly.

The executive-legislative power balance was tilted away from the Assembly under the 1987 constitution until 1996, when a fractious temporary coalition seeking to curtail presidential authority prompted a political crisis. This conflict crippled the Chamorro

administration and required international mediation, which brought the Assembly enhanced authority in budgetary matters. After leaving the presidency in 2001, Arnoldo Alemán had the AL fraction elect him president of the Assembly. In 2002, however, the Liberal bench split as a growing corruption scandal deeply implicated the former president. Alemán lost control of the Assembly, which voted to lift his legislative immunity from prosecution. He was convicted of fraud and imprisoned in 2003.

Because the Assembly may amend the constitution by a 60 percent vote, the legislative-executive balance of power (indeed constitutional provisions in general) may remain unstable.

SEATS IN THE NICARAGUAN NATIONAL ASSEMBLY, 1990–2006

Party[a]	1990–1996	1996–2001	2001–2006
FSLN	39	36	38
UNO	51	—	—
AL	42	53	—
CC	—	4	—
PCN	—	3	1
PN	—	2	—
Others	2	6	—
Total Seats	92	93[b]	92[b]

Sources: Consejo Supremo Electoral; Latin American Studies Association, The Electoral Process in Nicaragua: Domestic and International Influences (Austin, Tex.: November 19, 1984), table 3; Latin American Studies Association, Electoral Democracy Under International Pressure (Pittsburgh: March 15, 1990), table 4; and "How Nicaraguans Voted," Envío *15, nos. 185–186 (December–January 1996–97): 40 (with corrections by the author), and "Split Down the Middle," Barricada Internacional, no. 403 (December 1996): 8–9.*

[a]*Party names: FSLN = Sandinista National Liberation Front; PDC = Democratic Conservative Party; PLI = Independent Liberal Party; PPSC = Popular Social Christian Party; UNO = Nicaraguan Opposition Union; AL = Liberal Alliance; PCN = Conservative Party of Nicaragua; CC = Christian Way; PN = National Project.*

[b]*Total seats for 1996–2001 include an extra seat each for losing 1996 presidential candidates of the FSLN, CC, and PCN. Total seats for 2001–2006 include an extra seat for losing FSLN candidate Ortega and for former AL president Alemán, who later lost his seat after conviction in 2003 on corruption charges.*

JUDICIARY

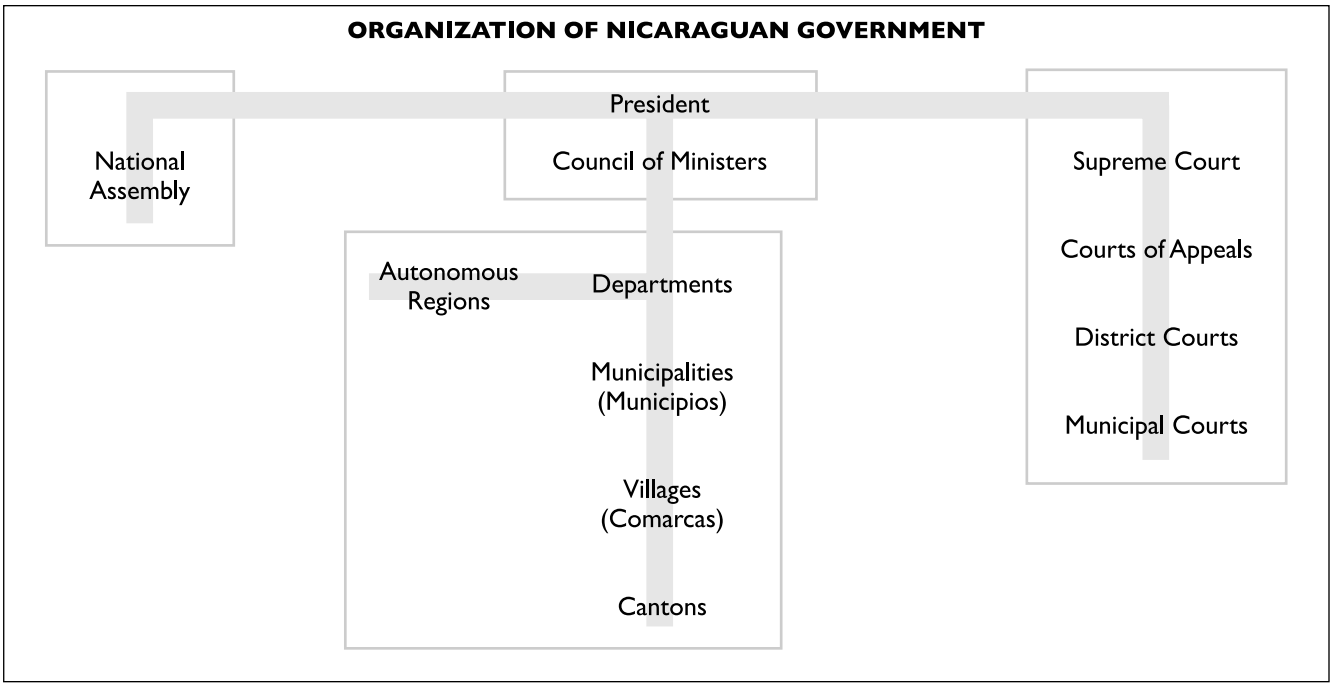
Nicaragua's legal system follows the civil law tradition, based upon legislated codes. The judiciary established under the 1987 constitution includes a Supreme Court (Tribunal Supremo) and civil and criminal lower courts. The Supreme Court's 16 magistrates (appointed by the National Assembly) sit as members of four specialized benches (criminal, civil, constitutional, and administrative). Under the 1987 constitution the president submitted a list of candidates from which the Assembly had to choose, but reforms in 1996 freed the Assembly to appoint magistrates not among the president's nominees. The Assembly also won the power to remove judges for diverse motives, including vaguely defined inappropriate moral or political conduct. The reforms also extended magistrates' terms of office from five to seven years, gave the Court jurisdiction over disputes among the branches of government, and doubled the judiciary's share of the national budget to 4 percent. The president of Nicaragua formerly designated the Court's president, but since 1996 the magistrates themselves annually elect their president.

Prior to 1996 critics viewed the Court as too subservient to the presidency and the FSLN, largely unchecked by the legislature, and underfunded. The reforms rectified those problems, but now the Court's dependency upon the National Assembly raises concerns over legislative manipulation of the courts. The Alemán-Ortega pact of 1999 enlarged the Supreme Court to 16 from 12 magistrates, a measure intended to dilute the influence of FSLN-appointed judges and place more Liberals on the Court.

Below the Supreme Court are courts of appeals, district courts, and municipal courts.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Nicaragua's political subdivisions consist of 15 departments and two autonomous regions. Departments per se have very limited functions, serving mainly as subdivisions for the election of the 70 departmental list members of the National Assembly and fulfilling some administrative responsibilities for the national government. The autonomous regions of the Atlantic coast, formed during the revolution, have more functions than the departments do. Responding to disaffection among ethnic and racial groups of the Atlantic zone, the revolutionary government gave the autonomous regions quasi-federal status. Each has an elected regional council with certain legislative and



administrative authority and resources beyond those of the departments.

Departments are subdivided into 145 municipalities (*municipios*—analogous to counties), each headed by an elected mayor (*alcalde*) and councils. Municipal councils vary in size according to local population, ranging from Managua's 16 members down to four members for municipalities of under 30,000. The mayor, elected separately, chairs the municipal council. The 1966 electoral reforms set municipal office terms at four years.

Municipalities have local authority, including modest powers to tax, regulate, and promote development. Traditionally underfunded because of limited taxing authority, municipalities receive additional funding from the national government.

The Electoral System

Nicaragua employs direct elections for all offices. The voting age is 16. The presidential–vice presidential ticket requires a 40 percent plurality to avoid a runoff between the top two candidates (this threshold was lowered from 45 percent by electoral-law changes enacted following the Alemán-Ortega pact of 1999). Mayors win by simple plurality votes. Seats in the National Assembly (both national and departmental lists), the Central American Parliament, and on all municipal councils are distributed among the contending parties by proportional representation. Citizens vote for slates of candidates nominated by parties on both Assembly and municipal ballots.

Nicaragua has a fourth governmental branch that administers elections. Established in 1984, the five-member Supreme Electoral Council (Consejo Supremo Electoral; CSE) is appointed by the National Assembly. The CSE handles voter registration, election organization and administration, and resolution of electoral disputes.

In the early 1990s the CSE began developing national civil registry functions, including issuing to all citizens a national identity card (*cédula*) that doubles as a voter registration document. Unable to complete this process prior to the 1996 general election, the CSE employed two ad hoc strategies to register voters. Despite multiple systems the CSE successfully registered voters and delivered documents.

Until 1995 a majority of CSE magistrates and staff came from FSLN ranks. Despite its partisan cadres the CSE earned a reputation for technical competence and nonpartisanship during the 1984 and 1990 elections. Reforms undertaken by the National Assembly in 1996, however, reorganized the CSE and caused numerous flaws in the 1996 general election:

- New elections for the National Assembly list, Central American Parliament, and mayors were added to those for president, Assembly, and municipal councils, doubling the number of ballots.

- Electoral regions for the Assembly changed from regions to the departments and autonomous regions.
- The CSE lost the power to name departmental and local electoral staff, which shifted to the parties. This change politicized the electoral apparatus and increased local staff inexperience. Delays in naming local electoral officials snarled the electoral apparatus.
- The number of polling places (*juntas receptoras de votos*) doubled to almost 9,000.
- The National Assembly funded the 1996 election at the 1990 level despite having a much larger staff and greater ballot complexity, prompting the resignation of the longtime president of the CSE.

Many problems ensued in the 1996 vote, including improper handling of 5 percent of the ballot materials at the national collection venue in Managua. The mishandled and discarded ballots were too few to have changed the national outcome, so parties and observers noted the flaws but recognized Alemán's victory.

The 2000 municipal elections and 2001 presidential and National Assembly elections took place under new rules designed by the 1999 Alemán-Ortega pact to help the big parties and minimize the number of parties competing. The CSE was expanded from 5 to 7 magistrates, postelection party recertification would require a party to win 3 percent of the total vote, and no nonpartisan slates could contest municipal elections. In both elections the CSE considerably improved its performance over the 1996 election, especially in logistics and ballot handling. Both domestic and international observers found the 2001 election's conduct satisfactory.

The Party System

ORIGINS OF THE PARTIES

Nicaragua's party system retains traits that originated in the late colonial era. Factions of promonarchy Conservatives from around Granada and proindependence Liberals from the León area evolved into extended clans with regional bases that survive today. Independence from Spain (1821) and inclusion into the Central American Republic (1823) eventually pitted Liberals and Conservatives in a nearly continuous violent competition that hardened regional partisan identification and cyclical political violence. By the early twentieth century most Liberal-Conservative ideological differences had vanished, but violent civil clashes persisted.

The United States intervened heavily in Nicaraguan politics after 1909 to protect its transisthmian canal monopoly in Panama. U.S. Marines occupied Nicaragua for most of the period from 1909 to 1925 in support of Conservative governments. A Liberal revolt in 1926 led to another U.S. occupation and a truce between the combatants that let the Liberals assume power in 1932. One Liberal general, the antiinterventionist revolutionary Augusto Sandino, rejected the truce and waged a six-year guerrilla struggle against the U.S.-trained Nicaraguan National Guard. Without defeating Sandino, the United States withdrew its troops in 1933.

The legacy of U.S. occupation included weakened political institutions, anti-American resentment, and the National Guard. At the head of the Guard was Anastasio Somoza García, a Liberal who had Sandino assassinated in 1933 and in 1936 seized ruling power. Somoza García took over the Liberal Party (renamed Liberal Nationalist Party; PLN) as a tool to control government and distribute graft. He employed the Guard to repress opponents and manipulated U.S. ties to bolster his power. Beginning in 1948 Somoza García countered prodemocracy sentiment by coopting Conservatives into the government with a share of offices and spoils. These arrangements continued after his 1956 assassination; his sons Luis and Anastasio Somoza Debayle succeeded him in control of the presidency, National Guard, and PLN.

Several parties arose to protest Somocista National Liberalism and collaborationist Conservatism; others were ideological movements. The Independent Liberal Party (Partido Liberal Independiente; PLI) split from the PLN in the 1940s. The pro-Soviet Nicaraguan Socialist Party (Partido Socialista Nicaragüense; PSN) appeared in the 1940s, and the Christian democratic-aligned Social Christian Party (Partido Social Cristiano Nicaragüense; PSCN) arose in the 1950s, each developing a significant base in the labor movement.

The twentieth century's most important new political movement was the Sandinista National Liberation Front, formed in 1961 as a Marxist guerrilla group drawing members from the disaffected of other parties and anti-Somoza movements. FSLN rule dramatically altered the party spectrum. The Sandinista party dominated politics during the 1980s and has survived its electoral defeats of 1990, 1996, and 2001 able to marshal a large minority vote.

The revolution shattered the old party system. It outlawed the PLN and collaborationist Conservative splinters but permitted other political parties to develop and contend for power. Older anti-Somocista parties like the PLI, Social Christians, and some Conservatives took part in the FSLN-led coalition government of 1979–84, as did several new parties—the latter typically personalistic rather than ideological. Outside of Nicaragua, ex-PLN and National Guard figures, dissident Sandinistas, and alienated former FSLN collaborators from others parties formed new parties or revived old ones in opposition to the FSLN. One expression of this anti-Sandinism was the U.S.-backed contras, who emphasized guerrilla insurgency. The contras (several coalitions of divergent interests and personalities) failed to form a coherent political movement after the 1989 cease-fire and had fragmented into and among various parties by the 1990 election.

The other major anti-Sandinista movement was the several new internal opposition parties that appeared in the late 1980s. Many received support from the United States or from social democratic, liberal, and Christian democratic party international organizations. In the 1990 vote the United States labored assiduously to defeat the FLSN. It encouraged 20 ideologically diverse parties, old and new, to form the Nicaraguan Opposition Union (Unión Nicaragüense Opositora; UNO) and nominate Violeta Barrios de Chamorro for president. Although victorious, Chamorro's UNO coalition soon fragmented.

The 1990 election law provided for disbanding unsuccessful parties, but liberal rules governing party formation permitted a multiplication of groups by the 1996 election, eventually contested by over 40 parties and coalitions. The FSLN retained about 38 percent of the national vote. The reformist splinter Sandinista Renovation Movement (Movimiento de Renovación Sandinista; MRS) fared poorly, as did Conservatives. The big news was the resurgence of the Liberals behind Arnoldo Alemán. A coalition of Alemán's Liberal Constitutionalists and other groups, the Liberal Alliance attracted back to Nicaragua many exiled Liberals, including personalities once associated with the Somozas' PLN.

In 2001 the Liberal candidate Enrique Bolaños easily won the presidency over the FSLN's perennial presidential nominee, Daniel Ortega. The Liberal Alliance won 53 of 92 legislative seats, with the FSLN taking 38 seats. Election-law revisions made by the PLC-FSLN pact of 1999 made it much harder for parties to survive a poor election performance and sharply cut the number of parties allowed to contest future elections.

PARTY ORGANIZATION

Great organizational differences exist between the FSLN and other parties. The FSLN is a mass-based, ideological party with an elaborate bureaucratic structure. During the revolution it had large ancillary organizations among women, youth, communities, labor, and peasants. Since the FSLN's 1990 electoral defeat it has effectively lost most such groups. Long dominated by its original revolutionary directorate, the FLSN added new members to this directoral body in the early 1990s. Despite reforms, various moderates, led by the former vice president Sergio Ramírez Mercado, defected to form the MRS, which failed to woo many votes away from the FSLN in 1996. Out of power the FSLN not only lost midlevel leadership to the MRS and to disenchantment but also developed funding problems. Sandinista hard-liners won greater control of the party with the 2001 election, solidifying Daniel Ortega as the undisputed FSLN *caudillo*.

Except for the Liberals and Conservatives, other parties tend to be small and formed around an ideology (Socialists, Social Christians, Independent Liberals), interest group, or personality. From this amalgam, two big anti-Sandinista coalitions have arisen to dominate postrevolutionary politics. In 1990 UNO rallied behind the unifying personality of Violeta Chamorro, a Conservative by background but nominally and recently a member of the new Social Democratic Party. Chamorro headed an extended clan that ran all of Nicaragua's main newspapers: the FSLN's *Barricada*, pro-FSLN *El Nuevo Diario*, and the opposition *La Prensa*. In 1996 Arnoldo Alemán pulled several Liberal factions, some unions, and some Conservatives into the AL.

The PLC under Alemán appeared likely to be dominated by the ex-president and a coalition of elites from rural areas and the agro-export sector. The investigation of Alemán in 2001, however, split the party, with a more progressive elite sector supporting president Bolaños while the many of the former president's supporters remained loyal to Alemán. The future of the PLC and the Liberal Alliance remains questionable with this schism ongoing. In 2001 the Conservatives virtually disappeared as an electoral alternative in Nicaragua, fully supplanted as the second party by the FSLN, and their legal future lay imperiled by their tiny vote share and their holding but a single Assembly seat.

CAMPAIGNING

Before 1979 campaigns were ritualistic; the regime so manipulated results that it was unaffected by campaigns.

When the opposition campaigned effectively, the National Guard usually disrupted the activity. Since the 1980s, with outcomes more in doubt, campaigning by the FSLN and its major opponents has become more open, civil, organized, and modern.

Nicaragua's 1984, 1990, 1996, and 2001 elections were among the most highly and systematically monitored votes ever conducted anywhere. In 1984 the revolutionary government invited hundreds of journalists, scholars, and foreign governmental representatives as election observers in hopes of improving the regime's legitimacy. Registered, legally participating parties campaigned without problems, but progovernment crowds disrupted events of the Democratic Coordinating Committee, an anti-Sandinista, U.S.-backed coalition that did not contest but sought to disrupt the election. Outside observers characterized the election as flawed by the weakness of the FSLN's opponents and by U.S. efforts to disrupt the vote but fair in terms of the opposition's freedom to campaign and media access.

In 1990, with even more external observation, the FSLN confronted a stronger, better-financed, and more unified opponent, UNO. Campaigning was open and intense. External observer missions of the United Nations, Organization of American States, and Carter Center facilitated the campaign and mediated disputes. Parties had access to subsidized mass media, and both the FSLN and UNO received considerable external funding and technical advice. Both UNO and the Sandinistas used public-opinion polling and sophisticated advertising. External observers helped cool the acrimonious environment. The opposition's win bore witness to the fairness of the 1990 campaign and election.

In 1996 and 2001 a reduced external observer contingent took part, but several thousand domestic observers from nongovernmental organizations and tens of thousands of party poll watchers scrutinized the processes. Compared with 1984 and 1990, 1996 and 2001 were less tense (the war having ended and partisan acrimony marginally diminished). Larger parties and the press polled extensively. The FSLN and the AL smeared each other enthusiastically by referring to ugly aspects of prior regimes, but otherwise interparty relations were generally civil.

Three other forces have played significant roles in recent Nicaraguan election campaigns—the Catholic Church, foreign political parties, and foreign governments. The church has often expressed its distaste for the Sandinistas. For example, during the final days of the 1996 campaign Cardinal Miguel Obando y Bravo, a harsh critic of the FSLN both during and after the revolution, held a televised mass that encouraged citizens to vote against the FSLN.

Foreign political parties have supported ideologically similar Nicaraguan parties with funding and technical assistance during recent campaigns.

Foreign governments have played diverse roles. Spain and the Nordic countries have provided technical assistance to the Supreme Electoral Council to facilitate the conduct of the election. U.S. intervention has varied according to whether the FSLN held power and the prospects of the Sandinistas' opponents. In 1984 the United States denounced the CSE and tried to disrupt the election. In 1990 the United States criticized both the CSE and the campaign as unfair while heavily backing UNO. In 1996 the United States provided extensive technical assistance to the CSE, a new role. The U.S. embassy in Managua proclaimed formal neutrality in 1996 and 2001, but the State Department in Washington made clear it hoped the FSLN would lose.

INDEPENDENT VOTERS

Identifying independent voters in Nicaragua is difficult given the instability of voting patterns since 1984. The FSLN's share of the vote fell from 67 percent in 1984 to 38 percent in 1996 but recovered to 42 percent in 2001. The party system and allegiances are fragmented and personalistic, somewhat masking patterns of support for parties other than the FSLN. A large shift in party support occurred from 1990 to 1996 and again from 1996 to 2001, and UNO and AL consisted of different party coalitions.

In addition to the numerous loyal FSLN identifiers there are contingents (of size unknown) of strong identifiers with other parties—especially Liberals and small nuclei of Conservatives, Independent Liberals, Social Christians, and Socialists. Outside these core identifiers, however, a substantial but indeterminate portion of Nicaraguans appeared to vote in 1990, 1996, and 2001 on the basis of candidate personality, ideology, or policy preference. Opinion polling so far offers scant insight into the phenomenon because of the recent great shifts in party support. Ultimately, shifting party identification and voting per se constitute voter independence.

LIBERAL PARTIES

A cluster of parties arising from the Liberal clans, led by the PLC under the leadership of Arnoldo Alemán, successfully challenged all others as the Sandinistas'

most effective opponent in the late 1990s. This success augured the Liberals' return to near-hegemonic power, but the corruption scandal and the ex-president's imprisonment split the party and clouded its future.

The Neo-Liberal Party (Partido Neo-Liberal; PALI) formed in 1989, as did the Liberal Party of National Unity (Partido Liberal de Unidad Nacional; PLIUN). A handful of Liberals took up the Liberal Nationalist (PLN) label again in 1994. All three joined the Liberal Alliance in 1996; their prospects as independent parties appear dim. The Liberal Salvation Movement (Movimiento de Salvación Liberal; MSL) and the Liberal Nationalists won certification to take part in the 2004 municipal elections.

CONSERVATIVE PARTIES

Another cluster of parties arose from the Conservative clans. The Conservative Party of Nicaragua (Partido Conservador de Nicaragua) dominated Nicaraguan politics for most of the nineteenth century but was displaced by the Liberals in 1890. U.S. military intervention (1909–28) put in power Conservatives willing to guarantee the U.S. canal monopoly in Panama, but Conservatives lost ascendancy in the 1930s in a U.S.-brokered pact. Afterward Conservatives took two approaches to the Somoza Liberals: earnest opposition and co-opted collaboration. While the latter discredited the movement, the principled opposition of Conservatives like Fernando Agüero Rocha and martyred *La Prensa* publisher Pedro Joaquín Chamorro earned them repression and exile. Their example inspired many to oppose the dictatorship, and numerous Sandinista leaders came from Conservative backgrounds. Many Conservatives have tended toward class reconciliation and support government social welfare responsibilities. The Conservatives fragmented in the late 1970s and 1980s over questions of social welfare, the revolution, whether to seek exile, and personalities. Conservative parties fared disastrously in the national elections of 2001, falling below the 3 percent vote threshold for survival and thus losing certification to compete in elections for four years. By the end of the twentieth century the failing Conservative movement was supplanted in the Nicaraguan tradition of two dominant parties, replaced as the second strongest party by the FSLN. The Conservative movement regrouped under the banner of the Conservative Party in 2000 but faced daunting prospects for survival as a national political force as the twenty-first century began.

Major Political Parties

SANDINISTA NATIONAL LIBERATION FRONT

(Frente Sandinista de Liberación Nacional; FSLN)

Carlos Fonseca Amador founded the FSLN in 1961 to pursue a revolutionary guerrilla struggle against the Somoza regime. A Marxist-Leninist, he had abandoned the Nicaraguan Socialist Party because it rejected armed struggle. Fonseca's cofounders were Tomás Borge Martínez, a former Independent Liberal activist, and Silvio Mayorga—both also Marxists. All three were from Matagalpa (a region once loyal to Sandino), had been student activists at the National University, and had suffered imprisonment for their antiregime efforts.

Until the mid-1970s the Sandinistas operated as a rural guerrilla force and grew very slowly. Limited support from Cuba and urban and university groups developed despite major military reversals in 1963 and 1967. In the mid-1970s growing public opposition to the Somoza regime evoked escalating repression, which drove disaffected elites, repressed civil society, and many ordinary citizens into the arms of the FSLN, the only armed challenger of the regime. The FSLN divided into three "tendencies" over tactics in the mid-1970s, a schism resolved by the spontaneous popular uprisings of 1978. The FSLN grew rapidly in late 1978 and 1979, drawing civil society into an anti-Somoza coalition and recruiting as many as 5,000 troops. After its final offensive defeated the National Guard, the FSLN assumed leadership of the rebel coalition that took power on July 19, 1979. Within months the Sandinistas consolidated control of the revolutionary government.

ORGANIZATION

The FSLN developed a complex nationwide structure supported by ancillary organizations of students, women, peasants, workers, and neighborhood organizations. Until the 1990s a nine-member National Directorate (Dirección Nacional; DN) of top military commanders from the insurrection headed the party. DN members served on the junta through 1984 and held key cabinet and military portfolios until 1990. Throughout the revolutionary era the armed forces and police were fused with the FSLN. FSLN cadres penetrated the government bureaucracy.

By the late 1980s hard times had eroded or alienated the FSLN's ancillary organizations. The electoral

defeat of 1990 dealt the party several further blows. The FSLN lost control of the police. The military (albeit retaining Sandinista officers) was dramatically downsized and its party links severed. The Chamorro administration reversed revolutionary policies. Feeling its way as an opposition party in the National Assembly, the FSLN struggled to salvage its policy legacy. The party debated its political errors and sought a strategy for the long term. Party congresses in 1991 and 1994 sought to regroup and revise its charter. The 1991 congress reorganized the party, but the DN blocked important democratization initiatives. The party congress became the FSLN's highest authority. An elected (by secret ballot among members) party assembly would govern between congresses. A new party secretary-generalship was established, to which the congress elected the old guard's Daniel Ortega.

Major fissures appeared in the FSLN's leadership, in part because harder-line, old-guard leaders resisted certain intellectuals' reform proposals. Social democratic "renovationists" led by the former vice president Sergio Ramírez Mercado pushed for further reforms. The Sandinista bench in the National Assembly split, most of the deputies aligning with the renovationists. Rebuffed and punished by the 1994 congress, key reformers bolted the party and established the splinter Sandinista Renovation Movement. However, the "democratic left" old guard remained united behind Ortega. The 1994 congress enacted deeper reforms: new members on the DN (including the first women), the election of party leaders, primary elections for party nominees for public office, and assigning women 30 percent of legislative slates. Despite such efforts Ortega's leadership of the party became more powerfully entrenched in the late 1990s and remained so in the early 2000s. Party rank and file rallied around him in 1998 when his stepdaughter publicly accused him of sexually molesting her when she was an adolescent.

POLICY

Although Marxist-Leninist, the FSLN experimented widely and pragmatically with its goals and policies. Early objectives included eliminating the Somoza dictatorship, improving popular living standards and participation in decision making, progressive socialization of the economy, and reducing U.S. influence over Nicaragua. Once in power the FSLN openly pursued many of these policies. It greatly expanded government participation in the economy, redistributed agricultural land and firms owned by the Somozas and their allies to cooperatives of peasants and workers, and established a panoply of new health, education, and welfare services. The FSLN's pragmatism stood out in several arenas: In concession to its geopolitical context and the dominant U.S. regional role the revolutionary regime retained a private sector, permitted opposition parties and independent media and civil society, held elections, and remained formally unaligned with the Soviet bloc.

Economic and geopolitical strains forced the FSLN to improvise and change just to salvage the revolution during the mid- and late 1980s. Capital flight, a U.S. economic embargo, revolutionary policy blunders, and the contra war demolished the economy. To finance military mobilization and the war, the government curtailed public services. Political and civil liberties decreased when the contra war intensified, and increased around elections.

The 1990 electoral defeat and the demise of Soviet-bloc economic support forced further FSLN policy changes. The outgoing FSLN-dominated National Assembly in 1990 approved a widespread distribution of government and confiscated private property to party leaders and members. This shameful "piñata," as it came to be called, embarrassed the party and exacerbated the byzantine complexity of property ownership disputes generated by the revolution. After 1990 the FSLN generally embraced the role of loyal opposition but never definitively renounced recourse to violence. In effect the party behaved moderately, oscillating between two tactics: (1) using its remaining mobilizational capacity to challenge rollbacks of revolutionary policies, and (2) using its National Assembly votes to cooperate with the legislative majority in exchange for concessions. In 1999 this deal-making orientation took the form of the pact between President Alemán and Daniel Ortega, which included legal and constitutional reforms that enhanced both *caudillos* within their parties, strengthened both of their parties vis-à-vis smaller ones, reduced the national comptroller's independent oversight over the president, and packed the Supreme Court with new justices. The pact indicated to many observers that the FSLN had abandoned its revolutionary idealism for personalistic ambition and jockeying for narrowly defined electoral advantage.

MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY

The FSLN drew its first members from the insurgent forces of the 1960s and 1970s. During the revolution it brought in tens of thousands of new members by recruiting from support groups and the armed forces. After losing power the FSLN became an even more broadly based membership organization, claiming 350,000 members in 1996 despite the defection of the MRS. Current FSLN support comes disproportion-

ately from León, Estelí, and Managua and from the middle class.

LEADERSHIP

Major Sandinista leaders come primarily from middle-class backgrounds, many recruited out of Liberal and Conservative families into the armed struggle through student opposition to the Somozas or as victims of repression. National Directorate membership remained unchanged until 1991, consisting exclusively of the nine men on the body in 1979. New members have been added and some removed since 1991. Among the key DN members since 1979 have been:

- **Tomás Borge Martínez**, born in 1930 of middle-class parents affiliated with the Independent Liberals. He studied law and owned a bookstore before cofounding the FSLN in 1961. The only surviving FSLN founder, he was imprisoned twice and tortured during the Somoza regime, and the National Guard also killed his wife. From 1979 through 1990 Borge served as minister of interior.
- **Daniel Ortega Saavedra** was born in 1945 in Chontales to a middle-class family and quit the university for the FLSN. He spent several years in guerrilla combat and several more in prison for subversion. He represented the DN on the revolutionary junta from 1979 through 1984 and in 1984 was elected president of Nicaragua. Although defeated in his 1990, 1996, and 2001 reelection bids, he became party secretary-general in 1991. Long regarded as a policy pragmatist, in defense of a harder party line he fended off the reformist challenge of 1994–95. Supported by loyalist hard-liners, Ortega continued in the FSLN's top post following his 2001 electoral defeat.
- **Humberto Ortega Saavedra**, younger brother of Daniel, lost his right hand in combat. A student of politics and guerrilla tactics, he was the insurrection's main strategist. As commander in chief of the Sandinista Popular Army (later the Nicaraguan Army) from 1979 until his retirement from that post in 1995, Humberto Ortega was the architect of Nicaragua's successful military strategy during the contra war. He resigned from the DN in 1990 to retain his military command. In 1996 he resigned his command of the armed forces.
- **Jaime Wheelock Román**, born in 1946 in Managua to an upper-class family, is an intellectual, theorist, and author of two books on Nicaraguan political economy. Although without combat experience, he served as minister of agrarian reform and agriculture (1979–90).

The FSLN's 1990 and subsequent election defeats, internecine organizational and leadership debates, and the increasing dominance of Daniel Ortega and his allies raised problems for the party. Many loyal and experienced middle-level FSLN leaders and intellectuals quit over the party's increasing personalism and lack of ideological change. While the party retained a substantial base of loyal followers and voters, its pool of talented middle-level leaders (many veterans of the insurrection and years in power) had diminished sharply by the late 1990s.

PROSPECTS

Popular early on, the FSLN easily won its first election, but a deteriorated economy, the contra war, repression, and conflict with the United States eventually alienated many supporters. The FSLN remains strong, but its prospects for recapturing power—even with its large base—appear limited for several reasons: Its depleted leadership ranks and its persistent demonization by other actors for its policy failures, Marxism, repression, Daniel Ortega's domination of the party, and the "piñata" undermine the Sandinistas' image. The end of the cold war and loss of socialist-bloc support limit resources, especially given the old guard's refusal to fully renounce violent methods. Perhaps most important, most other parties and many voters tend to form a working anti-Sandinista coalition for elections.

LIBERAL CONSTITUTIONALIST PARTY

(Partido Liberal Constitucionalista; PLC)

The PLC first surfaced within the Somocista PLN in the late 1960s as a mildly reformist faction known as the Liberal Constitutionalist Movement (MLC). The movement distanced itself from Somoza and reconstituted itself as a party. The PLC stayed for the civic struggle within Nicaragua during the revolution and took part in government. Its economic policies follow rightist classical liberalism (favoring a small state, private property, and unfettered markets). With U.S. support and progressively antagonistic toward the FSLN and revolutionary economic policies, the PLC joined the Democratic Coordinator (Coordinadora Democrática; CD) that boycotted the 1984 election.

In 1990 the PLC joined UNO, and attorney Arnoldo Alemán Lacayo won the mayorship of Managua. Alemán adopted a mixture of urban populism and fierce anti-Sandinism. He leveraged the Managua

municipality's patronage power, development projects, his confrontational style, and intense criticism of President Chamorro's cooperation with the FSLN to become a leading presidential contender for 1996. Having partly relegitimized Liberalism, Alemán and the PLC attracted support from the wealthy Liberal exile community in the United States. During the early 1990s the party organized nationwide, eventually claiming 150,000 members. The PLC forged the Liberal Alliance in 1995 with two other small Liberal splinter parties, some former PLN elements, a PLI splinter, some ex-contras, and anti-Sandinista unions. Also pulled into the AL was a powerful private-sector organization known as the Superior Council of Private Enterprise (COSEP), whose former president Enrique Bolaños became the AL's vice presidential candidate. The AL campaigned for neoliberal economic policies similar to Chamorro's, judicial reform, and a reopening of the contentious property conflicts stemming from the revolution.

The AL held together for the 2001 election, with Bolaños winning the presidency. He subsequently had the government bring charges against Alemán for fraud and money laundering, and the latter was convicted and sent to jail. Some PLC deputies supported the efforts of Bolaños to reduce the incarcerated former president Alemán's power within the party, but many others did not. The resulting conflict roiled the party in its preparation for the 2006 national election.

INDEPENDENT LIBERAL PARTY

(Partido Liberal Independiente; PLI)

A liberal splinter established in 1944, the PLI struggled against the Somozas and allied with the FLSN in the insurrection and the revolutionary government until 1984. Led since the late 1970s by Virgilio Godoy Reyes, a former labor minister (1979–84), the PLI entered formal opposition to the Sandinistas when it contested the 1984 election.

The PLI joined UNO in 1990, winning Godoy the vice presidency, but the party quickly broke with UNO and the Chamorro government and thereafter decried the UNO-FSLN cooperation of the mid-1990s. Originally social democratic in ideology, the PLI's image in later revolutionary years revolved around an intense anti-Sandinism. The PLI eschewed the AL in 1996 and finished catastrophically with no seats in the National Assembly. By 2004 the PLI had recovered sufficiently to win certification to contest the 2004 municipal elections.

CONSERVATIVE PARTY OF NICARAGUA

(Partido Conservador de Nicaragua; PCN)

This party formed in 1992 when the Democratic Conservative Party, National Conservative Party, and Social Conservative Party merged. It reclaimed the traditional Conservative Party name. Fernando Agüero Rocha became its leader. Demonstrating some residual Conservative voter loyalty despite years of fragmentation, the PCN won three seats in the National Assembly in 1996. The PCN elected only one Assembly deputy in 2001, failed to meet the 3 percent of the vote required for party survival, and lost its legal standing.

CONSERVATIVE PARTY

(Partido Conservador; PC)

A new Conservative Party, reborn from the remnants of the old Conservative parties, was established and received Supreme Electoral Council certification to compete in the municipal election of 2000. The PC won 13 percent of the 2000 municipal vote and captured five mayoralties in southern and central Nicaragua. The PC won certification to contest the 2004 municipal elections.

Minor Political Parties

CHRISTIAN WAY

(Camino Cristiano; CC)

This new party arose from the Assemblies of God congregations of Nicaragua in the 1996 election. Its presidential candidate, Guillermo Osorno, is an Assembly of God pastor. He won 4 percent of the 1996 presidential vote. Osorno and three other CC deputies served in the 1996–2001 National Assembly. The CC won 4 percent of the 2000 municipal elections. It captured no mayorships but retained its legal standing to compete in the 2004 municipal elections.

NATIONAL PROJECT

(Proyecto Nacional; PN)

Founded around 1995 by Antonio Lacayo, son-in-law and minister of the presidency to President Violeta Chamorro, the centrist PN originally appeared to be a vehicle for Lacayo's presidential candidacy. Other parties reformed the constitution with antinepotism rules

that blocked his bid in 1996. The PN won two seats in the National Assembly. Despite having two Assembly seats, the PN as a national party effectively vanished with the blocked presidential aspirations of Antonio Lacayo and did not survive the party recertification process following the PLC-FSLN pact of 1999.

NICARAGUAN RESISTANCE PARTY (Partido de Resistencia Nicaragüense; PRN)

Consisting of elements from the counterrevolutionary groups who fought the Sandinista revolution, the PRN has retained sufficient support in the Atlantic coast region and central Nicaragua to survive the tough party thresholds imposed after 1999. The PRN contested the Atlantic autonomous region election of 2002 and qualified for the 2004 municipal election.

SOCIAL CHRISTIAN PARTIES

The Social Christian Party (Partido Social Cristiano Nicaragüense; PSCN) was founded in 1957, led the 1960s electoral movement against the Somoza dynasty, and introduced Christian democratic politics to Nicaragua. It established Christian labor unions and participated actively in university student politics in the 1960s. The more left-leaning Popular Social Christian Party (Partido Popular Social Cristiano; PPSC) broke away from the PSCN during the 1970s. During the revolution the PPSC supported the FSLN early on but contested the presidency in 1984 and won six seats in the National Assembly. Meanwhile the more conservative PSCN increasingly identified with the opposition. The PPSC joined UNO in 1990, but the PSCN ran separately and won only one Assembly seat. By 1990 both the PPSC and PSCN had faded badly. Neither the PPSC and PSCN survived the party survival thresholds imposed after 1999.

ETHNIC AND REGIONAL PARTIES

Several small parties obtained certification to contest the elections of the municipalities and regional governments of the Atlantic autonomous regions in 2002 (autonomous regions) and in the 2000 and 2004 municipal elections. These include the Multiethnic Indigenous Party (Partido Indígena Multiétnico; PIM), the United Coastal Movement Party (Partido Movimiento de Unidad Costeño; PAMUC) and the ethnically Miskito YATAMA Party (Partido Yapti Tasba Masraka Nanih Aslatakanka).

MISCELLANEOUS ALLIANCES

The electoral law allows alliances among parties to contest elections jointly if the required threshold of signatures can be reached. Two new electoral alliances secured the required number of signatures to qualify for participation in the 2004 municipal elections: the Alliance for the Republic (Alianza para la República) and the Christian Alternative (Alternativa Cristiana).

Other Political Forces

MILITARY

The National Guard (Guardia Nacional; GN) was the Somozas' main instrument of political control. The FSLN's guerrilla army destroyed the Guard in 1979, though GN remnants formed the early nucleus of the contras. FSLN forces were reorganized into a new Sandinista Popular Army (Ejército Popular Sandinista; EPS), air force, and militia and the Sandinista Police (Policía Sandinista). Top FLSN leaders commanded these forces, and officers were FSLN cadre.

After the cease-fire with the contras in 1989, the 1990 election defeat of the FLSN, and the negotiated end of the contra war, the military underwent drastic changes. President Chamorro retained General Humberto Ortega as defense minister until 1995 to allay Sandinista fears of persecution of the party, although he relinquished his DN post. Troop strength was slashed by 80 percent, the draft abolished, and militias disbanded. Party identification of the police and military with the FSLN was dropped, after which the army was renamed the Army of Nicaragua (Ejército de Nicaragua), and the police became the National Police (Policía Nacional). Critics feared military disloyalty to the regime after 1990, but both army and police have enforced order against labor and popular protesters and against re-armed former contra and Sandinista/EPS combatants alike.

ORGANIZED LABOR

Freed from Somocista repression, the labor movement expanded greatly to encompass 250,000 workers by 1990. Before 1979 myriad unions and labor confederations existed: the General Workers Confederation (Confederación General de Trabajadores; CGT), the Independent General Workers Confederation (Confederación General de Trabajadores-Independiente; CGTI), the Social Christian Nicaraguan Workers

Confederation (Confederación de Trabajadores de Nicaragua; CTN), and the AFL-CIO-linked Council for Union Action and Unity (Consejo de Acción y Unidad Sindical; CAUS). There were various associations of public employees. During the revolution independent labor lost ground to the rapidly growing FSLN-linked Sandinista Workers Confederation (Central Sandinista de Trabajadores; CST).

During the late 1980s the CST restrained workers in support of the FSLN government's harsh austerity programs, but this opened FSLN-CST fissures. After 1990 the FLSN lost much of its influence over the CST, which struck frequently despite party wishes and formed new labor alliances such as the National Workers Front (Frente Nacional de Trabajadores; FNT). These strikes protested Chamorro and Alemán administration reversals of revolutionary policy gains, public-sector layoffs, and public-sector privatization. Labor confrontation won some concessions (shares for workers in privatized firms), but despite labor efforts public payrolls shrank and wages eroded.

The Association of Rural Workers (Asociación de Trabajadores del Campo; ATC), an FSLN-linked peasant union, arose in the 1970s. The union helped shape agrarian policy in the 1980s, winning land for many peasants and giving rise to the small-landowners group UNAG (see below). Government austerity programs eventually undermined ATC loyalty to the FSLN, and the ATC in the 1990s struggled to defend peasants' shares and rights during agrarian reprivatization.

As of the early 2000s the FSLN-linked umbrella organization the National Workers Front (Frente Nacional de Trabajadores; FNT) included the farm workers of the ATC, health workers, professionals, teachers, clerical workers, journalists, the farm owners of UNAG, and the CST. The non-Sandinista labor umbrella organization the Permanent Congress of Workers (Congreso Permanente de Trabajadores; CPT) included the CTN-A (Autonomous CTN), the Confederation of Labor Unification (Confederación de Unificación Sindical; CUS), the CGT-I, and CAUS. The CTN remained independent from both confederations.

BUSINESS GROUPS

Private-sector interests find expression through several national chambers (e.g., commerce, industry) and through the Superior Council of Private Enterprise (Consejo Superior de la Empresa Privada; COSEP). COSEP and other business groups eventually opposed the Somozas in the late 1970s, then held some influence in the early revolutionary government (especially cabinet positions). Most capitalists and such groups as COSEP soon broke with the revolution. Many joined the CD opposition coalition in 1984. By 1990 these business groups were deeply committed to UNO but found themselves frustrated with the Chamorro administration's economic policies, especially the failure to resolve property claims in favor of former owners. Business interests hoped for better from the AL in 1996 because former COSEP leader Enrique Bolaños was Alemán's vice president.

One private-sector group that sprang from the revolution was the National Farmers and Cattleman's Association (Unión Nacional de Agricultores y Ganaderos; UNAG). The Sandinistas' ATC began as a rural labor union but gradually came to include small property holders, especially those created by agrarian reform. The interests of landless peasants and smallholders diverged enough that UNAG separated from ATC. UNAG became an important voice for rural smallholders and increasingly independent of the FSLN. After 1990 UNAG worked to assist and to reconcile former Sandinista and contra combatants who received land in the demobilization.

ATLANTIC COASTAL ZONE AND ETHNIC MINORITIES

Once isolated in the Atlantic coastal zone, a heterogenous population of indigenous peoples (Miskito, Sumu, Rama) and English-speaking blacks (together 10 percent of Nicaragua's population) was thrust into national politics by the revolution. When the Sandinista regime attempted to integrate them into the revolution and to isolate the indigenous from the contras operating from nearby Honduras, many Miskitos joined the counterrevolutionaries.

After several years of war the government in 1987 passed laws and constitutional provisions that conceded limited autonomy to the peoples of the region. This dampened Miskito resistance, and the area's refugees began to return. Autonomy established two 45-member elected regional councils: the Northern Atlantic Autonomous Region (Región Autónoma del Atlántico Norte; RAAN) and the Southern Atlantic Autonomous Region (Región Autónoma del Atlántico Sur; RAAS). YATAMA, a Miskito opposition group originating among contra elements, has contested RAAN and RAAS elections with the FSLN, UNO, and the Liberals. Strong at first, in successive elections YATAMA has lost ground to national parties and coalitions and other multiethnic alliances.

RELIGIOUS GROUPS

The Roman Catholic hierarchy, influenced by social Christian doctrines and activist clergy, opposed the Somoza regime during the 1970s. Many Catholics and some clergy joined or assisted the revolutionary forces and after the insurrection collaborated with the revolution. The hierarchy, however, soon swung right and opposed the FSLN-led regime. Headed by Archbishop (later Cardinal) Miguel Obando y Bravo and increasingly supported by the Vatican, the Nicaraguan church often collaborated with the revolution's domestic and armed foreign opponents. Despite a pretense of political neutrality, the church rather openly sided with UNO in the 1990 election and with the Liberal Alliance in 1996 and 2001. Since 1990 the church has supported conservative shifts in national social, family, and education policy. In 2004 Archbishop Obando seemingly sided with the Alemán wing of the PLC when he advocated releasing ex-president Alemán from prison early for medical reasons.

Much of the small Protestant community, growing quickly since the 1980s, supported the Sandinista insurrection and the revolution. Over time Protestant support for the revolution became divided. The Assembly of God–based Christian Way Party, a newcomer to national politics, won four seats in the National Assembly in 1996 but no seats in 2001.

National Prospects

With its 1996 election Nicaragua took another step beyond its divisive, economically devastating revolution and civil wars. The Liberal government enjoyed prospects for good U.S. relations and a chance to resolve outstanding property claims. These could have stimulated economic recovery by attracting back flight capital and by encouraging foreign investment and assistance. The Alemán administration, marred by serious corruption, the PLC pact with the FSLN to suppress party pluralism, and considerable repression of critical civil society organizations, failed to live up to its potential. Economic recovery lagged. In late 1998 Hurricane Mitch devastated parts of Nicaragua, destroying lives, homes, jobs, roads, and crops. Despite extensive international relief efforts the impact of the hurricane aggravated economic problems.

After the election of Enrique Bolaños in 2001 and the arrest and prosecution of the former president, divisions within the PLC widened between critics and supporters of Alemán. During the Bolaños administration economic development and growth improved modestly, but prospects for the second-poorest economy of the hemisphere remained clouded as unemployment exceeded 20 percent and underemployment was much higher, several banks failed, and continuing fiscal deficits blocked international debt relief efforts.

Despite its reservations about the 1996 election and despite another presidential defeat in 2001, the FSLN remained in its role of loyal opposition. The prospects for gradual consolidation of Nicaraguan democracy appeared to grow with the FSLN's willingness to continue in this mode. The polity remained polarized, with the FSLN holding the loyalty of around 40 percent of the electorate and the PLC somewhat more. The numerous small parties and alliances, their survival more difficult after the PLC-FLSN pact of 1999, scrambled for other votes but remained generally anti-Sandinista in general elections. Prospects for the FSLN to win a national election seem limited while its revolutionary-era old guard, headed by Daniel Ortega, leads the party.

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REPUBLIC OF NIGER

(République du Niger)

By Christopher J. Lee, Ph.D.



Previously a part of French West Africa, Niger achieved independence on August 3, 1960. It is the largest country in West Africa, covering an area of approximately 1,267,000 square kilometers. Proportionately, its population is relatively small at 11.6 million (2005 est.), primarily due to arid conditions. Two-thirds of Niger's territory is Saharan desert. Hausas form the largest demographic group at 56 percent, with the Djerma Songhai at 22 percent, Peuhls at 10 percent, and Tuaregs at 8 percent. Islam is practiced by an estimated 80 percent of the population. Roughly 0.5 percent practice Christianity and the rest traditional beliefs. Niger's capital is Niamey.

Since independence executive power has experienced significant fluctuations. Hamani Diori, leader of the Niger Progressive Party (PPN), was the first to have executive authority and followed a policy of maintaining close links with France. In April 1974 Diori was overthrown by a military coup on the basis of corruption charges. A Supreme Military Council (Conseil Militaire Supreme; CMS) was set up, headed by Lieutenant Colonel Seyni Kountché. Political parties were outlawed.

Nevertheless, political activism existed, and tensions within the CMS existed as well. In 1981 Kountché began to increase civilian representation in the CMS. In January 1984 a commission was established to write a "national charter." A draft was completed in 1986 and approved by a national referendum in June 1987 by 99.6 percent of the voters. This charter provided for nonelected, consultative bodies at local and national levels. Kountché died in November 1987.

The military chief of staff, Colonel Ali Saïbou, succeeded Kountché as head of state. A national referendum in 1989 approved a constitutional motion to support continued military involvement in the government. The new government was to be referred to as the Second Republic. In December 1989 Saïbou was elected to a seven-year term as president. The position of prime minister was abolished. Economic unrest in 1990 prompted an announcement of further political reform along the lines of a more pluralist system.

In July 1991 a national conference was convened to address Niger's political problems. The constitution was suspended and the government dissolved. Saïbou remained in office for an interim period, though his position was largely ceremonial. Amadou Cheiffou was appointed prime minister in October. A 15-member interim legislature was convened as well. In December 1992 a new constitution was approved by a national referendum. A presidential election followed, consisting of two rounds. In March 1993 Mahamane Ousmane, leader of the Democratic and Social Convention-Rahama (CDS-Rahama), won the election with 55.4 percent of the vote (approximately 35 percent of the total electorate voted).

Ousmane's succession brought the Third Republic. Further labor unrest developed during his administration. Moreover, a political challenge came from the National Movement for a Society of Development Nassara (MNSD-Nassara). A lack of confidence also

developed within the National Assembly, and Ousmane eventually dissolved this body in October 1994. This action provoked further criticism and unrest. New elections in January 1995 resulted in a MNSD-Nassara majority. Ousmane initially rejected the MNSD-Nassara's choice for prime minister, Hama Amadou, but later relented. In July 1995 tensions between the president and prime minister reached a new peak with foreign mediation from Mali, Benin, and Togo. This tension was only temporarily resolved. Labor unrest and student protest further exacerbated political conditions.

A military coup ended the Third Republic on January 27, 1996. Led by Colonel Ibrahim Baré Maïnassara, the Council of National Health (CSN), consisting of 12 members, was formed. The constitution was suspended, and the National Assembly was dissolved. Political parties were banned as well. The CSN aimed to reform the government and to improve economic conditions. Boukary Adji was appointed the prime minister of a transitional government. A national forum for government reform was convened in April 1996. A plan was outlined with greater power being conferred on the president. Constitutional reforms were approved by a referendum held on May 12, 1996. A presidential election was held on July 7, 1996. Political rivalries among the five candidates instigated controversy during the election.

Maïnassara won with 52.2 percent of the vote. The Fourth Republic was ushered in on August 7, 1996. Legislative elections were held in November 1996 with opposition parties, despite having wide support, boycotting the elections. Maïnassara supporters gained control of 52 out of 83 seats. In December 1996 the CSN was dissolved and a new government established.

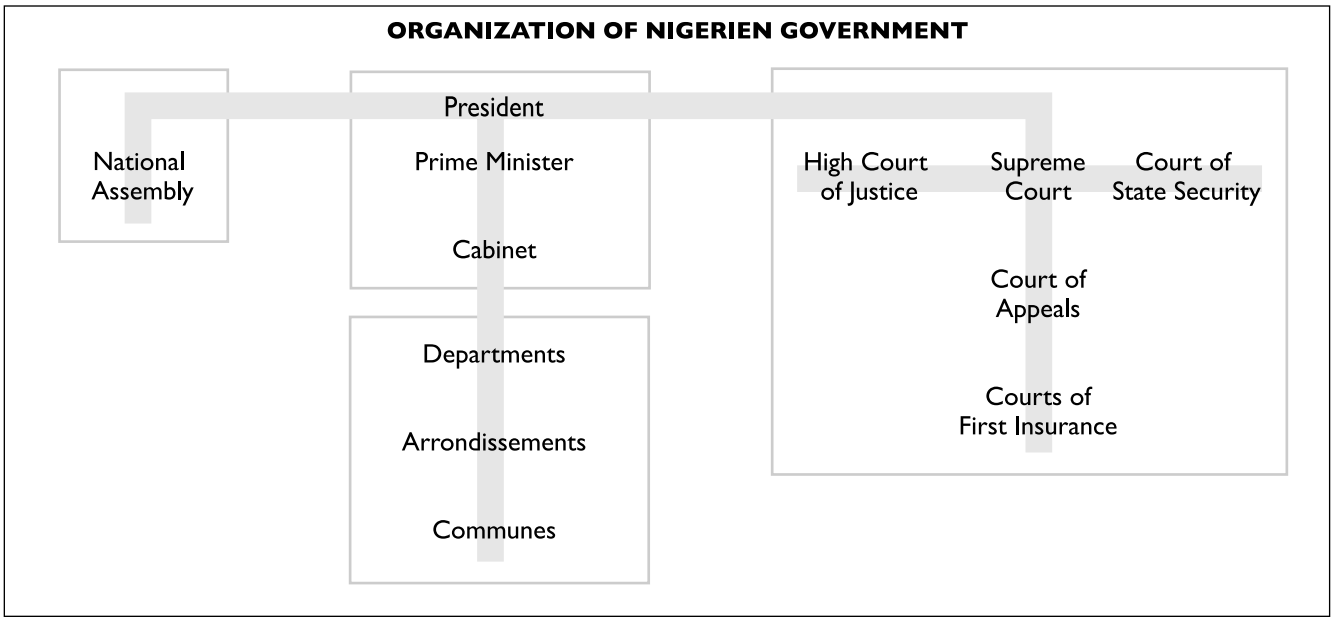
Since 1996 tensions between Maïnassara and opposition forces, collectively existing as the Front for the Restoration and Defense of Democracy (DRDD), have continued. Social protests by various unions have taken place, as well as an attempted coup in January 1998 and a military mutiny in February 1998. Maïnassara was assassinated in April 1999 by members of the presidential guard. Following a period of transition and constitutional change, Tandja of the MNSD-Nassara was elected.

The System of Government

Niger is a unitary republic maintaining a constitutional government within a multiparty political system.

EXECUTIVE

Executive authority is vested exclusively in the president as dictated by the constitution promulgated on 18 July 1999. National policy emanates from this authority. The prime minister is presidentially promoted and has the responsibility of implementing the president's agenda. Since December 1999 the president has been Mamadou Tandja. The prime minister is Hama Amadou.



LEGISLATURE

Legislative authority is vested in a National Assembly consisting of 113 members elected for five-year terms. Elections to this body are conducted on the basis of universal adult suffrage within a multiparty system.

JUDICIARY

The judicial system consists of several levels of courts. The Supreme Court provides a forum for matters of national importance. The High Court of Justice was created with the sole function of indicting political officials, including the president, for matters such as treason. The Court of State Security serves as a court for martial law. Below these courts is a national court of appeal, and below this, criminal courts, courts of first instance, and labor courts handle matters at the local level.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Niger is divided into seven departments, which are further divided into arrondissements and communes.

The Electoral System

Candidates for legislative and presidential elections are chosen by universal adult suffrage; the voting age is 18. In the presidential election held in 2004 Mamadou Tandja won a second and final term, easily defeating Mahamadou Issoufou. Several parties participated in the 2004 legislative elections, with the National Movement for a Developing Society–Victory (MNSD-Nassara) securing the most seats with 47.

The Party System

Niger has a history of instability regarding its party system. This history has been characterized primarily by tensions between military leaders and opposition parties rather than conflicts solely on the basis of expressed ideological differences. The party system remains in jeopardy to this day.

Beginning in 1959 Niger was a one-party state with the Niger Progressive Party (PPN). In 1974 legislation was enacted that further abolished alternate political groups. In August 1988 this ban on other political organizations was slightly lifted with Saïbou forming a new party, the National Movement for a Developing Society (MNSD; later it would become MNSD-Nassara). However, Saïbou was against establishing immediately a multiparty system. In July 1991 a national conference attended by 1,200 delegates was convened to address Niger's political problems. The constitution was suspended.

In December 1992 a new constitution was approved by a national referendum, and in February 1993 elections for a new 83-member national assembly were held. The MNSD-Nassara, the previously ruling party, won the most seats at 29, but a coalition of other parties, the Alliance of Forces of Change (AFC), took a majority with 50 seats. The AFC consisted of six parties, though its main members were the Democratic and Social Convention–Rahama (CDS-Rahama), the Nigerien Party for Democracy and Social Progress–Tarayya (PNDS-Tarayya), and the Nigerien Alliance for Democracy and Social Progress–Zaman Lahiya (ANDPS–Zaman Lahiya).

Following the military coup of January 1996, political parties were suspended. After a new constitution was approved in May 1996, political parties were reinstated. Shortly after Maïnassara's election an opposition coalition formed consisting of eight parties, notably the MNSD-Nassara, CDS-Rahama, and the PNDS-Tarayya. This coalition was named the Front for the Restoration and Defense of Democracy (FRDD). In reaction a coalition in support of Maïnassara was formed, called the Front for Democracy and Progress. Since Maïnassara's assassination multiparty politics has reemerged, with the MNSD-Nassara accruing power once again.

Major Political Parties

NATIONAL MOVEMENT FOR A DEVELOPING SOCIETY–VICTORY

(Mouvement National de la Societé de Développement–Nassara; MNSD-Nassara)

This party has dominated the political scene since the mid-1990s. In the 2004 elections its presidential candidate, Mamadou Tandja, easily won a second term. In the legislative elections of 2004 the party won 47 of 113 seats in the National Assembly.

NIGERIEN PARTY FOR DEMOCRACY AND SOCIALISM

(Parti Nigerien pour la Democratie et le Socialisme; PNDS)

In the 2004 elections this party won 17 legislative seats, second only to the MNSD-Nassara's 47. It led an electoral coalition of several other parties. It's

presidential candidate, Mahamadou Issoufou, finished second in the voting behind Tandja.

DEMOCRATIC AND SOCIAL CONVENTION

(Convention démocratique et sociale-Rahama; CDS)

This party won 22 legislative seats in the 2004 elections. It's presidential candidate, Mahamane Ousmane, came in third in the first round of presidential voting and was thus ineligible to compete in the second round.

Minor Political Parties

Other parties that won seats in the 2004 elections include the Niger Progressive Party–African Democratic Rally (PPN-RDA); the Social Democratic Rally–Gaskiya; the Rally for Democracy and Progress; the Nigerien Alliance for Democracy and Progress; and the Niger Social-Democratic Party.

Other Political Forces

THE TUAREGS

In the late 1980s an influx of Tuareg nomads arrived from Libya and Algeria. They were primarily returnees, having left Niger approximately a decade earlier because of drought conditions. Nevertheless, their large numbers caused tensions to develop in the North.

In May 1990 a Tuareg attack in Tchin Tabaraden, based on political grievances, met a violent military response that attracted international attention. The governments of Niger, Mali, and Algeria met to try to resolve the problem by agreeing to expedite the return of persons to their places of origin. In 1991 further Tuareg attacks occurred. In 1992 the government recognized formally a rebellion in the North consisting of a Tuareg movement, the Liberation Front of Aïr and Azaouad (FLAA). The FLAA was led by Rissa Ag Boula. It sought not independence but a federal system of government in which it would be able to practice a form of self-administration.

A truce was agreed to in 1992 but soon broken, with each side blaming the other. A major government military offensive was launched in August 1992. In November a government commission recommended a plan of decentralizing authority to the local level as a compromise with the FLAA's federalist plan. Still, the Tuaregs launched further attacks in early 1993. In March a temporary truce was reached. A more formal accord, signed in June in Paris, called for demilitarizing the North and further political negotiations. France pledged financial help for Tuareg resettlement.

Tuareg resistance to this agreement developed, however. A new Tuareg group, the Revolutionary Army of Liberation of Northern Niger (ARLN) rejected the accord. The FLAA split into factions, with the Liberation Front of Tamoust (FLT) supporting the truce while Boula and his supporters rejected it. Shortly thereafter the ARLN, FLAA, and FLT formed a negotiating body known as the Coordination of Armed Resistance (CRA) to deal with future negotiations. However, negotiation failed to take place. The French withdrew from their mediating role. Incidents of violence originating from both sides began anew.

In January 1994 a new Tuareg movement was organized, the Patriotic Front of Liberation of the Sahara (FPLS). With the CRA they demanded regional autonomy along with greater participation in the national government and military. The Niger government meanwhile sought a more general program of political decentralization. In June an agreement was reached in Paris for the establishment of a regional system of government for local ethnic groups, though greater Tuareg participation at the national level was not decided upon. Further unrest developed in late summer and early fall.

A new accord was signed on October 9. In early 1995 Boula formed a new group, the Organization of Armed Resistance (ORA), as a protest against the delayed implementation of the October 1994 accord. In April 1995 a more formal agreement was reached with an affirmation of the principles laid out in October. A period of disarmament would take place, with general amnesty being granted to all parties involved in the conflict. Development in the North was to take place along with a process of political decentralization.

However, this agreement met a new set of national problems. Unrest developed between Toubous and Peuhls in the East and South near Lake Chad. Refugees from Chad, primarily Toubou, created insecure border conditions with Chad. Moreover, a movement known as the Democratic Front of Renewal (FDR), formed in October 1994, demanded political autonomy in this region. Implementation of a peace agreement was slow, with incidents of violence continuing to occur. In March 1996 the CRA and FDR both recognized the April 1995 agreement.

Since Maïnassara's election in 1996 efforts at disarmament and repatriation have continued

with some success despite occasional incidents of violence. Financing and implementing the peace process are ongoing issues that have necessitated continued international coordination for approaching resolution.

National Prospects

Mamadou Tandja appears to be secure in power following his second consecutive electoral victory. His government has achieved a level of legitimacy within the international community. The government has loosened control over oppositional political activity, and students and workers remain a significant factor within civil society. Whether economic and political reform will succeed in appeasing these and other domestic forces remains to be seen. In July 2005 the United Nations warned that millions of people were faced with malnutrition as crops were devastated by locusts and a lack of rain.

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FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

By Terry M. Mays, Ph.D.



Nigeria is a country of perhaps 128 million people (2005 est.). The exact population of the largest country in Africa is in question. The country obtained its independence from Great Britain on October 1, 1960.

Nigeria emerged at independence with over 200 ethnic groups living in the country's three regions—a western region dominated by the Yoruba; a northern region dominated by the Hausa/Fulani; and an eastern region dominated by the Ibo. The Hausa/Fulani, the largest ethnic group in the country, represented approximately 30 percent of the total population, while the Yoruba were 20 percent and the Ibo 17 percent. Today the country consists of 36 states in an attempt to dilute the political power of these groups.

HISTORY

With independence Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, a northerner, became prime minister and Nnamdi Azikiwe, an easterner became governor general under a British-style parliamentary system of government. Independence intensified the campaign by many Nigerians, particularly among the country's minority ethnic groups, for greater autonomy. On January 15, 1966, the military, led by General Johnson Ironsi, ended the First Republic by means of a coup. Most Nigerians welcomed the demise of a regime hopelessly compromised by corruption, rampant patronage, sectionalism, factionalism, and election fraud. On May 24 the Federal Military Government (FMG) abolished the regions of the country and introduced a unitary state. Because the leader of the FMG was an Ibo, the move was not seen as a step toward national unity but as a device to break the powerful grip of the northerners on the country. Violent protests in the North resulted in great loss of life and property, primarily among Ibos settled there.

On July 26, 1966, a second military coup replaced Ironsi with General Yakubu Gowon. However, southerners were not satisfied with the change. On May 27, 1967, the FMG divided the country into 12 states in an attempt to settle regional divisions. Three days later the former Eastern Region, renamed Biafra, seceded. A bitter 30-month civil war followed, with some 600,000 military and civilian deaths. The defeat of Biafra and the exile of its leader, Lieutenant Colonel Odumegwu Ojukwu, reaffirmed the continuation of a federal system rather than the confederal one Ojukwu had proposed.

General Gowon presided over the relatively enlightened reintegration of the Ibo people into Nigeria. However, he failed to prepare to return the country to civilian rule. He was overthrown on July 29, 1975, by Brigadier Murtala Muhammed. By October Muhammed had appointed the 50-member Constitution Drafting Committee to prepare a constitution to be submitted to a constituent assembly for debate, amendment, and approval before October 1978. Four months later Muhammed decreed the establishment of seven new states, raising the total to 19. He also introduced a plan to move the capital from Lagos, a Yoruba stronghold, to a federal capital territory in the

ethnically mixed center of the country. Muhammed, a popular leader among average Nigerians, was assassinated in February 1976, but his transition timetable was carried out by his deputy, Olusegun Obasanjo.

THE SECOND REPUBLIC

On October 1, 1979, the Second Republic came into being under democratically elected civilians led by Shehu Shagari. The civilian government survived one complete term in office but fell early in its second term, on December 31, 1983, to another military coup, which brought into power a mixed military-civilian government headed by General Muhammadu Buhari. General Ibrahim Babangida toppled Buhari's regime on August 27, 1985. Babangida planned a gradual transition to a democracy because of domestic and international pressure. However, his government refused to announce the results of a presidential election, apparently won by Moshood Abiola, on June 12, 1993. Babangida established a civilian government under Chief Ernest Shonekan and stepped down from power on August 26, 1993.

Shonekan's government quickly collapsed following a coup led by General Sani Abacha on November 17, 1993. After assuming power, Abacha dismantled the various elements of the democratic process developed under the Babangida regime and arrested Abiola. Domestic and international pressure forced Abacha to pledge a return to civilian government in 1998. The execution of Ken Saro-Wiwa, the leader of the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People, and others on November 10, 1995, led to international condemnation. The British Commonwealth suspended Nigeria's membership, and several Western states recalled their ambassadors for consultation. Various forms of mild international sanctions were also imposed on Nigeria.

General Abacha legalized five new political parties, and each nominated him as its presidential candidate in an obvious sham of a democratization pledge. However, Abacha died suddenly on June 8, 1998, and was replaced by General Abubakar. Many questioned the circumstances behind Abacha's death. Abiola died of a heart attack in prison on July 7, 1998—only one month after Abacha's death. Within months of assuming power General Abubakar, facing considerable internal and external pressure to return the country to civilian rule, announced that he would do so. He legalized political parties and established a transition timetable with local elections set for December 1998, state elections in January 1999, and national elections in February 1999.

Olusegun Obasanjo of the People's Democratic Party (PDP) emerged from the February 1999 elections as Nigeria's first democratically selected president in 16 years. Nigeria successfully held its next presidential election on April 19, 2003. Obasanjo won reelection after receiving 61.9 percent of the vote. Muhammadu Buhari, the general who led the 1983 coup against the democratic government of President Shagari, amassed 31.2 percent of the vote, followed by Chukwuemeka Ojukwu with 3.3 percent and other candidates splitting the remaining 3.6 percent.

The System of Government

Nigeria is a federal republic with a strong president and a bicameral legislature.

EXECUTIVE

The president serves as head of state and government as well as commander in chief of the armed forces. Presidential elections are held every four years and involve direct selection of the chief executive by the people. Presidents are limited to serving two terms, and candidates for the office are selected by registered political parties. The president is assisted by a vice president and a cabinet known as the Federal Executive Council.

LEGISLATURE

Nigeria's national legislature, under the current constitution, is bicameral with a 109-member Senate and a 360-member House of Representatives. Each of Nigeria's 36 states is allocated three seats in the Senate, while the Federal Capital Territory holds one seat. Each member of the House represents a single constituency in the country. Elections for each house are held every four years. Members of the House of Representatives and Senate are not selected on the same day. The combined two houses of the legislature are known as the National Assembly.

The People's Democratic Party dominated both houses following the February 1999 legislative elections. The next legislative elections occurred in April 2003. The PDP again dominated the process and secured majorities in both houses. Seats in the Senate were divided among the PDP with 73, the All Nigeria People's Party (ANPP) with 28, the Alliance for Democracy (AD) with six, and other parties with two.

Seats in the House were held by the PDP (213), ANPP (95), AD (31), and other parties (21).

JUDICIARY

The Supreme Court is the highest court in Nigeria. The president appoints the chief justice at his discretion, while the other judges on the Court, no more than 15, are appointed by the president on the advice of the Judicial Service Commission. The Supreme Court is the final court of appeal and has original jurisdiction in disputes between the federal government and a state or between states. The Supreme Court is duly constituted by five judges in most cases but requires seven judges in cases involving constitutional interpretation or questions of civil or human rights. The Federal Court of Appeals sits below the Supreme Court and hears appeals from the Federal High Court, the High Court of the Federal Capital Territory, state high courts, the Sharia Court of Appeal, the Customary Court of Appeal, and the National Industrial Court. The Federal High Court holds jurisdiction over all civil cases involving customs and excise duties, taxation, banking, and citizenship.

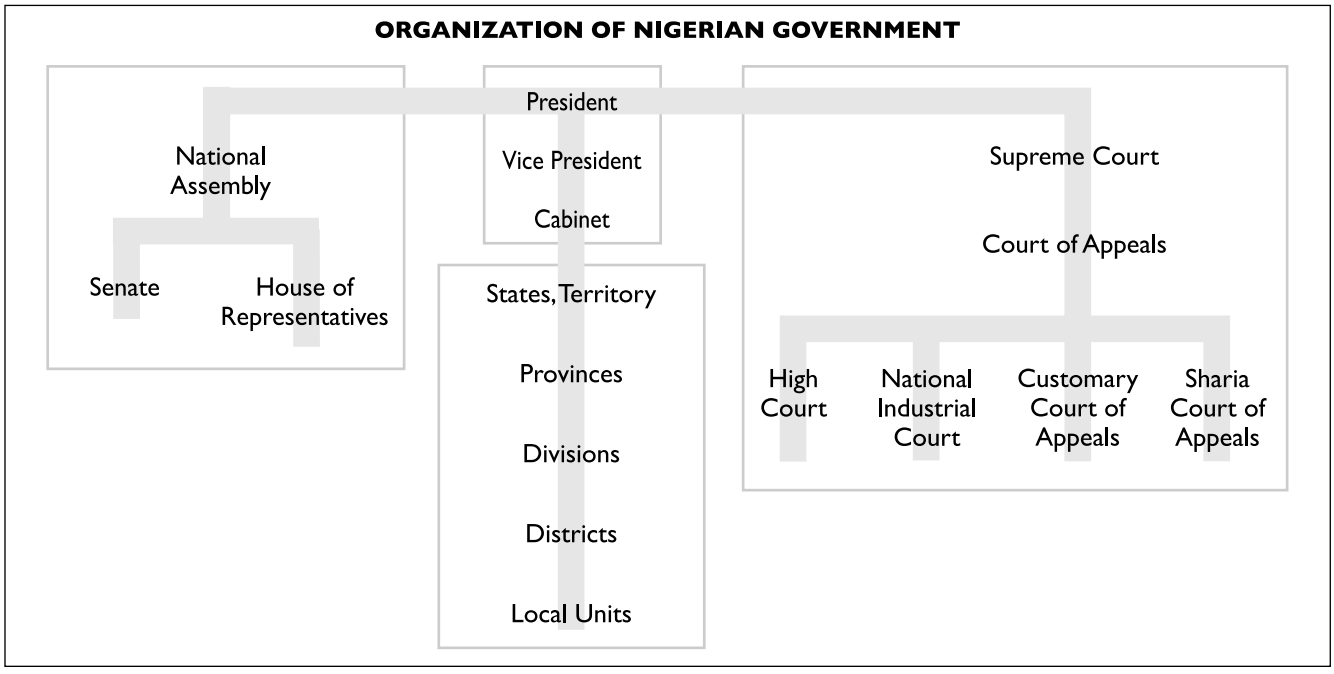
State courts consist of a high court with appellate and supervisory functions as well as original jurisdiction. States with a large Islamic population also have sharia (religious) courts of appeal and/or customary courts of appeal. These courts deal with appeals from lower sharia and customary courts, which handle personal and family matters on the basis of Islamic or traditional law. Judges may be removed only for disability or misconduct. Sentences handed down by these Islamic courts, including death by stoning for adultery, have led to considerable criticism in the West.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Nigeria emerged at independence with three regions but currently consists of 36 states in a federal system. The original three regions were split into 12 states in 1967, 21 states in 1987, 30 states in 1991, and then 36 states under General Abacha. Nigeria also has a Federal Capital Territory similar to the District of Columbia in the United States or the Federal District in Brazil.

The large number of states reflects an attempt to dilute the power wielded by ethnic groups and local leaders. Most groups support the establishment of additional states. Minority ethnic groups view new and smaller states as offering greater autonomy, while the Nigerian workforce recognizes new states, during periods of civilian rule, as presenting opportunities for additional political offices and government jobs.

A hotly debated issue in Nigerian politics is that of revenue allocation from the federal to the state and local governments. During the Second Republic, after months of debate over the amount to go to the state governments and whether the allocation to local governments should go directly to them or through state



offices, the National Assembly finally agreed in 1982 that the federal government would keep 55 percent of the revenues, distribute 35 percent to the states, and pass 10 percent directly to the local governments. The amount of the shares of each state and local government also causes great controversy. A few states, particularly the oil-rich ones, produce large numbers of petroleum-based jobs. However, many individuals within the states argue that they do not receive their fair share of petroleum income from the federal government. Other states are not as wealthy and/or have larger populations. Individuals in these states believe that they should receive increased funds from the federal government as compensation for the lack of lucrative mineral resources.

In the past the Nigerian government has attempted to allocate federal funding of the states based upon population. As a result states have tended to inflate their population reports as a means of increasing their percentage of funds. Due to this factor and the sensitivity of religious differences, census taking has been a heavily criticized activity within the state. For two decades Nigeria operated with a continuing series of estimates added to its 1963 census. The 1973 census count was not trusted by states and ethnic groups. The 1991 census counted over 88 million people, far below the estimated population of over 105 million Some observers attributed the discrepancy to overreporting by states in search of funds, while others viewed the count as inaccurate and an underreporting of the true population.

Southerners fear that the population growth of the Islamic North could increase the latter's influence in a democratic government and share of federal funds. On the other hand, the North would like to keep southerners divided in order to prevent any possible attempt to dominate a democratic government. The Abacha regime temporarily settled the question by annulling the 1991 census count in 1994.

The structure of state government has usually paralleled that of the federal government. Each state has a governor and vice governor of the same party, both elected statewide to four-year terms, as well as a state legislature. Under military rule the states were administered by military governors who held powers at a state level similar to those of the president at the federal level.

Local government represents the only political unit below that of the state. Elections for local government positions were last held on March 27, 2004. Traditional chiefs and religious leaders still carry considerable influence in many local areas.

The Electoral System

The electoral register consists of all Nigerians 18 years of age or over. Some violence occurred prior to the 2003 federal elections. Many international observers pointed to serious incidents of ballot tampering, vote rigging, and the questionable operation of polling stations. Others indicated that the transgressions could have been much worse due to the divisions within the country and were at least satisfied that the polling did not result in massive civil strife. Opposition parties called upon President Obasanjo to negate the results and conduct new elections. The matter was then referred to the Nigerian Court of Appeals. In the end, the results stood.

The Party System

ORIGINS OF THE PARTIES

Political activity by Africans appeared in the South, especially in Lagos, as early as the 1880s. It was largely a consequence of the spread of European-style education brought by Christian missionaries, as well as a natural continuation of southern Nigerian patterns of participation in government. In the North, where the British indirectly ruled a feudal society from which missionaries were banned, popular political activity was rare until the 1950s.

The first political parties were formed to contest limited indirect elections to a southern advisory legislative council in 1922. Herbert Macauly, of Yoruba–Sierra Leonean descent, founded the Nigerian National Democratic Party (NNDP) in Lagos prior to those elections. The NNDP dominated southern politics until 1934 when students founded the Nigerian Youth Movement (NYM). Although based in Lagos and largely Yoruba in membership, the NYM made efforts to be a national party and replaced the NNDP as the dominant political party in 1938.

As World War II drew to a close, political activity became more intense in Nigeria. In 1944 Nnamdi Azikiwe founded the National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons (NCNC). Azikiwe, an American-educated Ibo, worked for national unity in spite of the fact that the NCNC was largely Ibo in membership. In 1951 Chief Obafemi Awolowo founded the Action Group as an outgrowth of a Yoruba cultural preservation society. Awolowo, in contrast to Azikiwe, argued that the sharp ethnic divisions in Nigeria made it unrealistic to expect the populace to suddenly

abandon their ethnic identifications and adopt a vague national one. Instead he advocated that ethnic identities be protected and enhanced as the first step in a process of developing a pluralistic national polity. Also in 1951 the Northern People's Congress (NPC) was founded by Ahmadu Bello, the sardauna of Sokoto, heir apparent to the Fulani sultan of Sokoto, the most important political and religious position in the North.

The first government of independent Nigeria in 1960 emerged as a coalition between the NPC and the NCNC (which in 1961 changed its name to the National Convention of Nigerian Citizens). The Action Group became the formal opposition party. Awolowo and Azikiwe shifted their focus to the national level, with Azikiwe becoming governor-general and later president. The sardauna concentrated his efforts on the Northern Region and became premier of this area. Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, the sardauna's representative in Lagos, became Nigeria's first prime minister.

In 1962 a splinter of the Action Group re-formed the Nigerian National Democratic Party under the leadership of S. L. Akintola. Shortly thereafter Awolowo and many other Action Group leaders were arrested and tried on controversial charges of conspiracy to overthrow the government. Most, including Awolowo, were released in 1966 in the aftermath of the military takeover. The NCNC and the Action Group boycotted the elections of 1964, which were won overwhelmingly by an NPC-NNDP alliance. Azikiwe, as president, tried to force new national elections but failed. New elections were held in the Western Region in October 1965, and after a particularly violent campaign the NNDP won openly rigged elections and Akintola became premier of the region.

When the army took over in January 1966, the constitution was suspended, regional governments were dissolved, and political-party activity was banned. The coup was particularly bloody as evidenced by the murders of Balewa, Akintola, Ahmadu Bello, and other politicians. Ten senior army officers, most of them northerners, were also killed.

When political parties were allowed to re-form on September 21, 1978, most of the new organizations could trace their roots directly to the precoup parties. Azikiwe and Awolowo reappeared as major political party leaders. In an attempt to reduce regional and ethnic loyalties, political parties had to prove they operated offices in at least 13 of Nigeria's 19 states. Candidates for the presidency had to receive at least 25 percent of the vote in at least 13 states to claim victory. Five political parties participated in the 1979 elections for the new office of president and a national legislature. The parties included the Nigerian People's Congress, Great Nigeria People's Party, United Party of Nigeria (led by Awolowo), People's Redemption Party, and the Nigeria's People's Party (led by Azikiwe).

The Nigerian People's Congress, led by Shehu Shagari, received a majority in the national elections. Shagari became Nigeria's first elected national leader since Balewa in October 1979. The collapse of the national economy and charges of corruption were followed by a military coup on December 31, 1983. When General Buhari assumed power in Nigeria on January 3, 1984, he banned all political parties in the country.

After another military coup General Babangida announced in September 1987 that he planned to guide Nigeria toward democratic elections. University representatives recommended the establishment of only two political parties in an attempt to eliminate regional and ethnic tensions during an election process. The Armed Forces Ruling Council of the Babangida regime accepted the plan and called for the establishment of two national political parties. After May 1989, 50 organizations sought recognition as legal political parties and 13 were able to meet the strict requirements imposed by the government. Of these, six were nominated to the Armed Forces Ruling Council. However, the Babangida government disqualified all 13 parties. In their places Babangida established two new parties, the Social Democratic Party (SDP) and the National Republican Convention (NRC), on October 7, 1989. Both received government funding.

The SDP tended to dominate the election process during local and national balloting. Abiola, the SDP's candidate, won the election for the presidency according to most observers. However, Babangida disqualified both Abiola and his opponent and called for new elections. Following Babangida's departure and Abacha's overthrow of the Shonekan government, political parties were again banned and the government arrested Abiola.

In 1995 General Abacha allowed political parties to form under complicated guidelines that led to only promilitary parties being recognized by the government and able to participate in future elections. After the deaths of Abacha and Abiola, General Abukabar legalized mass political parties, resulting in the establishment of nine organizations in October 1998. Following local elections in December 1998 only three of these parties could garner enough popular support to qualify for state and national elections in 1999. These

organizations were the People's Democratic Party, the All People's Party (APP), and the Alliance for Democracy. Since the 1999 election there has been a proliferation of small political parties in Nigeria.

Major Political Parties

PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC PARTY (PDP)

The PDP, a coalition of smaller parties chaired by Audu Ogbeh, is the strongest political organization in Nigeria. Consisting of many former opponents of General Abacha, it cuts across ethnic and geographical boundaries and is the closest thing to a national party in Nigeria. Leadership within the PDP includes President Olusegun Obasanjo, a popular figure among many Nigerians for returning the country to democratic rule in 1979, and the former vice president Alex Ekwueme. The party nominated Obasanjo to run for the national presidency in 1999, and he won with 63 percent of the popular vote. In 2003 Obasanjo was reelected with 61.9 percent of the popular vote. The PDP also won 73 seats in the Senate and 213 seats in the House of Representatives in 2003.

ALL NIGERIA PEOPLE'S PARTY (ANPP)

The ANPP, the second-strongest political party in the country, formed in 2002 from an alliance of the United Nigeria People's Party (UNPP) and the All People's Party (APP). A splinter of the southeastern-based UNPP refused to join the coalition with the northern-based APP and ran its own slate of candidates for national office in 2003. The ANPP's presidential candidate, Muhammadu Buhari, a former military chief executive of Nigeria, won 31.2 percent of the popular vote in 2003. The ANPP did not do as well as the PDP in the 2003 elections for the national legislature, securing 28 seats in the Senate and 95 seats in the House of Representatives.

Minor Political Parties

ALLIANCE FOR DEMOCRACY (AD)

The Alliance for Democracy is a Yoruba-based party with its strength in the southwestern part of the country. Led by Adamu Abdulkadir, the AD includes many former supporters of Abiola. The party won less than 15 percent of the local seats in December 1998 and six gubernatorial seats in January 1999, but it received approximately 25 percent of the seats in both national legislative houses. The AD united with the All People's Party under a single presidential candidate, Olu Falae, to counter the PDP's candidate, Olusegun Obasanjo. Falae received 37 percent of the popular vote in the February 1999 election. In 2003 the AD supported President Obasanjo's bid for reelection and did not field its own candidate. The party did secure a third-place showing in elections for the national legislature, taking six seats in the Senate and 31 seats in the House of Representatives.

ALL PROGRESSIVE GRAND ALLIANCE (APGA)

The APGA emerged following the formation of the All Nigeria People's Party. The APGA's support lies among the Ibo of southeastern Nigeria. Chief Emeka Odumegwu-Ojukwu ran for the national presidency on the APGA ticket in 2003 and won 3.3 percent of the popular vote. The party secured two seats in the national House of Representatives but did not win a seat in the Senate.

Other Political Forces

MILITARY

The Nigerian military, numbering over 78,000 in 2003, can also be seen as a political party/movement due to its history of manipulation and coups since independence. Although all ethnic groups are represented in the military, the Hausa tend to dominate the senior officer ranks.

ORGANIZED LABOR

Labor unions have also participated in the Nigerian political scene. Labor organizations tend to cut across ethnic and regional lines in order to concentrate on basic issues of workers' welfare such as minimum wages, fringe benefits, and a variety of special subsidies. These groups are major champions of the demands of government employees. Oil unions were among the most instrumental in organizing the strikes in support of Abiola following his arrest by the government. The Provisional Ruling Council replaced the union leaders with individuals more sympathetic to the government, thus ending much of the union-based political

resistance at the end of the second military period. The National Labour Congress (NLC) is an organization that unites many labor unions. The NLC organized a general strike in July 2003 to protest an increase in fuel prices. The eight-day strike involved gasoline stations, banks, ports, and shops. Police attempting to disrupt the strike killed at least 10 individuals. The NLC ended the strike following a government agreement to slash fuel prices.

STUDENTS

The expansion of Nigeria's system of higher education during the 1970s, which brought a university to every state in the federation, increased the political importance of the students, who have consistently been an invaluable indicator of public opinion in the country. During the Shagari and Buhari administrations students were vociferous in opposition to the government. As educational institutions expanded, these student forces have become important factors on the Nigerian political, economic, and social scene. The government tended to base special riot-control police units near Nigerian universities to provide a quick response to protesting students. Frequently in recent years the government shut down the country's universities for entire semesters to relieve the boiling political tensions on campus. Professionals, journalists, and intellectuals have also emerged to speak for a broad array of public interests. On a national level students are organized under the National Association of Nigerian Students. Student protest remains a potential challenge to any Nigerian local or national government.

ETHNIC GROUPS

The various major ethnic groups that make up modern Nigeria are important forces in the national political arena. Depending on the definitions used, there are between 250 and 350 distinct ethnic groups in Nigeria with different customs, social structures, and languages or dialects. Aside from the three major groups, most of these groups are very small, and most are in the "middle belt," an uneven swath that stretches across the country from Kwara state in the West to Gongola state in the East.

North of the "middle belt" the Hausa-Fulani dominate, although Fulani concentrations can be found in the eastern section of the "belt." Conservative and strictly Islamic, the Fulani are descended from nomadic peoples, partly of Berber origin. Some Fulani still lead a seminomadic life in the Far North. Settled Fulani are the aristocrats of the North, leaders of a stratified feudal society whose emirs wield great political and social authority. That society includes the Hausa, who had established several city-states and the feudal system in the North before the founding of the Sokoto state in the early nineteenth century. Hausa is the lingua franca of the North. The Kanuri are another major people of the North. Nearly all the peoples of the North are Muslim and together make up at least half of Nigeria's population.

The Yoruba of the Southwest are probably the largest single ethnic group. Yoruba society is structured in communal groups based on large extended families. Yorubas profess Islam and Protestant Christianity in nearly equal numbers. The obas, or chiefs, continue to exercise effective social, and often political, control, and the alafin of Oyo is still the preeminent traditional political ruler.

The Ibos of the Southeast are known over much of Africa for their individualism, energy, and personal enterprise. They are largely Roman Catholic, with few vestiges of traditional religion. Among the minority ethnic groups, the Tiv are perhaps the most numerous and live in the North. The Nupe, most of whom are Muslim, are concentrated in the North and exhibit a hierarchic society. The Edo, who predominate in the Midwest, have much in common with the Yoruba, while the Ibibio in the East have been influenced by Ibo culture. The Ijaw of the East are probably of mixed origin, a product of the social disruptions caused by the former slave trade.

National Prospects

Nigeria remains at a political and economic crossroads. President Obasanjo is widely respected for his return of the government to civilian rule in 1999. He is a Yoruba from southwest Nigeria but is trusted by many Hausa-Fulani in the North. As a former general he retains many supporters in the military. Although Obasanjo received an impressive 63 percent of the popular vote in 1999 and nearly 62 percent in 2003, he faces many critics in culturally divided Nigeria. Obasanjo has found it necessary to walk carefully when confronting controversial issues in the various regions of the country. For example, while noting his opposition to stoning adulterers in northern Nigeria, he stopped short of issuing a legal challenge in the national court system. Nigeria's next test will be the 2007 national elections, assuming its democracy survives the ethnic tensions boiling within the country and avoids another military coup. The major political parties will have to select

presidential candidates who have national appeal and can secure votes across the entire country. At any point the military could reassert itself into Nigerian politics and overthrow the government.

Nigeria is also facing an economic crisis. Years of rampant corruption and mismanagement have taken a terrible toll on the national economy. Half-completed construction projects lie abandoned across the entire country due to the skimming of funds by officials. The money appropriated for such projects disappears, and the buildings are never completed. The economic growth of the 1970s based on high petroleum prices stagnated with the drop in the cost of oil in the 1980s and 1990s. Rising foreign debt and inflation add to the economic problems facing Nigeria.

Since 1984 successive governments have undertaken self-imposed austerity measures, which included retrenchment of employees in the civil service, floating the national currency, and divestment or closure of a large number of state corporations and agricultural marketing boards. Nigeria's military governments have often refused to abide by International Monetary Fund conditions for the opening of credit facilities and attempted instead to design their own programs for economic resuscitation. The challenges of restructuring the public arena, establishing a strong democratic leadership, and developing effective channels of participation are central to the governability of this large and potentially prosperous country. Steps toward economic stabilization are hence tied to continued political reforms within the state.

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KINGDOM OF NORWAY

(Kongeriket Norge)

By John T. S. Madeley, Ph.D.
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The kingdom of Norway, a nation of just over 4.5 million people (2005 est.), adopted its constitution on May 17, 1814, a date on which the Norwegian people declared independence from the Danish Crown, which had ruled them for four centuries. The Norwegian constitution has remained in effect ever since, making it the oldest constitution still in force in Europe. However, Norway remained subject to the Swedish Crown (by cession from Denmark) until 1905.

When Norway finally achieved complete independence, the people decided by referendum to reinstate the ancient Norwegian monarch. Prince Carl Frederick of Denmark was invited to ascend to the Norwegian throne; he assumed the name Haakon VII, and thus began Norway's contemporary monarchy. The official language of Norway is Norwegian with two dialects, Bokmål (Book Standard) and Nynorsk (New Norwegian). The official state religion is Evangelical-Lutheran.

The System of Government

Norway is a parliamentary democracy headed by a constitutional monarchy. The Crown is the chief of state, and the prime minister, with his or her cabinet, is head of government. The constitution also makes provisions for a legislative branch (vested in the Storting, the primary legislative and budgetary authority) and a judiciary power centered in a Supreme Court.

EXECUTIVE

The executive function is vested in the "King in Council," which refers to the king and the government, consisting of the prime minister and the cabinet ministers. The Council of State is formally appointed by the king, who requests the party winning a majority of members in the Storting—or, if there is no majority, a viable coalition—to form a new government and appoint a prime minister. The cabinet ministers are appointed by the king, but only after approval from the majority party (or parties in the case of a coalition government). The king is also the commander in chief of the Norwegian armed forces and the head of the Church of Norway. Prior to 1990 the Crown was hereditary in the male line. The constitution was amended at that time to provide for gender equality in succession rights to the throne. The constitutional amendment affected any heir born after May 1990. The present king is Harald V, who ascended to the throne in 1991.

The main role of the Council of State is to formulate bills and budget proposals for consideration by the Storting. Cabinet ministers implement legislation passed by the Storting.

LEGISLATURE

The Storting is the primary legislative and budgetary authority in Norway. It consists of 169 members elected from the 19 counties in Norway. Elections occur at regular four-year intervals, with no provision in the constitution for dissolving the Storting. A system of

alternates, or deputy representatives, ensures immediate replacement for any unoccupied seat. The Storting begins each year's session on the first weekday of October, but there is no formal end of session: The Storting is required to remain in session as long as is deemed necessary and terminates its proceedings only when it has concluded its business.

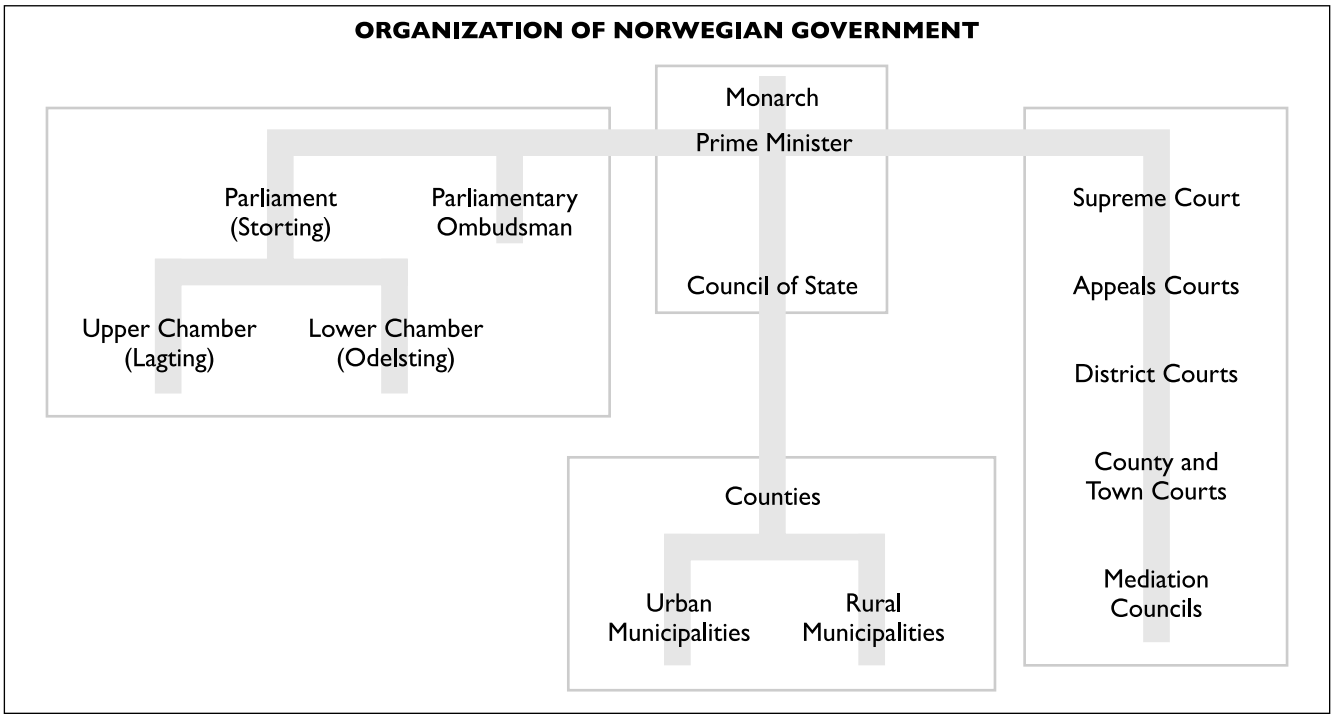
The entire Storting is elected as a single body. Once elections have taken place, members of the Storting nominate one-fourth of their number to constitute the Lagting, or upper division, the remaining three-fourths constituting the Odelsting, or lower division. The Storting attempts to balance power between the two divisions via the specific members nominated to the Lagting. If a disagreement over legislation does arise between the two divisions, the entire Storting acts to resolve the issue, a two-thirds vote being necessary for a measure to pass. Constitutional amendments also require a two-thirds majority, as well as a general election, before any proposed amendment can be enacted.

A presidium, with the president of the Storting as chair, acts as a steering committee responsible for the smooth operation of the legislature, the order of business, and management of the Storting. Standing committees, which correspond to the government ministries, perform many of the budgetary, legislative, and managerial functions of the government. Caucuses of the political parties in the Storting make decisions about the membership of the presidium and the standing committees. For the most part the parties function smoothly with one another on the basis of strict rules of internal party discipline and interparty relations. However, albeit very rarely, a government sometimes receives a motion of no confidence—the last time in 2000 when a minority government headed by Prime Minister Kjell Magne Bondevik lost a dispute over an environmental issue. Bondevik and his coalition government regained power in 2001.

The Storting oversees the government. It possesses the authority to wield a vote of no confidence or to launch an investigation into possible impeachment of the prime minister or individual cabinet ministers. More routinely, members of the Storting may voice concerns during the Question Time, at which the prime minister and/or cabinet ministers are held to account for their actions.

JUDICIARY

The Norwegian constitution establishes a court system divided into four sections, with the Hoyesterett (Supreme Court of Justice) at the top. The members of the Hoyesterett are appointed by the king and can be removed only after due process. The courts practice the process of judicial review in constitutional matters and may declare a law unconstitutional. However, the courts generally defer to the Storting in matters



related to the constitution, so it is rare for them to declare unconstitutionality. The Hoyesterett consists of a president and at least four other members. The High Court of the Realm (the Court of Impeachment) is drawn from the permanent members of the Lagting (two-thirds) and the permanently appointed members of the Supreme Court (one-third). Impeachment trials, however, are rare.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Norway is divided into 19 counties and 434 municipalities. The counties vary in size and range in population from about 73,000 to 517,000. Populations of the municipalities range from a mere 2,100 to around 517,000. Each local body elects its own governing council, the Kommune in the municipalities and the Fylkeskommune in the counties. Elections to these councils are held every four years, although they are staggered so that county elections do not take place at the same time as municipality elections.

There is no hierarchy of control between the two—that is, the municipalities are not subordinate to the counties. Each has its own specific function for its inhabitants. The municipalities are responsible for kindergartens, child care, elementary schools, libraries, various cultural provisions for municipal residents, social welfare, sewer systems and treatment, and primary health services. The counties' primary responsibilities revolve around high schools, hospitals and other special health services, care for substance abusers, county roads and transportation, and large-scale cultural enterprises such as museums.

The Electoral System

The Storting's 169 members are chosen by direct election in multimember constituencies. All citizens who are at least 18 years of age or will reach that age by the end of the election year are eligible to vote. The electoral register is drawn up in the summer months immediately preceding an election; thus voter registration is consistently up-to-date. Each of the 19 counties elects a number of representatives to the Storting in proportion to its population. The largest representation can be found in the counties of Oslo (Oslo) and Hordaland (Bergen), while Finnmark and Aust-Adger Counties have the fewest representatives, all other counties lying somewhere between. Within each constituency each party will offer a list of candidates with at least as many names as there are seats for the county. Thus a voter may vote for none or all from one party. The voter is also allowed to cross out names on one list and write in names from another party list; however, this has had only a minuscule effect on election outcomes in the past. Voter turnout is generally high in Norway, with usually more than 75 percent of the population active in Storting elections and about 60 percent in local elections.

The Party System

Just over a century has elapsed since the introduction of political parties in Norway. Before this time groups existed that had political links to activities in the Norwegian government, but there were no formally organized parties. The year 1884 saw the onset of parliamentarism and, shortly afterward, the creation of the first official political party, the Liberals. Only six months had passed when the opposition to this party formed their own party, the Conservative Party. In 1914 the Labor Party emerged as a major electoral force and was joined shortly after World War I by the Agrarian League. The addition of the Christian People's Party (Kristelig Folkeparti; KrF) in the 1930s completed the basic framework of parties in Norway. Meanwhile smaller parties also emerged, such as the Communist Party in the 1920s and the Socialist People's Party in the 1960s. Members of these groups joined forces in 1973 to form the basis for the Socialist Left Party. On the other side of the political spectrum the right-wing Progress Party also formed in 1973.

The Labor, Conservative, and Agrarian/Center Parties all represent their traditional economic interests: workers, business, and farming, respectively. Formally each party, with the exception of the Labor Party, has adopted a position of neutrality with respect to interest-group organizations. However, voting patterns indicate that there are strong ties between each party and interest groups.

Ideologically the parties fall fairly clearly along the traditional political spectrum: Socialist Left and Labor on the left, Conservative and Progress Party on the right, the Christian People's Liberal and Center Parties in the center, and smaller groups in various positions (e.g., the Communists farther to the left). Pragmatically the split is mostly between the Socialists and non-Socialists and is borne out in the alternation of parliamentary control between these two blocs.

There are other important factors in the party divisions and the vote. In particular, center-periphery, urban-rural, environmental, and religious and cultural divisions exist. Such factors have been particularly important in the development of the Christian People's Party, the Liberal Party, and the Green Party. These parties' identities are not formed necessarily along economic lines but involve other social forces.

Highly articulate system of party discipline and interparty relations ensure that these ideological differences are translated into action by party representatives in the Storting.

PARTY ORGANIZATION

Each of the Norwegian political parties is of the mass-branch type with relatively high levels of dues-paying membership. The Labor Party alone allows for collective membership—e.g., among trade union branches. This exception does not affect the basic fact that all Norwegian parties share the same type of structure; their party constitutions resemble one another to a remarkable degree.

The basic unit in all parties is the local association, which includes all dues-paying members in a particular locality. Associations are joined together at municipal, county, and national levels. An important feature is that the municipal and county party organizations have complete power to nominate candidates for elective office. This means, in particular, that central party organs have no formal power to affect the composition of party lists, even at the level of the Storting. This decentralized structure of power in the matter of nominations is reinforced by the existence of residential qualifications for Storting candidates. The nominating conventions of the constituency organizations usually take pains to include on the party list representatives of a range of groups (whether by locality, sex, or interest group) in order to attract the widest possible support consistent with the (local) party's political line.

The highest governing body in each party is the national conference, usually held every two years. Delegates to the conference are elected by constituency organizations but also include government ministers (where a party has any), members of the Storting, and representatives of the party's women's and youth organizations. The principal business of a conference is usually the discussion and adoption of the party program on the basis of a draft circulated to and debated by local parties in advance. In addition the conference elects party leaders and rules on general matters of organization and discipline. The principal party leader is generally the national chairman, who in most cases is also the leader of the party in the Storting.

The national chairman presides over the national committee, which is elected by the conference and includes members from all constituent organizations. The national chairman also presides over the executive committee, which is in charge of the day-to-day activities of the party. The national committee, which meets much less frequently than the executive committee, possesses the highest authority in the party between conferences. The chairman is assisted by the party general secretary, who heads the party's administrative apparatus.

At the municipal, county, and national levels the party's elected officeholders (Storting deputies and county or municipal council members) frequently meet in caucus with the appropriate level of party leaders. These caucuses ensure a high degree of internal party agreement and discipline. The national or local party membership organizations, through their representatives in conference, are accorded final authority in the party constitutions, but conflicts between them and the caucuses of elected representatives are rare.

CAMPAIGNING

Election campaigns are rarely colorful or exciting affairs because the electoral system generally ensures that the decisive contest lies between disciplined parties rather than between individual candidates. Few newspapers in Norway can be considered nonpartisan, so voters are generally presented with news and views that only confirm their initial predispositions. Since 1960, however, television has tended to supersede the press as the citizens' principal source of information. Although the electronic media generally have exposed the public to a wider spectrum of political debate and have doubtless contributed to the recent increase in electoral volatility, this new element of drama is limited by the absence of political commercials. (There is no commercial advertising on radio or television.) Meanwhile all parties are allotted equal exposure.

INDEPENDENT VOTERS

Party identification in Norway has been an important factor underpinning the remarkable stability of the electorate until recent years. Over the 20 years after 1945 a substantial majority of voters regularly identified with one of the major parties. Until the 1970s the reflection of social and economic cleavages in the party system further reinforced this stability. However, since the issue of Norway's membership in the European Union (EU) became a major concern, the country has

experienced a wave of electoral volatility unprecedented since the 1930s. During the stable years it was unusual for individual parties to vary by as much as 3 percent in electoral support from one election to another. Since the post-EU referendum election of 1973, however, a substantial floating vote has made its impact felt in marked changes of electoral strength. These changes have occurred principally among parties that make up the Socialist and non-Socialist blocs themselves. The 1970s and 1980s saw a distinct electoral shift away from the Socialist parties until the late 1980s, when the Labor Party regained power through about 1997. Although briefly restored to power in 2000–2001, the Socialist parties saw their support wane until 2005, when the Labor Party won the September elections and formed a new coalition government with the Center Party and the Socialist Left Party.

Major Political Parties

CENTER PARTY

(Senterpartiet; SP)

HISTORY

The Center Party was founded in 1920 as the Agrarian League. The following year it changed its name to Farmers' Party; the Center Party name was adopted in 1959. From the start it was an agrarian-interest party closely associated with farmers' organizations. In the postwar period it has joined in government coalitions with non-Socialist parties in 1963, 1965–71, 1972–73, 1983–86, 1989–90, and 1997–2000. Looking out for its members' economic interests, the party continues to campaign against membership in the European Union.

ORGANIZATION

The Center Party maintains auxiliary organizations for women and youth and conducts a variety of educational programs, particularly in rural areas. The party reported a membership of 50,000 in 1990, a decline of about 10,000 members over 10 years, and declined further to 33,000 by 2004. A great majority of the membership belongs to the various agrarian-interest associations.

The Center Party's principal aim has been to promote the interests of those engaged in agriculture by securing favorable credit, marketing, and pricing arrangements and to safeguard rural interests in general. Despite its advocacy of government intervention and support in agriculture, the party is firmly non-Socialist.

The party changed its name in 1959 in an attempt to make up for the decline of the agricultural sector by appealing to all centrist voters, regardless of their occupation or residence. The party has adopted a range of "green" environmental and decentralist policies that have modified its traditional political stance.

In foreign policy the party continues its firm stance against membership in the EU, a policy that was largely responsible for the collapse of the center-right coalition in 1971. In other respects the party's foreign policy is orthodox—pro-West, pro-NATO—and favors a strong defense establishment.

PROSPECTS

The Center Party has seen a gradual decline in votes since the 1990s, and in 2005 it won only 6.5 percent and 11 seats. Some of this reduction in popularity is due to a number of Center Party issues being co-opted by the Conservatives. The Center Party became a part of the coalition government with the Labor Party and the Socialist Left Party following the 2005 elections—the first time the Center Party had joined a coalition government with Socialist parties.

CHRISTIAN PEOPLE'S PARTY

(Kristelig Folkeparti; KrF)

HISTORY

The party was founded in 1933 by a group of religious temperance activists after one of their main leaders was dropped from the Liberal Party list for the Storting election that year. It emerged as a national party in 1945 and since then has advanced to become one of the largest parties in the system. It attracts support principally from religious activists both within and outside the state church, in particular from those who are members of the numerous organizations for home and foreign missions. It joined government coalitions with the other non-Socialist parties in 1963, 1965–71, and 1972–73 (when it also provided the prime minister, Lars Korvald), 1986–89, with the Conservative and Center Parties following the 1989 general election, with the Center and Liberal Parties in 1997, and with the Liberal and Conservative Parties in 2001, when it again provided the prime minister, Kjell Magne Bondevik.

ORGANIZATION AND POLICIES

The Christian People's Party maintains auxiliary organizations for women and youth. The party has for most of the postwar period had a relatively weak member-

ship base. This is compensated for by its ability to borrow strength from the religious and temperance organizations despite the fact that the party has no formal connections with them. Its principal stronghold is still in those areas, particularly in the south and west of the country, where these organizations maintain an important, if declining, strength.

From its inception the party has been committed to the promotion and defense of fundamentalist Christian values, including temperance. The party has distinguished itself from all others through its stands on moral and religious issues. Since the late 1960s the most controversial of these stands has been the party's strong opposition to the liberal abortion law espoused and then introduced by the Labor Party. The party's inability to persuade the Conservative Party to adopt an equally strong position led directly to the failure of attempts to form a majority non-Socialist coalition after the 1981 election. When it finally joined the Conservative and Center Parties in government in 1983, it firmly retained its position on this issue.

In economic policy the party is non-Socialist, although in the area of social welfare it has often been closer to Labor than the other non-Socialist parties. In foreign affairs it is strongly pro-NATO, but the EU question in the early 1970s caused severe internal divisions.

For most of the 1970s the main leader of the Christian Democrats was Lars Korvald, who was opposed to EU entry and strongly against any compromise on the abortion issue. The disagreement over these issues led to strong party infighting. Korvald disputed the EU and abortion issues heavily with Kaare Kristiansen, who took over as party leader during the 1980s. However, the disagreements have subsided for the most part. Valgerd Svarstad Haugland is the current party chair.

PROSPECTS

The Christian People's Party reached a peak of popular support in the 1997 election with 13.7 percent of the vote. It received 12.4 percent of the vote in 2001. In 2005 it lost the elections to a "red-green" coalition of the Labor Party, Center Party, and Socialist Left Party. Since 1963 the party has been a coalition partner in all non-Socialist governments.

CONSERVATIVE PARTY

(Høyre; "The Right")

HISTORY

The Conservative Party was founded in 1884 to oppose Liberals' demands that the royal veto should be defied and the rules of parliamentarism be adopted. For most of this century it has aspired to be the principal national party of all those opposed to Socialism. It constituted a major element in the non-Socialist coalitions of 1963 and 1965 to 1971. Despite being the largest of the non-Socialist parties, in most of the post-1945 period it usually took only about 18 percent of the votes. After 1973, however, it enjoyed a remarkable growth of support, taking as much as 31.7 percent of the vote in 1981. This support has waned in recent elections, although the party joined the Christian People's Party and the Liberal Party to form a government in 2001.

ORGANIZATION

Like the other major parties the Conservative Party has women's and youth wings. In the 1970s the organization was reformed and greatly expanded after a successful membership recruitment drive.

Around the turn of the century the party changed from being the party of the old class of officials, which had administered the state for centuries, to being the party of the rising class of those in business and higher professionals. Because of the survival of the other non-Socialist parties, the party failed to become a national party appealing to all classes and regions, remaining instead a largely urban-based party of high-income earners. The party receives large contributions from private business organizations, although, as in the case of the other parties, exact figures are unknown.

The party's opposition to socialism has been associated with the championship of private enterprise and initiative in the context of a free market. The party supports privatization and lower taxation. Like the other non-Socialist parties, however, it has come to accept the most central aspects of the country's highly developed welfare state. In recent years it has called for the deregulation of the economy, claiming that such a strategy would generate new economic growth and so leave the welfare state intact.

In foreign policy the Conservatives have been strongly pro-NATO and pro-EU. Their support for the EU in the early 1970s, when the country voted by referendum not to join, led to a relative decline in the party's fortune. In the 1980s, a period with less EU concern among Norwegians, the Conservatives attracted growing support for their economic programs. The party continues to support Norwegian membership in the EU.

PROSPECTS

The party's successes in the regional strongholds of the centrist parties and among the young and the

better-paid (and more highly taxed) workers support its claim to have become the worthy counterpart and opponent of the long-dominant Labor Party. Together with the Center Party the Conservatives provided a strong challenge to Labor's long-standing rule in the Storting. However, the party was not a part of the coalition government formed when Labor stepped down after the 1997 election. It joined a coalition government with the Liberals and Christian People's Party in 2001 when it received 21.2 percent of the vote. In 2005 it received 14.1 percent of the vote and 23 seats in the Storting. The Conservative Party will continue to argue for deregulation, lower taxes, and membership in the EU, as market forces, it believes, can solve most of the country's problems.

LABOR PARTY

(Det Norske Arbeiderparti; DNA)

HISTORY

Founded in 1887, the Labor Party was from the first closely associated with trade unions, which experienced considerable membership growth in the industrial take-off period immediately before World War I. In 1918 the party was taken over by a radical new leadership that soon brought it into the Communist International, thereby precipitating a number of splits. When the party was reunited in the late 1920s, it immediately established itself as the largest party in the system, a status it has been able to maintain with ease throughout most general and local elections.

In 1935 Labor began a term of office that was to last for 30 years, interrupted only by the German occupation and the two-month non-Socialist coalition of 1963. From 1945 to 1951 it enjoyed an absolute majority in the Storting. In 1971 the party again formed a minority government committed to negotiating Norwegian entry into the EU. When this policy was rejected in the September 1972 referendum, the government resigned. In the 1973 election the party suffered its heaviest loss of votes since 1930 but was able to form a minority government by relying on the support of the Socialist Electoral League (later the Socialist Left Party—Sosialistisk Venstreparti; SV). For eight years thereafter it clung to office on the strength of a single-seat majority for the parties of the Socialist bloc, finally being defeated in the election of 1981. The Labor Party regained its dominance in the late 1980s and has retained its position as the most popular vote-getter, but it was an opposition party between 1997 and 2005, except for a brief period in 2000–2001. After the 2005 elections it led a historic "red-green" coalition that included the Socialist Left Party and the Center Party. The party's leader, Jens Stoltenberg, regained the prime minister's office in 2005, having previously held it in 2000–2001.

ORGANIZATION AND POLICIES

Like the other major parties, Labor has important women's and youth sections. Its close association with the trade unions is institutionalized in a system of collective membership; i.e., trade union locals are members of the party at the local level. This feature lends the party organization great depth and penetration.

The party has traditionally been supported not only by the industrial working class, which is highly unionized, but also by workers in primary industry and smallholders in agriculture. It is the urban-rural basis of support that accounts for the party's historic strength.

Since the mid-1930s Labor has abandoned its early policies of radical social and economic change, opting instead for gradual reform aimed at maintaining full employment and the development of a welfare state in a mixed economy. In contrast to the non-Socialist parties it is committed to a relatively high degree of government planning and intervention in the economy.

In foreign policy the party adopted a firmly pro-NATO position in the late 1940s. It has generally maintained this stance ever since, but it has opposed the stationing of foreign troops and the installation of nuclear weapons in Norway. During the 1980s the Labor Party committed itself to the introduction of a nuclear-free zone in the Nordic area. From the early 1960s the party was for a decade also strongly pro-EU, but the defeat of the policy in the 1972 referendum led it to abandon this commitment.

Labor's electoral fortunes were undermined in the mid-1970s by tensions between the party's radical and moderate wings. It attempted to accommodate the two sides by dividing the leadership between a moderate prime minister and a more radical chairman. The experiment failed to resolve the tensions, and in early 1981 the two functions were reunited in the person of Grotharlem Brundtland, the country's first female prime minister and one of the most significant Norwegian prime ministers of the latter twentieth century. Despite Conservative rule of the Storting in the 1980s Brundtland returned to the office of prime minister in 1985. She resigned her position in 1989 but returned after one year when the non-Socialist government resigned over internal differences on the European Economic Community. Brundtland has since retired. As of 2005 the party leader was Jens Stoltenberg, who became prime minister following the 2005 elections.

PROSPECTS

The Labor Party remains Norway's strongest electoral party. From about 1935 the party has played a dominant role in government for a preponderance of the time. Through its leadership the nation's strong and comprehensive social welfare programs were instituted. While support for the party has declined, it has made its mark by establishing a direction for the country's policies. The "red-green" coalition government it formed in 2005 was historic for being the first Socialist government to include the Center Party and the firs government of any kind to include the Socialist Left Party.

Minor Political Parties

COMMUNIST PARTY OF NORWAY

(Norges Kommunistiske Parti; NKP)

The Communist Party of Norway was founded by left-wing members of the Labor Party when it disaffiliated from the Third (Communist) International in 1923 after a short period of membership. In the interwar years it declined to the status of an insignificant political sect, but it enjoyed a strong revival (taking almost 12 percent of the vote) in 1945 after a period of active involvement in the resistance to the German occupation. From that high point it again declined, losing its last Storting seat in 1961. In 1973 it joined the Socialist Electoral League (see Socialist Left Party) and shared in the success of that organization as it capitalized on the strong wave of mobilization against the EU. Two years later, however, die-hard elements refused to go along with the decision to merge with other left-Socialist elements in the new Socialist Left Party.

In the years after 1945 the Communist Party purged itself of "bourgeois-nationalist," "Trotskyite," and "Titoist" elements and reverted to being a strict Stalinist, Moscow-aligned party. With the exception of the EU referendum, it has largely remained within this mold and is now again a party of almost no electoral importance.

LIBERAL PARTY

(Venstre; literally, "The Left")

Founded in the early 1880s on the basis of a coalition of peasants and urban intellectuals committed to the introduction of parliamentarism, the Liberal Party's history since then has been very checkered. Until the First World War it remained the predominant party of government despite two serious splits on the right. In the period since then, however, it was first overtaken by Labor as the principal party of social reform and then lost support to the Farmers' and Christian People's Parties in the center of the political spectrum. Its remaining support was based on an uneasy alliance of diverse groups: temperance, religious, and language activists; secularist libertarians; and low-salaried workers.

Unlike other parties the Liberal Party had no single social or economic constituency and was sustained by little more than a common commitment to rather vague liberal ideas and the party's historic traditions. As such it joined the other non-Socialist parties in the 1963 and 1965–71 coalitions. The EU issue found the party badly divided, however, and it split into two soon after, the faction opposed to the EU retaining the old party label. In 1985 the party declared its willingness to lend support to a Socialist government in exchange for the adoption of its environmentalist policies, but in the election it failed to gain any representation for the first time in its long history. The party returned to regain one Storting seat in the 1993 election. In the 1995 local election the Liberal Party made a stronger showing, taking 4.7 percent of the vote. Finally, in 1997 the Liberals formed a coalition government with the Christian People's Party and the Center Party after Labor relinquished its control of the government. The party received 5.9 percent of the vote in 2005 (up from 3.9 in 2001) and 10 seats in the Storting.

LIBERAL PEOPLE'S PARTY

(Det Liberale Folkepartiet; DLF)

When the Liberal Party split in 1972, the pro-EU faction, which included 9 of the 13 members of the old Liberal Storting group, broke away to form the Liberal People's Party. In the 1973 election it fared even wore than the remaining Liberals, taking only a single seat, which it lost in 1977 and has since been unable to regain. With less than 1 percent of the vote the party is clearly moribund with little or no prospect of resuscitation.

PROGRESS PARTY

(Fremskrittspartiet)

The Progress Party was founded in 1973 under the name Anders Lange's Party for Substantial Reduction in Taxes, Duties, and Governmental Interference. The party received 5 percent of the vote and four seats that year. After the death of Lange, who was a political maverick, the party was torn by internal strife, for which

it paid in 1977 with the loss of all Storting representation. Carl I. Hagen, a popular and charismatic leader of the party, has apparently helped to boost its popularity in recent years.

However, the party's anti-immigration and "extreme" right positions have alienated other parties, and it has never joined in a coalition government despite intervals of popular support. Nonetheless, the party was a silent partner with the coalition government of the Conservative, Liberal, and Christian People's Party following the 2001 election. In 2005 it's support jumped to 22.1 percent and 38 seats. In general the party has acted as a watchdog for the right, alert to any slips or sell-outs on the part of, in particular, the Conservative Party.

SOCIALIST LEFT PARTY

(Sosialistisk Venstreparti; SV)

In 1961 a Socialist People's Party was founded by a group of anti-NATO activists who had been expelled from the Labor Party. In the election of the same year the party deprived Labor of its overall Storting majority by taking two seats, which it managed to hold for eight years, to 1969. With the success of the anti-EU referendum campaign in 1972 the party enjoyed a revival that was strengthened by cooperation with other anti-EU and anti-NATO groups in the Socialist Electoral League. In the 1973 election it took 11.2 percent of the vote and 16 seats. Two years later the League was converted into the Socialist Left Party. The process was attended by considerable internal disagreement; the Communist Party die-hards eventually refused to merge into the new party. In the 1980s SV failed to sustain the 1973 level of support for its radical Socialist and neutralist policies. The party's platform has called for improvements in education and social welfare programs, tougher environmental regulation, and opposition to globalization, which the party believes will deepen worldwide inequalities in the distribution of resources. In the 2005 parliamentary elections the party received 8.8 percent of the vote and 15 seats. For the first time in its history, it was invited to join the government, in this case with the "red-green" coalition led by the Labor Party and including the Center Party.

RED ELECTORAL ALLIANCE

(Rød Valgallianse; RV)

In 1973 a Maoist party was formed by the merger of a number of extreme-left splinter groups, the largest of which had split in 1968 from the Socialist People's Party's youth section. The party took the name Workers' Communist Party Marxist-Leninist (Arbeidernes Kommunist parti Marxist-Leninistene; AKPML). Since 1971 the party has fought the Storting elections under the name Red Electoral Alliance, failing to gain representation. Despite internal problems connected with attitudes toward China, the party will doubtless continue to exist, but its prospects for achieving anything but the most marginal electoral support must be meager.

Other Political Forces

ECONOMIC-INTEREST GROUPS

Like neighboring Sweden, Norway has a very highly developed system of interest-group representation that plays an important role within the overall political system. Despite the overwhelming ethnic and confessional homogeneity of the population (the Lapps in the far north account for less than 1 percent, and nearly 90 percent of Norwegians remain members of the Lutheran state church), the earliest voluntary associations to develop were those that articulated emergent cultural differences. In the middle and late nineteenth century movements associated with religious revivalism, temperance or prohibition, and the promotion of an alternative linguistic standard (New Norwegian) based on rural dialects gave rise to organizations that have continued to have a significant political impact. In particular these three "countercultural" movements with their disproportionate strength in the south and west of the country provided the historic basis for the viability of the centrist parties with their opposition to the industrialism and secularism of the Labor and Conservative Parties.

It is the economic-interest organizations—founded around the turn of the century to defend and promote the interests of workers, employers, and farmers—that have had the greatest impact on the style and content of political decision making. Through a system of regular consultation with government in a wide range of ad hoc and regular committees, commissions, and boards, they have provided a second channel of popular representation alongside that of the Storting. The system has been called one of corporate pluralism, and decisions made within it have regularly affected central questions of economic and social policy. The existence of this second tier of decision making or representation helps to explain the high level of policy consensus and general political stability in a system that for 20 years

after World War II was dominated by one party, the Labor Party, to the exclusion of all others. The standing of the main interest groups is enhanced by extremely high levels of membership within their respective economic constituencies and a degree of centralization, not least among the trade unions, that has enabled group leaderships to deliver binding agreements.

The major interest-group organizations are the Norwegian Employers' Association (Norsk Arbeidsgiver-forening; NAF), the Norwegian Trades Union Federation (Landsorganisasjonen i Norge; LO), and the Norwegian Farmers' Union (Norges Bondelag). No other groups are nearly so important, but two small groups do have some role; they are the Norwegian Farmers' and Smallholders' Union (Norsk Bonde og Småbrukarlag) and the Norwegian Fishermen's Union (Norges Fiskarlag).

National Prospects

Norway is a relatively prosperous, small, and homogenous country (although a there has been a modest immigration of refugees from war-torn or autocratic nations, resulting in some challenges concerning integration). The economy is strong, depending upon exports of fish, timber, aluminum, oil, and natural gas. Norway ranks among the top nations in the world in per capita GDP, $43,152 in 2004. This success is explained in part by its abundant natural resources. Norway is the third-largest exporter of oil, following Saudi Arabia and Russia. The country's natural resources have permitted it to enact progressive social welfare policies for its citizens, including pensions, medical care, day care, and paid and job-protected parental leave for childbirth and adoption at 80 percent of replacement wages. Levels of unemployment are low.

An egalitarian society, Norway has achieved high levels of gender equity, electing numerous women as political leaders. Nearly one-half of members of the Storting and a high proportion of cabinet members are women. Most of the political parties set aside positions for women to assure gender equity in the proportion of seats held in parliament.

One of the challenges for the new "red-green" coalition that took control of government in 2005 will be to maintain the country's high living standard and innovative policies while also protecting the source of its wealth, the natural resources, against depletion. Of course, there are other issues that could erupt, including reconsideration of EU membership, environmental matters, and the enduring question of the proper role of government versus the private sector.

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SULTANATE OF OMAN

(Saltanât ‘Umān)

By Jon Mandaville, Ph.D.
Revised by Leon Newton, Ph.D.



The Sultanate of Oman, a country the size of Utah or Idaho, is located on the southeast corner of the Arabian peninsula. Its population of 3 million (2005 est.) is largely Arab, with small Baluchi, East African, and South Asian ethnic groups mixed in. This reflects Oman’s millennia-long tradition of trade on the Indian Ocean and a nineteenth-century Omani maritime empire that stretched from the coast of Pakistan westward to Zanzibar. Oman’s population is growing rapidly (3.3 percent a year); up until the 1970s a large number of Omanis regularly migrated northward to work in the central Gulf oil industry. Since that time, however, with the development of Oman’s own oil and gas fields and general economic improvement, this labor flow has reversed. Today a large population of foreign workers resides in Oman. The rapid population growth has led to an Omani society in which nearly half the citizens are under the age of 15. Education of this young population so as to replace the expatriate workforce is a high priority for the government.

Religious representation in Oman is overwhelmingly Ibadhi/Sunni Muslim; perhaps 5 percent of the population is Shiite Muslim or Hindu. The Basic Law of 1996 guarantees freedom of all religious practice, “provided that it does not disrupt public order or conflict with accepted standards of behavior.”

The System of Government

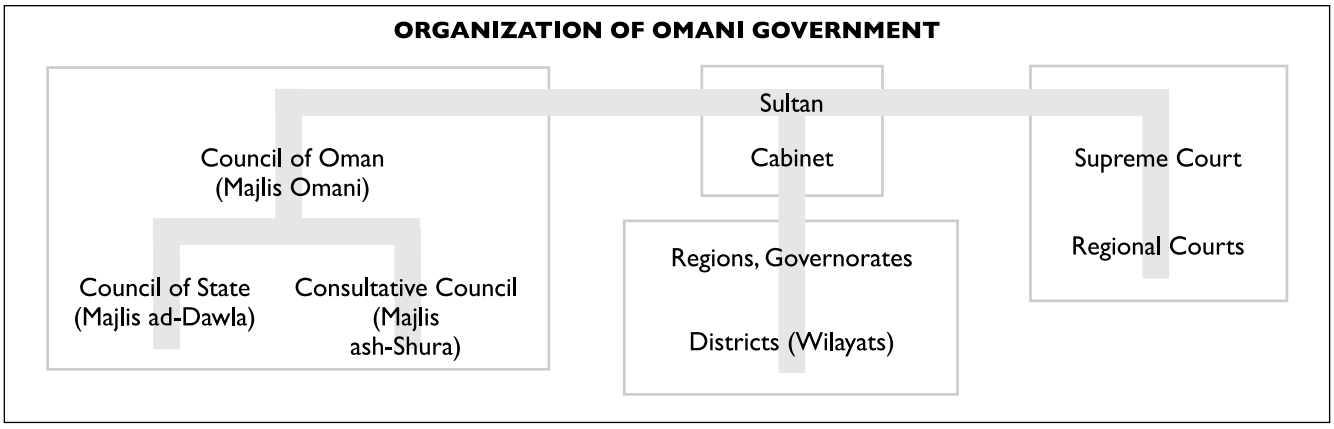
Oman is a monarchy. The bicameral legislature is appointed by the sultan and has very limited powers.

EXECUTIVE

Executive power is fully vested in the sultan. There are no formal checks on this power. Up until the 1960s traditional informal constraints on the sultanate were significant. Oman had no government in the modern sense of the word. Oman society was at that time barely touched by modern urbanization and industrialization; loyalties lay along lines of family, clan, and tribe. The predecessors of the current ruler held their position by regular consultation with local and regional leaders, the heads of tribes, and by playing one against the other. Failure to consult or to maintain this balance led to civil war. After 30 years of modernization of central government and military structures, however, traditional local and regional leaders offer little challenge to the sultanate.

The sultanate is hereditary, succession passing to a male descendant of Sayyid Turki bin Said bin Sultan, ruling sultan from 1871 to 1888 and great-grandfather of the current ruler, Sultan Qaboos bin Said. The ruling dynasty, the Al Bu Saids, first came to power in 1753; one branch or another has controlled Oman since that time. Though succession to the sultanate itself is now limited to the Sayyid Turki branch, high government posts are allotted to members of other Al Bu Said branches (all Al Bu Said clan members are identified by the title Sayyid).

When Sultan Qaboos came to power in 1970, he was committed to the design and implementation of a wide-ranging program of social and economic development



to be financed by government revenues from Oman's two-year-old business of exporting petroleum. This program required the creation of a planning apparatus and a ministerial form of government, the main structures of which were established between 1971 and 1974. Today policymaking on a national level is conducted primarily through four ministerial bodies. These are the Council of Ministers, where the 29 members of Oman's cabinet convene, the Council of Economic Development, the Council of Finance, and the Council of Defense. Each body meets weekly and is chaired by the sultan or his representative.

The sultan serves as prime minister and holds in addition the ministries of defense, finance, and foreign affairs. Members of the Al Bu Said clan also hold the ministries of defense affairs, interior, education, and national heritage and culture. The remaining 22 cabinet positions are held by technocrats and wealthy members of the emerging urban middle class, who function reasonably independently within the constraints of royal policy. Although there are some financial guidelines set by the indirectly elected Consultative Council, ministers often lobby the sultan on an ad hoc basis for additional funds. The Diwan of the Royal Court traditionally served as the venue for day-to-day civil affairs operations of the sultanate. Keeping the same title, its role is now one of administering royal affairs and protocol. A Ministry of Civil Service, established in 1988 and headed by a member of the Al Bu Said clan, now runs the machinery of government.

In 1996 Sultan Qaboos promulgated a new Basic Law, called the "white book," which clarified the royal succession, provided for a prime minister, barred ministers from having interests in companies doing business with the government, established a bicameral advisory legislature, and guaranteed basic civil liberties to Omani citizens.

LEGISLATURE

A legislative branch emerged in the 1990s. In 1991 an indirectly elected Consultative Council (Majlis ash-Shura) was created and given the power to review the budget and draft legislation concerning economic and social matters. It has advisory powers only. The 83 members are elected for four-year terms. However, the sultan makes the final selections and can overturn election results. Elections were last held in October 2003; the next ones are to be held in 2006. The legislature is now bicameral with the addition of an upper house or Majlis al-Dawla. This chamber has 58 members appointed by the sultan and has advisory powers only. Together the two legislative bodies are called the Council of Oman (Majlis Oman).

JUDICIARY

There is no judicial branch in Oman, only traditional Islamic judges and a civil court system that is administered by region. Jurisdiction is exercised by traditional Islamic law (sharia). The Supreme Court is based on English common law and Islamic law. The civil court system, administered by region, has non-Islamic judges and traditional Islamic judges. Ultimate appeal rests with the sultan.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Oman is divided into three governorates and five regions, which are further divided into 59 districts (*wilayats*), which have administrative governors.

The Electoral System

The first step in the direction of modern elective democracy was taken cautiously; the country had no experience with this process prior to its inception in 1991. Town hall meetings, attended by both males and females, were held in each of the 59 election regions of the country. These meetings produced three candidate representatives from each region; their names were forwarded to the Ministry of Legal Affairs, which in consultation with the sultan selected one from the three to represent each region. Those selected were the first members of the new Consultative Council. At first the term was three years.

In the election of 1994 the Council was enlarged to 80 members. Based on the census of 1993, each district (*wilayat*) with more than 30,000 citizens was allowed to nominate four candidates, with two of these to be chosen. In addition, women were given the vote for the first time, with the result that two of the 80 chosen that year were women.

By the election of 1997 voting qualifications were more carefully formalized. Approximately 51,000 voters in meetings throughout the country selected their regional nominees from among 836 candidates, of whom 27 were women. The Ministry of Legal Affairs and the sultan selected only two of these proposed women, both of whom had previously served on the Council.

Late in 1997 the emerging legislature was enlarged and restructured. The new Council of State (Majlis al-Dawlah) was created, with its members all directly appointed by the sultan. Those appointed were former ministers, military officers, and others with experience in the policies and administration of government. (Among them, four were women.) The stated goals of the new Council were to broaden the basis of citizen participation and expert advice.

By 2003 the Consultative Council had been enlarged to 83 members. For the 2003 elections suffrage was universal for citizens over the age of 21 but was denied to members of the military and security forces.

The Party System

There are no political parties in Oman. Members of the legislative bodies speak for the interest of their governates only. Debates tend to focus on such matters as construction of highways, utilities, and schools.

Major Political Parties

There are no political parties in Oman.

Minor Political Parties

There are no political parties in Oman.

Other Political Forces

For many years the Popular Front for the Liberation of Oman (PFLO) maintained an active opposition to the monarchy. It espoused Marxism and Arab nationalism. By 1992 it had changed its name to the People's Democratic Front of Oman and was advocating a peaceful transition to democracy. It is unclear if the organization was still active by 2005.

Like many other Arab states, Oman has also been buffeted by the rise in Islamic fundamentalism. In January 2005 the government announced the arrests of more than 100 suspected Islamic militants and charged them with trying to overthrow the regime. Thirty-one of those charged were convicted, the sultan later pardoned them.

National Prospects

Oman's economy is closely tied to the oil industry, with petroleum accounting for 75 percent of export earnings and government revenues. In the late 1990s Oman sought to eliminate its budget deficit by reducing public expenses, to develop non-oil-related sectors of industry, and to reduce its dependence on foreign workers by training and educating a new Omani workforce. In 2000 the country joined the World Trade Organization, and throughout the early 2000s continued its efforts to liberalize its economic system.

The sultan's efforts at democratizing the political system by forming the Consultative Council and the Council of Oman have been successful in including a more diverse cross-section of Omani society in the operation of government. This new structure hints at a budding bicameral parliament, although at present both houses act in a consultative and advisory role only and the sultan still holds ultimate power.

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ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF PAKISTAN

(Isāmī Jumhūriyyat-e Pākistān)

By Charles Amjad-Ali, Ph.D., and Cris Toffolo, Ph.D.



The Islamic Republic of Pakistan came into being on August 14, 1947, when the subcontinent was partitioned into India and Pakistan following the departure of the British. Until the secession of Bangladesh, Pakistan was the world's largest Muslim nation. Today it is the fifth-largest nation and the second-largest Muslim nation (behind Indonesia). Muslims make up 96.28 percent of the population, of which approximately 80 percent are Sunni, 17 percent are Shia, and 3 percent belong to other Muslim sects. The remaining 3.72 percent belong to minority religious groups: Hindus, 1.60 percent; Christians, 1.59 percent; Scheduled Castes (known as "untouchables"), 0.25 percent; Ahmadis (who consider themselves Muslim but were declared non-Muslim in 1974), 0.22 percent; and others (including Parsees, Sikhs, and Buddhists), 0.07 percent.

Pakistan borders India, China, Afghanistan, Iran, and the Indian Ocean at the opening of the Persian Gulf. It is a cultural crossroads linking South Asia with Central Asia and the Middle East. Because of its location Pakistan was geopolitically prominent during the Cold War, especially during the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Since the terrorist attacks on New York and Washington, D.C., on September 11, 2001, Pakistan is again geopolitically critical, this time because of the war on terrorism.

The last census was conducted in 1998, after a gap of 17 years, although the constitution stipulates a census every 10 years. The population at the time was 132,352,279, with an estimated annual growth rate of 2.69 percent, which makes the population in 2005 around 162 million. Of this, about 79 million (49 percent) are under the legal voting age of 18, and 69 million (43 percent) are under 15. The infant mortality rate is 76 per 1,000 live births, much higher than the overall South Asian average of 68. The ratio of men to women is 109:100. This anomaly is due largely to deaths during pregnancy and high female infant mortality.

The rural-urban division is 67:33; however, the labor force division between agriculture and manufacture/urban is estimated at 60:40. The World Bank estimated the 2003 gross domestic product (GDP) breakdown as services, 53.2 percent; industry, 23.5 percent; and agriculture, 23.3 percent (up from 20.3 percent in 1993). The male-female labor ratio is not easily definable because women's work is not counted even though women are heavily involved in agriculture and construction. The government's literacy figure is 43.92 percent, but the real rate is much lower if judged by international standards, and it is biased toward males by two to one. The scant education available to females is found primarily in urban areas. The average per capita income in 2003 was approximately $475, with 33 percent of the population living below the national poverty line.

Pakistan is a federation consisting of four provinces: Punjab, with 55.63 percent of the total population; Sindh, 23 percent; Northwest Frontier Province (NWFP), 13.41 percent; and Baluchistan, 4.96 percent. It also has a federally administrated tribal area

(FATA), 2.40 percent; and the federal capital (FC), Islamabad, 0.61 percent. Pakistan also has jurisdiction over a portion of the disputed Kashmir region; the rest is part of India. Kashmir has figured prominently in three of the four Pakistan-Indian wars (1947–48, 1965, and 1999). Pakistan's other conflict with India occurred when India came to the defense of East Pakistan during the 1971 civil war that led to the formation of Bangladesh.

Pakistan's ethnic groups, which differ substantially in tradition, socioeconomic system, and language, still reside in their original territories, which roughly overlay provincial lines. With urbanization, however, this is changing, a trend that is most manifest in Karachi, the country's major commercial center. This Sindhi port city has seen an influx of various groups. The first to arrive were the *Muhajirs*, refugees from India at the time of partition who now constitute about 60 percent of Karachi's population. They were followed by Punjabis, Baluchis, and, more recently, Pathans from Afghanistan. In the 1980s more than three million Afghan refugees entered Pakistan; due to recent repatriation this figure is now around one million. They are concentrated in NWFP and, to a lesser extent, in Baluchistan and Karachi.

The linguistic map also largely reflects provincial lines; however, given the above trends and the existence of minor languages, the overlay is not exact. The linguistic breakdown of Pakistan is Punjabi, 44.15 percent; Pashtu (spoken by Pathans), 15.42 percent; Sindhi, 14.1 percent; Saraiki (whose speakers straddle the four provinces), 10.53 percent; Urdu (native tongue of *Muhajirs)*, 7.57 percent; and Baluchi, 3.57 percent. Other linguistic groups, including Hindko and Barohi, constitute 4.66 percent. Urdu is the national and bureaucratic language taught in all primary and secondary schools. English also acts as an official language, the language of post-secondary education, and the lingua franca of the elite.

HISTORY

Pakistan formally remains a parliamentary democracy, and parliamentary rule is still legitimate in the eyes of most Pakistanis. However, such rule has rarely been in effect because Pakistan has been ruled for almost three decades by four military dictators. Given the British colonial regime, which governed this territory prior to 1947, it is not surprising that such usurpation of power has been the norm. Until the promulgation of the first constitution in 1956, the 1935 Government of India Act determined the nature of the regime. Executive power resided almost exclusively in the office of governor-general. There was also a very weak prime minister whose role was to manage the political process. Pakistan's founder, Quaid-e-Azam (Father of the Nation) Mohammed Ali Jinnah, was the governor-general from the formation of Pakistan until his death on September 11, 1948, after which power was transferred to the prime minister, Liaquat Ali Khan, until his assassination in October 1951. Liaquat Ali Khan tried to endow the office of prime minister with importance and minimize the governor-general's role. However, with the passage of the 1956 constitution, the governor-general's power went to the new office of president, and once again the prime minister's power was limited. After the 1958 coup Ayub Khan promulgated the 1962 constitution, which eliminated the office of prime minister and assigned all executive power to his presidency.

The passage of the 1973 constitution endowed the prime minister with the usual powers and made the presidency merely ceremonial. After General Zia ul-Haq's coup in 1977 the constitution was put "in abeyance" for seven years. During this period Zia used Islamization to justify his coup, to usurp all executive and legislative power to himself, and to add sharia (Islamic religious) courts and *Hadood* laws. When the constitution was revived in 1985 it underwent major revision through the Eighth Amendment. Besides immunizing Zia for all his extraconstitutional actions, it also made the prime minister totally subservient to the president. Consequently, the prime minister was dismissed four times in the 1990s. This was part of a running battle between the political parties, who wanted the usual powerful role for the prime minister, and the military and bureaucracy who desired a strong president. This struggle lies behind almost all constitutional amendments proposed since 1985.

There were high hopes this tussle would end in February 1997 after a landslide electoral victory that returned Nawaz Sharif to power for a second time. Using his two-thirds majority in the national assembly, he quickly passed the 13th Amendment, which repealed those parts of the 8th Amendment affecting executive power, thus restoring the original powers of the prime minister and returning the presidency to its ceremonial role. In the end, however, these restored powers did not protect him once Pakistan's economy began to decline sharply.

His downfall was caused in part by the International Monetary Fund halting further loan installments when Sharif was unable to raise tax revenues or increase collection rates for public energy utility usage. It was also caused by tough sanctions major donors placed on

Pakistan as punishment for conducting nuclear tests, on May 28, 1998, in response to tests by India. This economic situation and other issues caused Sharif's political support to corrode. He responded in August 1998 by pushing a 15th constitutional amendment to make the Qur'an and Sunnah the supreme law of the land. This amendment would have allowed him to rule by decree in the name of Islamic law (sharia). It passed the national assembly, but he was removed from power before he could get it passed in the Senate. By 1999 the economic situation was so bad Pakistan was in danger of defaulting on its foreign debts.

On October 12, 1999, while the chief of army staff, General Pervaiz Musharraf, was flying back from Sri Lanka, the prime minister announced his dismissal and instructed that the plane be diverted to Islamabad in order to arrest Musharraf. The military refused this order and took control of Karachi airport. When the general landed there, he instead deposed Sharif. Sharif was later indicted for attempted murder, kidnapping, hijacking, and terrorism and was eventually convicted of the last two charges. He was permanently banned from politics and sentenced to life imprisonment; in 2000, in a deal brokered by the Saudi royal family, he was allowed to go into exile in Saudi Arabia, and his election disqualification was reduced to 21 years.

Musharraf was supported by the population that had grown to dislike Sharif. Musharraf promised to clean up corruption and looked as though he would use his power to push through progressive reforms and overturn Zia's most misused laws. In January 2002 he cracked down on Islamist groups and arrested more than one thousand people, including Qazi Hussain of Jamaat-e-Islami and Fazlur Rahman of Jamiat-e-Ulema-i-Ilam. He also banned and sealed 390 offices of five groups: Lashkar-e-Taiba and Jaisha-e-Mohammad (radical groups accused of fighting Indian forces in Jammu and Kashmir), Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan and Tehreek-i-Jafria Pakistan (Sunni and Shia sectarian groups that target each other's communities), and Tehreek-e-Nifaz-e-Shariat Mohammadi (a movement sympathetic to the Taliban that operated in the tribal area bordering Afghanistan). The crackdown was triggered by an escalation of tension between India and Pakistan after the former accused the first two groups of attacking its parliament building in New Delhi on December 13, 2001.

Although he sacked the prime minister and parliament, Musharraf retained the existing president, Muhammad Rafiq Tarar, while he assumed real power, calling himself the chief executive officer (CEO). Once the legal framework order (LFO) was in place, transferring real executive power to the president, Musharraf assumed the presidency on June 20, 2001. Then on April 30, 2002, Musharraf held a referendum to remain in this office for another five years. He claimed to have won this referendum with 98 percent of the vote and a 70 percent voter turnout, but by most accounts the vote was rigged and the numbers grossly inaccurate.

Ruling through executive orders, Musharraf established the National Security Council, which the military had long desired as a way to formalize its power within a democratic structure. The NSC is charged with advising the chief executive or president on matters relating to Islamic ideology, national security, sovereignty, intraprovincial matters, and the integrity/solidarity of Pakistan.

Musharraf has been intent on institutionalizing his changes to the political structure. These were first codified in the far-reaching LFO that invalidated Sharif's 13th Amendment, thus restoring key parts of Zia's Eighth Amendment. The LFO also served initially to legalize the ex cathedra creation of NSC that was finally ratified by the necessary two-thirds parliamentary vote on April 15, 2004, amid an opposition walkout.

In May 2000 the Supreme Court upheld the 1999 coup and ruled as unconstitutional the changes Musharraf had made to the political structure. Musharraf claimed the LFO had become part of the constitution via this ruling. Following the 2002 elections, however, he began negotiating with various parties to endorse the LFO. The United Council of Action (MMA) was willing to support him in exchange for further Islamization, but eventually they walked out of the deal, as the Alliance for the Restoration of Democracy (ARD) had done earlier. Further protests questioned the legitimacy of his claim on the presidency itself and also targeted his simultaneous occupation of the posts of president and chief of army staff. These issues all appeared to be resolved in December 2003 by the passage of the 17th constitutional amendment. It stated that after December 31, 2004, the offices of president and chief of army staff shall not be held concurrently by the same person. It also incorporated most of the provisions of the LFO and created a mechanism to regularize Musharraf's position as president through a vote of confidence in the electoral college, which he won with 56 percent. However, in November 2004 the Senate chairman, acting as president while Musharraf was out of the country, signed into law a bill allowing Musharraf to continue to hold both posts, thus violating the only compromise he had made to get the 17th Amendment.

The System of Government

Pakistan is a parliamentary republic in which there is a figurehead president and a strong prime minister who holds the primary executive power. Presidents have, however, frequently exercised more extensive power than outlined. Pakistan is governed according to its third constitution of 1973, which was substantially amended in 1985 and 2003.

EXECUTIVE

Pakistan was envisioned as a standard parliamentary democracy, with a prime minister elected by the national assembly from within its ranks and usually the head of its largest party. The prime minister serves for a term of not more than five years and is the head of government, presiding over a cabinet of ministers, the size of which depends upon the coalition needs of the government. The 17th constitutional amendment of 2003 limits holders of this office to two terms.

The president is primarily a ceremonial head of state, indirectly elected by an electoral college consisting of the national assembly, the Senate, and the provincial assemblies. S/he serves a five-year renewable term. Together, the prime minister and president form the executive.

Constitutionally, the prime minister is to be checked only by the president's power to call for a vote of confidence and by the Supreme Court's power of judicial review. Historically, however, the prime minister has been unofficially checked by the military, exercising power behind the scenes. In 1999 the military normalized this unofficial role with its establishment of a National Security Council (NSC).

LEGISLATURE

Pakistan has a bicameral parliament that consists of the National Assembly and the Senate. Charged primarily with drafting a constitution, the first and second constituent assemblies (1947–54 and 1954–56) also acted as Pakistan's legislature for the first nine years. One reason for the long writing period was a conflict about constituting legislative power itself. Jinnah had always maintained Pakistan was to be a federal state, with each province having considerable autonomy. However, power was centralized very early due to the crises that accompanied partition.

A more lasting problem concerned the need to balance power between the eastern and western wings of the country, which were separated by about 1,700 kilometers of India, and between the various ethnic communities within the western wing. The first proposal suggested a bicameral legislature with an upper house representing the provinces and a lower house representing the people. This was not feasible because East Bengal was ethnically homogeneous and constituted 56 percent of Pakistan's population. Thus it would have controlled the lower house, while West Pakistan, with four provinces, would have dominated the upper house. As the two houses were to have equal power and meet jointly for many reasons, the East Pakistanis feared legislative domination by the West. As the West already dominated the bureaucracy, military, and economy, this was unacceptable.

A second proposal, based on the principle of parity rather than equal voter representation, provided a bicameral legislature with 60 seats for each wing in the upper house and 200 seats each in a more powerful lower house. This was rejected by Punjabis because the seats in the West would have been divided among four provinces, whereas Bengal would have voted en bloc. Ultimately the country was reorganized into two equal provinces (East and West Pakistan). Although this idea was enshrined in the short-lived 1956 constitution, the unified province of West Pakistan was retained until the 1973 constitution, which created the current provinces.

In December 1970 Pakistan held its first-ever general election, but the result only deepened the crisis because two leaders emerged. While Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto's Pakistan Peoples' Party (PPP) gained a majority in West Pakistan, Mujibur Rahman, leader of the Awami League (AL), secured such an overwhelming victory in East Pakistan (winning all but one seat there) that AL constituted an absolute majority in the national assembly. The Punjabi-dominated bureaucracy and military would not let Mujibur Rahman form the government, and the country descended into the civil war that led to the formation of Bangladesh on April 10, 1971, a humiliating defeat for West Pakistan and the army.

The military retreated to barracks, leaving Bhutto in charge with the dual titles of president and martial law administrator. He used these powers to restructure the military and the bureaucracy in an effort to subordinate them permanently to elected civilian authority. He also drafted a new constitution, promulgated on August 14, 1973, the first to be unanimously accepted by all political parties. It established a federal parliamentary system with a ceremonial president and a strong prime minister. Bhutto assumed the latter office.

Upon Bhutto's reelection in March 1977 the opposition coalition, Pakistan National Alliance (PNA), mounted a street campaign alleging the elections had been rigged. The unrest served as a pretext for the July 5 coup of General Mohammed Zia ul-Haq. He immediately put the constitution "in abeyance." On April 4, 1979, he hanged Bhutto after manipulating the judiciary.

In the 1973 constitution legislative functions are shared between the unicameral provincial assemblies and a bicameral legislature in the center. However, due to frequent military interventions, legislatures have frequently been dismissed, and the country has been governed for significant periods simply by fiat. This was true during the 1980s and 1990s and continues to be the case during Musharraf's rule, despite the fact that he has put in place the National Security Council and the 17th Amendment, which now formalize the role of the military by making it a partner of the legislature.

When the 2002 elections returned only a very small majority for the party favored by Musharraf, Mir Zafar Ullah Khan Jamali was chosen to become the prime minister because he came from Baluchistan, the least populous province, and hence had a very small power base. He was only able to form a weak coalition government composed of the Pakistan Muslim League–Quaid-e-Azam Group (PML-Q), the Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM), three smaller parties, and 10 defectors from the Pakistan People's Party Parliamentarians (PPPP). To achieve the latter, the 1997 "defection clause" of the constitution, stipulating party members must follow their party on matters of substance, was totally ignored. In June 2004, when Jamali agreed with those asking Musharraf to step down from the post of chief of army staff, Musharraf, true to history, "accepted" his early "resignation." Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain, the head of PML-Q, then served as prime minister for two months while the government arranged by-elections to get a national assembly seat for Shaukat Aziz, the technocratic finance minister since 1999, thus legitimately allowing him to assume the office of prime minister on August 28, 2004, while retaining his job as finance minister.

JUDICIARY

Due to its colonial past and subsequent extraconstitutional developments, Pakistan has several different types of courts, including civil, criminal, terrorism, commercial, family, juvenile, military, and sharia. The system is plagued by overlapping and competing jurisdictions, outdated court procedures, staff shortages, a serious lack of funding, corruption, and, increasingly, threats to judges and other related people. Consequently, cases routinely drag on for years. At the lower levels of the judiciary, the bureaucracy and courts function from the same office.

Pakistan's civil and criminal court systems have four tiers, with the Supreme Court and the four provincial high courts at the apex. Below that in the civil system are district courts, located at district headquarters, and civil courts, located at the *tahsil* level. In the criminal system the lower bodies are the sessions and magistrate courts. The civil system provides for open trials, cross-examination, representation by an attorney, and appeal of sentences. However, there are no jury trials, and attorneys are appointed for indigents only in capital cases.

Three "special" courts were established between 1975 and 1991 to address terrorism, backlogs, and heinous crimes. Under Zia military courts were given jurisdiction over a wide range of civilian offenses, and twice in that period the high courts were barred from interfering with military courts. On August 13, 1997, parliament passed the Anti-Terrorism Act, reestablishing speedy terrorism courts in which people can be convicted and sentenced to death within seven days, using confessions obtained while in police custody, which is known routinely to involve severe torture. These were put in place as a result of the deteriorating law and order situation in Sindh and Punjab, largely due to escalating sectarian violence between Sunnis and Shias. Currently, most death sentences are imposed by these courts. This law also gave the police wide-ranging powers to arrest suspects and to conduct searches without a warrant. The police and army are authorized to fire on anyone "committing, or believed to be about to commit, a 'terrorist' offense."

In January 2001 an ordinance established courts inside jails to ensure security. They consist of two civilian judges and one senior military officer. In November 2002 this order was extended by another ordinance, which expanded the act to say people suspected of a terrorist offense can be held for up to one year without charge or trial, thus suspending the right to habeas corpus. In the meanwhile the state can even investigate the assets of their relatives. In January 2004 the cabinet approved another amendment that raised the punishment for financing terrorism, and in May the Supreme Court ruled terrorism-related crimes are exempt from compromise. These judicial events are linked to many incidences of killing and arbitrary arrests of al-Qaeda and terrorist suspects. Legal experts argue that the special courts do not provide fair trials

as the short period does not allow the accused to prepare an adequate defense, and their procedures repudiate the presumption of innocence. Also criticized has been the encroachment by the center on provincial constitutional authority to administer justice, and the inherent unfairness of parallel courts to which cases may arbitrarily be assigned.

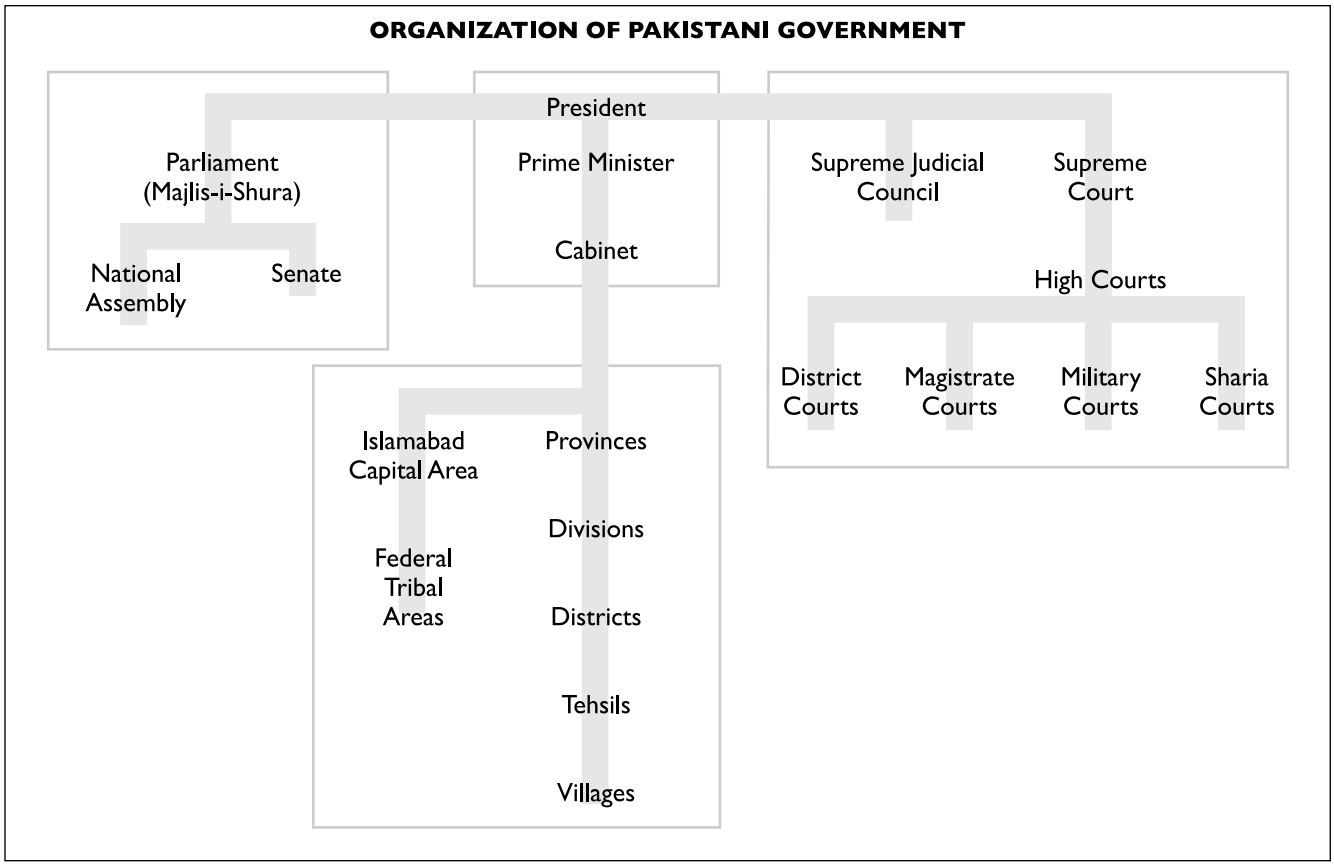
The judiciary has seldom functioned as an independent branch. Although the courts attempted to save the first constituent assembly and first constitution, the Supreme Court discreetly accepted the former's dissolution under the infamous "law of necessity." This precedent reduced the courts to a point where they were bypassed and ignored. In the 1970s the Supreme Court did show some independence when some members refused to pledge an oath of allegiance to Zia, while others, despite Zia's pressure, refused to find Prime Minister Bhutto guilty of the charges laid against him by the military regime. Then in March 1981 Zia issued the provisional constitution order that allowed him to amend the constitution and forbade the civilian courts from challenging the actions of martial law officials. All judges were then required to swear a new oath upholding the supremacy of the martial law and Zia as martial law administrator. At that point a number of judges either resigned or were dismissed, including 10 high court justices and nine Supreme Court justices.

Zia also established a sharia court system in January 1978 that was still in place as of 2005. A panel of judges, "knowledgeable" in Islamic law, is attached to the Supreme Court and each provincial high court. They render judgments on whether specific laws conform to Islam; these courts therefore have *suo moto* power in addition to hearing cases brought by citizens. As their jurisdiction does not extend to the constitution, fiscal law, or banking and insurance practices, their effect has been limited mainly to Muslim personal law and religious issues. They also preside over a new class of suits that result from four *Hadood* ordinances passed by Zia on February 10, 1979, and made part of the constitution through the Eighth Amendment. The first restricts the drinking and manufacturing of alcohol. The second punishes theft with the amputation of hand(s) or foot. The third, the *Zina* Ordinance, makes all sex outside of marriage between adult Muslims punishable by stoning to death. Women are particularly vulnerable under this law because the rules of evidence in *Hadood* cases make the testimony of a woman equal to only half that of a man. A woman who becomes pregnant as the result of a rape can be charged with adultery since women are considered guilty even in cases of nonconsensual sex. The fourth ordinance, *Qazf*, is supposed to mitigate the problems caused by the *Zina* Ordinance by protecting women against false accusations of unchastity. In 1986 Zia also expanded the blasphemy laws, making any derogatory remark against the Holy Prophet, his family, or his companions, whether by imputations or indirectly, punishable by death as a capital crime. This law is often misapplied, especially against religious minorities, for a variety of suspect motives.

Following Zia's lead, in October 1990 Sharif's government promulgated the *Qisas* and *Diyat* Ordinance. It makes the punishment for murder or infliction of injury either *qisas* (equal punishment for the crime committed, *lex talionis*) or *diyat* (compensation—blood money—payable to victims or their legal heirs). This ordinance was repromulgated 24 times over seven years and finally passed into law in 1997. Human rights groups argue these laws, together with the *Zina* law, contribute to impunity in cases of "honor killings" of women, of which there were at least 651 in 2003. In late 2004 attempts were made to enhance legal scrutiny and apply punishment for these crimes.

When Musharraf first came to power many hoped he would improve the courts by undoing some of Zia's Islamist provisions. While he did make some initial moves in this direction, he backed down when faced with vocal opposition from Muslim groups. This, however, changed after September 11, 2001, and he has slowly begun to undo Islamic legislations. One progressive change he did promulgate was the Juvenile Justice System Ordinance, designed to fulfill Pakistan's signatory obligations under the Conventions on the Rights of the Child. Though not in force in FATA, in the rest of the country it provided for separate juvenile courts that lacked the ability to impose the death penalty. Musharraf also commuted the death penalties of all juveniles sentenced before July 2000. This reform is currently in jeopardy because the Lahore high court revoked it on December 6, 2004, finding it "unreasonable, unconstitutional and impracticable." It is hoped the Supreme Court will speedily review the judgment and stay its implementation.

Overall, however, Musharraf has moved aggressively to co-opt and disable the judiciary, thereby deepening its subservient position. Like Zia, Musharraf's first provisional constitution order required judges to take a loyalty oath directly to him, thus violating their previous oath to uphold the 1973 constitution. This act served to purge many judges, and since then he has manipulated the system of appointments, promotions, and removal. Thus, now Musharraf's allies fill key positions, such as chief justices of the Lahore and Sindh high courts, that have administrative power to



allocate cases, assign judges to lower courts, and name election officers who are appointed from the ranks of the subordinate judiciary. Now new judges can be removed after one or two years by declining to confirm their appointments. These changes reverse some of the healthy trends in the judiciary that had begun to emerge in the 1990s.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENTS

Since 1973 Pakistan has had four provinces. Three of these (Sindh, Baluchistan, and NWFP) have demanded provincial autonomy at various times, with the Baluchi demand escalating into armed secessionist conflict in the 1970s. There is also intraprovincial ethnic rivalry. Even political parties that have national followings have their primary strength in particular provinces.

Traditional leaders continue to exert considerable influence in many parts of the country, which in some cases extends to the national level. In Baluchistan and NWFP they are tribal leaders (*sardars*) and landlords (*maliks*). In Sindh and Punjab they are large landlords (*waderas* and *chaudries*, respectively) who often also hold religious titles (e.g., *Pirs* and *Makhdooms*) and hence are also esteemed for religious reasons.

Each province has its own government consisting of a unicameral assembly, presided over by a chief minister and a cabinet. Each province also has a governor who serves at the pleasure of the president. Constitutionally, the provinces retain residual power given the fact that 67 items are on the federal legislative list, and only 47 are on the concurrent list.

The 1973 constitution also provides for FATA, which is almost a fifth province and shares its governance with the Pakistan Civil Service and the governor of NWFP. It is mainly populated by tribal Pathans and consists of seven tribal agencies and four tribal regions. The laws of Pakistan do not apply in FATA unless extended to the area by the governor, with the approval of the president. Constitutionally guaranteed civil and political rights are not enforced; local political agents enjoy a free hand acting as judges, police chiefs, and executive officers in conjunction with the traditional *jirgah* (council of elders) tribal system. The Pakistan army, along with U.S. military and personnel from the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), entered

the area for the first time in 2002 and began to search for al-Qaeda and Taliban members. These actions, most pronounced in Waziristan, are highly resented by local people and have resulted in many attacks on army posts.

There are also seven provincially administered tribal areas (PATAs) ruled directly by the provinces in which they are located: Bugti, Marri, and Kachhi by Baluchistan and Chitral, Dir, Swat, and Malakand by NWFP. The 1973 constitution provided these areas with a separate legal status, and government officials rarely venture there. PATAs also operate under the *jirgah* system.

LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

Local elected bodies are not well established. Ironically, they have been most prominent during periods of military dictatorship, largely for a cynical legitimization. They provide an outlet for powerful rural feudals, bypassing the more politically active and savvy urban areas. For these very reasons elected governments have been wary of local government, though it is generally acknowledged that it must be strengthened for true democratization.

The 1973 constitution does not provide for any set form of government below the provincial level, stipulating only that the provincial assembly may confer functions upon subordinate authorities. Although there are slight variations, all local governments function in roughly the same manner. Punjab is paradigmatic. At the lowest level, villages with a population under 2,000 are officially run by union councils but are actually dominated by *patwaris*, local officials who keep the land records. Furthermore, since the union councils' duties are roughly the same as those of the district councils and are dependent entirely on the latter for revenue, they perform only peripheral functions. Ten villages together form a *Tahsil*, overseen by a *Thana* council made up of the chairs of its constituent union councils. Several *tahsils* combine to form a district, the core administrative area of the old colonial system, which is overseen by a deputy commissioner. The deputy commissioner also acts as the magistrate in the first tier of the criminal court system. Finally, several districts together form a division, which is overseen by a divisional council headed by a commissioner. The last two tiers are dominated by the bureaucracy.

In the urban context, communities of 15,000 to 20,000 are governed by a 15-member town committee. Municipal committees, with 15 to 75 members, are found in cities with populations between 20,000 and 2 million. Cities above 2 million are governed by municipal corporations with 100 to 150 members. These bodies perform similar tasks to their rural counterparts. In some urban areas there are military cantonments that are governed by separate military cantonment boards. Except for the latter, all local bodies have lacked sufficient authority to fulfill their responsibilities. There are also other structural deficiencies, for their writ is restricted by a plethora of federal and provincial agencies that directly deliver a variety of civic services. There are no clear lines of responsibility, coordinated planning, or proper accounting or auditing procedures. These factors, combined with the problems of overlapping jurisdictions and lack of skill and accountability, result in the misallocation and misuse of funds and an inability to deal adequately with their assigned issues, such as increasing food production; promoting education, health, and sanitation; improving water supply and roads; developing livestock and dairy industries; and so forth. There are approximately 50,000 elected local leaders countrywide.

Musharraf has introduced a radical change to local government, setting aside one-third of all local bodies' seats for women. He also has established a cabinet-level National Reconstruction Bureau to help develop new local structures and processes for subprovincial government.

The Electoral System

Since independence Pakistan has held only eight general elections. The first, in December 1970, was conducted by the military and led to the civil war. The 1977 elections, conducted by Prime Minister Z. A. Bhutto, resulted in a military takeover. The 1985 elections, held by General Zia on a partyless basis, were boycotted by most political parties. Since then elections have occurred frequently, with numerous parties competing; however, no government has completed its full term, and the elections of 1988, 1990, 1993, and 1997 were all held under caretaker governments. Since 1985 all voters must present an identity card to register and cast votes. This has dampened turnout, especially in rural areas where peasants do not normally have such cards. As of 2002 the voting age was reduced from 21 to 18.

National assembly elections must be held at least once every five years. Voting for the national assembly is completed in a single day, followed three days later by provincial assembly elections. Currently the national assembly has 342 seats (raised by Musharraf from 217). Of these, 272 are directly elected from sin-

gle-member districts in winner-take-all races. National assembly seats are divided among the provinces as follows: Punjab, 148; Sindh, 61; NWFP, 35; Baluchistan, 14; FC, 2. FATA is the exception, wherein an electoral college of some 30,000 tribal chiefs and elders elect 12 national assembly members on a nonparty basis. They, in turn, select eight senators.

Throughout much of Pakistan's history special seats have been reserved in the national assembly and provincial assemblies for women. The 1973 constitution stipulated 20 seats be reserved for women for "a period of ten years ... or the holding of the second general elections to the national assembly whichever occurs later." The hope was that after that, affirmative action would no longer be needed. Following this provision the 1993 and 1997 elections had no such seats. In 2002 the National Reconstruction Bureau added 60 women's seats, divided as follows: Punjab, 35; Sindh, 14; NWFP, 8; and Baluchistan, 3. These seats were allocated proportionally after the general election, based on the number of seats a party won in the national assembly; women's seats thus serve to augment the dominant party's margin. Women could also run for general seats, and in 2002, of the 17 who ran, 8 won.

There is similar history regarding seats for religious minorities. In 1983 Zia introduced an apartheid-like separate electorate system as part of his Islamization: minorities could neither stand nor vote for regular national assembly seats. Instead they were allocated 10 seats elected in nationwide constituencies by respective communities: four seats each for Hindus and Christians, one for Ahmadis, and one for others. Musharraf ended this segregation. In the 2002 elections minorities, like the rest of the population, voted for regular seats. In addition, there were minority seats, divided as above, filled through a proportional representation system similar to that used for women's seats, except in this case through a nationwide constituency. Both women and non-Muslim candidates are chosen from closed lists filed by their respective political parties.

More than 72 parties registered to compete in the 2002 election. A total of 2,098 candidates stood for the 272 general national assembly seats. There were 64,475 polling stations, and voter turnout was estimated at 41 percent. The big surprise of these elections was the massive success of the newly formed MMA. In addition to its third-place finish in the national assembly, the party won 48 seats in NWFP's provincial assembly election, thus forming the government there. It is also the dominant partner in the coalition that governs Balochistan. For its part, Musharraf's chosen party (PML-Q) won a thin majority in the center and formed a government in Punjab. However, in Sindh and Baluchistan, it sits only as a weak partner in coalition governments.

While external observers judged election-day procedures to be free and fair, they didn't judge the election rules to be so because Musharraf did many things to boost the PML-Q and restrict other parties prior to the elections. With the exception of the last five weeks before the elections, all outdoor political rallies were banned, but the ban was enforced selectively. This selective application of the law was also followed in the case of the 10-year election prohibition on people convicted of corruption and the permanent disqualification of people with court convictions. Also selectively disqualified were those who had absconded from court proceedings or who had defaulted on loans or utility bills. Many are skeptical of these rules because corruption cases were withdrawn against politicians who agreed to support the military government. By this method Musharraf coerced potential winning candidates into joining breakaway factions of major parties. He further decreed membership of Benazir Bhutto or Nawaz Sharif would disqualify a political party. In response, Sharif's party (Pakistan Muslim League–Nawaz Sharif; PML-N) changed its leadership, while Bhutto's party reincorporated, adding "Parliamentarians" to the end of its name and leaving her name off the membership list. Another new law, also aimed at Sharif and Bhutto, stipulated that any person who has twice served as prime minister or as a provincial chief minister cannot seek a third term.

The Senate currently has 100 seats, of which 17 are reserved for technocrats and 17 for women. Half of the Senate stands for election every three years. Each provincial assembly has 22 senators who serve renewable six-year terms. Of these, 14 reflect the provincial assembly's party representation, four are reserved for technocrats (*ulema*) and other professionals, and four are for women. FATA's national assembly members select its 12 senators, and four more come from the FC, of which one is a technocrat and one a woman. The last Senate election was held in February 2003. It returned a 55-seat majority for PML-Q and its allies.

Under Ayub Khan local governments were elected on a nonparty basis. This system was revised in 1977 to allow parties, and the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) won heavily. The law was revised again by Zia in 1983 to deny party participation. This ban was upheld by the courts in 1998; hence, the most recent elections were held on a nonparty basis. They took place in all 97 districts in four phases: in 2000 on December 31, and in 2001 on

March 21, April 21, and June 28. Voter turnout varied from 20 to 40 percent, with violence marring the process in some places and the central government interfering in others. In several places, especially Baluchistan, many candidates ran unopposed. Generally, however, observers deemed these elections free and fair.

Directly elected union councilors formed an electoral college in order to elect a district *nazim* (ruler) and members of the district council. In these elections women competed for the first time at this level; 2,621 women competed for the 1,867 seats allocated to them. In some districts social and religious conservatives prevented women from running, and in NWFP and the southern PATAs women were prevented even from voting.

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY ELECTION RESULTS, 2002

Party	Total Seats	Percentage
Pakistan Muslim League (Quaid-e-Azam; PML-Q)	118	34.5
Pakistan People's Party Parliamentarians (PPPP)	81	23.7
Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal (MMA)	60	17.5
Pakistan Muslim League (Nawaz Sharif; PML-N)	19	5.6
Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM)	17	5.0
National Alliance (NA)	16	4.7
Pakistan Muslim League (Functional; PML-F)	5	1.5
Pakistan Muslim League (Junejo; PML-J)	3	0.9
Pakistan People's Party (Sherpao; PPP-S)	2	0.6
Pakistan Awami Tehrik (PAT)	1	0.3
Pakistan Muslim League (Zia-ul Haq; PML-Z)	1	0.3
Pakistan Tehrik-e-Insaf (PTI)	1	0.3
Muhajir Qaumi Movement Pakistan (MQM-P)	1	0.3
Balochistan National Party (BNP)	1	0.3
Jamhoori Wata Party (JWP)	1	0.3
Pukhtunkhwah Milli Awami Party (PMAP)	1	0.3
Independents (including 12 from FATA)	14	4.1
Total	342	100

The Party System

Political parties have never been fully organized, and what passes for parties can be described better as movements or personalistic factions. This lack of organization is caused by frequent military dictatorships and unstable governance. It also stems from the failure of elected leaders to meet the people's aspirations. Politicians betray public trust and freely change their party affiliations for opportunistic reasons, thus exposing a total lack of loyalty or ideological conviction.

The Muslim League (ML), founded in 1906, represented Muslim feudal interests in the context of British India. In 1940 the ML, under Mohammed Ali Jinnah's leadership, called for the partition of India and in 1947 became the governing party of the new state. Its electoral defeat in East Pakistan in 1954 signaled its demise there, but it continued to play a role in West Pakistan until martial law was imposed in 1958. Since then the ML has been a handmaiden of the status quo and has surfaced in many avatars. Other parties of note during Pakistan's first decade were the Awami League (AL), the National Awami Party, the Republican Party, and the Krishak Sramik Party. They were largely regional in organization and parochial in outlook. From 1958 to 1971 party activity was largely reactive, as genuine power rested with the military and the bureaucracy. The 1970 election revived party politics, and during most of the 1970s multiple parties operated, although Z. A. Bhutto frequently harassed both the left wing of the PPP and other parties.

Parties were initially curbed, and then completely banned, by Zia in 1979. In spite of this, the "defunct" parties continued to operate in a circumscribed fashion. After the party-less elections of 1985, the establishment of a civilian government, and the appointment of Mohammed Khan Junejo as prime minister, an Official Parliamentary Group (OPG) was established

in the national assembly. This led the opposition to set up an Independent Parliamentary Group. Through the 1985 Political Parties Act, parties were legalized with the requirement that they register for eligibility with the Federal Election Commission. They were then granted full recognition a year later.

Major Political Parties

PAKISTAN MUSLIM LEAGUE (PML)

The ML has gone through numerous divisions caused by ambition and personality clashes. As of 2005 these parties go by the generic name Pakistan Muslim League. Following a split, each faction tries to claim the ML name for itself in order to capitalize upon its legacy. After the 1988 election Nawaz Sharif broke with the main PML to establish his own party (PML-N). PML-N was divided in 1993 when Hamid Nasir Chatta broke away to form a coalition with the PPP. In the 1997 elections there were four PMLs, with Nawaz Sharif's faction the largest. There are now six PML factions, and in spite of Sharif's exile from the country, the PML-N is the fourth-strongest party in the national assembly. It is, however, currently eclipsed by the Pakistan Muslim League–Quaid-e-Azam group (PML-Q), which is Musharraf's chosen platform, often called the "King's party." It has the most seats (118) in the national assembly and is led by Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain, who was the transitional prime minister for a brief period in summer 2004.

The party has had a feudal base but now also represents industrial and commercial interests; most PML members of the national assembly are local elites that the military currently favors. All MLs have been culturally conservative and support pro-government and pro-business economic policies. The party is primarily financed through the contributions of its members.

PAKISTAN PEOPLE'S PARTY (PPP, PPPP)

The PPP was founded in 1967 by Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto and a few of his close friends. Bhutto rose quickly within Ayub Khan's regime from 1958 until his resignation in 1966. In the 1970 election the PPP won a majority of the West Pakistani seats, but only after the war did Bhutto assume the presidency of a truncated Pakistan. Under the 1973 constitution he became prime minister. He was reelected in 1977 but was removed by the military and hanged. The party derived considerable strength from this martyrdom. His daughter, Benazir Bhutto, assumed leadership of the party and was elected prime minister in 1988. She was at the time the world's youngest prime minister and the first woman to hold this office in a Muslim country. She was removed from office in August 1990 but was reelected in October 1993. In November 1996 she was again removed. In spite of its serious defeat in the 1997 elections, PPP remains a potent political force.

Following Musharraf's takeover Benazir Bhutto went into voluntary exile. During the 2002 election it was made clear that the presence of Benazir would lead to the automatic disqualification of the PPP, so a new wing of the party, called the Pakistan People's Party Parliamentarians (PPPP) was set up under Makhdoom Amin Fahim. It has the second-largest number of seats (81) in the national assembly and won a slim majority in the Sindh provincial assembly, but the MQM, PML-Q, and their allies formed a coalition to keep the PPPP out of the Sindh provincial government. The PPPP has recently formed an alliance with PML-N called the Alliance for the Restoration of Democracy (ARD).

The party's original strength was concentrated in Punjab and Sindh, primarily among urban working classes. It also has support in rural areas. Although it has a fair number of rightists and wealthy landowning supporters in powerful positions, the rank-and-file members are progressive and determine the party's platform, if not always its policies. Money for PPP activities is derived by contributions from its supporters.

UNITED NATIONAL MOVEMENT

(Mutahida Qaumi Movement; MQM)

The MQM is a secular ethnic party organized in the 1980s with assistance from Zia in order to undermine the PPP and the Islamic Assembly (JI) in Karachi and urban Sindh. It represents Urdu-speaking *Muhajirs* (refugees) and their descendants. MQM's platform seeks to promote and protect the material interest of *Muhajirs* by working to have them formally recognized as the fifth ethnic group. This designation would admit them into the federal and provincial quota system by which government employment and permits are distributed.

In order to have a wider appeal, the party renamed itself from Muhajir to Mutahida (united), but it is known simply as the Altaf group of MQM. This is to differentiate it from Muhajir Qaumi Movement–Haqiqi (MQM-H), a splinter group created, again by the army, in the late 1980s to break Altaf Hussain's power in urban Sindh. The two MQMs continue to

struggle for the control of the *Muhajir* vote. This has often led to heavy bloodshed and thousands of arrests. In the current parliament MQM-A supports the PML-Q in the ruling coalition, so it has acquired a much larger national significance than its voting base would indicate. It has 17 seats in the national assembly, making it the fifth-largest party. The MQM-P is another splinter group and has one seat in the national assembly.

UNITED COUNCIL OF ACTION

(Muttahida Majilis-i-Amal; MMA)

The MMA is a recent alliance of religio-political parties. It was led by Shah Ahmed Noorani until his death in December 2003. It is now headed by Qazi Hussain Ahmed of JI. The MMA holds a tenuous position in relation to the government. Occasionally it has lent its support to the ruling coalition; for example, in supporting the passage of the 17th Amendment in return for Musharraf's ceasing to be the chief of army staff by December 31, 2004. At other times it has joined the opposition, as when it attempted to prevent the appointment of Aziz as prime minister, and the more recent agitation demanding that Musharraf keep his promise to step down as the chief of army staff. Until the 2002 election all Islamic parties together never garnered more than 7 percent of the votes cast. This time, however, the MMA alliance completely reversed this trend and won an impressive electoral standing of 60 seats, becoming the third-largest party in the national assembly. The MMA controls the provincial assembly in the NWFP and is the largest member of the provincial assembly in Baluchistan.

Among its goals is making the sharia the law of Pakistan. It criticized the Supreme Court for postponing the abolition of bank interest and argues that insurance of all kinds is un-Islamic. It also seeks the banning of coeducation and lotteries, the closing of government offices during *namaz* (daily prayers), and the firing of civil servants who do not say *namaz*. Below is a brief description of the major partners in this coalition. Not discussed here are its minor partners, including Markazi Jamiat Ahle Hadith (MJAH) of Sajid Meer and the outlawed Tehrik-i-Jafria of Sajjid Naqvi, now under the new name Pakistan Islami Tehrik (PIT).

Jama'at al-Ulema-i-Islam (Conference of Ulema of Islam), a sectarian party of the Deobandi sect of Sunni Muslims, is the Pakistani successor to the Jamaiyat-ul-Ulema-i-Hind (Conference of Ulema of India), which played a prominent role in the independence struggle as an ally of the Indian Congress Party. Although it is orthodox and fundamentalist, it has democratic credentials. Its strongest support is among the Pathans of NWFP and Baluchistan. While it plays only a marginal role in Punjabi and Sindhi politics, it dominates a majority of the nation's theological institutions. The party is today split between a faction led by Maulana Fazlur Rahman (JUI-F) and another headed by Maulana Samiul Haq (JUI-S). Maulana Fazlur Rahman is the leader of the opposition in the national assembly and thus holds a very powerful position from which to challenge President Musaharraf.

Jama'at-i-Islami (Islamic Assembly; JI) was organized prior to 1947 in India by Maulana Maudoodi. JI has campaigned against secular nationalism and for a larger Islamic (*ummah*) state. Ostensibly this is still the primary aim of the party, a platform that has often made it a target of government suppression. JI gained importance when it supported Zia's Islamization program. Although never large, it has had an impact that far exceeds its numbers. This can be explained by its ideology and its organizational structure. It is a well-organized party with a very centralized authority and disciplined cadre who concentrate on propaganda and recruitment. JI is the best-financed party in Pakistan, with some of its revenue rumored in the past to have come from Arab oil states and the United States. Its strong support comes from the urban middle and lower-middle classes and, until the 1980s, also from *Muhajirs*.

JI is particularly strong on university campuses where its student wing, Jamiat-ul-Tulaba-i-Islam (JTI), dominated most student unions until very recently. JTI is composed of religious orthodox militants who have frequently used violence. JI has also penetrated teachers' associations and labor unions. Due to its message it has an immediate access to the central symbols that guide Pakistani life, and hence its importance will continue to outweigh its membership. JI is ruled by Professor Qazi Hussain Ahmad, who is the chief of the MMA.

Jamiat-i-Ulema-i-Pakistan (Conference of Ulema of Pakistan; JUP-N) was headed by Shah Ahmed Noorani, a very sharp politician, until his death in December 2003. The party is now led by Pir Ejaz Hashmi. It is an orthodox and folkish Islamic rightist party and has no program other than the vague aim of Islamization, although it supports the idea of democracy in general terms. The party draws its strength from the Barelvi sect of Sunni Muslims. It is supported by some of the Urdu-speakers in Karachi and Hyderabad, as well as by some *pirs* in Punjab. The JUP has virtually no support in Baluchistan and only nominal influence in NWFP. The president of the party from Punjab, Maulana Abdul Sattar Khan Niazi, now heads his own faction of JUP.

NATIONAL ALLIANCE (NA PARTY)

The NA Party is a pro-government alliance set up in May 2002 to counter the growing strength of the ARD. It originally consisted of six parties, but its membership has been somewhat fluid, and by 2004 it retained only three of its original members: the Millat Party, the National People's Party, and the Sindh National Alliance. On August 12, 2002, the NA Party formed a "Grand National Alliance" with PML-Q. This included seat-by-seat negotiations in order to work together in the forthcoming parliament. However, the two parties still contested the elections autonomously. The original six members included the following:

1. National People's Party (NPP), led by the former caretaker Prime Minister Ghulam Mustapha Jatoi, who also serves as the NA Party's chairman. He has undergone many different alliances but got his political start as one of the original members of Z. A. Bhutto's PPP.
2. Millat Party (MP), led by Farooq Leghari, who also used to be a member of the PPP and served as the president during both Benazir Bhutto's and Nawaz Sharif's second terms as prime minister.
3. Pakistani Awami Tehreek (PAT), of Tahir-ul-Qadri; left the NA Party in June 2002.
4. National Awami Party Pakistan (NAPP) of Ajmal Khattak; left the NA Party in October 2003.
5. Sindh National Front (SNF), of Mumtaz Ali Bhutto, former Chief Minister of Sindh, who also had his beginning in the PPP and for a long time led the coalition of nationalist Sindhi parties. He also left the NA Party.
6. Sindh National Alliance (SDA) of Arbab Ghulam Rahim.

The Balochistan National Party (Awami), under the leadership of Mir Mohim Khan Baloch, left the ARD and joined the NA Party in June 2002. Other individuals and parties were invited to join the NA Party but declined. These included Sikandar Sherpao of Pakistan People's Party (Sherpao group), Omar Asghar Khan (Qaumi Jamhoori Party), and Imran Khan of Tehrik-i-Insaaf.

Minor Political Parties

PAKISTAN NATIONAL PARTY (PNP)

PNP is a Socialist party created in 1979 by Mir Ghaus Bux Bizenjo. Although based in Baluchistan, it also had a small but critical following throughout the country among the left. The Baluch leadership has generally ignored it. The party advocates provincial autonomy and a very weak central government. This common Baluch sentiment has recently been taken up by two other avowedly progressive parties with past connections to PNP. These parties, backed by different Baluchi tribal chiefs, are the Baluch Nationalist Party and the Baluch Nationalist Movement.

PAKHTOONKHWA MILLI AWAMI PARTY (PKMAP)

(National People's Pathan Brotherhood Party)

PKMAP is found only in the Pathan areas of Baluchistan. It is leftist, pro-Pathan, and headed by Mahmud Khan Achakzai, who has earned major democratic credentials in recent years.

SINDH-BALUCH-PAKHTOON FRONT (SBPF)

Disaffection with Punjabi domination led some of the nationalists from minority provinces to create the SBPF. Former PPP leaders, some Baluch tribal leaders, and former members of the Mazdoor Kisan Party (a 1960s coalition of labor and peasant movements) came together in London in December 1985 to form the party. SBPF's core policy is to advocate a confederal system for Pakistan.

Other Political Forces

MILITARY

In spite of its reputation for being highly professional, political ambition and years in power have created divisions within the military that, since Musharraf took power, are being dealt with by internal purges. The military establishment considers all politicians suspect and sees itself as the source of national integration. To that end it has acquired an official and permanent place in the governing process via the NSC. No major political, economic, or social decision can be made without its influence, and this is likely to continue. Until very recently, when debt servicing started to take the largest chunk of the national budget, outlays for defense constituted the largest budgetary allocation. If the proportion of debt servicing directly linked with

army expenditure is included, the military still constitutes about 60 percent of all government spending.

RELIGIOUS GROUPS

Because Pakistan was established in the name of the Muslims of India, religious groups have been very influential in its politics. Religious parties and organizations are loose congeries of rival groups competing for power and influence. These groups either support a particular localized expression of Islam or follow a certain leader. This is true of both Sunnis and Shias. Sectarian violence has continued to be a problem especially in Karachi, where Shia doctors and professionals have been killed. There have been a number of vicious attacks on both sides with hundreds killed over the last few years. The state, in its attempt to curb Islamic terrorism, has outlawed several groups directly implicated in these attacks; the most famous of these were the Sunni Sipah-i-Sahaba Pakistan and Lashkar-i-Jhangvi and the Shia Sipah-i-Mohammed Pakistan. Many of these groups have simply reincorporated under different names and are still active.

During the same period there has been an increase in violence against Christians, with various Christian institutions experiencing bombings. The year after Pakistan declared its support for the United States–led war on terrorism, at least 65 Christians died in targeted killings.

ORGANIZED LABOR

The trade unions are ineffective, generally poor, and often repressed. Left- and right-wing labor organizations are active, but their organizations are ineffective and seldom generate support from the working class. In recent years whatever little organized labor there was is now in shambles.

CIVIL SOCIETY INSTITUTIONS

Civil society institutions got their impetus during the second half of Zia's regime and have grown to become a major pillar in both development and service-related work. They also play a major role in advocacy for human rights, labor, woman and child labor, and so forth.

National Prospects

Since the country's founding, Pakistan's geographical and ideological location has been both a blessing and a curse. The benefits have been in the form of economic and military aid from the West. The big disadvantage is that the West has been uncritical of the coups and abuses of rights, and typically aid has been plentiful only to military dictatorial regimes that have been willing to assist the West (particularly the United States) in its foreign policy objectives. Between 1958 and 1971 Generals Ayub and Yahya Khan were close U.S. allies during the Cold War. From 1977 until his death on August 17, 1988 (in a mysterious plane crash that also killed the U.S. ambassador and military attaché, as well as 26 top Pakistani military leaders), General Zia worked very closely with the United States in Afghanistan to develop and arm the mujahideen in the fight against the Soviets.

As of 2005 General Musharraf is an active ally of the Americans in their "war on terrorism." Once again Pakistan's military advice is being utilized, this time to hunt for terrorists. More importantly, America has resumed giving large amounts of aid. This collaboration has included allowing Americans to use Pakistani territory for staging operations into Afghanistan; allowing U.S. troops and FBI agents to hunt for al-Qaeda operatives within Pakistan (e.g., in Waziristan); and allowing the extradition of suspected terrorists to the United States in abrogation of the Pakistani constitution. Musharraf has also expanded the scope and use of anti-terrorism courts.

In exchange for this assistance many benefits have flowed to Pakistan. These include the lifting of several levels of U.S. sanctions, including those put in place after the nuclear test; U.S. assistance in securing additional loans from international lending institutions and U.S. allies; restoration of Pakistan's Commonwealth status on May 22, 2004, after a five-year suspension for the nuclear tests; and resumption of U.S. development and military aid. In the year following September 11, 2001, the U.S. Congress voted more than $640 million in emergency economic support for Pakistan plus additional military, law enforcement, and anti-crime aid. Since then much more money has been given. The net effect is Pakistan's current account balance has improved dramatically, from being a negative 5.5 percent of GDP in 1997 to more than 5.5 percent to the good in 2003. Other benefits include the resumption of joint military exercises and the authorization of the sale of aircraft, harpoon missiles, and other equipment worth a few billion dollars.

The military is again benefiting from circumstances that are neither of its making nor good for the country in the long term because they invariably strengthen anti-democratic forces and enhance the army's presence

in the political processes. During the early heyday of the Cold War Pakistan's location helped the military dictators Ayub Khan and Yayha Khan, and during the Soviet's blunder in Afghanistan it helped Zia-ul-Haq. The current anti-terrorism focus makes Musharraf a particular favorite of the United States. He is being handsomely supported even though he has impeded and seriously deformed the democratic processes. His destruction of democracy is not even mentioned in the Western media and politics. Once again all mechanisms are fully in place for kleptocrats such as the military generals, bureaucrats, and feudal politicians to pilfer with impunity the economic benefits generated through Pakistan's status as an American client state. As a result, the people's frustration will continue to grow and be expressed through acts of nihilistic violence, which is channeled by Islamic sectarian groups on the one hand and social malcontents on the other.

As a result of the influx of Western money into development projects and military hardware, an apparent economic boost will be visible for a while, but it is unlikely to result in much long-term benefit because the Pakistan economy continues to suffer from serious structural problems. These include the fact that an enormous percentage of government spending goes to the military; for example, the 2003–04 budget projected spending of $2.8 billion on defense. There is also the issue of a very low tax collection rate and the problem of poor performance of public-sector power utilities, which has caused problems in negotiations with the International Monetary Fund. Pakistan did enjoy a GDP growth rate of approximately 6 percent per annum in the 1980s. This was due in large part to substantial workers' remittances from jobs in the Middle East, which constituted Pakistan's single largest source of foreign exchange. Presently the economic growth is largely financed through aid and loans from the World Bank, International Monetary Fund, Asian Development Bank, United States, European Union, and Saudi Arabia and the Persian Gulf states. As a heavily indebted country with an estimated external debt in 2004 of $33.54 billion and foreign economic aid of around $2.4 billion, Pakistan remains vulnerable to serious outside pressures and structural adjustments.

Because of its port facilities Pakistan has the potential to act as a conduit for the Central Asian Republics, which could boost its economy substantially. This possibility is dependent upon a stable Afghanistan, which the United States is pursuing heavily at present. Pakistan also has its own energy resources that are currently being explored.

The recent influx of money and influence, due to its role in the United States' war on terrorism, falsely inflates Pakistan's sense of importance. When the focus shifts away from terrorism, especially Islamic terrorism, the United States is likely once again to walk away from its utilitarian relationship with the Pakistan army. Then the moral demand for democratization and greater transparency will again be raised by the West. Since this will coincide with an economic downturn, new rounds of agitational politics are inevitable. At this point it is likely the army will return to the barracks in order to allow a civilian government to once again sort out the mess, with the army looking over its shoulder to protect its interests. When this civilian government begins to thwart the army, as it must in order to truly change the system, new accusations of corruption, partisan politics, and undermining national integrity and sovereignty will be hurled. Soon thereafter another round of military intervention will ensue as a corrective for the "politicians' evils." In short, there are no trajectories that allow prediction at present of anything other than more of the same. In each of these cycles, the public will shift its allegiance further toward militant Islam in the hope that it will be able to accomplish what others have failed to achieve; that is, to generate a polity and politics that are beneficial to ordinary people. The election victories of the MMA in 2002 were a great surprise as religious parties have never before won more than 7 percent of the vote, but they are a harbinger of future trends.

Musharraf has made important changes for women (e.g., special women's seats) and minorities (e.g., joint electorates). The sustainability of these moves is highly suspect, however, because of his overall antidemocratic tendencies and institutional setups.

Fears are expressed in the Western media that Musharraf will be unseated in a coup led by a fundamentalist cadre inside the army. The fact that the MMA performed so well is seen as proof that religious forces in the army are active and intervened directly in the 2002 elections. The media also frequently raise the specter that Musharraf is likely to be assassinated by religious radicals, and this seems confirmed by several attempts on his life. If the latter scenario does occur, it will most likely have been perpetrated by some elements in the army, using religious militants as their cover. All this is used to justify Musharraf's keen desire to continue to be chief of army staff.

Recent movement in the Pakistan-India relationship is a positive development given how tense the countries had become after the nuclear tests in May 1998 and the Kargil crisis of 1999. Relations

remained very tense until 2003. After that point full diplomatic ties were reestablished and Lahore-Delhi bus service resumed. On November 23, 2003, Musharraf announced a unilateral cease-fire along the Line of Control in Kashmir, saying that the United Nations–mandated plebiscite for Kashmir could be set aside. Despite these encouraging developments, it is hard to predict whether relations with India will continue to improve. One could also easily argue that the current rumors of peace are merely to impress the West about Pakistan's irenic intentions and to smooth over concerns about the army's collusion with Q. A. Khan's export of fissile material, nuclear technology, and expertise.

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REPUBLIC OF PALAU

(Belu'u era Belau)

By Srikrishna Ayyangar



Palau is a group of islands located in the Oceania region in the Pacific Ocean, southeast of the Philippines, having a total land area of 458 square kilometers. It is the westernmost cluster of the Caroline Islands. With a population of around 20,000 people in 2005 and having gained independence in 1994, Palau is one of the smallest and youngest democracies in the world. Through most of its 20th-century history, it was a protectorate of the United States because it provided a base for air and naval access across the Pacific. The United States has had strategic interests in the region since World War II, also using it as a potential fallback point for U.S. forces in the Philippines during the Cold War.

Most of Palau's population is of Micronesian origin, followed by Filipino, Chinese, Taiwanese, and Vietnamese descent. About 41 percent of the population is Roman Catholic, and about 9 percent is the indigenous Modekngei religion.

Palau was one of the Trust Territories of the Pacific Islands (TTPI) created by the United Nations in 1947, and the United States was made the trustee of Palau and the three other parts of Micronesia that formed the TTPI. On October 1, 1994, Palau became an independent sovereign state, after the Compact of Free Association was signed between the United States and Palau in 1992. According to this, the United States would provide economic and other benefits to the state for 15 years and would have authority and responsibility for security and defense matters for 50 years. It can establish military bases and can operate warships with nuclear capability there.

Palau's gross domestic product was $133.6 million in 2003, and the country enjoys a high standard of living, with a per capita income of $7,500 in 2003, primarily because of the support funds drawn annually from the compact with the United States. Otherwise, its main sources of income are tourism and government employment, followed by agriculture and fishing. It is also considered one of the best diving destinations in the region. In 2000 there were 50,000 business and tourist arrivals.

Even though Palau only became independent in 1994, it had a constitution that was adopted by referendum in 1979. The first elections were held in 1980. It signed the Compact of Free Association in 1982. However, the compact with the U.S. government required 75 percent approval through a referendum if it was to be accepted. The intermittent years between 1979 and 1994 were politically violent, leading to the assassination in 1985 of the first president, Haruo Remilik, and the suicide of the second president in 1988 following allegations of corruption and his strong support of the compact. The people were opposed to one of the provisions of the compact that allowed the United States to dock ships with nuclear capability and also store nuclear resources in the islands. Seven referenda were not able to get a majority. In 1992 the percentage required for approval was reduced to a simple majority, and Palau became an independent sovereign state in 1994.

The System of Government

Under the constitution of 1979, Palau has a bicameral legislature with the popular sovereign being the president, who is assisted by a vice president. All the political representatives are elected by the "first past the post," or simple majority, process. The national legislative body, Olbiil Era Kelulau (OEK), has two houses of equal standing. The Senate consists of nine directly elected members who represent the nation. There are 16 states in the country, and each elects one representative to the House of Delegates. The states are also represented by traditional chiefs in the Council of Chiefs. The executives and legislators serve four-year terms.

EXECUTIVE

The president is the head of the state and the government of Palau and, along with the vice president and the Council of Chiefs, makes up the executive of the state. A president has to be at least 35 years of age and a resident of Palau for at least five years. There have been five presidents in six terms. Haruo Remelik was elected president in 1981 but was assassinated in 1985. Lazarus Salii succeeded him the same year, but his term was short-lived by his apparent suicide in 1988. Ngiratkel Etpison completed his full term in 1992. Kuniro Nakamura succeeded him and was also reelected in 1996. Tommy Remengesau was elected in 2000 after serving as the vice president for the previous eight years.

The president appoints a cabinet after being ratified by the Senate, and the vice president serves as one of the ministers. The members of the cabinet serve as executive heads of departments created by the president. They cannot be legislators simultaneously. The vice president serves a subsidiary role to the president and acts upon the directions provided by the latter. The Council of Chiefs is the apex council based on the traditional system of local governance. Every Palauan village is divided into 10 clans determined matrilineally, and each elects a member for its village council. The councils in turn elect their representatives, and this eventually creates the confederate structure of the National Council of Chiefs. The council advises the president on traditional customs and their relationship to the constitution and the other laws of the democratic government. Section 2 of Article V of the constitution states that traditional law is as authoritative as a statute, but in case of conflict the statute will prevail.

The president and the vice president are subject to a recall initiated by a two-thirds majority from the Senate and a three-fourths majority from the House of Delegates. The legislature sets up a commission to oversee the nationwide referendum to recall within 30 to 60 days after the resolution is passed.

LEGISLATURE

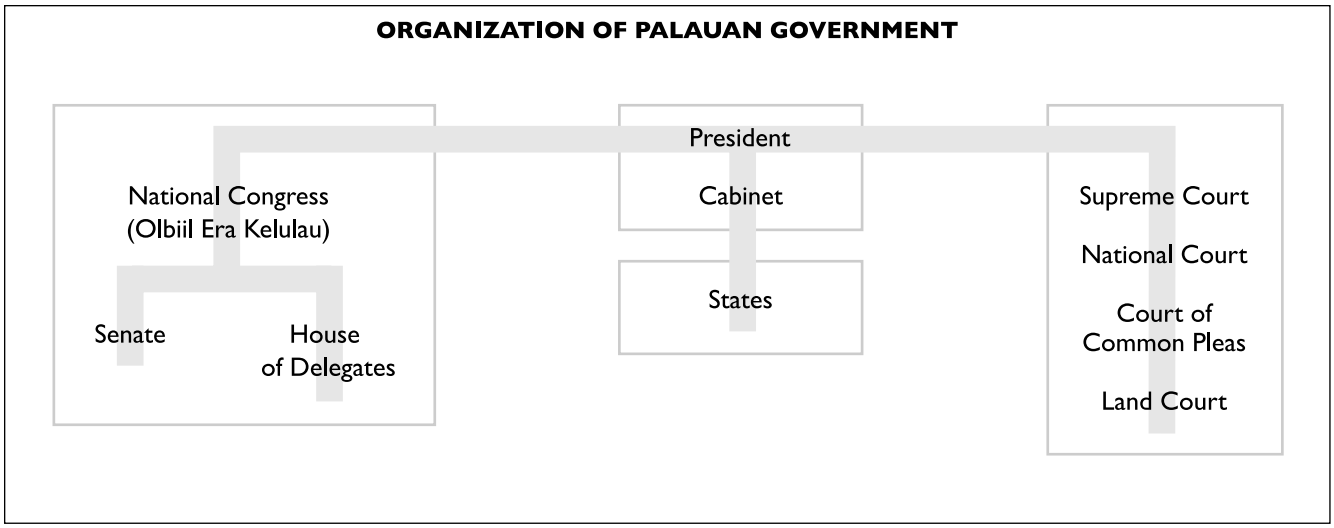
The Senate and the House of Delegates together constitute the legislature, the Palau National Congress or Olbiil Era Kelulau. A legislator has to be at least 25 years of age and a resident of Palau for at least five years. Besides typical legislative functions, the houses also have the power to impeach the president, the vice president, and the justices of the Supreme Court by two-thirds majority in each house. While the president has to get his appointment approved by two-thirds majority in each house, the legislators have no role to play in the appointment of the judges, although they can impeach them.

Bills adopted by the houses have to be presented before the president, but if he does not sign, veto, or refer a bill to the house within 15 days, it is deemed to be a law. A legislator's term can be truncated if 25 percent of his voting population initiates a recall. He can be reinstated by a fresh election if he gains a simple majority. The legislature term can also be truncated by the emergency powers of the president but for not more than 10 successive days without the consent of the OEK.

Beginning in 1981 there have been six legislative terms of both houses. A reappointment commission can, every eight years, redraw the lines of electoral constituencies and consequently change or maintain the size of both houses. There have been two terms of the reappointment commission.

JUDICIARY

The judicial system in Palau has a Supreme Court, national court, the court of common pleas, and the land court. The Supreme Court is the supreme judicial body with appellate and trial divisions. The president appoints the chief justice with approval from the Senate, and the chief justice is assisted by anywhere from three to six associate justices. These judges are appointed by a Judicial Nominating Commission of seven members with the chief justice as the chairman, and three nominees each chosen by the bar and the president. To be eligible for justiceship, a person should have practiced law for at least five years. The maximum age is 65 years. The



national court has a presiding judge and such other judges as prescribed by law.

The Supreme Court has original jurisdiction over all matters pertaining to the highest political authorities such as the national and state governments, the consuls, the ambassadors, public ministers, admiralty, and maritime cases. The rest was left to the national court in the constitution, but a year after the constitution was adopted this court's case load was taken up by the Supreme Court and the land court. The court of common pleas handles small claims, traffic citations, and other minor cases. In 2003 the functions of the land courts were transferred to the executive branch of Bureau of Lands and Surveys of the Ministry of Resources and Development.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The local governments have traditionally been run by the village councils, called *klobaks*, representing the 10 matrilineal-based clans. Except for the Council of Chiefs at the national level, this traditional system for local governance has been gradually marginalized by the constitution by creating 16 state governments, which have elected legislatures and executives called governors. While these governments have the right to impose taxes, the national government has been giving them block grants annually ranging from $100,000 to almost $900,000 depending on the size of the government, for administrative costs and building infrastructure. These governments are very nascent institutional bodies.

The Electoral System

All citizens above 18 years are eligible to vote in legislative and presidential elections. Votes are counted by the "first past the post" process, or simple majority. However, the National Council of Chiefs is elected by, and from among, the members of the village councils. Approximately 70 percent of the total population is eligible to vote. In the past several elections, around 80 percent of the voting population has gone to the polls. Elections to the legislature and for the president have been held simultaneously thus far.

The Party System

Palau had political parties during the period 1963–79. The Liberal Party and the Progressive Party were the two platforms for candidates for the Congress of Micronesia elections, but the groups were more personality oriented than issues based. For a brief time in 1996 the Palau Nationalist Party emerged to support the presidential candidates that year, Johnson Toribiong and Kyoni Isechai. The party applied for and was granted a charter. It held several conferences but faded away with the loss and withdrawal of its candidates in late 1996. Since that time no political parties have been organized.

Major Political Parties

There are no formal political parties in Palau.

Minor Political Parties

There are no formal political parties in Palau.

Other Political Forces

There is no denying the predominant influence of the United States on the government of Palau. The former has secured the rights to maintain a military presence in Palau for 50 years that can include some leeway to pursue its nuclear ends. In addition, its business interests in the region are tax exempt and imports from Palau are duty free, and almost all the television channels are of American origin. Further, Palau has also been receiving aid from the United States that, the latter government claims, will exceed $500 million by 2009.

National Prospects

The number of registered voters is nearly half the total population of the country, and 80 percent has been the average voter turnout in both the parliamentary and the presidential elections. This high percentage bodes well for Palau's democratic prospects. But the lack of a party system allows a personality-based political rule, and this is generally not a healthy sign for a vibrant democracy. It limits the number of leadership alternatives the voters have because only those with adequate resources will be capable of standing for elections. Building the capacity of formal political institutions seems expedient to build a plurality-based federal structure so the confusion from having a parallel traditional structure can be resolved. The size of the country coupled with a small and relatively affluent population bodes well for its democracy.

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PALESTINIAN NATIONAL AUTHORITY

(As-Sulta Al-Wataniyya Al-Filastiniyya)

By Rima Habasch, Ph.D.



The Palestinian National Authority is an administrative body that governs the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. The West Bank has an area of 2,270 square miles (5,787 square kilometers) and the Gaza Strip 140 square miles (363 square kilometers). The combined population of the two regions is 3.8 million (2005 est.). The majority of the Palestinians are Muslims, while Christians constitute less than 3 percent of the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

HISTORY

On September 13, 1993, the stage was set for the resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict with the signature of the Declaration of Principles (Oslo I Agreement). This was followed by the Gaza-Jericho Agreement (also Cairo Agreement), signed on May 4, 1994. In line with this agreement, the Israeli government handed over to Palestinian control most of the Gaza Strip and the town of Jericho.

The Gaza-Jericho accord also marked the beginning of a five-year interim period, the managements for which were laid down in the Interim Agreement (also Taba or Oslo II Agreement). This was signed by the Israeli government and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) on September 28, 1995. The Interim Agreement stipulated the election of a Palestinian government to rule during the interim period.

The Palestinian Authority (PA), established in January 1996, constitutes the first-ever elected Palestinian government. Palestinian control over the West Bank and Gaza Strip has been confined by the Gaza-Jericho Agreement and the Interim Agreement to certain areas. In both the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, there are Jewish settlements and areas that are viewed as vital by the Israelis and are excluded from Palestinian self-rule. Most of the Gaza Strip is under Palestinian control, while much of the West Bank is controlled by Israel. The United Nations calls the West Bank an "occupied territory," while the Israeli's prefer to call it a "disputed territory." During the intifada (civil uprising) that began in September 2000, there have been frequent Israeli incursions and reoccupation of large parts of the Palestinian-controlled area.

The Interim Agreement outlined the structure, jurisdiction, and functions of the Palestinian legislative council and the executive authority, as well as how they would be elected. The elected council was to replace the Palestinian administrative body that was in power until elections took place. On January 20, 1996, the legislative council and the president of the executive of the PA were elected.

All agreements concerning the Palestinian Authority have focused on interim arrangements, leaving certain issues such as settlements, Jerusalem, and the right of Palestinians to return, as well as foreign relations, until after the interim phase. Both the government and the council will serve until Israel and the PLO reach a final agreement on the West Bank, East Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip.

The peace process has reached an impasse, and several attempts have been made to revive it. However,

all initiatives, such as the Camp David Summit of July 2000, the Tenet Plan, the Mitchell Report, and the talks in Taba in January 2001, ended without reaching an accord. The most comprehensive attempt to revive the peace process has been the "Performance-Based Road Map to a Permanent Two-State Solution to the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict" (the Road Map), which was presented by the United States, European Union, United Nations, and Russian Federation in April 2003. It laid the reciprocal steps that needed to be implemented to reach a final settlement of the conflict by 2005. However, at the close of 2005 no such settlement was in sight. During 2005 Israel did withdraw its troops from the Gaza Strip and began dismantling the Jewish settlement camps there, along with a few settlements in the West Bank.

The System of Government

The Palestinian National Authority is a tentative administrative body. It has a prime minister and an elected legislative council.

EXECUTIVE

According to the Interim Agreement, the president appoints 15 members from the elected legislative council and 5 additional members to form the executive. The latter are not allowed to vote. The president is also the head of the executive and a member of the legislative council. His role is to approve laws and introduce legislation. The present executive authority was approved by the council on June 26 and 27, 1996. The president's responsibilities also include the overall control over the security forces. Until the Basic Law amendment of 2002, the president also headed the cabinet. After the amendment of the Basic Law, which instituted the post of prime minister, the cabinet was placed under the authority of the prime minister.

The president of the executive authority was elected in a separate ballot on January 20, 1996. Two candidates ran for presidential elections: Yasir Arafat and the former head of the General Federation of Palestinian Unions, Samiha Khalil, who is also affiliated with the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP). Arafat received 87.1 percent of the votes and Khalil 9.6 percent. Invalid counts made up 3.3 percent of the votes. However, when taking the 22 percent blank ballots into account, Arafat's victory was confined to not more than 70 percent of the total votes. Elections to the Palestinian presidency were scheduled for January 2003 but were cancelled in December 2002 due to the conditions of the occupation. In May 2003 Mahmoud Abbas was appointed the new prime minister. He resigned in September 2003 and was succeeded by Ahmed Qureia. Following Arafat's death in 2004, new presidential elections were organized. The elections were held in January 2005, and Abbas won the voting to become the PA's new president.

Contrary to the provisions of the Interim Agreement, power has been centered in the hands of the head of the executive and remains unchecked. Furthermore, in order to control opposition, Arafat created various institutions. The Palestinian Police Force was established in May 1994 and includes the Palestinian National Security Force, the Palestinian Civil Police, the Preventive Security Force, General Intelligence Services (*Mukhabarat*), the Civil Defense Force, and the Presidential Security Force. Several other quasi-military security organizations, such as the coast guard and military intelligence, also exercise law enforcement powers. The Palestinian Police Force is responsible for security and law enforcement for Palestinians and other non-Israelis in PA-controlled areas of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The different intelligence branches compete with one another with overlapping and unclear mandates. Under pressure for reform, the security services were unified in 2004 into three branches: the national security, police, and the general intelligence services. The security services remain a major employer, with at least 40,000 members.

From its formation until June 1997, the council passed more than 167 resolutions and laws, almost all of which Arafat ignored. The proposed Basic Law, which was sent to Arafat on October 31, 1996, was signed into law in May 2002. The Basic Law constitutes a provisional constitution. The Civil Service Law from 1998 has not been fully implemented. Arafat did sign a law authorizing the elections of municipal councils, which were to be held in the summer of 1997, but he did not approve the accompanying legislation determining the authority of local governments.

LEGISLATURE

The role of the legislative council, formally called the Palestinian Legislative Council, is to check and balance the government by supervising and questioning its policy. It can dissolve the interim government through a vote of no confidence. It can make laws within the confines of the self-rule agreement. According to the

Interim Agreement, the council will have civil powers in 40 specified spheres. The Oslo II Agreement confines the role of the council to legislation pertaining to the administration of the self-rule areas. Furthermore, the Oslo Agreement stipulates that the council will not play a role either in foreign politics or in the peace negotiations. The PLO will remain Israel's negotiation partner in the peace process. The council was originally set up with 88 members, but in 2005 that number was increased to 132 in advance of new legislative elections scheduled for January 2006.

Both the council and the president can introduce legislation. The legislative council meets in the West Bank and Gaza. Its work, however, has often been obstructed, since Israel's policy of closing the border between Israel proper and the occupied territories makes meetings difficult to attend. The council established 12 permanent committees. The committees review and propose amendments to legislation, report to the council, receive constituent complaints, and study and review programs and agreements submitted to the council by the executive authority.

Elections to the council were held on January 20, 1996. In accordance with the Oslo II Agreement, the council replaced the Palestinian Authority, which had been appointed by the PLO's executive committee.

As required by the Oslo II Agreement, the final electoral registers were turned over to the Israeli minister for review and approval. The only major changes concerned the Jerusalem list. Of the initial 91,148 names submitted by the PA, the ministry removed 28,742, claiming these as double entries. An additional 12,491 registered Palestinian voters were removed from the list for holding Israeli passports. Thus, the number of eligible voters approved by the Israeli authorities for the Jerusalem district was 49,915. According to the Palestinian Central Election Commission, 1,013,235—more than 90 percent of the eligible voters—were registered to vote.

Of the 676 candidates who ran for the elections, 200 were affiliated with parties and movements that are either factions of the PLO, former Communists, or nationalists. The remaining 476 candidates were independents. Only 34 candidates were women. The major opposition party, Hamas, boycotted the elections. On the one hand, Arafat had attempted to weaken the movement by arresting Hamas members and closing down the movement's newspaper, *al-Watan*. On the other hand, Arafat's policy aimed to co-opt its members by offering them to join Fatah, the largest group within the PLO.

In a similar effort, Arafat had engaged with the secular opposition groups, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) and the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP), which opposed the Oslo agreement. Five candidates, some of them from opposition parties, joined the Fatah list: two from the Palestinian Democratic Union (FIDA), one from the Palestine People's Party (PPP), one from the PFLP, and one from Hamas. Despite the call for a boycott by opposition parties (mainly Hamas, Islamic Jihad, PFLP, and DFLP), many candidates from opposition parties ran as independents.

Fatah emerged as the big winner of the 1996 elections, obtaining 50 seats and 55 percent of the votes. Of the independents who won seats, 21 were affiliated with Fatah. They obtained 20 percent of the votes. Fatah could thus obtain more than three-quarters of the seats. The remaining independents who won seats were either affiliated with the secular parties or with Hamas or were not linked to any political organization. Of the 13 political factions (other than Fatah) that contested the elections, only FIDA obtained a seat.

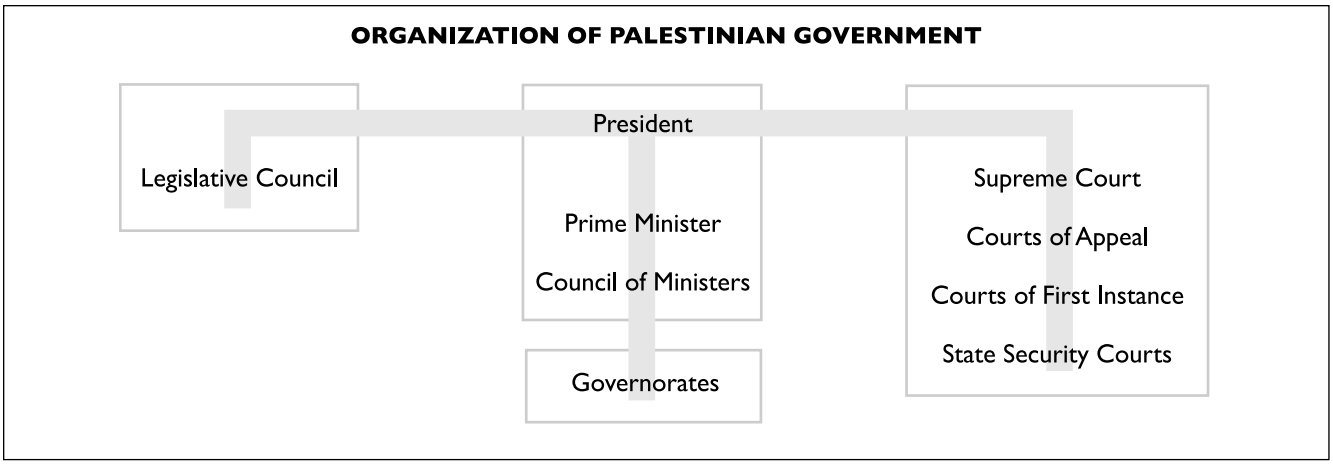
Although Fatah won the highest number of seats, the largest number of votes was received by independents. Whereas a candidate won his or her seat with an average of 24 percent of the votes in a district, independent nationalist leaders, such as Haidar Abd al-Shafi, Hanan Ashrawi, and Abd al-Jawad Salih, received 60 to 65 percent of the votes in their districts. Of the female candidates, five won seats.

The elections were characterized by a high voter turnout: 79.9 percent of the 1,013,235 registered voters actually cast their ballots. Voter participation varied across regions. In areas under Israeli control, such as Jerusalem and Hebron, participation was less than 35 percent. Women constituted 43 percent of the voters. Their unexpected high participation rate contributed to the high voter turnout.

Elections of the legislative council were due in 1999. They were then scheduled together with presidential elections for January 2003 but were postponed again due to the violence and instability in the region. Elections were held on January 25, 2006. Hamas won 74 of the 132 seats (44 percent of the popular vote) and Fatah won 45 seats (42 percent of the popular vote. Hamas leader Ismail Haniya was sworn in as prime minister on March 29, 2006.

JUDICIARY

The legal system in the West Bank and Gaza Strip is not unified. In the Gaza Strip, it is based on the Anglo-Saxon common law imposed during the



British mandate. During the Egyptian occupation the legal system in the Gaza Strip remained largely unchanged. The legal system in the West Bank follows the Napoleonic tradition introduced during the Jordanian occupation. Personal status law is dealt with by religious courts (Muslim and Christian) in both the West Bank and Gaza Strip. In addition to the existing laws, Israel issued more than 1,000 military decrees each for the West Bank and Gaza Strip during its occupation. The PA has undertaken efforts to unify the two legal systems, but this effort has been characterized by a high degree of arbitrariness. According to the Interim Agreement, law amendments require Israeli approval. The legal foundation for the judicial system is the Basic Law of 2002 and the Judicial Authority Law of 1999. Legislation regulating the court system in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip has been unified. However, most of the legislation has not been applied; as a result, the court system is not functioning and jurisdictional delineations remain unclear.

With the establishment of Palestinian self-rule, the PA civil judges were appointed by the Ministry of Justice for a term of 10 years. The attorney general, also an appointed official, reports to the minister of justice and supervises judicial operations in both the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. However, appointments have not been based on legal rules, nor has a law been issued clarifying the authority to appoint them.

In February 1995 Arafat created security state courts, parallel to the existing military and civilian courts, to try cases involving security issues. Each state court is presided over by three military judges. In these courts neither the right to appeal nor access to legal counsel nor the right to a public hearing is guaranteed. Verdicts are either ratified or repealed by the PA president. These courts have been criticized for being subordinate to the power of the executive. The PA Ministry of Justice has no jurisdiction over the security courts. While the state security courts were officially abolished in 2003, the military courts remain operational.

The independence of the judiciary as foreseen by the Basic Law has been undermined by the interference of the executive.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

With the establishment of Palestinian self-rule, control of municipal affairs was taken over by the PA. The governors appointed by the PA are directly responsible to the PA president. Nearly all of them come from the top ranks of the PLO. Based on a law signed by Arafat on December 16, 1996, local elections were scheduled to take place in summer 1997. The law stipulated that the 4,000 mayors and village council members shall be directly elected in 385 electoral districts. Depending on the population size of each district, the number of council members range from 7 to 15. Districts with fewer than 1,000 inhabitants are excluded from the election. There the local council will be appointed by the Ministry of Local Government, to which the local councils report. The last local elections were held in the Gaza Strip more than 40 years ago and in 1976 in the West Bank. The elections scheduled for 2001 were postponed due to the outbreak of the intifada.

As is the case for presidential and legislative elections, closures and restrictions of movement and the deteriorating security situation make voter registration and the holding of elections difficult.

The Electoral System

According to the election law that was drafted in accordance with the Oslo II Agreement, the legislative council members and the president are directly elected in two separate ballots. The law foresaw 16 multimember districts: 11 in the West Bank and 5 in the Gaza Strip. Eligible voters are Palestinians from the West Bank, Gaza Strip, and Jerusalem who are 18 years or older. Voters have as many votes as there are parliamentary seats reserved in each district, which in turn is dependent on the number of voters. In some districts a certain number of seats is reserved for minorities: six seats for Christians (two seats in Bethlehem, one in Gaza, two in Jerusalem, and one in Ramallah) and one seat for the 400 Samaritans in Nablus. Candidates who gain the most votes in a district gain a seat, rendering the electoral system a winner-take-all one.

The Party System

Almost all Palestinian factions and groups are members of the umbrella organization PLO. Although an umbrella organization, it is clearly dominated by Fatah. The PFLP and the DFLP rank second after Fatah. In the West Bank and the Gaza Strip there are additional parties that are not represented in the PLO, such as Hamas and other Islamist organizations. The PLO has created a vast net of social and cultural institutions dominated to a varying degree by the different factions.

In September 1995 a law was drafted regulating the formation of parties. It has been criticized by human rights activists for undermining the freedom of association.

Major Political Parties

FATAH MOVEMENT

(Harakat Fatah)

Fatah was founded in 1959 and was headed by Yasir Arafat until his death in 2004. It is the biggest group within the PLO and has the largest number of followers in the Palestinian diaspora and among Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Fatah is generally viewed as a basically conservative, nonrevolutionary movement. Until the Gulf War it received substantial funding from the conservative Arab states. The dominant position of Fatah has been challenged by the emerging strength of Hamas as the primary force in the Gaza Strip.

Fatah has been facing major challenges resulting from its ideological impasse and lack of direction. Its dwindling popular support is also a result of being associated with the corrupt Palestinian Authority. Internal divisions over direction and ideology have led to the emergence of a new leadership, the Al-Aqsa Brigades (the military offshoot of the Fatah movement), the political line of which is closer to Hamas.

Fatah endorsed Mahmoud Abbas in the 2005 presidential elections, and Abbas coasted to an easy victory.

POPULAR FRONT FOR THE LIBERATION OF PALESTINE (PFLP)

(al-Jabha al-sha'biya li tahrir filastin)

The PFLP was founded in 1967 as the heir of the Arab Nationalist Movement. It was headed by George Habash from its founding until 2000. The number of its supporters is significantly smaller than that of Fatah. In contrast to Fatah, it has a Marxist orientation and has gained influence especially among intellectuals, workers, and students. Opposing the Oslo agreements while having no coherent alternative, the PFLP has become increasingly marginalized. Together with the other major leftist party, the DFLP, it enjoys the support of approximately 8 percent of the population in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. In the 2005 presidential election it supported Mustafa Barghouti, who garnered 19 percent of the vote.

DEMOCRATIC FRONT FOR THE LIBERATION OF PALESTINE (DFLP)

(al-Jabha al-dimuqratiya li tahrir filastin)

The DFLP was founded in February 1969 by Nayef Hawatmeh as a breakaway from the PFLP. It is a leftist party based on Marxism-Leninism. Compared to Fatah, it has relatively few supporters. Like the PFLP, it is supported by intellectuals, workers, and students. Although the DFLP rejected the Oslo accords, in February 1997 it expressed its wish to participate in the final-status negotiations with Israel. As of 2005 it was still led by Hawatmeh. Its candidate in the 2005 presidential election, Taysir Khalid, won a little over 3 percent of the vote.

PALESTINIAN DEMOCRATIC UNION PARTY (FIDA)

(Hizb al-ittihad al-dimuqrati al-filastini)

FIDA was created in 1991 as a breakaway from the DFLP. In contrast to the DFLP, FIDA supports the Oslo agreements. In its policies, it is similar to Fatah. FIDA's leader until 1996 was Yasir Abed Rabbo, previously Hawatmeh's deputy. In February 1996 Abed Rabbo resigned and was replaced by Salah Ra'fat, who was more critical of the Oslo agreements and the PA. Abed Rabbo subsequently returned as party chairman.

ISLAMIC RESISTANCE MOVEMENT (HAMAS)

(Harakat al-muqawama al-islamiyya)

Hamas was founded in 1988 by Sheikh Ahmad Yassin as the military wing of the Muslim Brotherhood (Jama'at al-ikhwan al-muslimun). Historically the Palestinian Muslim Brotherhood was part of its Jordanian counterpart.

Since the peace negotiations Hamas has established itself as the largest Palestinian opposition party. The number of its followers fluctuates according to the mood in the street. Its followers come primarily from socially and economically marginalized strata. Since the onset of the second intifada in 2000 Hamas has emerged as a major political player. In December 2003 Hamas openly questioned the claim of the PLO, which is dominated by Fatah, to be the sole representative of the Palestinian people. In 2004 both Yassin and the Hamas leader, Abdel Aziz Rantisi, were killed by Israeli forces.

In 1990 the Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades, a radical wing of Hamas, was formed. The leadership of this wing is outside of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, where Hamas is trying to establish itself as a party. This effort, however, is blocked by the PLO. Hamas opposes the peace agreements, and it boycotted the 2005 presidential elections.

ISLAMIC JIHAD

(Harakat jihad al-islami)

Islamic Jihad was formed by Sheikh 'Abd al-'Aziz 'Awda and Fathi al-Shiqaqi. It was the first offshoot of the Muslim Brotherhood. Like Hamas, the Islamic Jihad applies military means to undermine the peace process. Since the outbreak of the second intifada, support for the Islamic Jihad has grown.

Minor Political Parties

PALESTINE PEOPLE'S PARTY (PPP)

(Hizb al-sha'b al filastini)

The PPP was formerly the Palestine Communist Party (PCP); it adopted its new name after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Initially the Communist Party was organized as part of the Jordanian Communist Party, and it became independent in 1982 as the PCP. The PCP was influential among workers, students, and trade unions. Earlier than other Palestinian parties and factions, the PCP advocated a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. In 2002 the party's general secretary, Mustafa Barghouti, left to form a new party, the Palestinian National Initiative. The PPP's candidate in the 2005 presidential elections, Bassan Al-Salhi, won less than 3 percent of the vote.

PALESTINIAN NATIONAL INITIATIVE

(al-Mubadara al-Wataniyya al-Filistiniyya)

This party was founded in 2002 by Mustafa Barghouti, Haydar Abd al-Shafi, Hanan Ashrawi, and Edward Said. It rejects the policies espoused by both Hamas and Fatah and tries to present itself as a democratic alternative. The demands of the party's platform include the creation of a sovereign, independent, and democratic Palestinian state based on the rule of law and the engagement of the Palestinian Diaspora in the nation-building effort. The initiative is also critical of the Oslo peace process and calls for the implementation of relevant United Nations resolutions ending the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and protecting the right of Palestinian refugees to return to their homeland. In the 2005 presidential elections Barghouti won nearly 20 percent of the vote, second to Mahmoud Abbas of the PLO.

Other Political Forces

Demands for the reform of the PA were expressed by the largest party represented in the PA, Fatah, and in

particular by the Al-Aqsa Brigades, which Fatah created in late 2000 as its military wing. While initially well organized and with close ties to Fatah, the Brigades have become increasingly localized and fragmented, without a unified command. Israel's elimination of some of the Brigades' commanders and the PA financial reforms have contributed to the fragmentation of the Brigades. Many members of the Brigades have relied on the PA or Fatah as their source of income. A financial reform effort for the payment of PA salaries has forced the Brigades to seek alternate sources of funding. These have come from Hamas, the Islamic Jihad, Hezbollah, and Iran. Some of the Brigade members have engaged in abusive conduct and have contributed to the lawlessness that governs parts of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

National Prospects

Since 2000, with the eruption of the intifada that saw unprecedented levels of violence, challenges and pressure on the Palestinian Authority have increased. The worsening of the economic situation, the construction of a "separation barrier" in the West Bank by Israel, closure and rising levels of poverty as a result of the intifada, and the lack of progress in the peace negotiations have undermined the legitimacy of the Palestinian Authority. Furthermore, Israeli destruction of PA facilities has weakened it considerably and rendered it unable to perform some of its basic functions. The late Arafat, who died on November 11, 2004, left a regime marked by an absence of the rule of law, high levels of corruption, and the centralization of decision making and power. The weakness of the Palestinian Authority has resulted in organizational fragmentation and the incapacity of the security forces to maintain law and order.

The Palestinian Authority faces major challenges. In the immediate future, challenges center on the rebuilding of Palestinian institutions, the implementation of laws signed by Arafat, and institutional reform, in particular the separation of powers. A major first step in regaining the legitimacy of the Palestinian Authority is the holding of presidential, legislative, and local elections. Local elections were held in December 2004 in a first phase in the West Bank, presidential elections were held in January 2005, and legislative elections were scheduled to be held in January 2006. The new president, Mahmoud Abbas, was seen by many observers as a moderate, but his ability to stop attacks by armed groups on Israeli targets is in some doubt.

In addition, progress in the peace negotiations remains crucial. This will also depend on the cooperation of Israel and the United States and their willingness to offer the necessary conditions. Israeli unilateral measures and military interventions, both with the approval of the United States, will undermine any effort of the PA toward rebuilding Palestinian institutions and improving the situation. However, the Israeli pullout from the Gaza Strip and parts of the West Bank in 2005 was seen as a significant sign of progress.

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REPUBLIC OF PANAMA
(República de Panamá)

By Orlando J. Pérez, Ph.D.



The Republic of Panama occupies the southernmost part of Central America, where the Isthmus joins with South America. The nation is 29,208 square miles, slightly larger than West Virginia. Panama has a population of three million (2005 est.), with an annual growth rate of 1.2 percent. The population is 70 percent Mestizo, 14 percent West Indian black, 10 percent white, 6 percent Indian and others. The religious affiliation of the population is 85 percent Roman Catholic, 15 percent Protestant and other religions.

The Republic of Panama was established on November 3, 1903, after local elites—with the assistance of the United States—successfully separated the Central American nation from Colombia. In 1821 Panama achieved its independence from Spain and immediately joined Ecuador, Venezuela, and modern-day Colombia in what was known then as New Granada. Throughout the 19th century, however, Panamanian leaders sought increased local autonomy from the government in Bogotá, the capital of New Granada. By the early 20th century the interest of the United States to build an interoceanic canal coincided with that of the local elites, and thus the former supported the movement to separate Panama from Colombia. Between 1903 and 1968 the Panamanian government, with few exceptions, was dominated by an urban commercial elite. Elections were held periodically but were characterized by corruption and fraud.

Between 1968 and 1989 Panama was ruled by the military institution known as the National Guard. General Omar Torrijos governed the nation from October 11, 1968, until his death in an airplane crash in July 1981. After several years of internal maneuvering, General Manuel A. Noriega emerged in 1983 as the nation's strongman and ruled until the United States military invasion of December 20, 1989. The United States restored power to civilians, and a period of liberal democracy was initiated.

The System of Government

Panama has a presidential system with a strong central government and subordinate local and provincial institutions. The government is divided into three branches: the executive, legislative, and judiciary. The constitution stipulates that the government of Panama is unitary, republican, democratic, and representative. The current constitution was established in 1972 and amended significantly in 1978 and 1983. The initial document gave extraordinary powers to General Omar Torrijos and the National Guard. The 1978 and 1983 revisions were intended to expand political participation and reduce the power of the military. Additional changes were made to the constitution in 1994 regarding the management of the Panama Canal after the transfer of authority and the elimination of the armed forces.

EXECUTIVE

The Panamanian constitution establishes an extremely strong presidency in relation to the other branches of

government. The president is the official head of state and of government. The constitution vests all executive powers in the president, vice presidents, and ministers of state. The nation has a first and second vice president. The first vice president assumes executive functions in the absence of the president but is otherwise powerless. The same is true for the second vice president. The positions of vice president are primarily used for patronage purposes.

The president is elected by direct popular vote for a term of five years, without the possibility of reelection. The election is by a plurality of the votes. To be eligible for the position of president a person must be a natural-born citizen of Panama and 35 years old. Along with his executive powers, the constitution grants significant legislative powers to the president. The president initiates most legislation and names one member of the Electoral Tribunal and, with the approval of the legislative assembly, the judges of the Supreme Court. In addition, the president has sole discretion in naming and removing ministers of state. The legislative assembly, however, may impeach and remove the president for acts that violate the constitution, the laws, or the "free exercise of the public power." The assembly may require the presence of ministers of state before the legislative chamber of justify their behavior, or else may censure and remove them from office with a two-thirds vote.

PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION RESULTS, 2004

Candidates	% Votes
Martin Torrijos (PRD/PP)	47.4
Guillermo Endara (PS)	30.9
José Miguel Alemán (PA/MOLIRENA)	16.4
Ricardo Martinelli (CD)	5.3

LEGISLATURE

Panama's legislative structure was altered by the constitutional revisions of 1983. The national assembly of community representatives (Asamblea Nacional de Representantes de Corregimientos) was abolished, and the national legislative council (Consejo Nacional de Legislación) was replaced by a legislative assembly (Asamblea Legislativa). Members of the Assembly are nominated by political parties and elected by direct popular vote for a term of five years. Elections are concurrent with presidential elections. Candidates must be at least 21 years old and Panamanian citizens by birth or naturalization for a minimum of 15 years, and they must reside in the electoral district represented. Legislators from outlying rural districts are chosen on a plurality basis, while districts located in more populous town and cities elect multiple legislators by means of a proportion-based formula.

By Article 141 of the national constitution, Panama is divided into electoral districts corresponding to the administrative districts of the national census. Each electoral district elects one legislator per 30,000 inhabitants, and one per the remaining number of inhabitants as long as that number exceeds 10,000. The exceptions are the provinces of Darien and the autonomous territory of San Blas, which have two electoral districts each, and Panama City, which has four.

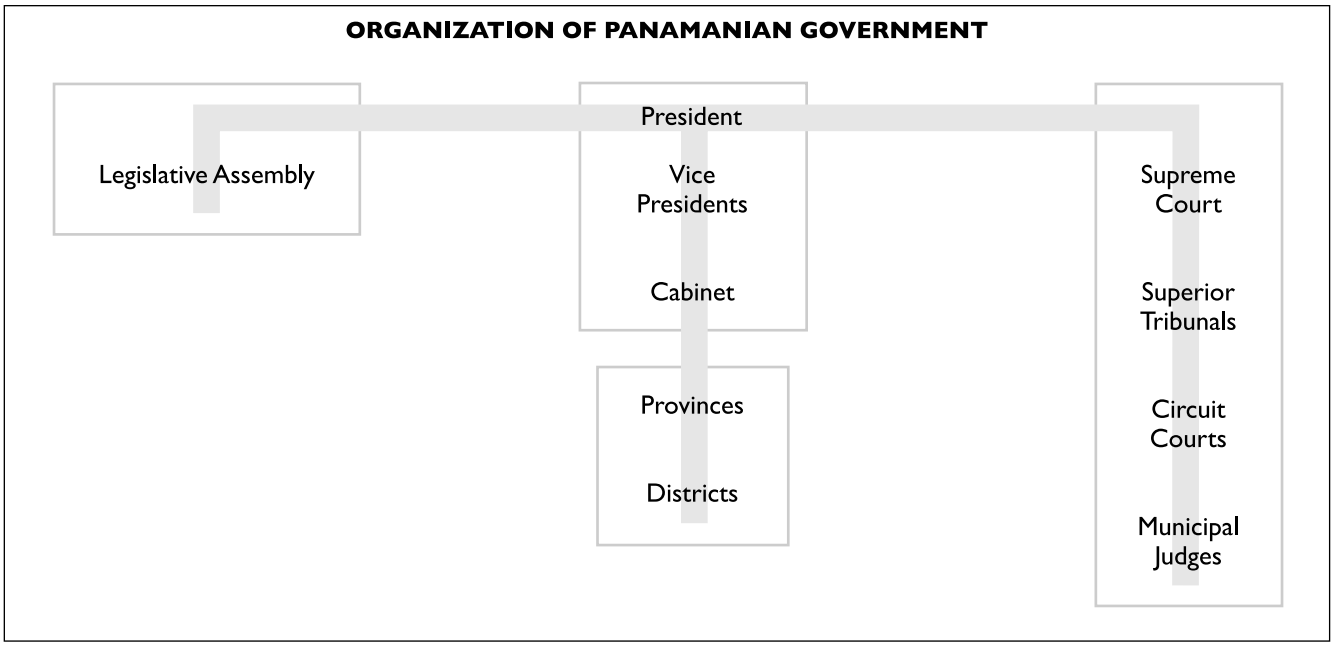
The Assembly approves treaties, declares war, and initiates some legislation. It is also empowered to impeach the president and the justices of the Supreme Court, approve the national budget, determine monetary law, and enact national codes. In addition, the reforms circumscribed legislative immunity by allowing legal action against legislators through a Supreme Court order. There were 78 Assembly seats after the 2004 elections, but this number will drop to 71 in 2009.

DISTRIBUTION OF SEATS IN THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY AS OF 2004

Party	Seats (78)
Partido Revolucionario Democrática (PRD)	41
Partido Arnulfista (PA)	17
Partido Solidaridad (PS)	9
Movimiento Liberal Republicano Nacionalita (MOLIRENA)	4
Cambio Democrático (CD)	3
Partido Liberal Nacional (PLN)	3
Partido Demócrata Cristiano (PDC)/ Partido Popular (PP)	1

JUDICIARY

The highest court of the land is the Supreme Court of Justice (Corte Suprema de Justicia), whose nine members are appointed for 10-year terms by the president, with the approval of the legislative assembly. The Supreme Court is divided into three chambers, which hear civil, penal, and administrative cases, respectively.



A permanent justice is assigned to each chamber. Justices must have been practicing lawyers for 10 years and must be Panamanian-born and 35 years of age. The powers of the court include judicial review and "final, definitive, and binding" decisions on the legality and constitutionality of legislative acts. In addition, Panama has five superior courts and three courts of appeal.

The independence of the judiciary has been questioned throughout most of Panama's history. Between 1903 and 1968 the judiciary was subordinate to the president and the dominant commercial elite. After 1968 it was under the thumb of the military. However, since civilian rule was restored in December 1989, Panama has made significant strides in securing the independence of the judiciary.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Regional government consists of nine provinces, each administered by a governor appointed and removed by the president. Provincial governments are not autonomous but rather administrative subdivisions of the national government.

Government at the municipal, or district, level has greater self-rule. Each district is governed by a mayor (*alcalde*), in conjunction with a municipal council (*consejo municipal*). The municipal council elects a president and vice president from among its members. The constitution stipulates that mayors may be elected by direct popular vote for a period of five years or may, under provisions of law, be appointed by the president. As of the 1994 elections, all municipal mayors are elected. The municipal council is composed of the community representatives (*representantes de corregimiento*) from the district. A *corregimiento* is the smallest unit of government in Panama. Each *corregimiento* elects a representative by direct popular vote for a period of five years and has a community council (*junta comunal*) to promote community development. The community council is composed of the community representative (*representante de corregimiento*), who will preside over its meetings, a community leader (*corregidor*), and five other members selected by the municipal council.

While municipalities are, according to the constitution, independent, with few exceptions they rely heavily on funds from the central government. The exceptions are the largest districts such as Panama, Colón, and David.

The Electoral System

Panamanian electoral history has been marred by fraud, manipulation, foreign and military intervention, and violence. Before the 1968 military coup Panama held regular elections under a system controlled by a conservative political and economic elite with the support of the United States. During that period the United States intervened several times to "protect the

purity of the electoral process." However, in 1994 Panama held the most competitive and open elections in its history. The 1994 elections marked the beginning of a period of stable, free, and competitive elections.

The Electoral Tribunal (Tribunal Electoral) is the institution empowered by the national constitution (Articles 136 and 137) for setting up the electoral process. The tribunal is composed of three magistrates, one appointed by the executive, one by the Supreme Court, and a third by the national legislative assembly. They serve 10-year terms.

The tribunal has the authority to regulate the activities of political parties and candidates. It also has the power to set up the timetable for the registration of political parties, candidates, and voters. The tribunal was given authority over the Public Force, the law-enforcement body, six days before the elections and until the official proclamation of the president-elect.

In Panama, a person at birth is given a *cedula* number (similar to an identification, or ID, number) that is used for the rest of the person's life. Upon turning 18, the individual acquires a *cedula de identidad personal* (ID card) containing photo and fingerprints. This ID card is used for everything from voting to cashing a check. When individuals receive their ID cards, they are included in the electoral registry and are eligible to vote. Registration is thus automatic once a person comes of age. The vote is "free, equal, universal, secret, and direct" (Article 129 of the constitution). The electoral registry is under the jurisdiction of the Electoral Tribunal (Article 137), which must keep it up to date as it relates to deaths and movement of individuals.

The counting of the vote is organized around several counting boards at various territorial and political levels. The national counting board (*junta nacional de escrutinio*) tabulates the results for president (Electoral Code, Articles 133–37). The legislative district counting board (*junta de escrutinio de circuito*) tabulates the votes for legislator (Code Articles 138–41). The district counting board (*junta distritoriales de escrutinio*) is in charge of counting the votes for mayor and council persons (Code Articles 142–45). Finally, the community counting boards (*junta comunales de escrutinio*) tabulate the votes for county representatives (Code Articles 146–49).

The Party System

Political parties flourished during the pre-1968 period, but most represented factions of the commercial elite that dominated the political system. There were few ideological or real differences between the political parties. Most, in fact, were offshoots of the original Liberal Party that ruled Panama for the first 30 years of the republic. The only significant challenge to the predominance of the commercial elite came from Arnulfo Arias and his Panamanian Movement. In 1968 the National Guard overthrew the constitutionally elected government. The military regime built a multiclass alliance by implementing populist measures to help those groups that had been traditionally excluded from politics and giving selective benefits to the traditional commercial elite.

The military government, under General Omar Torrijos, was able to use the issue of Panamanian sovereignty over the Panama Canal to gain further support for its domestic policies and to quell any potential opposition. The government signed a new canal treaty with the United States in 1977.

After the ratification of the Torrijos-Carter treaty, the military government announced a liberalization process that would culminate in free and open presidential elections in 1984. During the liberalization process political parties were legalized and allowed to operate, political exiles were allowed to return, and the powers that Torrijos had been given by the 1972 Constitutional Reforms expired.

In July 1981 General Torrijos died in a plane crash. After a couple of years of internal struggle within the National Guard, Manuel A. Noriega became the commander in chief of the military institution. Noriega proceeded to expand the role of the National Guard. The institution's capabilities were increased, and its institutional role within the state was expanded. The military institution increased its take of the illicit activities it controlled, reducing the amount that had gone to the commercial elite.

The liberalization process was supposedly completed with the election of Nicolas Ardito Barletta in 1984. Those elections were marred by violence and fraud. The overthrow of Barletta in September 1985 ended the liberalization process. The overthrow of Barletta also soured the relationship between the military and the United States. Up to that time the United States had supported the liberalization process and the military-led government. In fact, the United States increased military and economic aid to the Panamanian government while ignoring evidence that Noriega had been involved in drug trafficking for years. For the United States, stability in Panama and in the region, plus Noriega's support of the U.S. anti-Sandinista policy in Nicaragua, were far more important than human rights abuses.

The overthrow of Barletta, the changes within the military institution, mounting charges of repression and illicit activities by the Panamanian defense forces, and increasing U.S. opposition to the regime (including devastating economic sanctions) led to the rise of a national opposition movement called the National Civic Crusade. The Crusade brought together, under the leadership of the business community, a wide range of groups from civil society to bring down the military regime.

On May 7, 1989, Panama held scheduled elections for president. The electoral process was carried out under extremely difficult conditions: repression and censorship by the military, an economic crisis caused by U.S. sanctions, and heavy U.S. involvement in favor of the opposition. The opposition won a landslide victory, but the government annulled the elections on May 10.

Despite the efforts of the civilian opposition and those of the United States, the military government remained in power. After the elections, negotiations sponsored by the Organization of American States failed to remove Noriega from power. On December 20, 1989, the United States finally ended the 21-year rule of the Panamanian military by invading the country.

After the invasion the United States installed the opposition candidates who had won the elections: Guillermo Endara, Ricardo Arias Calderon, and Guillermo Ford. The new government made significant efforts to strengthen the financial and institutional autonomy of the Electoral Tribunal, as well as to foster an environment in which basic freedoms were respected. In that atmosphere free and competitive elections were made possible.

The Electoral Code required those who wanted to register as political parties to present 18,500 signatures to the tribunal (Article 39). Article 39 was modified in 1993, increasing the required signatures to 5 percent of the votes cast in the 1994 elections (approximately 55,000). The Electoral Code requires each party to receive at least 5 percent of the valid votes for president, legislator, or community representative in order to survive as a legal political entity (Article 111).

Panamanian law allows political parties to form alliances in order to contest national elections (Electoral Code, Chapter 9, Articles 107–10). In fact, Panamanian electoral politics has traditionally been structured around such alliances. Seldom, however, have these electoral alliances been constructed on the basis of political ideology or even programmatic agreement. The contestation of the election and the partition of power afterward have been the *raison d'être* of Panamanian electoral alliances.

Major Political Parties

REVOLUTIONARY DEMOCRATIC PARTY

(Partido Revolucionario Democratico; PRD)

The Revolutionary Democratic Party was founded in 1979 by supporters of the military regime in order to lead the liberalization process. The model used for the party was the Revolutionary Institutional Party (PRI) of Mexico. The party represented middle and popular sectors that had been incorporated into politics during the "Revolutionary Process" initiated by the National Guard after the 1968 coup.

The party held nominal power until the U.S. invasion of 1989. The party supported and promoted the regulatory power of the state and social welfare programs to help the popular sectors. During the 1984 general elections the party nominated the eventual winner of the elections, World Bank vice president Nicolas Ardito Barletta. In 1989 the party supported the Noriega regime and nominated for the presidency a close business associate of Noriega, Carlos Duque.

Without the support of the military institution, the PRD was forced to undergo a restructuring process after the U.S. invasion. The party's statutes were reformed to promote internal democracy, and the party moderated its position on the role of the state. It came to support the privatization of some state-owned enterprises and reduction of government spending.

For the 1994 elections the party nominated its secretary-general, Ernesto Pérez Balladares. Pérez Balladares had served in the cabinet as minister of finance during the military regime. The party based its campaign on its opposition to the "corrupt" practices of the Endara government. The party made a great deal of its reorganization and newfound internal democracy. Whether or not it was now internally democratic was still an open question. What was true, however, was that its civilian leadership was now free to run the party without the intervention of the National Guard.

Throughout the 1990s the party continued efforts to reform its internal structure to be more democratic. The party was one of the first to institute primary elections for presidential and legislative nominations. For the 1999 presidential elections the PRD nominated Martin Torrijos, the son of the old military leader Omar Torrijos. The younger Torrijos lost those elections partly because of great dissatisfaction with the administration of PRD president Pérez Balladares. However, in the presidential elections held in May

2004 the party again nominated Torrijos, and this time he won with a substantial plurality of the votes. In both the 1999 and 2004 elections the PRD dominated the elections for the national assembly, although for the 1999–2004 legislative period the party was unable to build coalitions that could hold on to control of the assembly.

ARNULFISTA PARTY

(Partido Arnulfista; PA)

The Arnulfista Party was officially founded in 1990 as an attempt by supporters of Arnulfo Arias to recapture the lore and mystique of the dead caudillo. The party had been known by other names in the past: the Panameñista Party, Authentic Panameñista, and in the 1940s, the National Revolutionary Party.

In 1940 Arnulfo Arias founded the National Revolutionary Party. Its base of support was middle-class professionals and small and medium-size agricultural producers. The party was highly nationalistic and supported a program of social and political reforms based on the slogan "Panama for the Panamanians."

Arias influenced Panamanian politics until his death in 1988. He won the presidency in 1940, 1948, and 1968. He was overthrown by the military in 1941, 1951, and 1968, and he was denied victory in 1964 and 1984. For the elections of 1989 the party name and symbol were given to a rival of Arnulfo Arias by the military-dominated Electoral Tribunal. The candidates that supported the opposition had to run with the support of other political parties.

In 1994 the party nominated Arnulfo Arias's widow, Mireya Moscoso de Gruber, for the presidency. She invoked the memory of the dead leader and organized her campaign around his ideals and his "unfinished" work. Mireya Moscoso lost the 1994 elections but continued to lead the party, working to organize the campaign toward the next presidential elections in 1999. That year the party nominated Moscoso again, and she was elected. Since the constitution does not permit immediate reelection, in 2004 the party nominated José Miguel Alemán, who had served as foreign minister under Moscoso's administration. Alemán lost badly, coming in a distant third in the elections held May 2, 2004. However, the party elected 17 legislators, receiving almost twice the percentage of votes it received for president, which makes the PA the second most important party bloc in the national assembly. The party is now immersed in a bitter internal struggle between supporters of Moscoso and younger members who blame her administration and leadership for the party's defeat in the 2004 elections. The results of this struggle will determine whether the party will continue to be one of the two major parties in Panama.

SOLIDARITY PARTY

(Partido Solidaridad; PS)

This party was legalized in 1993. Its president was Samuel Lewis Galindo, a prominent businessman, owner of one of the largest breweries in the country. Other prominent members of the party included Fernando Manfredo, former vice administrator of the Panama Canal and member of the PRD, and Marisin V. de Arias, a prominent leader of the National Civic Crusade and member of the Liberal National Republican Movement (MOLIRENA).

Solidarity's membership comes primarily from disgruntled members of other political parties, particularly the PRD. At the beginning of the 1994 campaign the party had great hopes of being a pivotal actor in the electoral contest. In the end, its inability to negotiate an alliance with one of the major parties crippled its electoral options. The party had to settle for an alliance with the evangelical party, Mission of National Unity. Moreover, the desertion of Fernando Manfredo to Papa Egoro, the party of Ruben Blades, also crippled the electoral chances of the PS. Nevertheless, the party managed to gain four seats in the legislative assembly. In 1999 the PS supported the PRD candidacy of Martin Torrijos. After Torrijos's defeat several members of the PS switched their allegiance, although not their party registration, to the Arnulfista Party and supported President Moscoso's legislative initiatives. By the 2004 elections the PS had broken with Moscoso and the Arnulfista, and they nominated former president Guillermo Endara (1990–94). Endara received 30 percent of the vote, coming in second place. The party won nine legislative seats.

LIBERAL NATIONAL REPUBLICAN MOVEMENT

(Movimiento Liberal Republicano Nacionalista; MOLIRENA)

MOLIRENA was founded in 1982. The party was made up of a faction of the Liberal Party that opposed the results of the 1981 party convention. When the military regime announced the liberalization process in 1978, the political organizations that would form MOLIRENA joined the National Opposition Front.

In the 1984 elections the party supported the candidacy of Arnulfo Arias and in 1989 joined the opposition ticket headed by Guillermo Endara. The second vice presidential candidate on the ticket was Guillermo "Billy" Ford, a prominent member of MOLIRENA. During the Endara regime MOLIRENA was the principal promoter of the neoliberal restructuring program, which came to be known as "Plan Ford."

In the 1994 elections internal divisions within the party torpedoed the presidential aspirations of Billy Ford. The party eventually supported the candidacy of the former comptroller general, Ruben D. Carles. Carles, while a member of the party, had never been active in its internal affairs. His candidacy had been suggested and initially supported by powerful economic interests and two newly created political organizations, the Civic Renewal Party and the National Renovation Party.

After the party's defeat in 1994 the party allied itself with the Arnulfista Party, becoming one of the pillars of the latter's electoral strategy. In the elections of 1999 MOLIRENA supported the successful candidacy of Mireya Moscoso. As a reward for its support, MOLIRENA obtained the first vice presidency and significant clout within the cabinet. In 2004 the party again supported the Arnulfista candidacy; it won four seats in the Assembly elections.

Minor Political Parties

THE POPULAR PARTY

(Partido Popular; PP)

The Popular Party (known as the Christian Democratic Party until 2002) was founded in 1960. The party had its origins in the National Civic Union, founded in 1957. The members of the party came from several Catholic organizations such as the Catholic Young Worker's Organization and Catholic University Student's Movement. The party bases its ideology, as do most Christian Democratic parties, on the social doctrine of the Catholic Church.

During its early years the party presented itself as an alternative to the traditional political parties. Ideologically its position was somewhere between capitalism and Socialism. It spoke of a "capitalism with a social conscious."

The party participated for the first time in electoral politics in 1964. After the 1968 military coup the leaders of the party became the most ardent opponents of the military regime; many of them were sent into exile. In 1984 the party joined forces with Arnulfo Arias to lead the opposition ticket in the elections of that year. During the 1989 elections the party nominated Ricardo Arias Calderon, the party's longtime president, as first vice president in the opposition's ticket. The party was an active supporter of the Endara government until it was expelled from the governing coalition in 1991.

In 1994 the Christian Democrats failed to negotiate an agreement with other political parties to form an electoral alliance. Thus, the party nominated its own candidate and contested the elections alone. The party again presented itself as a third alternative between the "militarist" past represented by the PRD and the "corrupt" present of the Arnulfista government.

In 1999 the party won five Assembly seats, but in 2004 it garnered only one seat. In the presidential elections it supported the PRD's Martin Torrijos.

DEMOCRATIC CHANGE

(Cambio Democratico; CD)

This party was founded by Ricardo Martinelli, a prominent businessman and former director of the Social Security Administration. The party obtained the required 55,000 signatures in record time, a reflection of its financial resources. The party's statement of principles says it was born because of the "evident need for a profound and true change in the structures of the country." Initially the CD formed part of the governing coalition headed by the PRD. The party supported the PRD's efforts to change the constitution to permit residential reelections. However, once the constitutional reform failed to win popular approval, CD left the governing coalition and supported one of the opposition alliances for the May 1999 elections. In 2004 Democratic Change nominated its leader, supermarket magnate Ricardo Martinelli, for president. Martinelli obtained 5.3 percent of the votes, and the party will have three legislators for the 2004–09 period.

NATIONAL LIBERAL PARTY

(Partido Liberal Nacional; PLN)

This party joins MOLIRENA and the Liberal Party in claiming to represent the ideology of liberalism within Panamanian politics. The party was founded in 1997 by Raul Arango, a member of one of the most prominent families in Panama. The PLN represents the political interests within liberalism of those who supported the military-led regime of 1968–89 and also support the

PRD-led government of President Pérez Balladares. Raul Arango, for example, served as minister of the presidency in the Pérez Balladares administration. For the May 1999 elections the party supported an alliance headed by the PRD. In the 2004 elections the National Liberal Party supported the unsuccessful candidacy of José Miguel Alemán, thus following the pattern of 1999 of supporting the party in power.

Other Political Forces

CATHOLIC CHURCH

The Catholic Church has played an important role in Panama since the elections in 1994. Through its Commission of Peace and Justice (Comisión de Justicia y Paz), the church was able to bring together all the political parties in signing an Ethical and Moral Accord. The accord committed the political parties to "respect the popular decision that will be expressed in the polls." The agreement also committed the parties to engage in a clean and positive campaign.

The agreement was instrumental in putting pressure on the candidates and political parties to conduct positive campaigns. The agreement also brought the church and other groups involved with the Commission of Peace and Justice into the electoral process in a way that had never occurred before, thus increasing the role of civil society in the process. The Commission of Peace and Justice also conducted a parallel count during election day to back up the efforts of the Electoral Tribunal.

INTERNATIONAL PLAYERS

The United Nations has played an important role in the electoral process. The UN sponsored a meeting, known as Bambito (a resort in the westernmost province of Chiriqui), in which the presidents of all Panama's political parties were brought together to come up with a national agenda for dealing with the country's problems. The meetings leading up to Bambito and the final accord were instrumental in bringing political enemies together and ensuring a peaceful campaign.

The efforts of the Commission of Peace and Justice and the United Nations were vital in creating the conditions conducive to a free and transparent electoral process. A major concern at the start of the election was the possibility of violence; the efforts mentioned above contributed significantly in diffusing that possibility.

LABOR

Three factors have historically characterized Panama's labor movement: that ideological and political diversity have caused its relative weakness among organizations of civil society; that political parties have rarely sought to use labor as a significant organizational base; and that labor has traditionally organized itself in relation to the national state, whether in association with or opposition to the structures of the state. The relative weakness of labor is a result of the hypertrophy in the service sector of the economy. This sector is difficult to organize because of the temporary nature of many of its employees. Nevertheless, labor unions have played an important role in the nation's struggle to assert its independence from external forces. For the most part, trade unions in Panama are organized around labor federations that in turn are organized into national confederations. Some of the most important national confederations include the Confederation of Workers of the Republic of Panama, the National Worker's Central of Panama, and the General Central of Workers of Panama.

BUSINESS SECTOR

Since the birth of the republic, Panama's business sector has been dominated by an urban commercial elite engaged primarily in the emergence, through a program of import substitution industrialization, of a small but significant industrial sector. By the 1970s they were joined by banking interests spurred on by the creation of an International Banking Center in Panama City. Major business interests include the Chamber of Commerce, Industry, and Agriculture of Panama; the Industrial Union of Panama; and the Panamanian Association of Business Executives.

National Prospects

In the decades after the U.S. invasion, Panamanians have successfully established the institutional foundations of a liberal democracy. Since 1990 Panama has held several free, competitive elections (including three presidential and two constitutional reform elections) in which the opposition parties have emerged victorious. Much of the success of the elections is attributed to the institutionalization of an autonomous Electoral Tribunal. Another major accomplishment is the dismantling of the military apparatus and the creation of a new security structure that promotes civilian control. Moreover, there are clear signs that

Panamanian elites have learned to behave in a more democratic and conciliatory fashion, thus promoting the necessary agreements to establish democratic rules of the game. Nevertheless, Panama still faces significant challenges to the full consolidation of democracy. Some of these challenges are economic, such as chronic unemployment and underemployment, and widespread poverty in more than half of the population. Some are related to the efficient management of the Panama Canal and billions of dollars worth of land and infrastructure turned over by the United States. Others stem from a number of national security concerns ranging from increased drug trafficking to incursions by Colombian guerrillas into Panamanian territory. Still others derive from institutional and structural conditions, such as government corruption, a weak political party system, and asymmetrical power relations between the executive and other branches of the government.

Since the colonial period Panama has been a cosmopolitan society opened to the world's commerce and its diverse cultures. More than any country in Latin America, Panama has been built by the incorporation of diverse groups of people with their various customs and languages. While this openness has given Panama a rich and unique culture, the external influences have jeopardized Panama's sovereignty. However, with the transfer of the Panama Canal, the territorial integrity of the country has been restored, and Panamanians finally now manage the nation's most precious resource. In addition, all U.S. military installations were transferred to Panama, and a serious effort is under way to convert them into civilian productive endeavors. The transfer of both the canal and the military bases provide Panama with the opportunity to build a bright future for its people while continuing to serve as a bridge for the world's cultures and economies.

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INDEPENDANT STATE OF PAPUA NEW GUINEA

By Edward Dew, Ph.D.
Revised by Leon Newton, Ph.D.



Throughout much of its independent history, Papua New Guinea (PNG) has seen a rapid turnover of executive positions, reflecting a very fractionated multiparty system and shifting coalitions in its house of assembly, or legislature. This volatility, in turn, rests upon a multiethnic population of 5.9 million (2005 est.) like no other in the world. PNG is one of the most extreme examples of a culturally plural society, with more than 1,000 tribes and 850 languages spoken. English, Pidgin, and Motu serve as lingua francas, but the strength of village organization keeps the native languages going. Territorially, Papua New Guinea consists of the eastern half of the island of New Guinea (whose rugged northern half is rich in resources, while the southern coastal area houses the capital city of Port Moresby, population 200,000), a large number of islands in the Bismarck Archipelago to the north, and the island of Bougainville to the south.

The System of Government

Papua New Guinea is a constitutional monarchy with a parliamentary democracy. It has a unicameral legislature. The central government is responsible for national finance, infrastructure, defense, foreign relations, trade, schools, and hospitals, while the provinces are given responsibility for local education, industry, and business development.

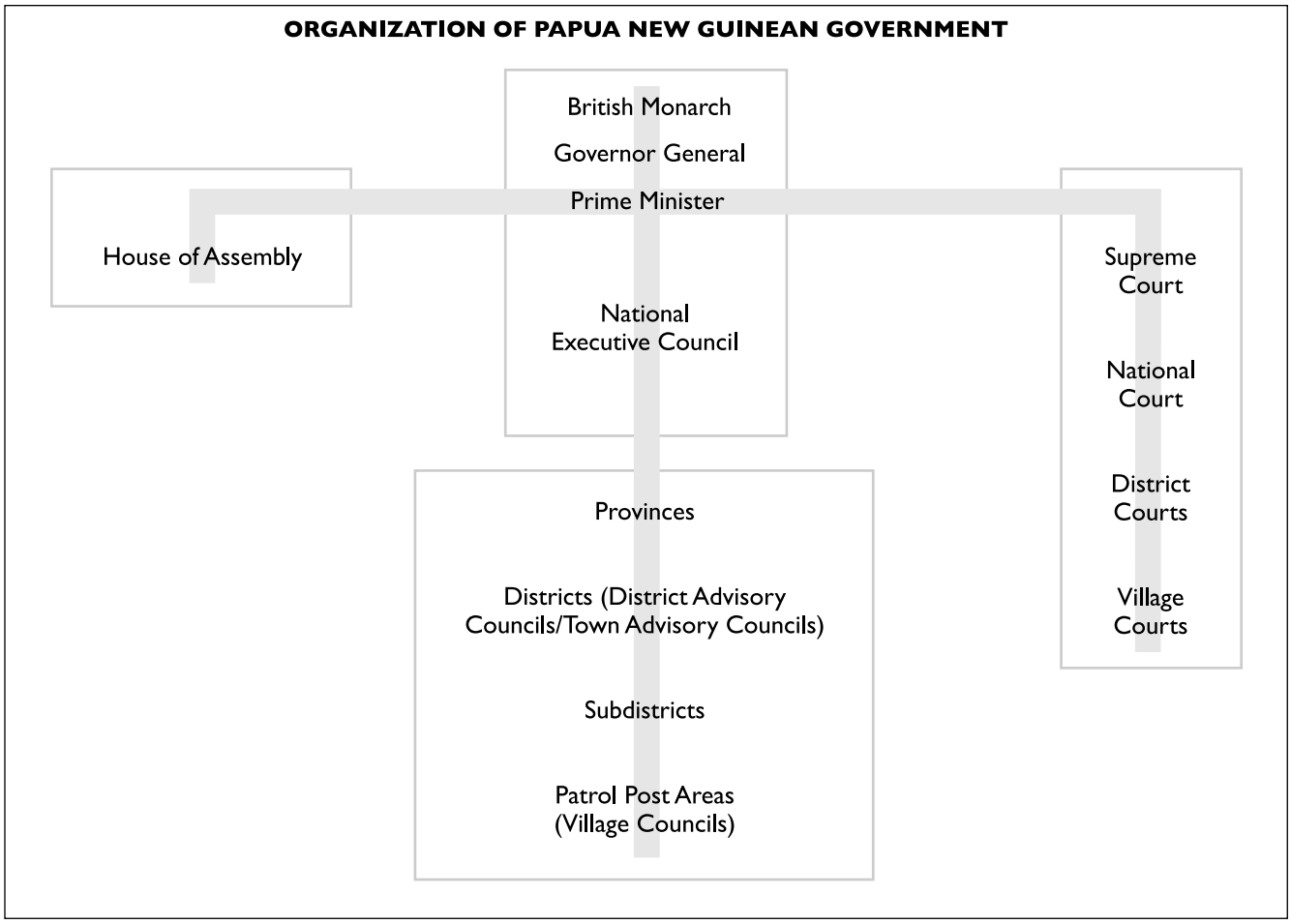
EXECUTIVE

Despite its lack of experience, upon independence on September 16, 1975, PNG acquired the trappings of a modern constitution and state. It had had no previous history of centralized government apart from a period of colonial administration by Australia. In the new constitution, the British monarch remains head of state, represented by a governor-general. The head of government is the prime minister, who is chosen from the majority party in the House of Assembly and formally approved by the governor-general.

LEGISLATURE

The unicameral legislature is the House of Assembly, consisting of 109 members headed by a prime minister chosen from their number. Elections are held every five years, with universal adult suffrage. The cabinet (called the national executive council) reflects the coalition's party base in the House. In such a plural society, competition over cabinet seats is a perennial source of instability both before and after formation. Party formation is still limited, and the large number of independents only complicates the process of aggregating a majority. Crossing the floor is frequent, usually for the promise of being able to offer constituency favors in this or a future government.

Each elector has two votes to cast for representation in the assembly. Elected at large are 20 members from the nation's 19 provinces and the National Capital District (Port Moresby), while the other 89 members represent



smaller, single-member districts, some of whose boundaries cut across provincial lines. As in all parliamentary systems, the legislature may oust the prime minister by vote of no confidence, a practice that has been all too frequent. The prime minister, for his part, may request the governor-general to dissolve the legislature and call new elections. The result of these various provisions has been a highly volatile political dynamic. New governments are protected by law from no-confidence votes for the first 18 months of their terms.

JUDICIARY

The legal system is based on English common law, a fact that suggests multiple problems for a plural society. Village courts, with local magistrates, hear simple cases. Land courts settle disputes over customary lands. The national court, at which a single judge sits, lies below the Supreme Court, the highest court and final court of appeal. The Supreme Court is also the court of first instance in matters requiring interpretation of the constitution. The chief justice is appointed and may be removed by the governor-general on the advice of the prime minister. At least three judges sit during a hearing. The judiciary is independent of the government and protects constitutional rights and interprets laws.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Regional government in the 19 provinces is a function of commissioners appointed by the central government advised by elected provincial assemblies. Port Moresby, the capital, and other cities have an elected municipal government, but the National Capital District, governing greater Port Moresby, remains under direct central control. There are also 145 local government councils and community governments.

The Electoral System

Citizens 18 years of age or over are eligible to vote. Because of the ruggedness of the country and remoteness of

some of the population, the election process takes a good amount of time (two weeks in 2002, from June 15 to 29). Candidates for the house of assembly are elected by simple majority. Given the number of parties and independent candidates, a plurality victory may be achieved with as little as 15 percent of the vote. Voting is by secret ballot, but because most of the population is illiterate, election officials are allowed to mark ballots according to the "whispered votes" given them by the voters. Turnout is high, as is often the case in fragmented societies. Allegations of electoral fraud are common, involving improper recording of "whispered votes," destruction of ballots, and tampering with sealed ballot boxes. In the three Highlands provinces, the most remote and yet politically competitive, election officials at times have been assaulted by supporters of unsuccessful candidates.

The Party System

The country's extreme segmentation has yielded an astounding number of parties, the most important of them serving as centrist, catchall parties. The personality of each of their charismatic leaders is important as a bonding agent, but members are very constituency-oriented. This is a consequence of the village basis of most of the society. Communal landownership, combined with deep ties of language and tribal origins, makes the village a unified bloc of votes that a candidate cannot easily disregard. Some parties have a larger localist base, as in the Highlands, Bougainville, and Port Moresby. In Port Moresby, which houses most of the civil service together with the expatriate business community, political interests focus heavily on national issues, foremost being infrastructural development.

Switching sides is not uncommon at any stage in the political process: campaigning, coalition formation, or crossing the aisle. Victory is determined by charisma, status in the community, and a readiness to distribute the wealth that is expected to come from officeholding. As promises are sometimes worth more than deliveries, incumbents do not fare too well in seeking a second term.

Major Political Parties

Political parties are very competitive in Papua New Guinea. No single party has ever won enough seats in the assembly to form a new government. In the 2002 elections seven parties won 69 seats in the House of Assembly, and another 40 seats were won by independents. The leading vote getter, the National Alliance Party (NA), managed to get only 19 seats (18 percent of the vote).

The other main vote getters were the United Resources Party (URP) with 14 seats and 13 percent of the vote, and the People's Democratic Movement (PDM) with 13 seats and 12 percent of the vote.

Minor Political Parties

Four minor parties managed to earn seats in the House of Assembly in the 2002 elections. The People's Progressive Party (PPP) earned eight seats with 8 percent of the vote; the Papua and Niugini Union Party (PANGU) earned six seats with 6 percent of the vote; People's Action Party (PAP), five seats with 5 percent of the vote; and People's Labor Party (PLP), four seats with 4 percent of the vote. Several additional parties took part in the election: the Christian Democratic Party, Melanesian Alliance Party (MAP), National Party (NP), Papua New Guinea National Party, People's National Congress (PNC), Pipol's First Party, and the Rural People's Party (RPP).

Other Political Forces

A chief outside force in PNG's political system is its neighbor, Australia, which annually supplies some $240 million in aid, a figure that constitutes 20 percent of PNG's annual budget. Australia is also PNG's largest trading partner. PNG relies heavily on Australian assistance in keeping its western border with Indonesia secure. In 2004 Australia deployed police forces to help PNG confront an epidemic of crime. However, the forces were removed in 2005 after the PNG Supreme Court found their presence unconstitutional.

National Prospects

Prime Minister Sir Julius Chan's government fell in March 1997 over the question of hiring foreign mercenaries to fight the secessionist rebels on the island of Bougainville. As news of this involvement spread, Brigadier General Jerry Singherok, commander of the Papua New Guinea Defence Force, called on Chan

to resign. Chan refused and seemed sustained in his act by the failure of a parliamentary vote of no confidence on March 25. But even as the mercenaries left the country, more than one thousand troops and civilians surrounded the parliament, trapping many of the members (MPs). As the siege continued, Chan announced his resignation. John Giheno was sworn in as caretaker prime minister, and general elections were called in June. After a month of deal making, Chan and Michael Somare came together to back the former governor of Port Moresby (and PNC leader), Bill Skate, as the new prime minister. As with several of his predecessors, the first item on Skate's agenda was the conflict in Bougainville.

Bougainville's location at the northern end of the Solomon Island chain and 400 miles to the east of PNG's population center, with a distinct culture and language of its own, creates a natural basis for a secessionist movement. Bougainville is the site of the Panguna copper mine, one of the principal sources of revenue for the PNG government. Labor issues between the Australian owners and local residents spread and escalated into violence and destruction at the mine. Then the issue escalated into an independence movement. A rebel Bougainville Revolutionary Army (BRA) succeeded in driving government forces from the island (population 120,000) in 1990–91. The copper mine then suspended operations indefinitely, depriving PNG of important revenues. A retaliatory government blockade had devastating effects on the island. This, combined with the failure of the BRA to win international recognition, led both sides repeatedly to explore an accommodation. The conflict finally came to an end with the signing of the Burnham Truce in 1997.

In 2002 Somare was elected as prime minister for the third time. Widely regarded as an honest politician, Somare has sought to stabilize the country's finances and governance. Still, an Australian study in 2004 warned that PNG was facing a potential economic and social collapse.

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REPUBLIC OF PARAGUAY

(República del Paraguay)
(Tetã Paraguáipe)

Revised by John Williams, Ph.D.
Further revision by Orlando J. Pérez, Ph.D.



Paraguay received its independence from Spain on May 14, 1811. The history of the Paraguayan political system can be divided into three main periods. The first (1811–70) was characterized by a very rudimentary legal and constitutional system and highly restricted political activity. The second period (1870–1954) was marked by the liberal constitution of 1870, extreme political instability, and the constitution of 1940, a turning point that led back to authoritarianism.

The third period, 1954 to 1990, was characterized by the authoritarian regime of General Alfredo Stroessner, who presided over the longest-lived dictatorship in the history of Paraguay and one of the longest in world history. In 1967 a new constitution was approved, and in 1977 it was amended to allow the president to run for office beyond the two five-year periods established in the original constitution. His tenure was ended only when his key army supporter, General Andrés Rodriguez, ousted him in a bloody coup in 1990. Rodriguez then engineered his own election to the presidency and promised free and open elections in 1993.

As president, Rodriguez instituted political, legal, and economic reforms and initiated a rapprochement with the international community. Meanwhile, General Lino Oviedo, an influential player in the military coup that ousted Strossner, began to climb the ranks within the Paraguayan army.

The June 1992 constitution established a democratic system of government and dramatically improved protection of fundamental rights. In May 1993 Colorado Party candidate Juan Carlos Wasmosy was elected as Paraguay's first civilian president in almost 40 years in what international observers deemed fair and free elections. The newly elected majority-opposition congress quickly demonstrated its independence from the executive by rescinding legislation passed by the previous Colorado-dominated congress. Wasmosy worked to consolidate Paraguay's democratic transition, reform the economy and the state, and improve respect for human rights. His major accomplishments were exerting civilian control over the armed forces and undertaking fundamental reform of the judicial and electoral systems.

In early 1996 President Wasmosy asked the army chief, General Lino Oviedo, leader of a Colorado Party faction, to resign. Initially General Oviedo refused, but he soon stepped down when President Wasmosy promised to appoint him defense minister. Wasmosy did not fulfill his pledge, however, and Oviedo allegedly took refuge in a military barracks and threatened a military coup d'état against Wasmosy. He later accused Wasmosy's administration of corruption. In September 1997 Oviedo was chosen the Colorado Party's presidential candidate for the May 1998 elections. While a significant faction of the party (including President Wasmosy) was vehemently opposed to his candidacy, Oviedo's popularity with the party rank-and-file won him the nomination. In October 1997 President Wasmosy issued an arrest warrant for Oviedo for his alleged coup attempt.

After a protracted legal battle the Supreme Court upheld Oviedo's conviction on charges related to the 1996 coup attempt, and he was not allowed to run. His running mate, Raul Cubas Grau, became the Colorado Party's candidate and was elected in May 1998. The assassination of Vice President Luis Maria Argaña and the killing of eight student antigovernment demonstrators, allegedly carried out by Oviedo supporters, led to Cubas's resignation in March 1999. The president of the Senate, Luis Gonzalez Macchi, assumed the presidency and completed Cubas's term. Gonzalez Macchi offered cabinet positions in his government to senior representatives of all three political parties in an attempt to create a coalition government that proved short-lived. Gonzalez Macchi's government suffered many allegations of corruption, and Gonzalez himself was found not guilty in a Senate impeachment trial involving corruption and mismanagement charges in February 2003. In April 2003 Colorado candidate Nicanor Duarte Frutos was elected president. Duarte's administration has focused upon attacking corruption and improving the quality of management in the wake of the Gonzalez administration, widely considered the most corrupt in the post-Stroessner era.

The System of Government

Paraguay is a presidentialist republic (described in the 1992 constitution as "a social state of law") and a unitary state. It has a bicameral legislature.

EXECUTIVE

Executive power rests with the president of the republic, whose term is five years and who is head of state and government and commander in chief of the armed forces. During debate over the 1992 constitution, the army attempted to reserve this title for a serving general, and the resultant compromise guaranteed a great deal of autonomy for the military. The constitution of 1992 provides that the president participates in the formation of laws and the preparation of the national budget; is in charge of foreign relations; has the power to appoint and dismiss the members of his cabinet; and indirectly designates the members of the Supreme Court (with the agreement of the Senate), the state general prosecutor (originally with the agreement of the Council of State, a body that has now been abolished), and judges (with the agreement of the Supreme Court).

The president can veto any law passed by congress; can no longer dissolve congress; and has the authority to dictate decree-laws while the congress is in recess (December 21 to April 1), although he has to submit them for approval within 60 days of the first meeting day of congress. The president is now subject to impeachment, and he can no longer decree a state of siege that would allow him to detain persons without legal procedure or forbid meetings and public demonstrations. His only option is to proclaim a "state of exception" in one or more departments (states), which is limited to 60 days and has to be approved by congress within 48 hours.

The president thus holds considerable power, though vastly less than before. This legal power is increased in practice, however, by the high degree of formalism that persists in the Paraguayan system.

The Council of State has been abolished. It had been used as a virtual alternative to congress by Stroessner.

PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS

Party	1998 Votes %	2003 Votes %
Asociación Nacional Republicana (ANR) (Colorado)	55.4	31.7
Partido Liberal Radical Auténtico (PLRA)	—	24.0
Alianza Democrática (AD) (PLRA-EN)	43.9	—
Movimiento Patria Querida	—	21.3
Unión Nacional de Ciudadanos Éticos	—	13.5
Others	0.77	9.5

LEGISLATURE

The legislature is composed of two chambers, the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies, with 45 (and 30 alternate) and "at least" 80 (and 80 alternate) members, respectively. The term of office is five years. In the past, both chambers usually met for an average of two hours per week, but the new constitution mandates annual sessions from March 1 to December 20. Each chamber has a president and two vice presidents elected by their peers.

The Senate is accorded the right to pass laws regarding the approval of international treaties, national defense, and expropriations. The Chamber of Deputies approves banking, taxing, and monetary laws, as well as the annual budget submitted by the president. The only real power that congress has vis-à-vis the president is the right to override a presidential veto with the vote of two-thirds of both chambers.

ELECTIONS FOR THE SENATE

Party	1998 # of Seats	2003 # of Seats
Asociación Nacional Republicana (ANR) (Colorado)	24	16
Partido Liberal Radical Auténtico (PLRA)	—	12
Encuentro Nacional (EN)	7	1
Alianza Democrática (AD) (PLRA-EN)	13	—
Movimiento Patria Querida	—	7
Unión Nacional de Ciudadanos Éticos	—	7
Partido Blanco	1	—
Partido País Solidario	—	2

ELECTIONS FOR CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES

Party	1998 # of Seats	2003 # of Seats
Asociación Nacional Republicana (ANR) (Colorado)	45	37
Partido Liberal Radical Auténtico (PLRA)	—	21
Encuentro Nacional (EN)	8	—
Alianza Democrática (AD) (PLRA-EN)	27	—
Movimiento Patria Querida (MPQ)	—	10
Unión Nacional de Ciudadanos Éticos (UNACE)	—	10
Partido País Solidario (PPS)	—	2

JUDICIARY

The highest court is the Supreme Court of Justice, now fixed at nine members appointed for their lifetimes by the president with the agreement of the Senate. Its political role is extremely restricted, and in practice the court will confine itself strictly to nonpolitical matters. The attorney general is now elected and, like the president and members of congress, serves a five-year term.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The country is composed of 18 political units, or states, called *departamentos* (departments). Each *departamento* is ruled by a president and a council elected by the people of the department. Their actions are largely oriented toward political and police matters. The *departamentos* are further divided into districts.

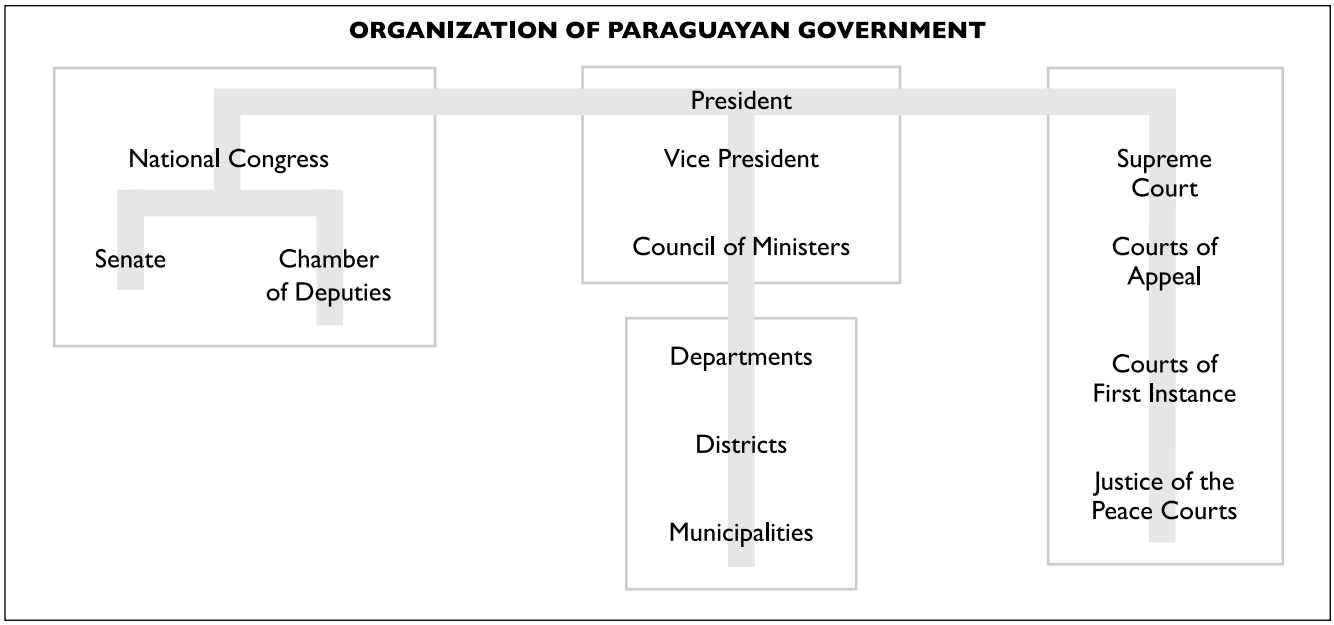
Administrative matters rest with a smaller unit, the municipality. Each of the municipalities is ruled by an *intendente* (mayor) elected by the people and by a *concejo municipal* (city council) elected by popular vote. The president can "intervene" in a municipality: take over its administrative functions, dismiss its mayor and councilmen, and call new elections within 60 days. The president must, within 48 hours, seek the approval of congress for an "intervention."

The Electoral System

The president, members of congress, and councilmen are elected through a system that is very much in flux. A two-party system had basically dominated the scene from the late 1870s until the 1950s, then fragmented and continues to change and shift in form. This fragmentation process was a largely successful political move of the government (completed in 1977), as a result of which the old and traditional Liberal Party was subdivided into a handful of parties.

Department and municipality politics tends to be a case of one party (normally the Colorados) dominating all posts at all levels. In many of these political subdivisions, it could be said that "politics" do not truly exist. On the local level the traditional *caudillo,* or political boss—again, mostly Colorados—simply lets it be known who will be "elected."

Suffrage is universal for all citizens age 18 and over, and compulsory for all adults between the ages of 18 and 75.



The Party System

The constitution proclaims the right to organize political parties but establishes that "the formation or functioning of parties whose purposes are to overthrow the republican system, the representative democratic form of government, or the system of competing parties" is not permitted.

Constitutional guarantees notwithstanding, the legal recognition of political parties depended for decades on the Central Electoral Board (Junta Electoral Central), which was empowered to grant parties the legal standing known as *personalidad jurídica*. In reality, what was supposed to be a merely administrative process has become a highly political one because the government has used this power to decide which sector or faction of a given opposition party will remain legitimate and which will be considered legally nonexistent. It also allows the government to manipulate party names, a very important factor in a largely traditional country.

For example, in 1963 the name Liberal Party was given to a tiny progovernment faction, thus depriving the majority of the party of its own name; they were later (1967) recognized as the Liberal Radical Party, a somewhat misleading name. In 1977 tiny factions of both the Liberal and Liberal Radical Parties, following a division, were allowed to use those names, again leaving the majority of both parties with neither name nor legal standing. The ideology of the remaining parties is vague, ranging from very conservative stances to a center ideological position. They are office-seeking parties, however, rather than ideological parties.

All parties are extremely centralized, but this is particularly true of the Colorado Party. Local and regional leadership is important only to secure support in party elections, and they do not significantly influence important political decisions. Since the approval of the new constitution, all organized political parties, including the Christian Democrats and the miniscule Communist Party, are legalized.

The selection of candidates for public office varies from party to party. Opposition parties hold relatively open and democratic elections to select delegates to a party convention, which, after much maneuvering, elects the party slate. The process is exactly the reverse in the case of the governmental party: Decisions are made at the very top level with little consultation with grassroots leaders, and the party convention has met only to ratify such decisions, until recently, by unanimous vote.

Although the opposition parties are much more open than they were, the elite groups that run the parties are small and quite closed. There is, to be sure, some mobility, but within restricted and very predictable limits. This no doubt helps explain the rise of the coalitions.

The membership in the highest executive bodies of the parties overlaps with membership in congress, so that the parliamentary party factions generally implement party decisions quickly. There have been some cases, however, in the opposition parties in which the forces in congress and in the party were at odds, resulting in strained relations between party members and congress.

Major Political Parties

COLORADO PARTY

(Asociación Nacional Republicana; Partido Colorado)

HISTORY AND ORGANIZATION

Founded in 1887, the Colorado Party is one of the two traditional parties. It has been in power from its foundation until 1904 and then from 1947 through late 2005. While conservative in ideology, it has become progressively less homogeneous in recent years. It has a highly centralized organizational structure composed of more than 200 *seccionales* (local branches) spread all over the country. The party is ruled by small, elite groups, most not in close contact with the president of the republic, who is also the honorary president of the party. It has no international affiliation. The party has several auxiliary organizations such as the youth movement, the women's movement, and an association for each profession, such as the Colorado Association of Lawyers. Through its auxiliary organizations, the party penetrates and attempts to control every area of social, economic, and political activity.

POLICY

The domestic policies of the mainstream of the party (that is, most of the factions) are very conservative. Its foreign policy is extremely anti-Communist. As to the relations it maintains with its biggest neighbors, Argentina and Brazil, the party has generally leaned toward Brazil.

MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY

The party has no particular area of strength, but the peasants of the central part of the country surrounding the capital city are said to be its most loyal political supporters. In the Stroessner years this area provided an extralegal "militia," the party's muscle, which was called upon to intimidate the opposition.

FINANCING

No reliable figures regarding party finances are available, but its budget is certainly substantial. Contributions come from membership dues and, until 1992, came from public employees, who contributed a percentage of their wages.

PROSPECTS

The Colorado Party continues to be the main political force in the country. While it no longer has an undisputed majority in either house of the legislature, the fact that it was able to win another term for president in 2003, even after numerous corruption scandals and a downturn in the economy during the previous government, is a testament to the strength of the party. The Colorado Party will continue to use the mechanisms of government to influence people's vote and to distribute patronage to its supporters. The party continues to be particularly strong in the rural areas.

LIBERAL RADICAL AUTHENTIC PARTY

(Partido Liberal Radical Auténtico; PLRA)

One of the two traditional parties, the Liberal Party was founded in 1887. It was in power between 1904 and 1936 and again between 1937 and 1939. In 1962 the party split into the Liberal Party and the (decidedly nonradical) Liberal Radical Party, the latter enjoying the most support and the former constituting a very small fraction that participated in the 1963 elections and won seats in the 1963–68 congress.

In 1977, after a short-lived reunification, both parties underwent further divisions, from which emerged the Liberal Party, the Liberal Teeté Party, and the stronger and growing Liberal Radical Authentic Party.

The PLRA is a centrist party, with its youth leaning toward the left. It abstained from participating in the 1977 convention to amend the constitution and the 1978 presidential and congressional elections. The PLRA was the leading force in the Acuerdo Nacional (National Pact), an opposition front composed in part of illegal parties: the Partido Revolucionario Febrerista (PRF), the Christian Democratic Party (PDC), and the Movimiento Popular Colorado (MOPOCO).

In the 2003 elections its presidential candidate, Julio César Ramón Franco Gómez, won nearly 24 percent of the vote, finishing second behind Duarte.

Minor Political Parties

NATIONAL UNION OF ETHICAL CITIZENS

(Unión Nacional de Ciudadanos Éticos; UNACE)

This party was founded in 2002 by followers of former General Lino Oviedo. The party gathers members of the Colorado Party that support the presidential candidacy of the former army chief of staff. Between 1999 and 2002 this movement worked within the Colorado Party

to advance Oviedo's candidacy, obtaining 35 percent of votes in the Colorado primaries in 2001. After the movement's defeat within the Colorado Party Oviedo and his followers decided to form their political organization. Oviedo himself, however, was not allowed to run for president because of his participation in an attempted coup in 1996, so his hand-picked candidate, Guillermo Sánchez Guffanti, ran as the party's standard bearer in 2002. UNACE received 13.5 percent of the presidential votes and 7 and 10 seats in the Senate and Chamber of Deputies, respectively.

MOVEMENT FOR THE BELOVED FATHERLAND

(Movimiento Patria Querida; MPQ)

The origins of MPQ date to 1999 and the movement Paraguay Jaipotava (The Paraguay We Want), founded by lay Catholics. In 2001 Pedro Fadul, a prominent businessman and leader of the Association of Catholic Businessmen, took control of the movement and founded the current party. Fadul was the party's presidential candidate in 2003. The party is primarily led by businessmen and composed of young professionals. Many members of the National Encounter Party are now supporting MPQ. Beloved Fatherland seeks to challenge the control of the traditional parties and introduce a "new way" of doing politics, devoid of the traditional reliance on patronage and corruption. The party managed to receive more than 20 percent of the presidential votes in 2003, coming close to challenging the second-place finish of the PLRA.

NATIONAL ENCOUNTER PARTY

(Partido de Encuentro Nacional; PEN)

This party was founded in 1991. The main mission was to challenge the dominance of the Liberal and Colorado parties. The party had significant success in the presidential elections of 1993, receiving more than 20 percent of the vote. In 1996 the party formed an alliance with the PLRA that won the mayoral elections of the capital city of Asuncion. In 1998 the PLRA and PEN formed the Democratic Alliance, which managed to receive almost 44 percent of the presidential votes and substantial numbers in the Senate and Chamber of Commerce. The PEN decided to join the government coalition in 1999. The scandals and economic problems of the government during the period 1999–2003 precipitated a process of disintegration in the PEN that persists.

OTHER MINOR PARTIES

There are a number of other minor parties, none of which have substantial public support or representation, including Partido País Solidario, Partido Frente Amplio, Movimiento Fuerza Ciudadana, Movimiento Fuerza Democrática Independiente, Partido Demócrata Cristiano, and Partido Humanista Paraguayo.

Other Political Forces

MILITARY

Since the late 19th century the military has been a decisive force in Paraguayan politics. Its role has increased since the 1960s. Originally highly politicized, it has gradually moved toward professionalism, especially since the early 1970s. Yet it is still extremely political, and to be an officer is still by definition to be a Colorado, although there is now no legal basis for this exclusionary policy. As in political parties, factions exist within the small army, for the most part along generational lines.

The leading traditionalist for many years was General Lino Oviedo, who headed the strategic First Army Corps before being appointed commanding general. A reputed presidential aspirant, he would, under the new constitution, have to resign his commission to run. In late April 1996 Oviedo resolved this problem in a bizarre manner. He formally accused the president of corruption and, with other officers, holed up in the main barracks in downtown Asunción. It appeared to be the first step in a coup. However, within two days Oviedo had what he apparently sought. He resigned his army commission and became minister of defense in the Wasmosy cabinet: an uncomfortable arrangement for the president but a major step for Oviedo in the direction of the presidential palace. Within days he was forced to resign. He was eventually exiled to Argentina and then Brazil, but returned to Paraguay in 2004, only to be arrested and forced to serve a 10-year sentence for plotting to overthrow the government in the late 1990s.

Among younger officers, many trained in the United States or in Panama, there are a number who are rumored to covet the presidency, but it would appear that for the foreseeable future the office will be occupied by civilians.

CATHOLIC CHURCH

From the late 1960s onward the Roman Catholic Church constituted a formidable force of moral oppo-

sition to the Stroessner regime. Its liberal wing, in part ensconced in the Catholic University, controls most of the key positions in the church. It organized a people's conscience movement against the government, and Archbishop Ismael Rolón, who was a member of Stroessner's Council of State, remained a constant critic of despotism and human rights abuses until his retirement in 1989. Its publication, *Sendero* (often confiscated as it hit the street in the Stroessner years), harshly criticized the government and accused Stroessner of totalitarianism.

Beginning in 1985, in collusion with the Acuerdo Nacional, Rolón and his bishops and priests began, as an institution, to call for political liberalization. They openly condemned the regime for human rights abuses, sponsored a successful mass silent march in Asunción in 1987, and attempted, with some success, to mediate between the government and the growing number of malcontents. Thoroughly distanced from the Stroessner government for years before its fall, the church by 1989 had both respect and credibility, and while its overt political role (now barely visible) had been somewhat subtle, it was clear to all that it possessed considerable potential clout in the political sphere.

STUDENTS

Until the early 1970s student organizations were a major opposition force. The Movimiento Independiente (Independent Movement) orchestrated mass demonstrations and other forms of protest. After that point, however, government repression and major Colorado Party measures to infiltrate and take over student groups seriously weakened the students' power. However, in the late 1990s student organizations once again became a force, organizing massive demonstrations that helped topple President Cubas and forced both him and General Oviedo into exile.

PEASANTS

In the late 1960s and 1970s a relatively strong agrarian movement emerged with firm church support. The increasingly nervous government ruthlessly repressed the movement, arresting thousands, killing some, and outlawing various peasant groups and organizations. In the early 1980s, however, in the wake of an agricultural recession, growing population, increasing concentration of land in fewer and fewer hands, and severe floods, the peasants reorganized and again became a potent force. They successfully occupied underutilized lands and defied the government to evict them. In 1985 a permanent peasant assembly was officially but reluctantly recognized by the regime. There were some bloody confrontations with police and army during Rodriguez's tenure.

The peasants formed their own quasi-union, the umbrella Mesa Coordinadora Nacional de Organizaciones Campesinas, or National Coordinating Table of Peasant Organizations. They launched massive protests that caused the government to thoroughly overhaul the IBR and make other concessions. The Mesa, in a sense, was the flip side to the venerable Asociación Rural, an influential pressure group of large landholders that long had the ear of the government. Finally, it should be noted that the Enxet and other Indian tribes of the Chaco (western Paraguay), recognized now by the constitution as "peoples" and expressly given the vote, have emerged as a strong and savvy political force in their own region. This was unthinkable a decade ago.

ORGANIZED LABOR

Long dominated by the Confederación Paraguaya de Trabajadores (CPT), a government-controlled labor organization, the few existing Paraguayan organized workers had little influence on the Stroessner regime or its economic policies. However, largely as a result of the massive 1975–82 building boom created by the immense Itaipú and Yací-Retá hydroelectric projects and accelerating inflation, independent labor unions and blocs organized and become vocal. Of these, the most notable were the Central Unitaria de Trabajadores (Workers' Unitary Central), the Central Nacional de Trabajadores (Workers' National Central), and the Central de Sindicatos de Trabajadores del Estado (State Workers' Central Union). Under the constitution of 1992, public employees (except for the police and military) were for the first time permitted to unionize, and both strikes and lockouts are now legal. General strikes (the first since 1958) for higher wages and other specifics in 1994, 1996, and 2000 were partially successful.

National Prospects

Democratic governance was restored in Paraguay in 1989 when Stroessner was ousted in a military coup. The June 1992 constitution established a democratic system of government and dramatically improved protection of fundamental rights. Despite the new constitution and competitive elections, however, the

1990s saw great upheavals in Paraguay, including an attempted coup in 1996 precipitated by the ouster of the army chief of staff, General Lino Oviedo, and the assassination of the vice president in 1998 in which Oviedo and his followers were implicated. Prior to the assassination of the vice president, the congress had initiated impeachment proceedings against President Cubas, who had won the elections of 1998 with the support of Oviedo. After the assassination, massive student protests forced both President Cubas and General Oviedo to flee the country. Senate president Luis González Macchi was inaugurated president on March 23, 1999. Despite early optimism stemming from the removal of President Cubas and the "national unity" government, the González Macchi administration was soon mired in a web of corruption and mismanagement. In 2002 the president was found to be driving a stolen car, and in 2003 he narrowly survived impeachment after being accused of mishandling $16 million in state funds. The economy hit its lowest level in two decades with the help of Argentina's economic collapse, and the number of Paraguayans living in poverty has risen to more than one-third. Unemployment as of 2004 was more than 15 percent. The country's fiscal deficit soared.

Despite the economic and political problems, on April 27, 2003, Paraguayans voted to reelect the Colorado Party into power, thus extending the party's control of the presidency, which it has had since 1947. With government corruption on the rise and the economy sliding deeper into crisis, opposition parties had viewed the election as their best chance of unseating the Colorados since General Stroessner was ousted in 1989. But the Colorado candidate, Nicanor Duarte Frutos, campaigned cleverly, playing on people's fears of rising crime and on nostalgia for the Stroessner days when Asunción was so safe and sleepy that residents did not need to lock their houses or cars. He also employed the Colorados' political machine, which pervades nearly all sectors of Paraguayan society, controlling state sector jobs and supplying rural communities with many of their needs.

Duarte has been successful at working constructively with an opposition-controlled congress, and in his first year of office six Supreme Court justices suspected of corruption were removed and major tax reforms were enacted. Macroeconomic performance has improved significantly under the Duarte administration, with inflation falling significantly and the government clearing its arrears with international creditors. Unemployment remains stubbornly high, and the living standard of most households has not improved. The administration has placed a strong emphasis on participating in international institutions and has used diplomacy to promote the opening of international markets to Paraguayan products. In June 2004 Oviedo returned to Paraguay from exile in Brazil and was imprisoned for his 1996 coup-plotting conviction. A few months later a Paraguayan court requested the extradition from Brazil of former strongman Alfredo Stroessner.

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REPUBLIC OF PERU

(República del Perú)

By Gregory D. Schmidt, Ph.D.
Revised by David M. Goldberg, Ph.D.



Peru covers just over 1.28 million square kilometers on the western portion of South America. Peru shares a border with Ecuador, Colombia, Brazil, Bolivia, and Chile. In 2005 the population was estimated at just under 28 million people. The people of Peru are 45 percent Amerindian, 37 percent *mestizo* or mixed race, 15 percent white, and the remainder a mix of African, Japanese, and Chinese descent. Spanish and Quechua serve as the official languages. In addition, Aymara and a significant number of Amazonian languages are spoken. More than 90 percent of the population identifies with the Roman Catholic Church, while some Protestant denominations have made inroads in the population. The country is divided between three distinct geographic regions. A narrow strip of land from the ocean inland, including the capital of Lima, receives very little precipitation. The Andes Mountains make up a significant portion of the terrain and contain some of the highest peaks in the hemisphere. The eastern third of the country consists of the Amazon jungle. Peru's history and people have been profoundly shaped by this geographic diversity. The populations in the Andes and the Amazon have long been alienated from the social, political, and economic development in Lima and other large cities. The result is the indigenous and mixed-race populations in those areas have lagged significantly behind in education, health care, and economic opportunity. Attempts to decentralize political and economic power to address this imbalance have met with mixed results. Political and economic upheaval over the past 25 years has been a source of instability while offering the potential for optimism.

Despite its status as a republic Peru has repeatedly been governed by authoritarian and semi-authoritarian regimes. From 1968 to 1980 Peru was ruled by a reformist military regime that instituted economic, agricultural, and educational reforms throughout the country. In 1979 a new constitution was ratified, and presidential elections were held in 1980. Two democratically elected presidents, Fernando Belaunde (1980–85) and Alan García (1985–90), had mixed results in facing a growing list of problems. As a debt crisis engulfed Latin America, the Peruvian economy imploded with pale reform efforts from both administrations. A brutal insurgency from the Maoist Shining Path (Sendero Luminoso) and Marxist Túpac Amaru Revolutionary Movement (Movimiento Revolucionario Túpac Amaru; MRTA) challenged the new democracy and reinforced a critical role for the military and security services in combating the uprisings. By the early 1990s nearly 70,000 people lost their lives through guerrilla and government violence. Human rights abuses on both sides drew the attention of the international community. As the 1990 presidential elections grew closer the economic situation worsened, and Shining Path violence spiraled out of control. Voter dissatisfaction with the political and economic status quo was reflected in the elections. Alberto Fujimori, a political neophyte, university administrator, and engineer by training, was able to capitalize on voter discontent. Fujimori went from an also-ran to placing second

in the first round and winning the second round by a significant margin. In office he continued to actively deride political parties and the congress.

On April 5, 1992, Fujimori suspended the legislature and judiciary and seized absolute power for himself in a presidential self-coup (*auto-golpe*). Domestically, Fujimori's actions were greeted with overwhelming support in part because of growing Shining Path violence in Lima and around the country. Internationally, strong criticism was virtually unanimous, and Fujimori responded by agreeing to new elections for a constituent congress (Congreso Constituyente Democrático; CCD) and ultimately the drafting of a new constitution. Both the new legislature and the drafting of the new constitution were heavily dominated by parties and factions loyal to Fujimori. In 1995 Fujimori was reelected in a decisive first-round victory. The outcome was decided by his handling of the Shining Path and MRTA and for effecting an economic recovery in the mid-1990s. In addition, his opponent, former UN Secretary-General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, had little popular support domestically and had long resided outside of Peru.

After the self-coup in 1992 and the reelection in 1995, the government of Alberto Fujimori became increasingly authoritarian. The national intelligence service (SIN) was tied to several high-profile massacres and increasingly attempted to intimidate the media and political organizations. The head of the intelligence service, Vladimiro Montesinos, exerted greater control over the day-to-day running of the government in all aspects. As in many Latin American countries, the Peruvian constitution had a strict prohibition on a president serving more than one consecutive term in office. After considerable controversy, a loyal legislature and divisive constitutional tribunal opened the door for Fujimori to run for a third term in 2000. As the election neared, the security forces increased their role, and state resources increased as well, resulting in a skewed electoral playing field. Both the opposition and international observers expressed serious reservations about the potential for a free and fair election. After briefly claiming a first-round victory amid considerable allegations of fraud and irregularities, Fujimori agreed to a runoff election against Alejandro Toledo. As pressure on Fujimori from the domestic opposition and international observers mounted, there was little commitment to implementing necessary reforms. At least partially as a result, Toledo dropped out of the second round, and many international observers withdrew their support for the process. Fujimori went on to win the second round with 51 percent of the total vote and 73 percent of the valid vote. Toledo, whose name appeared on the ballot, won 25 percent of the vote. Nearly 31 percent of Peruvians cast blank or defaced ballots. According to law all Peruvians are required to cast a vote. Against the backdrop of a deeply divided country, Fujimori was sworn in for an unconstitutional third term. Citizens took to the streets of Lima to protest, and there were several bombings and incidents of violence that resulted in death. While Fujimori controlled the presidency, his electoral coalition was unable to win a majority in the congress. Gradually over the course of the summer, opposition members of congress began to cross the aisle to vote with the government's coalition. The impression was that members were being bribed or blackmailed into creating a majority for Fujimori. The rumor was confirmed when a video was released showing Montesinos offering a congressman thousands of dollars in exchange for his vote. Within a short time Fujimori fled to Japan, where he faxed his resignation. As the full extent of illegal activities under Fujimori's rule was exposed, a caretaker government was installed and new presidential and legislative elections were called for the following year.

In 2001 Toledo defeated former president Alan García 53 percent to 47 percent in a runoff election to win the presidency. Japan took no action in response to Peru's request for extradition of Fujimori, but in November 2005 he was arrested in Chile while making plans to run for president again in 2006; authorities in Peru and Chile began negotiations over his possible extradition to Peru. In 2003 Montesinos was sentenced to a 15-year prison term for his role in the corruption and illegality of the previous decade. By 2004 Toledo's administration was rocked by street protests and scandals involving administration members and members of his family.

The System of Government

According to the 1993 constitution Peru is a republic with a presidency, unicameral legislature, and judiciary. The country is divided into 24 departments and one constitutional province. Peru has begun a process of decentralizing power to the departments by giving the regions greater autonomy and citizens the opportunity to elect regional leaders.

EXECUTIVE

The president is Peru's chief executive and head of state. Historically, the sitting president was limited to

a single five-year term in office. The 1993 constitution allowed the president to run for a second term (Article 112). In 2000 the constitution was changed to prohibit an immediate consecutive term for the president. Each presidential candidate has two running mates for the first and second vice presidencies. The first vice president, and then the second vice president, replaces a chief executive who dies, resigns, or is removed from office.

The president has only a weak veto, which can be overridden by an absolute majority of congress, but he may exercise a wide array of decree powers. Indeed, during the 1980–92 period most legislation was enacted through various kinds of presidential decrees. The chief executive may issue "decrees of urgency with the force of law, on economic and financial matters, when so required by the national interest" (1993 constitution, Article 118–19). In practice, this provision has become a source of general decree authority because "economic and financial matters" can be stretched to cover most any subject, and no objective criteria for defining "the national interest" are specified. Congress also may pass statutes that delegate legislative authority to the president on specific subjects for a set period of time, though the delegation of certain matters is proscribed. In addition, the chief executive can unilaterally set tariffs and promulgate the budget and the audit of the budget if congress fails to act by the constitutionally stipulated deadlines. Certain types of treaties do not require congressional approval.

Peruvian presidents may suspend civil liberties under certain circumstances. States of emergency can be declared for up to 60 days in the event of internal disorder, catastrophe, or grave circumstances, with no limit on renewal. Under states of emergency, residences may be searched without warrants, the rights to assemble and travel can be suspended, and people may be indefinitely detained. The more serious state of siege can be decreed for up to 45 days in the case of invasion, foreign war, civil war, or the imminent threat of any of these. All rights, except arguably those protected by the Inter-American Human Rights Convention, may be suspended under a state of siege. Although a state of siege has never been declared, beginning in the early 1980s Peruvians have lived under continuously renewed states of emergency promulgated in response to the Shining Path and the MRTA.

The president carries out treaties, laws, and other legal dispositions. Most important laws passed by congress cannot be implemented without comprehensive administrative regulations (*reglamentos*) formulated by the executive branch. The president is the head of the national police and the armed forces (at least nominally), directs Peru's foreign policy, appoints ambassadors, and may declare war or the end of war with authorization from congress. In addition, the chief executive can grant pardons and commute sentences.

The president appoints and may remove the prime minister and the other members of the cabinet, who also must enjoy the confidence of congress. The prime minister coordinates the work of the cabinet and chairs its meetings when the chief executive is not present. The cabinet must approve decrees of urgency, those issued under legislative delegation and others specified by law, as well as bills proposed by the executive branch, presidential messages to congress, and ambassadorial appointments. In addition, all official acts of the president must be countersigned by one or more ministers.

Although the prime minister and his colleagues do not exercise independent political authority, the requirements of cabinet and ministerial approval can exert a moderating influence on the president. During the 1980–92 period all but one prime minister were members of congress, and legislators frequently held cabinet posts. Ministers are politically accountable to both congress and the chief executive, and they are also legally responsible for the presidential acts they countersign. In addition, the cabinet as a whole is legally responsible for any violations of the constitution or laws by the chief executive; a minister is absolved of this responsibility only if he or she resigns.

LEGISLATURE

During the course of modern Peruvian political history, executive-legislative relations have resembled volcanic cycles: Long periods of relative tranquility have been interrupted by short spurts of furious activity. Although congress has seldom been quiescent, it has usually deferred to the president when in session during periods of extraconstitutional government or limited democracy (1933–36, 1939–45, 1950–56) and when controlled by a majority coalition supportive of the chief executive (1956–62, 1980–90, 1992–95, 1995–2000). However, conflicts between the two branches "erupted" during the 1945–48, 1963–68, and 1990–92 periods when the president's supporters were minorities in congress. All three "eruptions" contributed to breakdowns of democracy, although this outcome was by no means inevitable.

Until 1992 congress was comprised of two houses, a Chamber of Deputies (Cámara de Diputados) and a Senate (Senado). The 1993 constitution created a uni-

cameral congress with 120 members. These legislators elect a speaker, whose title is the president of congress; a steering committee; and a permanent committee, which is composed of no more than a quarter of the membership. As under the 1979 charter, congress is elected every five years concurrently with the president of Peru.

Congress meets in ordinary session from July 27 to December 15 and from March 1 to June 15. Congressional rules stipulate that the speaker may extend these sessions in order to deal with a specific agenda and that the legislature must be convened upon the request of an absolute majority of its members. The president also can call an extraordinary session and must do so if he appoints a new cabinet during a recess. Congress automatically convenes upon the promulgation of a state of siege.

The prime minister and the cabinet are subject to congressional confidence. Each cabinet must receive a vote of confidence within 30 days of its appointment, and the prime minister may make a legislative proposal a matter of cabinet confidence. Moreover, congress can interpellate and censure the cabinet or specific ministers, who also may request individual votes of confidence. If the cabinet is censured or defeated in a vote of confidence, it must resign. The same is true for individual cabinet members. If two cabinets are dismissed by congress, the president can dissolve the legislature and hold new elections, except during the last year of his term or a state of siege. In the event of dissolution the permanent committee continues to function until members of the new congress take their seats.

Congress has other important checks over the executive branch. By only a simple majority, it may dismiss the president for "moral or physical incapacity." The president, cabinet members, and other officials can be impeached by only a simple majority of the permanent committee and convicted by only a simple majority of the remaining legislators. Although a sitting president may be impeached and tried only on certain charges (treason, impeding elections, interfering with the functioning of congress), he can be prosecuted on other matters for five years after the end of his term. Congressional consent is required for the extension of a state of siege, the most important kinds of treaties, loans to the government, and foreign travel by the president.

Although the president may veto bills passed by congress, the latter can override him with only an absolute majority. Thus a majority of legislators can repeal a decree issued under legislative delegation by passing a law over the chief executive's veto. Congress also may annul or modify decrees of urgency by passing a resolution that cannot be vetoed. Only the president may initiate expenditure bills, but congress can amend the chief executive's proposals during the appropriations process. The permanent committee must approve any supplementary spending bills or modifications to the budget while congress is in recess. The constitution can be amended by an absolute congressional majority and a national referendum or by two-thirds of the members of congress in two successive legislative sessions.

Congress may delegate legislative authority to its permanent committee with the same restrictions that apply to legislative delegation to the executive branch. The permanent committee must ratify the president's nominees to head the General Controller's Office, Central Bank, and Superintendency of Banking and Insurance. In addition, the full congress elects three of the seven Central Bank directors, may remove the general controller, and can grant amnesty.

Congress has formidable oversight authority, but its staff and resources are quite limited. Moreover, when the president's party or coalition has held a majority (1956–62, 1980–90, and 1992–2000), congress generally has lacked the political will to check executive authority or scrutinize governmental actions. Indeed, the pro-Fujimori CCD and 1995–2000 congress obsequious to the executive and his allies in the military. In contrast, presidents lacking congressional majorities (1945–48, 1963–68, and 1990–92) faced much greater scrutiny from a relatively powerful congress. Since the resignation of Fujimori new legislative elections have done little to strengthen the role of parties in the politics of Peru. While Toledo's party (Perú Posible) controls a plurality of seats in the congress (45/120), it is well short of a majority. Given the short life of the party and comparatively shallow roots of support, it is unlikely to outlive the presidency of Toledo in any meaningful way.

JUDICIARY

Peruvian law is based on the Napoleonic model, but reforms have introduced some features borrowed from the United States. Prior to the 1979 constitution judicial relief from unconstitutional or illegal norms was possible only on a case-by-case basis. The principle of constitutional supremacy was explicitly established in the 1979 charter, which created a hybrid judiciary combining a European-style constitutional court with U.S.-style, litigation-based review in the regular courts of the judicial branch (*poder judicial*). During the late 1980s and early 1990s this hybrid judiciary demonstrated

increasing independence by issuing numerous injunctions against the García administration's takeover of private banks and by ruling that several presidential decrees issued by Fujimori were unconstitutional. However, its reputation was badly soiled by widespread allegations of corruption, politicization, incompetence, and intimidation. Although the 1993 constitution increased the judiciary's independence from the executive by eliminating the president's role in appointing magistrates and judges, pro-Fujimori congressional majorities eviscerated the principle of judicial autonomy. Since Fujimori's departure, efforts have been undertaken to reform the judiciary and restore its standing in the eyes of the Peruvian people.

2001 CONGRESSIONAL ELECTION RESULTS

Party	Votes	%	Seats
Perú Posible	2,477,536	26.30	45
APRA	1,857,309	19.71	27
Unidad Nacional	1,303,976	13.84	17
FIM	1,034,684	10.98	12
Solución Popular	336,676	3.57	1
Renacimiento Andino	127,707	1.36	1
Proyecto País	155,567	1.65	1
Todos por la Victoria	191,181	2.03	0
Somos Perú	544,187	5.78	4
Cambio 90–Nueva Mayoría	452,360	4.80	3
Acción Popular	393,426	4.18	3
Unión por el Perú	390,229	4.14	6
FREPAP	156,259	1.66	0
Total Valid Votes	9,421,097	100	120
Null Votes	1,349,005	11.26	
Blank Votes	1,213,212	10.12	
Total Votes Emitted	11,983,314	100	

Eligible to Vote: 14,906,233 - Absenteeism: 18.39%

Source: Oficina Nacional de Procesos Electorales

The seven magistrates of the Constitutional Tribunal (Tribunal Constitucional) and an ombudsman (*defensor del pueblo*) are elected by a two-thirds majority of the members of congress. The magistrates serve concurrent five-year terms, cannot stand for immediate reelection, and may be removed by congress through the impeachment process. The ombudsman also serves a five-year term and can be dismissed by a two-thirds vote of congress or impeachment and conviction.

The tribunal mediates disputes among governmental institutions and rules on challenges to the constitutionality of laws, decrees of urgency, decrees issued under legislative delegation, treaties, congressional rules, legislation passed by future regional governments, and municipal ordinances. Petitions of unconstitutionality may be filed by the president, the chief state's attorney, the ombudsman, one-fourth of the members of congress, or 5,000 citizens. Regional governments, municipalities, and professional colleges also can petition with regard to matters within their legal competency or specialty. Municipal ordinances may be challenged by 1 percent of the affected population or 5,000 citizens, whichever is less.

The National Council of the Judiciary oversees the judicial branch and the Academy of the Magistracy, which trains judges and state's attorneys. Making up the Council are two representatives from nonlegal professional associations and single members designated by the Supreme Court, high-level state's attorneys, the national bar associations, the presidents of public universities, and the presidents of private universities. The Council also may elect two additional members from nominees submitted by entrepreneurial and labor organizations.

By a two-thirds vote, the National Council of the Judiciary selects all state's attorneys and the most important judges in the judicial branch, including Supreme Court justices, from among candidates competing in open searches. The Council also must ratify state's attorneys and judges every seven years after an evaluation of their performance, and it may dismiss them at any time for misconduct. Congress can impeach and convict members of the Council, high-level state's attorneys, and Supreme Court justices. The 1993 constitution mandates the election of justices of the peace and allows the judges of the lowest-tier courts to be elected, if so stipulated by law.

During the course of litigation, the regular courts of the judicial branch may invalidate laws and decrees that are unconstitutional or illegal. They also have

exclusive jurisdiction over the procedures for challenging decrees that are subordinate to law (*acción popular* and *las acciones contencioso-administrativas*) and initial jurisdiction over habeas corpus and other procedures designed to protect individual rights (*amparo, habeas data,* and *cumplimiento*). The Constitutional Tribunal serves as the ultimate court of appeal for these latter procedures. When hearing habeas corpus, or *amparo,* cases the courts may overturn government actions taken under a state of emergency or siege that are deemed to be unreasonable or disproportionate. On the other hand, citizens accused of terrorism or treason are now tried in military courts, a constitutional provision that has been severely criticized by jurists in Peru and abroad.

Although the 1993 constitution gave the judiciary greater autonomy vis-à-vis the executive branch, Fujimori had already used his dictatorial powers to restaff the regular courts following the presidential coup. After the new charter took effect, pro-Fujimori congressional majorities adopted legislation that has severely compromised judicial autonomy and review powers. The Organic Law of the Constitutional Tribunal, passed by the 1992–95 CCD, requires a six-sevenths majority to declare a legal norm unconstitutional. Installed in August 1996, the newly elected Constitutional Tribunal included some distinguished independent jurists among its magistrates, but the will of its majority was soon frustrated by the six-sevenths rule and two solidly pro-Fujimori colleagues. Nevertheless, in late December 1996 four of the seven magistrates voted to reject a petition of unconstitutionality against the six-sevenths rule filed by opposition members of congress, thus upholding this provision of the Organic Law.

Beginning in November 1995 the new unicameral congress passed a series of laws that gave various special commissions, headed by Fujimori appointees, effective control over the budgets and personnel policies of the regular courts, as well as the appointments of new state's attorneys. In August 1996 legislators considered a bill that would have stripped these courts of their authority to declare laws and decrees unconstitutional during the course of litigation. Although the bill was withdrawn after protests from the opposition, this sort of legislation could be quickly passed if a court threatened to overturn a legal norm of critical importance to the government. Indeed, pro-Fujimori majorities had previously enacted laws that thwarted politically sensitive judicial processes, most notably in the case of the 1992 Cantuta massacre.

In January 1997 the Constitutional Tribunal circumvented the six-sevenths rule to render a politically explosive decision on Law 26,657, which allowed Fujimori to run for reelection again in 2000. Four members of the tribunal, including its president, Ricardo Nugent, abstained from voting on this matter because they had publicly expressed an opinion. The other three magistrates, who asserted the tribunal also could exercise litigation-based review like the regular courts, found Law 26,657 to be "inapplicable" to Fujimori's case. Nugent validated this decision on the basis of Article 4 of the tribunal's Organic Law, which stipulates that nonconstitutional matters are settled by a majority of those voting.

In May 1997 the pro-Fujimori congressional majority impeached and removed the three magistrates who had voted for the inapplicability of Law 26,657, citing alleged procedural violations. Nugent, who also faced charges, soon resigned in solidarity with his deposed colleagues. Public opinion, which had consistently supported Fujimori's attacks on pre-1993 institutions, decisively favored the deposed magistrates, despite a surge in the president's popularity following the daring raid on the Japanese ambassador's residence that freed MRTA-held hostages in late April. After congress passed a law reducing the powers of the National Council of the Judiciary, its members resigned in March 1998.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Since before its independence in 1824, Peruvian political and economic life has been centered in Lima. The people of the Andes and the Amazon have long been marginalized in virtually every facet of national life. For most of its history the Peruvian state has been divided into departments (23), provinces (180), and districts (1,812). The port city of Callao enjoys the status of a special province not part of any department.

Two tiers of municipal government function at the provincial and district levels. Both kinds of municipalities have mayors and councils who are elected every five years, midway between the elections for national offices. Although departments constitute the largest administrative units, elected departmental governments have not functioned since 1919.

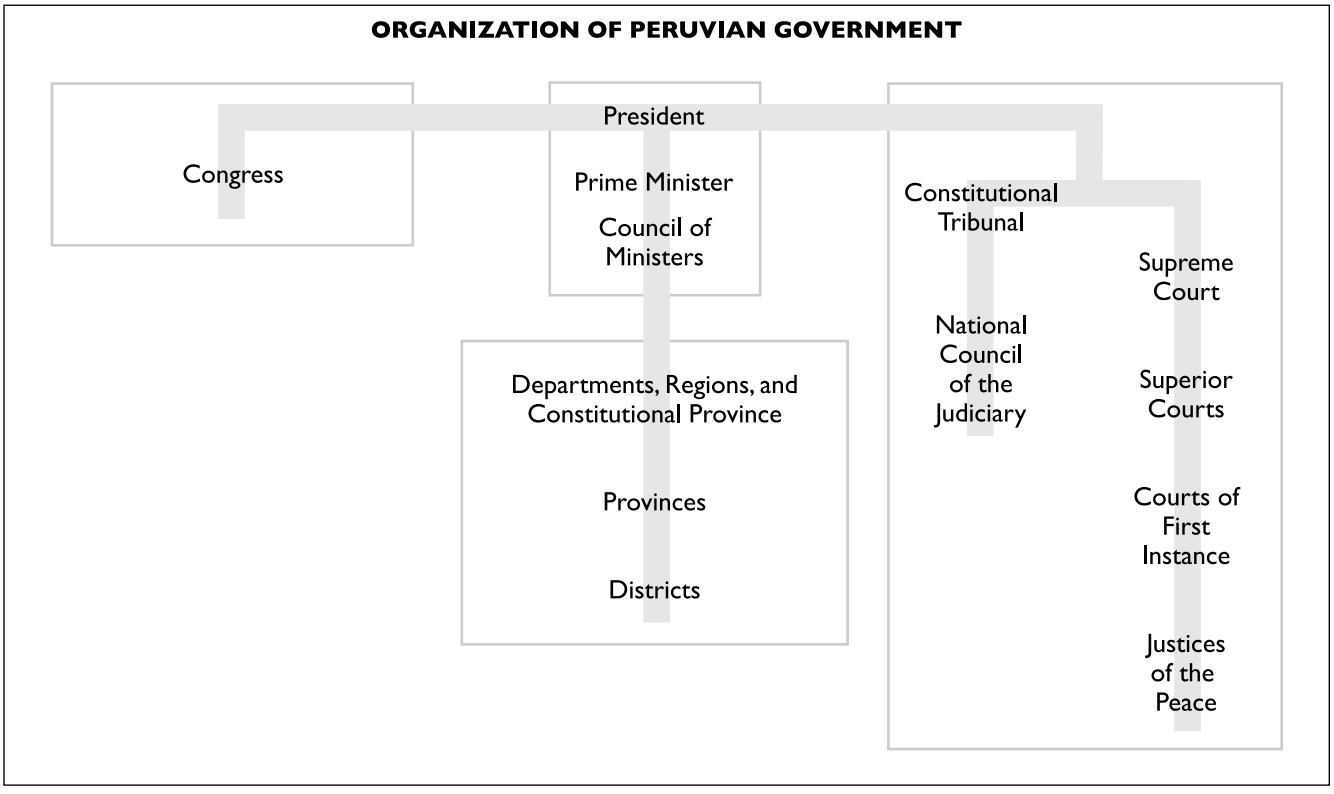
During 1988–90 the García administration established 11 elected regional governments whose jurisdictions covered all of the country except the Department of Lima and the Province of Callao: Four departments became regions; the other seven regions encompassed more than one department. One of the multidepartmental regions was subsequently split into two departmentally based regions, creating a total of 12 regional

governments. After the April 5, 1992, presidential coup, Fujimori dismissed the regional governments, which had broader powers than municipalities at the provincial and district levels.

The 1993 constitution abolished the regional jurisdictions that had been created under García but allows individual or contiguous departments to constitute new regional governments. The 1993 charter stipulates that regional presidents are to be popularly elected every five years and that regional councils will include popularly elected provincial mayors. Other members of the regional councils may be specified by law. The assemblies of the previous regional governments also included members elected by direct suffrage and by interest associations. During the 1980s central government ministries and agencies had appointed representatives to the assemblies of departmental development corporations, the predecessors of the regional governments.

The division of responsibilities among national, regional, and the two tiers of municipal government is poorly defined. The 1993 constitution stipulates that future regional governments are to coordinate and carry out socioeconomic programs within their jurisdictions in accordance with subsequent legislation and that they are to support, but not duplicate, the activities of municipalities. The national police perform most law-enforcement functions, although municipal police and civilian patrols with limited powers are permitted. The utilities of Lima and other major cities are operated by autonomous agencies of the central government. Municipal governments at both the provincial and the district levels construct public works and provide such services as road maintenance, street repair, markets, public illumination, trash collection, and public hygiene. Some smaller municipalities run electricity and water systems.

The 1993 charter does not specify sources of income for future regional governments, leaving these to be defined by law. In comparison with other Latin American countries, the tax base of Peruvian municipalities is weak, and their proceeds from revenue-sharing and intergovernmental transfers are modest. Despite the adoption of some recent equalization measures, there are great disparities in per capita expenditures between urban (especially Lima and Callao) and rural provinces, as well as between affluent and poor districts in metropolitan areas. Although decentralization efforts were hurt during the Fujimori regime, they have been a stated goal of Toledo's presidency. In the fall of 2002 voters went to the polls to replace appointed regional officials with elected. The intention



was to devolve political and financial power to those areas most impoverished and marginalized, promoting development and self-sufficiency. To accomplish this goal Peru received significant loan guarantees from the World Bank for the purpose of developing and expanding the tax base and infrastructure without placing excessive burden on regional governments.

The Electoral System

With the return to civilian rule in 1980, suffrage was extended to all citizens 18 years or older. Prior to the 1979 constitution, prohibitions on the right to vote effectively excluded much of the indigenous population. As in many Latin American countries, active members of the armed forces and national police are prohibited from voting. For citizens under the age of 70, voting is required by law, and not voting is punishable with a fine.

Prior to the 1993 constitution an independent National Board of Elections (Jurado Nacional de Elecciones; JNE), assisted by boards at the departmental or provincial levels, conducted Peruvian elections. Under the 1993 charter the JNE continues to perform oversight and adjudication functions, but the tasks of administering elections and maintaining the electoral rolls were transferred respectively to the National Office of Electoral Processes and the National Registry of Identification and Civil Status. The JNE has five members who are elected to four-year terms by the Supreme Court, high-level state's attorneys, the Lima Bar Association, the deans of public law schools, and the deans of private law schools. (Recall that special commissions appointed by the pro-Fujimori congressional majority control the personnel policies of the judicial branch and the appointments of new state's attorneys.) The National Council of the Magistracy names the heads of the National Office of Electoral Processes and the National Registry of Identification and Civil Status, both of whom serve four-year terms. However, a law passed by the pro-Fujimori congressional majority specifies that the head of the latter agency is selected from among nominees submitted by the executive branch.

Since the early 1960s Peruvian elections have not been marred by widespread fraud, due to such procedures as decentralized tabulation and the presence of party representatives at the polls. Although most informed observers agree that electoral administration needed to be modernized, there is widespread concern that the institutional changes mandated by the 1993 constitution will foment administrative conflict. Opponents of Fujimori also fear that the JNE's reduced role and executive influence in key appointments will compromise the impartiality of electoral administration. In late 1997 there were serious allegations that agents of the National Intelligence Service had infiltrated the National Registry of Identification and Civil Status. According to the 1993 constitution the president was allowed to run for a second consecutive term. In 2000 this was changed to limit a president to one five-year term without the possibility of immediate reelection.

Political parties, independent political groups (which often call themselves political movements), and alliances of parties and/or groups may nominate candidates for all elected offices. The candidates of each party, group, or alliance for president and the two vice presidencies run together as a team. If no slate receives a majority of the valid vote in the general election, a runoff is held between the two top tickets. Under the 1979 constitution presidential and vice presidential candidates could simultaneously run for congress, but the 1993 charter only allows vice presidential candidates to do so.

The Peruvian congress is elected by proportional representation, using the d'Hondt rule. Under the 1979 constitution deputies in the lower chamber represented departments, while senators were elected at large in a single national district. Peru had a 120-member unicameral congress elected in a single national district as a result of the 1993 constitution. In November 2000 Law 27,387 was passed eliminating the single national district. Subsequently members were chosen from the 25 total electoral districts based on departmental organization. The port city of Callao has special status as a department. Seats are allocated based on district population. Electoral groups and parties may run lists of candidates or form alliances. The law was changed to increase the required number of female candidates on each list from 25 percent to 30 percent.

Since 1985 Peru has used a system of open-list voting for congress. In addition to selecting a list of candidates, citizens also may cast nonordinal "preferential votes" for two candidates on the list that they have chosen. Each list is awarded seats in proportion to its share of the valid vote, but specific candidates are elected by preferential votes. This system has stimulated competition among candidates on the same list, particularly during the 1990 election.

Municipal elections use a closed-list system. If no list receives at least 20 percent of the valid vote, there is a runoff between the top two lists. Whether or not there

is a runoff, the first candidate on the list that receives the most votes becomes mayor. The winning list also receives at least 51 percent of the seats on the council (more if it wins a higher share of the vote), which are filled by subsequent candidates. The remaining seats are then filled proportionately by all other parties having at least 5 percent of the valid vote. At least 25 percent of the candidates on each list must be women.

The 1993 constitution also contains provisions for referenda and the recall of municipal authorities, regional presidents, and justices of the peace. The recall of state's attorneys and any elected lower-tier judges may be established by law. The president of Peru and members of congress cannot be recalled.

The Party System

Since the 1990 election the Peruvian party system has largely collapsed. The major parties that long dominated Peruvian politics, capturing significant percentages of the vote, have been reduced to single digits. During the 1980s four major parties or electoral alliances competed for political power. The Popular Christian Party (PPC) and Popular Action (AP) respectively occupied the right and center-right of the political spectrum. The center-left was claimed by the American Popular Revolutionary Alliance (APRA). Despite its name, the United Left (IU) was a shaky alliance of mostly Marxist parties and movements.

The two more moderate parties, AP and APRA, successively won the presidency and congressional majorities in the 1980 and 1985 general elections. But these more centrist parties became discredited by the manifest policy failures of their respective governments. Neither the orthodox economic policies of AP's venerable elder statesman, Fernando Belaunde, nor the heterodox approach of APRA's young, charismatic Alan García succeeded in reversing the long-term decline of Peru's debt-ridden economy. Nor were the Belaunde and García administrations able to check escalating violence emanating from the Shining Path and the MRTA or counterviolence from the security forces. By the end of the decade Peruvians' faith in their political and governmental institutions, especially parties, had plummeted to all-time lows.

The 1990 election proved to be a major turning point in Peruvian history. AP, the PPC, and the fledgling Liberty Movement formed a rightist electoral alliance to support the candidacy of Mario Vargas Llosa, the famous Peruvian novelist. For most of the first-round campaign, Vargas Llosa appeared to be invincible against weak opposition. However, during the final six weeks support for Fujimori, the candidate of the makeshift Change 90 (C90) movement, mushroomed from less than 1 percent in public opinion polls to 29 percent of the valid vote. With support from APRA and the two major leftist fronts, Fujimori went on to defeat Vargas Llosa in the runoff by a landslide.

The Peruvian party system has since been in disarray. After the presidential coup new supporters of Fujimori joined New Majority (NM), which ran joint lists with C90 in the 1992 CCD election and the 1995 general election. Fujimori exerted tight control over both NM and C90, each of which had little more than a skeletal organization. AP, the PPC, and APRA are all better organized but have fared poorly in recent elections. The IU was dissolved in 1996. Since 1993 there has been a proliferation of new parties and groups. The most important of these are the Union for Peru (UPP) and We Are Lima/Peru.

Peruvian parties have historically been dominated by their founders. The 1993 constitution stipulates that future laws will ensure parties maintain internal democracy and are accountable for their finances. The Organic Law of Elections, approved in October 1997, requires candidates to report their sources of financing and prohibits an incumbent president from using official appearances or state resources in a reelection bid.

Most Peruvians consider themselves to be political independents, and only a small fraction are members of any political party. Television has replaced traditional mass rallies as the primary campaign medium. The 1993 charter guarantees parties free access to government-owned media in proportion to their support in the previous general election. However, most television and radio stations, as well as most newspapers, are privately owned.

Major Political Parties

PERU POSSIBLE

(Perú Posible)

Perú Posible is the party of President Alejandro Toledo. It was created in 1999 as a vehicle for Toledo's presidential ambitions. The party received 26 percent of the congressional vote in the 2001 elections and maintains a plurality of seats with 45. Support for the party has been closely tied to support for President Toledo. It is

a party of the center-left, supporting development and decentralization policies.

AMERICAN POPULAR REVOLUTIONARY ALLIANCE

(Alianza Popular Revolutionaria Americana; APRA)

The American Popular Revolutionary Alliance, also known as the Peruvian Aprista Party (Partido Aprista Peruano), is Peru's oldest and best-organized party. Víctor Raúl Haya de la Torre founded APRA in 1924 while in Mexican exile and led the party until his death in 1979. APRA was initially a radical populist party that frequently suffered proscription by the military, but it became more moderate in the late 1950s and 1960s. Until 1992 APRA controlled the largest solid block of votes in Peru, thanks to its strong organization and regional bastion in the north. However, the party's sectarianism and authoritarian style alienated many voters. In 2001 the party won 19.7 percent of the vote and 27 legislative seats.

NATIONAL UNITY ALLIANCE

(Alianza Unidad Nacional)

National Unity Alliance was an electoral alliance between the Popular Christian Party and the Union of the Democratic Center (Unión de Centro Democrático) for the 2001 elections. The party gained nearly 14 percent of the vote for congress and 17 seats. Its presidential candidate, Lourdes Celmira Rosario Flores Nano, was a popular figure in Lima in opposition to Fujimori during the previous decade. The party represents a center-right agenda. Lourdes Flores Nano won a surprising 2.4 million votes and nearly 25 percent of the popular vote in the first round of presidential elections in 2001.

POPULAR ACTION

(Acción Popular; AP)

Popular Action was established in 1956 by Fernando Belaunde, who appealed to members of Peru's growing middle class and had strong support in the south. Belaunde was elected president in 1963, but APRA and supporters of the former dictator, Manuel Odría, blocked his modest reform program in congress. After being overthrown by the military in 1968, he returned from exile to win the presidency in 1980. Although Belaunde had a reputation for honesty, most Peruvians consider his second presidency to have been a failure. Raúl Diez Canseco, Belaunde's nephew and AP's 1995 presidential candidate, received only 1.6 percent of the vote, while the party's congressional slate won only 3.3 percent. In 2001 Popular Action won 4 percent and three seats in congress. The party did not run a candidate for the presidency.

INDEPENDENT CLEAN GOVERNMENT FRONT

(Frente Independiente Moralizador; FIM)

The Independent Clean Government Front was formed in 1990 by Fernando Olivera Vega, a colorful PPC deputy. FIM has concentrated on the congressional level. FIM won 11 percent of the congressional vote and 12 seats in the 2001 elections. For president, Olivera won just over one million votes and 10 percent of the total.

Minor Political Parties

POPULAR CHRISTIAN PARTY

(Partido Popular Cristiano; PPC)

The Popular Christian Party came into being in 1967 when Luis Bedoya Reyes, the popular mayor of Lima, broke with the Christian Democratic Party. The PPC is a conservative party oriented to the interests of business and the urban middle class. It has little appeal outside of Lima.

CHANGE 90

(Cambio 90; C90)

President Fujimori's success in the 1990s was partly the result of the collapse of the Peruvian party system. During the 10 years he served as president he created and closely controlled three very loosely defined political parties better known as electoral lists. The first was Change 90, established in 1989. Fujimori's initial goal was a seat in the Senate, but he later took advantage of the simultaneous candidacy provision in the 1979 constitution to also run for president. Prominent among C90's original members and candidates were technically oriented university professors, members of Peru's one-million-strong evangelical Protestant community, and emerging "informal" entrepreneurs of mostly

indigenous and Mestizo descent. Members of C90 tend to be of modest origin. Many come from the provinces. In the 2001 legislative elections C90 combined with New Majority to win just under 5 percent of the vote and three seats in congress.

NEW MAJORITY

(Nueva Mayoría; NM)

New Majority was founded by Fujimori to attract new supporters after the 1992 presidential coup. Members of NM, who tend to be from Lima's upper and middle classes, dominated leadership positions in the Fujimori administration. The C90/NM lists contributed to Fujimori's electoral success throughout the decade. In 2001 the list garnered just under 5 percent of the vote (half a million votes) and three congressional seats. The party did not run a candidate for presidential elections in 2001. The list had been substantially discredited by the bribery, fraud, and human rights violations that occurred during Fujimori's administration. The 2000 Fujimori presidential and congressional vehicle, Peru 2000, did not run any candidates in the 2001 elections.

UNION FOR PERU

(Unión por el Perú; UPP)

The Union for Peru was established to support the 1995 presidential candidacy of the former United Nations secretary-general Javier Pérez de Cuéllar. Its congressional lists included prominent individuals from across the political spectrum who opposed the Fujimori government. Pérez de Cuéller placed a distant second to Fujimori, with 21.8 percent of the vote. The UPP's congressional slate won just over 4 percent of the vote and six seats in the 2001 election. The UPP did not run a candidate for the presidency.

WE ARE LIMA

(Somos Lima)

We Are Lima is a loose movement that was created to support the candidacy of Alberto Andrade for mayor of the capital in 1995. Andrade's defeat of Jaime Yoshiyama, Fujimori's handpicked candidate, made him a leading contender for the presidency in 2000. In the October 1998 municipal elections Andrade fielded candidates throughout the country under the banner of We Are Peru (Somos Peru). Although Andrade was reelected mayor of Lima in a landslide, We Are Peru had little success outside of the capital. We Are Peru won just under 6 percent of the congressional vote and four seats in the 2001 elections. The party did not field a candidate for the presidency.

Other Political Forces

Since the collapse of the Fujimori government in September 2000, the intelligence service was redesigned in an effort to restore lost credibility. The army has begun to recover from the extreme politicization of its ranks under Fujimori. The Shining Path has made a brief, if largely insignificant, resurgence in some parts of the country.

National Prospects

The disintegration of the Fujimori government served to reinforce suspicion of government for most Peruvians. Ironically, it also ushered in a brief era of optimism and heightened expectations for the new government of Alejandro Toledo. Regrettably, Toledo's administration has been plagued by a series of personal scandals and unmet promises. Limited economic growth has done little to reduce the grinding poverty for the vast majority of Peruvians. Toledo's approval ratings hovered in the low double digits for most of his term.

Two decades of bloody civil war and a corrupt, repressive government have taken their toll on Peruvian politics. The release of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report in August 2003, combined with the conviction of former spy chief Vladimiro Montesinos, contributed to the process of national healing necessary to generate new political ideas and new national leadership. Attempts to extradite former President Fujimori from Japan, where he enjoyed official protection for several years, were unsuccessful. However, Fujimori claimed to be making plans to return to Peru to run for president in 2006. In November 2005 he made a surprise visit to Chile, where he was promptly arrested. Chilean and Peruvian authorities then began discussions about his possible extradition to Peru.

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REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES

(Republika ng Pilipinas)

By Vincent Boudreau, Ph.D.
Revised by Joel Selway



The Republic of the Philippines lies between the South China Sea and the Pacific Ocean, some 497 miles off the Southeast Asian coast. The nation's political, cultural, and economic center is metropolitan Manila, a sprawling urban center composed of several separate municipalities, the largest of which are Manila (population 1,581,082) and Quezon City (population 2,173,831). Outside Manila, major cities include Cebu and Davao, with populations of 776,600 and 951,000, respectively. The republic's 7,107 islands cover about 115,600 square miles, divided into 79 provinces. The country had 1,416 municipalities and 41,945 *barangays* (neighborhoods) in 2003.

More than 87 million people (2005 est.) live in the Philippines: 95.5 percent of Filipinos are Malay, though many of these have partial Chinese or Spanish ancestry; 1.5 percent are Chinese; and 3 percent have other origins. Filipinos are 83 percent Roman Catholic, 9 percent Protestant, and 5 percent Muslim; these latter form powerful local Islamic concentrations in the south. The remaining 3 percent practice other religions, most notably a variety of localized and indigenized semi-Christian nationalist sects like the Aglipayan Church and the Iglesia ni Cristo. Filipinos speak more than 87 languages. Filipino is the official national language and is taught in all public schools. Tagalog (the language on which Filipino is based) is spoken by 23.8 percent of the population as their first language; 24.2 percent speak Cebuano, 10.3 percent Ilokano, 9.2 percent Hiligaynon Ilongo, 5.6 percent Bicol, 4.0 percent SamarLeyte, 2.8 percent Pampango, and 1.8 percent Pangasinan.

An estimated 42 percent of Filipinos live in urban centers. In 2004 average life expectancy at birth was 69.6 years, and in 2003, 40 percent of the national population lived below the poverty line. The per capita share of the gross domestic product was $4,600, and the infant mortality rate was 24.24 deaths per 1,000 births. Natural disasters, such as typhoons, earthquakes, and volcanic eruptions (including the catastrophic 1991 eruption of Mt. Pinatubo) significantly exacerbate the socioeconomic conditions of the Philippine population.

MODERN HISTORY

Recent Philippine history has been dominated by the rise and fall of the Marcos dictatorship and the subsequent consolidation of Philippine democracy. Ferdinand Marcos declared martial law in 1972 and built his dictatorship with considerable U.S. support. Still, by the early 1980s dissatisfied elite families and businesspeople joined established opposition movements and brought down that state. The key moment came in massive and stunningly peaceful demonstrations after the fraud-marred presidential elections of February 1986. In light of these protests and of longer-term developments, the United States withdrew support for Marcos, and key segments of the Philippine military defected to the opposition. Within four days the Marcos family fled the archipelago, and opposition

candidate Corazon Aquino, widow of Marcos's critic Benigno Aquino, became the republic's next president. In the first month of her administration, President Aquino declared a revolutionary government that allowed her to rule by presidential decree. At the same time, she organized a Constitutional Convention that wrote what became the world's longest constitution. Its detail and specificity reflect the delegates' unwillingness to leave much to officials' interpretation. In February 1987 the new constitution passed with overwhelming popular support in a plebiscite.

While progress was made in restoring democratic institutions and respect for civil liberties during Aquino's rule, many viewed her administration as weak and fractious. This led to several attempted coups by disaffected members of the Philippine military and ultimately prevented a return to full political stability and economic development. Fidel Valdez Ramos of the People's Power–National Union of Christian Democrats was elected president in 1992. He was succeeded in 1998 by Joseph Ejercito Estrada of the Fight of the Patriotic Filipino Masses Party. Estrada was unpopular, and the masses took to the streets in demonstration accusing Estrada of corruption. In January 2001 the Supreme Court declared Estrada unable to rule in view of mass resignations from his government. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo took over the reigns of president as the candidate of People's Power. Arroyo was reelected in 2004. The major issues facing the Philippines presently are the Muslim violence in the South, population control, and economic development.

The System of Government

The Philippines is a representative democracy with a presidential system based largely on the U.S. system. The legislature is bicameral. Respect for these institutions is still being consolidated as the Philippines continues on its slow path toward full democracy.

EXECUTIVE

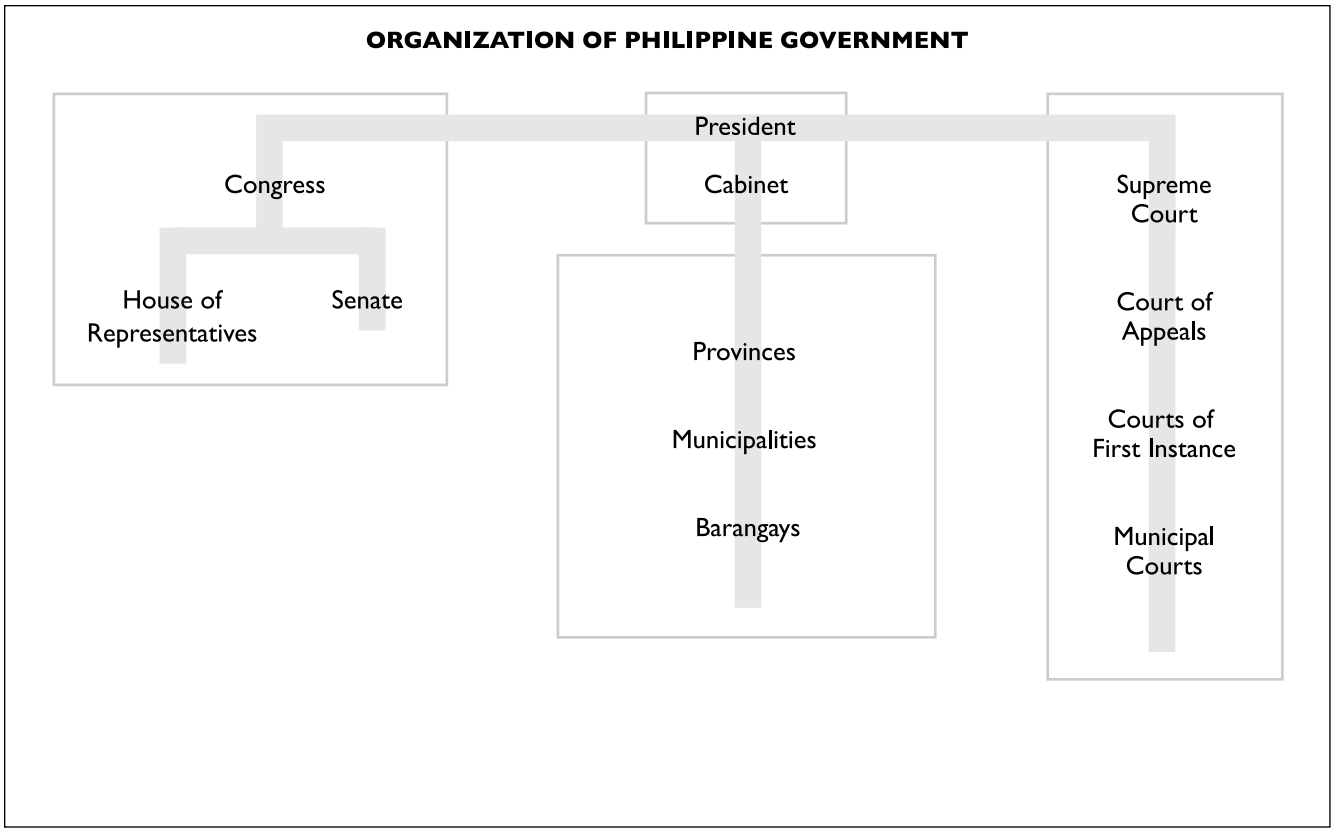
The president is both head of state and head of government. The president and vice president are elected on separate tickets by popular vote for six-year terms. The cabinet is appointed by the president with the consent of the Commission of Appointments. The House of Representatives has the sole authority to initiate any impeachment charge against the president or vice president. However, the Senate has responsibility to try and decide on all cases of impeachment.

Since 1986 presidents have reorganized and restaffed their cabinets several times, often to deflect political pressure or criticism. The Philippine vice president is elected in national elections and need not come from the president's party. Even when both officers are party mates, the weak Philippine party system gives scant incentive for vice presidential loyalty to the president. Salvador Laurel, Aquino's vice president, joined the opposition in September 1987. While President Ramos's vice president, Joseph Estrada, began by working closely with him in 1992, Estrada later began to operate more independently. In 1998 Joseph Estrada was elected to the Philippine presidency, with Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo serving as his vice president.

LEGISLATURE

The bicameral legislature, known as congress (Kongreso), is quite strong; this reflects an effort to correct the weakness of the Marcos-era national assembly (Batasan Pambansa). Marcos's assembly was structured as a parliament, and the president had substantial oversight and control. The post-1987 legislature has powers to check the executive, largely modeled on the American system. A two-thirds majority in both houses can override a presidential veto, and all appropriations must originate in the lower house. The legislature can declare war, and the Senate must ratify treaties. In addition, the legislature has broad powers to conduct inquiries; given the vibrant and free Philippine press, this constitutes perhaps its strongest check against executive abuse.

The lower house (House of Representatives) and upper house (Senate) are also designed to balance the representation of regional and national interests. The Senate has 24 members elected at large in national elections to a maximum of two six-year terms. This national electoral base is designed to give the Senate a broad national perspective. Members of the House of Representatives are elected in single-member districts that can be reapportioned within three years of a national census; this narrow geographic base promotes and protects regional interests. While there were 200 electoral districts for the 1987 elections, that number rose to 212 in 2004. In addition to elected representatives, the 1987 constitution mandates that up to 50 additional representatives will be appointed to office from party lists to broaden representation among smaller parties. For the transitional elections of 1987,



1992, and 1995, however, these seats were to be filled by presidential appointment as "sectoral" representatives from interest groups like women, farmers, youth, and workers. Only a portion of these appointed positions were ever filled. In 1998 this system was replaced by an elected party list system. According to the enabling legislation, 20 percent of seats in the lower house are reserved for small parties (defined as excluding the top three vote getters in the previous election) competing for a maximum of three seats per party; winning parties appoint members to fill the elected position.

The senators' national electoral base has tended to place them in competition with the executive. Like the president, senators must build national constituencies, and this standing proves a spur to further ambition. The Senate's right to conduct investigations has produced the convention of the "privileged speech," in which senators can comment at length on any issue they please. While this can enhance Senate power, it also has tended to derail sustained focus on national priorities and rendered the institution erratic and driven by issues that run hot and cold in the popular imagination. In the past, privileged speeches have asked why a Philippine boxing champion lost a title fight or why there was cheating in a film-award ceremony. More ominously, it was also via a privileged speech that Senator Juan Ponce Enrile, during a series of coup attempts against President Aquino's government in 1987, brandished a list of alleged left-leaning cabinet ministers.

JUDICIARY

Justice in the Philippines is administered via a four-tiered system of municipal, regional, appellate, and supreme courts. The post-1987 system is designed to be far more autonomous than its martial-law predecessor, which was periodically abolished and subject to scandal and pressure throughout the dictatorship. The current system cannot be abolished by presidential action, and the courts can review the constitutionality of executive and legislative action. For every vacant judgeship, the president nominates a person from a list of at least three candidates prepared by the Judicial and Bar Council. The judiciary draws on its own budget and avoids dependence on legislative appropriations. The House of Representatives can impeach judges suspected of misconduct, and the Senate must sit in judgment on such cases.

Despite these checks and balances, the judiciary continues to be an overburdened and inefficient

branch of government. Numerous scandals and evidence of favoritism have reinforced popular skepticism about the administration of justice. Although arrested for involvement in the December 1989 coup attempt, Senator Juan Ponce Enrile had the luxury of an air-conditioned cell, nominal bail, and the eventual withdrawal of all charges against him. Despite charges that range from graft to murder, Imelda Marcos successfully ran for a seat in the House of Representatives in 1995. Indeed, Mrs. Marcos's 1998 presidential candidacy was, by her own admission, partly an attempt to gain immunity from prosecution.

An ongoing and important test for the Supreme Court is the trial of former president Joseph Estrada, who was forced out of office by a military-backed coup in 2001 and subsequently put on trial on charges of corruption.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The 1987 constitution contains a provision to ensure the autonomy of local governments that was strengthened with the passage of the Local Government Code in 1991. The Code provides for a decentralization of governmental authority and resources and seeks more actively to involve sectors of civil society in governance. In addition, the Code moves decision making on local issues nearer to those with specific local expertise. The administration of regional and local government takes place on three levels. Each of the republic's 79 provinces is ruled by an elected governor and vice governor. The governor appoints a provincial administration with control over issues such as finance and development; such officials are responsible to both the governor and to central ministries within the jurisdiction in which they work. Mayors govern the roughly 1,500 municipalities across the Philippines and work with a vice mayor and an elected team of municipal councillors. *Barangay* captains head the smallest administrative unit, the *barangay*. Elections for these local positions take place every three years, and the positions have three-term limits.

The Electoral System

The regeneration of the Philippine electoral system stands at the center of the transition from the Marcos dictatorship. Elections under Marcos occurred at intervals governed by the dictator's own political calculations and happened to occur at one-year intervals from 1978 to 1982, and then in 1986; the 1987 constitution established a more formal timetable for elections. While Marcos's New Society Movement (Kilusang Bagong Lipunan; KBL) dominated all elections, after 1987 any party with support that does not advocate violence can compete in elections, and more parties have emerged since 1986. In the 1988 local government elections, seven candidates on average ran for each position, compared with between two and three under Marcos. Electoral violence and corruption, both long-standing problems, still exist but have diminished. Most encouragingly, contemporary elections frequently produce a change in officeholders—something rare under Marcos. The peaceful transition in executive authority in 1986 was arguably the greatest achievement of Aquino's administration.

Following a brief transition period that ended in 1992, constitutional rules on the timing and conduct of elections have taken effect. Presidential contests occur at six-year intervals. Half the senators run for office during presidential elections, and the other half stand for midterm elections. All members of the lower house run for office every three years, as do local and regional officials. In all Philippine elections, winning candidates gain a plurality and are directly elected by citizens' votes.

Voting under the 1987 constitution is compulsory, and all citizens 18 or older are eligible to vote. No property or literacy requirements exist. Although no subsequent election has produced anything close to the 90 percent turnout for the 1987 legislative contests, participation remains strong, and about 80 percent of eligible voters went to the polls in 2004. Many candidates distribute sample ballots that can link their own candidacy with that of a popular candidate for another office. Sample ballots also help illiterate voters, because voting requires that the voter write candidates' names onto an election card.

The Commission on Elections (COMELEC) supervises elections, certifies candidates and parties, and oversees the ballot count. Civil servants, commonly schoolteachers, staff polling stations. Parties and civic organizations often field "poll watchers" at polling stations to guard against irregularities. It typically takes from four days to one week for results to be counted, during which the press prints running tallies of electoral leaders. In the 1992 presidential election, for example, candidate Miriam Defensor-Santiago led other aspirants for the first several days before Fidel Ramos emerged to take over and eventually win the contest.

The Party System

ORIGINS OF THE PARTIES

Since 1946 the Philippine government has had three constitutions and three separate party systems. Initially, two established and similar parties competed for electoral office. The institutional arrangement was stable, but party membership was extremely fluid; candidates commonly moved between parties to increase their opportunity for electoral advance. Under the martial law constitution, representative institutions, and so elections, were initially abolished. When elections resumed in 1978 they were dominated by Marcos's New Society Movement (KBL) until the 1986 snap presidential election. This election produced a real contest between a mobilized movement behind the coalition LABAN (Fight)—made up of the Filipino Democratic Party and People's Struggle (as PDP-LABAN), United Democratic Opposition (UNIDO), and the Liberal Party—and the KBL; following the election's massive fraud, widespread protest erupted in Manila.

When that popular uprising unseated the Marcos dictatorship, it decisively ended the KBL's dominance. The first postdictatorship elections pitted antidictatorship forces, still on the LABAN ticket, against remnants of the old order organized as semi-loyal oppositionists in the short-lived Grand Alliance for Democracy (GAD). Several others ran on the KBL slate but did poorly. Aquino's endorsement proved decisive in 1987, for 23 out of her 24 "official candidates" won Senate seats, and a dominant majority also took lower house positions. Almost immediately after the 1987 elections new political parties began to proliferate.

The transitions between these three periods altered the number of parties and the degree of liberty with which they contested elections. Yet something important runs across these different systems: The dominant dynamic of Philippine electoral politics, particularly during its most liberal periods, is that of personal connection and patronage. To understand elections, one must discover how ties of personal connection and patronage work within the more formal structures of the electoral system.

PARTIES IN LAW

The 1987 constitution provides that any party that fulfills the administrative requirements of presenting a platform and a list of officers and that has nominal public support can register with the COMELEC. Only candidates belonging to a registered party's official and approved slate can run for office. All decisions related to the status of parties and candidates are made by the COMELEC.

PARTY ORGANIZATION

Contemporary parties range between two polar types. Some political parties have established organizational structures and traditions; others, such as Miriam Defensor–Santiago's People's Reform Party, are organized by individual politicians, sometimes to contest a single election. Somewhere between these two, one finds organizations with established, though languishing, traditions rejuvenated by an especially prominent political personality. After losing the Democratic Philippine Struggle (Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino; LDP) presidential primary in 1992, for example, Fidel Ramos's Strength of EDSA (LAKAS ng EDSA) party fused with the long-marginal National Union for Christian Democrats (NUCD). When Ramos became president, the party now known as LAKAS-NUCD became a dominant political force.

LAKAS-NUCD's wavering fortunes are instructive. After Ramos became president, many in the legislature hastened to ally with his party in moves that produced a massive political realignment in 1992. Soon LAKAS-NUCD had a majority in both houses, and Jose de Venecia became the powerful speaker of the House. By 1998 de Venecia was the LAKAS-NUCD candidate for president, but he lost in a landslide to Joseph Estrada and the Fight of the Free Filipino Masses Party (Laban ng Malayang Masang Pilipino; LAMMP). Although many LAKAS-NUCD senators gained office in 1998, five months after the election many were scrambling to change their affiliation to Estrada's party.

Then, with the ousting of Estrada in 2001, Gloria Macapagal Arroyo came into power on the LAKAS ticket. Arroyo renewed her position in office in May 2004, again under the LAKAS party banner.

CAMPAIGNING

Rules limit the official election period to 90 days before an election and 30 days afterward. Campaigning is notoriously personality-centric, and it helps a candidate immensely to be physically attractive or musically talented. Candidates typically recruit film stars and entertainers to campaign for them, and recent years have produced a steady increase in celebrities who run in and win elections. President Joseph Estrada was a popular action star, and he recruited other actors and sports figures to flesh out his campaign slate. Still, an equally important factor in Philippine elections since the restoration of democracy has been incumbent politicians' endorsement. Corazon

Aquino's selection of Fidel Ramos decisively elevated his candidacy over others, as it had done with the candidacy of legislators in the 1987 elections.

Major Political Parties

DEMOCRATIC FILIPINO STRUGGLE

(Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino; LDP)

HISTORY

The LDP was originally conceived as a merger between the Filipino Democratic Party (PDP) and the People's Force Party (Lakas ng Bayan) in 1988. At that time, the antidictatorship parties had no clear institutional machinery, and the LDP established a stronger party infrastructure. After the LDP's founding in September 1988, more than three-quarters of the House declared some affiliation with the party. Several of the strongest Philippine politicians in 1992 competed for the LDP nomination to the presidency, a position House Speaker Ramon Mitra eventually won. The LDP met great success in the 1992 legislative elections, but its power waned when Mitra came in a distant fourth for the presidency. In 1997, under the leadership of the LDP president, Edgardo Angara, the party merged with Estrada's Party of the Filipino Masses (PMP) to form the LAMMP, under which Estrada gained the presidency.

LDP's hold on congress ended with Estrada's ouster. The 2001 elections brought new senators to LDP's ranks, foremost among them former police chief Panfilo Lacson, who ran for the presidency in 2004. Lacson had the backing of some LDP leaders, but the others, most importantly Angara, supported the candidacy of actor Fernando Poe Jr. instead. These divisions split the party into two factions and arguably caused Poe to lose to the incumbent Arroyo.

ORGANIZATION

As the LDP organized, it selected a secretary-general to run its internal affairs and a chair. Its first two chairs—Ramon Mitra and Neptali Gonzales—were the House speaker and Senate president during their respective tenures. Still, these formal organizational structures soon succumbed to factional dispute in 1992, when Representative Ronald Zamora led more than half the LDP members into the victorious NUCD.

Indeed, factional dispute seems to have become somewhat of a norm in the LDP. The recent split over the party presidential nominee pitted Edgardo Angara (party president) and Agapito "Butz" Aquino (secretary-general) against each other. Aquino refused to accept Poe as the official candidate for the LDP, and he was backed by the Election Committee (COMELCO), which decided to have two LDP candidates representing two factions within the party. The Supreme Court overruled this decision in February 2004, and Lacson was forced to run as an independent candidate. Ultimately, Lacson received 11 percent of the vote. Poe got 37 percent of the vote. Had the LDP been united, the party could have held the presidency.

MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY

Like most Philippine electoral parties, the LDP has very little in the way of a mass constituency and is more accurately an organization of individuals engaged in politics in some direct way. Politically, LDP members are right of center.

FINANCING

Official LDP budget figures reveal a somewhat weak party. However, many of its most significant members come from extremely prominent Philippine families that contribute significant resources to the party.

LEADERSHIP

From the outset the LDP stood firmly behind Corazon Aquino and was formed by politicians who gained office with her personal endorsement; many of these originally had been part of the People's Force Party. In the 1990s Edgardo Angara steadily rose to claim dominant control over the party, but by the early 2000s he was opposed by a faction led by Butz Aquino.

PROSPECTS

The LDP's main task is to recover from the fractious events of the 2004 election. It is evident from the election, however, that the LDP remains a very popular party in the Philippines. Lacson's independent campaign drew support away from the LDP, but the real problem lies in the internal structure of the party. The LDP needs to tighten its reigns and weed out any disloyal elements if it is to present a strong challenge to LAKAS in the next elections.

PEOPLE'S POWER–CHRISTIAN MUSLIM DEMOCRATS

(LAKAS)

The LAKAS has two distinct origins. The National Union of Christian Democrats, led by the former Philippine president Raul Manglapus, flourished during

the dictatorship as an opposition movement. For much of that period it operated out of the United States and had American backers. The LAKAS wing of the alliance was organized by Fidel Ramos as a personal vehicle when he lost the LDP presidential nomination in 1992. The organization was first called the People's Power Party (PPP) and then EDSA-LDP, both designed to highlight Ramos's role in the 1986 transition. Finally, the party was named LAKAS ng EDSA and merged with the NUCD in early 1992 to form LAKAS-NUCD. Reflecting recent concerns of Muslim separatism in the South, LAKAS renamed itself LAKAS–Christian Muslim Democrats in the 2004 presidential race.

Originally the LAKAS had a small formal organization other than that which supported the Ramos presidential campaign. After Ramos became president, however, LAKAS gained many members who had won office on the LDP ticket.

The LAKAS has in recent years reworked the mildly activist orientation of the original NUCD and has become an organization of powerful incumbent politicians. It is oriented toward the political center but has also recruited local government officials from across the political spectrum.

The party receives money from member donations. Its many prominent officials give the party one of the strongest financial bases in Philippine politics today. That base is substantially expanded by the state largess that its many incumbent politicians can recruit to party causes.

LEADERSHIP

LAKAS has ridden on the success of its president, Gloria Arroyo, since she took over the reigns in 2001 after defecting from the fallen LDP under Estrada. Arroyo has spurred the party on to political dominance by winning the 2004 elections. However, de Venecia, who was heavily beaten by Estrada in the 1998 elections, still is an influential figure. Back as House speaker in 2001, de Venecia formed another coalition called the People Power Coalition, which included the NPC, to become the majority in the House.

PROSPECTS

LAKAS is riding on the success of its narrow 2004 presidential victory. However, the party must deliver results in this presidential term or it can expect to suffer heavy defeat in the next elections. LAKAS's biggest rival, the LDP, has won the support of the poorer segments of society via the popular former movie actor Fernando Poe Jr. LAKAS must concentrate on overall macroeconomic growth as well as reducing inequality. LAKAS's future depends solely on how it can answer the needs of the Philippine people in this term.

NATIONAL PEOPLE'S COALITION (NPC)

The National People's Coalition was formed primarily as a vehicle for the presidential aspirations of Eduardo (Danding) Cojuangco in 1992. The party drew conservative and right-wing elements from the Nacionalista and Liberal Parties and from those who had run under the defunct Grand Alliance for Democracy in 1987. In those elections, the NPC placed third in House races and elected the second-highest number of senators of any party. Its greatest achievement at that time, however, was the election of the NPC member Joseph Estrada to the vice presidency. In 1998 the NPC joined the winning coalition backing Joseph Estrada. NPC was subsequently drawn into the LAKAS coalition with Arroyo as president, where it remained as of 2005.

The NPC has a formal administrative structure but little in the way of a stable mass base. In the beginning its overriding resource was Cojuangco's ability to piece together a system of alliances among prominent Philippine clans and to use the party's resources to recruit local support. Many argue that for the 1992 national elections, this network convinced many local political brokers who supported LDP legislators to vote for Cojuangco as president. Since 1992 the NPC has emerged as a serious political organization. It has maintained a strong constituency in the legislature and made especially significant gains when the LAKAS party began to lose members in the mid-1990s. The NPC has been able to exert strong party discipline due to the patronage Cojuangco can bestow.

The NPC is politically conservative. Its initial appeal lay in the claim that despite his potentially damaging association with Marcos, Cojuangco has the business skills to manage the Philippine economy. The party promises to bring the Philippines into the ranks of the newly industrialized powers by following many of the authoritarian modernizing policies that other East and Southeast Asian states have embraced.

The NPC is financed by the assets of its most powerful members, as well as through support from members of the Filipino and Chinese business community. Cojuangco, as a former Marcos crony, has vast personal assets he spent freely to support the party's organizational expansion and consolidation; the party's reputation as an efficient pro-business party has garnered many contributions from businesspeople.

The NPC won the allegiance of many candidates for local office by offering election resources. Moreover, conservatives looking for an alternative to Marcos-era parties have embraced the NPC. Finally, Filipinos who saw underdevelopment and corruption as a matter of economic mismanagement chose to identify with the former Senate president Ernesto Maceda, who headed the NPC until March 1998, at which point he left the party to seek the position of Manila mayor under the Liberal Party banner.

The NPC's two most prominent founding leaders were Eduardo Cojuangco and Joseph Estrada. Cojuangco is the cousin of Corazon Aquino and José Cojuangco and a member of one of Tarlac's most influential landed families. In the 1970s Eduardo Cojuangco allied himself with the Marcos administration and became one of the dictatorship's most notorious and wealthy cronies. Cojuangco managed the national coconut cartel and many parastatal industries during those years. He fled the country in 1986 but made several trial returns between 1988 and 1990 and eventually moved back in 1991. While Cojuangco was not personally prominent in the 1998 elections, his backers, most notably the Zamora family, represented a keypole in the Estrada administration. Estrada became the most important figure associated with the party. Building on his reputation as an action star in the Tagalog cinema, he was elected mayor of San Juan, one of Manila's municipalities, during the Marcos years. He was elected a senator in 1990 under the Grand Alliance for Democracy and went on to win the vice presidency in 1992. President Ramos traded on Estrada's crime-busting movie persona by appointing him to head the Presidential Anti-Crime Commission.

Eduardo Cojuangco made no move to position himself as a candidate for the 2004 elections and seemed interested in throwing NPC support behind another aspirant. NPC seems to have a knack for picking the winning coalition. As long as this continues, the NPC will be a force on Philippine politics for some time to come.

Minor Political Parties

In addition to the political parties discussed above, several minor parties exist. Some of these have formed under the leadership of a prominent Philippine politician who, through the strength of his or her appeal, is a serious candidate for the presidency, and most hold some important public office. Still, their political parties must be considered minor because in most cases they have spare organizational structures, underelaborated programs, and little political machinery or tradition beyond their leader's candidacy. Such personalistic political parties are extremely volatile. In 1997, for example, it was not clear that the Party of the Filipino Masses (PMP) would continue its independent existence. Estrada's electoral success brought the party new prominence and an array of willing coalition partners. Similarly, Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo had in June 1997 started her own party, Supporters of the Free Philippines (Kabalikat ng Malayang Pilipino; KAMPI), but by 1998 had dumped her running mate and joined the LAKAS-NUCD as its vice presidential candidate. Yet if the individual party organizations may come and go, this sort of party has been quite important in contemporary Philippine politics. Hence, while some of the following parties may no longer exist several years after this volume is published, similar personalistic parties doubtlessly will.

Others parties are those that had once been very important in Philippine electoral politics but have recently declined. The New Society Movement (Kilusang Bagong Lipunan; KBL) was Marcos's political machine during martial law but today is marginal; the Liberal and Nacionalista parties, which dominated in the pre–martial law two-party system, have become small and fragmentary groups.

PARTY OF THE FILIPINO MASSES

(Partido ng Masang Filipino; PMP)

This party was organized in 1994 by the then vice president, Joseph Estrada, to support his projected presidential campaign. As Estrada became a stronger presidential prospect, the PMP acquired standing among Philippine politicians, and by 1997 established figures like Senators Orly Mercado, Ernesto Maceda, and Neptali Gonzales had pledged support to the Estrada candidacy and to the PMP. In the midst of Estrada's presidential campaign the PMP was overshadowed by a new and larger LAMMP campaign machinery that included LAKAS and NPC. Unlike the NPC, the PMP has a habit of choosing the wrong condition. In the 2004 elections it was aligned with the LDP under the larger Koalisyon Ng Nagkakaisang Pilipino (KNP).

FILIPINO DEMOCRATIC PARTY

(Partido Demokratikong Pilipino; PDP)

The PDP began when former members of the Mindanao Alliance joined together in 1982, and it was among the parties most clearly opposed to the dictator-

ship. Early on it joined forces with the People's Struggle (LABAN) group that was under the nominal leadership of Benigno Aquino. After Aquino's assassination in 1983 the PDP-LABAN led the parliamentary opposition and formed a fusion LABAN ticket with Salvador Laurel's UNIDO (United Democratic Opposition) in 1986. In 1988 PDP joined forces with Lakas ng Bayan to form the LDP but retained substantial autonomy: PDP leader Aquilino Pimentel ran as the vice presidential candidate with the Liberal Party's Jovito Salonga in the 1992 presidential election, even though the LDP also fielded candidates.

The PDP is one of the few Filipino political parties that began with a real mass membership. In northern Mindanao the PDP organized neighborhood and community support and in the 1980s functioned more as a social movement than as a political party. The organization received a substantial boost when Pimentel became minister of local government in 1986; in this capacity, Pimentel replaced many local officials with officers in charge whom he recruited into a fairly vast national network of patronage and loyalty. Pimentel was one of five "left-leaning" ministers that coup plotters demanded be removed from government in 1986. He also authored the Local Government Code. The PDP's greatest success came in coalition with other forces, but after Pimentel's defeat in the 1992 presidential election the party began to dissolve. By 1997 Pimentel had set out to organize a new party, provisionally named the Moral Recovery Party, but that party failed amid squabbles between Pimentel and charismatic religious leaders. Still better known under the joint PDP-LABAN banner, the PDP was part of the losing KNP coalition headed up by the LDP in 2004.

NEW SOCIETY MOVEMENT

(Kilusang Bagong Lipunan; KBL)

Ferdinand Marcos founded the KBL in 1978 to use in the tightly managed elections during his dictatorship. The party was run by perhaps 200 loyal cronies and dominated elections in the Marcos years. By the early 1980s, however, a stronger opposition emerged, and the 1986 popular uprising decisively injured the KBL. Between 1987 and 1992 many KBL members had switched to new organizations like the LDP and LAKAS-EDSA. The most prominent KBL candidacy in 1992 was Imelda Marcos's bid for the presidency; she came in fifth in a field of seven candidates with 10.3 percent of the vote. In 1995 she successfully ran on the KBL ticket to represent her home province of Leyte in the House, and her son Ferdinand Junior won a seat in the Senate. Still, both electoral victories indicated the Marcos family's lingering popularity among some sectors of Philippine society, rather than the KBL's vitality. The only KBL member in the House as of 2005 is Marcos' daughter Imee.

LIBERAL PARTY (LP)

The Liberal Party was formed in 1945 by Manuel A. Roxas after he contested Sergio Osmena's leadership of the NP and candidacy for the presidency. Roxas won the presidency and became, with Elpidio Quirino and Diosdado Macapagal, one of the three LP elected presidents. Marcos himself was LP until he defected to the NP in 1965, when it became evident that Macapagal wanted to run for reelection as a Liberal. After the period of martial law, many LP members defected to the KBL. The LP remains a small party (34 members in the House as of 2005) but is seen as a strong promoter of the progressive ideology, especially on human rights and democracy. Despite this, the LP retains some traditional politicians in its ranks.

DEMOCRATIC ACTION

(Aksyon Demokratiko)

Formed in 1997, Aksyon is essentially the political organization of Raul Roco. Roco is a former congressman and senator and ran for the presidency in 1998, losing to the later-disposed Estrada. In 2001 Roco's brother Sulpico won a House seat, making him Aksyon's only representative in the 12th congress. Roco launched another failed bid for the presidency in 2004 under the Aksyon banner. Aksyon's membership base and organization is unique. It relies on a network of volunteers, made up of mostly youth and the middle class.

Other Political Forces

THE RELIGIOUS SECTOR

Besides political parties, other civic institutions play important roles in the Philippines. The Roman Catholic Church frequently issues guidelines for voting and identifies candidates who adhere to its teachings. In 1987 and 1992 the Catholic Archbishop of Manila, Jaime Cardinal Sin, issued lists of church-supported candidates. The Catholic Church took the lead in the demand for Joseph Estrada's resignation in the wake of the corruption allegations in 2000. More recently, the

church signaled its support for Arroyo against charges of election fraud in the 2004 presidential elections. Other religious institutions, like the Iglesia ni Cristo (INC), also take positions in elections and are reported to vote en bloc. Social movement organizations and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) have also been deeply involved in electoral politics, both by backing candidates and by attempting to focus campaign debates on issues rather than personalities.

THE LEFT

The broad complex of left organizations, from the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) to more centrist social democratic organizations, have steadily declined since the transition from Marcos. The CCP and its associated New People's Army (NPA) have declined since 1987 and suffered splits and defections. Many who formerly belonged to the "parliament of the streets" assumed more conventional roles in electoral and governmental institutions. Three political formations—the Independent Socialists, Popular Democrats, and Partido ng Bayan (PnB)—formed the Citizens' Action Party in 1996 to participate regularly in elections. Perhaps the most interesting aspects of the left's role in the 1998 presidential elections was that virtually every prominent candidate garnered support from some ostensibly "left" faction. This perhaps indicates how decisively the polarization of the Marcos years has passed, for now patronage relationships cross any apparent ideological chasms.

MUSLIM ORGANIZATIONS

In 1995 the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) ended its persistent but sporadic insurgency against the Philippine state, begun in the early 1970s by winning elections for the political leadership of the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM). In the wake of these elections, the MNLF allied with Ramos's LAKAS party. Other political forces in Mindanao, however, remain less completely satisfied. The Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) is negotiating persistent complaints with the government, and the Abu-Sayyaf emerged in the mid-1990s and staged several armed attacks and kidnappings to advance a more radical independence agenda.

In August 2001 a referendum was held on Mindanao autonomy, and a cease-fire was agreed on with the MILF. Its failure stemmed from an inability to agree on whether the whole of Mindanao should be autonomous. Peace talks scheduled for May 2003 in Malaysia were cancelled following an MILF attack on a mining village. In June 2003 the MILF announced a 10-day cease-fire, but military clashes with government forces nevertheless continued. Over the past few years the smaller, more extremist Abu Sayyaf has stepped up terrorist activities, including periodically kidnapping foreigners for ransom. Furthermore, since the terrorist attacks on the United States in September 2001, the United States has joined forces with the Philippines to eradicate terrorism in the south. This, however, may aggravate the MILF to revert to its former, more militant stance.

NONGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

Since Marcos's rule nongovernmental organizations have proliferated. Some arose in connection with Aquino's KaBISIG program, which pledged financial support to community NGOs. Social movement organizations founded others in attempts to read just their relationship with mass members under liberal democracy. The Local Government Code created provincial development councils in which NGOs participated; the councils have also encouraged NGO formation. NGOs have worked to define their proper role in electoral politics, and many have programs to help their beneficiary communities engage in electoral politics.

National Prospects

The Philippines has begun to shed its dictatorial past. While political parties remain weak and corruption remains high, the country is moving to a more stable, democratic consolidation. President Gloria Arroyo's respect for the rule of law and strong democratic institutions has provided the country with a period of political rest. However, a host of challenges faces the Philippines still. First, Arroyo narrowly avoided being impeached following the 2004 election. Both opposition candidates, Poe and Lacson, filed complaints with the Supreme Court for election fraud and accused Arroyo of following in the authoritarian footsteps of leaders past. There were protests in the streets, but the impeachment effort failed. Arroyo has to deal with the unrest in the South and other internal conflicts. She has been a strong ally of U.S. president George W. Bush's war on terror and has vowed to eradicate terrorist activity from the islands. However, she recently bowed to domestic pressure by pulling out troops from Iraq. Whether this sends a message of weakness to

the rebel groups in Mindanao is yet to be seen. Lastly, Arroyo must concentrate on reviving the once-booming economy. As she does this, she must also maintain a delicate balance with the rural poor. It is unlikely that there are any quick fixes to the latter two problems. The solution to the Muslim problem in the South must be a long-term one. Likewise, if Arroyo fails to appease the poor, there is a keen opposition ready to take the reigns. The future is indeed precarious in the Philippines, but there is hope.

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REPUBLIC OF POLAND

(Rzeczpospolita Polska)

By Jeffrey K. Hass, Ph.D.



Located in east-central Europe, Poland comprises an area of nearly 313,000 square kilometers (about the size of New Mexico). Borders with Germany on the west and Belarus and Russia on the east give Poland notable geopolitical significance. In addition, its flat topography, with no defensible geographical features, has made Poland a prime area for conflict, as the country not only lies between historically powerful nations but also has served as an unwilling conduit for forces between Russia and Germany.

Poland does not suffer from the ethnic problems that have plagued Russia, Bulgaria, or Romania. Poland is 96.7 percent ethnic Polish. Polish is the dominant language, and Poland does not suffer disputes over a second legal language in the country. The Roman Catholic Church can claim 90 percent of the Polish population, with perhaps as much as 75 percent of Poles actively practicing their faith. Ethnic and religious homogeneity have played a large role in the post-1989 Polish political world. This dual homogeneity helped act as a social glue during the Communist period and has kept social tension at a minimum during the painful transition to a market economy and to democracy.

Poland's political system is grounded in structures carried over from the pre-1939 period, from Communism, and from contingencies since 1992. Until the new constitution was adopted on April 2, 1997, Poland's Socialist constitution of 1952 provided the basic political ground rules. The new constitution sets up the system of government and provides rights for citizens. Freedom of organization is provided for, except when such organizations or political parties have "totalitarian" methods; Nazi, fascist, or Communist activities; or programs of racial or national hatred, inspired by Poland's memories of Nazi and Soviet occupation. Private property and a market economy are sanctified and protected by the constitution, also inspired by the desire to avoid a return to Communism. Other articles in the constitution were of some dispute, reflecting the desires of right-wing parties (in the legislative minority) and the left-wing majority. For example, the constitution allows for freedom of religion, but the state is to remain religiously neutral. This proposition angered right-wing parties and supporters, who wanted religion more forcefully supported (and religious convictions imposed) by the state. Social security, a minimum wage, and labor holidays are provided for; this probably stems from left-wing parties' Socialist leanings and convictions. Free public education and health care for children, invalids, and pregnant women are to be provided. Finally, duties are specified, although vaguely: Citizens are to pay taxes, defend the motherland (although exactly how they are to do so is left for other legislation), and care for the environment.

Relations and divisions of power between the two main branches of government, the executive and the legislature, are only now crystallizing. Before Aleksander Kwasniewski's election as president in 1995, the presidency and the legislature had come into conflict not only over policies but also over the degree of

powers delegated to each branch. This stemmed in part from the political and ideological distance between President Lech Walesa and the Socialist legislature after 1993. However, Walesa's personality also played no small role in the struggle for power. Walesa viewed himself as a savior and founder of the Polish state and accordingly took a more dictatorial attitude toward his office over time. His heavy-handed politics did not sit well with his allies in Solidarity, the party he helped found in 1980 that became a beacon of anti-Communist support in Poland. In an attempt to assemble a party apparatus Walesa created the Non-Party Bloc in Support of Reforms, but the party faired badly in 1993 and later disappeared. With the election of a Socialist legislature in 1993, Walesa's pushing of presidential powers to the limit of the law isolated him from the electorate, and he lost to the more pragmatic and moderate Kwasniewski.

After taking office, Kwasniewski tried to remodel the Socialist image from that of staunch Communism to pragmatic, social-democratic leftism. He took a moderate stance toward the Catholic Church, favored relations with the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) and the European Union (EU), and in general presented himself less as a party ideologue and more as a moderate politician.

Despite pro-Western sentiments, especially after the experience of Communism and Soviet domination, Poles were not entirely convinced on the need to enter the European Union as they were entering NATO. The latter gives Poland a greater sense of security than the country probably has had in many centuries. The European Union, on the other hand, brings not only potential economic and political gains but also hardship, especially for agriculture. In 2002 new far-right parties made considerable gains in local elections because of the issue of EU membership. In 2003 a national referendum was held, and while a majority of those who voted approved European Union membership, there were some claims of vote-fixing or other forms of interference. Further, the referendum and pro-EU result led to a split in the coalition. The Polish Peasants Party (PSL) had entered the governing coalition with the social-democratic SLD (Democratic Left) so that a majority government could be formed, and their price for cooperation was either rejection of EU membership or tough negotiations for privileges and subsidies for Polish farmers. PSL received neither in negotiations between Poland and the European Union, and following the referendum the PSL cried betrayal and left the ruling coalition. This weakened Prime Minister Leszek Miller's position, and following stories of scandal and a near-fatal helicopter accident, Miller resigned as prime minister, although not without the accomplishment of gaining Poland entry into the EU.

Turning to Europe angered not only the Polish Peasants Party but also other factions on the conservative right frightened by possible negative implications of joining the West. In 2002 two right-wing parties emerged: Samoobrona and the League of Polish Families. Both capitalized on opposition to joining the EU, especially Samoobrona.

In the 2005 presidential election, Lech Kaczynski of the conservative Law and Justice party won a runoff to claim the presidency. Kazimierz Marcinkiewicz, also of Law and Justice, became the new prime minister, ending four years of center-left government.

The System of Government

Poland is a democratic republic with a bicameral legislature.

EXECUTIVE

Poland's executive branch is like that of most European nations: a two-sided executive with a president and a prime minister. The president is the leader of the nation, while the prime minister heads the state bureaucracy. Foreign policy is the president's domain, while domestic policy is the prime minister's. The Polish model (like that in Romania or Bulgaria) resembles more the German political structure, where the president acts as a chief diplomat and the cares of the country are in the hands of the prime minister. Poland's president does not enjoy the same amount of power as presidents in Russia, Belarus, France, or the United States. This stems partially from Poland's use of the German model of strong prime minister and weak president and partially from events of the post-Communist era, when tensions between the heavy-handed Lech Walesa and the legislature arose not only over ideology and policy but also over political power.

The president is elected to office for a five-year term and can serve a total of only two terms; a runoff system is used if in the first round of elections no candidate receives more than 50 percent of the votes cast. If the president cannot fulfill his duties (e.g., due to illness, death, resignation, or dismissal by the state tribunal), the marshal of the *Sejm* is the next in line, followed by the marshal of the Senate. The president

can be removed from office by the legislature. In this case, if two-thirds of all members of the national assembly (both houses) support a petition submitted by at least 140 members for removal, then the case goes to the tribunal of state. While the case is being contemplated, the president is suspended from office pending the decision.

According to the constitution, the president's main role is to be "the supreme representative of the Republic of Poland and the guarantor of the continuity of State authority." The president is to be above the daily affairs of state—leaving these for the prime minister—and is both to represent Poland abroad and to safeguard the constitution. Foreign policy, especially agreements with foreign states, is the responsibility primarily of the president; in this he is aided by a national security council. Further, the president is the commander in chief of the armed force and has the power to appoint the heads of the military.

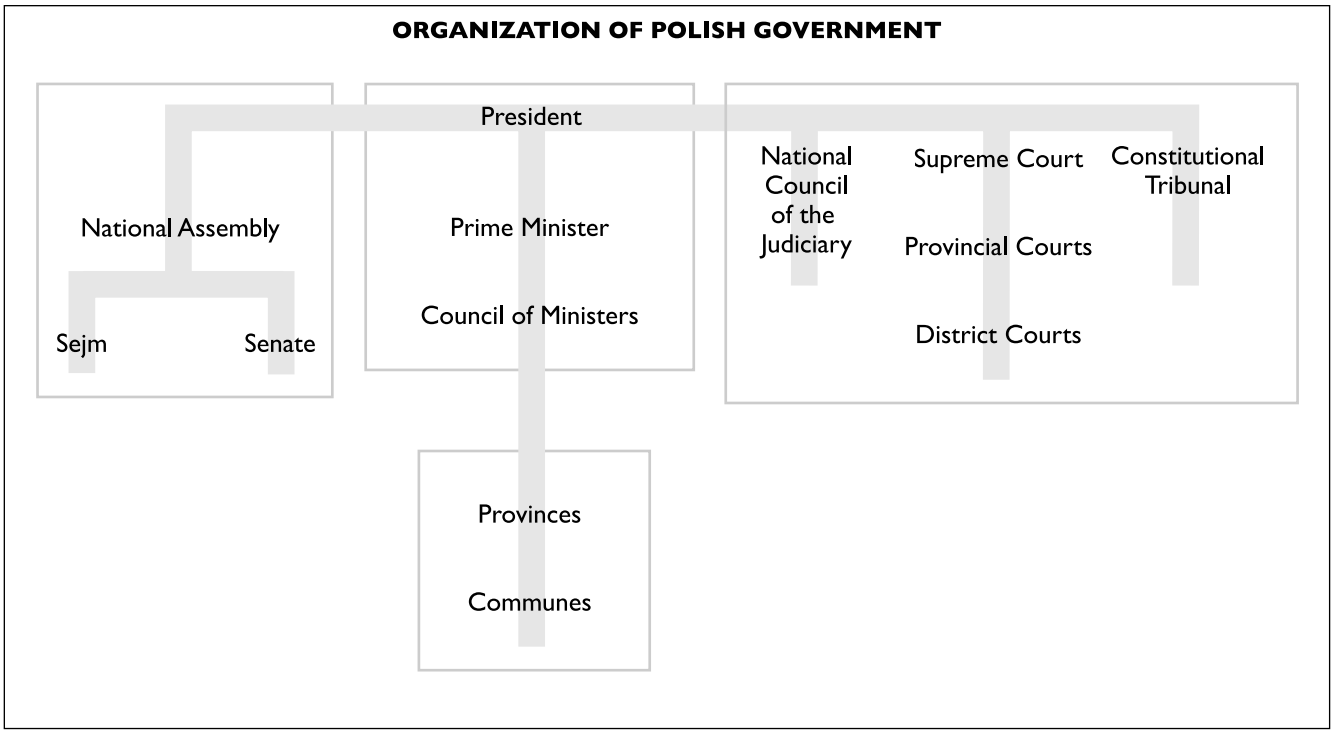
Domestic affairs, especially the day-to-day running of the state and the nitty-gritty of drafting and implementing policies, belong more to the prime minister and the council of ministers. The president does play a role in adopting legislation and may convene the "cabinet of ministers," which is a meeting of the council of ministers but chaired by the president, and which does not have the same power as the council of ministers. The president also sets elections to the national legislature; calls to dissolve both legislative houses if so decided after consultations with the marshals of the two chambers; introduces legislation to the national assembly; proclaims nationwide referenda; refers matters to the Constitutional Tribunal; nominates and appoints the prime minister; dismisses ministers after a no-confidence vote has passed the Sejm; and appoints judges and fills positions within the high courts.

The president has only weak veto power over legislation. Upon receiving legislation passed by the national assembly, the president has 21 days to respond. He may approve the bill, at which point it enters the Journal of Laws (Dziennik Ustaw). If the president opposes the bill, he has two options, and he cannot use both. In the first option, he may refer the bill to the Constitutional Tribunal. If the tribunal accepts the bill as constitutional, the president is obliged to sign it. The tribunal may reject the bill as unconstitutional in its entirety or in parts. In the former case, the bill is dead; in the latter case, however, the president is to sign the bill without those parts deemed unconstitutional or to return the bill to the national assembly. The president's second option is to refer the bill back to the Sejm for reconsideration: this is a weak veto. If a quorum (more than half of the deputies) is present and three-fifths of those present support the bill, then the president is obliged to sign it into law within seven days; the president at this point has no recourse to the Constitutional Tribunal.

One prominent role the president has played in domestic affairs is that of power broker. President Walesa, for example, in 1994 and 1995 threatened the Socialist legislature with dissolution even though he did not have the power to do so; yet his threats were taken seriously and led to Walesa's being able to make the ministerial appointments he desired. President Kwasniewski, whose style was less inflammatory, acted less as a direct power broker, although he played that role in dealing with the Catholic Church. In this way, the president puts himself "above politics" in order to help bring political consensus.

For domestic affairs the prime minister and council of ministers play a much more active role. Ministers of all state bureaucracies are appointed and sit on this body; the prime minister is the head of the group. As the heads of the state bureaucracy, the ministers have the job of managing the state bureaucracy and upholding the implementation of laws and policies. According to the constitution, the council of ministers has control over state affairs that are not expressly reserved for local self-government organs. The council of ministers also oversees the state treasury, implements the state budget, maintains internal security and civil peace, and engages in the day-to-day functions of foreign relations.

Ministers leave office on three occasions. The first is when a new Sejm is elected and comes to office; at this point the prime minister must submit the resignation of the council of ministers. (This does not mean those ministers may not be reappointed.) The second is upon the resignation of the prime minister, which the president does not need to accept. The third is in the case of a vote of no confidence by the Sejm. To depose a prime minister, at least 46 members of the Sejm must submit a motion on no confidence and submit the name of a new prime minister candidate. If a majority of the Sejm supports this motion, the prime minister must submit his resignation to the president, who is obliged to accept it. Such a motion must be voted on seven days after submission. If the no-confidence motion fails, the Sejm must wait three months before attempting the motion again (unless the motion is supported by at least 115 Sejm deputies). Votes of no confidence can also be submitted against individual ministers; such a motion requires the support of 69 deputies and follows the same time limits and procedures as for no confidence in the prime minister. The



prime minister may also call for a vote of no confidence in himself and the council of ministers in order to force issues of disagreement between the executive and legislature.

LEGISLATURE

Poland's legislature is bicameral. The lower, "popular" house is the Sejm, consisting of 460 members; the upper house is the Senate (Senat), consisting of 100 delegates. Together these two houses make up the overall legislature, the national assembly (Zgromadzenie Narodowe). Each body is elected for a four-year term; before the end of each term the president is supposed to call for new elections. However, the Sejm may dissolve itself by a two-thirds support of a motion to do so; this leads to dissolution of the Senate as well. Also, the president may call for the dissolution of the Sejm and Senate after consultation with the marshals of the Sejm and the Senate (speakers of the two houses); at this point the president must call for new elections to both houses within 45 days. As described above, the national assembly has the power to dismiss ministers through a vote of no confidence, providing some popular control over the executive branch.

Of the two houses, the Sejm is the more powerful. Legislation may be submitted by the president, deputies of the Sejm or Senate, members of the council of ministers, or citizens who have collected 100,000 signatures of support. A bill then proceeds to the Sejm, where it must be passed after three readings. The marshal of the Sejm can keep a bill from a vote if the bill has not passed through an appropriate legislative committee, although it is not clear whether every bill has to pass through a committee or whether this is a built-in constitutional safeguard against hasty legislation. For legislation to pass at each reading, more than one-half of all Sejm deputies must be present and a simple majority must vote in favor at each reading.

Once passed by the Sejm, the bill goes to the Senate. If the Senate takes no action after 30 days, the bill becomes law. Within that 30-day period the Senate may adopt the bill as it is, propose amendments, or reject the bill. In the latter two cases the bill returns to the Sejm; a majority can override the Senate's rejection or amendments (making the Sejm the more powerful of the two legislative chambers). Once legislation has been passed, it is referred to the president, who has the options described above. In the case of a presidential veto, the Sejm can override the veto if a three-fifths majority approves the bill once more.

JUDICIARY

Poland's judicial system, like that in every formerly Socialist bloc country, has slowly been moving from

that of Communism to that of liberal democracy, where courts have autonomy and act as a balance to other branches of government. Under Communism, the law was subordinated to Leninist ideology and the dictates of the Communist Party. Since the break with Communism, Poland's judiciary has been moving to a continental system, where courts serve more to clarify bureaucratic procedure and law and to adjudicate in disputes than to set precedent or act as a proactive third political branch.

The function of the court system in Poland is primarily to administer justice. The court system is composed of three separate groups: civil, administrative, and constitutional. At the top of the civil hierarchy is the Supreme Court. The role of the Supreme Court and lower common courts is to adjudicate in disputes and civil or criminal matters. The chief administrative court and administrative courts underneath this hierarchy control public administration, acting as bureaucratic courts. The chief administrative court and lower administrative courts also have the role of ensuring that local governments' actions conform to national law and the constitution. Finally, the constitutional court has four primary tasks: to adjudicate on questions of the constitutionality of government statues; to ensure that national statues follow ratified international agreements; to ensure conformity of state edicts with the constitution; and to ensure that activities of political parties conform with the constitution. The Constitutional Tribunal also plays a role in ensuring proper election procedure, as contested elections can be brought before the tribunal.

The National Council of the Judiciary is above all the courts (except the Constitutional Tribunal). It is made up of the first president of the Supreme Court, the minister of justice, the president of the chief administrative court, an independent person appointed by the president, 15 judges from the Supreme Court and lower courts (military, common, administrative), and four individuals chosen by the Sejm. The National Council is to guard the independence of the judicial system and act as a judicial watchdog to ensure the legal conformity of judges. In cases of judicial incompetence or criminality, the National Council can apply to the Constitutional Tribunal.

Judges are appointed by the president and cannot be removed from office except by a motion from a higher court, which guarantees some independence from politics. Further, upon taking the position, a judge must leave any political, trade union, or other public organization or position.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Below the national level the Polish polity is divided into 16 provinces (*wojewodstwa*), which themselves are divided into the basic local political unit, the commune (*gmina*). The constitution gives all those powers or rights not fulfilled by national government to the local government. Thus, provinces are provided a legislature and an executive, which are directly elected on a regular basis. Local governments obtain funding through local taxes and through subsidies from the central government.

The Electoral System

Poland's electoral system resembles that of other Eastern European countries, such as Russia or Romania. Suffrage is universal at age 18. The presidency is decided through direct ballot and in two rounds. To get on the ballot a potential candidate must be at least 35 years old and must collect the signatures of 100,000 citizens who hold the right to vote. All candidates compete in the first round of voting. If no candidate garners more than 50 percent of all votes in the first round, then the top two receivers of votes move to compete in a runoff round held two weeks later. The winner of this round (who will mathematically receive more than 50 percent of votes cast) wins the overall presidential race and serves for a five-year term.

Elections for the Senate (the upper house of the national assembly) are fairly straightforward. Voters cast ballots only for individuals rather than parties, and the elections are single-seat races. Two deputies are elected from each province, and three deputies each from Warsaw and Katowice. The candidate receiving the most votes wins the race. Unlike Senate races in the United States, Senate races in Poland are not staggered but are held all at the same time. The two Senate candidates with the top two numbers of votes win the two seats from each province (except in Warsaw and Katowice, where the top three vote getters gain Senate seats).

The electoral rules for choosing delegates to the Sejm are fairly complicated. In the 1991 election political parties received a number of seats equal to the proportion of total votes they received nationwide. This led to a plethora of parties and a fragmented parliament as no single party or faction dominated, and building a viable and durable political coalition proved impossible. A new election

law for the 1993 elections introduced a percentage barrier, the goal of which was twofold. First was to reduce the number of parties represented, thus allowing one or a few to have many seats, which would lead to easier creation of ruling coalitions and parliamentary governance. Second was to reduce the number of existing political parties through attrition from a large number to a handful, which would then be more powerful and more efficient at campaigning and winning votes.

In 1991, the first year of parliamentary elections, the Poles relied on both single-seat constituencies and on proportional party representation. It was confusing to most observers and led to the formation of a huge number of small parties that could not garner enough votes to have a dominant faction within the Sejm. To avoid repeating this scenario in future elections, legislators introduced a 5 percent hurdle that all parties would have to overcome to obtain places through proportional representation. This cut down on the number of parties represented in the Sejm; further, alliances (such as that founding the Alliance of the Democratic Left) have helped bring smaller parties together into larger blocs.

According to the election law, elections for the Sejm are based on proportional representation in which voters select parties through selecting individuals tied to parties. There are two party lists, one for the local constituency level, for which 391 Sejm seats are reserved, and one for the national level, for which 69 seats are reserved. At the election, the votes for party members in the constituencies and on the national list are tallied; according to the election law, a political party must exceed a percentage barrier to gain seats. For the local constituency lists, a party must garner 5 percent of the votes, or an alliance of parties must garner 8 percent; for the national list, a party or alliance must garner at least 7 percent of all votes cast.

In the actual electoral procedure, citizens vote for one individual candidate (linked to parties or alliances unless independent) on each of these two lists. If the party/alliance overcomes the five-eighths percent barrier based on a nationwide count, then the party receives a number of seats from each constituency based on a proportion of the number of votes it received in that particular constituency. (This differs from other countries, where the overall votes from all regions are tabulated into a national total, which is then broken down for assigning delegates to parties.) Once a party knows how many delegates it may send to the Sejm, actual seats are assigned to those individuals who received the most votes. In this way the 391 seats from the first list are distributed, and the local list provides some degree of local representation.

Those parties or groups that gain at least 7 percent may also receive some of the 69 seats assigned to the national list. Here the Polish system is similar to other systems. The number of seats out of 69 that a party receives is in proportion to its total percentage of votes on the party list divided by the percentage total of all parties overcoming the percentage barrier. If only two parties overcome the barrier and they each receive 30 percent of the vote, then each receives 30 / (30 + 30) = one-half of the total seats. (This means that a vote cast for a party that receives less than 5 percent of all party ballots is a wasted vote.) Individuals receive a seat from this list depending on their standing on submitted lists of party candidates.

Polish elections have swung consistently between right and left. Solidarity was the biggest gainer immediately after the collapse of Communism, but its enactment of shock-therapy economic reforms created social pain and a backlash, with voters turning to the Social-Democratic Party, formerly the Communist Party but revamped to embrace post-Socialist, pro-Western symbols and rhetoric. In 1993 the Democratic Left, an electoral alliance headed by the Social Democrats, came to power but were unable to solve thorny economic issues. As well, the thought of former Communists in power did not sit well with much of the anti-Communist population. In 1997 the remnants of Solidarity had created a super-alliance of pro-reform parties, the Solidarity Action Committee (AWS). However, AWS was weakened by a series of scandals under AWS prime minister Jerzy Buzek. This, coupled with Kwasniewski's reelection and promise to take Poland into the EU, brought SLD back. With the Polish Peasants Party, SLD created a coalition government—again, a turn to the left. However, tensions emerged between SLD and PSL over European Union membership: PSL feared the impact of EU farming policies (especially the end of farming subsidies) on its constituents, while SLD had embraced the general line of pro-EU moderate or left-leaning parties in Europe, such as New Labor and the Liberal Democrats in Britain. Not surprisingly, the 2005 legislative elections witnessed a turn back to the right, with the Law and Justice party winning the most seats and forming a minority coalition government with several smaller parties.

PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION, 2005	
Candidate	**% votes Second Round**
Lech Kaczynski	54.04%
Donald Tusk	45.96%

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS, 2005		
Party	**Sejm Seats**	**Seats: Senate**
Law and Justice	155	49
Citizens' Platform	133	34
Self-Defense of the Polish Republic	56	3
Alliance of the Democratic Left	55	0
League of Polish Families	34	7
Polish People's Party	25	2
Election Committee German Minority	2	0
Independents	0	5
Total	460	100

The Party System

Poland's political spectrum was scattered in the early years of the democratic transition. The disbanding of the Polish United Workers' Party gave rise to many left-wing parties, and the fragmentation of Solidarity after 1990 led to a multiplication of right-wing parties. There were too many parties with too little power, making coalition building difficult if not impossible. After the election reform of 1993 the number of parties was reduced, and politicians began building coalitions.

Given the flux in party composition and existence and the relative newness of the party system, little direct information is available in non-Polish languages about exact party composition, procedure for obtaining and distributing funds, and organization. Most Polish parties appear to be no different from those in other post-Communist countries. They are loosely organized groups of political elites and subelites whose activities are primarily parliamentary and deliberative.

Major Political Parties

LAW AND JUSTICE

(Prawo i Sprawiedliwosc; PiS)

A center-right party, Law and Justice was founded before the 2001 elections. For party members and members of parliament, PiS drew upon remnants of the foundering Solidarity Electoral Action (AWS). PiS is pro-Europe but not fanatically so. The core component to PiS's political platform and identity is combating corruption and improving the effectiveness of Poland's overall legal and court systems. In 2005 PiS scored a huge victory in the elections, winning 155 Sejm seats and 49 Senate seats and forming a minority coalition government led by Prime Minister Kazimierz Marcinkiewicz. In the presidential contest, Lech Kaczynski of the PiS emerged victorious.

CITIZENS' PLATFORM

(Platforma Obywatelska)

This party was founded in 2001 by Andrzej Olechowski, Maciej Plazynski, and Donald Tusk. Olechowski and Plazynski eventually left the party, leaving Tusk as the clear leader. The party favors conservative economic policies such as increased privatization and reduced power for labor unions. In 2005 it performed very strongly, winning 133 Sejm seats (an increase of 68) and 34 Senate seats, placing it second in both results behind the PiS. In the presidential contest, Tusk was defeated in a runoff election by Lech Kaczynski.

SELF-DEFENSE OF THE POLISH REPUBLIC

(Samoobrona Rzeczypospolitej Polskief; S)

Samoobrona emerged for the 2002 elections as a protest vote against EU membership and for the defense of Poland's agricultural sector, which the Polish People's Party (PSL, the traditional rural party) has not defended as vigorously as some of its constituents would like. At the center of the party is charismatic Andrzej Lepper, a former farmer himself, whose style and rhetoric remind some of fascism. Samoobrona is a more nationalistic party of rural and agricultural voters, in contrast to the PSL. It also is right-wing, in contrast to the PSL's leftist leanings. Further, Samoobrona has not participated in governance, as PSL has, giving it the typical "cleaner" image of a party that has only

been in opposition. In the 2005 elections Samoobrona won 56 Sejm seats and three Senate seats, while in the presidential election Lepper finished third in the first round of voting, his strongest showing ever.

DEMOCRATIC LEFT ALLIANCE

(Sojusz Lewicy Demokratycznei; SLD)

SLD began as an alliance of social-democratic parties led by the Social-Democratic Party of Poland (Socjal-Demokracja Rzecspolpolita Polskiego; SdRP). The heir to the Communist party, SdRP and SLD threw off the old image of Soviet Communism and embraced a more Western social-democratic image, including a sleeker, younger, Western-looking presidential candidate (Kwasniewski) in 1995. While critical of radical shock therapy in the 1990s, SLD did support promarket reforms following a more gradual approach, which Poland eventually adopted. SLD supports a regulatory state in the economy, multiparty liberal democracy, and an active state role in welfare and other social defenses, although it does not go so far as to support large subsidies as some agricultural parties do. As the heir to the Communist party, SLD has a developed network of local, grassroots cells and organizations throughout Poland. While this gives it some mobilizational advantages in comparison to other parties, ultimately its success in national elections has depended on its overall image and the images and policies of competitors on the right.

Throughout the 1990s the SLD moved to capture the center ground. This was made possible by weakness of parties to the left—most leftist parties are either very marginal, radical Socialist parties, or agricultural parties such as the PSL—and the collapse of the Solidarity alliances to the center-right. Interestingly, SLD's center-left position resembled the change in the British Labor Party under Tony Blair ("New Labor," which rejected many of its historically Socialist programs, such as nationalization of industry). SLD championed integration with Europe even at the cost of initial and temporary shocks to Polish industry and agriculture. After 2000 SLD formed an electoral alliance with the Union of Labor. But in 2005 SLD was soundly defeated in the elections, winning only 55 Sejm seats and no Senate seats.

LEAGUE OF POLISH FAMILIES

(Liga Polskich Rodzin; LPR)

The League of Polish Families emerged for the 2001 elections. LPR grounds its identity and ideology in Catholicism (with which, however, it does not have formal links) and Polish history. LPR's program contains left-wing and right-wing policies. On the left, LPR's economic policies are relatively protectionist and critical of post-1989 economic reforms. LPR found a patch of fertile soil among Polish voters, in particular older Catholic Poles who were hurt by economic reforms but whose Catholicism (or other aspect of political belief) keeps them from voting for the former Communists (such as the Democratic Left Alliance). At the same time, LPR's social policies lean to the right. Catholicism is strong in Poland, yet most parties are centrist or left-leaning, and right-leaning parties such as Solidarity and its heirs focus their platforms and policies more on economic reform, social welfare issues, and anti-Communism. This has left "cultural" social issues, traditionally the property of the Catholic Church, up for grabs in the political realm. Finally, LPR is fiercely opposed to the European Union and has attracted euroskeptics' votes. In the 2005 elections it won 34 Sejm seats and seven Senate seats.

POLISH PEOPLE'S PARTY

(Polskie Stronnistwo Ludowe; PSL)

Founded in May 1990, the PSL is the heir to the Communist-era United Peasants' Party, which was an independent Communist party but a minor player to the Polish United Workers' Party. Led by Waldemar Pawlak, the PSL was one of the first and main parties to orient its program to a specific segment of society—in this case, the more than 3.7 million Poles who work in agriculture—rather than to society at large. Like the SdRP, the PSL favors slower implementation of market reforms and an increased presence of the state in regulatory and social safety–net functions that can provide all citizens, especially peasants, with the opportunity to participate in political and social life.

The PSL claims to adhere to "agrarianism," a philosophy that supports market democracy with a state capable of addressing excesses and problems; agrarianism also exalts the peasantry and its historical role in society and proclaims the need to protect peasants from potential inequalities that occur with economic and social change. Echoing the Socialist rhetoric of its past, the PSL claims exploitation should be addressed and should not be the cornerstone of an economy; in Socialist fashion, the PSL stresses that social interests come before (exploitative) economic interests.

Interestingly, the PSL's seeming leftism does not entirely extend into the sphere of social issues. The PSL claims that its agrarianist platform holds values also espoused by the Catholic Church, which marks

a partial break of the PSL from the atheism of the Communist era and possible good relations with the right-wing AWS. PSL did not have to hope on AWS, however; its leftism was enough to gain an invitation to form a majority ruling coalition in the Sejm in 2001. PSL entered with the understanding that entry into the European Union would either be delayed or would occur after further negotiations for the defense of Polish agriculture, much of which remains in the form of small and not always efficient peasant landholdings.

PSL's moderate-left pro-agriculture stance has not been as effective as of late in shoring up its constituency. Partly because it did not confront EU membership sufficiently vigorously, a competitor for the agricultural vote emerged, Samoobrona. Competition from Samoobrona drove PSL toward a more anti-EU position. In 2005 the PSL won only 25 Sejm seats, down from 42 in the previous election; it won two Senate seats.

Minor Political Parties

UNION OF LABOR

(Unia Pracy; UP)

The Union of Labor is a left-wing party that is popular among the working class. The Union of Labor has its origins in a combination of leftist political ideology and anti-Communism. However, the UP cannot be considered a remade Communist labor party. The UP supports a leftist Socialist vision and temporarily was a member of the left-wing ruling coalition of the PSL and SLD after 1993. The UP supported the SLD's positions and did not provide any left-wing opposition. In the 1997 elections the UP did not clear the 5 percent vote hurdle and lost representation in the Sejm. In the 2005 elections it formed a coalition with the Alliance of the Democratic Left.

DEMOCRATIC PARTY

(Partia Demokratyczna–demokraci.pl)

This party was founded in May 2005 as the legal successor to the Freedom Union. The latter was formed in 1994 when the Democratic Union (UD) and the Liberal Democratic Congress decided to bring their political forces together as a parliamentary opposition to the leftist majority. The Freedom Union maintained the political program of its component groups: economic reform and closer foreign relations with the West. On social issues the Freedom Union was not entirely conservative but instead was liberal in the classical sense; it was right-wing in its economic policies (pro–market reforms). While the Freedom Union was promarket and anti-Communist, it did not openly support the social conservatism that other right-wing parties espoused. The conversion of the Freedom Union to the Democratic Party was led by Wladyslaw Frasyniuk, Jerzy Hausner, and Tadeusz Mazowiecki. The party attracted significant media attention prior to the 2005 elections but in the end fared poorly, winning only 2.5 percent of the vote and gaining no seats in the Sejm or Senate.

Other Political Forces

As in other Communist regimes, the army was a powerful support to the civilian regime. While under civilian command, the army gained status after 1980, when it stepped in to enforce martial law against Solidarity's challenge to Communist authority. The army was the main political force in the 1980s, until liberalization and the end of Communist rule. After this the military receded into the background. Given memories of martial law and the importance to the army of the Moscow-backed leadership, it is unlikely the armed forces will step into the political limelight soon.

Civil organizations have been important forces of political change, especially since 1980. After 1989, however, Solidarity's fortunes declined. Infighting and the drawbacks of responsibility to leadership hurt their electoral support, and Solidarity was continuously threatened by internal fragmentation. By 2000 Solidarity seemed a spent force. Trade unions in Poland had greater vitality than in other Communist countries, but after 1989, in the face of market reforms, unions as well lost some power. However, they remained powerful enough to slow privatization in the middle 1990s. Thus trade unions are important political players for occasional issues, mostly concerning economic well-being of blue-collar workers and control of enterprises. In the countryside, Poland enjoyed a relatively independent peasantry, unlike most other Communist countries, and the Polish peasantry had their own party, which became the Polish People's Party. Even the rise of Samoobrona and decline of the Polish People's Party does not diminish the potential mobilization in the countryside. Thus, civil society in Poland does have some vitality, and, unlike in neighbors Belarus or Russia, political parties and elites cannot co-opt or ignore civic organizations and associations entirely.

National Prospects

In spite of obstacles and hazards on the road to a market economy and democracy, such as political fighting between individuals, parties, and branches of government, and problems of shock therapy, Poland may be considered a success story in the former Communist bloc. Despite his mostly autocratic behavior, Walesa handed power over to a former Communist, Aleksander Kwasniewski, when he lost the presidential election of 1995. Another peaceful change of power took place in 2005.

Despite scandals over media control and ownership and the European Union referendum, Poland appears poised for positive political and economic development. EU membership might create initial pain for the agricultural sector, but it will also improve trading links with the rest of Europe. Membership also sends a positive signal to foreign investors, whose capital is vital to continued post-Socialist economic recovery. Politically, while Poland's electorate shifts between preferences for the left and right, politics remains stable. The remnants of Solidarity and the post-Socialist social democrats are more centrist than after the collapse of Communism, and radical parties to the left and right for the moment are marginal players. Samoobrona and the League of Polish Families are the kinds of parties that emerge in reaction to perceptions of threat from transitions to new economic life, but if the European Union can provide Poland with the materials for growth, then recent history suggests Poland will be one success story in the post-Socialist world. With few ethnic tensions—a potential problem in such countries as Russia, Romania, and to a lesser extent the Baltic countries—and social solidarity from the Catholic Church, the foundation for stable politics is in place.

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PORTUGUESE REPUBLIC

(República Portuguesa)

By Jan Knippers Black, Ph.D.
Revised by William Godnick



Portugal is a nation of 10.5 million people (2005 est.) on the western side of the Iberian peninsula. Through a coup d'état in 1974 that rapidly took on the characteristics of a revolution, Portugal emerged from a personalist, corporatist dictatorship that had spanned 48 years.

The dictatorial style of Antonio de Oliveira Salazar, premier from 1932 to 1968, was low-key. A former economics professor and a deeply religious man, he avoided public appearances and led a frugal life. The governmental system he constructed, however, had many of the trappings of fascism. He banned all political organizations other than his own National Union and attempted to control the populace through youth movements, veterans' associations, and other officially sponsored entities. He also made use of propaganda and censorship and ultimately relied upon a secret-police system to silence dissidents and crush opposition.

Under Salazar's so-called New State and the six-year successor regime of Marcello Caetano, the spiraling costs of maintaining rebellious African colonies were borne by the poor majority of workers and peasants while the profits were closely held by a small commercial, industrial, and landholding oligarchy. By most standards of measurement, Portugal remained Western Europe's poorest nation.

The military coup that forced a sharp break with the past was perpetrated by a group of young military officers known as the Armed Forces Movement (Movimento das Forças Armadas; MFA). The initial grievances of the movement had to do with pay and promotions, although disgruntlement over the seemingly endless colonial wars soon became a major issue. When the young officers made their move on April 25, 1974, the old regime collapsed like a house of cards, and few could be found to mourn its passing. The Portuguese people surged through the streets in a spirit of euphoria, waving red carnations that soon became the symbol of the revolution. Whether or not there were many in the MFA who had aspired to carry out a revolution, it soon appeared that the people were demanding nothing less.

The new military government, initially headed by General Antonio de Spinola, pledged the release of political prisoners, the dissolution of the secret police, the abolition of censorship, and popular determination of the future of the colonies. It also pledged to bring democracy to Portugal.

Political freedoms soon gave rise to demands for economic justice. The military caretakers initially responded to a spate of strikes by raising wages and instituting price controls. These measures exacerbated the fears of businessmen and contributed to disinvestment, capital flight, and bankruptcy, forcing the government to take over some businesses in order to prevent a sharp increase in unemployment.

Between mid-1974 and the end of 1975 the government nationalized domestic banks and many of the country's vital industries, including the steel, cement, shipbuilding, petrochemical, and oil-refining industries, and the country's largest conglomerate,

Companhia Uniaõ Fabril. By the end of this round of government investments and nationalizations, the public sector accounted for about one-fourth of the gross domestic product and 46 percent of gross fixed capital. Meanwhile, the government announced its intention to expropriate large landholdings, but as it moved slowly in drawing up guidelines, landless peasants took matters into their own hands. In early 1975 peasants in the Alentejo region "liberated" about 2.5 million acres, one-fifth the country's cultivable land.

The revolution's first two years also witnessed political turmoil. During that period the country endured six provisional governments, two abortive coup attempts—one inspired by the right, one by the left—and countless strikes and demonstrations. Nevertheless, on the first anniversary of the "Carnation Revolution," the Portuguese elected a constituent assembly. A new constitution, establishing a parliamentary democracy under the guardianship of the military-dominated Council of the Revolution, was promulgated on April 2, 1976; on April 25, the second anniversary of the revolution, the parliament, formally known as the Assembly of the Republic, was duly elected. Portugal's constitution was further revised in 1982, 1989, 1992, and 1997.

The System of Government

Portugal is a multiparty parliamentary democracy in a unitary state. It has a unicameral legislature.

EXECUTIVE

The president of the republic, elected by direct and secret universal suffrage by Portuguese citizens, serves as the head of state. He is also commander in chief of the armed forces. The president is elected for a five-year term and is limited to two consecutive terms. He is responsible for the promulgation of laws and executive orders. He is empowered to declare a state of siege or emergency in all or part of the national territory. A state of siege or emergency may not last more than 30 days without ratification by the Assembly.

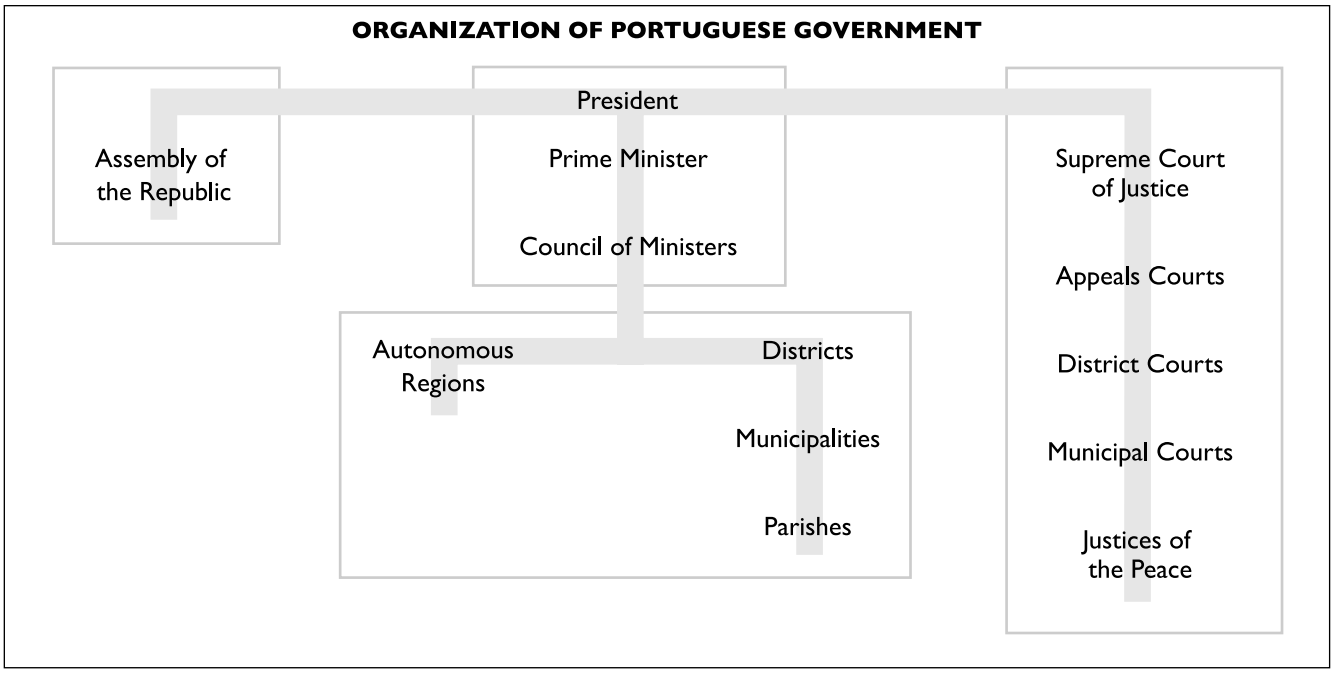
The president is also empowered to grant pardons and commute sentences; to appoint ambassadors and envoys at the proposal of the government; to ratify duly approved treaties; to declare war, in the case of actual or imminent aggression; and to make peace, with the approval of the Assembly.

In accordance with an informal agreement between the armed forces and the political parties in the aftermath of the 1974 revolution, the president was to be a military officer. General Antonio dos Santos Ramalho Eanes was first elected to the presidency in June 1976 with 62 percent of the popular vote. He was reelected in December 1980 by a 56 percent vote. General Ramalho Eanes had gained prestige when troops under his command put down an uprising staged by leftists in the armed forces in November 1975. The following month he was appointed army chief of staff.

Presidential elections took place again at the beginning of 1986. No candidate won a majority in the first round, although Diogo Pinto Freitas do Amaral, leader of the Social Democratic Center Party (CDS), had a strong lead, with 46 percent in a field of four. In the February 16 runoff, however, the two leftist candidates who had been eliminated threw their support to the former Socialist prime minister Mario Soares, giving him a margin of 51 percent to Freitas do Amaral's 48 percent. Soares was reelected, with 70.4 percent of the vote, in 1991. The Socialists increased their margin in the presidential elections of January 14, 1996, as Socialist Party (PS) candidate Jorge Sampaio defeated the Social Democratic Party (PSD) candidate Anibal Cavaço Silva by 53.8 percent to 46.2 percent. Sampaio was reelected in 2001 with 55.76 percent in an election with an absentee rate approaching 50 percent. His closest rival, Joaquim Amaral of the CDS, received 55.34 percent of the vote.

The Portuguese government is headed by a prime minister appointed by the president after consultation with the parties represented in the Assembly. Due regard is given to election results and the Assembly majority. Other members of the government are appointed by the president in accordance with the proposals of the prime minister. The prime minister is politically responsible to the president and to the Assembly. Other ministers are responsible to the prime minister and to the Assembly. The prime minister, deputy prime ministers, and other ministers, making up the council of ministers, determine the general lines of government policy and the means of implementation. The government's program is to be presented to the Assembly within 10 days of the appointment of the prime minister. Rejection of the program requires an absolute majority of the members of the Assembly entitled to vote.

The government is required to resign if its program is rejected, if it loses a vote of confidence, or if two motions of censure are approved at an interval of not less than 30 days by an absolute majority of Assembly members.



Soares was the first of several prime ministers to have served since the promulgation of the constitution of 1976. Cavaço was elected to that role in 1985; he lost a censure motion in 1987 but was reelected later that year and again in 1991. Antonio Guterres of the PS served as prime minister from 1995 to 2002. José Barroso of the PSD was named prime minister in 2002 and served until 2004, when he accepted the nomination to serve as president of the European Commission. Upon Barroso's departure in 2004, President Sampaio nominated Pedro Lopes from the PSD as prime minister. In the 2005 elections the PS scored a resounding victory, and José Sócrates became prime minister.

LEGISLATURE

Legislative power is vested in the unicameral Assembly of the Republic, which has 230 members. The Assembly members are to represent the country as a whole, rather than individual electoral districts. The number of members allotted to each electoral district is proportional to the number of eligible voters on that district's electoral register. Nominations are presented by the political parties, either separately or in combination, and may include nonparty members. A duly elected member may lose his or her seat by exceeding a permissible number of absences from Assembly proceedings; joining a party other than the one that presented the member for election; or being convicted by a court of participation in any organization with a fascist ideology. Legislative periods last four years.

The president is required to dissolve the Assembly and call new elections when, by withholding its confidence from the government or passing a motion of censure on it, it has brought about a third change of government. New elections must be held within 90 days of dissolution. The Assembly may not be dissolved during a state of siege or emergency. In the event of dissolution and new elections, the newly elected Assembly completes the current legislative period and continues throughout the following one.

Members of the Assembly share legislative initiative with the government and with the assemblies of the autonomous regions. Matters in which the Assembly has sole legislative competence include civil rights and liberties and conditions of citizenship; political parties and elections; the creation of taxes and the revenue system; national and regional planning and agrarian reform; determination of the sectors of ownership of the means of production, including the basic sectors in which private firms are forbidden to operate; and economic intervention, nationalization, and socialization of the means of production and the criteria for determining compensation.

The center-right Social Democratic Party (PSD) emerged as the party with the most parliamentary seats in the March 2002 elections and formed a coalition government with the smaller People's Party (PP); this coalition held 119 of 230 seats in the national

Assembly, an absolute majority. The Socialist Party (PS), Portuguese Communist Party/Green Ecologist Party (PCP/PEV), and the Left Bloc (BE) held 96, 12, and 3 seats respectively and function as the opposition. However, in 2005 President Sampaio called for early elections, and the result was an overwhelming PS victory, earning the party its first absolute majority since the return to democracy. The PS won 121 seats to the PSD's 75. José Sócrates, the leader of the PS, became the new prime minister.

JUDICIARY

Portugal's court system is independent, subject only to the law. The decisions of the courts are binding on all public and private bodies and prevail over the decisions of all other authorities. Hearings before the court are public, except when the competent court finds cause for deciding otherwise.

The Supreme Court of Justice is the highest court of appeal. Under certain circumstances, the Supreme Court may serve as a court of first or second instance. The court system is self-regulating. The higher council of the bench, elected by sitting judges from among their own number, appoints judges and dictates assignments and promotions.

The Supreme Court is empowered to rule on the constitutionality of legislation. A finding of unconstitutionality may be appealed to the Constitutional Commission, whose members are chosen by the government, the Assembly, the Supreme Court, and the higher council of the bench. Members of the Constitutional Commission serve four-year terms and are entitled to all the safeguards and immunities proper to judges during those terms.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Pending the establishment of constitutionally mandated regions, 18 districts continue to be the highest subnational administrative unit. The district is headed by a civil governor appointed by and responsible to the central government. The governor is assisted by a council and by a deliberating assembly comprising representatives of the municipal authorities.

The constitution of 1976 provides that in addition to the already-autonomous regions of the archipelagos (see below), the mainland is to be divided into regions for administrative purposes. They are to be governed by assemblies, committees, and councils. The assemblies will comprise members elected at large and at least an equal number of members elected by municipal assemblies. The regional committee, an executive organ, will be elected by the regional Assembly in secret ballot from among its members. The advisory council is to represent the region's economic, social, cultural, and professional organizations. A representative of the national government, appointed by the council of ministers, will be assigned to each region. A national referendum held in 1997 to formally establish these regions was rejected by the voting public.

The archipelagos of the Azores and Madeira already enjoy limited self-rule. These two autonomous regions are governed in much the same manner as the Portuguese Republic. Their assemblies are elected by direct and secret universal suffrage in accordance with the principle of proportional representation. These regional governments are politically responsible to their respective regional assemblies. Portugal returned the island of Macau to Chinese sovereignty in 1999.

Members of the national council of ministers serve as liaisons between central and regional governments. They appoint the chairmen of the regional governments, giving due regard to election results. They also appoint and dismiss other members of the regional governments on proposals of their chairmen.

The autonomous regional governments are empowered to collect and dispose of revenue and to administer and dispose of their own assets. They may enter into contracts and participate in the negotiation of international treaties and agreements of direct concern to them. They may also introduce bills in the Assembly of the Republic. The regional autonomous assemblies have residual legislative powers, but their political and administrative statutes must be approved by the Assembly of the Republic. An advisory commission on the autonomous regions advises the president on the constitutionality of statutes adopted by the regional assemblies. That commission comprises one citizen appointed by the president, two by the Assembly, and one by each of the regional assemblies.

Parish and municipal governments antedate the constitution of 1976. In practice, however, they had no authority of their own until after 1974. They were generally responsive to the wishes of local landlords and ultimately responsible to the national government. The parish, as a government unit, almost always corresponds to the preexisting ecclesiastical parish. Each parish is entitled to a popularly elected assembly and a committee to serve as its executive organ. In the least-populous parishes, the assembly may comprise all eligible voters.

Municipalities are governed by assemblies, chambers, and councils. The municipal assembly comprises

the chairmen of the parish councils and at least an equal number of members elected at large from the municipal area. The municipal chamber is the executive organ. Its members are elected at large from the municipality. It is chaired by the candidate heading the party list that received the most votes. In addition, a municipal council, an advisory body, represents local economic, social, cultural, and professional organizations.

Party activity is intense at every level of government. Local and district elections are hard fought by the same alliances that dominate national politics.

The Electoral System

The constitution specifies that "direct, secret and regular elections shall be the general rule in appointing the members of the elected organs of supreme authority, the autonomous regions, and local governments." It also specifies adherence to the principle of proportional representation. A single registration system is maintained for all elections by direct, universal, adult suffrage.

Multimember electoral districts for the Assembly of the Republic coincide with the country's 18 administrative districts. The electoral law of 1979 specifies a simple method (d'Hondt) of proportional representation. A party list must contain as many names as the district has seats, plus a number of alternates.

The Party System

ORIGINS OF THE PARTIES

Political parties were banned in Portugal from the consolidation of Salazar's dictatorship in the early 1930s until the revolution of April 1974. The Communist Party and, to a lesser extent, the Socialist Party and a few smaller leftist groups nonetheless operated clandestinely. These parties were joined by a number of new ones very shortly after the opening of the system in 1974. The largest of the new parties, the Popular Democratic Party (later renamed the Social Democratic Party; PSD) and the Social Democratic Center Party, were formed by politicians who had been active in the deposed Salazar-Caetano regime. Most of the major parties were organized or reorganized after the revolution with considerable financial assistance from their foreign counterparts.

Within a few months of the revolution, there were about 80 political groups jockeying for position. By the time the first ballot was printed, the field had narrowed to 12 groups. From 1979 to 1983 most of the parties were aligned in three coalitions representing center-right, center-left, and far-left, dominated by the center-right PSD. That constellation of forces gave way in 1983 to a centrist coalition of the Portuguese Socialist Party (PS), which had the plurality, and the PSD. The coalition government broke down in 1985 when the PSD withdrew.

Although the Socialist candidate, Soares, was elected to the presidency in 1986 (becoming the first civilian head of state in 60 years) with support from Eanes's Democratic Renewal Party (PRD) and the Communist-led United Peoples Alliance (APU), the Social Democrats maintained an unsteady lead in the parliament through the mid-1980s. In 1987, after losing a censure motion and going up for new elections, the PSD became the first party in 13 years to win an absolute majority of legislative seats. While the PS led in municipal balloting in 1989 and Soares won 70.4 percent of the vote for reelection to the presidency on January 13, 1991, the PSD again claimed an absolute majority in the parliamentary elections of October 6, 1991. In 1995–96, however, the Socialists won both the presidency and the plurality in the parliament. In the early 2000s the two main political parties, the PS and PSD, continued to dominate party politics with the PS holding the presidency. Prior to 2005 the PSD led a coalition in control of the Assembly, but in elections held in February 2005 the PS scored an absolute majority and once again controlled the Assembly.

THE PARTIES IN LAW

The constitution guarantees freedom of association, including the right to establish or join political associations and parties. No one, however, may be a member of more than one party simultaneously.

Political parties may not use names that contain terms directly related to any religion or church, nor may they use emblems that may be mistaken for national or religious symbols. Parties that are regional in name or program are prohibited, as are fascist and paramilitary organizations.

The Portuguese government subsidizes political parties in accordance with the number of seats each holds in parliament.

PARTY ORGANIZATION

Party organization varies considerably. Parties of the right tend to be loosely structured coalitions of independent politicians and local notables, while those of

the left are formally organized and operate with a far greater degree of central control. With the exception of the Communist Party, relatively democratic procedures characterize intraparty organization. Parties in alliance have tended to run combined lists in some areas and to avoid competing against each other in other areas. While the alliances have been parliamentary rather than between the membership organizations themselves, considerable interparty communication and planning have occurred.

CAMPAIGNING

Electoral campaigns are characterized by freedom of speech, equality of treatment for the various candidates, and impartiality toward candidates on the part of public bodies.

INDEPENDENT VOTERS

There is very little reliable information on party loyalty or ticket splitting between national and local elections. Indications are that voters identify strongly with one party or alliance and consistently vote for it at all levels.

Major Political Parties

PORTUGUESE SOCIALIST PARTY

(Partido Socialista Portugues; PS)

HISTORY

Portugal's first Socialist party was founded in 1875, attracting intellectuals but few workers. Between the 1930s and the 1960s several Socialist fronts attempted, ineffectively, to oppose the dictatorship of Salazar. The roots of the contemporary party are traced to a front called Portuguese Socialist Action, formed in 1964 by about one hundred militants in exile. It was admitted to the Socialist International in 1972, and in 1973 it became known as the Portuguese Socialist Party.

The PS proved to be the country's strongest party, by far, in the first two national elections. It won 38 percent of the vote and 116 seats in the constituent assembly in 1975 and 35 percent and 107 seats in the Assembly of the Republic in 1976.

The PS's secretary-general, Mario Soares, served as prime minister of the first and second constitutional governments, from mid-1976 to mid-1978. However, the austerity measures he was obliged to impose to obtain a loan from the International Monetary Fund cost the party dearly. Its representation in the Assembly dropped to 74 seats after the elections of 1979 and 66 after those of 1980.

Its fortunes rose again in 1983 when, with a strong plurality of 101 seats, it was able to put together a coalition government with the PSD. Its representation dropped again to 57 seats in the general elections of 1985, but its leader, Soares, was elected president of the republic in 1986 and reelected in 1991. He was succeeded after the 1996 election by the Socialist Jorge Sampaio. Legislative representation rose to 60 seats in 1987, to 72 in 1991, and to 112 in 1996 before dropping slightly to 96 in 2002. In 2005 it scored a huge victory in the legislative elections, however, winning 121 seats and an absolute majority.

ORGANIZATION

The PS is the best organized and most highly structured of the larger parties in Portugal. Organized at the neighborhood level in the cities and some smaller towns, party members elect their own leaders and their representatives to district and regional conferences. The regional conferences in turn send representatives to the national congress, which elects a national commission (a large oversight body), a political commission (for policy planning), and a small executive commission, which comprises the party's top leaders.

POLICY

The PS presents itself as the party of workers and as the defender of all those who have been subject to discrimination or who have special needs, including immigrants and refugees from the former colonies. Its platforms have stressed the need for increasing employment, improving working conditions, and extending social benefits, including social security and national health care. In the 1980s, although references to Marxism were stricken from the PS declaration of principles, the party continued to defend the concept of a mixed economy as established by the constitution of 1976. In practice, however, the party had been forced to adopt economic measures acceptable to foreign creditors and investors, and by the 2000s its policies were scarcely distinguishable from those of its conservative opposition.

MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY

A mass party with a membership of more than 100,000, the PS draws wide support from the working class, a sizable portion of the middle class, and many professionals. Its strength is concentrated in urban areas and larger towns, but support from some rural

regions, such as the upper Alentejo and the Algarve, is firm. The party also has the support of a small workers' federation that it organized in the late 1970s.

FINANCING

During the first two years following the revolution the PS received several million dollars from the Socialist and Social Democratic Parties of several Western European countries, particularly those of West Germany, the Netherlands, and Sweden. The United States, seeing the PS as the strongest opponent of the Portuguese Communist Party, reportedly provided clandestine financial backing as well. Today the party depends primarily on membership dues, special fund-raising events, and contributions.

LEADERSHIP

Mario Soares (born 1924, in Lisbon) was reelected to the post of secretary-general at the party's national congress in May 1981. Soares, a lawyer and writer, had been an active political dissident against the Salazar and Caetano regimes since his student years. After suffering arrest 12 times, he went into exile in 1970, returning to a hero's welcome shortly after the 1974 coup. The leadership is rent by factions, both personal and ideological, but Soares remains a key leader. Limited to two terms as president, he was succeeded in that role by the Jorge Sampaio. By 2005 the party leader was José Sócrates, who in February of that year became the nation's prime minister.

PROSPECTS

PS fortunes have followed a zigzag course since the consolidation of the 1974 revolution. Its terms in government have been politically costly because its austerity measures have been highly damaging to lower-income groups, from which it draws much of its support. However, the party has held the presidency since 1986 and parliamentary leadership from 1995 until 2002 and again from 2005 forward. Given its loyal following in Lisbon and Oporto and its new abosolute majority in the Assembly as of 2005, the party is likely to remain a significant force for the foreseeable future.

SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY

(Partido Social Democratico; PSD)

HISTORY

The PSD, originally known as the Popular Democratic Party, was organized a few weeks after the 1974 revolution by former members of the liberal faction of the old regime's national assembly, including Francisco Sá Carneiro and Francisco Pinto Balsemao. The party was second in strength, following the Socialist Party, in the constituent assembly elected in 1975 (80 seats) and in the first Assembly of the Republic, elected in 1976 (73 seats). It overtook the Socialists in the elections of December 1979, gaining 80 seats. The PSD's leader, Sá Carneiro, then became prime minister, but his career was tragically ended by a fatal plane crash on December 5, 1980. Balsemaõ was sworn in as prime minister on January 9, 1981, but he was not able to hold together the ruling AD coalition. After new elections in 1983, the PSD, with only 75 seats, became the minority partner in a coalition government with the PS. The 1985 elections placed the PSD in the lead again with 88 seats, heading a minority government. The PSD, defeated in a censure vote on August 3, 1987, came back to win an absolute majority in parliamentary elections on July 19. In the general elections of October 6, 1991, the PSD again won a majority: 135 of the 230 seats. The elections of October 1, 1995, reduced it once again to the standing of minority party, claiming 88 seats, before it claimed 105 seats in the 2002 parliamentary elections and two consecutive nominations for prime minister. It lost its advantage in the 2005 elections, when the PS scored an absolute majority in the Assembly, winning 121 seats to the PSD's 75.

ORGANIZATION

The PSD is a loosely structured party based on patron-client relationships that antedate the revolution. The organization shows its greatest strength at the regional level, where it is dominated by local notables.

POLICY

The party's platforms have stressed respect for political democracy and civil liberties and tolerance of a limited degree of state intervention in the economy. During the first couple of years after the "Carnation Revolution" it supported the nationalization of utilities and other "natural" monopolies and limitations on the amount of productive land to be held by a single owner. After 1976, however, the party turned sharply to the right. For the most part, the party is responsive to the concerns of private enterprise. It views the distributional schemes of the left as utopian and the nationalization carried out in the wake of the revolution as excessive. It supported the return of many businesses to private hands and the return to original owners of land that had been extralegally seized by peasants. Together with its partners to the right, the PSD pressed successfully for constitutional

reform to delete passages calling for building Socialism, protecting nationalized industries, and granting extraordinary powers to the now-defunct Council of the Revolution. In recent years, economic policy has focused on limiting wage increases and inflationary pressures and attracting foreign investment.

MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY

The PSD draws its greatest support from the politically conservative and devoutly Catholic middle class of northern Portugal, its leadership from among the liberal professionals of the region. The party is also dominant in the archipelagos of the Azores and Madeira.

FINANCING

Party dues are generally spent at the local level. Nationwide operations are dependent on campaign contributions and other sources of support. The PSD has also been, over most of the democratic era, the prime beneficiary of the state subsidy, though this money is used primarily to finance its parliamentary activities.

LEADERSHIP

The PSD was weakened by the loss of its original leader, Sá Carneiro, in 1980. Balsemaõ, who replaced him in 1981, was a man of many talents, but he lacked his predecessor's charismatic appeal. Party leadership has undergone several changes since Balsemaõ resigned in early 1983. After the 1983 elections Carlos Mota Pinto became party leader as well as deputy prime minister and defense minister in the coalition government. He had served previously as prime minister from November 1978 to June 1979. In early 1985 Mota Pinto lost a vote of confidence in the party's ruling national council. (Four months later he had a heart attack and died.) He was replaced, both as party leader and as deputy prime minister, by Rui Machete, who had been serving as minister of justice. Machete, however, did not seek reelection as PSD leader at the party's national congress in May 1985.

At that time Anibal Cavaço e Silva, 45, an economist serving as minister of finance, was elected by a narrow margin to the party leadership. Later that year he became prime minister, a post he continued to hold until 1995, when the party was defeated in parliamentary elections. Party leadership then passed to Fernando Nogueira, a former defense minister, as Cavaço ran unsuccessfully for president. Pedro Lopes was the secretary-general of the PDS and served as prime minister between 2004 and 2005. Following the PS victory in the 2005 elections, Luís Marques Mendes became secretary-general of the PSD.

PROSPECTS

In the late 1990s and early 2000s the party had strong showings in elections to the Assembly. It entered into a coalition with the PP in order to obtain an absolute majority in the Assembly in the early 2000s. However, it was convincingly defeated by the PS in the 2005 elections and now forms the opposition.

Minor Political Parties

DEMOCRATIC SOCIAL CENTER/ PEOPLE'S PARTY

(Centro Democratico Social/Partido Popular; CDS/PP)

The CDS/PP, an amalgam of very conservative political factions and interest groups, was organized in the early 1990s. It is best understood as an expansion and refurbishing of the older Democratic Social Center Party (CDS). The CDS was formed in mid-1974 by officials of the deposed Caetano government, including Diogo Pinto de Freitas do Amaral, Adelino Amaro, and Valentin Pintado. Following the transition of the CDS into the CDS/PP in the early 1990s, the party won 9.1 percent of the vote in the 1995 elections, claiming 15 seats in the unicameral Assembly. In 2002 the party joined with the PSD, a traditional political opponent, to form a coalition and obtain a majority vote in the Assembly. In 2005 the CDS/PP won 12 Assembly seats.

LEFT BLOCK

(Bloco de EsQuerda; BE)

This party was founded in 1999 as a collection of several smaller parties, including the People's Democratic Union, the Socialist Revolutionary Party, and Politica XXI. It obtained three parliamentary seats in 2002, and in 2005 it improved on this performance by winning eight seats. The party's leader is Francisco Louça, who promotes a left-leaning platform shared by other parties in opposition to the PSD policies.

Other Political Forces

MILITARY

Traditionally, Portuguese military officers were drawn from the nobility. Pay was not taken seriously because

the gentlemen warriors were not expected to need it. As the country's economy became more complex and large conglomerates developed, military officers augmented their salaries by serving on the boards of directors of private enterprises or in other capacities.

The intensification of conflict in the colonies in the 1960s, however, required the enlargement of the officer corps. Entrance standards were lowered, and officers were recruited from the middle class. These *milicianos* had neither family money nor business connections to help them make ends meet. Graft, though rampant, did not suffice to fill the gap between salaries and needs.

By the beginning of 1974 Portugal had committed 80 percent of its armed forces, about 140,000 troops (60 percent of whom were African), to the struggle to maintain its African colonies. The Armed Forces Movement (Movimento das Forças Armadas; MFA), which grew out of the African campaigns, did not begin as a revolutionary body. It was a group of young career officers united by professional grievances. Specifically, they resented long tours of duty for meager salaries in remote places in interminable colonial wars. Exposure to the revolutionary ideologies of their opponents led them to an awareness of the need for political and economic change in Portugal itself. The toppling of the old regime coincided with the virtual end of opportunity for employment of young Portuguese in other European countries. The enthusiastic reaction of the Portuguese people to the Armed Forces Movement's seizure of power and the urgency of popular demands completed the radicalization of the movement.

After the revolution, the large and amorphous MFA, in general, spoke for the military as a whole. The inevitable political factionalism of the military was played out within it. During the first two years of the revolution, interaction with civilian political leaders served to intensify that factionalism. General Antonio de Spinola, first president of the new government, resigned on September 30, 1974, having failed in his attempt to build a conservative following sufficient to counter the leftist trend in the MFA. In March 1975 he was implicated in an abortive right-wing coup attempt and fled the country along with 15 other officers.

For a time, resentment of the coup attempt strengthened the positions of military leftists, represented particularly in the Continental Operations Command (Comando de Operaçocs do Continente; COPCON). COPCON had been organized in July 1974 as an elite military group charged with protecting the revolution and the MFA program. From March to September 1975 the leftist faction within the MFA appeared to have the upper hand. It favored what it termed "direct democracy," exercised through people's assemblies of civilian and military representatives. Predictably, most of the civilian parties reacted strongly against such a proposition, and they prevailed upon a more moderate faction within the MFA to steer a different course. Seeing itself losing ground, the leftist faction attempted a coup in November 1975. Its failure resulted in a far-reaching purge of Communists and other leftist military leaders and left the moderate faction of the MFA with a majority in the military. The moderate faction, in the so-called Document of the Nine issued in August 1975, called for a gradual transition to Socialism in the context of "political pluralism."

After the purge of the leftists, the moderates split into two factions, one advocating immediate military withdrawal from politics, the other a continuing though limited political role for the military. The constitution of 1976 represented a compromise between the two moderate MFA factions, between the MFA and the political parties, and between the parties themselves.

The general assembly of the MFA, which had been highly influential since the revolution, was given no governmental role. It evolved into an association representing the interests of the institution. The military-dominated Council of the Revolution, however, retained broad and rather ambiguous powers until it was eliminated by constitutional amendment in mid-1982, with the assent of the military.

In November 1982 a bill transferring responsibility for senior military appointments from the president to the defense minister and restricting the role of the armed forces to the defense of the country against foreign aggression was passed over the president's veto. Portugal is a full member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation and has sent troops to serve in peace operations in Bosnia-Hercegovina and Kosovo.

National Prospects

In formal political terms, Portugal's 1974 "Carnation Revolution" brought about a reconstitution of the system—from traditional quasi-corporatist authoritarian rule to modern parliamentary democracy—with remarkable speed and efficiency. The country has disentangled itself from the debilitating vestiges of empire; civil liberties have been restored; free and fair elections have become routinized; and a parliamentary

system is functioning. In general, the political system is stable and has tended toward two-party dominance betwee the Socialists and Social Democrats.

In the early 2000s Portugal began to experience its steepest economic downturn in decades, with unemployment levels at 6.5 percent in 2004. The PSD-led coalition of the early 2000s adopted restrictive budget policies and other structural reforms, including further privatization. But the economic malaise was a large factor in the dominant performance by the PS in the 2005 elections. Upon taking the office of prime minister, José Sócrates promised increased investment in job training and technology, but he faced a difficult challenge in controlloing the budget deficit and reducing unemployment. With the full adoption of the euro as the national currency, the country's future prospects are intrinsically tied to those of the European Union.

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COMMONWEALTH OF PUERTO RICO

(Estado Libre Asociado de Puerto Rico)

By Félix V. Matos Rodríguez. Ph.D.
Revised by Angel Lopez



The island of Puerto Rico is located in the Caribbean and extends 3,420 square miles. Nearly 4 million people (2005 est.) live in the island, and an estimated 3 million persons of Puerto Rican birth or heritage reside in the United States. Puerto Rico has been a colony of either Spain or the United States since Christopher Columbus claimed the island for the kingdom of Castille in 1493.

Between 1511, when the first governor, Juan Ponce de León, arrived to settle the colony, and 1898, Spain kept the island under colonial tutelage. Throughout this period military governors ruled the island, which remained a military outpost until the late 18th century. The first political parties in Puerto Rico emerged in the 1870s. The parties reflected the ideological tendencies of the island's elite: full incorporation with Spain, independence, or autonomy. Slavery was abolished on March 22, 1873. The period from the 1870s to the year 1897 was characterized by an aggressive political persecution campaign organized by the colonial establishment against persons espousing liberal, autonomic, and/or proindependence ideals. In 1897 an "autonomic charter" was granted by Spain to permit the formation of an insular government that would further define and begin to exercise autonomy.

The Spanish-American-Cuban War made the autonomic experiment a short one. U.S. troops landed in Puerto Rico July 25, 1898, and eliminated any Spanish opposition within three weeks. On December 10, 1898, the Treaty of Paris put an official end to the war, and Puerto Rico became a territory of the United States. The United States paid Spain $20 million for both Puerto Rico and the Philippines.

On April 12, 1900, after two years of U.S. military occupation, President William McKinley signed the Foraker Act, providing Puerto Rico with a civilian government (the governor, an American, to be appointed by the U.S. president) and a popularly elected House of Delegates (lower house). Puerto Rico was declared an "unincorporated territory" of the United States. On March 2, 1917, the Jones-Shafroth Act (also known as the Puerto Rico Organic Law) provided for a popularly elected Senate and U.S. citizenship for all Puerto Ricans. The people of Puerto Rico were not consulted at the time, and there was considerable sentiment for independence or autonomy among the island's political leadership.

There remained three options for the political future of the island, then a colonial possession of the United States: becoming a state of the union; independence; or some form of autonomy while staying under the political "umbrella" of the United States. The last option gained favor during the years following World War II, when there arose a worldwide movement to end colonialism.

On July 21, 1946, President Harry Truman named Jesús T. Piñero as the first native governor of Puerto Rico. On August 4, 1947, Truman signed the Crawford-Butler Act, permitting Puerto Rico to elect its own governor, and Luis Muñoz Marín, the Senate leader of the Popular Democrats, won the 1948 elections, becoming the island's first popularly elected governor.

On July 4, 1950, President Truman signed Public Law 600, permitting Puerto Rico to draft its own constitution. On October 30, armed nationalists sparked uprisings in several island towns, killing 27 and wounding 90. On November 1, two Puerto Rican nationalists tried to kill President Truman in Washington; a White House policeman and one of the assailants were killed, and nationalist leaders in Puerto Rico were given long prison terms for complicity.

On June 4, 1951, Puerto Ricans voted on Public Law 600, with 387,000 for and 119,000 against. Some 200,000 voters abstained. On March 3, 1952, the new constitution of Puerto Rico was approved in a referendum, 374,000 to 82,000, and was subsequently approved by the U.S. Congress. The commonwealth constitution went into effect on July 25, 1952. That November, in the gubernatorial elections, the Popular Democrats (who advocated commonwealth status) won the election with 429,000 votes against 232,000 votes for other parties. The Independence Party, with 125,000 votes, came in second.

In 1953 the United Nations authorized the United States to cease transmitting to it information on Puerto Rico as a non–self-governing territory, finding that achievement of commonwealth status meant that the island was engaged in the process of self-determination.

In 1959 the Popular Democratic Party sought to amplify Puerto Rico's autonomy with the Fernós-Murray Bill, but it was rejected by the U.S. Congress. On July 23, 1967, in a status referendum, commonwealth status received 60.5 percent of the votes, compared with 38.9 percent for statehood and 0.6 percent for independence. Most supporters of the independence option boycotted the plebiscite.

Since then the commonwealth status has remained unchanged. Governors favoring U.S. statehood won numerous elections from 1968 onward, somehow blunting the thrust of the commonwealth movement, which seeks to expand the island's autonomous powers. Still, in a nonbinding local referendum in 1993, commonwealth status remained the preferred option of Puerto Rican voters, with 48.6 percent of the vote. Statehood received 46.3 percent and independence 4.4 percent. Another such referendum in 1998 yielded the same result.

The U.S. government plays a decisive role in the government of Puerto Rico. Several thousand federal government employees are based on the island. The post office and the customs and quarantine services are operated by the federal government. Flight procedures are controlled by the Federal Aviation Agency. Radio and television stations are licensed by the Federal Communications Commission. Almost every federal agency or department, from the Weather Bureau to the Peace Corps, is represented. A substantial amount of federal money is also spent on the island, ranging from Social Security payments to grants and loans. United States minimum wages apply in Puerto Rico, which is also subject to federal labor legislation. The U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Secret Service maintain offices on the island. Also, from Washington, the Untied States manages all of the island's external affairs, and the island has no official diplomatic relations with any country.

The official languages of Puerto Rico are Spanish and English. The commonwealth exercises virtually the same control over its internal affairs as do the 50 U.S. states, differing from the states in its relationship with the federal government. For example, although the people of Puerto Rico are U.S. citizens, they do not vote in national elections, and they are represented in congress only by a resident commissioner who has a voice in the House of Representatives but no vote.

On the other hand, most federal taxes (except those such as Social Security taxes, which are imposed by mutual consent) are not levied in Puerto Rico. No federal income tax is collected from commonwealth residents on income earned from local sources in Puerto Rico, except for federal employees, who are subject to taxes on their salaries. Federal excise taxes on shipments of alcoholic beverages (chiefly rum) and tobacco products from Puerto Rico to the continental United States are returned to the Puerto Rican treasury. The U.S. dollar is Puerto Rico's currency.

The System of Government

Puerto Rico is a dependent commonwealth associated with the United States. It has a governor and a bicameral legislature.

EXECUTIVE

The governor of Puerto Rico is elected every four years coinciding with the U.S. presidential elections. Candidates for governor must be 35 years old and during the five preceding years be a citizen of the United States and a resident of the island. There are no term limits in Puerto Rico. In the governor's absence the secretary of state assumes power. The secretary of state, as well as

all other cabinet-level positions, requires the approval of both houses of the local legislature. The commonwealth government is much more centralized than that of any other state of the United States, and perhaps more centralized than that of many nations.

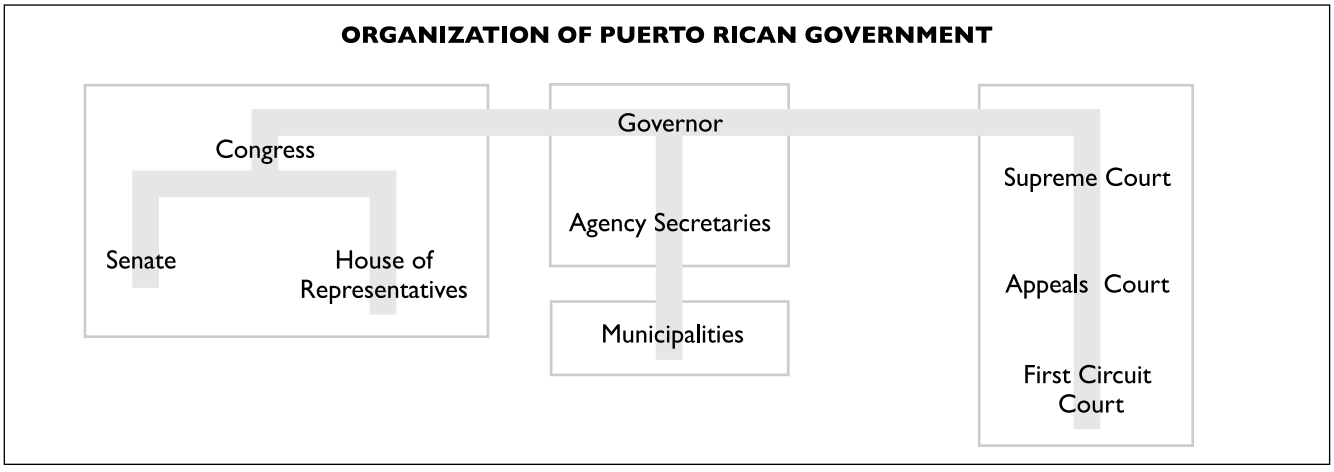
The executive branch encompasses the governor's office and several large agencies, departments, and corporations. Such key services as education, health, police, fire protection, electricity, and water are under the executive branch. The governor is also the nominal commander in chief of the state militia (which is actually the federally funded National Guard).

The current governor, Aníbal Acevedo Vilá—former resident commissioner in Washington, D.C. (2000–04)—began his term on January 2005 after the most bitterly contested and closest election in Puerto Rico's history. He ran for the Popular Democratic Party (PPD) and defeated the New Progressive Party candidate (PNP), former governor Pedro Roselló González (governor 1992–96, 1996–2000), by 3,566 votes. The margin of difference (48.40 percent against 48.22 percent) being less than half of 1 percent, the law mandated an automatic recount of the votes. After a very strong showing in the 2000 race (5.2 percent), the candidate for the Puerto Rican Independence Party (PIP), Rubén Berrios Martínez, obtained only 2.74 percent of the vote in 2004, a performance that made the PIP loose its franchise.

Acevedo Vilá ran his campaign mostly by presenting himself as an honest and transparent public official, an alternative to Roselló, whose two terms as governor were characterized by numerous corruption scandals; the new governor used the fact that many public officials from Roselló's previous administrations have been prosecuted and jailed by federal and local courts to fuel his campaign. Acevedo Vilá won by an extremely narrow margin, prompting many to question if he badly misjudged popular sentiment about Roselló. Roselló's party won both chambers of the legislature.

Acevedo Vilá's victory was due in part to many *independentista* voters (PIP) crossing party lines to the PPD, driven by fear of a new Roselló administration. This crossing of party lines by *independentistas* accounts for the poor performance of the PIP. By late January 2005 the PIP had regained its status as a recognized political party by obtaining hundreds of thousands of signatures. The PIP is fairly popular as a watchdog against corruption in government in both the House and the Senate.

When the election results became public, Roselló refused to recognize Acevedo Vilá as the preliminary winner of the election, imperiling a smooth transition for the new administration. In fact, the New and Progressive Party proclaimed that Roselló was the actual winner of the election and brought the case to Puerto Rico's Supreme Court. The Court decided against Roselló, arguing that the procedure established by the island's electoral law had to run its course with the mandatory recount. Roselló then brought the case to Federal Court in Puerto Rico. This time the ruling was favorable to Roselló; the judge—newspaper articles later unveiled the fact that he was a personal friend of Dr. Roselló—decided that the mandatory recount could not include the votes of *independentistas* or of any ballot that had any type of party crossing. Only ballots in which only one party was marked were to be counted as valid. If carried out, this decision would have effectively handed the election to Roselló. Acevedo Vilá, civil rights activists, and Puerto Rico's Electoral Commission all appealed this decision to the court of appeals



PUERTO RICO GUBERNATORIAL ELECTION, 2004

Candidate (Party)	% Votes	Number of votes
Aníbal Acevedo Vilá (PPD)	48.40	963,303
Pedro Roselló González (PNP)	48.22	959,737
Rubén Berrios Martínez (PIP)	2.74	54,551

in Boston, which decided in late December—more than a month and a half after the election—that the vote recount established by Puerto Rico's electoral law had to run its course as originally intended by the creators of the law. The recount proved Acevedo Vilá to be the winner of the election.

Roselló's actions were encouraged by the fact that his party had taken control of the both chambers of the legislature, retained control of the capital (San Juan), and made significant electoral gains in municipalities around the island. Acevedo Vilá will have to share power with the opposition party in so far as his party lost the Senate and the House of Representatives.

As a final stage of the political turmoil in Puerto Rico, Roselló managed to have his party appoint him as senator, despite the fact that he did not run for a Senate seat. As of mid-January 2005 he was involved in an internal fight in his party to gain the presidency of the Senate. He proclaimed that he was going to act in the Senate as if he had won the election, even if he had not.

LEGISLATURE

Puerto Rico's bicameral legislature has 27 senators and 51 representatives. Two senators are elected from each of eight senatorial districts, and 11 others are elected for "at large" seats that have no specific local constituency. There are 40 representative districts, with one House member from each and 11 "at large" House seats. The legislature meets each year from January through April, but one-month extensions to complete last-minute business are usually required. The governor can also call for a special session of the legislature to discuss important bills.

Legislators must "read and write Spanish or English," be citizens of the United States, and have resided in Puerto Rico for two years prior to election. The minimum age is 30 for senators and 25 for representatives. The working language of both houses is Spanish.

Bills approved by both houses become law when the governor signs them or if he fails to act on them within 10 working days. The legislature may overrule the governor's veto if it passes the bill for a second time by a two-thirds majority.

JUDICIARY

A new judicial law was passed in August 2003 radically restructuring Puerto Rico's judiciary system. Puerto Rico's Supreme Court is now composed of a chief justice and six associate judges; district courts were eliminated and replaced with a single appeals court, composed of thirty-nine judges. The lowest court is the first circuit court, composed of 253 superior judges and 85 municipal judges. The island's official courtroom language is Spanish, except in San Juan Federal District Court, where English is required. Although many aspects of the legal system are derivative of the United States' system, vestiges of Spanish law, particularly civil law, are still part of the local laws. Puerto Rico's courts are under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Circuit Court in Boston, but appeals may go as high as the U.S. Supreme Court.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Each of Puerto Rico's 78 *municipios* has a major and a municipal assembly elected during the general voting every fourth November. The minority-representation law described below also holds true for municipal assemblies. Until recently the central government played an important role in subsidizing many municipal budgets. Several municipal reform laws, however, have begun to transfer more resources and responsibilities directly to the *municipios*.

In the political realm, municipal politics play an influential role in the island's party system. There are two very influential mayor's associations: one for PNP mayors (Federación de Municipios) and another for PPD mayors (Asociación de Alcaldes). These associations are often a vital source of support and fund-raising for islandwide candidates.

The Electoral System

Puerto Rico has about 2.3 million registered voters, and at least 80 percent of them participate in elections, among the highest such percentages in the world. A referendum in 1970 lowered the voting age from 21 to

18 years. Local elections, primaries, and referendums are all managed by the State Election Board (Junta Estatal de Elecciones), which includes delegates from all major parties. The board is also responsible for certifying official candidates and publishing official results.

Puerto Rico's constitution safeguards a minority voice in the legislature. If two-thirds or more of the seats in either house are won by a single party, the number of seats is increased (by a maximum of 9 in the Senate and 17 in the House). These "at large" seats are reserved for minority-party legislators. If there is more than one minority party, the extra seats are apportioned according to the electoral strength of each group.

Even when all political parties are defined and differentiated by their political status preferences—statehood, independence, or commonwealth—local elections are not plebiscitary in nature. A wide range of other issues, such as crime, economic development, and education, play a central role in determining the outcome of local elections. Furthermore, political patronage in the form of state or municipal jobs, which account for about one-third of all jobs in the island, also plays a determining role in Puerto Rican elections.

Although Puerto Ricans on the island cannot vote in U.S. congressional and presidential elections, the U.S. Democratic and Republican Parties allow voting Puerto Rican delegations at their nominating conventions, and prior to the 1984 elections local primaries of the two U.S. parties were held on the island.

The Party System

ORIGINS OF THE PARTIES

The three party tendencies—autonomy, integration, and independence—can trace their origins to the period of Spanish colonialism, and the first political groupings appeared just prior to the Spanish-American-Cuban War. The autonomy charter of 1897 was achieved largely through the efforts of the group around Luis Muñoz Rivera. The integration or statehood tendency arose immediately after the war and quickly identified itself with the dominant party in the United States, the Republicans. The Republican Statehood Party, the ancestor of the modern PNP, was formed in 1899. Pro-independence sentiment was expressed as early as 1868 in a short-lived, unsuccessful revolt against Spain—*El Grito de Lares*—but did not manifest itself in a political group until 1912, and then only briefly. Today's independence movement was not clearly identifiable until 1930.

THE PARTIES IN LAW

In order to register a new party for an election, organizers must gather notarized signatures in at least three-fourths of the voting precincts; total signatures must exceed 5 percent of the total votes cast for governor in the previous election. This also applies to those parties who failed to earn at least 5 percent of the votes in the previous election. The usual technique for a party to register is to staff tables at town plazas or shopping malls with a party official and a notary public and ask passersby to sign the necessary forms.

Puerto Rico's electoral law, passed in 1977, includes an electoral subsidy that provides public funds for party campaigns and annual operations. The established parties, those with more than 5 percent in the previous election, receive $300,000 per nonelection year and $600,000 in an election year. The law also provides for up to $3 million of public monies for each political party to be used in the party's communication campaign. The law prohibits personal gifts to a single party or candidate in excess of $1,000 a year. No person can give more than $5,000 a year in political contributions.

PARTY ORGANIZATION

Political parties in Puerto Rico have a highly centralized leadership based in San Juan, the capital. However, some mayors in island towns have established local power bases, and the same is true of leaders at the neighborhood level. Parties do not have formal membership or dues. In the two major parties, party organization is comparable with that in the United States, i.e., relatively loose coalitions of independent local politicians. Power is to a large extent exercised through patronage, which often means doling out federally funded jobs. While there is a professional civil service in Puerto Rico, thousands of jobs at all levels are subject to the influence of the party in power.

CAMPAIGNING

Political campaigns are major events. Widespread illiteracy until three decades ago prompted political parties to develop symbols that attract the voter's eye. These symbols are used on posters, flags, car decals, lapel pins, and television commercials. Music and entertainment now play a major role in political rallies and caravans. Catchy jingles capture the dividing

issues of each race or take advantage of political or personal weaknesses in the opposition. Television and radio commercials, fund-raising events, and negative advertisements have also become standard features of Puerto Rican political campaigns.

Although the majority of the voters have strong party affiliations, independent voters have increased their numbers over the last 20 years. Political analysts calculate that between 10 percent and 15 percent of the voters are not affiliated with any political party. These independent voters have been a determining factor in the last few elections and seem to be a political force to contend with in the years ahead in Puerto Rican politics.

Major Political Parties

POPULAR DEMOCRATIC PARTY

(Partido Popular Democrático; PPD)

The PPD was founded in 1938 by Luis Muñoz Marín and a group of left-of-center populists, most of whom favored autonomy or independence for Puerto Rico. The party won a narrow victory in 1940 and continued to dominate the island's political scene until 1969. From its beginnings the PPD has maintained formal ties with the U.S. Democratic Party.

When Muñoz retired as governor in 1964 he designated his longtime aide, Roberto Sánchez Vilella, as the party candidate for the 1964 elections. Sánchez won handily but toward the end of his four-year term became embroiled in party factionalism and personal problems. Sánchez was not named the PPD candidate at the party convention prior to the 1968 election. With the short-lived People's Party (Partido del Pueblo) he drew about 10 percent of the 1968 popular vote, enough to spell defeat for the PPD, whose candidate for governor was Luis Negrón López, a veteran legislator. In 1972, with the young lawyer and former Justice Department secretary Rafael Hernández Colón as its leader and candidate, the PPD returned to power. Although Hernández was defeated in 1976 and again in 1980 by Carlos Romero Barceló and the PNP, he regained the governorship in 1984 and 1988. Hernández retired just prior to the 1992 election when Muñoz's daughter, Victoria, ran an unsuccessful gubernatorial campaign against Pedro Roselló of the New Progressive Party. Victoria Muñoz was the first woman to run for governor as a candidate from a major party on the island. After its candidate, Héctor Luis Acevedo, former mayor of San Juan, lost the run for governor in 1996 the party was thrown into internal turmoil in search for a viable future gubernatorial candidate. Sila María Calderón, also a former mayor of San Juan, turned out to be the party's successful pick for the 2000 election. In 2004 the PPD's Aníbal Acevedo-Vilá won a contentious election to retain the PPD's hold on the governor's office. However, the rival PNP captured both houses of the legislature.

As the 1993 nonbinding referendum and the 2000 and 2004 elections showed, the PPD is still a major political force in Puerto Rico, in part due to the strong memory of Muñoz Marín and also because of its long list of accomplishments: a successful economic development program in the late 1940s and the achievement of commonwealth status in 1952, which, despite its shortcomings, gained additional self-government for Puerto Rico.

The PPD favors "permanent association" with the United States while seeking maximum autonomy within that linkage. "Autonomy," however, is the subject of many interpretations. The more conservative wing of the party believes that the present status needs few modifications, among them the opening of new possibilities for economic development and investments. The PPD's extreme liberal wing proposes the creation of an associated republic (*república asociada*). Under this arrangement, similar to the one negotiated by some U.S. territories in the Pacific, Puerto Rico would become an independent nation that would then voluntarily enter into an associated status with the United States. This proposal has discarded by the PPD's top leadership to avoid being accused of separatism by statehood supporters.

PPD support is found throughout the island but in general appears stronger in rural areas, as well as certain sectors of the western end of the island. Also, PPD supporters tend to be older than those of the PNP and the PIP.

PUERTO RICAN INDEPENDENCE PARTY

(Partido Independentista Puertorriqueño; PIP)

The PIP, an offshoot of the PPD, was founded in 1946. Until that time the PPD had focused upon economic development and avoided pronouncements on political status. But when Muñoz Marín managed a PPD consensus favoring autonomy, a group of independence supporters bolted to form the PIP. The peak of the PIP's strength, under its founding president, Gilberto Concepción de Gracia, was in the 1952 gubernatorial elections, when it won almost 20 percent of the

vote. Since then, the party's electoral support slipped continuously until reaching 3.8 percent of the vote in the 1996 elections. Analysts agree that the party's sizable percentage rebound in the 2000 election (5.2 percent) is mostly due to its popular stance on the much-discussed issue of the U.S. Navy using the island of Vieques for training purposes. However, this support slipped to 2.74 percent in 2004, temporarily costing the party its franchise. (It was reinstated after a petition drive in early 2005.)

As part of its proindependence ideology, the PIP has traditionally opposed the presence of American military bases in Puerto Rico's territory. Thus, the demilitarization of Vieques, an island-municipality that was used for more than 50 years as a military based and training ground for the U.S. Navy, was on the party's program for decades. The 1999 accidental death of a civilian, David Sanes, during the course of a military exercise in Vieques created a wave of widespread indignation and brought the presence of the U.S. Navy in Vieques to the forefront. The PIP and its president, Rubén Berrios Martínez, were at the head of the movement that eventually succeeded in securing the final withdrawal of the U.S. Navy from the island in May 2003.

Berrios Martínez, a charismatic lawyer and witty debater, has been the party's president since Concepción de Gracia's death in the late 1960s. He won a seat in the Puerto Rican Senate in 1976 and has subsequently run both for governor and for the Senate. He was elected by wide margins to an at-large position in the Senate in 1984, 1992, and 1996.

The PIP has close ties with the Social Democratic Parties of Europe and Latin America and seeks international support for Puerto Rican independence. The party advocates nonviolence in this struggle. The PIP has consistently tried to distance itself from more radical proindependence parties or groups. It proposed a peaceful transition to independence, gradually weaning the island away from its heavy dependence on the U.S. economy.

The PIP tends to draws its support from younger and better-educated voters. The party also attracts more supporters in large urban centers or in smaller towns with a long-standing proindependence tradition.

NEW PROGRESSIVE PARTY
(Partido Nuevo Progresista; PNP)

The PNP was formed in 1967 following the plebiscite on the island's political status. The industrialist Luis A. Ferré, a three-time loser as gubernatorial candidate of the Republican Statehood Party, formed the PNP. He was elected in 1968 when his PNP edged in with 44 percent of the 875,000 votes cast, compared with 42 percent for the PPD.

The PNP is the successor of the old Republican Statehood Party, which has long maintained formal ties with the U.S. Republican Party. The PNP no longer maintains such exclusive affiliations. In 1976, for example, Ferré's successor, Governor Romero, joined the U.S. Democratic Party. The PNP has tried to gain support in both U.S. parties for the cause of statehood.

The PNP has strong support throughout the island at all socioeconomic levels, but it seems to enjoy particular strength in the modern, upwardly mobile suburbs. Still, the party's populist message also attracts large numbers of voters among the island's poorer barrios and public housing projects. The PNP has also nurtured a "tough-on-crime" image that has served the party well, particularly in the 1990s.

Romero was the party's undisputed leader—if Ferré remained a benign patriarch figure—until the mid-1980s. Then a series of government scandals during Romero's governorship encouraged others in the party to challenge his position. The first was Hernán Padilla, the mayor of San Juan from 1975 through 1984. When he sought the PNP nomination for governor prior to the 1984 elections he was harshly rebuffed by Romero's forces and abandoned the party to form his own party, the Puerto Rican Renovation Party (Partido Renovación Puertorriqueña). The PNP split helped the PPD's Hernández reclaim the governorship. In the 1990s Pedro Roselló, a physician, rejuvenated the party and guided it to electoral victories in 1992 and 1996. Roselló surrounded himself with technocrats as staff and cabinet members who catered to the party's suburban electorate. Roselló's administration was marred by numerous corruption scandals, and many of his former administrators and staff members were indicted or convicted on corruption-related charges. Among these are Roselló's secretary of education and his personal secretary. Roselló lost a close election to Aníbal Acevedo-Vilá in 2004. However, the party secured majorities in both houses of congress, winning 32 of 51 seats in the House and 17 of 27 in the Senate.

Minor Political Parties

Several small parties exist in Puerto Rico, although they do not participate in electoral politics. While small, some of these parties, such as the Nationalist Party (Partido Nacionalista), yield considerable influence.

Other Political Forces

Although less active than throughout the early 1980s, student and labor mobilization increased in the late 1990s and early 2000s. Several factions within the labor movement organized sizable demonstrations and rallies to protest Governor Rosello's privatization plans. The labor movement has also been affected by the changes in the global economy that have made Puerto Rico less competitive than other countries in Latin America and Asia.

Student politics have also been revitalized by opposition to Governor Roselló's privatization and Americanization policies. In 1997 students staged noisy demonstrations to protest the entrance of Roselló and several of his cabinet to activities within the University of Puerto Rico's campus. On April 19, 1999, during the course of a scheduled military practice, a U.S. Navy bomb accidentally killed David Sanes Rodríguez, a civilian employed as a watchman in Camp García, one of Vieques's military bases. Sanes's death created an immediate outburst of indignation among proindependence and environmental activists. Residents in Vieques also felt the loss of one of its own. The issue eventually took national proportions, as Puerto Ricans felt a sense of impotence and helplessness in the face of what was widely perceived as the U.S. Navy's arrogant attitude concerning the bombing of Vieques and its use as a training ground with live ammunition. Environmental, human rights, student, labor, political, religious, ecumenical, health, and communitarian organizations staged peaceful protests for more than a year throughout Puerto Rico. Many activists moved to Vieques, improvising camping communities inside training grounds, and reclaimed the island's territory in an outburst of spontaneous political activism without precedent in Puerto Rico's history.

Roselló, under whose administration Sanes's death occurred, created a special commission to investigate the U.S. Navy impact on Vieques; it was later discovered that the navy (by the navy's own admission) had use depleted uranium and Napalm in some of its drills. Roselló was forced to start negotiations with the U.S. Congress, the U.S. Navy, and President Bill Clinton in order to secure a prompt solution to the situation. President Clinton pledged to look for alternative training sites with the aim of eventually withdrawing the U.S. Navy out of Vieques. The navy left the island May 1, 2003.

The Vieques affair generated much tension between the Puerto Rican government and the U.S. government. The problem forced many Puerto Ricans, as well as people in the United States, to give a closer look to the relationship between the United States and Puerto Rico. Hundreds of activists were arrested during the course of civil disobedience protests and condemned to months in jail. Berrios Martínez, president of the PIP, spent months in prison. Many political figures from the continental United States got involved in the situation as part of their efforts to court the Latino vote in the United States. The Rev. Jesse Jackson, New York senator Hillary Clinton, and New York governor George Pataki, among others, expressed their support for a prompt resolution of the problem.

Concern for the environment has also become a political issue on the island. Several environmental groups have blocked private and public construction projects, such as the "superaqueduct," a system to supply water to the San Juan metropolitan area from several lakes in the countryside, on the grounds of their potential harmful effect on the environment. Also, Neftalí García, an environmentalist and professor at the University of Puerto Rico, has made two unsuccessful but competitive attempts to gain an independent at-large seat in the Senate.

Religious groups play a considerable role in Puerto Rico's political life. Both Catholic and Protestant religious groups also control a majority of the private elementary schools and high schools on the island. The Catholic Church has been a historic political force on the island, affecting policy decisions in areas such as birth control, health, education, and consumerism. Evangelists, such as Yiye Avila, have enormous popular appeal and have begun to compete with the Catholic hierarchy for influence in government affairs.

Interest and professional groups are also active on Puerto Rico's political scene. Groups like the chamber of commerce and the Puerto Rico Manufacturers Association, for example, are visible in their attempts to influence public policy. Several industrialist lobby groups, such as the Puerto Rico–U.S.A. Foundation, have been formed to help fight recent attempts in Washington to alter the tax-credit benefits given to U.S.-based multinational companies in Puerto Rico. Professional groups, particularly the bar association (Colegio de Abogados), frequently issue studies and pronouncements on major political issues.

National Prospects

Although in the 1990s the PNP consistently defeated the PPD, the latter managed to get both houses of the legislature and the governorship in 2000. The PNP regained both houses in 2004 but lost a close race for governor. Both parties share equal electoral support,

and the independent vote has been a determining factor in each election. The PIP seems content with securing a few seats in the Senate and the House of Representatives and lobbying for independence in Washington.

One of the dominant political processes throughout the 1990s and the early 2000s has been the repeated appearance of decolonizing bills in the U.S. Congress. These bills have tried to define the parameters of the three political status options so that Congress can sponsor a referendum. So far, all the pieces of legislation designed in the U.S. House and Senate have failed to make it to a final vote. Congress seems as divided as the Puerto Rican people on such key issues as language policy (should statehood allow Puerto Rico's official language to be Spanish?), citizenship (is the U.S. citizenship granted to Puerto Ricans in 1917 irreversible?), taxation (can Congress grandfather tax exemptions in Puerto Rico in the event of statehood?), and migration (would any change in the political status cause a large influx of Puerto Rican immigrants to the United States?). Also, Congress, particularly the opponents of statehood, has balked at the idea of making any plebiscite self-executing.

A reinforcing trend on the island's political scene is the growing influence of the Puerto Rican community residing in the continental United States. The Vieques situation highlighted the awareness in the island that the Puerto Rican and Latino community in the continental United States, and the politicians serving those constituencies, are a force to be included in future discussion about Puerto Rico's future. This community has been very vocal about its desire to be part of any decision-making process that alters Puerto Rico's political future. The presence of three Puerto Rican members of Congress—José Serrano (Democrat of New York), Nydia Velázquez (Democrat of New York), and Luis Gutierrez (Democrat of Illinois)—and their insistence on being involved in any plebiscitary discussions have forced local Puerto Rican politicians to be more sensitive to the claims of the community in the United States.

Recent electoral trends in Puerto Rico indicate that quality-of-life, economic, and social issues are more important to voters than resolving the island's political relation to the United States. Furthermore, the U.S. Congress and the White House have not been able to achieve a consensus on what to do regarding Puerto Rico's colonial situation. There are no signs that there will be any fruitful discussion about Puerto Rico colonial relationship with the United States in the near future. The global situation and the war on terrorism have created a reticence in the main political parties to address the issue; political candidates in the United States certainly have other priorities in their agenda.

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STATE OF QATAR

(Dawlâh Qatar)

By Fred H. Lawson, Ph.D.



Qatar, located on the eastern coast of the Arabian Peninsula, is a nonparty autocracy whose ruler (emir) governs the country's 863,000 citizens (2005 est.). He rules in consultation with a small group of advisers, including influential members of the ruling family as well as a smaller number of Western-educated sons of prominent merchant families. The ruling family is descended from a branch of the Bani 'Utub tribal confederacy that was among several settling along the Persian Gulf coast in the mid-18th century. The political primacy of the Thani clan originated less in class or ethnic differentiation than it did by fiat of British administrators during the years after World War I. In fact, Qatari society constituted one of the most homogenous communities to be found in any of the Arab Gulf states until the middle of the 20th century.

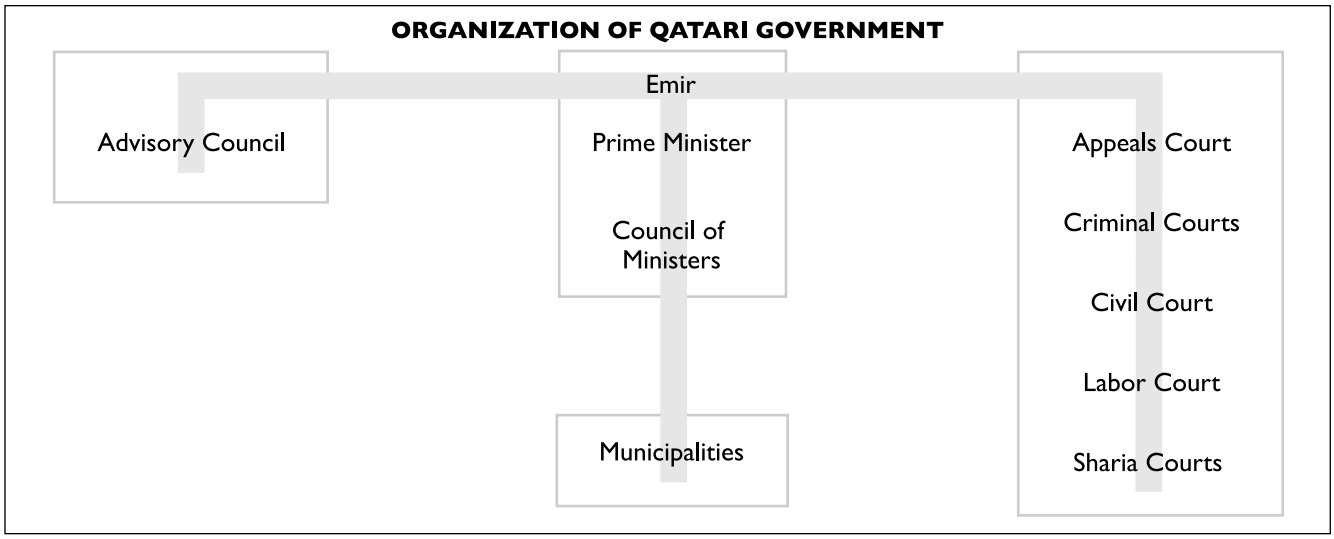
Before Qatar began producing oil for export in commercial quantities in 1949, most of the country's inhabitants supported themselves through fishing, sailing, herding, and pearl diving. Members of the Al Thani were not markedly richer than their nominal subjects. The small group of wealthy pearl and cloth merchants who resided in Doha, the capital, were predominantly native Qataris who occasionally provided the emirs with loans to enable them to meet their financial obligations and other expenses. After oil revenues started coming into their hands, however, the country's ruling shaikhs began to move out of the capital city and set up agricultural estates away from the coast, using farm workers imported from Oman and Baluchistan (Pakistan). This trend helped to increase the ruling family's political strength relative to that of the established commercial elite and gave it sufficient resources to dominate most aspects of Qatari society. As a way of legitimizing the Al Thani's continued rule in the face of the United Kingdom's withdrawal from the Persian Gulf after 1970, the emir issued a provisional constitution that envisaged both a Council of Ministers and an elected Advisory Council that would cooperate with the ruler in enacting national policy.

The System of Government

Qatar is a nonparty autocracy, at the center of which is the emir, who controls the country along with other senior members of the Al Thani clan. In April 2003 a formal constitution was approved by popular referendum. The document guarantees in principle a wide range of civil liberties, including freedoms of expression and public assembly, protection of private property, and the right to trial in open court. It went into effect in the summer of 2005.

EXECUTIVE

Shaikh Hamad bin Khalifah Al Thani became ruler of Qatar in June 1995, after deposing his father Shaikh Khalifah bin Hamad, who had in turn deposed his cousin Shaikh Ahmad bin 'Ali in February 1972. In



October 1996 Shaikh Hamad named his son Qasim to be crown prince and heir apparent. In August 2003 Qasim abdicated and was immediately replaced by his younger brother Tamim.

According to the terms of the 2003 constitution, the ruler is recognized as head of state and accorded a primary role in policy making and the promulgation of laws and administrative decrees. He is authorized to set remuneration for himself and senior government officials. The emir acts as commander in chief for all military and police formations and serves as head of the State Security Agency, which oversees the activities of the country's intelligence services. In addition, he appoints all judges for both the civil and the religious courts.

Close relatives of the emir dominate the appointed Council of Ministers. Shaikh Hamad retained the posts of prime minister, defense minister, and commander in chief of the armed forces even after he assumed the office of emir. In October 1996 he relinquished the premiership to his brother Shaikh 'Abdullah, who was also serving as interior minister. Cabinet ministers who are not members of the Al Thani are drawn largely from sons of the country's rich merchant families who have received specialized training in Western universities. Qatar's largest industrial, commercial, and real estate companies are directed and managed by this same collection of ruling family members and influential commoners.

LEGISLATURE

Qatar's first consultative body and initial state budget were instituted by order of the emir in May 1972. The ruler chose 20 members of an Advisory Council from a pool of 40 candidates. The candidates had been elected by property-owning Qataris in 10 voting districts spread throughout the country. Those chosen tended to be the most prominent notables residing in various communities, all of whom enjoyed close ties to the ruling family. As a result of three extensions of their terms in office decreed by the emir, these same 20 representatives remained in the Council until at least 1986. In 1975, 10 new members, also selected by the ruler, were added to the Advisory Council.

In January 1992 representatives of 50 prominent Qatari families petitioned the ruler to set up an elected national council as a means of "guaranteeing an effective participation of the people" in public policy making. The petition asked that the council be charged with drawing up a permanent constitution "capable of guaranteeing democracy and determining political, social and economic structures" for the country. This was supposed to contribute to the elimination of what its proponents perceived to be widespread abuses of power by senior members of the ruling family. The emir flatly refused to acknowledge the manifesto, and those individuals who signed the petition were harassed by the police.

Nevertheless, in 1999 the emir ordered that elections be held for 29 members of a nationwide municipal council. Women were explicitly granted the right to vote, and by all accounts the balloting transpired in a free and transparent fashion. A second set of municipal council elections took place in April 2003. The constitution provides for a 45-member Advisory Council,

30 of whose members are to be elected by the people. Plans are in place to inaugurate this body in 2007.

JUDICIARY

There are five principal courts in Qatar. These consist of a lower and higher criminal court, a labor court empowered to decide matters related to the terms of employment and benefits of the country's workers, a court of appeals, and a commercial contract court. Muslim citizens also have access to a network of religious (sharia) courts for settling personal disputes. The religious courts are run by Sunni clerics whose decisions are made in accordance with the strictures of Islam's Wahhabi sect, to which the Al Thani belong.

Judicial reforms carried out in 1997 consolidated the court system under the auspices of a Higher Judicial Council. In practice, supreme judicial powers remain firmly in the hands of the emir.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Qatar has 10 municipalities.

The Party System

Political parties are prohibited in Qatar. The 2003 constitution empowers the government to license popular associations of all kinds, but to this point all applications for political parties, women's societies, and other civic organizations that might operate as forums for groups and individuals critical of the regime have been rejected.

Major Political Parties

There are no political parties in Qatar.

Minor Political Parties

There are no political parties in Qatar.

Other Political Forces

RIVAL FAMILIES

Prominent local families continually vie with the Al Thani for predominance both in the Qatari economy and the state's armed forces. Prior to 1963 Hamad al-'Atiyyah controlled a large part of the country's treasury as well as important sections of its army and police. When unrest among the country's workers precipitated a brief burst of popular demonstrations in April 1963, he joined 'Abdullah al-Musnad in forming a short-lived National Unity Front. Besides the al-'Atiyyahs, the al-Muhanidah, al-Mani', and Darwish families are important family groups whose members have had serious conflicts of interest with the Al Thani.

WORKERS

Native Qataris who earned their living through sailing and fishing before the expansion of petroleum production became workers in oil-related industries and vehicle drivers during the 1950s and 1960s. Most of these laborers lived in Doha, al-Khor, and Umm Sa'id, where the largest industrial projects were concentrated. Those districts were the ones in which radical political activity was most evident during the spring of 1963. At that time, demands were made for unionization among industrial and transportation workers, for equitable rates on water and electricity, for the opening of a cinema and a television broadcasting station, for the convening of a representative assembly, and for a greater degree of fiscal responsibility on the part of the ruling family. These demands failed to generate popular support, partly due to the fact that a relatively liberal labor law that gave significant benefits to most workers had been issued the previous year and partly because oil revenues were becoming readily available to meet the basic needs of Qatar's small population. In addition, larger companies set up workers' committees to hear complaints and settle minor disputes.

Foreign workers now make up virtually all of Qatar's labor force. These workers come from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Korea, and Egypt. They are permitted into the country only if they have a local sponsor. They can own neither land nor buildings. During the summer of 1980 some 250 Indian and Pakistani laborers were arrested on the grounds that their immigration papers were not in order. This move by the regime represents one aspect of the general tightening of sponsorship regulations in the emirate that followed the 1978–79 revolution in Iran.

FOREIGN ORGANIZATIONS

Qatari officials have allowed radical and Arab nationalist organizations to operate inside the country so long

as their activities are directed toward objectives outside Qatar itself. The Palestine Liberation Organization, for example, maintained a regional office in Doha for decades. But the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen was refused permission to open a consulate anywhere in the country after its envoys were charged with sponsoring terrorist activities in the United Arab Emirates in the spring of 1978.

National Prospects

Qatar's rulers have so far avoided any serious challenges to their dominance. Foreign workers and expatriate merchants and professionals have been integrated into the local economy with virtually no social or political disruption. Citizens who demanded unionization or nationalization of the workforce were co-opted during the boom years of the 1970s. Aside from the 1992 petition, there has been little pressure for greater popular participation in policy making. Even the 2003 constitution and the proposed elections for an Advisory Council have emanated more from the reformist inclinations of the ruler than from agitation from below.

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ROMANIA

(România)

By Jeffrey K. Hass, Ph.D.



Before 1989 Romania was among the most authoritarian regimes of those in the Socialist East Bloc. Nicolae Ceauçescu's secret police was among the most active, and the dictator ruled with impunity until the wave of popular revolutions that swept Eastern Europe in the autumn of 1989 reached Romania. An internal coup deposed Ceauçescu (whose body was shown on television after he was shot), but Romania did not move immediately to liberal politics as in Poland or Hungary. Democracy took time to develop, although success appears on the horizon after joining the North Atlantic Treat Organisation (NATO) in 2004 and possible inclusion in the European Union by 2007.

The System of Government

Romania is a parliamentary republic. The country's political system is split into three branches: the executive, legislature, and judiciary. The legislature is bicameral.

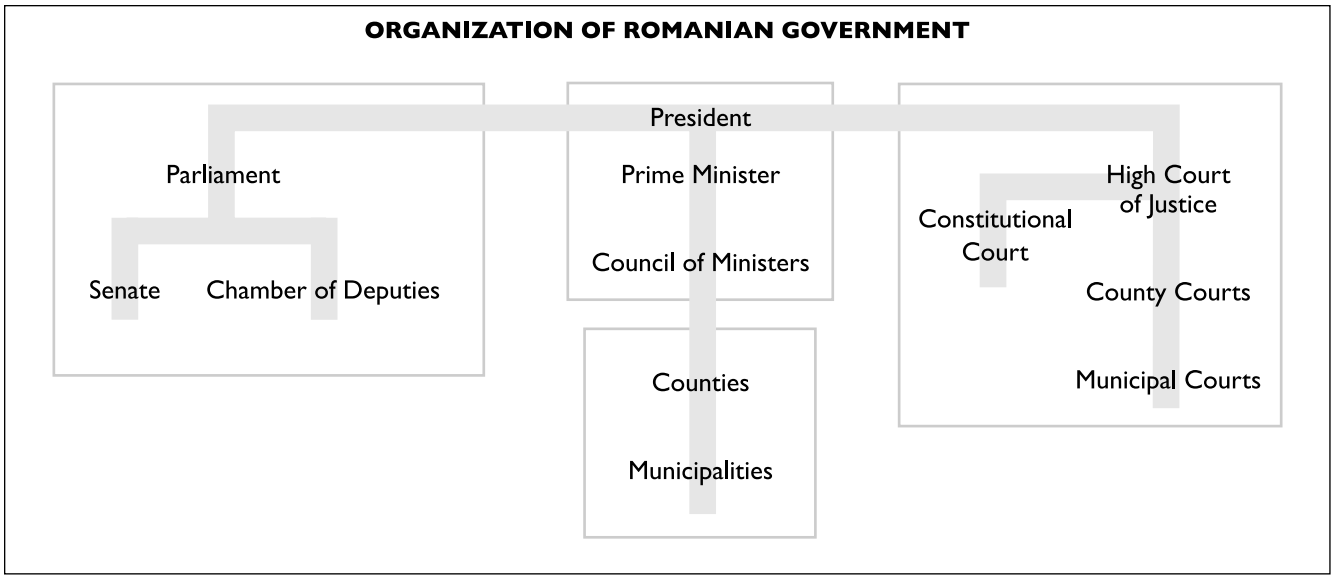
EXECUTIVE

The executive branch is headed by two figures, the president and the prime minister. The president is chosen through a national election and serves for a five-year term. The prime minister is proposed by the president and approved by both chambers of parliament.

The president is supposed to be above politics, a national figure representing the nation in its entirety. Accordingly, the president is supposed to sever ties with political parties (e.g., give up chairmanship or position within a party) when entering the presidency. This has been followed in letter but not in spirit. When Ion Iliescu faced a threat to his hegemony in the National Salvation Front (FSN) from Petre Roman in 1992, he sat in on party meetings and organized resistance to Roman's attempt to steer the party in his own direction, even though Iliescu was supposed to avoid party activity.

The president is, institutionally, a weak political player. He must leave his party position and duties upon taking office, which denies him political security. The president has a weak veto: he can send legislation back to parliament for additional discussion, but if the bill is passed a second time, he cannot block its implementation. Presidential decrees require co-signing by the prime minister to be legally binding, unless the decrees concern appointment. The president also has the power to call a national referendum; however, legislation and the constitution are vague on the referendum process, and since no referendum has yet been called by the president, there is no political precedent for procedure.

The president selects the prime minister for parliamentary approval. If parliament does not approve a government within 60 days of the president's first nomination, then the president can dissolve parliament and call new elections. However, the president



can dissolve parliament only once per year; thus, if the same parliamentary delegates are voted back into power, the president has to come up with a candidate for prime minister whom parliament will approve.

The prime minister and the Council of Ministers are the heads of the state bureaucracy and thus are the real working heads of the executive branch. Ministers are responsible both for the operation of the state bureaucracy and for the initiation and implementation of policies in the spheres of economic development, social welfare, and foreign policy. Ministers answer for their conduct, competence, and shortcomings to parliament, which may remove the prime minister and the Council through a vote of no confidence. The ministers do have some autonomy from the president. The latter can chair meetings of the government only if such meetings are called to discuss matters of foreign policy and national security (where the prime minister and government are subordinate to the president). Also, the prime minister needs the president's approval (not that of parliament) in order to reshuffle the cabinet; on the other hand, only parliament (not the president) can remove the prime minister and government.

The president and prime minister, then, have their own separate spheres of power and autonomy; this means that there can be conflicts between the two, as was the case when Iliescu was president and Roman prime minister. In case of conflict the president cannot simply dismiss the prime minister, and the prime minister has no power over the president. However, either can form an alliance with parties in a particular parliament to bring about the dismissal of the government or the impeachment of the president. Because impeachment is broadly worded—the president is accountable for "grave mistakes," which can mean anything from serious crime and corruption in office to responsibility for results of policies—it can be used more frequently than elsewhere. However, the process for impeachment requires a sizable majority in parliament that is both organized and dedicated to such a mission.

LEGISLATURE

The Romanian legislature under the 1991 constitution resembles that which preceded it—a bicameral body made up of the House of Deputies (Adunarea Deputatilor) and the Senate (Senat). (Before 1991 the two houses together were called the Constituent Assembly. After 1991 the legislature—both houses together—is referred to as the Romanian Parliament [Parlamentul Romaniei].) The Chamber of Deputies is made up of 332 delegates, 314 elected from parties and 18 reserved for ethnically-based minority parties. The Senate is made up of 137 elected from parties; there are no reserved seats for ethnic minorities in this chamber. The number of seats depends on population, with the number able to rise or fall as the population rises or falls.

Parliament's primary role is passing legislation. Legislation may be introduced in either chamber by delegates or by the executive; to become law the bill has to be approved by a simple majority in both chambers. If both disagree over the wording or content of a bill (e.g., one house passes the bill and the other does not), then the bill would go before a joint session of both houses, where only a simple majority would be needed of the

combined votes. Further, parliament, rather than the courts, has the ultimate say over legislation. If the Constitutional Court rules that a law is unconstitutional, parliament can reconsider the law. If two-thirds of each chamber support the bill again, then the Constitutional Court's objections are dismissed and the law remains on the books. (Apparently this rule was included in the constitution in Article 145 out of fear that the Court's autonomy and position as final arbiter make it too tempting for the Court to enter the legislative sphere and to intrude on Parliament's prerogative.)

The three forms of legislation in Romania are constitutional, organic, and ordinary, and each has its own procedure for passing legislation. Constitutional legislation may be introduced by 500,000 or more citizens (with 20,000 signatures from each county), or by the president on behalf of the government, or by one-fourth of parliament (both houses). If both houses pass the legislation with a two-thirds majority, the legislation moves on to a nationwide referendum. If a dispute between the House of Delegates and the Senate arises and a medication commission cannot produce a compromise, then the legislation appears before a joint meeting of both houses and requires a three-fourths majority to move on to the referendum stage.

The second form of legislation is organic legislation. These are laws that, according to Article 72 of the constitution, regulate processes concerning elections, political parties, referenda, governmental organization, state of emergency, criminal offenses, amnesty, functioning of upper courts, status of civil servants, property and inheritance rules, trade union and labor affairs, religion, education, local government, and economic zones. Deputies, senators, the government, and a group of 250,000 citizens can introduce organic legislation (although citizens cannot introduce organic legislation on taxation). Organic legislation is debated in the house where it was introduced and is sent to the other house; if the other house rejects it, it returns for further debate, and if the second house rejects it again, the bill is dead. If both houses approve an organic bill by absolute majority, it becomes law. If both houses adopt differently worded versions of the same legislation, then a mediation commission works out a compromise bill; if the commission fails, a joint session of both houses discusses the bill and a majority can approve it. Approval in any case requires an absolute majority—that is, a majority out of the total number of seats in parliament, rather than a majority of the number of votes cast by deputies present for the vote.

The third type of legislation is ordinary legislation, which includes all bills that are not constitutional or organic. Ordinary legislation follows the same procedure as organic legislation except for two differences: the procedure for resolving conflicts between both houses is straightforward (the revision commission meets only once), and only a simple majority is required (i.e., a majority of votes of those delegates physically present).

Parliament has certain powers that act as checks over the executive. First, parliament can call for a vote of no confidence in the prime minister. One-fourth of the total number of parliamentary delegates are needed to raise a vote of censure and introduce a vote of no confidence; if a simple majority of both houses supports, it, then the prime minister must resign and the president must present a new candidate for the post. (The president can present the same person again, although parliament is under no obligation to approve him.) If the no-confidence vote fails, then the same parliamentary faction cannot bring up a no-confidence vote in the same parliamentary session. However, if a total of one-third of all the deputies of both chambers requests an extension of the session, then this extension is considered a new session and the no-confidence vote can be raised again. (The opposition employed this tactic in working to obtain five no-confidence votes against Prime Minister Varacoiu in 1992 and 1993.)

Parliament also has ways of controlling the president. One method is through impeachment. If the president has committed "grave errors" (vaguely defined), then parliament can bring up a motion to suspend him and, through a national referendum, impeach him. Such a motion must be brought up by one-third of the total parliamentary membership (162 deputies) and approved by a majority; the suspension goes into effect, and within 30 days a national referendum is called to decide whether to impeach the president and call new elections. While the president is under suspension the chairman of the Senate acts as an interim president (and does not have the power to dissolve parliament).

This mechanism can counter potential presidential obstruction of the political process. For example, the president may dissolve parliament if it cannot approve a prime minister after 60 days; if the president tries to present the same candidate (whom parliament did not and would not approve) and thus creates political gridlock, then parliament may try to impeach the president. In 1993 there was a dual attempt to vote out the government of Nicolae Varacoiu and to suspend President Iliescu. The motion on presidential suspension and impeachment began when Iliescu implored local government not to give back land nationalized

under communism to previous owners. In doing so Iliescu was, so the opposition claimed, violating the constitution by calling for local authorities to ignore judicial decisions. However, the Constitutional Court claimed that the impeachment motion had no legal foundations, and because of disorganization within the opposition the motion was brought up but could not garner the necessary support to pass.

JUDICIARY

The judiciary is the third autonomous branch of the Romanian political system. Like other former Communist countries, Romania inherited a judicial branch that was subordinated to the state and to the Communist Party and whose job was to mete out justice according to Communist Party principles.

Romania's judiciary has undergone some reform, with the passing of a new constitution and new laws. Romania now follows a continental system of law. In this system the courts (except for the Constitutional Court) mediate legal disputes between citizens and mete out justice to criminals. In the Romanian system the courts decide whether a law should be implemented, and the courts do not have the power to expound interpretations of laws (unlike in the American system); such interpretation, in the tradition of civil bureaucracy, is left to the bureaucrats implementing the law or, in the case of questions of constitutionality, to the Constitutional Court. Also, in the continental system, judicial precedent does not play a role either in interpretation or in enforcement.

Local and district courts are the first levels for justice and dispute resolution. Appeals may be carried to higher levels, from local to district and on up the hierarchy. At the apex sits the High Court of Justice, which is the equivalent of the Supreme Court. The High Court is composed of 40 judges appointed for six-year terms by the president on the recommendation of the Superior Council of the Magistracy. The High Court does not rule on constitutional issues but, rather, is the highest level for appeal; decisions made on disputes or criminal decisions are considered final. Below the High Court are county and municipal courts.

Alongside the judicial hierarchy is the Constitutional Court, whose duties place it outside the normal judicial system. Unlike other courts, the Constitutional Court is concerned with overarching political decisions—mostly deciding on constitutionality of laws but also ruling on the application of constitutional rules to such disputes as legitimacy of political parties, electoral rules, and electoral outcomes. (Because these are not disputes between parties but are political matters and concern constitutional order, they fall within the sphere of the Constitutional Court.) The Court consists of nine judges who hold nine-year terms; terms are staggered so that every three years three judges are up for reappointment or dismissal. Three judges are chosen by the Chamber of Deputies, three by the Senate, and three by the president.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

At the local level Romania is divided into 41 counties (*judete*) and one municipality (the capital, Bucharest). Politics at the local level are run by locally elected legislative councils and mayors.

The Electoral System

Elections to both the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies are held every four years, at the same time, through proportional voting for parties rather than individuals. (Individuals may run, but they compete against parties, not other individuals, and must also cross the 3 percent threshold.) To qualify for obtaining seats, a party must overcome a 3 percent electoral barrier, that is, receive at least 3 percent of all votes cast. There are two exceptions. One is for minority parties. The top 15 ethnic parties are guaranteed one seat regardless of the percentage of vote that they gain. The other exception is for coalitions. A coalition's electoral barrier is greater than the average for single parties. (Coalitions in 2000 obtained more than 5 percent of votes, but this was ultimately too low, and so the coalitions did not receive seats.) Once a party crosses the threshold, the number of seats it receives is equal to its proportion of votes cast for all parties overcoming the electoral barrier. (As a result, the percentage of legislative seats a party receives will be greater than its percentage of the overall vote.) Voting and calculations for the Chamber of Deputies and Senate are done separately; thus, a party can receive enough votes to be represented in one body but not in the other.

The Party System

ORIGINS OF THE PARTIES

In the parliamentary elections of May 1990, the National Salvation Front (FSN), the party formed after

Ceaçescu's overthrow and the political vehicle of the post-Ceaçescu political elite, held an absolute majority in both houses of parliament; however, this did not guarantee political stability. In 1991 tension brewed between party elites Ion Iliescu and Petre Roman—who were president and prime minister, respectively, and thus in potential competition in the executive branch. Throughout 1991 Roman had been moving toward some cleansing of the FSN, with the idea of replacing old Communist-era elites (the supporters of Iliescu); further, while Roman was no proponent of shock therapy—he consistently claimed that the state needed to intervene in the economy and that rapid economic liberalization brought only pain elsewhere in Eastern Europe—he did call for increased reform. Iliescu, on the other hand, preferred gradual reform.

In September 1991 striking miners descended on Bucharest protesting economic hardships and low wages. While Roman wanted to reshuffle the cabinet at the time, Iliescu took advantage of proposed cabinet changes and concurrent social protest to proclaim that Roman had given up his mandate and that he either had resigned or was released. Roman protested that this was not his intention, but this did little good. The Roman-Iliescu feud continued into the March 1992 FSN party congress, where Roman's reformist wing (located in the party caucus) and Iliescu's older conservative wing (which held most of the parliamentary seats for the party) battled over the party platform. While Iliescu attempted to regain control of the party—an illegal action, since by the constitution he was allowed neither to be affiliated with any party nor to be involved in party activities—Roman's faction won the day. Iliescu's conservative supporters left the party and formed a new party, which would eventually become known as the Party of Social Democracy in Romania (PDSR). Meanwhile, Roman's faction eventually took the name Democratic Party (PD). In 2001 the PDSR incorporated the Social Democratic Party of Romania (PSDR), with the new entity known as the Social Democratic Party (PSD).

Economic policy has also provided a flashpoint for political contention, as has nationalism. Ethnicity was been a factor in 20th-century Romania, mostly because of the presence of a large number of Hungarians in rural sections of Transylvania (which belonged to Hungary before 1918). Fears of Hungarian aggression were muted by the Soviet presence in Eastern Europe from 1945 to 1989; however, ethnic rivalries and tensions have come to the fore again, as political parties and politicians have used the ethnic card to rally support or have used political tools to push their own antiethnic strategies. For their part, Hungarians in Transylvania feel threatened by Romanian authorities, who were repressive under Ceaçescu and in some areas have remained so.

Political parties have used nationalism to increase popular appeal. By 2005 some of the parties in existence illustrated this concept: the Democratic Union of Hungarians in Romania (UDMR) was formed as a counter-balance to the presence of anti-Hungarian parties such as the Party of Romanian National Unity (PUNR) and the Greater Romanian Party (PRM). The strong role of ethnicity in the country is enhanced by the Romanian political system, which actively encourages ethnic identity. Unlike in neighboring Bulgaria, where straightforward ethnic-oriented parties are forbidden under the constitution, the Romanian political system not only allows but rewards political rhetoric of ethnicity by reserving 18 seats in the House of Delegates for ethnic parties. Hence, given the existence of a sizable Hungarian minority struggling to defend itself (and receiving some rhetorical support from the Hungarian government), the use of nationalism as a tool for receiving votes, and the existence of extremist ideology, ethnicity remains both a political issue and a political problem that can lead potentially to social flare-ups.

ELECTIONS

Since implementation of the 1991 constitution there have been several presidential elections. While Iliescu's popularity had dropped after the 1989 overthrow of communism, he managed to win the 1992 election in no small part because of mistakes by the opposition. Most candidates were unknowns with little political savvy or, in the case of Funar, individuals perceived as radical. The most prominent challenger was Emil Constantinescu, and he was only prominent because he was the candidate of the Democratic Convention, the largest opposition group. However, Constantinescu had been selected only a few weeks before the election, which gave him little time to make himself known, and the Democratic Convention's campaign centered on ideological differences rather than on concrete programs. Also, Iliescu managed to use misinformation to taint Constantinescu's image. Finally, the Democratic Convention had little organizational connection to grassroots and rural populations, making it more difficult to mobilize the population, which was suffering from economic shock.

However, by 1996 the lesson had been learned, and Constantinescu not only was able to run a more

effective campaign but also benefited from the fact that after four years neither Iliescu's presidency nor the PDSR-extreme nationalist coalition in parliament had produced strong economic gains or political peace.

Constantinescu's presidency and his party's power in parliament were hampered by internal divisions, best demonstrated by the short-lived tenures of prime ministers (no more than two years in power, maximum). This hurt the liberal/democratic camp's position in the 2000 presidential election; as well, different liberal and social democratic parties entered their own candidates, splitting that vote base. This allowed Iliescu to return to the presidency in 2000. This also opened the way for a worrying development, namely, the rise of Vadim Tudor's Greater Romanian Party (PRM), a right-wing nationalist party whose candidates employ rhetoric that approaches the xenophobic. In 2004, with Iliescu unable by law to run for another term as president, Traian Băsescu, the popular mayor Bucharest, won the presidency, defeating Prime Minister Adrian Nastase of the PSD. In the legislative elections, the coalition of the PSD and the Humanist Party of Romania (PUR) won 132 Chamber seats and 57 Senate seats, beating the coalition of the PD and the National Liberal Party (PNL), which tallied 113 Chamber seats and 49 Senate seats. However, the PSD was consigned to the opposition because it lacked an absolute majority, allowing the other parties to form a coalition government.

Romania has a plethora of political parties; however, only a relatively few possess the organization and support to be represented in parliament and thus exert any effect on Romanian politics.

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS, 2004

Party or Coalition	seats, Chamber of Deputies	seats, Senate
PSD/PUR	132	57
PNL/PD	113	49
PRM	47	21
UDMR	22	10
Ethnic minority parties	18	—
Total	132	137

Major Political Parties

SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY

(Partidul Social Democrat; PSD)

The most important party in the post-1989 aftermath was the National Salvation Front (FSN). After 1989 this was the hegemonic party. Its members included conservative Communists who had supported the revolt against Ceaucęscu and who were tied to the Romanian nomenklatura (Communist elite.) While the FSN supported economic reform in theory, such theory remained murky and in practice was rent with contradictions. Much of this confusion was linked to the two different wings in the party, which formed the basis for the 1991–92 feud between Ion Iliescu and Petre Roman and the 1992 split of the party into the FSN. One wing of the party, the conservatives in parliament supporting Iliescu, preferred gradual reform, retention of a large state role in the economy, and some form of economic and price regulation; this wing because the Party of Social Democracy in Romania (Partidul Democratiei Sociale din Romania; PDSR). A younger reformist wing supported Petre Roman and preferred more substantial reform, particularly on matters of liberalization, land reform, and some privatization, although they also preferred to retain a state role in the economy and support for a social safety net. The basis for this approach was the example of social pain and tension occurring because of shock therapy in other Eastern European countries. This party was named the Democratic Party (Partidul Democrat; PD) and joined with the Romanian Democratic Socialist Party (Partidul Socialist Democrat Român; PSR) in the 1996 parliamentary elections.

During the 1990s two factions emerged in the PDSR, namely, a more traditional hard-line Communist (and somewhat nationalist) wing, associated with president Ion Iliescu, and a more moderate grouping associated with Prime Minister Adrian Nastase. In 2001 the PDSR merged with the PSDR, and the combined party became known as the PSD. In the 2004 elections the PSD, in a coalition with the PUR, won a majority of seats in both houses of parliament but was forced into opposition when four other parties formed a coalition government. Nastase lost the 2004 presidential election to Traian Băsescu of the PD.

GREATER ROMANIAN PARTY

(Partidul Romania Mare; PRM)

Originally part of the ruling coalition with the Social Democratic Party and Romanian National Unity Party

in 1993, PRM emerged from PUNR's shadow to become Romania's dominant right-wing ultranationalist party. Like PUNR, PRM is primarily anti-Hungarian, but its claims and stance are more radical, constituting a peculiar combination of fascist and communist language and imagery. Its economic program is not much different from that of social democratic parties. The party also supports authoritarian rule (under its leadership, naturally). Support for PRM rose consistently through the 1990s, especially within some mining communities (where leader Vadim Tudor gained iconic status). PRM gained 15 seats in the Chamber of Deputies and 6 in the Senate in 1992, 19 seats in the Chamber of Deputies and 8 in the Senate in 1996, and improved to 84 seats in the Chamber and 37 in the Senate in 2000. However, it saw its support drop in 2004 to 47 Chamber seats and 21 Senate seats.

DEMOCRATIC PARTY

(Partidul Democrat; PD)

The Democratic Party emerged from the original Salvation Front as the faction supporting reformist prime minister (1990–91) Petre Roman. Roman and his followers left the National Salvation Front and joined the fledgling Democratic Party. Soon after, the merger was reversed—Roman and followers exited—and PD advocated more moderate economic changes. In 1996 the PD and PSDR joined forces, but tensions led to a reversal of this alliance. Other smaller social democratic parties and organizations have merged with it since 1996, and, on its own, the PD has gained minor representation in parliament. The PD continues to take a moderate social democratic line in advocating market reforms moderated by concerns for social well-being. In 2004, a PD-PNL coalition won 113 Chamber seats and 49 Senate seats. PD leader Traian Băsescu won the presidency, and the party formed a coalition government with several other parties. PNL leader Cýlin Popescu-Týriceanu became prime minister.

NATIONAL LIBERAL PARTY

(Partidul National Liberal; PNL)

Founded in 1990, PNL was the heir to the pre-1945 Liberal Party and its ideological traditions. In 1992 the party split temporarily between those who wanted to join the CDR for the parliamentary elections and those who preferred that the party stand alone. However, PNL was too weak to gain seats and rejoined the CDR in 1995. Before the 2000 elections PNL merged with the Alliance for Romania, Union of Right-Wing Forces, and National Liberal Party–Campeanu. Fortified by the merger, the party was able to successfully overcome the election barrier. In 2004 the party allied with the PD and was able to form a minority coalition government, with PNL leader Cýlin Popescu-Týriceanu becoming prime minister.

Minor Political Parties

PARTY OF ROMANIAN NATIONAL UNITY

(Partidul Unitatii Nationale Romane; PUNR)

Led by Gheorghe Funar, PUNR emerged as Romania's first major ultranationalist (anti-Hungarian) political party. PUNR emerged based on Funar's popularity and his victory in a mayoral election in Transylvania, where relations between ethnic Hungarians and Romanians have been problematic. This propelled PUNR to the national level. The nationalist rhetoric and image, however, are masked by PUNR's more moderate behavior in banal politics. Perhaps because of this, their support has eroded through the 1990s. In the Chamber of Deputies their numbers fell from 29 seats (1992 elections) to 18 (1996) to no seats in either house (2000) despite joining forces with another small nationalist party to form the National Alliance Party PUNR-PNR. In 2004 the party again failed to win seats in either house.

DEMOCRATIC UNION OF HUNGARIANS IN ROMANIA

(Uniunea Democrata a Maghiarilor din Romania; UDMR)

Given the tensions between Romanians and Hungarians, particularly in Transylvania, it is not surprising a Hungarian party would emerge—and UDMR filled that niche. UDMR serves as a counterbalance to the constant presence of anti-Hungarian nationalist parties in public life (e.g., PUNR and PRM). UDMR managed to gain 27 seats in the Chamber of Deputies in 1992 and 12 in the Senate, and this held fairly constant (25 and 11 seats in 1996, 27 and 12 in 2002, 22 and 10 in 2004). UDMR has positioned itself as the party in defense of Hungarians, although the tactics employed in this defense have led to tensions within the party between moderate and more radical factions. However, a goal shared by all is to secure some degree of Hungarian rights and autonomy in Romania. UDMR calls for

rapid and fundamental economic reform. After 2000 UDMR entered the ruling coalition with PDSR, and Hungarians gained ministerial positions.

Other Political Forces

ETHNICITY

The problems of ethnicity stem from four sources. The first source comprises ethnic nationalists who stoke the flames of ethnic resentment with their rhetoric. The second source is the need by some politicians to play an ethnic fear card in order to garner support: both Roman's PSDR and the democratic National Liberal Party turned to pro-Romanian (and thus anti-ethnic) rhetoric in order to shore up their nationalist support and portray themselves as defenders of Romanian unity. The third source of ethnic tension is the perception, on both sides, of threats from the other. Currently there is no real threat, except from small radical voices, of either ethnic separation from Romania by Hungarians or of ethnic cleansing by Romanian authorities. However, members of both sides perceive a threat, giving legitimacy and fuel to their own rhetoric. The Hungarian minority, for example, has its own ethnic party, which some radical nationalists view as a threat to Romanian unity. The Hungarian government's claim that its mission has been to defend Hungarians regardless of where they live was viewed as an intention to interfere in Romanian sovereignty and to give aid to Hungarian separatists (even though the Hungarian government has repeatedly denied any claims on Romanian territory). The fourth source is fear of suffering the fate of Yugoslavia and the USSR, which fell into either civil war (Yugoslavia) or national collapse (the USSR) because of ethnic tensions.

Rather than try to create national unity and concord, Romanian conservatives and nationalists, echoing the rhetoric of the Ceauçescu era, have turned to more vibrant nationalism in order to secure national unity. However, such attempts involve some degree of coercion rather than persuasion and as such have led to a response by the Hungarian minority to secure its own rights through political organization—which in turn raises the threat to Romanian nationalists of separatism.

Whether the situation will change soon remains to be seen. While some democratic parties have not eschewed using nationalist slogans to gain political support, the democratic (i.e., anti-Communist and anti-Iliescu) camp has been less inclined to play the national card, preferring to use anti-Communism and economic reform as the basis for their political programs. Also, the population at large does not seem to be overtly ethnocentric or nationalistic; PUNR's support dropped in the 1996, 2000, and 2004 elections, and nationalism has not been seen as a cure (or rhetorical substitute) for economic problems. However, small radical nationalist groups remain on the political scene, and it bears recognizing that a society does not need to be polarized for politics (and thus political outcomes) to be polarized along ethnic lines.

National Prospects

To develop a stable economy and polity—and thus a stable society—Romania has to address two important issues: the political legacy of Communism and the reform of that legacy; and nationalism and ethnic politics.

The historical legacy of Communism is both political and economic. The political side concerns Ceauçescu's regime and those who inherited and retained power from that regime. While anti-Communism has not been as strong or volatile in Romania as in Bulgaria, it has played a role in creating social and political tensions. One important legacy is that of Ceauçescu's police state. The Securitate—the secret police—was all-intrusive, and many political and economic leaders have had links to it, making exposition of police documents—which would reveal illegal activity, favoritism, and who turned in whom—a potential political time bomb.

The second legacy of Communism is the nation's economic structure. Like other former Eastern bloc nations, Romania inherited a state-led economy, and reforming such an economy has been difficult. Conservatives in power have been loathe to restructure the economy, either because they support some form of Communist ideology and/or because their own interests are linked to continued state regulation and control of the economy. Further, Romania has had difficulty receiving economic aid for two reasons. First, Romania's economy has been in decline and has not been restructured, making the IMF and foreign investors wary. Second, Romanian politics have not shown a degree of democracy enough for outside institutional investors to feel comfortable (in front of their own investors or politicians) to invest the capital necessary to get Romania on its feet.

If Romania is to develop a stable polity, then both these issues must be addressed. The Communist legacy

appears to be the less important of the two. First, some form of "Communist cleansing" has occurred, as voters have rejected former Communists and the secret police has been reined in. Second, economic decline has diverted the population's attention from the Communist past to the present state of the wallet. Constantinescu and the Democratic Convention did not manage to improve the economy or fight corruption and nationalism seriously enough to return to power, and voters returned Iliescu and the PDSR instead. However, Constantinescu managed two important feats, namely, Romania is under consideration for European Union membership, perhaps as early as 2007, and it was able to join NATO in 2004. These steps toward integration with the rest of Europe and alliance with the Atlantic community could well improve Romania's economy and perhaps lead to an improvement in the country's ethnic relations and a lessening of the nationalist wave that, while still small, casts a potentially disturbing shadow over Romanian politics and society.

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RUSSIAN FEDERATION

(Rossiiskaya Federatsiya)

By Jeffrey K. Hass, Ph.D.



The Russian political system remains subject to sudden radical change—this has been the basic logic of its political history since 1985. Only by understanding the processes and logics of that recent history of change can one understand the present and the (possibly radically different) future.

In December 1991 Boris Yeltsin, president of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic (the USSR's largest republic, known as RSFSR), joined Stanislav Shushkevich of Belarus and Leonid Kravchuk of Ukraine in dissolving the Soviet Union and replacing it with the ill-defined Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). The RSFSR was transformed into the Russian Federation, and the process of political transformation and state building was under way, and it continues apace.

Prior to December 1991 Russia was the largest of 15 republics in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (RSFSR). In 1991 Boris Yeltsin won the RSFSR presidential race, defeating Nikolai Ryzhkov and ultranationalist Vladimir Zhirinovskii. Throughout 1991, in conflict with and defiance of the USSR government, the RSFSR began claiming political authority and sovereignty. In December 1991 in the Belorussian town of Belovezhsk, Yeltsin, Kravchuk, and Shushkevich dissolved the Soviet Union. This marked a culmination of the centrifugal forces that had been pulling the USSR apart. The Russian government claimed political sovereignty and inherited Soviet institutions such as Gosbank (the State Bank), the KGB (reorganized as the FSB, the Federal Security Council), the executive branch, headed by Yeltsin, and the Supreme Soviet as the legislative branch (headed then by Ruslan Khasbulatov).

Relations between the executive and the legislature were calm in 1992, and Yeltsin received a year of emergency powers (when presidential decrees had the force of law) to pursue a "shock therapy" program. Under Yegor Gaidar's watch (as minister of finance and later deputy prime minister), price and trade liberalization and a brief stint of tight monetary policy were implemented. However, initial inflationary shocks, rising inter-enterprise debt, the collapse of trade relations between republics, wage arrears, and political intrigue led to near economic collapse. To prevent the economy from seizing up, the Central Bank injected money into the system, resulting in hyperinflation (around 2,500 percent for 1992). By December 1992 conservatives in the Supreme Soviet and society reacted negatively to market reforms and demanded policy changes. Yeltsin answered by offering Viktor Chernomyrdin, former head of the natural gas monopoly Gazprom, as prime minister. Chernomyrdin turned out to be more of a market-reformer than Gaidar, pushing privatization with his aide Anatolii Chubais, introducing embryonic bankruptcy laws, and restricting further emissions of state subsidies.

However, the battle over economic policy soon became a conflict over the power to set agendas and pitted Yeltsin against legislative speaker Khasbulatov and the conservative Supreme Soviet. The rivalry was

decided in September–October 1993, when Yeltsin disbanded the Supreme Soviet and called for new elections. Khasbulatov and Vice President Aleksandr Rutskoi staged a sit-in in the "White House," the home of the Supreme Soviet. A crowd of Khasbulatov-Rutskoi supporters gathered outside the White House and, riled by Rutskoi, stormed toward the Ostankino television station. Defense minister Pavel Grachev, on Yeltsin's orders, commanded the tanks and troops to bombard and then assault the White House. After the elapse of several days and suffering some casualties, the rebels surrendered and Yeltsin emerged victorious. After the "October events" Yeltsin called for a double vote in December, namely, for a new parliament and a new constitution.

The results of the December 1993 elections stunned reformers: while the electoral bloc of Yegor Gaidar's party, Russia's Choice, emerged as the largest winner, the Communists had reemerged with new strength, and Vladimir Zhirinovskii's Russian Liberal Democratic Party emerged as the clear winner on the party ballots. The pain of economic reform and the blood of the October events had soured voter opinion of the democrats. Yeltsin had given no public support for democrats, nor had he founded his own party for the Duma elections; as a result, democrats were split, especially between Gaidar's group and the alternative reform camp led by Grigorii Yavlinskii's "Yabloko" Party. Nationalists (especially the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia) and Communists tapped into the pain, shame, and anger rising up in society. The new Duma threatened to be no more helpful than the defunct Supreme Soviet.

The year 1994 opened with hired killings of mafia (*mafiia*) bosses and bankers, and with reports of increasing corruption in the government and mafia influence over the economy. The annual inflationary surge in August 1994 pushed up prices in September and, along with possible intrigues by major banks and the Central Bank, led to "Black Tuesday"—on October 10 and 11 the ruble lost 40 percent of its value relative to the dollar. While the ruble temporarily regained most of its lost value, Chernomyrdin's government was reshuffled and the prime minister himself was nearly sacked. Viktor Gerashchenko resigned as the Central Bank chairman and was replaced by Tatiana Paramonova, who would later implement the ruble corridor (a band of acceptable limits on ruble-dollar exchange rates) and would introduce financial discipline to private banks.

INVASION OF CHECHNYA

In December 1994 the Russian political scene was shaken by the sudden invasion of Chechnya—the decision to invade was taken without Duma consultations or public debate and because the defense minister, Grachev, had been practicing shuttle diplomacy with Chechen leaders. The war led not only to a financial drain on the state but, more importantly, also to increased political tensions and social outrage against Yeltsin and his government and to tensions within the military. From the first military engagements, the Russian media carried images of war and its ravages into the homes of Russians. Several political parties, including democrats and Communists, reacted negatively to Yeltsin's decision. (Zhirinovskii and his Liberal Democrats supported the invasion.) Social groups began to protest the war; most vehement in condemnation was the Soldiers' Mothers Association, a group that sent petitions to the executive and legislature, forwarded documentation on the war to foreign groups such as the United Nations, and harbored AWOL soldiers. Finally, low pay, bad living conditions, and the lack of quick military success hurt a morale already in decline, battered by the generally low level of army conditions and by abuses by soldiers and officers within divisions.

In 1995 Yeltsin's health worsened. Political stability was threatened by growing discontent with the Chechen war. In June 1995 Chechen rebels occupied a hospital and took hostages in the town of Budennovsk. Rumors throughout Moscow were rife that Yeltsin would keep the prime minister and the government and disband the Duma and call for new parliamentary elections. The year ended with elections to the Sixth Duma. Riding on a wave of growing discontent due to economic reforms, the Communist Party, headed by Gennadyi Zyuganov, claimed more than 20 percent of the votes and 157 seats overall. Supported by the older generations, who had suffered from inflation, investment fraud, and unpaid pensions, the Communists returned to politics, a return that led to power games between blocs in early 1996. With Yeltsin's popularity low early in the presidential race (behind Zyuganov, popular retired general Aleksandr Lebed, and Yabloko leader Grigorii Yavlinskii), some members of the presidential staff—especially the chief of presidential security and Yeltsin confidant Aleksandr Korzhakov—called for postponement of the presidential elections. However, aided by American campaign consultants and promises of public spending to alleviate wage arrears and to fund public projects, Yeltsin managed to turn the tide and win enough votes to enter the

second round to face Zyuganov. Yeltsin offered Lebed a position in the cabinet in return for support; Lebed had received 15 percent of the votes cast and had a positive reputation as honest, competent, and strong-willed. His support, along with Zyuganov's inability to move beyond the 20 percent of the electorate loyal to the Communists, allowed Yeltsin to win the July 1996 presidential election.

Soon afterward, however, Yeltsin's health declined; he had already dropped out of sight between the first and second rounds because of heart problems and required triple-bypass surgery. Lebed's popularity only increased as he worked out a cease-fire in Chechnya and promised to root out corruption. Political intrigue against Lebed—Chernomyrdin and Chubais "insiders" versus Lebed the "outsider"—led ultimately to Yeltsin's firing Lebed in the fall of 1996. Lebed's ultimate sin had been his independence and confidence in his own abilities and popularity; these traits did little to endear him to Chernomyrdin and Chubais. Lebed exited the government and began to form his own political machine, preparing for a bid at the presidency should Yeltsin leave office before the end of his five-year term. (The popular general-turned-governor was killed in a freak helicopter crash in 2003, removing one potential future presidential candidate from the field.)

The years 1997 and 1998 were not calm for Russian democracy, as Yeltsin continued to appear frail physically and yet flex his muscles politically. On March 23, 1998, he dissolved his cabinet, including Chernomyrdin, because of its inability to cope with wage and pension arrears and to speed up reforms. Yeltsin appointed Sergei Kirienko, a 35-year-old former energy minister with little experience at the helm and a member of the "Nemtsov family," as the prime minister designate. Anatolii Chubais, under siege from enemies for scandals and for favors to allies (such as Moscow banks), was finally out of the cabinet but would remain somewhere on Yeltsin's team. Foreign investors looked favorably upon Chubais for his ability to keep reforms on course, and Yeltsin could not simply discard Chubais. Boris Nemtsov, the young reformer brought into the cabinet in the spring of 1997, remained as an acting deputy minister; his charisma and reformist image could not be thrown overboard if Yeltsin was to maintain any degree of outward trappings as a reformer. But his steadfast ally and potential rival Viktor Chernomyrdin was gone.

The new situation was not to last long, for in August 1998, Yeltsin sacked his cabinet again. After trying to convince the Duma to support Viktor Chernomyrdin's return, Yeltsin turned to Yevgenii Primakov, a former Gorbachev aide and former foreign minister. This appeared to be a victory for Communists and leftists and a serious defeat for Yeltsin and his allies in the reformer and banking camps; in fact, Yeltsin appeared weak and tired after the affair, and Primakov de facto assumed more powers than previous prime ministers in running Russia.

Russian politics in Yeltsin's last years revolved around two important informal groups that grew out of the backroom politics and horse-trading of economic reform. The first group was "the Family," the informal inner circle around Yeltsin made up of his daughter Tatiana Diachenko, presidential secretary Aleksandr Voloshin, and oligarch Boris Berezovskii. They were the ailing Yeltsin's closest advisers after 1996, and they acted as gatekeepers to the feeble president. The second group was the "oligarchs." These were Russia's richest elites, who had made their fortunes buying Russian enterprises cheap during the course of privatization thanks to political connections to Anatolii Chubais (the executive of the privatization policy) and Yeltsin. Lucrative firms were sold to Boris Berezovskii (Aeroflot, aluminum firms), Mikhail Khodorkovskii (Menatep financial group, oil firms that became Yukos), Roman Abramovich (oil firms that became Sibneft, aluminum firms), Vladimir Gusinskii (media empires), and Vladimir Potanin (Interros financial group, Norilsk Nickel). The oligarchs traded loyalty to Yeltsin for the chance to create property empires, and they repaid their debt by financing his 1996 presidential election bid and then supporting Vladimir Putin (heir to Yeltsin and defender of the Family) in the 1999 Duma elections.

RISE OF VLADIMIR PUTIN

In 1999, sensing a chance for power, Moscow mayor Yurii Luzhkov made use of his popularity as a strong leader who could bring order by establishing the party Fatherland (Otechestvo) and uniting it with All Russia (Vsya Rossiia). This coalition threatened Yeltsin and the Family. To tackle the threat Yeltsin sacked Primakov—who promptly joined Luzhkov's coalition—and named Sergei Stepashin to be prime minister. In August 1999 Yeltsin sacked Stepashin for his refusal to attack Luzhkov, and named Vladimir Putin, head of the security services, to the position. To observers Putin appeared to be a loyal heir who would defend the interests of Yeltsin and the Family. In the second half of 1999 Putin sent troops back into Chechnya following a series of raids by rebels into neighboring Dagestan and on apartment bombings in Moscow, supposedly pulled off by Chechen rebels. This helped his popularity by

giving him an image of strength and resolution. In the 1999 Duma elections, Putin and Berezovskii unleashed media allies against Luzhkov, for all practical purposes slandering him with accusations of corruption and opportunism, among other things. Further, Putin put his support behind Unity (Edinstvo), a loose party made up of various individuals and elites linked more by ties to the Kremlin inner circle or a desire for opportunistic gain than by shared ideological hopes. Willing to trade political loyalty for a share of political power and gains in Moscow, they were favored by Putin and the Putin-friendly media. While the Fatherland–All Russia coalition gained seats in the Duma, Unity emerged triumphant. The threat from Luzhkov, or any serious competition, was neutralized.

His health failing, Yeltsin suddenly resigned on December 31, 1999, making Putin acting president. In 2000 Putin won the presidential election in his own right, defeating perennial Communist candidate Gennadyi Zyuganov. Putin portrayed an image of quiet determination and strength and to many represented what Russia needed, an iron fist of order and discipline (an image aided by his KGB background, his lack of affiliation with 1990s privatization and corruption, and his unbending decision to end rebellion in Chechnya). Following the collapse of the ruble in 1998 and NATO bombings of Serbia in 1999 (Serbs were widely seen as brother Orthodox Slavs), a feeling of anger at the West and the political elite heated up, and Putin played to this sense of national betrayal with pseudo-nationalist trappings and tactics: from restoring the Soviet-era national anthem (with different words) to televising individual meetings with ministers demonstrating his authority over the government to a stress on the "dictatorship of law" and renewal of national security and strength.

In keeping with his image, Putin began to gather political power around himself. His first real act of power was an attack on oligarchs who had helped him rise to power and who threatened to constrain him, as they had Yeltsin. From his position as head of the security apparatus Putin had two tools. First, he had connections to fellow *siloviki*—members of the security apparatus, including the FSB (Federaln'aya Sluzhba Bezopastnosti, Federal Security Service, the former KGB)—who followed him into the Kremlin. *Siloviki* had been the one major group that had lost out in the 1990s: they not gained from privatization and economic liberalization as had other Communist Party–era nomenklatura elites (such as oligarchs or Red directors), and Yeltsin had weakened the KGB's powers when he reorganized them into the FSB. *Siloviki* were spread throughout the state apparatus, from Moscow to the provinces, and they were ready to return to power. Putin's second tool was access to *kompromat,* namely, compromising materials, usually information on illegal or questionable activities (e.g., tax fraud) committed by the oligarchs and others. Yeltsin unleashed the *siloviki* and *kompromat* against Berezovskii and Vladimir Gusinskii—both of whom controlled important newspapers and television stations (e.g., the popular television station NTV, which had been critical of the war in Chechnya) that had helped promote Yeltsin's image in 1996 and 1999 and who had destroyed Luzhkov's in 1999. Once again threatened with an investigation and prison, Berezovskii fled to the United Kingdom, where he remains a refugee and occasional news commentator. Gusinskii's MOST Group empire and NTV were threatened with bankruptcy over unpaid debts and potential prosecution. Gusinskii sold his media empire, including NTV, to the state-run natural gas monopoly Gazprom—putting important media outlets indirectly in Putin's hands. Gusinskii then fled to Greece. The remaining oligarchs and regional governors quickly fell in line, and Putin began proposing reform legislation.

The rise in oil prices after 2000 helped Russia's economy and state budget, but the war in Chechnya remained inconclusive. With presidential elections coming in 2004, and the question of a successor to Putin in 2008 further on the horizon, Putin and the *siloviki* became nervous about potential competition that could hurt their interests. A competitor emerged in 2003: oligarch Mikhail Khodorkovskii, Russia's richest man and head of the financial empire Menatep and the oil giant Yukos. A slick young oligarch who championed transparency and modern capitalist methods of operation—for example, he opened Yukos' financial books to external scrutiny—Khodorkovskii gave money to various political parties and quipped that one day he would leave business for other interests, that is, politics. In July 2003 the *siloviki* arrested an assistant manager at Yukos on charges of murder, opened an investigation in tax fraud at Yukos—an ironic punishment for accounting transparency, rare in Russia—and arrested Khodorkovskii for tax fraud. Despite a vigorous defense against the charges and proposals to pay the tax debt (including offers from the Chinese government, who relied on Yukos oil), Putin and *siloviki* continued to attack Yukos, Russia's economic champion and post-Soviet success story. Other oligarchs did not come to Khodorkovskii's aid and towed Putin's line, while Roman Abramovich, head of oil giant Sibneft, quickly

shifted hundreds of millions of dollars from Russia to the Chelsea Football Club in Britain.

In 2003 a new round of Duma elections took place, and Putin's party renamed itself United Russiia (Edinaia Rossiia). United Russia displaced the Communists as the largest party in the Duma, and the nationalist Liberal Democrats and Motherland parties—generally friendly to Putin—shored up Putin's influence in the lower house. Right-wing, pro-reform parties such as Yaboko or the Union of Right Forces did not overcome the 5 percent electoral barrier—for the first time since the heyday of Gorbachev's reforms, a pro-democracy, pro-reform party did not gain seats through proportional representation, and had to rely on individuals winning local first-past-the-post contests. In 2004 Putin easily defeated competitors in the presidential race in the first round—the Communists put forward someone other than Zyuganov and other parties nominated symbolic candidates to create a façade of a democratic competitive election. In September 2004 Chechen terrorists under orders of Shamil Besayev took approximately 1,000 adults and children hostage in a school in the North Ossetian town of Beslan, and, in a freak series of accidents, killed a third of the adults and children. Amidst the national and international outcry against this horrifying event and the Chechen rebels, Putin announced measured to combat terrorism and security threats, including more direct control of the selection of local governors and the Duma.

The System of Government

The Russian state is a federation of 21 autonomous republics, 49 oblasts, 10 autonomous *okrugs,* and 1 autonomous oblast. Autonomous republics are akin to ethnic enclaves within Russia, similar to the republics of the former Soviet Union. Oblasts are equivalent to provinces and are headed by governors, traditionally selected through competitive elections but since 2004 appointed by the president.

EXECUTIVE

According to the 1993 constitution, ultimate executive authority rests with the president of the Russian Federation. The Russian presidency resembles that of France. The president is as much a political "overseer" as head of state and government, setting the general course for the country, issuing presidential edicts (*ukazy*), and acting as a final arbiter between the executive and legislative branches. In this way, the president is part of the executive but also above it in that the duties of president encompass the entire political realm of process and stability and not just the executive duties of implementing legislation. A telling sign of this is the president's power to dismiss both the Duma and the ministers. The president is aided by the Presidential Administration, run by the head of the Presidential Administration. This Administration includes the Security Council, the Defense Council, presidential aides, and the Administration of Affairs of the president. The Security Council looks after Russia's national and political security.

If the president is the overall *political* leader, the head of the day-to-day workings of the executive branch is the prime minister. The prime minister is aided by four deputy prime ministers and a cabinet of heads of ministries and state committees, including the Ministries of Finance, Justice, Defense, Education, Transportation, and Communications, the Committees on Industrial Policy, Land Reform, State Property Management, and Bankruptcy, and others. These ministries manage the day-to-day activities of the executive branch, which includes controlling federal property and payments, regulating customs and borders, running the armed forces, collecting taxes, and the like. The prime minister and various ministers and heads of state committees are appointed by the president and are subject to approval by the Duma. The duties of the ministers include shaping policy, ensuring fulfillment of legislation and policy, administering state property, and executing financial policy (payments and taxes).

The real power of the executive is greater than in many Western nations. This is due to three factors. First, historical legacy and political culture support a strong central figure over a body such as parliament; second, the urgent nature of economic reforms supports a strong central figure who can decree immediate policy; and finally, a strong executive was designed to solve the problem of conflicts between executive and legislature that plagued Yeltsin in 1992–93. These factors come from institutional rules (such as the constitution) as well as from Yeltsin's own political strategies and capital.

Presidential power was not always so great. The Soviet constitution granted final power to the Congress of People's Deputies; Yeltsin's 1991 addition to that document made the president the "highest official" of the RSFSR, and the contradiction between the two articles helped set the stage for executive-legislative conflict in 1992. With the three factors above dovetail-

ing in 1993, the writers of Russia's constitution (under Yeltsin's influence) granted extensive powers to the president.

First, the laws of the land include not only legislation passed by parliament but also presidential decrees; this is a legacy of Yeltsin's year of emergency powers to promote shock therapy. Presidential decrees have the advantage that they do not require parliamentary debate and two (or three) separate votes, as is the case for Duma legislation. In theory, presidential decrees are invalid if they contradict Duma-approved legislation; however, solving potential contradictions is usually left to the courts, to political compromise, or to the whim of the bureaucrat making the decision at the time.

Second, the executive wields power over the military and the Ministry of Internal Affairs (the nationwide police), and the president holds the authority to use military force where he sees fit. This was the case with Chechnya, for example, where Yeltsin authorized the use of the army to compel obedience from the breakaway republic. When legislative members protested this use of force before the Supreme Court, the Court upheld the president's authority to use military force without direct interference from parliament. Finally, because the executive runs the state bureaucracy, directives and "letters" of the various ministries can shape political, economic, and social life.

The power of the president stems also from the fact that he is not simply part of the political system; he stands above it. This can be seen in the system's checks and balances. While the legislative branch can open formal impeachment proceedings, the president also has the power to dissolve the Duma or the entire parliament and call for new elections, for example, in the case of a vote of no confidence. The president can, in the end, avoid the checks and balances by simply ignoring the legislature

Checks on executive power are problematic. In 1992 and 1993, the Supreme Soviet acted as a check on the president by emitting contradictory legislative decrees and by challenging the legality of Yeltsin's policies. However, the legislature still holds two important levers of power over the president. The first is control over finances: expenditures and the actual yearly state budget must pass through parliament. The second lever is that the legislature can oust the executive, either by a vote of no confidence in the government or by impeachment of the president. However, this check is precarious: the measure must pass *twice,* and after the first reading the prime minister can demand an immediate second vote. If the Duma passes the no-confidence measure a second time, the president has the option either to dismiss the existing government and name a new prime minister and cabinet or to dismiss the sitting Duma and set new elections for parliament. Finally, executive actions must follow the constitution; violation may lead to overturning of executive policies and, in egregious instances, to impeachment.

Putin has acted to enhance presidential power even further. He has used *kompromat*—informal power—to bring the Duma and regional governors into line. This has enabled him to pass reform legislation that Yeltsin could not, for example, on the sale of land. Early in his first term, Putin created the "presidential vertical," presidential representatives to "super-regions" comprising groups of oblasts. These representatives monitor the behavior of local legislatures and governors, although they have not been as effective a tool for Putin's control of the regions as initially envisioned. Finally, Putin in 2004 pushed through a new means of enhancing the "presidential vertical": revising electoral rules so that the president appoints regional governors. Interestingly, Putin has been following a watered-down version of Aleksandr Lukashenko's strategy of vertical presidential power in Belarus; however, Putin does permit more autonomy to the legislature.

PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION, MARCH 14, 2004

Candidate	% votes received
Vladimir Putin	71.2%
Nikolai Charitonov	13.7%
Sergei Glazev	4.1%
Irina Khakamada	3.9%
Oleg Malyshkin	2%
Sergei Mironov	0.8%

Source: www.rferl.org

LEGISLATURE

The national legislature is a bicameral body, composed of the upper house, the Federation Council (Soviet Federatsii), and the lower house, the State Duma (Gosudarstvennaia Duma). The purpose of both bodies is to introduce, debate, and pass legislation for the Russian Federation and to act as a check on executive powers. The current system was introduced at the end of 1993, after the October events and the dissolution

of the Supreme Soviet, and with the introduction of Russia's new constitution and Duma elections. The process of forming the Duma has been relatively straightforward. The Federation Council has been developing more slowly.

The Federation Council is composed of 178 members. Originally created in 1993 during the reconstruction of Russia's legislative branch, the Council had two deputies assigned from each of Russia's 89 regions: one deputy represented the executive of that region and one deputy represented the legislature. Until legal changes in 1995, the central authorities appointed representatives of the Federation Council. Yeltsin and his executive team appointed regional governors early on, and some governors sat in the Federation Council as regional representatives. At other times, the central government would simply appoint the representatives. Yet in other regions, the central authorities would propose a list of candidates for election; some regions were able to send candidates who had managed to gather the requisite number of signatures on the electoral petition and run a successful campaign. Legal changes in December 1995 altered the composition of the Federation Council by stipulating that the two representatives of each region would definitely be that region's governor and legislative speaker. The December 1995 law also mandated that gubernatorial elections were to be held in all regions by the end of 1996. Hence, Federation Council members were to be elected indirectly, that is, they entered the Federation Council on account of being elected to necessary positions.

The Federation Council appoints judges to the three top courts, decides on the use of the armed forces, approves border changes for intra-Russian subjects (e.g., oblasts), calls presidential elections, approves of a presidential introduction of martial law, impeaches the president, and appoints or removes from office the prosecutor-general and the deputy chairman of the accounting chamber. Furthermore, legislation adopted by the State Duma is passed on to the Federation Council after five days; within 14 days the Federation Council may adopt or reject the legislation. If the Council has not considered the legislation within the first 14 days after its introduction in this upper legislative chamber, the legislation is considered passed and legally binding.

The State Duma is composed of 450 members, chosen through individual and party-based balloting. The powers of the Duma are those typical for a representative body. Most important is the right of the Duma to pass legislation. The Duma has responsibility for approving the state budget; unlike most legislation, the budget must be approved *three* separate times by majority vote. The Duma approves the appointment of ministers and the head of the Central Bank. The Duma, through its various committees, enjoys the power of political investigation and can recommend policy and laws based on the findings of these committees.

The Duma is more of a representative body than the Federation Council. According to the constitution, Duma elections are to occur every four years. Half of the Duma is chosen through elections for individual candidates from Russia's various regions, where the number of positions is based on population (as for the U.S. House of Representatives). These individual races are "first-past-the-post"—the winner is the candidate with the most votes, regardless of whether the number is a majority or plurality. The other 225 seats are apportioned in a more complex system, reserved for balloting based on a party list. Voters throughout the country cast a vote for a political party. Those parties that garner 5 percent or more of the total votes cast are eligible to receive some of these 225 seats. The number of seats they receive is equal to the percentage of the votes cast for those parties that overcame the 5 percent barrier.

The overall powers of the legislature were limited after the conflicts of 1993. The executive-legislature balance is lopsided; the president's position above politics and thus outside of political procedure deprives the legislature of checks and therefore of much autonomy, especially if the president decides to dissolve parliament. Furthermore, the Federation Council was docile in its early years because the president, who could appoint whomever he wanted, appointed its members. Since 1995 the law requires that governors be elected; because governors allied with Yeltsin and the "parties of power" have not faired well in provincial elections, the Federation Council has the chance to escape the president's control.

However, the legislature does have certain powers that can be used against the executive as a check. The Duma has the right to initiate impeachment, and the Federation Council the duty to decide on whether impeachment will go through. In addition, the Duma may use a vote of no confidence against the prime minister and his government; this is, however, a double-edged sword that can lead to the Duma's dissolution. Hence, the check that the legislature wields itself contains a check wielded by the president.

One key type of power and political process, controlled by parliament, is that of introducing nationwide legislation. This process is somewhat complicated. Leg-

islation is first introduced in the Duma by legislators or executive members (such as the president or prime minister), where it must pass two separate votes (and sometimes three, as for the federal budget). If the bill passes the second or third reading, then in up to five days it goes to the Federation Council. If the Federation Council accepts the bill or does not consider it within a 14-day period, the bill is considered approved and goes to the president for his consideration and signature. If the Federation Council rejects the bill, it returns to the Duma. If a two-thirds majority continues to support the bill, the Federation Council's rejection is waived; if the two-thirds majority is not reached, a "conciliation committee" is set up to find compromise revisions that would allow the bill to pass both the lower and the upper houses.

If the president signs the bill, it becomes law or policy. If the president rejects it, then the bill returns to the Duma, where it may be dropped or reconsidered, and the legislative process begins anew. However, a two-thirds majority in both houses may choose to override the president's veto. In this case, the president must either sign the bill or defy parliament's power. This, of course, could lead to conflict between the executive and legislative branches and possibly result in dissolution of parliament.

Parliament is not a rubber-stamp organization for executive power, even though executive power is extensive. As discussed above, parliament has the power of impeachment and no confidence, and it maintains control over the budget. Stronger yet is the open political space for debate and for controlling political rhetoric, which, coupled with a free and often critical media, gives parliament additional power and a degree of independence for opposing the executive and shaping the political agenda. However, these institutional tools exist only for a parliament with the will and the opportunity to use them.

In the 1993–95 period of elections, Yegor Gaidar's "Russia's Democratic Choice" came in second on the party ballot in 1993 but had the largest number of seats, owing to the strength of candidates in individual (nonparty list) elections. By 1995 Gaidar and his party suffered the wrath of the electorate, just barely failing to overcome the 5 percent barrier in the 1995 voting; only individual candidates survived to carry the Russia's Choice banner into the 1996 Duma.

Grigorii Yavlinskii promised an alternative reform party, but his party, Yabloko, could not improve on its base in St. Petersburg and Moscow. Partly this was because Yabloko did not move beyond the position of opposition to the government; in addition, Yavlinskii's Jewish roots and (however unfair) arrogant image did not help his party's fortunes. The heirs to Russia's Choice, Union of Right Forces, also inherited popular wrath against perceived corrupt market reforms—and, as for Yabloko, the leaders of Union of Right Forces (Boris Nemtsov, Irina Khakamada) were not among the more popular in the country. In the reform camp, Our Home Is Russia was organized as a party of power to support the president, but it never gained momentum. In 1995 the Congress of Russian Communities looked to be a nationalist competitor to the Liberal Democrats, helped by the leadership of popular general Aleksandr Lebed. However, this party did not overcome the 5 percent barrier in 1995.

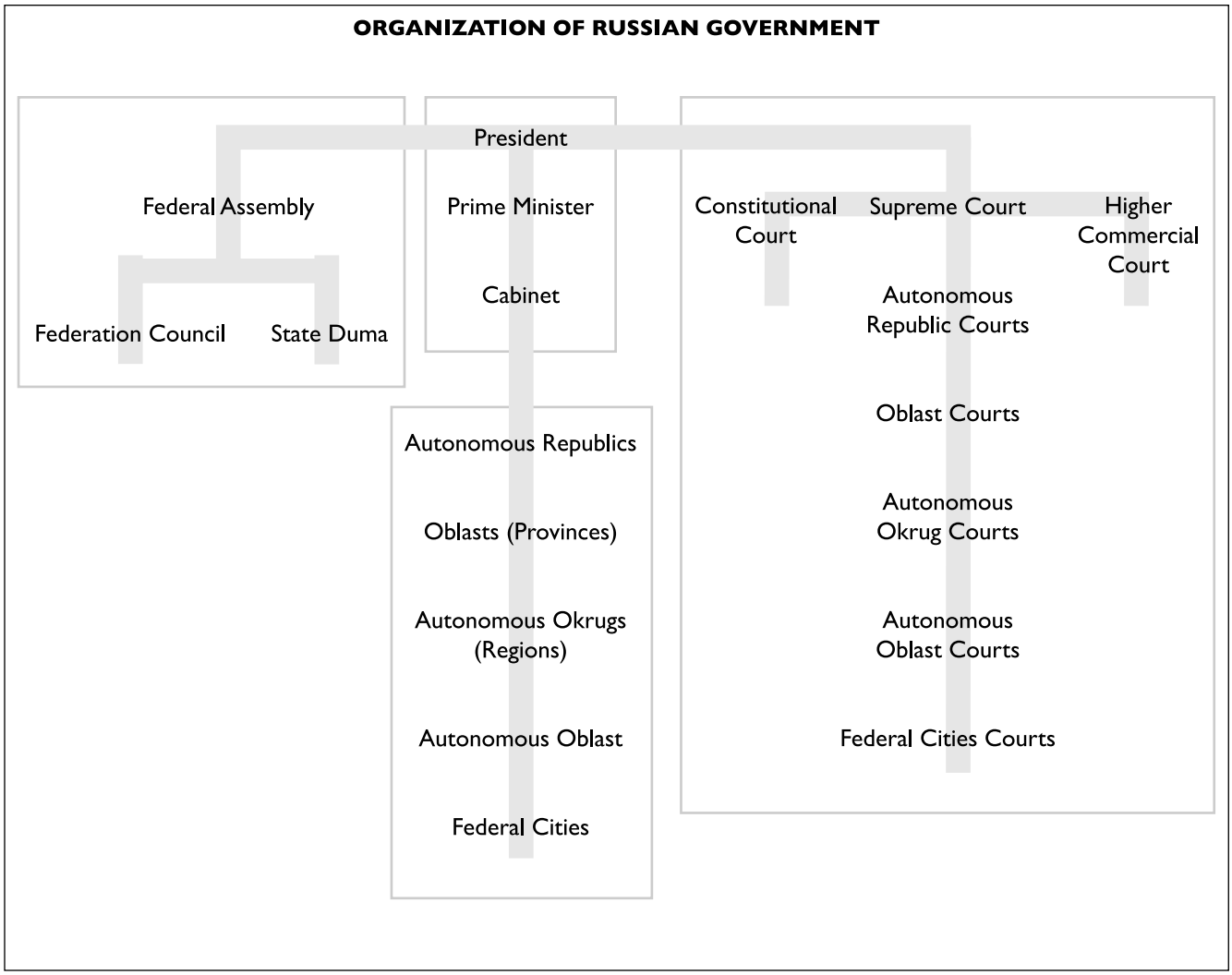
In 1995 right-wing pro-market parties were on the decline, and the Communists emerged triumphant. They looked poised to gain even more ground in 1998, as the ruble crash effectively ended Yeltsin's ability to govern Russia. Iurii Luzhkov's potential juggernaut was derailed by Putin and his Unity Party in 1999, and in 2003 Putin achieved domination of the Duma through United Russia.

ELECTIONS TO THE STATE DUMA, DECEMBER 7, 2003

Party	% votes	Seats
United Russia	37.6%	222
Communist Party of the Russian Federation	12.6%	51
Liberal-Democratic Party of Russia	11.5%	36
Motherland—People's Patriotic Union	9%	37
Yabloko	4.3%	4
Union of Right Forces	4%	3
Agrarian Party of Russia	3.6%	3
People's Party of the Russian Federation	1.2 %	16
Other (individual races)		67
Non-partisan		11

Note: Seats are based on party list percentage (over the 5% barrier) and individual races.

Source: www.electionworld.org



JUDICIARY

Like the American system of power, Russia's political system includes a third independent branch of government, the judiciary. While legislation and conflict have helped define the powers and structures of the first two branches, the third branch receives the least attention and, arguably, is the least developed and wields the least power of all three. While in theory independent, the judiciary finds itself under several constraints. At the uppermost level, the judiciary tends to follow the overall line of the executive, either agreeing with executive decisions or declining to rule on challenges made against executive power. At lower levels, judges are hampered by insufficient resources to handle a backlog of cases and by weak institutional means of enforcement of court decisions.

Further, one important constraint is the Soviet judicial legacy. Under the Soviet system, the judiciary was an arm of the state that, according to the tradition of civil law, applied the legal code in individual cases. The judiciary was under the strong influence of the Procuracy (office of the prosecutor), and the tradition of a dialectical examination in the court (where both prosecution and defense teams examine witnesses and evidence before an impartial jury) was foreign. Even today Russia follows the continental system of law rather than the Anglo-American common law system. In such a system, judges essentially act as interpreters of laws in the case of conflicts; because precedent does not play a formal role, conflicts must be argued anew each time they are brought up (although lawyers are known to copy the logic of successful arguments). Thus, the judiciary, especially at the local level, acts more as an interpretive arm of the bureaucracy, rather than as a branch of power that (with the power of precedent) can alter the meaning and mechanisms of legislation.

Finally, the Russian legal system awaits its own central charismatic figure able to use existing levers of power and rhetoric to carve out for the judicial system its own niche and authority.

At the highest level, Russia has three high courts. First is the Constitutional Court, for deciding issues related to violation of constitutional provisions. This court, which has 19 judges, decides whether legislation or presidential actions are in accordance with the constitution. Judges are recommended to the Federation Council, which then debates candidates and appoints (or denies) them. Already the Constitutional Court has heard several cases, the most important to date being the complaint about abuse of executive power in the president's ordering the invasion of Chechnya without prior consultation with or approval of parliament. In this case, the Constitutional Court managed to avoid criticizing the president by claiming that the action was in line with the constitution and that such a question of policy was outside the Court's competence. The Constitutional Court tends to put off difficult decisions on the basis of the Court's incompetence in dealing with particulars of cases.

At the top of the criminal court system is the second high court, the Supreme Court. Complaints against abuses by the state or against civil rights violations or criminal appeals may be carried through the tiers of the court system to this apex. The Supreme Court, as for the judicial system in general, has been undergoing changes, and procedures remain somewhat confusing. At present, the Supreme Court is staffed by 20 justices and 45 assessors. The Supreme Court is divided into three chambers, for civil, military, and criminal cases. Typically, three judges or one judge and two assessors hear and decide on cases.

The third high court is the Higher Commercial Court (or Supreme Court of Arbitration), for resolving economic disputes (especially contract disputes). This court is staffed by 70 individual justices whose work is organized into four subject areas: economic disputes, economic administration problems, review of decisions of lower arbitration courts that have legally binding force, and review of lower courts' decisions that have not gained legally binding force. Arbitration courts seldom use a jury system; instead, litigants (or their representatives) appear before one or several judges, who then apply relevant laws and decrees to decide. In addition to lower levels of normal arbitration courts there are special arbitration courts (*treteiskie*) that are organized along functional lines. Different arbitration courts include the interbank arbitration court, the arbitration commission of the Moscow interbank currency exchange, the interbank financial arbitration court (a nonstate court concerned with banking disputes), and the maritime arbitration court of the chamber of commerce of the Russian Federation. Such courts are specialized and in many cases (such as the interbank court) are only binding on a voluntary basis; appeals or challenges of decisions may go to the regular arbitration courts.

While courts have the power of review, their powers are restricted in three ways. First, procedures and regulatory laws have been in flux, making the powers of the courts and procedures of appeal uncertain. Second, the lack of professional lawyers and judges has weakened the court system by depriving it of those actors whose expertise is needed for the courts themselves to function. Also, actors in the political and economic realms still have not acclimated to a rule of law, in which the courts would resolve conflicts. Instead, they turn to such mechanisms as enforcement through the mafia or through use of the police without following those general procedures for defending the life and liberty of the accused. Sometimes offended parties will not use the court system because they see it as useless and a waste of time. Finally, when courts do reach decisions, *formal* enforcement mechanisms grounded in legal and civil procedures are lacking.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

As on the national level, government at the local level is split between the three branches. A governor heads each oblast, each republic, the Moscow region, and the St. Petersburg region. Initially governors were appointed from Moscow, but in 1996 and 1997 they were subject to direct election. However, Putin took back the power to appoint governors for the executive in 2004. Municipal and oblast legislatures are unicameral bodies, with the power to pass budgets, adopt legislation, and act as a check over the power of the local executive.

A serious political matter of the transitional period has been the conflict over control between the central and regional governments. While Russia is by name a "federation," in practice the central administration has tried to bind the powers of regional governors and bodies in economic and political decisions. For example, central authorities control the distribution of funds and privatization decisions, over the objections of local bodies who claim that regional expertise makes them better judges. In addition, privatization and elections have given local elites greater leverage vis-à-vis the center, and this often leads to disagreement and conflict. Federal agencies often want to sell off controlling pack-

ets of shares to single (usually Moscow-based) owners, whereas local elites and managers want increased local control over firms.

Most governors straddle the line between reformist and strong managerial policies—trying to attract investment and reform economies, on the one hand, and creating order and solidifying power, on the other. The majority of governors seem loyal to the central government, but within constraints, because the central administration punishes regional leaders for unpopular actions by ignoring regions when distributing resources or by trying to intrude on local decision making.

Crucial to conflict between the center and regions is that there are no formal institutionalized demarcations of power or rules for resolving conflicting interests and goals. The separation of powers between region and center is not clarified in the constitution; neither is there judicial power or judicial precedent for defining what powers each side has and how use of powers is related. Hence, center-region conflict will be a defining trait of Russian politics until, by rules or by force, the issue of demarcation and process is decided.

The Electoral System

According to law, the president's term is for five years, and thus elections are to be held every five years. However, whether this political practice has become regular and institutionalized is not clear. While Yeltsin did call the 1996 election (by legal requirement), the reality is that law does not have the same moral force as in the West. Until the last minute in 1996, observers were not sure whether the election would actually be held, given that Yeltsin could cancel it at the last minute (as he dissolved the Supreme Soviet in 1993). In 1996 democracy was not truly tested, since the officeholder (Yeltsin) won reelection and did not have to vacate his position. In short, the official version of the electoral system and procedure hinges on fragile agreements to play by the rules rather than on strong convictions and beliefs that "this is how the system always has worked and will work," rooted in decades of actual repeated practice.

A candidate must secure 1 million signatures supporting his candidacy before being allowed officially on the ballot. Once on the ballot, all candidates campaign until the last days before the elections, when political advertisements (and publication of opinion poll information) are forbidden. The two candidates with the highest vote totals continue to a second round of voting. In the second round, a winner is declared only if he receives a majority of votes. Voters have an option of voting against all candidates.

The Party System

From the rise of the first independent party (Pamiat') in 1988, political parties have come to form the backbone of post-Soviet political life. Since 1991 elections have served as an incentive for party formation; many parties change or disappear soon after the relevant election, from lack of success or splits. The types of parties vary from the Communist Party to more radical (left-wing) Communists–Workers' Russia, from the short-lived seminationalist Congress of Russian Communities to the more controversial and nationalist Liberal-Democratic Party of Russia (Zhirinovskii's party), from the monetarist reformers of Gaidar's Russia's Choice to Yavlinskii's neo-Keynesianist Yabloko, to the Beer-Lovers' Party (whose charter proclaimed democratically that "each person has the right to drink or not to drink"). Parties adhere to particular ideologies and try to appeal to those citizens who would be in the same camp. However, parties still have not developed entirely; party congresses are irregular and filled usually by the most dedicated or ambitious. With the exception of the Communist Party—the inheritor of a large following and tradition of congresses and organization—most parties are more alliances of individuals under a single tent. (Duma rules allow party members to break from their parties and enter different fractions after elections have been held and membership in the Duma determined.)

Defining whether a party or groups of parties are "left," "right," "centrist," and so on is rather confusing, especially since market reforms are both "right-wing" (pro-market and libertarian) and "liberal" (since they challenge the status quo), while "conservative" parties (against change) are "leftist" in that they support a strong state role in the economy and society. Most parties have come to be defined in terms of attitude toward economic policy and reforms (in particular, toward the role of the state). This leads to three groups: reformers (dedicated to continuing reforms, even radical pro-market reforms), centrists (concerned with pragmatic economic reform), and antimarket parties (who oppose economic reforms in their current guise). Finally, one will note that much discussion of these parties is in terms of economic policy: given the centrality of Russia's market transition and its effects on the everyday lives of ordinary Russians (more

than Russia's transition to democracy), economic and related social platforms tend to be the most developed and strongest parts of parties' rhetoric; politics usually enters a party's campaign as appeals to nationalism.

In the early 1990s reformist parties dominated, riding on support for market reform, Yeltsin's popularity, and positive opinion about the end of the Soviet Union. However, market reforms hurt many in the population and also gave birth to "New Russians" (rich entrepreneurs who made money off of speculative activities and flashed their wealth) and "oligarchs," super-rich Russians who used political connections to gain control of lucrative natural-resource firms. Support for reformists remained, but only among entrepreneurial, educated, and urban segments of the population. Beyond this, support shifted to the Communists and nationalist parties as protest votes or out of nostalgia for the Socialist welfare state and Russian geopolitical power and prestige. The second half of the 1990s constituted a standoff between Communists, dominating the Duma, and Yeltsin and his allies (some reformers, some opportunists). With the emergence of Putin, the centrist juggernaut United Russia has come to dominate the political scene to the detriment of right-wing and left-wing parties. This move to the center is less a sign of emerging political moderation among the population—nationalist pride persists, as does some desire for welfare support—than it is a sign of the increasing power of the Kremlin and Putin's technocratic, less ideological stance. (Yeltsin hoped to do the same with his "party of power," Our Home Is Russia. However, this party was led by the uncharismatic prime minister Viktor Chernomyrdin. Yeltsin also did not use such political tools as *kompromat* to hurt competing parties and support his vehicle for legislative control.) Thus, one should not mistake the move of Russian politics toward the center as a sign of moderation; rather, this centrism reflects the weakening importance of ideology to the real dynamics of Russian politics and its replacement with practical power politics and technocratic, rather than ideological, solutions to issues of economic and social development.

Major Political Parties

UNITED RUSSIA

(Edinaia Rossiia)

In 2004, for the first time in Russia's post-Soviet history, a party other than the Communists was the largest in the Duma: with 222 out of 450 seats in the lower house, United Russia was now the true legislative power. This party was born as Unity (Edinstvo), formed only a few months before the 1999 Duma elections, but on Putin's coattails and led by the efficient Minister of Civil Defense Sergei Shoigu, the party managed to gain 72 seats to become the second largest party in the lower house. Unity was driven less by an overarching ideology than manufactured support for Putin, and it included a host of different celebrities and national and regional political elites. Unity was also created as a vehicle for Putin to have influence within the Duma and to compete effectively against the threat from Iurii Luzhkov and Evgenii Primakov, the Fatherland–Our Russia alliance. By 2001 Putin and Luzhkov had reached an accord, and they merged their parties to form a super party, United Russia (originally called "The Union 'Unity' and Fatherland"). Their program placed United Russia in the center of the political spectrum. The basic demands of the party's program include a strong executive branch to bring political order; improved state efficiency and integrity; increased accountability of politicians; expanded civil society via strengthened political parties and their control over the state; defenses of civil rights and justice (vaguely understood); stimulation of economic development through reduced bureaucratic interference; rationalization of the tax system and continued structural reforms, especially in the financial system; and development of regional autonomy and of scientific and cultural work. United Russia's program is sufficiently vague and contains the required buzzwords ("development," "civil rights," and the like) to legitimate a wide range of reforms that Putin could push through, from increasing presidential control over parliamentary candidates to reforming welfare (e.g., lowering subsidies for household needs such as gas and electricity). In its call for a strong state, United Russia appears to support state-led development akin to that in East Asia, rather than the more laissez-faire economy of the Anglo-American world and assumed in the neoliberalism of Yegor Gaidar and the Union of Right Forces (see below).

In September 2004, in response to Putin's calls to increase centralization of power around the executive (to combat terrorism and corruption), United Russia began to expand its organizational bases in the regions, becoming a second arm of the "presidential vertical" stemming from the Kremlin.

COMMUNIST PARTY OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION

(Kommunisticheskaya Partiia Rossiiskoi Federatsii; KPRF)

Until the 21st century the KPRF was the largest party in the Duma, representing older citizens nostalgic or desperate for the security of the command economy and Soviet welfare or nationalist citizens who could not stomach the Liberal Democrats or felt there was no nationalist alternative to KPRF. Unlike similar parties in Eastern Europe, Russia's Communists have not tried to reform their image and turn the party into modern social democrats. Rather, they have been forced to maintain a symbolic link with the Soviet Communist Party to maintain the loyalty of the 20 percent of the Russian electorate who support them. This has created a dilemma and constraint for the Communists: change and they lose loyal support that makes up part of the electorate (but is dying out as this generation passes from the scene); do not change, and the Communists appear more anachronistic and less a serious contender for political power.

KPRF has a leftist, pro-welfare policy line. They stood opposed to privatization of industrial enterprises but did not fight that policy. They were more ardent against privatization of land, and Yeltsin had difficulties with such laws in the Communist-led Duma. Only in 2001 did Putin manage to pass privatization of land (which remains problematic). KPRF has called for social spending on welfare, subsidies for state-run industry and agriculture (i.e., collective farms, the *kolkhoz*), and provision of good pensions and free education. They have occasionally toyed with ideas of renationalization of certain firms and price controls, although these have been marginal ideas. KPRF has been critical of the war in Chechnya, although they also have a nationality tint in being critical of NATO expansion in Eastern Europe and supportive of Russian geopolitical ambitions.

Perennial presidential candidate and party leader Gennadyi Zyuganov could not expand his appeal beyond traditional Communist voters because of his lackluster image; 2004 candidate Nikolai Charitonov cut an even less impressive figure. If they are to survive, the Communists will have to "modernize" their image, although at present there is no sign of vibrant leaders waiting in the wings to make this happen.

LIBERAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF RUSSIA

(Liberal'no-Demokraticheskaya Partiia Rossii; LDPR)

LDPR stormed onto the political stage in 1993 as a nationalist protest vote against Communists and right-wing pro-reform parties. Led by the charismatic and sometimes nonsensical Vladimir Zhirinovskii, LDPR appealed to working-class nationalists stung by market reforms and Russia's loss of geopolitical prestige. Originally little known and then not taken seriously, a major investment in television advertising propelled LDPR to a shocking and unexpected electoral success in 1993. However, Zhirinovskii's bravado and antics lost him support, and LDPR's support halved by the 1995 elections—although most pundits expected LDPR would barely pass the 5 percent barrier, if at all. LDPR appeared to be losing popularity through the 1990s, winning fewer seats in the 1995 and 1999 Duma elections. However, siding with Putin and tapping into the smoldering anger by 2000, LDPR gained renewed electoral popularity in 2003.

LDPR's political program is not among the more specific, except as a vehicle for promoting Zhirinovskii. The general thrust is expanded state power and national prestige, including a more aggressive foreign policy, increased border controls to combat crime, and increased spending on the armed forces and social programs. Early statements by Zhirinovskii and LDPR elite were often xenophobic and bordered on the anti-Semitic, and Zhirinovskii blamed Jews and the United States (the CIA) for perestroika and the destruction of Soviet power. However, in the later 1990s Zhirinovskii toned down his rhetoric, and he jumped on Putin's bandwagon early, supporting the president's efforts to increase security and order, to clamp down on the Chechen rebellion, and to improve Russia's position vis-à-vis the West.

MOTHERLAND—PEOPLE'S PATRIOTIC UNION

(Rodina—Narodno-Patrioticheskii Soyuz)

Rodina combines two important streams of contemporary political ideology: moderate leftism (but short of Soviet Communism) and nationalism, expressed through the development of the regions, which have been mostly ignored by political parties that focus their attention on the Duma and Moscow politics. Founded in 1998 and originally called "Party of Russian Regions,"

Motherland now claims 5,000 members and representation in 47 regions. It sees the biggest issue facing Russia as the creation of a strong state that can guard the well-being of its people, and this can be done through democracy and moral improvement. It also claims to be a patriotic party, in that it holds that it is important not only to defend the Russian motherland but also to celebrate its heroic traditions and history. Motherland supports basic welfare in the regions and increased aid to children. It contends that this can be realized only by giving greater political power to the regions, rather than leaving decision making in Moscow alone.

UNION OF RIGHT FORCES

(Soyuz Pravykh Sil)

The demise of this party spells the symbolic end of original post-Soviet economic and political reform. In the 1993 elections Yegor Gaidar, architect of Yeltsin's initial reforms (e.g., price liberalization) in 1992–93, formed Russia's Choice (Vybor Rossii) as a vehicle for the reform movement. Yeltsin did not endorse this party, and Russia's Choice became a target for popular disaffection over the pain of reforms: voters often voted specifically *against* Gaidar's party (e.g., for the Communists or LDPR). Russia's Choice gained places in the Duma, although fewer than it had hoped. In 1995 the party was renamed Russia's Democratic Choice (Demokraticheskii Vybor Rossii) but gained even fewer seats. By 1999 Gaidar's light had faded and his party was defunct. The Union of Right Forces was set up as its heir, the new vehicle for pro-market, pro-democracy reforms and reformers—Anatolii Chubais, Boris Nemtsov, Irina Khakamada, and others from Yeltsin's pre-1998 cabinets—and smaller pro-market parties that had little chance of representation. With Putin's support, Union of Right Forces gained 29 seats in the Duma in 1999. However, Putin's own real vehicle, Unity (later renamed United Russia), became the real party of Putin's reforms, and in 2003 the Union of Right Forces gained only 4 percent of the votes and had to rely on individual races to gain three seats in the Duma. In contrast to United Russia's supremacy, the symbolism of the moment was not lost: Putin and a new political era had opened and the curtain had dropped (for the time being) on the ideology that had led Russia out of its Soviet shadow.

YABLOKO

Yabloko was once a liberal opposition in the Duma and the major alternative to politicians linked to Yeltsin. However, Yabloko's fortunes have soured since Putin's arrival, and in 2003 the party failed to overcome the 5 percent electoral barrier. Formed by Grigorii Yavlinski and allies, Yabloko began as a movement in 1993 and became a party by 1997. Yabloko has championed market and democratic reforms; however, its backers are more neo-Keynesianist and less enamored with radical shock therapy and the fiscal and privatization policies pursued by Yeltsin and his former advisers (e.g., Gaidar, Chubais). Yabloko has also been critical of Russian foreign policy, the war in Chechnya, and Putin's attempts to centralize power.

Minor Political Parties

Russia's political landscape is scattered with many small left-wing parties, from the more radically Communist National Bolshevik Party and Revolutionary Workers' Party to the more moderate Social Democratic Party of the Russian Federation and Liberal Russia. The Agrarian Party enjoyed a larger representation in the Duma before 1999, but since 1999 it has had to rely on individual races for its meager representation. The Agrarian Party was founded in 1993 as a vehicle for the interests of state farms and collective farms and to pressure the government to continue agricultural subsidies and protectionism. With 250,000 members and more than 3,000 branches in the regions, the Agrarian Party is among Russia's better-organized groups. Despite its relatively stronger grass roots, this party's power in the center is waning. The People's Party of the Russian Federation, a social-democratic party, gained 16 seats in 2003 through individual races. Toward the middle of the political spectrum, Women of Russia had a handful of seats in the 1990s, and the party drew attention to the plight of women, demanding better welfare services, and voicing criticism of the Chechen conflict. On the right, Forward Russia was founded by radical pro-market reformer Boris Fëdorov as a platform for his brand of reform policies.

Other Political Forces

Corruption of the rule of law, the lack of institutionalization of the rules of power, and the military are three vital issues that still threaten Russia's political stability.

The links among the mafia, corrupt bureaucrats, former red directors (Soviet-era managers of state enterprises), and private bankers have helped drain capital away from the Russian people and into the pockets of a select few who have the connections to those in power.

Further, this new elite has not been good at hiding its wealth and power, leading to growing disillusionment with market reforms and growing disgust with state officials and politicians. The visibility of the new power elite's influence was evident in the events of August 1998. Putin has put the oligarchs in their place, but perhaps at the price of democratic freedoms.

Organized crime and official corruption are only the most visible parts of a larger problem: creating the rule of law in Russia. Not only mafia bosses and high-placed bureaucrats skirt the letter and spirit of laws; average bureaucrats, businessmen, and citizens do so as well, either because others are doing it and force them to or because others are doing it and they do not want to lose out. From bribes paid to bank workers to policemen stopping cars on the street just to demand a fine (which often ends up in the policemen's pockets), Russian life is not so much structured by the rule of law as by avoidance of rules and laws. This raises the costs of doing business— and thus has scared off much foreign investment—and raises issues of justice; such problems play into the hands of authoritarian politicians who see a solution to corruption not through inculcating a culture of laws but through using the iron fist of repression.

Rules of power between the center and regions remain in flux. Here the conflict between the federal government and regional governments over sovereignty has not abated as local officials do not always share the views and policies emanating from Moscow. The lack of democratic traditions in center-regional relations has made center-region issues (such as taxes and investment) points of contention. Putin's use of *kompromat* brought some regional governors back into line. His reintroduction of presidential appointment of governors has solved the problem of center-region conflict but at the cost of local autonomy.

Finally, Russia's army is one of conscripts, and recent changes have tightened the loopholes through which many 17-year-old boys evaded the dreaded service. Officer and soldier alike are underpaid (or unpaid for long stretches). Officers' quarters are scant and privileges shrinking. The prestige of service is at an all-time low. Soldiers are poorly trained, and their military lives are miserable—any footage of army life in Chechnya, with soldiers confused from the fighting, often disorganized, and with few, poor-quality provisions (and sometimes without provisions), certainly testifies to why morale is so low and anger so high in the military. (Morale and material conditions were so bad that experts believe they accounted for the 500 suicides, by officers, in 1996 alone.) Finally, soldiers are subject to abuse (physical, mental, sexual) from other soldiers and from officers, leading to a large number of AWOL cases and even injuries and deaths. Before they were dismissed from the administration, Lebed and then various members of the armed forces warned that the army was on the brink of rebellion. Without an injection of "professionalism" and money, Russia's armed forces, especially its army, will continue to deteriorate; the result may be military rebellion or simply a refusal to fight when called on by those in command—unless the commander is a popular figure such as Lebed.

National Prospects

Nikolai Gogol's famous quip "Russia, whither thou flyest?" is as pertinent today as it was 150 years ago. Russian voters rejected a return to the past in July 1996; however, just what from the past they rejected is unclear. A vote for Yeltsin, then, was not support for economic reform or an endorsement of Yeltsin's tenure as president but rather a decision to avoid repeating the political terror that accompanied Communist rule.

Russia's economy remains problematic. Oil income has aided economic growth since 2000, but it is unclear whether this is leading to real structural reform and laying the foundation for vibrant capitalism. Too many firms survive in a shadow economy of barter and tax evasion. Laws remain too confused and convoluted, and corruption and incompetence among state officials remains rampant. The banking sector requires further reform, and in the summer of 2004 there was a mini-crisis among several major Russian banks. Not that Russia's economy is a total doom-and-gloom scenario. Small private firms have sprouted, absorbing workers unemployed or underemployed and providing better wages paid on time. Russia's natural resources hold vast potential for income; with oil and mineral-extraction firms in their financial-industrial groups, banks may be able to bring in the funds for restructuring and retooling that will help Russia's economy rebound. However, the complete transition to the market—meaning new institutions, new organizational structures, and new economic practices and culture—will take at least 10 years, if not longer.

Russia's political system continues to take shape. While he created the oligarchs, who were willing to undercut democracy through shady deals, Boris Yeltsin still followed the rules and trappings of democracy. Perhaps his biggest failure as a democrat was picking a successor to defend his interests rather than let the electorate decide his successor in fair elections. Yeltsin's strategy was to trade support for power: Duma represen-

tatives and regional governors had their perks and ran their own bailiwicks in exchange for supporting Yeltsin's right to rule. As a result, the central government could not always enforce its own laws in the small empires of local elites. Putin's attempts to centralize power might be the start of real improvement in the struggle for order, stability, and the reduction of corruption and crime—but this type of technocratic solution often hinders prospects for democratic development. The last four years have seen freedom traded for order, and it is uncertain whether Russia will go the way of post-Socialist countries such as Poland and the Czech Republic, toward democracy and inclusion in the West, or in the direction of Belarus and Ukraine, toward authoritarianism and centralized political control.

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REPUBLIC OF RWANDA

(République Rwandaise)

(Repubulika y'u Rwanda)

By Christopher J. Lee, Ph.D.



Located in central Africa, the Republic of Rwanda is bordered by Uganda to the north, Tanzania to the east, the Democratic Republic of the Congo to the west, and Burundi to the south. Though small in territory, it has a high population density with the current composition of the population being 84 percent Hutu, 15 percent Tutsi, and 1 percent Twa. It existed as a political entity for centuries prior to the colonial period, when it then became part of German East Africa in 1899 and later was administered by Belgium after World War I under a League of Nations mandate. Postcolonial independence was achieved on July 1, 1962. Its capital is Kigali.

The current government was established in 1994 following the infamous genocide there, and it has been influenced primarily by the Tutsi-led Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF). A constitution was adopted in May 1995 based on principles of the RPF, the 1991 constitution, and the 1993 Arusha Accords, which were intended to resolve ethnic tensions between Hutus and Tutsis in the region. This constitution provided for an RPF-led transition government for a period of four years. This transition period was extended for another four years in 1999. A new constitution in 2003 marked the end of this period. Nevertheless, Rwanda remains a nation-state in transition, recovering from the political and social impact of the 1994 genocide that resulted in the estimated deaths of 1 million Rwandans over a period of a hundred days. A population approximately twice that number also became refugees.

MODERN HISTORY

Ethnic strife between the Tutsi minority and the Hutu majority historically led to a series of conflicts before 1994. Prior to independence in 1962, severe violence occurred in 1959 between the then-ruling Tutsis and the Hutu majority. Ethnic violence again erupted shortly after independence in December 1963, with an estimated 20,000 Tutsis killed by Hutus. During the early 1970s ethnic conflict reemerged with Major General Juvénal Habyarimana leading a coup in 1973 to establish the Second Republic. Habyarimana became president and suspended all other political activity. In July 1975 the National Revolutionary Movement for Development (MRND) was established as the ruling party. In December 1978 a new constitution was approved that concluded military rule. Despite a coup attempt in April 1980, elections to the National Assembly were held in 1981 and 1983. Habyarimana was reelected president in 1983.

During the 1980s Rwanda faced the difficult situation of repatriating Rwandan refugees, mostly Tutsi, arriving from Uganda. Rwandans were being persecuted in Uganda, thus instigating an outflow of refugees in the tens of thousands. Though still firmly in power, having been reelected again as the sole presidential candidate in 1988, Habyarimana faced an increasingly difficult national situation. Economic conditions worsened as a result of increasing population pressures. The economic plight, when combined with the refugee problem, compelled consideration

of political reform. In September 1990 Habyarimana established the National Unity Commission (CNS) to work in this direction.

In October 1990 an invasion of approximately 10,000 guerrillas from Uganda took place, organized and led by the Tutsi-controlled Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF). Conflict continued through 1991 and 1992, with a cease-fire reached in July 1992. Political reform pursued by the CNS had culminated in a new constitution in June 1991. In April 1992 a coalition government was set up consisting of five parties. These political developments in turn created new demands from the RPF, namely, that it have a direct role in the new government. Negotiations between the government and the RPF broke down in February 1993, culminating in violence. In August 1993 a formal peace accord was signed in Arusha, Tanzania, by Habyarimana and Colonel Alex Kanyarengwe of the RPF, with promises of RPF participation in elections and a new transitional government.

In January 1994 disputes again arose regarding the political composition of the new government. These disputes continued until April 6 when Habyarimana was killed in a suspicious airplane crash. Civil order collapsed. Political opponents and Tutsis faced the brunt of the Hutu-led backlash of retaliation by violence. On April 8 Théodore Sindikubwabo became interim president on the basis of the 1991 constitution. This succession drew criticism from the political opponents. The RPF resumed military activity shortly thereafter. The escalating violence—now a civil war—proved catastrophic. With the Rwandan military and Hutu civilians, operating under a slogan of "Hutu Power," attacking Tutsis, and the RPF responding with similar violence, an estimated 500,000 Rwandans were killed during a one-month period, and an estimated 2 million became refugees. Despite UN and French attempts to stabilize the situation, violence continued during the spring of 1994, with the total mortality reaching genocidal proportions, estimated at 1 million. The majority of the victims were Tutsis. However, the RPF gradually gained military and political control of the country. This power shift led to an estimated 2 million Hutu refugees fleeing from violent retribution.

On July 19, 1994, the RPF announced the establishment of a new government of national unity with Pasteur Bizimungu, a Hutu, as president. The government aimed at reestablishing civil order through democratic initiatives, economic revitalization, and the repatriation of refugees. Difficulties were faced on each of these fronts, though. In the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Hutu refugees were dying in camps at a peak rate of 2,000 per day with the total mortality reaching to the tens of thousands. A persistent fear of violent retribution if they were to return existed. The new government promised safety and legal action against those who committed ethnic violence, though the judicial system was in collapse. A transitional legislature was formed in December 1994. A new constitution was adopted in May 1995.

In November 1995 the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda began the process of investigating specific incidents of murder during the genocide. In December 1996 trials began in Rwandan courts with 108 convictions being passed the following year. The International Criminal Tribunal found Jean Kambanda, former Rwandan prime minister, guilty of genocide in May 1998, its first verdict. Another goal of the international community that has been difficult to meet is arms control in the region, specifically the disarming of Hutu militias who threaten raids from the DRC. Despite efforts at repatriation, including forced deportations from the DRC in August 1995 and an attempt in February 1996, the refugee problem persists with thousands living in countries surrounding Rwanda, the majority in the DRC. In 1997 Rwanda played a direct role in the overthrow of Mobutu Sese Seko in what was then Zaire (now DRC). Rwanda continues to exert influence on the new government in the DRC.

The System of Government

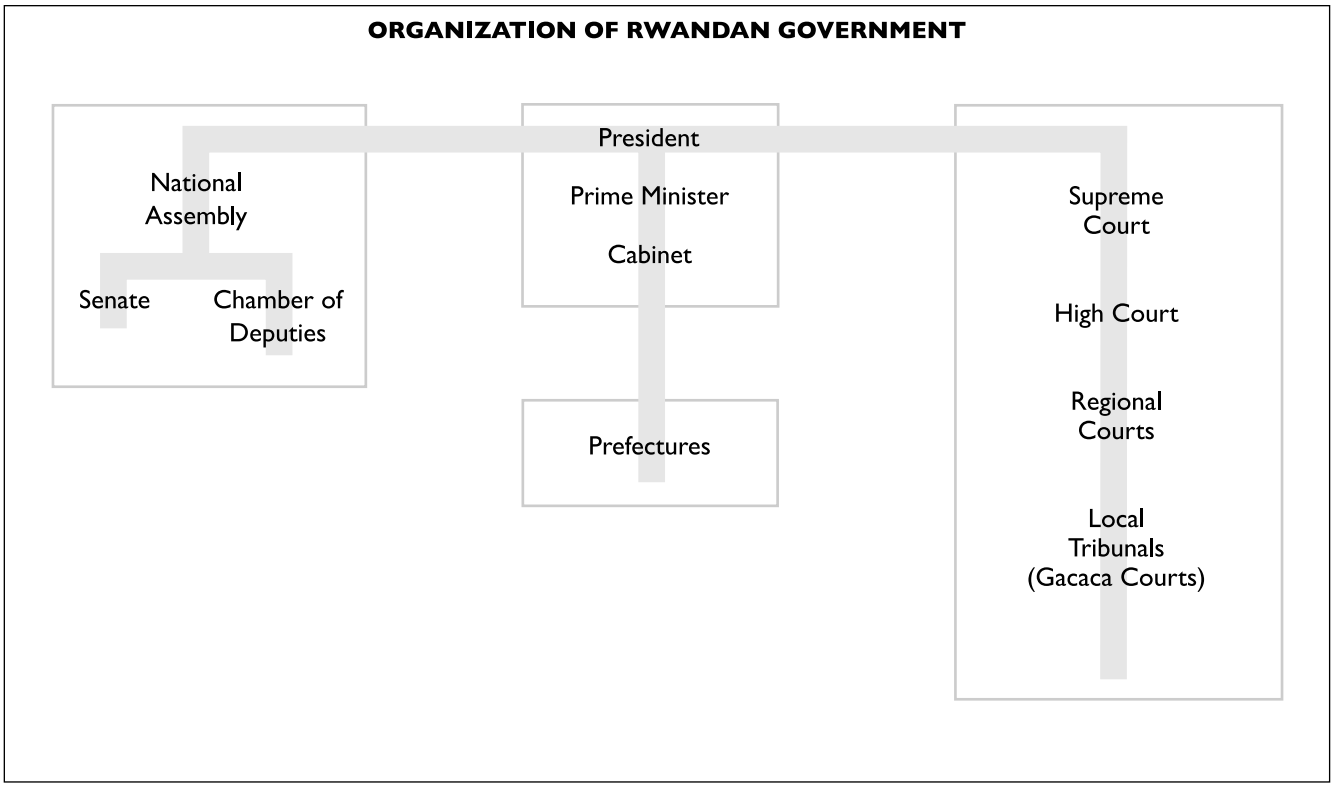
Rwanda is a unitary republic with a constitutional government based on a constitution adopted in May 2003.

EXECUTIVE

The 2003 constitution provides for the election of a president by universal suffrage for adults 18 years of age and older. The office of president is limited to two terms of seven years each. The president is responsible for appointing a cabinet and a prime minister to administer the cabinet.

LEGISLATURE

The legislative branch of government consists of a bicameral National Assembly with a Senate and Chamber of Deputies, respectively. Membership to these bodies is designed by law to reflect the demographic



diversity of the country, thus avoiding the singular control of the government by any single ethnic group. The Senate has 26 seats, 12 of which are elected by local councils and eight appointed by the president. The remaining six seats are allocated to other political groups and organizations. Senate members serve eight-year terms. One third of the total members must be women. The Chamber of Deputies has 80 members, with 53 seats allocated to parties according to proportional representation of the total electoral vote. The remaining seats are designed to provide additional diversity to the composition of the government: 24 seats are reserved for women elected by local provincial councils, two seats are for representatives of the National Youth Council, and the last seat is for a representative from the Federation of the Associations of the Disabled. Members of the Chamber of Deputies serve five-year terms.

JUDICIARY

The judiciary system in Rwanda is based on Belgian and German law, as well as local customary law. The Supreme Court serves as the highest court in the land and has 14 judges appointed for life by the Senate. A high court exists below the Supreme Court, with lesser courts existing at the regional level. In addition to this court system, a second system of local tribunals—the "Gacaca" courts—has been recognized as a traditional, grassroots means of addressing and expediting the process of justice and reconciliation following the 1994 genocide. Similarly, the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, sponsored by the United Nations, has sought to bring individuals who committed acts of genocide to justice, in order to aid local transition and reconciliation as well as support and achieve the principles of international humanitarian law.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

There are 12 administrative districts, or prefectures, each with local governments. They are Kigali, Umutara, Ruhengeri, Butare, Byumba, Kigali Rurale, Cyangugu, Gikongoro, Gisenyi, Gitamara, Kibungo, and Kibuye.

The Electoral System

Universal suffrage for adults over the age of 18 is provided for by the 2003 constitution. The electoral

system is generally designed to prevent ethnic conflict by making illegal parties that are ethnically or racially exclusive in membership.

The Party System

With a multiparty democratic system in place, there are at least seven political parties that have notable constituencies in the country. These parties are intended by law to have open membership, regardless of ethnic background. In an effort at reconciliation, they have formed a Government of National Unity. However, of the seven parties, the Rwandan Patriotic Front remains dominant.

Major Political Parties

RWANDAN PATRIOTIC FRONT (RPF)

Despite efforts at greater political inclusion, the RPF, led by Rwandan president Paul Kagame, remains the key political party in Rwanda. It has been in power since 1994. Kagame was reelected president by popular vote in 2003. Of the 53 Chamber of Deputies seats up for voting in 2003, the RPF won 33.

Minor Political Parties

Minor political parties that have participated in the Government of National Unity include the Social Democratic Party, the Liberal Party, the Islamic Democratic Party, the Democratic Popular Union of Rwanda, the Rwandan Socialist Party, and the Centrist Democratic Party.

Other Political Forces

Two banned parties of note include the Republican Democratic Movement and the Party for Democratic Renewal. Both have been accused of maintaining an exclusionary ethnic stance. From a regional and international standpoint, outside observers continue to put pressure on political leaders to avoid further conflict and to expedite processes of justice and reconciliation. Neighboring countries, such as the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), also continue to be involved in the internal politics of Rwanda, and vice versa, through the status of Rwandan refugees in the eastern part of the DRC.

National Prospects

The genocide of 1994 and the threat of further ethnic violence remain the defining features of contemporary Rwandan politics. Overall, regional and internal stability remain ongoing issues. A key aspect of this situation is whether justice and a sense of reconciliation will be achieved through the efforts of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda and local "Gacaca" courts. Economically, Rwanda has made progress in rebuilding its economy to pre-1994 levels.

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FEDERATION OF SAINT KITTS AND NEVIS

By Thomas D. Anderson, Ph.D.
Revised by Edward Dew, Ph.D.



The Federation of St. Kitts and Nevis is the smallest state in the Americas, with an area of 269 square kilometers, a third of which is Nevis. It is an island federation in the Leeward Islands west of Antigua. It has a population of 38,958 (2005 est.), of which fewer than 10,000 live on the sister island of Nevis. Most of the inhabitants of the two islands are black and English-speaking, with an annual population growth rate of 0.38 percent and a literacy rate of 97 percent.

Settled by the British first in 1623, the islands became a three-island colony (Anguilla-Nevis-St. Kitts) in 1816. The first political party, the Labour Party (LP), was formed in 1932 by Robert Llewelyn Bradshaw, who led the movement toward independence. The country joined the brief West Indian Federation (1958–62) and then in 1967 received the status of an Associate State under British rule. The separation of Anguilla from the triad occurred formally in 1980, and on September 19, 1983, St. Kitts and Nevis became a single "sovereign democratic federal state."

The System of Government

St. Kitts and Nevis is a constitutional monarchy with a unicameral legislature.

EXECUTIVE

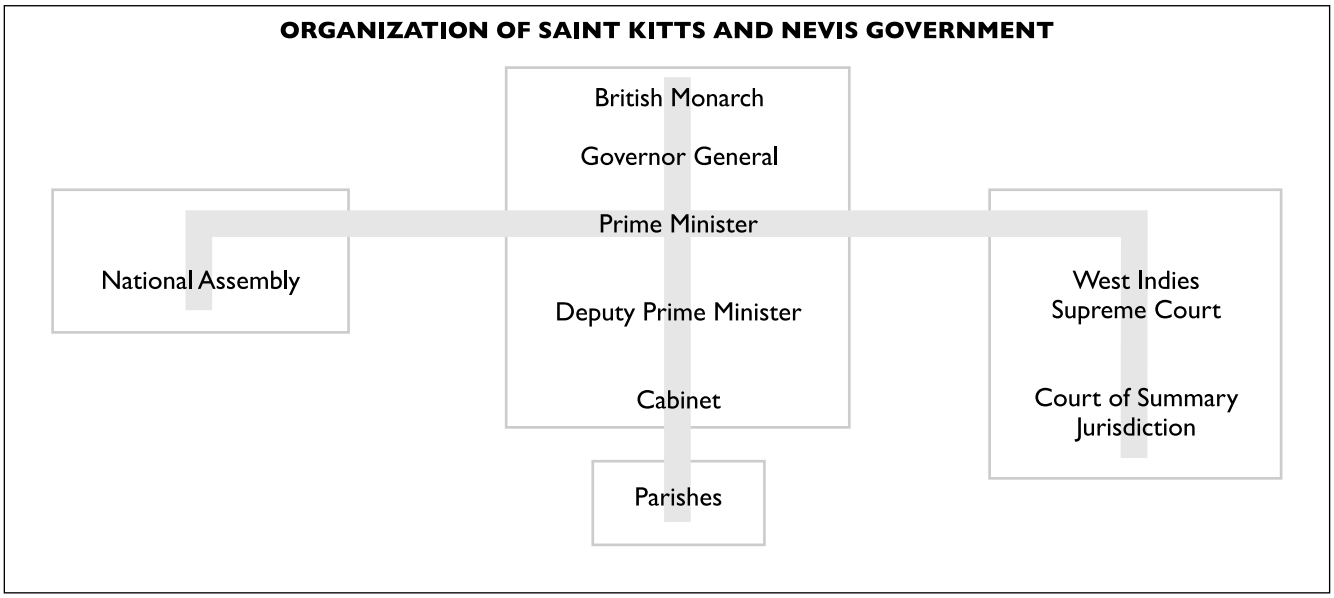
The formal head of state is the British monarch who names an island native as governor-general, who in turn appoints as prime minister the leader of the parliamentary majority. The prime minister holds actual executive power and names cabinet ministers from elected members of the legislature. The governor-general also appoints, with approval of the ruling coalition, a deputy governor-general for Nevis.

LEGISLATURE

The unicameral legislature is the National Assembly, which consists of 11 elected members from single-district constituencies and three members appointed by the governor-general. All serve five-year terms. In federalist fashion Nevis has its own island assembly of five elected and three appointed members. A crucial provision is that the Nevis assembly has the right to order political secession from St. Kitts with approval of two-thirds of the National Assembly and endorsement of two-thirds of the voters in an island referendum. (This entitlement is not provided the people of St. Kitts itself.)

JUDICIARY

The highest court is the West Indies Supreme Court (in St. Lucia), composed of a High Court and a Court of Appeals. A judge from the High Court resides on St. Kitts and has jurisdiction over a Court of Summary Jurisdiction. Decisions may be appealed to the Privy Court in London.



REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

St. Kitts is divided into nine parishes and Nevis into five parishes for purposes of local administration.

The Electoral System

Suffrage is universal for citizens age 18 and older.

The Party System

The nearly 30-year-rule of the Labour Party was broken in 1980 when the People's Action Movement (PAM) and the Nevis Reformation Party (NRP) formed a coalition government after winning five of nine seats in the National Assembly. The coalition government under Kennedy Alphonse Simmonds, the PAM leader, led the nation to independence in 1983. The following year the PAM/NRP coalition increased its majority in the National Assembly, winning six of eight seats on St. Kitts and all three seats on Nevis. It lost one seat on Nevis in 1989 as the coalition retained power.

The election of 1993 yielded four seats each to PAM and the St. Kitts-Nevis Labour Party (SKNLP), even though the SKNLP won 54 percent of the vote while PAM received only 41 percent. In a new election in 1995 SKNLP won seven seats out of 11 in the National Assembly, ending 15 years of government by the PAM. Labour leader Dr. Denzel Douglas was installed as head of a new government. In the 2000 parliamentary elections, the SKNLP was able to gain one additional seat, thus holding eight out of 11 elected parliamentary seats, but in the 2004 elections the SKNLP's seat total dropped back to seven. Douglas remained prime minister.

Major Political Parties

ST. KITTS–NEVIS LABOUR PARTY (SKNLP)

The SKNLP was founded in 1932. In the 1990s it emerged as the most powerful party in the federation. It won seven of the 11 seats up for voting in the 2004 parliamentary elections.

PEOPLE'S ACTION MOVEMENT (PAM)

The PAM was founded in 1964 and emerged as a leading party in the 1980s, when it joined a coalition with the Nevis Reformation Party. The coalition held the majority of seats in the National Assembly throughout the 1980s but gradually ceded power to the SKNLP in the 1990s. The PAM won one seat in the 2004 elections.

Minor Political Parties

Among the other political parties in St. Kitts and Nevis are the Concerned Citizens' Movement, a coalition

that won two seats in the 2004 elections; the Nevis Reformation Party, which won one seat in the 2004 elections; the People's Democratic Party; the United National Movement; the Progressive Liberal Party; and the United People's Party.

Other Political Forces

There are no other political forces in St. Kitts and Nevis.

National Prospects

Although exports of sugar, electrical products, and clothing are important, the major economic sector is tourism. A new Marriott Resort Hotel (capacity 642 rooms) has provided employment for over 600 Kittitians and an important ripple effect for the economy in general. Short-stay visits from cruise ships remain high as well. Hurricanes in 1998 and 1999 did a considerable amount of islandwide damage, but new and improved berthing facilities were quickly established. St. Kitts enjoyed a visit by the *Queen Mary II* on her maiden voyage in 2004. Nationalization of sugar lands and the central mill, combined with a British subsidy for production, has kept St. Kitts relatively competitive. World Trade Organization attempts to liberalize agricultural trade in 2004 may hurt the industry, while efforts at agricultural diversification are at a relative standstill.

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SAINT LUCIA

By Thomas D. Anderson, Ph.D.
Revised by Soeren Kern

St. Lucia is a small (610 square kilometers) mountainous island country that lies in the Windward Islands between Martinique and St. Vincent. Its capital is Castries. St. Lucia's population is predominantly of African and mixed African-European descent, with small East Indian and European minorities. English is the official language, although some French patois is used in rural areas. Nearly 70 percent of the population is Roman Catholic. The population of about 166,000 (2005 est.) is evenly divided between urban and rural areas, although Castries contains more than one-third of the population. Literacy is about 90 percent. Nearly 30 percent of the island is cropland, with two-thirds in tree crops, mainly bananas grown for export. The only seaports are Castries in the northwest and Vieux Fort on the southern tip. There are two airports, one of which can accommodate modern passenger jets.

The System of Government

St. Lucia is a constitutional monarchy with a bicameral legislature.

EXECUTIVE

The chief of state is the British monarch, represented by an appointed governor-general who is an island native. Effective executive powers are held by a prime minister who is the leader of the majority party in the House of Assembly and appointed by the governor-general and a vice president appointed by the prime minister. Most duties are performed by cabinet ministers, appointed by the prime minister from elected members of the House.

LEGISLATURE

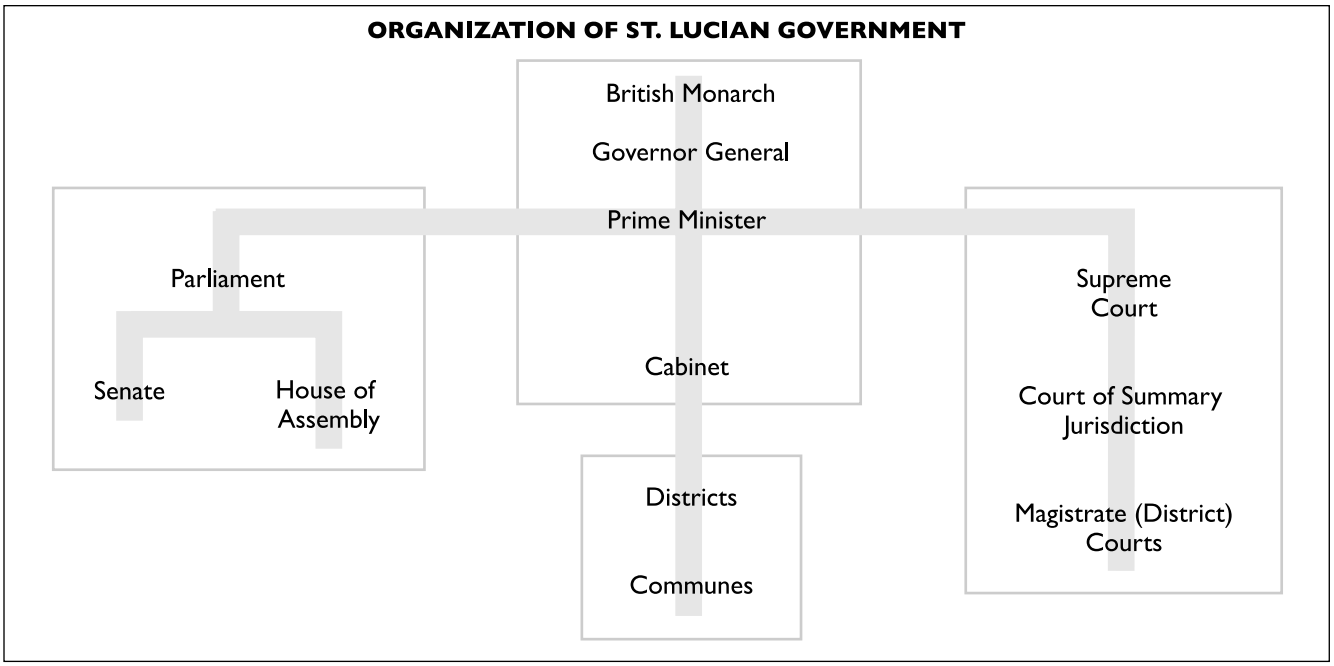
St. Lucia has a bicameral legislature consisting of an 11-member Senate and a 17-seat House of Assembly. Senate members are appointed by the governor-general, six on the advice of the prime minister, three on the advice of the leader of the opposition, and two after consultation with religious, economic, and social groups. House members are elected from single-member constituencies for five-year terms.

JUDICIARY

The legal system is based on English common law. The high courts consist of a Supreme Court and a Court of Summary Jurisdiction. The former is the Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court, which is centered in St. Lucia with single judges normally resident on the different islands represented. Appeals that go beyond the island courts are sent to the Privy Council in London.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

St. Lucia is divided into 11 administrative districts, or quarters, and there are also 20 rural community councils.



The Electoral System

All adults age 18 or over are eligible to vote in parliamentary elections.

The Party System

Local representation began in 1832 with a legislative council whose members were landowners appointed by the Crown. Formation of the St. Lucia Representative Government Association in 1919 led to the constitution of 1924, which added three elected (landowner) representatives to the legislative council. The amended constitution of 1936 raised the elected proportion of representatives from 3 of 13 to 5 of 12 members. Public pressure for greater popular participation increased following formation of the St. Lucia Workers' Union in 1939. It was a Caribbean-style "general union" that by 1949 had over 3,500 members. Universal adult suffrage (now 18 years or older) was provided by the constitution of 1951, which also established a majority of elected members and membership of these in the cabinet. In 1959 a cabinet form was adopted, with a chief minister appointed by the Crown. St. Lucia was a member of the West Indies Federation (1958–62), became an Associated State in 1967, and was granted independence from Britain in February 1979. Party politics began with suffrage in 1951 and, despite an East Indian minority, ethnicity was never an issue.

Major Political Parties

ST. LUCIA LABOUR PARTY (SLP)

The SLP was the first political party, under the leadership of Allen Lewis (who was appointed the first governor-general upon independence); it won the first election and three subsequent ones and won 12 of 17 seats in the House in the first postindependence election.

Its lowest point was in the early 1970s under Kenneth Foster, who then was replaced by Allan Louisy. Louisy presided over a party divided into moderate and radical wings, the latter led by George Odlum. Louisy resigned in 1981, and the SLP won 9 of 17 seats. However, the SLP soon lost a vote of confidence and won just two seats in the subsequent election. The SLP then remained in opposition to the United Workers' Party (UWP) of John Compton for 18 years until the May 1997 election, in which it won the most decisive victory in St. Lucian (and perhaps Caribbean) history by a 16-to-1 seat margin. The leader was Dr. Kenny Anthony, a former head of the teachers' union who in 1979 was the youngest-ever senator, an appointment that required a constitutional change. In the December 2001 elections the SLP won 14 of the 17 available seats, with Anthony serving another term as prime minister.

UNITED WORKERS' PARTY (UWP)

Politics in St. Lucia was once dominated by the UWP, which until 1997 had governed the country

for all but three years since independence in 1979. The UWP was formed in 1964 by John George Melvin Compton from a merger of the National Labour Movement (NLM) and the People's Progressive Party (PPP). Prior to independence Compton had served as chief minister and premier and was prime minister from 1982 to 1996, when he handed over leadership to Dr. Vaughn Lewis. Compton was one of a group of longtime West Indies political figures who played major roles in the pre- and postindependence period. As a leader he had a record of progressive achievement, as well as some taints of financial scandal. Dr. Lewis is regarded as more of a technocrat than a creative or populist leader. Arsene James, a retired school principal and a regional UWP representative, led the three-member parliamentary opposition following the 2001 elections.

Minor Political Parties

Among the smaller parties, none of which have representation in parliament, are the National Alliance or NA (previously known as Progressive Labour Party, or PLP), whose leader is George Odlum; the Saint Lucia Freedom Party or SFP, whose leader is Martinus Francois; and Sou Tout Apwe Fete Fini or STAFF, whose leader is Christopher Hunte.

Other Political Forces

There are no other political forces in St. Lucia.

National Prospects

As prime minister, Anthony has brought about a major shakeup of the administrative leadership in St. Lucia. It can be assumed that this includes a program to raise the proportion of literacy. Economically, two sectors are predominant: tourism and banana exports. In addition to two harbors and two airports, the infrastructure for tourism is the most advanced in the Windward Islands and the industry has been thriving. St. Lucia also produces half of the bananas of the five-island cluster. However, both price declines and projected changes in marketing arrangements with the European market—which take effect in 2006—have stimulated efforts to add other crops to the export sector.

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SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES

By Thomas D. Anderson, Ph.D.
Revised by Soeren Kern

St. Vincent is a small (340 square kilometers) volcanic island that lies between St. Lucia and Grenada in the Windward Islands. The Grenadines are tiny islands that trail southward and are divided politically with Grenada. The country was granted independence by the British on October 27, 1979. Its capital is Kingston, a port city on the southwest coast. The population is about 117,000 (2005 est.). Ethnically the population is largely black, with lesser numbers of whites, East Indians, and some of the few remaining Caribs in the Caribbean. English is the official and most widely spoken language, with some French patois in use in rural areas. The literacy rate is 98 percent. Although the island is dominated by the periodically active La Soufrière volcano (its crater is one of the widest in the world), nearly half the area is planted to crops, of which about a fourth are tree crops.

The System of Government

St. Vincent is a constitutional monarchy with a unicameral legislature.

EXECUTIVE

The chief of state is the British monarchy, who appoints an island native as governor-general. The head of state is a president elected by the House of Assembly, but effective executive power is exercised by a prime minister, the leader of the elected majority in the House. The prime minister names a deputy prime minister and cabinet ministers who direct most government activities.

LEGISLATURE

The legislature is a unicameral House of Assembly. Of its 21 seats, 15 are elected representatives and 6 are senators appointed by the governor-general, 4 on the advice of the prime minister and 2 on the advice of the leader of the opposition. The parliamentary term of office is five years, although the prime minister may call elections at any time.

JUDICIARY

The legal system is based on English common law. There are a Supreme Court and a Court of Appeals. The latter is the Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court, based in St. Lucia but with a member usually in residence on St. Vincent. Appeals beyond the local courts are sent for final decision to the Privy Council in London.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

There is no local government in St. Vincent, and all six parishes are administered by the central government.

The Electoral System

Members of the House are elected by plurality vote in single-member constituencies. There is universal suffrage for citizens 18 years old or older.

The Party System

Expansion of the franchise from the colonial, planter-only vote began in the early 1920s when a group of black businessmen led by Robert Anderson and Ebenezer Duncan formed the St. Vincent Representative Government Association. Trade unions were treated by authorities as conspiracies until the West Indian Trade Union Ordinance of 1950. Political parties began with the granting of universal suffrage in 1951. Although in the first general election of 1951, all candidates ran as independents, in 1952 the People's Political Party (PPP) was formed, headed by Ebenezer Theodore Joshua. Soon after came the St. Vincent Labour Party (SVLP), which became the main rival. Others appeared in the 1970s, with many consolidations and rearrangements since St. Vincent became an Associated State in 1969, two years later than its neighboring islands because of political turmoil.

Major Political Parties

NEW DEMOCRATIC PARTY (NDP)

Between the 1984 and 2001 elections, politics in St. Vincent were dominated by the NDP. The NDP was formed in 1974 when James Mitchell, who had served as agricultural minister under Cato from 1967 to 1972, resigned and was expelled from the SVLP. At independence, the NDP was the second largest party, with especially strong support in the Grenadines. In the 1989 elections the NDP won an unprecedented sweep of all 15 House of Assembly seats. The party won a majority in the 1994 election with 10 of 15 seats. Sir James Mitchell became prime minister and his son, James Mitchell, served as party head. In 1998 Prime Minister Mitchell and the NDP were returned to power for an unprecedented fourth term but only with a slim margin of eight seats to seven seats for the United Labour Party (ULP). In 2001, however, the NDP lost its majority to the ULP, winning only three of 15 House seats. In the 2005 elections the NDP once again finished second to the ULP with only three of 15 House seats.

UNITED LABOUR PARTY (ULP)

This party came into existence as a result of the merging of several parties in the mid-1990s, including the St. Vincent Labour Party (SVLP) and the Movement for National Unity (MNU). Headed by Vincent Beache, it served as the opposition heading into the elections of July 1999. In March 2001 the ULP, led by Ralph Gonsalves, assumed power after winning 12 of the 15 seats in parliament. In 2005 the ULP again won 12 seats, and Gonsalves remained prime minister.

Minor Political Parties

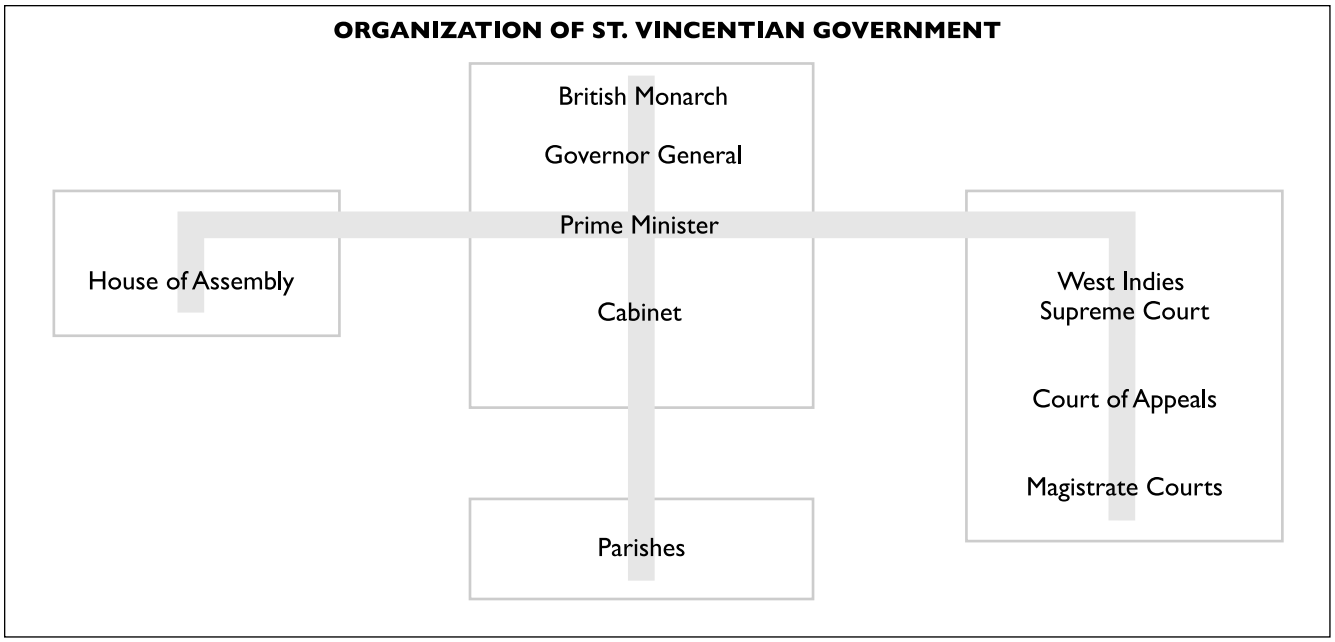
Among the country's minor parties, none of which have representation in parliament, are the National Reform Party or NRP, led by Joel Miguel; the People's Progressive Movement or PPM, led by Ken Boyea; and the United People's Movement or UPM, led by Adrian Saunders.

Other Political Forces

There are no other political forces in St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

National Prospects

The politics of St. Vincent and the Grenadines since the mid-1970s has been marked by rapidly changing loyalties and the realignment of personalities. A new generation of personalities is emerging to replace those who served in the preindependence period. Perhaps the safest assessment about the future is that open democracy will flourish. The economy has long been weak, with agriculture—especially the export of arrowroot—a major sector. Bananas alone account for upwards of 60 percent of the workforce and 50 percent of merchandise exports. Such reliance on a single crop makes the economy vulnerable to external factors. St. Vincent's banana growers now face the challenge of having to reduce reliance on bananas following a European Union decision in 1999 to phase out preferential treatment to producers from former colonies. Efforts to increase tourism have been hampered by poor infrastructure, strong competition from its better-developed neighbors, and the ecological handicap of being a volcanic island with black lava sand beaches. Natural disasters continue to plague the country. St. Vincent



suffered extensive agricultural damage following the eruption of La Soufrière, an active volcano that dominates the north of the island, in April 1979. In 1980 and 1987 hurricanes devastated banana and coconut plantations; Hurricane Lenny in 1999 caused extensive damage to the west coast of the island.

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INDEPENDENT STATE OF SAMOA

(Malo Sa'oloto Tuto'atasi o Samoa)

By Eugene Ogan, Ph.D.



In 1997 the independent state of Samoa officially dropped "Western" from its name, leaving its neighboring island polity to distinguish itself and its dependent status as American Samoa. This indicates Samoa's pride in becoming the first independent Pacific Island nation in 1962, when it ceased to be a United Nations Trust Territory, administered by New Zealand.

Samoa comprises a chain of islands formed by volcanic action millions of years ago. Total land area is 2,832 square kilometers. Only four islands are inhabited, but the nation also claims 120,000 square kilometers of ocean territory. The estimated population in 2005 was 177,000, most of whom are ethnically Polynesian. In addition to the island residents, many Samoans have moved to New Zealand. There are also substantial Samoan communities in the United States, especially in Hawaii and California.

The System of Government

Samoa is a mixed parliamentary-style democracy and constitutional monarchy.

EXECUTIVE

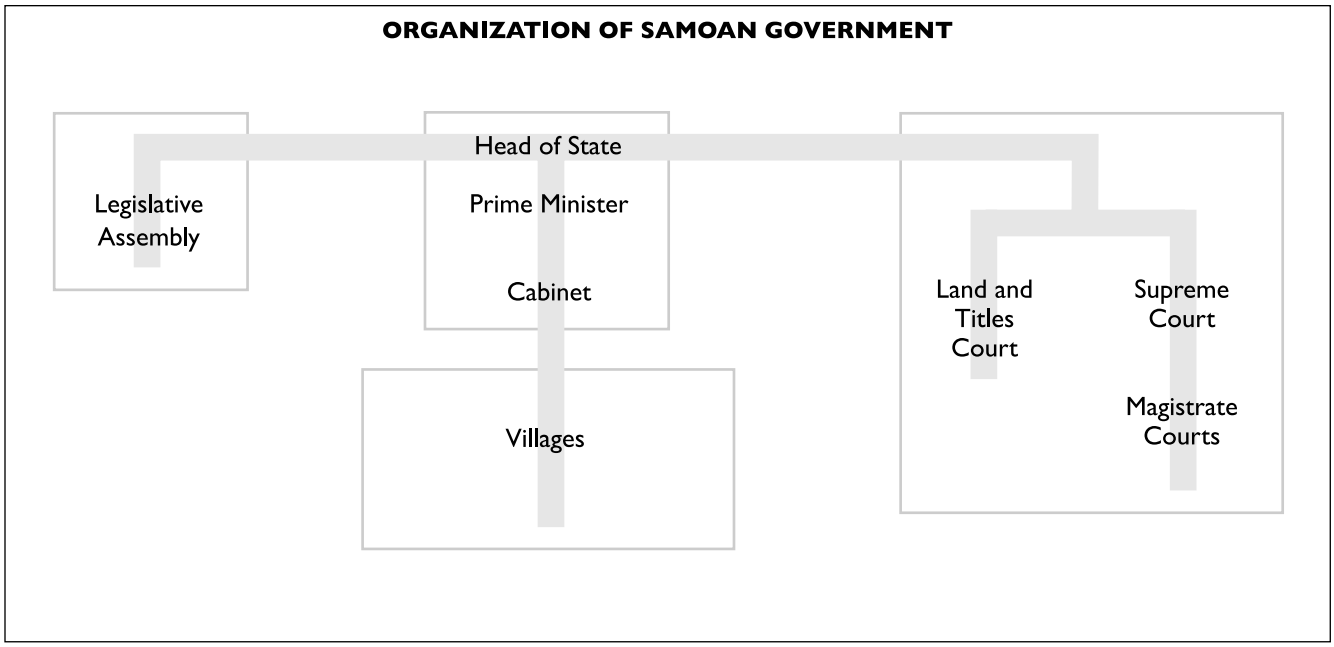
The Samoan constitution explicitly combines Western concepts and practices with those of *fa'a Samoa* (Samoan custom). Basic to the latter is an elaborate system of chiefly titles, the *matai* system. When Samoa achieved independence, two holders of the highest *tama-a-'aiga* titles became joint heads of state for life. One died in 1963; when the survivor dies, a single head of state will be elected by the Legislative Assembly. Whether the new head of state must hold one of the highest titles remains to be resolved. The head of state must appoint as prime minister the member of the Legislative Assembly who commands the support of a majority of the other members.

LEGISLATURE

Laws governing the nation are enacted by the Legislative Assembly, or Fono a Faipule. The Fono currently consists of 49 members. There are 41 territorial constituencies; two members are elected from each of the six largest and one from each of the remainder. In addition, the constitution provides for the election of other members to represent the small portion of the population who regard themselves as being of European or part-European origin. Currently there are two such members; the number is determined every five years by constitutional formula. Thus the executive authority is vested in the head of state, acting in accordance with the advice of the prime minister, the cabinet, or the appropriate minister. The latter are all elected members of the Fono.

JUDICIARY

There are two courts of original jurisdiction: the Supreme Court and the Land and Titles Court. The chief justice



is appointed by the head of state on the advice of the prime minister. All other judicial appointments are the responsibility of the Judicial Services Commission, which consists of the chief justice, the attorney general, and a nominee of the minister of justice. The Land and Titles Court has jurisdiction in claims and disputes relating to Samoan names and titles and to customary land tenure. The Court president is the chief justice or other Supreme Court judge; other Samoan judges are appointed for three-year terms. Deliberations are guided by Samoan custom and usage. The bulk of formal court work is handled by magistrates' courts. A significant branch of the judiciary officially recognized in 1990 is village *fono,* councils of *matai,* who deal generally with disputes that threaten village harmony. These operate in some 200 villages.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Aside from the village *fono,* there is no formal system of local government in Samoa.

The Electoral System

Important constitutional changes affecting the Fono were made in 1991. Until that time, only holders of *matai* titles were allowed to vote in electing this legislative body. This meant that most women and many young men could not vote, since few of them were *matai.* Under the 1991 constitutional reforms, the vote was granted to all Samoans 21 years or older, although only *matai* are eligible to run for Fono membership. The term of the Fono was increased from three to five years, and the number of cabinet members from eight to 12.

The Party System

Political parties were formed in the course of disputes about the legitimacy of the *matai* electoral system.

Major Political Parties

Major political parties include the Human Rights Protection Party (HRPP), the Samoan National Development Party (SNDP), and the Samoan United Independents Party (SUIP). Tuila'epa Sa'ilele Malielegoai took over leadership of the HRPP on the death of the party's former leader, and the party continued its electoral success by winning 30 of the 49 Fono seats in the 2001 elections. The SNDP won 13 seats, with independents winning the remaining six.

Minor Political Parties

Minor parties include the Christian Democratic Party, the Samoa All People's Party, the Samoa National Party, and the Samoan Progressive Conservative Party.

Other Political forces

There are no other political forces in Samoa.

National Prospects

Despite typhoon damage suffered in January 2004, the country is prosperous and is expected to remain the most politically stable island nation.

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REPUBLIC OF SAN MARINO

(Repubblica di San Marino)

By Jeffrey K. Hass, Ph.D.



Located inside Italy and set atop Mt. Titano, San Marino is the world's oldest republic, founded in the early 4th century (around 301 C.E.) by Christians fleeing religious persecution. By the 12th century San Marino had developed quasi-republican traditions of self-rule, and in the 15th century a Grand Council, composed of 60 men from the Assembly of Families, was created to run San Marino according to republican rules.

The System of Government

San Marino is an independent republic. Its governmental structure evolved from family alliances nearly 800 years ago. In the 13th century elite families of the community formed the "Assembly Place" (Arengo), designed to bring together family heads for decisions of self-defense and general coordination. In 1243 the families decided to elect two of their number to be cocaptains; this was the origin of the regent captains (*capitani reggenti*), an executive form that continues to this day.

EXECUTIVE

Executive power is located in the two *capitani reggenti*, who are heads of the Grand and General Council, of the State Congress, and of the Council of Twelve (the high court). *Capitani* act as heads of state representing San Marino in the international arena; they also organize and preside over legislative procedures. In essence the *capitani* are symbolic figureheads. The *capitani reggenti* are chosen every six months, on April 1 and October 1. The two *capitani* are elected from the Grand and General Council by majority vote.

The State Congress is akin to a cabinet or Council of Ministers. It consists of 10 members selected by majority vote from the Grand and General Council. State Congress members run the state bureaucracy and propose and implement policies and laws. The 10 secretaries are: Internal Affairs and Civil Defense; Industry and Crafts; Territory, Environment, and Agriculture; Trade and Relations with Town Councils; Labor and Cooperation; Finance, Budget, and Information; Health and Social Security; Communications, Transport, Tourism, and Sport; Education, Culture, and Justice; and Foreign and Political Affairs.

LEGISLATURE

The parliament, or Grand and General Council (Consiglio Grande e Generale), is a unicameral body of 60 members elected every five years. Voting is based on proportional representation. Voters select up to three candidates from a list, and the proportion of seats received equals the proportion of votes received. The Grand and General Council proposes and passes legislation, elects the *capitani reggenti*, the State Congress, the Council of Twelve, and other state commissions.

The legislature has five special commissions and 15 councils for examining legislative proposals. Legislation is passed with a majority vote.

JUDICIARY

The high court is the Council of Twelve (Consiglio dei XII), which acts to ensure justice, hear claims from contending parties (and act as a neutral third party), interpret the law, and carry out administrative acts of justice. The lower courts are the first to hear cases, and their rulings may be appealed from these administrative courts to the Council of Twelve, whose decision is final and binding. San Marino's legal system is a civil law system, which derives from historical rules and traditions and from common law legacies and decisions. Administration of justice (except for the person of the justice of the peace) is carried out by specially hired foreigners who will be more neutral than citizens. Lower courts employ two judges—one for civil cases and one for criminal cases.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

San Marino is divided into nine municipalities, or "castle councils" (*castelli*), whose members are elected every five years by local citizens. They exist to address local problems and help in implementing national laws and policies. The nine municipalities are: Acquaviva, Borgo Maggiore, Chiesanuova, Dommagnano, Faetano, Fiorentino, Monte Giardino, San Marino, and Serravalle. San Marino also has an institution called the "Arengo," which in its modern-day guise allows individual citizens to file petitions or requests to the *capitani reggenti*.

The Electoral System

All adults age 18 and over are eligible to vote. Women gained the right to vote only in 1960.

The Party System

Because San Marino is small (population approximately 29,000 in 2005), political parties are not mass parties. Further, usually there is no dominant party, and so San Marino is run by coalitions, although these coalitions are not always stable. In 1977 and 1978 and again after 2002, the Socialists left coalition governments, causing the most recent coalition with the Christian Democrats to fall. (In 1986 the Communists and Christian Democrats joined to form a coalition government—the first time this combination occurred in all Europe.) The current government is run by a coalition of the Socialists and other small parties. The most popular party in recent years has been the Christian Democrats, a centrist party that champions some religious values. The Communist Party and the Socialist Party are left-of-center but not particularly radical. All support San Marino's position in Europe, although adoption of the euro did not proceed without some disagreement among the parties.

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS, JUNE 10, 2001

Party	% votes	seats
Christian Democratic Party of San Marino	41.4%	25
Socialist Party of San Marino	24.2%	15
Progressive Democratic Party	20.8%	12
Popular Alliance of Democrats of the Republic of San Marino	8.2%	5
San Marino Communist Refoundation	3.4%	2
National Alliance of San Marino	1.9%	1

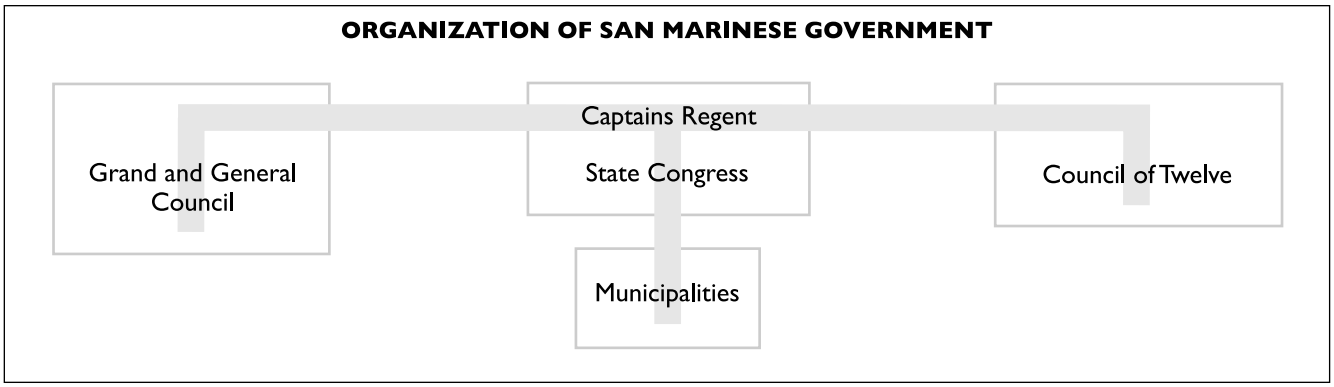
Source: www.electionworld.org

Major Political Parties

Parties that won significant numbers of votes in the 2001 elections include the Christian Democratic Party of San Marino (over 40 percent of the vote), the Socialist Party of San Marino (over 24 percent of the vote), and the Progressive Democratic Party (over 20 percent of the vote).

Minor Political Parties

Smaller parties that also hold seats in parliament include the Popular Alliance of Democrats of the Republic of San Marino, the San Marino Communist Refoundation, and the National Alliance of San Marino.



Other Political Forces

There are no other political forces in San Marino.

National Prospects

San Marino is a member of the United Nations and coordinates its policies with the European Union, although it is not a full EU member. Recent policy imperatives have focused on improving transparency in parliamentary and state activities and procedures.

Further Reading

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DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF SÃO TOMÉ AND PRÍNCIPE

(República Democrática de São Tomé e Príncipe)

By Christopher J. Lee, Ph.D.



The archipelago of São Tomé and Príncipe is located in the Gulf of Guinea off the central west coast of Africa. Its capital is São Tomé. The archipelago was appropriated and colonized by the Portuguese beginning in the 15th century, and the Portuguese government recognized the islands' right to self-determination shortly after the military coup of April 1974 in Portugal. In December 1974 a transition government was established with members of the Liberation Movement of São Tomé and Príncipe (Movimento de Libertação de São Tomé and Príncipe, MLSTP) serving as popular representatives. Later in July 1975, when elections were held for a constituent assembly, the MLSTP captured all 16 seats. On July 12, 1975, independence was officially achieved. Manuel Pinto da Costa, leader of the MLSTP, became president, and Miguel dos Anjos Trovoada became prime minister.

The System of Government

São Tomé and Príncipe maintains a constitutional government with a multiparty political system.

EXECUTIVE

As outlined by the 1990 constitution, the president is head of the executive branch of government. The president is accountable to the 55-member National Assembly. The prime minister is chosen by the National Assembly, appointed by the president, and serves as the head of the cabinet. The cabinet is accountable to both the president and the National Assembly. The president is supreme commander of the military. A presidential limit of two five-year terms is set forth in the constitution. Presidential candidates are chosen through their party's conventions or may campaign independently. Election to office is based on an outright majority vote.

Concern and outright struggle over the power of the executive branch has defined the political history of São Tomé and Príncipe. The postindependence constitution established in November 1975 invested absolute authority in the hands of the president and the MLSTP's political bureau. Over the next decade and a half, conflict arose over the power of Pinto da Costa and the MLSTP, with political moderates and opponents being forced into exile. In 1978 a coup attempt took place. Trovoada was dismissed from the government in April 1979 for his suspected involvement. In November 1980 another coup attempt took place. The unstable health of the economy due to failing Socialist policies further exacerbated political disturbances.

In the mid-1980s economic and political shifts began to take place. Constitutional reforms were implemented in October 1987 that sought to guarantee the election of the president by universal adult suffrage. However, the MLSTP nominee was the sole presidential candidate. In 1988 the position of prime minister was reestablished in another move toward

reform. However, critical opposition from those in exile, culminating in a failed invasion by political dissidents based in Cameroon, still persisted. This factor combined with the MLSTP government's inability to build a lasting sense of economic viability, particularly with the end of the cold war and support from socialist countries, forced additional change. The 1990 constitution, approved with a popular vote of 72 percent, made further progress in defining the present limits of presidential and executive branch power.

The current president is Fradiqué Melo Bandeira de Meñezes of the Force for Change Democratic Movement (Movimento Democrático das Forças de Mudança; MDFM), elected in September 2001. In July 2003 a coup took place while he was out of the country, though he was reinstated as president, provided that he guarantee the separation of powers—and more specifically, the limits of executive power—as outlined by the 1990 constitution. Reasons for the coup were predicated on Meñezes's dismissal of four prime ministers, the dissolution of the National Assembly once, and concerns over his government's economic program. Damião Vaz d'Almeida of the Movement for the Liberation of São Tomé and Príncipe–Social Democratic Party (MLSTP-PSD) served as prime minister from September 2004 to June 2005, when he resigned; he was replaced by Maria do Carmo Silveira. The next presidential election is scheduled for 2006.

LEGISLATURE

The August 1990 constitution provides for a 55-member, unicameral National Assembly, with individual terms lasting for four years. Members of the Assembly are elected by direct, popular vote in 12 election districts. The executive branch—president, prime minister, and cabinet—is accountable to this body. The Supreme Court is also accountable to the National Assembly, which appoints its judges. Only the National Assembly may amend the constitution, with a three-quarters vote to propose and a two-thirds vote to approve. Based on the last election held in 2002, the MLSTP-PSD currently holds the most seats at 24, with the MDFM a close second with 23 seats. The Uê Kédadji Coalition holds the remaining eight seats. The next parliamentary elections are scheduled for 2006.

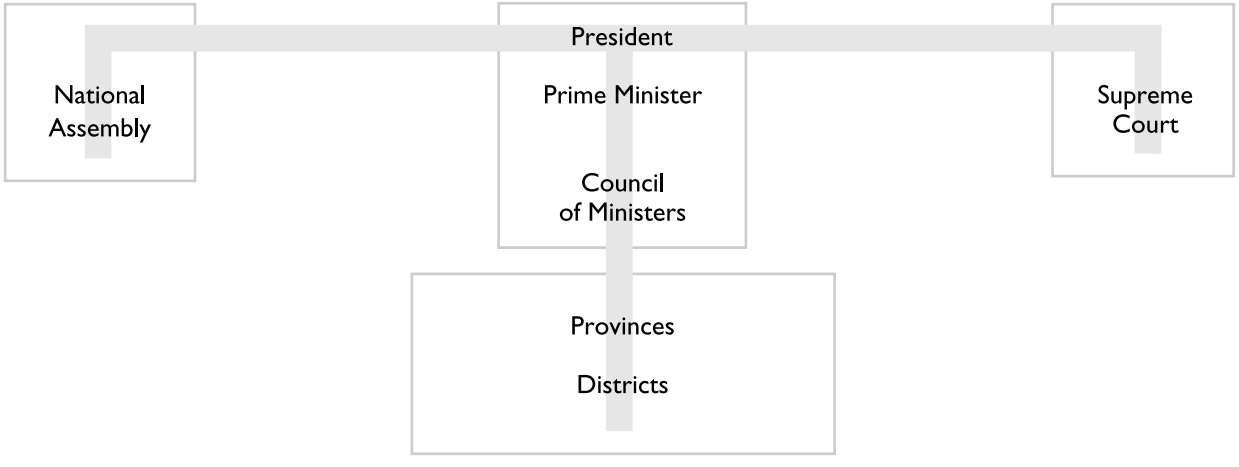
JUDICIARY

The Supreme Court established by the 1990 constitution is the absolute judicial authority and is accountable to the National Assembly. The legal system is based on Portuguese law and local African customary law. The Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe has not accepted the jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

São Tomé and Príncipe is divided into two provinces, respectively named. Within these two provinces there are seven administrative districts. Lobata, Lembá, Caué, Água Grande, Mé-Zóchi, and Cantagalo are on São Tomé. Príncipe has a single district, Pagué. Príncipe has also had self-governance since April 1995. It maintains a five-member regional government and a seven-member regional assembly in addition to participating in the national government.

ORGANIZATION OF SÃO TOMÉAN AND PRÍNCIPEAN GOVERNMENT



The Electoral System

The electoral system established by the 1990 constitution is predicated on universal suffrage for persons 18 years of age and older. The president is elected for a term of five years with an overall limit of two terms. Members of the 55-seat National Assembly are elected for terms of four years. The next presidential election and the next parliamentary election are both scheduled for 2006.

The Party System

The Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe maintains a multiparty system. Historically, the Liberation Movement of São Tomé and Príncipe (Movimento de Libertação de São Tomé and Príncipe; MLSTP) has held power, though its dominance has been challenged progressively since the 1980s, particularly after the establishment of the 1990 constitution. In 1990 it changed to the Movement for the Liberation of São Tomé and Príncipe–Social Democratic Party (MLSTP-PSD). The Force for Change Democratic Movement (Movimento Democrático das Forças de Mudança; MDFM) has provided a challenge to its power, with the majority of seats in the National Assembly being roughly divided between this party and the MLSTP-PSD.

Major Political Parties

MOVEMENT FOR THE LIBERATION OF SÃO TOMÉ AND PRÍNCIPE–SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY

(Movimento de Libertação de São Tomé and Príncipe–Partido Social Democrata; MLSTP-PSD)

The Liberation Movement of São Tomé and Príncipe (MLSTP) was the leading political party from independence in 1975 up to the constitutional reforms of 1990. Its present incarnation, the Movement for the Liberation of São Tomé and Príncipe–Social Democratic Party (MLSTP-PSD), was formed in 1990 and remains an important political party. It has been the ruling party in the National Assembly since 1994.

FORCE FOR CHANGE DEMOCRATIC MOVEMENT

(Movimento Democrático das Forças de Mudança; MDFM)

The MDFM was established in 2001 and supports current president Fradiqué Melo Bandeira de Meñezes. The MDFM recently formed a coalition with the Democratic Convergence Party–Reflection Group (PCD-GR) called the Force for Change Democratic Movement-Democratic Convergence Party (MDFM-PCD) in order to protest the National Assembly election of March 2002, in which the MLSTP-PSD won a slim majority.

Minor Political Parties

A number of smaller parties exist, though the most important grouping of these parties is the Ue-Kedadji Coalition. This opposition front consists of the Independent Democratic Action (ADI), the Democratic Coalition of the Opposition (CODO), the Democratic Renewal Party (PRD), the Popular Progress Party (PPP), and the National Union for Democracy and Progress (UNDP). The Uê Kédadji Coalition formed to protest the outcome of the March 2002 National Assembly election.

Other Political Forces

There are no other political forces in São Tomé and Príncipe.

National Prospects

Despite constitutional reform in 1990, the 1990s were marked by political tensions and conflict, culminating in a military coup in August 1995. Shortly thereafter, President Miguel Trovoada, elected in 1991, pledged to restructure the military and form a unity government. The presidential election in June and July 1996 resulted in Trovoada's defeating Manuel Pinto da Costa with roughly 53 percent of the vote. Pinto da Costa contested this result but conceded in August. Trovoada reaffirmed his commitment to a broad-based government.

Between 1995 and 2001 political instability again set in as a result of the deteriorating economy. The government has faced criticism from international monetary organizations for not pursuing more concerted

economic reform. Such criticism has been countered by domestic unrest that has cited reform as occurring too swiftly and thus reducing standards of living. In 2001 Fradiqué Melo Bandeira de Meñezes was elected president, defeating the MLSTP-PSD's candidate, Manuel Pinto da Costa, who came in second. Despite the coup attempt of July 2003, cautious optimism exists due to the new potential of a prosperous offshore oil industry in the Gulf of Guinea. The United States and Nigeria have put pressure on the government of São Tomé and Príncipe to resolve its internal divisions in order to stabilize and benefit from this significant opportunity.

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KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA

(Al-Mamlakâ al-'Arabīyyâ al-Sa'ūdīyyâ)

By Mahmud A. Faksh, Ph.D.
Revised by Mary Hendrickson, Ph.D.



The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is a monarchy characterized by the exceptional centrality of the royal family, the house of Saud. Members of the dynasty hold most key government and security positions and maintain a virtual monopoly over political life in the country. They also play a major role in the country's economy and business activities.

Saudi Arabia has possibly the least-known political system of any country of international importance. In part this is due to the region's desert isolation and, until the discovery of oil, its poverty. The country remained insulated, socially and culturally, behind a veil of traditional Islam. As a result, even though outsiders are now intensely interested in the Saudi system, they know little about its society and politics. To make matters worse, the royal family is discrete, verging on secretive, hence making its structures, divisions, and functions more a matter of speculation than of fact. Political freedoms are virtually nonexistent and citizen's role in government very minimal.

Information about Saudi political institutions is sketchy, contradictory, and unverifiable. Many of the Saudi state's unusual features can be attributed to its relative newness and religious roots. While some parts of the Arabian Peninsula, such as Yemen or the cities of the Hijaz, on the west coast of the peninsula, had long been governed by constituted governments, the rest of the area had been dominated by tribes lacking even the most elementary forms of state authority: a police force, a fixed capital, written records, and courts. Only when their energies were harnessed to a religious cause had the Arabian tribes formed anything more enduring than a transient coalition of warriors.

The unifying bond of religion took hold in Arabia twice. First, in the seventh century under Muhammad, the prophet of Islam, who founded—for the first time ever—a united Islamic state of Arabia. Second, in the 18th century, when the religious leader Muhammad bin Abdul Wahhab, founder of the Wabbabi Islamic revivalist movement, joined forces with the tribal chief Muhammad ibn Saud. The alliance between the two in 1744 was forged by religious ideology, and inspired Saudi-Wahhabi warriors to conquer much of the territory of today's Saudi Arabia before the state fell to outside (Ottoman) forces in 1818. It was resurrected on a smaller scale between 1820 and 1891, only to fall again.

ADVENT OF MODERN SAUDI ARABIA

The modern Kingdom of Saudi Arabia was founded in 1932, with Abdul Aziz ibn Saud proclaimed as king. Like so many other new states, Saudi Arabia has had to establish itself as a meaningful political entity in a short time. Tribal affiliations are far from eradicated. The fact that the state was created from within, by a local leader, makes tribal and regional ties that much more binding. While most new states were created by European colonial masters—neutral outsiders who

disrupted traditional systems and eventually left—Saudi Arabia was the achievement of one local family. As a result, the house of Saud is subject to envy and resentment by other tribal leaders for its power and fortunes.

In addition to conquest and subdual, Abdul Aziz relied on an ancient method for consolidating his kingdom: marrying the widows and daughters of his rivals and defeated enemies. Exploiting the right of a Muslim man to four wives at once, and easy terms of divorce, he wed dozens of women and had 45 recognized sons by at least 22 mothers. These sons, whose birth dates range from 1900 to 1952, have constituted the dominant political force since 1953. And assuming continued royal family cohesion and strength and the support of foreign powers, they will remain in charge for years to come.

Saudi leaders have shown a remarkable devotion to their own traditional Islamic way of life. Islamic law (sharia) reigns supreme with few concessions to Western sensibilities: women are kept behind the veil and forbidden to take part in public life, criminal punishments follow the traditional Islamic penal code (*hudud*), and the Qur'an is proclaimed the constitution of the kingdom.

Income from oil, discovered in 1932, has led to a substantial increase in government functions and powers. More than half a century ago, the Saudi government did nothing beyond providing a guarantee of social order and a rudimentary form of justice. The central government consisted of the king, his advisers, and some of his kinsmen; public functions were limited to royal assemblies; and the state treasury was no more than sacks of gold coins carried wherever the king went. Today, the Saudi state offers a wide array of services ranging from free education to medical treatment, low-interest loans, and subsidies for consumer goods. During the economic boom in the 1970s and early 1980s, it even gave land for housing development, subsidized the costs of weddings, and guaranteed business enterprises.

Proliferation of state functions has required a massive expansion of government bureaucracy; hence, a large portion of the native Saudi working force is made up of government employees. This gives rulers a vital source of leverage; even more important, state functions have given the government pervasive control over the country, for it disburses nearly all the country's wealth. Although the Saudi welfare state has periodically endured retrenchment due to the economic hardships resulting from drops in world oil prices and rising costs and demands of military security, it has managed to keep the population largely sheltered from the burdens of heavy taxation and fees. Today, despite emerging dissatisfaction by some modernist and Islamist groups over the dwindling economic benefits, widespread corruption within the royal family, and absence of an effective voice for citizens, the Saudi government still enjoys a measure of popularity and wields a most extraordinary power over every aspect of life.

The System of Government

Saudi Arabia is an absolute monarchy, with the House of Saud dominating the political system of the country.

THE KING

The king (*malik*) of Saudi Arabia is an absolute monarch, limited only by the constraints of his family's support and the laws of Islam. He is head of state and chief executive of the government.

Since Abdul Aziz's death in 1953, five of his sons have succeeded him to this position: Saud (1953–64), Faisal (1964–75), Khalid (1975–82), Fahd (1982–2005), and Abdullah (2005 to the present). This established the tradition of passing the throne from the senior brother to the next.

The position of king has included several components: dynastic, tribal, and religious leadership. The king derives his power by virtue of his role as head of the house of Saud, since the royal family's support determines who rules. Sovereign power resides in the family; whoever leads it, is head of state. The selection of an heir-apparent in advance, a tradition established by Abdul Aziz, is a key decision in the succession. Selecting the crown prince is perhaps the single most critical issue in Saudi politics. Although the issue arises only occasionally, it touches on all actions of the royal family.

The Saud family has no written rule of succession. Selection of a new crown prince by the house of Saud involves such factors, as seniority, education, ability, temperament, popularity, the number of his full brothers, and his mother's tribal affiliation. Until now, the line of succession has been confined to the eldest sons of Abdul Aziz, who are already in their 70s and 80s. The current line of succession will lead next to Crown Prince Sultan. The prospect of the Saudi monarchy having to face the question of succession fairly frequently, with the passing of these prospective rulers,

is very unsettling, raising the specter of schism within the royal family.

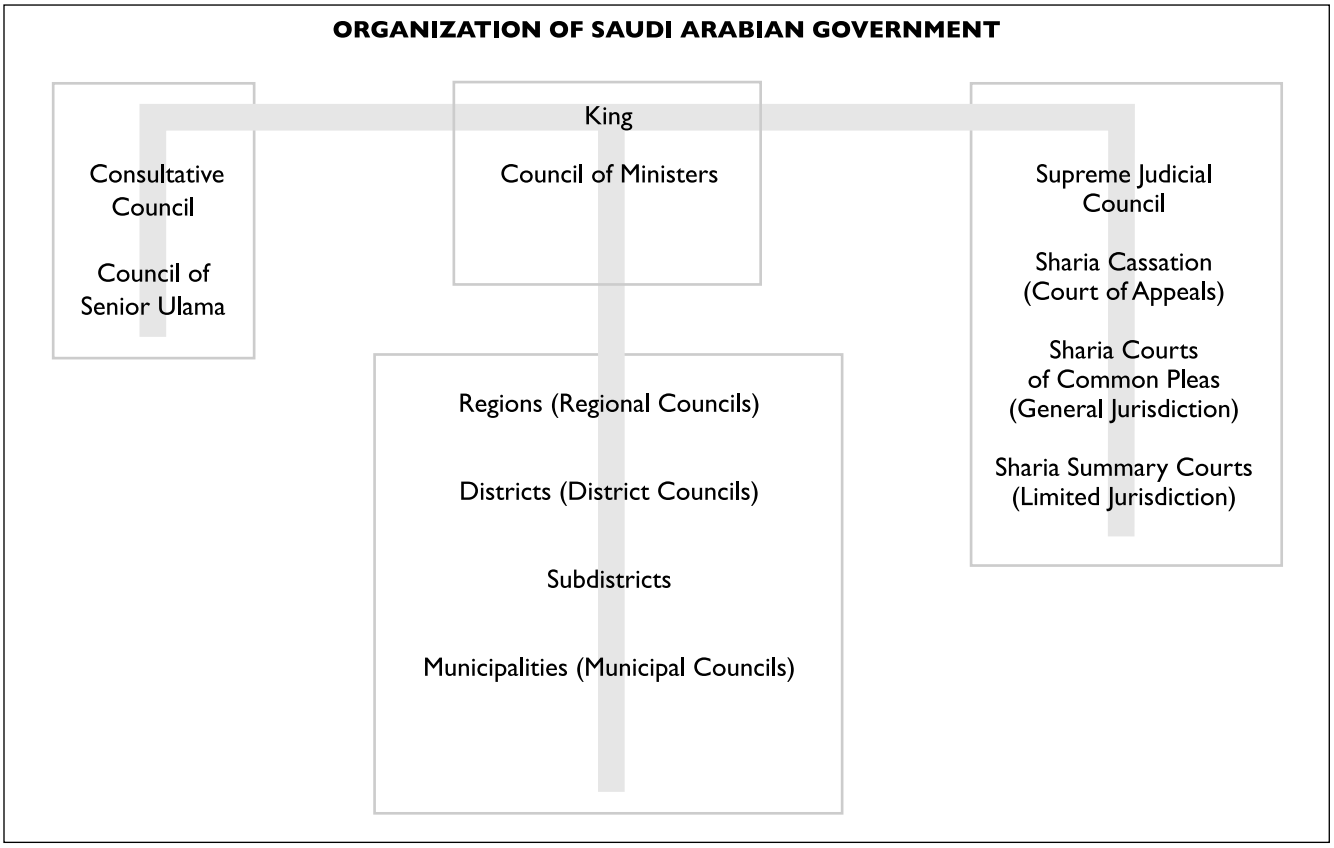
Another challenge concerning the succession issue is the increasing prominence of the second-generation princes: the grandsons of Abdul Aziz. These younger aspirants, some of whom are middle-aged and hold important ministerial or governorship positions, are slowly being brought into the process, a recognition of their rising power status. The Basic System of Government (the closest approximation to a written constitution, under the primacy of Islamic sharia law), decreed by King Fahd in March 1992, contained a section that formally stipulated the terms of succession for the first time. It empowered the king to choose his successor form the sons and grandsons of Abdul Aziz, rather than having to designate automatically the next eldest son. Further, upon the death of the king, the new king's rule is contingent upon *bai'ah* (oath of allegiance) from the sons and grandsons. Surely a Saudi king typically hopes to pass his rule to a son. However, with no clear line as to which grandsons of which sons should have primacy over the others, and with more than two dozen of Abdul Aziz's sons alive, the prospect of a second-generation succession will be unlikely for some time to come. This issue could easily split the family.

As religious leader (imam) of his people, the king is bound to carry out sharia sacred Islamic law, to defend the borders from unbelievers, and personally to set a righteous example for his subjects. Saudi sponsorship of Wahhabi doctrine links the king very closely to religion, which becomes even more important in his role as "Protector of the Two Holy Cities" of Mecca and Medina. Surely this makes the Saudi leaders all the more accountable to the very Islamic values they espouse, and hence susceptible to members of religious opposition groups who may accuse them of corruption and deviation from true Islamic rule.

ROYAL FAMILY

Members of the ruling family fill vital positions in the government, both at high and intermediate levels. In essence, the direct descendants of Abdul Aziz, who now number about 7,000 princes, control key ministries, many deputy ministerial positions, and occupy most of the 13 regional governorships.

All princes are entitled to a stipend. Unregulated before 1963, the privy purse once consumed most of



the government revenues, leading to extravagant consumption and corruption, and on one occasion (1958) nearly bankrupted the kingdom. Since 1963 stipends depend upon a mix of two factors: a prince's age and his proximity (by generation and direct descent) to Faisal ibn Turki, paternal grandfather of King Abdul Aziz. Precise figures are of course unknown, but Abdul Aziz's sons receive handsome sums.

Although King Abdul Aziz used marriage to bind the country together, sharing his bed with daughters of almost every tribe and region, his descendants increasingly tend toward monogamy (probably a symptom of modern Western influence) and marriage to cousins (a tradition of Arabian society). Young princes and princesses are encouraged to marry within the house of Saud or its collateral lines. The only other family wholeheartedly embraced is that of al-Shaykh, the descendant of Muhammad ibn Abdul Wahhab, founder of the Wahhabi religious movement.

COUNCIL OF MINISTERS

The Council of Ministers was created in 1953 by King Abdul Aziz bin Saud. The Council has acquired increasing responsibility over time, including the power to consider legislation and policies on foreign and domestic affairs, and to issue decrees. The Council consists of the cabinet ministers (approximately 21 with portfolio and six without), and it meets with the king or his deputy presiding. King Abdullah is the prime minister as well as the king. The first deputy prime minister is Crown Prince Sultan. All decisions of the Council are subject to the approval of the king.

As the bureaucracy has grown, ministers have also gained in authority. Although always responsible to the king, they have in fact carved out a good deal of autonomy as the complexity of their offices has increased. With time, functional division has become more pronounced: princes still hold the most sensitive posts (defense, interior, foreign affairs, and supervision of the national guard), with commoners taking the more technical positions (financial, oil, industry, planning). Religious authorities, usually of the al-Shaykh family, predominate in appointments related to religion, justice, and education.

In his last official act, in October 1953, King Abdul Aziz established the Council of Ministers to meet the expansion of government services and responsibilities. Originally the Council had no prescribed functions or effective role in policy questions: A royal decree of May 1958 (inspired by Crown Prince Faisal) specified the Council's policy-making and policy-executing functions. The Council of Ministers is appointed by the king and has the authority to consider all questions arising in the kingdom, including the budgets, treaties, contracts, administrative appointments, and court cases involving the government. However, all decisions are referred to the king for approval. Its decisions, therefore, more closely resemble recommendations that may be ignored or enacted by the administration as the king directs. The king can veto any of the Council of Ministers' decisions within 30 days. The Council functions, in part, as a legislature by formulating some government decrees.

The increased volume and complexity of affairs of state has meant a growing number of cabinet portfolios, some of which are filled by a rising class of Western-educated Saudi technocrats. This does not, however, signal any significant change in the power or independence of the technocrat ministers. They remain beholden to the king, who is the source of authority of the Council of Ministers. Also, the power of the ministers is further constrained by the increasing number of princely deputy ministers, who act as watchdogs over their shoulders.

LEGISLATURE

CONSULTATIVE COUNCIL

The Consultative Council (Majlis al-Shura) was created by King Fahd in 1992 following years of promises by Saudi royalty about establishing a council to make policy recommendations to the king. A 60-member Council was appointed by the king to four-year terms beginning in 1993; since then, the size of the Council has increased to 150 members. Matters may be referred to the Council by the Council of Ministers or the Council may recommend legislation, but, in either situation, the king must approve the Council's recommendations. Under pressure to increase the Council beyond a mere advisory board, King Fahd issued a decree in 2003 that the Council may propose new laws without first seeking his approval.

The Council is led by a chairman, deputy, and secretary general, all of whom are appointed by the king. The chairman is the presiding officer and leader of the body. The deputy chair presides in the chairman's absence. The Council requires a two-thirds majority to operate, although decisions are made by the majority of members. The Council has created committees to assist in the operation of the government.

The Council's appointive status, its restrictive governing rules, and its circumscribed powers make it less a representative supervisory body than a pli-

ant advisory body. In short, the Council of Ministers remains in charge of formulating and implementing policy under the supreme power of the king. King Fahd hailed the newly appointed Consultative Council as the "Islamic Way" of governance and dismissed Western representative democracy as "unsuitable" for Saudi Islamic society and traditions.

The Consultative Council is composed of former senior officials, academics, mainstream theologians, retired army and security officers, professionals, writers, and journalists. Both women and Muslim activists are excluded.

COUNCIL OF SENIOR ULAMA

Islam has a direct bearing on the political life of Saudi Arabia, because its sacred law (sharia) minutely regulates all activities in the public and private realms of its believers. Living by the sacred law of Islam entails an involvement with politics; a Muslim cannot lead a truly Islamic life unless his government acts in accordance with sharia law. Experts in the law, known as *ulama,* are therefore in a position to influence the rulers. However, the Ulama, an official body of religious leaders, also serve as a source of legitimacy for government decisions.

In no Muslim state in modern times have the *ulama* so consistently exercised political influence as in Saudi Arabia; and nowhere else has Islam been taken quite so seriously as in the deserts of Arabia. According to the fundamentalist Wahhabi ideology, the Qur'an is the constitution of the state—a view not shared by Muslims universally. This then gives the leading *ulama* a unique interpretive role over all state actions. Because the raison d'être of the Saudi state is narrowly tied to Wahhabi doctrines, the political leadership has been extremely careful not to stray far from the strictures of the *ulama*. The Basic System of Government (March 1992) declares that the Qur'an is the constitution of the kingdom and that the government system is in accord with Islamic principles.

The Council of Senior Ulama consists of between 30 to 40 religious scholars who consult with the monarch on matters of policy. Some of the members are descendants of Abd al Wahhab, a prominent family tied to the Wahhabi strain of Islam.

During times of crisis, the royal family turns to the leading *ulama* for support, asking them to issue religious fatwas to sanction contemplated government actions. Twelve of them signed the fatwa authorizing the transfer of power from King Saud to Crown Prince Faisal in March 1964, including four members of the al-Shaykh family, the descendants of Muhammad ibn Abdul Wahhab. Other fatwas sanctioned the government assault on the Grand Mosque in 1979 and the stationing of foreign troops on Saudi soil during the Gulf War.

JUDICIARY

Saudi Arabia has no formal constitution, instead relying on the principles of Islamic law, sharia. Thus, the courts' decisions must endeavor to remain consistent with the Qur'an and Islamic faith.

The judicial system is composed of four layers of courts. The Supreme Judicial Council is the administrative head of the judiciary and the third level of courts, hearing appeals from cases whose gravity or punishment is deemed important enough to be heard by the high court. The Permanent Commission of the court is composed of five members appointed by the king. These members are high-ranking judges. The General Commission is composed of five members of the Permanent Commission, plus the chairman of the Court of Appeals, the deputy minister of justice and three senior judges from the general courts. The Supreme Judicial Council, applying its administrative functions, appoints, promotes, and assigns judges.

The Court of Appeals (Sharia Court of Cassation) is the final court of appeals in most instances. It holds sessions in Riyadh. The general courts, the Sharia Courts of Common Pleas, hear cases involving criminal matters, tort, family law, civil law, and real estate. Civil cases are first heard by the Amarah, which will first attempt resolution before entering the court system, if necessary. Sharia Summary Courts are courts of limited jurisdiction that hear minor civil or criminal cases.

In addition to the Sharia courts, various specialized judicial institutions exist outside of the system, the cases of which are appealable to the Grievance Board. The Greivance Board hears claims against the government and reports to the king.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Traditional royal family control and centralized government administration have inhibited the growth of effective local government in Saudi Arabia. Provincial governmental roles have been even more unclear than those in the central administration. An element of decentralization was introduced by a royal decree in November 1963, which divided the country into four provinces, each with an appointed governor (emir)

who was responsible to the minister of interior. The November 1963 royal decree also called for the creation of provincial or regional councils. Like the Consultative Council on the national level, however, they had to wait almost 30 years before becoming a reality. Finally, in March 1992 King Fahd decreed the establishment of a system of regional government through the setting up of 13 appointive regional councils headed by the regional governor. They consist of members of the local administration, central government officials in charge of these regions, and regional representatives who are appointed by the king. The regional governors—most are members of the royal family—are an extension of royal authority. The majority of the appointed members of the councils have come from local tribal leaders and leading merchant families, with unquestionable loyalty to the royal family. All this has limited the power of the councils in freely running their regions' affairs.

The government has indicated its intention to decentralize powers to regional governments, except for major decisions, and to provide for separate budgets. Elections for municipal councils were held in 2005 for the first time. Increased autonomy for regional governors is also planned.

The Electoral System

The first elections in the country's history were the municipal elections held between April and June 2005. All males age 21 and over, except those who were members of the armed forces, were eligible to vote. Voters elected half of the municipal councils, while the rest were appointed. Officials indicated that women might be given the right to vote by 2009.

The Party System

Political parties are not allowed in Saudi Arabia.

Major Political Parties

There are no political parties in Saudi Arabia.

Minor Political Parties

There are no political parties in Saudi Arabia.

Other Political Forces

A nearly total ban now proscribes political activity outside the government. Political parties, pressure groups, labor unions, and professional associations are prohibited, and the media are strictly controlled. Many books, magazines, and periodicals are either censored or blacklisted. Government rules regarding the Internet proscribe citizens from viewing "anything contrary to the state or its system." Government employees who criticize the government can be jailed or fired. Police checkpoints are often used to monitor movements between towns and the moral-religious police (*mutawi'in*) have access to private homes to stamp out "illicit" activities. No public forums exist for dissenting opinions regarding the royal family, the country's social and economic changes, the role of Islam, world politics, or oil policies. The system offers little scope for the expression of competing views, much less for acting on them. Controversy is discouraged, and conformity is encouraged.

Yet Saudi Arabia is not totalitarian. Travel outside the country is common, political crimes and violence are rare, people are not in constant fear of the police, and the state does not try to take over all existing organizations, such as philanthropic, religious, commercial, and industrial groups. Saudi rulers still see themselves in a parental role, much like a sheikh of a tribe who is in close touch with the concerns of his tribesmen and keeps those concerns in balance. For so long a time, a relatively benign monarchy has ruled over this populace that it has become used to being looked after in this manner. Therefore, until recently, calls for a more open, representative political system did not win wide support.

However, the modern-day spread of education, demands of growing population and burgeoning urbanization, increasing economic difficulties—declining job opportunities, plummeting living standards, and greater class disparities—all have engendered reformist aspirations, posing a challenge to the ruling family. Real or potential sources of opposition include dissident religious groups, the Shia religious minority, the economically disadvantaged, and the armed forces.

RELIGIOUS OPPOSITION

Since the Gulf War in 1990–91, open manifestations of religious dissidence have surfaced again. They took the form of public petitions to the king in 1991 and 1992 and the founding of a Committee for the Defense

of Legitimate Rights in 1993—all basically calling for reform and responsible government under sharia law. Later, religious opposition took a militant turn—uncharacteristic of the Saudi political scene—with the bombing of U.S. targets in November 1995 and in June 1996 in Riyadh and Dhahran, respectively. While two obscure groups—the Islamic Movement for Change and Tigers of the Gulf—claimed responsibility for the first attack, in which seven were killed, no group took credit for the second bombing, which killed 19. However a little-known Shia organization, the Saudi Heizbullah, is reported to be among the chief suspects.

The Saudi government's response has been a mixture of accommodation and repression. It instituted a Consultative Council as a limited measure of openness. It showed greater deference and attentiveness to the religious establishment and exhibited more vigor in enforcing Islamic morality and laws. Meanwhile, it clamped down on extremist fundamentalist groups, arresting activist leaders such as Dr. Safar al-Hawali and Sheikh Salman al-Awdeh, and beheading those convicted of terrorist acts.

The Saudi government has faced increased dissent and terrorism after the 9/11 bombings in the United States, which were conducted by 15 Saudi nationals and four others. The leader of the terrorist group al-Qaeda that conducted the acts of terrorism, Osama bin Laden, was born to a wealthy Saudi construction magnate, but his Saudi citizenship was rescinded in 1994 because of his terrorist activities. Bin Laden called for the overthrow of the royal family in 1992 on the basis of their cooperation with the United States during the Gulf War and due to his rejection of corrupt government practices. Bin Laden viewed the presence of American troops on Saudi soil, home to Mecca and Medina, the holy sites of Islam, as anathema to Islamic principles.

There is evidence of support for bin Laden's anti-American cause among Saudis, perhaps due to the strong support by the United States for Israel. The support could stem from resentment at the subordination of the Saudi government, which has generally been perceived to be close to the U.S. government. A decision by the United States to remove almost all of its troops from Saudi Arabia in 2003, stationed there since the Persian Gulf War, was well received by the royal family since the troops were an irritant to the citizenry. Still, numerous acts of terrorism continued in Saudi Arabia in 2003 and 2004, including attacks on housing compounds that killed citizens of the United States and other countries and a suicide bombing at the U.S. consulate in Jeddah.

SHIA MINORITY

The government does not provide for or protect religious freedom. In the midst of the Meccan siege in November 1979, riots broke out among the Shia Muslim community in al-Qatif in the far northeast of Saudi Arabia. If the attack by the religious zealots on Mecca reminded the Saudi rulers of their earliest constituency, the Shia disturbances symbolized the anger of their most dispossessed and maltreated subjects, who had until then been a quiescent, second-class minority. Reviled and persecuted for their heterodox beliefs, the Shia living in al-Hasa have always suffered under Wahhabi rule—branded as *kuffar* (heretics). They have little representation in the government restrictions on their faith, limits on building of mosques, and face political and economical discrimination. The Shia problem is all the more important because of Shia concentration in the eastern oil-rich region.

An agreement with Shia opposition leaders in exile was reached in October 1993, providing for greater recognition of Shia community rights and civil liberties, guaranteeing the release of scores of Shia dissidents, and promising amelioration of their impoverishment. However, many of these promises went unfulfilled, and there remains much disenchantment and skepticism among the Shia population. They continue to live in a state of isolation and deprivation and are still discriminated against in employment in the Saudi Arabian Oil Company (Saudi Aramco).

PROFESSIONAL-BUSINESS ELITES

The expansion of education, the inflow of oil wealth, and the proliferation of economic activities since the mid-1970s created a new class of professionals, technocrats, and businessmen. They constitute a rising group of Western-educated modernists who have sought a more active role in public affairs. Hence, they emerged as key proponents of liberal reform in the kingdom. With a generally moderate tone, they called for a measure of openness and participation and basic individual rights and freedom, without contesting the authority of the royal family. In 2003, 140 Saudi business and professional leaders signed a bill of rights calling for government reforms and more political freedoms. However, the appeal of the liberal modernists in the traditional Saudi context remained limited, and therefore they were more amenable to control than the religious opposition. Further, the Western-educated professional elite and businessmen have become a prosperous class that shares common ground with the royal family in protecting position and privilege. In fact many of this

class are basically government allies, tied by employment or business contracts. Although relations between the Saudi government and the modernists at times have been strained, especially in the light of dwindling economic benefits and continued resentment of royal family enrichment and corruption, the government has sought to co-opt their positions by giving them the lion's share of the appointed Consultative Council seats and by playing on the specter of the antimodernist fundamentalist threat.

ARMED FORCES

As the kingdom grew more prosperous, and hence more envied by radical groups and states in the region, and as the Saudi leadership aspired to a more assertive role as a major force in the Middle East and the Persian Gulf, it has, since the mid-1970s, undertaken a program of military expansion and high-tech weapons accumulation. Regional development from the late 1970s through the early 1990s—the Islamic revolution in Iran, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, the Iran-Iraq War, and the Gulf War—had accelerated the growth of the Saudi armed forces and whetted its appetite for ever more advanced arms purchases, mainly from the United States.

Surely an enlarged military should be a source of concern, because it could possibly increase the danger of a challenge to the royal family. Officers were among the key figures in a 1969 coup attempt; and soldiers may have plotted with the fanatics who seized the Grand Mosque in 1979, although there has been no clear evidence of military insubordination. Officers enjoy a privileged social and economic status, and this wins their loyalty and lessens the chances they will use their increased power to turn against the state.

If such a threat eventually occurs, the Saudi government is prepared. The National Guard, a cohesive crack force recruited and deployed along tribal lines, is considered the most loyal supporter of the al-Saud family and of the Wahhabi way of life. It is entrusted with internal security, including protection of the royal family and the prevention of military coups.

BACKLASH ON WOMEN'S AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Protests within Saudi Arabia and growing negative publicity outside the country focused on the treatment of women and human rights generally. Women are not allowed to drive cars, to make decisions without male permission, to leave the country or even their own home. They may divorce, but they lose custody of their children over age six. Women may be accused of sexual improprieties by men, such as adultery, without proof, resulting in severe punishment. Armed with the *mutawa'in*, a vice squad that maintains moral order, segregation of the sexes in public places is maintained and a dress code (the veil) is enforced. An incident in 2002 in which young girls were refused exit from a burning building because they were not wearing *abayas* created controversy over the treatment of women. Many Saudis see these restrictions as consistent with fundamentalist Islam, which seeks to keep women within a protected role within the family. Western values are seen as eroding moral values and equating women with sexual objects.

Sharia law, which continues to provide the blueprint for the legal system, may result in beheadings for crimes, amputations for thievery, or death for adultery. In addition to criticisms in the press, external groups, such as Amnesty International, document these actions.

National Prospects

Evolutionary reform in the government may signal small steps toward political rights. The Consultative Council is entirely appointed by the king and restricted to an advisory role on limited matters, yet the inclusion of representatives from among the various leading segments of the population gives a semblance of inclusion in the government that could eventually lead to a wider and more open participation. The government has indicated that the Council may initiate proposals without first consulting the king. One key reform measure, allowing elections for some seats on the municipal councils, was instituted in 2005. The slow pace of reform seems to be attributable to misgivings by the royal family, which has not had to share governmental power. Whether this will chart the way toward a constitutional monarchy remains to be seen.

While the Saudi leaders have been exceptionally adept at containing dissent and forging consensus, the family may be losing touch—which is possible, given its extravagant wealth, regional security problems, and international alignment. This could well be its ultimate downfall.

Oil income has created social tensions stemming from rapid changes brought by modernization, a huge foreign presence, and the many problems associated with a boom-and-bust economy. The demand for oil continues at a brisk pace, and Saudi Arabia is the

world's foremost supplier of oil. Foreign investment has also increased and attempts have been made to diversify the Saudi economy.

Saudi Arabia is almost certain to face threats to its security by Islamist militants. While there are internal sources of support and international terrorist groups continue to be potent, the kingdom's internal security is strong and has been able to contain threats to some extent.

The al-Saud family has several factors working in its favor: the country's size, the separation between cities, and religious affinities—all of which make it extremely difficult for a rebel force to take over the country. And so long as oil keeps flowing at moderately stable rates and prices, the government will continue to use its largesse for domestic peace and external security. All this leads one to conclude that the Saudi monarchy will probably endure into the foreseeable future.

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REPUBLIC OF SENEGAL

(République du Sénégal)

By Jacob Darling, B.A., and Ken Menkhaus, Ph.D.
Revised by Florina Laura Neculai, M.A.



Senegal, a West African nation of 11 million people (2005 est.), was ruled from 1980 until 2000 by President Abdou Diouf. Diouf succeeded the country's first president, Léopold Senghor, who was the first leader of independent Africa to voluntarily retire and permit a peacful transition to a constitutional successor. Throughout its postcolonial history, Senegal has possessed one of Africa's more open, stable, vibrant, and democratic political systems. Its limited, "semidemocratic" system of government in the 1970s has since undergone significant reforms that have deepened democratization in the country. Today, Senegal enjoys most of the elements of a fully democratized political system, despite the fact that it has yet to remove the incumbent party from power through elections and despite relatively high levels of political tension and unrest that accompany each election. It is one of the few African countries not to have experienced a single violent transfer of power or a military coup.

Located at the westernmost point of West Africa, the area today known as Senegal has been a gateway to the continent by sea and land for centuries. Three medieval empires flourished there, all linked to the trans-Saharan trade with North Africa and the east-west routes across the Sahel. Much of the Atlantic slave trade from the 17th to the 19th centuries passed through the ports and coastal castles of the region as well. France occupied four coastal trading centers (communes) in the area in the mid-19th century and later colonized the interior as well. Senegal's present boundaries were established in 1904; it formed part of the French colonial federation of French West Africa. Senegal's capital city, Dakar, served as the administrative center of French West Africa. Senegal comprises 196,840 square kilometers—about the size of South Dakota—and is mostly semiarid lowlands and foothills.

The long history of French colonial administration and French education for the region's elites has left a strong French influence, both direct and indirect, on Senegalese politics. The French practice of granting full political rights and French citizenship to a small portion of the local inhabitants of the four communes created a small Senegalese political elite with extensive experience with political parties, elections, and formal administration from the French perspective.

Islam is also a powerful influence on the political culture in Senegal: 90 percent or more of the population is Muslim. Ethnic distinctions play a role in Senegalese politics as well. Senegal is composed of six major ethnic groups. The Wolof, at 43.4 percent of the total population, constitute the largest group, and the Wolof language serves (along with French) as a lingua franca in the country. The largest of the other ethnic groups include the Hal Pular (Tukulor and Fulani combined, 23.8 percent), the Serer (14.7 percent), and the Diola, Mandingo, and others (19 percent).

With few exceptions, ethnic identity has not been a divisive factor in Senegal; the government has done a successful job of building a strong sense of national identity among its people, and political parties tend

not to have ethnic affiliations. Though the Wolof dominate urban commerce and the civil service, they have not sought to block other groups from entrance into these fields, a fact that has helped to prevent ethnic tensions. The government has taken care to recognize six national languages (in addition to French) as "official" languages in the country—Wolof, Fulani, Serer, Malinke, Diola, and Soninke. Only in the Casamance region, where the Diola (who mostly embrace Catholic or traditional religion rather than Islam) have mounted an armed secessionist movement against the Senegalese state, is ethnopolitics an immediate threat.

HISTORY

Senegal won its independence in 1960, followed by several years of single-party rule. However, the current multiparty democratic system is the product of more than two decades of constitutional reforms, which effectively reverses the 1960s autocratic trends. This incremental reform process began in 1974 with the legalization of one opposition party. In 1976 the constitution was amended to allow for three parties, each of which was given defined ideological positions, ostensibly to prevent factionalism, ethnic parties, or personality cults. Senghor's own party was positioned in the center of this trio and renamed the Socialist Party (Parti Socialiste; PS), though its policies were more conservative than Socialist. Upon assuming power in 1980, President Diouf launched a series of additional constitutional and legislative reforms toward democratization, including abolishing limits on the number of registered political parties, which resulted in 14 political parties; lifting of restrictions on the independent press; equal access to the electronic media for the opposition; and reintroduction of the position of prime minister. Diouf in 1983 succeeded in abolishing the prime ministership a second time to streamline the administration, but in 1991 he was pressured to reestablish the position.

Despite relatively credible elections in 1983 and 1988, widespread public dissatisfaction with the electoral "rules of the game"—which were perceived as being biased in favor of the incumbent PS—triggered massive rallies and a political crisis. In response, still more constitutional reforms were proposed by Diouf's government. In 1991 the government invited opposition parties to form a coalition government of national unity while a joint "National Commission on the Reform of the Electoral Code" crafted constitutional revisions. Those revisions eventually met nearly all the opposition's demands for reform; unfortunately, the assassination of the vice president of the Constitutional Council, Babacar Seye, in the immediate aftermath of the May 1993 legislative elections cast a dark shadow over the electoral reform process. In 2000 the 40-year domination of the PS came to an end when longtime opposition candidate Abdoulaye Wade of the Senegalese Democratic Party (PDS) was elected to the presidency.

The System of Government

Senegal is a democratic republic with a strong presidency and a unicameral legislature.

EXECUTIVE

According to the constitution, the president is head of state and commander in chief of the armed forces. He is elected by universal adult suffrage (anyone 18 or older may vote) in presidential elections that, since the reforms of 1992, are to be held in separate years from legislative elections.

The presidency in Senegal is strong. In foreign policy matters, the president is empowered to name diplomats and can negotiate, ratify, and approve most types of treaties on behalf of Senegal. In domestic matters, he appoints and can dismiss the prime minister and cabinet members (in consultation with the prime minister); he is empowered to declare a state of emergency, a state of siege, or a crisis threatening the institutions of the republic; and he can initiate legislation for the National Assembly's consideration. The president also enjoys the prerogative to regulate by presidential decree all matters not reserved to the legislature.

The president shares executive branch power with a prime minister. The prime minister is appointed by and responsible to the president, a practice that in principle would clearly place ultimate authority in the hands of the president. Nonetheless, in the past this division of labor has created power struggles between the two offices that have twice resulted in decisions to abolish the prime ministership. The prime minister, in consultation with the president, appoints and presides over a Council of Ministers, which serves as a cabinet, and is responsible for managing the day-to-day functioning of the government. In the event of the death of the president, it is the head of the National Assembly, not the prime minister, who assumes power.

In practice, most of the power of the presidency derives from his control over the allocation of state resources and hence his patronage capacities, which opposition parties cannot match. The most significant constraint on presidential powers in Senegal has proved to be public pressure and protest.

LEGISLATURE

The National Assembly is a single-chamber legislative body composed of 120 deputies. Deputies are popularly elected for five-year terms. The Assembly normally meets twice a year for two months. Special sessions may be called by the executive or a majority of legislators and last a maximum of two weeks, unless a budget is being considered, in which case the session lasts until the budget is passed.

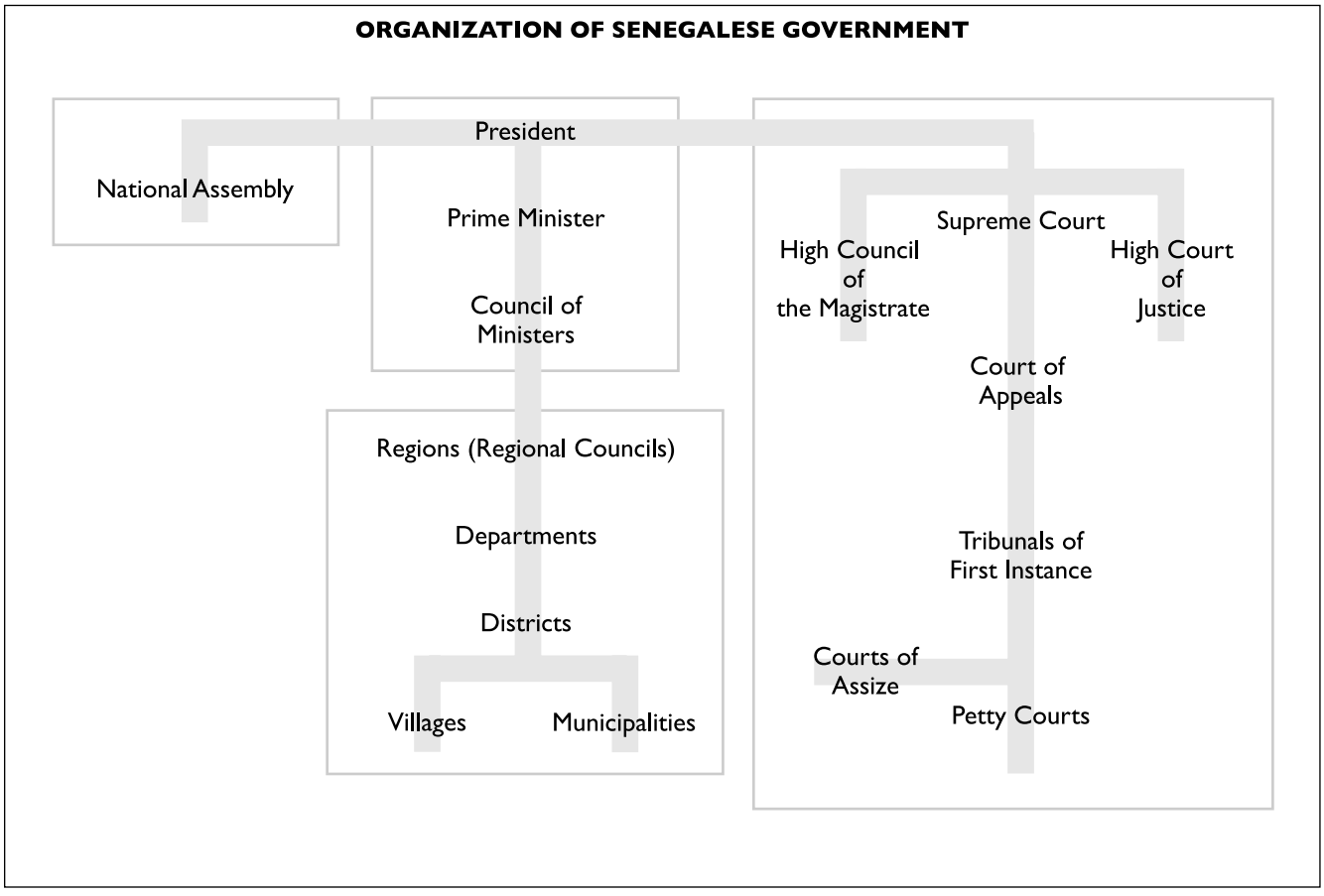
In keeping with its model, the French Fifth Republic, Senegal's legislature is relatively weak. Deputies have the right to initiate legislation but rarely do; most legislative proposals are put forward by the executive. Most conflicts are settled in committee rather than in open sessions. Appointed liaisons between each ministry and relevant committees smooth this process. The right to debate the budget, which in theory is a key power of the Assembly, has been marginalized by Senegal's weak economy, by its reliance on French subsidies, and most importantly by the growing role of the International Monetary Fund in restricting and directing financial and budgetary decisions.

2001 NATIONAL ASSEMBLY ELECTION RESULTS:

Political Party	Seats
SOPI Coalition (Led by PDS)	89
Alliance of Forces of Progress (AFP)	11
Socialist Party (PS)	10
Others	10

JUDICIARY

The Senegalese judiciary is proud of its independence, although its importance relative to the executive



and legislative branches is limited by the prevalence of code law procedures. Major laws are examined for constitutionality before passage. The judiciary is headed by the 10-member Supreme Court, including a chief justice. The High Court of Justice, consisting of two justices and 10 deputies, can be convoked to consider impeachment of the president or ministers; the only impeachable offense is high treason. The High Council of the Magistrate is the nerve center of the system, nominating judges, guaranteeing the integrity of the judiciary, and advising the president of clemency. There are petty courts in departmental capitals, four courts of assize, and the Supreme Court of Appeal. Civil and criminal cases are heard by the same judges and assessors in all except the courts of assize, where felonies are heard by juries.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The territorial administration is divided into 11 regions headed by governors, 31 departments headed by prefects, and 95 districts headed by subprefects. Territorially elected representative bodies include regional assemblies, municipal councils, and rural councils (village groupings), all with budget authority over the personal taxes collected in their area by the central government.

In the past, Senegal's regional and local government had few significant powers; as in most of Africa and as in Senegal's political model, France, power was invested heavily in the centralized state and in the capital. In that context, regional and local government posts were seen as entry-level positions for young civil servants who hoped quickly to be promoted to more promising jobs in the capital. In the 1990s, however, a long-anticipated decentralization program was begun to devolve significant central government authority to regional assemblies and municipalities. The World Bank helped to fund the "Senegal Urban Development–Decentralization Project" in which responsibility for urban services and infrastructure was shifted from central government ministries to 60 municipalities in Senegal. Over time, more and more functional authority will likely be located at the local level.

The Electoral System

The electoral system in Senegal has been the subject of repeated constitutional and legal reforms. For opposition parties, a perception that the electoral system was biased in favor of the incumbent party has been at the center of their complaints. This concern was eased after the 2000 elections, when the opposition PDS candidate won the presidency.

Since 1988 separate elections have been held for the legislature and the presidency. The president continues to be elected by direct, universal suffrage. Because multiple parties sponsor presidential candidates, a possibility exists that no one candidate will receive 50 percent or more of the vote. In that instance, a runoff election would be held. A victorious candidate must also secure a minimum of 25 percent of registered voters in order to claim the presidency, which heightens the importance of voter turnout.

In 1991 the government established a "National Commission on the Reform of the Electoral Code." Those reforms met nearly all the opposition's demands, including a lowering of the voting age to 18 years; obligatory secret ballot; a comprehensive list of identified registered voters; use of indelible ink to mark voters' fingers and prevent multiple voting; monitoring by political parties of the distribution of voting cards and of voting sites; and creation of the National Vote Tabulation Commission to oversee elections. These reforms did not entirely eliminate imperfections and even significant problems in the 1993 elections but constituted a major step forward in institutionalizing the democratic process.

The Party System

ORIGINS OF THE PARTIES

Although Senegal has the longest tradition of electoral politics in black Africa (the French first organized elections in the trading centers of Saint-Louis in 1848 before they conquered the rest of the country), political parties are a relatively recent phenomenon. Elected leaders in the early 20th century depended on their political clubs. Electoral politics was suspended during World War II by local representatives of the Vichy regime, so it was not until 1945 and 1946 that the SFIO-Sen won its first electoral victories.

The poet Léopold Senghor in 1947 formed a mass-based political party, the Senegalese Democratic Bloc (Bloc Démocratique Sénégalais; BDS). His rural prominence, alliances with Muslim and Catholic religious leaders (the most powerful rural authorities), and skill at patronage politics paid off in the 1951 and 1952 elections, and he ruled with an iron hand until 1973.

Then, in order to meet the requirement of the Socialist International that its member parties participate in multiparty democracy, Senghor legalized a number of opposition parties—first, the centrist Senegalese Democratic Party (Parti Démocratique Sénégalais; PDS), then one branch of the long-underground Marxist-Leninist African Independence Party (Parti Africain de l'Indépendence; PAI), and finally the conservative religious Senegalese Republican Movement (Mouvement Republicain Sénégalais; MRS). At the same time, Senghor changed the name of his own party to the Socialist Party (Parti Socialiste; PS). By 1981 President Diouf allowed complete freedom to organize and formally register parties, producing 16 parties by 1985.

PARTY ORGANIZATION

The PS and PDS are the only parties that enjoy mass membership nationwide. Most of the smaller parties are based in and draw most of their support from members in Dakar; several others are regional, with power bases in the far southern province of Casamance or in the Sine-Saloum.

Parties typically have political bureaus elected at their annual national conventions, but the basic mechanisms of politics are intraparty cliques, locally dubbed "clans," and patron-client networks. The latter comprise a political leader's relatives, their traditional dependent religious disciples (if the leader is a *marabout*, or local Islamic leader), and any organization the leader has founded or won over. The style and internal functioning of the networks and clans grew out of precolonial extended-family and lord-vassal ties with modern twists. Patrons buy large blocks of party membership cards and distribute them to their followers. Trade unions, cultural associations, and vocational organizations sometimes adhere to a single patron or form a clan of their own. Within the network, adherents turn to one another for help in getting jobs, promotions, and political favors and in coping with the cumbersome Senegalese bureaucracy. Only at election time do most networks have enough coherence to be identified individually; then they are expected to vote as a bloc with the patron.

CAMPAIGNING

Campaigning is vigorous, open, and unrestricted in Senegal, with sharp criticism of the government an accepted part of the process. Campaigning is officially limited to the two weeks preceding an election, but candidate decisions and publicity begin much earlier. The choice of candidates takes place through intraparty elections. Television and radio news and the official daily newspaper, *Le Soleil,* focus on presidential and cabinet activities all year round, and incumbents tour the country at government expense.

Endorsements by important social leaders are critical in campaigning. Especially sought after are the *marabouts*, who have a reputation as "kingmakers" in Senegal for their ability to direct disciples to vote for or against candidates.

The 1992 electoral and constitutional reforms have had an impact on campaigns. A High Council on Radio and Television was created by the government in an effort to ensure equal access to radio, television, and newspaper coverage for all parties. Prior to that, the incumbent PS was allocated one-half of all campaign time on electronic media, while the other half was divided up among all other opposition parties.

Major Political Parties

SOCIALIST PARTY

(Parti Socialiste; PS)

The PS practices a brand of African Socialism combining the private sector with nationalized economic development. Léopold Senghor was honorary president for life until his death in 2001. The PS remains structurally, as it was in the BDS and UPS days, a curious amalgam of patron networks cutting across a formal territorial hierarchy of committees, which send delegates to district, regional, and national meetings. Individual membership cards are sold for a small amount, but patrons and *marabouts* buy large blocks for distribution to followers, which renders membership figures meaningless. Ruling party membership claims have generally been about one-third of the registered voters. The party also has labor unions and peasant, women's, youth, and student units at various levels, rivaling, often successfully, independent voluntary associations. It publishes the weekly *L'Unité Africaine* and the satirical *Caaxan Faaxee.* In 2000 and 2001 the party saw its longtime political dominance come to an end, as first it lost the presidency and then was routed in legislative elections.

SENEGALESE DEMOCRATIC PARTY

(Parti Démocratique Sénégalais; PDS)

The lawyer Abdoulaye Wade (born about 1930) left the ruling party to found this centrist labor party in

1974, the first in Senegal's recent experiment in multiparty democracy. His was the only party to mount a presidential campaign in 1978 (he won 17.7 percent of the vote) and the only one to win Assembly seats (18). After 25 years of failure, he finally captured the presidency in 2000. In the 2001 legislative elections the PDS led a coalition known as the Coalition Sopi, which captured 89 of the 120 Assembly seats.

Ideologically, the PDS is similar to the African Socialism of the PS, yet opposed to nationalization. Its journal, *Le Démocrate*, harshly criticized government corporations during the PS's rule.

ALLIANCE OF FORCES OF PROGRESS

(Alliance des Forces de Progrès; AFP)

This party, led by Moustapha Niasse, captured 11 seats in the National Assembly elections of 2001.

Minor Political Parties

AND JEF: REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT FOR THE NEW DEMOCRACY (AND JEF UNITY FOR ACTION)

(Movement Révolutionaire pour la Démocratie Nouvelle; AJ/MRDN)

And Jef is an Asian-style Communist movement registered in 1981 by the demographer and former director of statistics Landing Savane (born in 1948 in Casamance) and his colleague Amadou Top. It publishes the important journal *Jaay Bdoole Bi* in Wolof and French. The party won two seats in the 2001 elections.

DEMOCRATIC AND PATRIOTIC CONVENTION

Convention des Democrates et des Patriotes/Garab-gi (CDP/Garab-gi)

The party was organized in May of 1992 by a one-time education minister and UNESCO executive council member, Professor Iba Der Thiam. In the 2000 presidential election Thiam won less than 2 percent of the vote. In the 2001 legislative elections the party did not win any seats.

DEMOCRATIC LEAGUE–POPULAR LABOR MOVEMENT

(Ligue Démocratique–Mouvement Populaire et du Travail; LD/MPT)

This party, registered in 1981, is led by Abdoulaye Bathily. Although founded as a Marxist party, it no longer identifies with those principles. It has an active student wing, the Democratic Youth Movement. In the 2001 legislative elections the party joined the PDS-led Coalition Sopi, which captured 89 of the 120 Assembly seats.

INDEPENDENCE AND LABOR PARTY

(Parti de l'Indépendence et du Travail; PIT)

A 1965 Marxist offshoot of the African Independence Party (PAI), the PIT is led by Amath Dansokho. It was legalized and registered in 1981. In 2001 the party won one Assembly seat.

NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC ASSEMBLY

(Rassemblement National Démocratique; RND)

Cheikh Anta Diop (1923–86), a noted historian, founded this pan-African Socialist party after a decade and a half in internal exile as head of a radiocarbon-dating laboratory. In 2001 the party won one Assembly seat.

UNION FOR DEMOCRATIC RENEWAL

(Union pour le renouveau démocratique; URD)

In 2000 this party's presidential candidate, Djibo Leyti Kâ, won more than 7 percent of the vote. In the legislative elections the next year, the party won three Assembly seats.

Other Political Forces

MILITARY

The Senegalese army has a reputation as a small but highly professional force that has thus far consciously

and consistently remained apolitical and under the firm control of the civilian government. It has increasingly been called on to serve in multinational peacekeeping operations. Its most serious and direct involvement in internal Senegalese affairs has come as a result of its mobilization to combat the armed secessionist movement in Casamance region, where it has risked being seen as an instrument of Islamic and Wolof domination over the Diola people. Still the tradition of multiethnic recruitment and French officer training has contributed to a tradition of abstention from politics in the armed forces.

In 1988 the army chief of staff, General Taverez da Souza, was relieved of his duties following charges that he had convened meetings to plan a possible military intervention to quell political disturbances following elections. The prompt action by the government reinforced the ethos of noninvolvement of the military in politics.

RELIGIOUS BROTHERHOODS AND ISLAMISM

Marabouts—whose roles include teacher, scholar, landowner, and leader in worship—are the most widespread and effective local political authorities in the countryside. Their informal authority can often eclipse formal government power. Discipleship, or the patron-client relationship, is the key to their political power. People become their adherents through either having studied with them or having joined their movement as adults. In either case, the bond is usually strong and lifelong. According to their own ethics, they should abstain from direct involvement in politics, and most support separation of state and religious matters, though they can and do endorse parties. The main Islamic brotherhoods all support the government.

By contrast to this "traditional" form of Islamic leadership, contemporary Islamic movements calling for the establishment of an Islamic revival and Islamic state have grown. To date, the political elite of Senegal are firmly committed to secular government, but political Islam in Senegal bears careful attention, as it has been connected to several assassinations and street violence.

ARMED INSURGENCY MOVEMENTS

Only one major political movement has opted for the bullet rather than the ballot in Senegal, and its sustained armed insurgency against the government has become the most intractable political crisis in Senegal. In the southern region of Casamance, the Movement of Democratic Forces of Casamance (Mouvement des Forces Démocratiques de la Casamance; MFDC) has been waging a war for independence from Senegal since 1982. There, the Diola ethnic group claim that their isolated region—which is virtually cut off from the rest of Senegal by the tiny country of Gambia—has been marginalized and ignored by the rest of the country. Religion and language are important factors in the separatist movement; most of the Diola people are animists or Catholics and fiercely resist both Islam and the Wolof language. Some of the top leaders of the MFDC are Catholic priests. Though the actual number of armed insurgents appears to be small—perhaps only 300—their guerrilla tactics have frustrated government forces. The government's use of torture and executions in Casamance has been a source of international criticism. In December 2004 the government and the MFDC signed an agreement aimed at ending the conflict.

EXTERNAL FORCES

Increasingly, some aspects of the Senegalese political system have come to be influenced or even dictated by external forces. In particular, all political processes related to economic decision making must take into account the influence of the International Monetary Fund, which imposes strict guidelines on the country's budget and fiscal policies as part of its structural adjustment program. In addition, France retains a special level of indirect influence in the country. The United States has also attempted to improve its relationship with Senegal. This policy was reflected in President Bill Clinton's visit in April 1998.

National Prospects

Since the early 1990s Senegal has increased its dealings with the governments of the West African region, which have become more involved in one another's economic and military affairs. This tendency came to a head in June 1998 when Senegal sent troops to defend the government of Guinea-Bissau against a rebel movement. This conflict and difficulties in Sierra Leone in December 1998 put Senegal's military at full alert and contributed to a growing refugee problem. In 2005 a dispute with Gambia about ferry tariffs led to a blockade that harmed both nations' economies.

Senegal's democracy is ironically at its best in nonelection years, when the country engages in thoughtful

and articulate debates over electoral and constitutional reforms. Election years, however, have often yielded high levels of political tensions, street protests, imprisonment of political figures, and even assassinations. Public cynicism over both incumbent and opposition parties runs high as well. As one analyst noted, "Senegalese democracy does not necessarily come out of these elections strengthened." Severe economic hardship revolving around the possibility of debt forgiveness, post–cold war political marginalization, and rising sectarianism and ethnopolitics in the country all add to the pressures placed on Senegal's democratic system. Still, Senegal's democracy appears capable of absorbing the growing challenges shouldered by the country, and the peaceful transfer of power following the 2000 presidential election reflected the strength of the country's democratic institutions.

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SERBIA AND MONTENEGRO

(Srbija i Crna Gora)

By Stephen C. Markovich, Ph.D.
Revised by Daniel Skinner



Serbia and Montenegro emerged from the ashes of the former Yugoslavia, the Socialist federal republic led after World War II by the Communist dictator Josep Tito. In the decade after Tito's death in 1980, the formal federation slid toward confederation and ultimately disintegration in 1991; it was effectively unable to survive as one country without Tito at the helm to check the latent ethnic discords. From the remains of the disintegration came the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY), which, on February 5, 2003, was officially reinvented—nominally and structurally—as Serbia and Montenegro. Despite numerous hurdles and internal fissures, the new state is vigorously attempting to achieve international respect and economic and political stability.

As a result of the disintegration there are substantial differences between Serbia and Montenegro and the Yugoslavia of the past. Where the previous Yugoslavia was made up of six republics (Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, and Montenegro) and two autonomous provinces (Kosovo and Vojvodina), Serbia and Montenegro is made up of only two republics—Serbia and Montenegro; the other four republics have seceded and declared independence, and the two autonomous provinces have been annexed by Serbia. Where the previous Yugoslavia had a total population of 23.5 million people comprising several South Slav peoples, Serbia and Montenegro has a population of 10.8 million (2005 est.) comprising primarily Serbs (6,500,000), with smaller but significant numbers of Montenegrins, Albanians, Hungarians, and Muslims. The large number of Albanians is concentrated in what was the autonomous province of Kosovo, which is adjacent to Albania itself, and similarly the Hungarians are in the region that was the autonomous province of Vojvodina, which is adjacent to Hungary. The Serbs now make up nearly two-thirds of the population, compared with one-third previously, and therefore they dominate Serbia and Montenegro despite a constitution that emphasizes equality between the two republics.

Though the new constitution ostensibly sets up a federal system consisting of two republics, Serbia and Montenegro, the inequities between the two republics bring the federal nature into question; Serbia has 94 percent of the population and Montenegro 6 percent, and Serbia has over 90 percent of the economic assets and Montenegro less than 10 percent. Such an extreme in size and wealth is not promising for genuine federalism, and the reality is that Serbia does dominate. Nonetheless, the constitution includes rigorous provisions to ensure that Montenegro retains a strong voice, such as locating the judiciary in the Montenegrin capital, Podgorica, and representative controls requiring that both Serbs and Montenegrins hold the highest positions in government.

The System of Government

Serbia and Montenegro is a federal republic with a unicameral legislature.

EXECUTIVE

The constitution of Serbia and Montenegro calls for a single president and vice president elected by the Assembly for a single four-year term. Candidates for the presidency are nominated by the president and vice president of the Assembly, one of whom must be from Serbia and the other from Montenegro (the president and vice president of Serbia and Montenegro also must be from different republics, as must the president of the Assembly). The president of Serbia and Montenegro functions as the chief of state, head of government and is a member of the Supreme Command Council. The president also calls elections for the Assembly and chairs the Council of Ministers. As in all parliamentary systems, the president is held accountable to the Assembly.

The presidency of Serbia and Montenegro marks a decisive move away from the kind of centralized power Slobodan Milošević was able to accrue during his presidency in the former Yugoslavia. By funneling virtually all powers through the Assembly and making the president only one of several equals on the Supreme Command Council, the presidency is forced to work within a system based on consensus decision making. Despite strong formal powers of the presidency, this command structure has resulted in an increased role for the president of the Assembly.

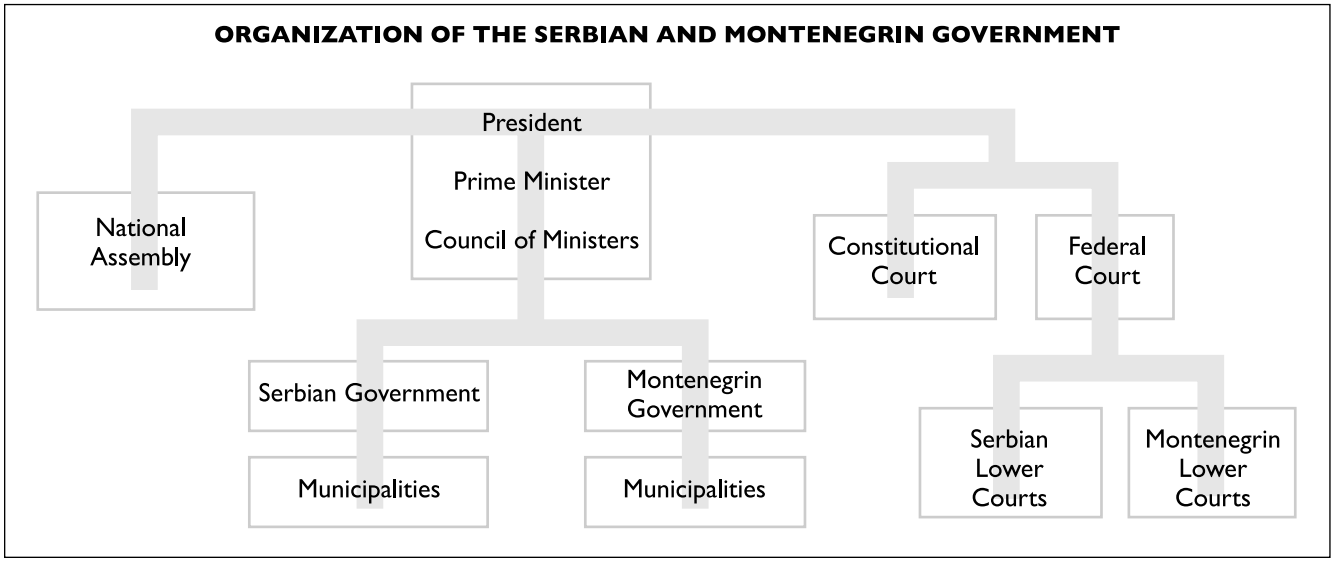
Beneath the president of Serbia and Montenegro is a Council of Ministers, elected to four-year terms, which includes the ministers of foreign affairs, defense, international economic relations, internal economic relations and human and minority rights. After two years ministers are replaced by their deputies.

The republics of Serbia and Montenegro also have provincial dual executives. The president of Serbia and the president of Montenegro are chosen by popular election for a maximum of two five-year terms and are charged with proposing candidates for prime minister of their respective Assemblies, issuing ordinances, commanding the armed forces, and promulgating laws passed by the Assembly. The presidents of the republics can also force the Assembly to take a second vote within seven days of the passage of laws before declaring it valid. The prime ministers of Serbia and Montenegro are nominated by the presidents of their respective republics, and they are voted on by representatives of their national assemblies. Most of the formal powers associated with heads of state and government reside in the prime ministers of both Serbia and Montenegro.

LEGISLATURE

While in the former Yugoslavia there was a bicameral legislature on the federal level, the Assembly of Serbia and Montenegro (Skupstina Srbije) is unicameral. Comprised of 126 seats—91 Serbian and 35 Montenegrin—members of the Assembly are to be nominated for four-year terms by the Serbian and Montenegrin assemblies for the first two years of the new republic (the first assembly was chosen on February 25, 2003), after which the president is to call for popular elections, which are expected to be held at least once every four years.

The constitution charges the Assembly with electing the president of Serbia and Montenegro as well as the president's Council of Ministers. The president and



the vice president of the Assembly propose candidates, which the Assembly then elects. The president and vice president of the Assembly must come from different republics, and the president of the Assembly may not be from the same republic as the president of Serbia and Montenegro. Should the Assembly elect a president from the same republic as the president of Serbia and Montenegro, the president and vice president of the Assembly are required to switch posts.

The Council of Ministers, members of the Assembly, as well as the assemblies of the member states can propose bills to the Assembly. Bills are adopted by the vote of a majority of members, but must also have a majority of votes among the assemblies of the member states.

In addition to making domestic law, the competencies of the Assembly include the power to declare and abolish war and to enact military and defense policies in general. It is also responsible for ensuring compliance with international law and international courts—a clear mandate for cooperation with the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ITFY) in The Hague.

The legislatures of the republics of Serbia and Montenegro are closely related. Both are charged with electing the prime minister, president and vice presidents of the Assembly. The Assembly of Serbia is fixed at a total of 250 representatives while the constitution of Montenegro mandates one representative for every 6,000 citizens. Both assemblies are elected by popular vote, and members serve four-year terms without limitation.

JUDICIARY

Most cases in Serbia and Montenegro begin in the lower courts of the two federal republics. In Serbia the courts apply Serbian and federal law, and in Montenegro they apply Montenegrin and federal law. These republican courts are established and the judges appointed by the respective governments in Serbia and Montenegro. It is only when cases involve legal points and constitutional issues above the republican level that they are brought to one of the two courts on the federal level—the Federal Court or the Federal Constitutional Court. According to the constitution, the Federal Court hears appeals from the republican courts when the cases concern federal statutes, when they involve disputes between member republics and between Serbia and Montenegro and member republics, or when they require the uniform enforcement of federal statutes and enactments. The Federal Constitutional Court rules on the conformity of federal and republican constitutions, on the conformity of federal and republican laws with the federal constitution, and on the conformity of actions of political parties and citizen associations with the federal constitution; and it also serves as umpire in resolving conflicts between federal and republican authorities and between authorities of the member republics.

In sum, the justices who serve on these courts are expected to act as the ultimate arbiters in legal and constitutional matters. The constitution mandates that the Court of Serbia and Montenegro be comprised of an equal number of judges from both member republics, nominated by the Council of Ministers for six-year terms. Judges may serve only one term.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Below the federal government and the two republican governments are over 200 municipalities that are responsible for covering community needs involving utilities, housing, welfare, and other local matters. Each of these municipalities is run by an assembly of aldermen elected directly by the people for four-year terms. In Serbia the aldermen are elected by majority vote in a double-ballot system: if one candidate does not win a majority on the first ballot, then a second election is held between the top two candidates. In Montenegro the aldermen are elected through a system of proportional representation. Local elections for all municipalities are held simultaneously throughout the nation.

Historically, local elections proved extremely important in establishing firm power bases for the dominant political parties in Yugoslavia, and it was on the local level that the first signs of coordinated dissent from Milošević were seen.

The 1996 elections, in particular, were significant in that they demonstrated some overt challenges to Milošević. Even though his ruling party won 134 districts to the opposing coalition's 44 districts, the coalition's victories troubled him because they occurred in key urban areas; in Belgrade alone the coalition won 12 of 16 constituencies, enough to make an opposition leader mayor of the capital city. Milošević tried to erase these opposition victories by pressuring the courts to annul the elections in these urban districts, which the courts did, as noted above, but subsequent domestic demonstrations and international protests forced Milošević to retreat from his heavy-handed tactics and recognize the opposition victories. Significantly, these victories provided opposition parties with renewed

energy and legitimacy that has been carried forward into the politics of Serbia and Montenegro.

The importance of municipal power remains in Serbia and Montenegro. Many of these early opposition parties to Milošević have gone on to become formidable participants in Serbian and Montenegrin politics. It is also at this level that the insurgent movement for Montenegrin independence is felt most strongly, and local governing bodies in Montenegro could be important players in the referendum for independence from Serbia planned for 2006.

The Electoral System

To be eligible to vote in Serbia and Montenegro, an individual has to be a citizen who is 18 years of age and who fulfills some minor residence requirements. Apart from slight variations in residence requirements in the republics, the voting qualifications are generally the same for all elections at all levels. After the first two years, members of the federal Assembly are to be elected by popular vote, while the president of the Assembly, the president of Serbia and Montenegro, and the Council of Ministers are elected by the Assembly. After two years, members of the Assembly will be chosen by popular vote in an election called by the president.

However, while nearly 70 percent of eligible voters cast their ballots in the federal, republican, and local elections held jointly by the republics of Serbia and Montenegro in 1992, there has been a continuous and steady decline in voter participation on all levels that has continued into the new Serbia and Montenegro. The 1997 election for the Serbian presidency was the first major indication; in October of that year the first election for a president to succeed Milošević had to be invalidated because less than 50 percent of the eligible voters participated, and in the rescheduled election in December, an election described by international observers as flawed and manipulated, barely 51 percent of the 3.2 million eligible votes turned out. Subsequently, it took multiple elections—four in Serbia, three in Montenegro—for the republics to elect presidents due to low voter turnout. Explanations for voter apathy have been numerous, but most analysts agree that the poor economy is largely to blame, while others still point to boycotts orchestrated by Milošević supporters. Moreover, stark ethnic divisions can still be seen in voter returns, which may explain, at least in part, the rise of the far-right nationalist Serbian Radical Party (SRS), led by Vojislav Seselj, who came in a strong third in the first round of the September 2003 elections despite the fact that he was awaiting trial in The Hague on multiple war crimes indictments. Both the Serbian and the Montenegrin assemblies, frustrated at the inability to elect a president, voted to change their electoral codes in 2003, doing away with the 50 percent turnout requirement. On June 27, with a 48 percent turnout, Boris Tadic received 54 percent of the vote to become Serbia's first democratically elected president since World War II, while Tomislav Nikolic, Seselj's successor as leader of the Serbian Radical Party received 45 percent. Also with a 48 percent turnout, Montenegro elected its president, Filip Vujanovic of the Democratic Party of Socialists and the Social Democratic Party, who received 63 percent of the vote.

On the republican level the people in Serbia and Montenegro, respectively, elect their own presidents and unicameral legislatures. To be elected president of Serbia or Montenegro for a five-year term, a candidate has to win a majority of the popular vote in his republics; if no candidate wins more than 50 percent on the first ballot, then a second election is held between the top two candidates.

Members of the unicameral legislatures are elected through systems of proportional representation in each republic. In Serbia the people vote for party lists in nine electoral constituencies to determine the makeup of the 250-seat National Assembly, and in Montenegro they vote in several communes within one electoral constituency to elect deputies to the Assembly.

The Party System

The constitution of Serbia and Montenegro contains no explicit language regarding political pluralism or the role of parties. Serbia and Montenegro has witnessed political divisions and coalitions on a scale similar to those of Yugoslavia, which saw the participation of nearly 50 political parties and coalitions in its 1996 elections. Many of the formidable parties that have survived the transition were born during the intensely chaotic period toward the end of Yugoslavia.

Among the major parties in Serbia are the right-wing Serbian Radical Party led by Tomislav Nikolic, the Democratic Party of Serbia led by Vojislav Kostunica, and the Democratic Party led by Boris Tadic. While there were few sharp differences in the policies and programs of the parties of the former Yugoslavia, the split between the Serbian Radical Party and Democratic Party of Serbia, in coalition with the Democratic Party,

are more significant, especially insofar as integration with European organizations and cooperation with the International Tribunal is concerned. This difference, however, is still one of degree rather than substance. All of them, for example, have a strong nationalist orientation, some stronger than others, and each argues for the union of all Serbs under one nation; those parties that earlier tried to take more moderate stands on nationalism got nowhere politically. All of the major parties want some form of market economy, though there are variations on the degree and speed of privatization.

Aside from their similarities, the dominant Serbian parties have become increasingly polarized on the issue of minority rights, and the Serbian Radical Party has exploited the issue of minorities by framing minority issues as purely economic. For many, however, it is the alliance between the Serbian Radical Party and Milošević's Socialist Party of Serbia in the 1990s that generates a fear of returning to the divisions that tore the former Yugoslavia apart, as well as how such a return would be interpreted by the international community that provides crucial aid and support to Serbia and Montenegro. This fear is given further support by the Serbian Radical Party's platform, which, despite the party's leader Tomislav Nikolic's assurances that as president he would not seek territorial gains, continues to claim Serbia's right to the territories that constituted the former Yugoslavia. In the weeks leading up to the Tadic/Nikolic election, for example, public reminders were issued by the United States State Department that "This election is an opportunity to confirm Serbia's transformation into a democratic, peaceful State government by the strength of the law" and that the election was a decisive moment for "the Serbs to continue to support the democratic reforms that were launched on 5th October 2000 after the fall of Slobodan Milosevic." Additionally, Javier Solana, the High Representative for the Foreign Policy of the European Union, underscored the importance of the election for Serbia and Montenegro's relationship with Europe when he warned: "If Tomislav Nikolic wins, the EU won't support him and this will be a very bad signal to foreign investors." Several other parties won seats in first election, but none appear capable of posing any challenge to the three majors; these include G17 Plus, the Socialist Party of Serbia, and SPO-NS.

On the Montenegrin side, the Democratic Party of Socialists of Montenegro dominates, having won 19 of the 25 seats in the first elections. The only other party that has thus far posed any challenge is the Socialist People's Party of Montenegro, which won nine seats. A host of smaller parties have won seats, including the Social-Democratic Party of Montenegro, the Serbian People's Party of Montenegro, the People's Party of Montenegro, the Liberal Alliance, and the Serb People's Party of Montenegro.

SERBIA AND MONTENEGRO NATIONAL ASSEMBLY ELECTION RESULTS, FEBRUARY 25, 2003

Serbia	**91**
Serbian Radical Party	30
Democratic Party of Serbia	20
Democratic Party	13
G17 Plus	12
Socialist Party of Serbia	8
SPO-NS	8
Montenegro	35
Democratic Party of Socialist of Montenegro	15
Socialist People's Party of Montenegro	9
Social Democratic Party of Montenegro	4
Serbian People's Party of Montenegro	2
People's Party of Montenegro	2
Liberal Alliance CG	2
Serb People's Party of Montenegro	1

Major Political Parties

SERBIAN RADICAL PARTY

(Srpska Radikalna Stranka; SRS)

The Serbian Radical Party was officially founded in 1991 at an assembly organized by its leader, Vojislav Seselj, who in 2005 was put on trial for war crimes at The Hague. Though the party characterizes itself as moderate right in ideological orientation, this is relative to the general right-wing character of Serbian politics; people outside of the SRS see it as an ultraright, ultranationalist party. On questions concerning the union

of Serbs and their lands, Seselj's party, now under the leadership of Tonislav Nikolic, presses even harder; for example, his party platform claims that Serbian lands include "the present diminished Serbian federal unit, Montenegro, Serbian Bosnia, Serbian Herzegovina, Serbian Dubrovnik, Serbian Dalmatia, Serbian Lika, Serbian Kordun, Serbian Banija, Serbian Western Srem, Serbian Baranja and Serbian Macedonia." Little of the former Yugoslavia is omitted from this list.

When Seselj felt that any of his political rivals disagreed with his view of Serbian lands, that is, when they were insufficiently nationalistic, he did not hesitate to attack them and try to remove them from office. On this point he broke his party's coalition with Milošević's party in October 1993 and forced the resignation of the Serbian prime minister and government; and earlier in the year he was instrumental in bringing down the Yugoslav president, Dobrica Cosic, and the Yugoslav prime minister, Milan Panic. Not even leaders and parties who agreed with his ultranationalism were immune from attack; he even leveled his verbal blasts at Zeljko Raznjatovic, the infamous militant ultranationalist and alleged war criminal with the alias "Arkan" who had attempted to enter the political scene with his own party. At times Seselj's attacks on Arkan and nearly everyone else in Serbian politics seemed to isolate him and his party, but he remained unfazed and pressed on with his ultranationalist program.

Despite the changes that have occurred with the formation of the new state, Nikolic has been able to carry and indeed increase the flame of Seselj's torch. In the early elections Nikolic appeared all but certain to win the presidency; indeed, he beat Tadic by 3 percent in the first round of elections that were thrown out because of low voter turnout. Tadic, however, went on to win over Nikolic by 8 percent in the final election. Nonetheless, SRS has remained extremely powerful, winning 82 out of 250 seats in the Serbian Assembly and 30 of 126 seats in the Assembly of Serbia and Montenegro.

Like Milošević's Socialist Party and the Radical Party under Seselj, Nikolic gets most of his support from former Communists turned Socialists, and especially from the less-educated segment of the populace living in the rural areas. With this support he has done well. Considering Serbia and Montenegro's soaring unemployment rate and lingering ethnic tensions, the Serbian Radical Party is certain to remain a major and, to many, an ominous force in the politics of Serbia and Montenegro.

DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF SERBIA

(Demokratska stranka Srbije; DSS)

Founded in 1992 by a splinter group of the former Yugoslav Democratic Party (DS), the Democratic Party of Serbia was eventually able to ally with the Serbian Renewal Movement (SPO) in forming the Democratic Movement of Serbia (DEPOS). DEPOS was made possible by important changes that Milošević was forced to make following the imposition of United Nations sanctions and intense protests staged by student and other citizen activists. This restructuring of the Yugoslav political landscape introduced a system of proportional voting that encouraged coalition building. The Democratic Party of Serbia was formed as a response to the Socialist Party of Serbia under the umbrella of DEPOS.

Riding the wave of DEPOS, the Democratic Party of Serbia won 19 seats in the Yugoslav Assembly and began to establish itself as a force in Serbian politics. Throughout the 1990s, however, DSS remained a persistent opponent of Milošević, and was not able to maintain strong alliances, which kept it from increasing its base. It was a member of the Democratic Opposition of Serbia coalition (DOS) that eventually deposed Milošević in 2000.

The DSS platform emphasizes both nationalism and democracy that, with the fall of Yugoslavia, has positioned it well to deal with the new political imperatives—both domestic and international—of Serbia and Montenegro. While it won 19 of 250 seats in the first elections of Serbia and Montenegro, it is in the Republic of Serbia that DSS has played its most important role. Under the leadership of Vojislav Kostunica who, after defeating Milošević in a run for the presidency in 2000, was elected prime minister of Serbia on March 3, 2004, the party has not only held 53 (or 18 percent) of seats in the assembly, but it has formed sometimes powerful coalitions with parties such as the People's Democratic Party (NDS) and the Serbian Liberal Party (SLS)—but also with former opponents such as SRS.

Despite Kostunica's critical role in opposing Milošević, he too has been cause for concern for many, and his opposition to the transfer of Milošević to The Hague and general lack of cooperation with the tribunal in general has been the source of tension with both European institutions and relations with the United States. In the new political climate of Serbia and Montenegro, and without Milošević to define Kostunica's politics, DSS has moved to the

right in order to prove its nationalist credentials and compete with SRS.

DEMOCRATIC PARTY

(Demokratska Stranka; DS)

The Democratic Party was also an important member of the DOS coalition that deposed Milošević. It is the third largest party in Serbia, winning 34 of 250 seats in the 2003 elections. DS also holds 13 seats in the assembly of Serbia and Montenegro, the fourth most powerful party in the new state. DS was excluded from the Kostunica coalition government reportedly because of pressure from Milošević's Socialist Party of Serbia.

DS is an essentially liberal and centrist party but, like almost all Serbian parties, has a strong nationalist streak as well. The party's leader, Boris Tadic, became president of Serbia in 2004 after the assassination of the former president of the party and Serbian prime minister Zoran Djindjic. Tadic's policies have emphasized open new markets and building a strong relationship with Europe, with EU membership being a central long-term goal. Though the Serbian presidency is weak when compared to the powers of the prime minister, and considering his ostracism from the Kostunica government, Tadic will likely use his position to secure DS a more powerful place in Serbian politics.

DEMOCRATIC LIST FOR A EUROPEAN MONTENEGRO

(Demokratska Lista za Evropsku Crnu Goru; DLECG)

Formerly called the Democratic Party of Socialists of Montenegro**,** the Democratic List for a European Montenegro is the ruling party in the Republic of Montenegro and is tied for third in party representation in Serbia and Montenegro. It holds 39 of the 78 seats in the Montenegrin Assembly, a majority on its own, and possesses 19 of the 126 seats in the National Assembly of Serbia and Montenegro. This relatively large representation in the legislature is due more to the constitutional provision that guarantees Montenegro 35 seats than it is to strong electoral support.

Under the leadership of Milo Dukanovic, DLECG has led a campaign advocating independence from Serbia yet, despite the establishment of new national symbols and preparations for independence, many of Dukanovic's critics charge that the referendum—set for 2006—is not soon enough. Nonetheless, DLECGs remains—and is likely to remain—the most powerful political force in Montenegrin politics for years to come, especially so long as the young Dukanovic remains its primary source of energy.

Minor Political Parties

There are a number of small parties in Serbia and Montenegro, but few of them are significant and very few are likely to endure as viable contenders. Two left-of-center parties that need to be mentioned are the Montenegrin Together for Changes Party (ZP), and the Serbian Democratic Party (DS), which is considered progressive center-left. These parties offer the greatest challenge to the dominant parties from the left, with each winning 14 seats in the first elections to the National Assembly. DS, in particular, offers a slightly less nationalistic vision that includes cooperation with European institutions and that seems willing to leave behind the burdens that Serbian political history (and excessive nationalism) brings to efforts to join the international community.

If Serbia can contain its extreme nationalist factions, one of the most promising parties may be G17 Plus, which began as a non-governmental organization advocating aggressive economic reforms and membership in the European Union and other Western institutions. G17 Plus formally established itself as a political party in December 2002 under the leadership of Miroljub Labus, former Yugoslav minister of foreign economic relations. Labus seems to appeal mostly to young people who see the future of Serbia in opening and maintaining economic relationships with European institutions and markets, and who recognize that this goal can be accomplished only by observing UN resolutions on Kosovo and cooperating with the tribunal in The Hague. In putting forth such a vision, G17 Plus offers Serbia and Montenegro the most thoroughly democratic and liberal vision of all insurgent parties.

The Serbian Socialist Party (SPS), which maintains Milošević as its titular head, has declined significantly since the establishment of Serbia and Montenegro and has been forced to coalition with ruling parties such as the Serbian Radical Party. Western pressures, as well as the obvious historical fears associated with SPS, have rendered it virtually powerless to impact Serbian and Montenegrin politics without seriously compromising its core principles and visions.

Other Political Forces

Since the 1980s Milošević's tight control over governmental power afforded little opportunity for other political forces to develop. Several groups, however, were able to challenge Milošević in ways that positioned them well to remain potentially powerful political forces in the post-Milošević Serbia and Montenegro.

ORTHODOX CHURCH

The Orthodox Church, although still a strongly nationalist institution, questioned Milošević's annulment of the 1997 elections by calling on all Serbs "to observe the truly expressed will of the people, and to prevent autocracy," and remains well-positioned as a critic of any attempts to thwart Serbia and Montenegro's new and more democratic institutions. This is especially true as both Serbia and Montenegro, like most Balkan nations, have experienced a boom in religious observance since the fall of Milošević.

MEDIA

While the media was previously an arm of Milošević's power-base, it has become an important force in Serbian and Montenegrin politics, with several new newspapers appearing over the last few years. The Montenegrin media, and most notably Montenegrin State Television (TVCG), which enjoyed a higher degree of autonomy than their Serbian counterparts under Milošević, became an increasingly important force in his overthrow. This radicalization has made it an important force in the Montenegrin independence drive.

OTPOR "RESISTANCE"

The rise of the student organization OTPOR ("Resistance") was perhaps the key factor in the movement to bring down the Milošević regime. While OTPOR—and student political action in general—has been relatively quiet since Milošević's fall, student organizations may prove to be a source of enormous political power in the future, both in the perpetually unstable Serbian politics and in the Montenegrin independence movement.

National Prospects

Despite some positive indicators such as slight economic development and the occasional cooperation with European institutions, Serbia and Montenegro is beset with problems, and these problems are fundamental to the state. They involve the very boundaries of the state, the people of the nation, and the character of the system.

Ostensibly the boundaries of Serbia and Montenegro are the combined boundaries of the republics of Serbia and Montenegro, but for many Serbian leaders the future boundaries stretch the country into areas that formally come under the jurisdiction of Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. Exactly what these areas are varies from one leader to another, but minimally they include the Bosnian areas inhabited by Serbs who, leaders such as Nikolic argue, continue to be oppressed by the largely non-Serb population. Merging these areas into a Greater Serbia may be difficult to accomplish diplomatically and, if pursued, could thrust Serbia and its people into yet more violence and trauma for many years to come. Even the internal annexations of Vojvodina and Kosovo have been accompanied by rumblings—the annexation of Kosovo came with the extremely high cost of war, which included a prolonged bombing by NATO and what appears to be the long-term presence of United Nations peacekeepers, a presence that often becomes the target of opprobrium and rancor by Serbian politicians. These former provinces, particularly Kosovo with its large Albanian population, remain explosive, and are likely to move toward independence once the postwar efforts make them stable enough to hold elections. The forces that have historically driven Serbia's problems could worsen yet more when Montenegro votes on independence in 2006, a vote that would further vanish any similarities Serbia and Montenegro share with the former Yugoslavia, destroy any hopes of achieving a greater Serbia, and, perhaps most importantly insofar as the economy is concerned, leave Serbia landlocked. Despite attempts to create a more sustainable and equitable political system in the new Serbia and Montenegro, the constitution itself indicates an uncertain future by providing guidelines for the day Montenegro secedes, a strange provision indeed for a nation looking toward a future of stability and unity. In Serbia, as well, the assassination of Prime Minister Djindjic, and rampant corruption within the ranks of the Serbian leadership, indicate that not only does Serbia and Montenegro have a long way to go to achieve stability, but that Serbia itself is still a long way from achieving a political system that is capable of stimulating real development, which is necessary before discussions about Serbia's future relationship with Europe can be seriously undertaken.

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REPUBLIC OF SEYCHELLES

(République des Seychelles)

By B. David Meyers, Ph.D.



The Republic of Seychelles comprises a scattered Indian Ocean archipelago of over 100 islands, home to approximately 81,000 people (2005 est.). Independent since 1976, this small country has made a transition from one-party authoritarianism toward democratic pluralism.

At independence, Seychelles was governed by a coalition of its two major political parties. James Mancham, leader of the conservative Democratic Party (DP), served as the nation's first president, and France Albert René, leader of the Socialist-leaning Seychelles People's Progressive Front (SPPF), was the prime minister. Less than a year later René assumed power through a coup, and Mancham began a 15-year exile.

In 1979 a new constitution established the Seychelles as a one-party, Socialist state, and René won uncontested presidential elections in that year, 1984, and 1989. While continuing to espouse Socialism, René's government successfully developed a mixed economy with an extensive social welfare system. Throughout the 1980s a series of troop mutinies and attempted coups and an invasion by foreign mercenaries were successfully resisted. However, the increasingly repressive nature of the regime encouraged thousands of Seychellois to live overseas.

During 1991, in an international atmosphere charged by changes in Eastern Europe and under pressure from France and the United Kingdom, René agreed to return Seychelles to a multiparty system. Opposition parties were legalized, Mancham and other exiled opponents returned, and an elected commission completed, and, on the second try, voters ratified a new constitution. Multiparty presidential and legislative elections have been held since 1993.

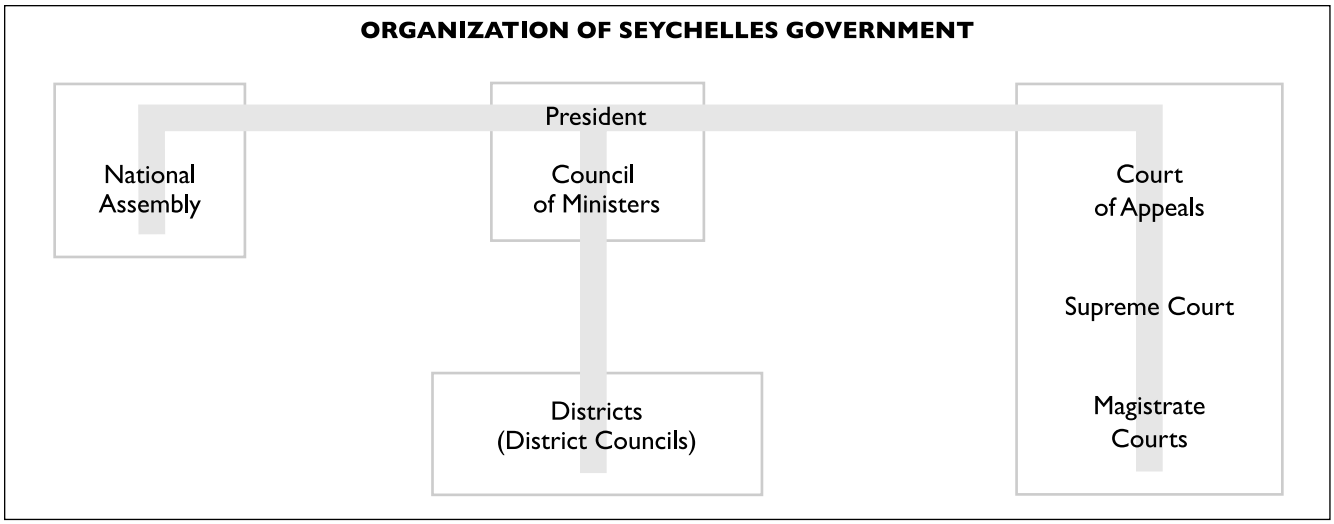
The System of Government

Seychelles is a presidential-style democratic republic with a unicameral legislature.

EXECUTIVE

Executive authority is vested in a president who is chief of state, head of government, and commander in chief of the armed forces. He may hold office for a maximum of three consecutive five-year terms. He appoints the members of a Council of Ministers, who act in an advisory capacity to him.

President René was reelected with 59.5 percent of the vote in 1993, 66.7 percent in 1998, and 54 percent in 2001. In a surprise announcement on February 24, 2004, René stated that he would step down from the presidency in favor of Vice President James Michel. He did so on April 14 but continued as the head of the SPPF. Michel, who has held a number of government positions, is expected to be less authoritarian than his predecessor, but there were questions about his strengths leading up to the 2006 elections.



LEGISLATURE

Legislative authority is vested in a unicameral National Assembly presided over by a speaker. The Assembly consists of 34 seats, of which 25 are directly elected and 9 are allocated on a proportional basis to parties obtaining at least 10 percent of total votes cast. As it has done continuously since 1993, the SPPF retains a strong majority in the National Assembly. The December 2002 elections saw SPPF winning 23 seats; the Seychelles National Party (SNP) won 11.

JUDICIARY

There are magistrates' courts, a Supreme Court, and a Court of Appeals, which hears appeals from the Supreme Court. A Constitutional Court, which forms part of the Supreme Court, determines constitutional questions and hears cases involving civil liberties. The judges of the Supreme Court and the Court of Appeals are presidential appointees. The judiciary is weak and has been subject to executive interference.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

During the one-party era, the SPPF's district branch committees functioned as local governments. They have now been formally replaced by 23 elected district councils. As SPPF holds all of the district council seats the change, if any, is minimal.

The Electoral System

There is universal suffrage for resident-citizens at least 17 years of age. Up to 15,000 Seychellois living in exile, the majority of whom have opposed René and the SPPF, are excluded from voting.

Until 2001 presidential and National Assembly elections were held simultaneously. In summer 2001 René, who had come under severe criticism, called for early presidential elections, which were held in August and September. The Democratic Party (DP) did not take part, and international observers differed on whether or not the elections were entirely free and fair. René received 54 percent of the vote, Wavel Ramkalawan 45 percent, and Philippe Boulle 1 percent. The next presidential election is scheduled for 2006.

Elections for the National Assembly were held in December 2002. The SPPF received 54 percent of the vote, the Seychelles National Party (SNP) 43 percent, and the Democratic Party (DP) 3 percent. The next Assembly election is scheduled for 2007.

The Party System

The Seychelles was a multiparty system from the time of its independence in 1976 until René's coup and announcement of a one-party state in 1979. It was returned to multiparty status by the 1993 constitution. Throughout the years the SPPF, which appeals primarily to the poorer voters, has been the dominant party. Until the mid-1990s its major opposition was the DP; more recently it has been the SNP. These opposition parties draw most of their support from merchants, richer urbanites, and critics of René's authoritarianism.

Major Political Parties

SEYCHELLES PEOPLE'S PROGRESSIVE FRONT (SPFF)

The SPFF remains the Seychelles's dominant party. Since 1993 it has promoted a transition from Socialism to free-market economic policies and has transferred various state facilities to private ownership. In early 1995 it announced that state-funded welfare services would be reduced. Despite relinquishing the presidency, René remains the party leader.

SEYCHELLES NATIONAL PARTY (SNP)

The SNP, formerly known as the United Opposition, has replaced the DP as the leader of the conservative opposition to SPPF. The party was formed in the mid-1990s by a merger of three small conservative parties. The leader of SNP is the Reverend Wavel Ramkalawan.

Minor Political Parties

The Democratic Party (DP), once a major party, has been weakened in recent years as most of its former supporters have switched allegiance to the SNP. The DP did not participate in the 2001 presidential election and received only 3 percent of the 2002 vote for the National Assembly. James Mancham has led the party since independence.

Other Political Forces

The Roman Catholic Church, to which over 90 percent of the islanders belong, was instrumental in the defeat of the first draft of the constitution in 1992. Trade unions and the press, which faced some restrictions in the early 2000s, may also play some political role.

National Prospects

There is hope that René's resignation will reignite movement in the Seychelles toward democratic political reforms. The economy, based primarily on tourism, may prove to be the chief determinant of future stability.

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REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE

By Steven Metz, M.A.
Revised by Sheila Elliott, Ph.D.



Sierra Leone is a West African country that borders the North Atlantic Ocean, Guinea, and Liberia. Its 6 million people (2005 estimate) consist overwhelmingly of African tribes (30 percent Temne, 30 percent Mende, and 39 percent other) and a very small minority of Creole, European, Lebanese, and Asian peoples. Most Sierra Leoneans—60 percent—are Muslim, 10 percent are Christian, and 30 percent practice indigenous beliefs.

Sierra Leone has suffered from years of civil war, economic dislocation, and social distress. It is estimated that prior to the end of the conflict in 2002, this violence displaced 1.2 million citizens, who reside in Guinea, Liberia, Gambia, and camps inside Sierra Leone.

The rebellion and civil war that ripped apart Sierra Leone began in March 1992 in the eastern part of the country near Liberia. The government of President Joseph Momoh contended that Charles Taylor's forces in Liberia were responsible for assisting the development of rebel forces in Sierra Leone known as RUF (Revolutionary Front). On April 29, 1992, Captain Valentine Strasser seized power from Major Momoh, the designated successor of Siaka Stevens, the first president of Sierra Leone. Strasser installed a five-member military council to rule and established an 18-member National Provisional Ruling Council composed mostly of military personnel. Then he declared that he intended to eradicate the RUF and its relatively unknown leader, Foday Sankoh, as forces in Sierra Leone.

Despite Strasser's declarations, the RUF continued to make territorial inroads in the country, especially in the Malal Hills and the Mokanni Hills, only 100–135 kilometers east of the country's capital in Freetown. As a consequence of the RUF's regional attacks and raids on agricultural and industrial sites, the mining industry was closed, agricultural production was marginalized, and there were two coup attempts against Strasser.

The Strasser regime refused to respond to international and regional pressure for elections, and in January 1996 Strasser was overthrown by his own military junta and the vice president of the council, General Julius Bio, who took over as president. Bio came to power articulating his commitment to democracy and resolution of the conflict, and began peace talks with the RUF in February 1996.

In March 1996 presidential elections were held with 13 candidates participating. Ahmad T. Kabbah of the Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP) won 59.5 percent of the votes. The SLPP and its allies also did well in the February 1996 National Assembly elections, receiving 51 of the 80 available seats. Understandably, the RUF leader, Sankoh, declared the elections illegal but continued to participate in the peace process. The new president was sworn in on March 29, 1996, and the parliament was convened on April 2, 1996, offering new hope for democracy in Sierra Leone. The government signed a peace agreement with the RUF in November 1996.

Peace remained elusive, however. The RUF continued to fight despite the agreement. On one visit to

Nigeria, Sankoh was detained for bringing weapons into the country, and, in March 1997 he was removed as RUF leader. On May 25, 1997, Major Johnny Paul Koroma ousted Kabbah and his government in yet another coup. Koroma dismissed the constitution and the National Assembly and established the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) to govern in alliance with the RUF.

On February 12, 1998, ECOMOG (Economic Community of West African States Cease-Fire Monitoring Group) took control of Freetown, paving the way for Kabbah's return. Oddly enough, the military government of General Abacha in Nigeria assisted Kabbah's return to power on March 10, 1998. Koroma's AFRC retreated to the bush to join the RUF, and the fighting continued.

The Sierra Leonean civil war was officially declared ended on January 18, 2002, by President Kabbah. Significant regional and global actors facilitated a cease-fire in May 1999, and the Lomé Peace Agreement formulated a plan to end hostilities. Moreover, the UN Security Council, through two resolutions—1270 and 1289—established UNAMISIL (UN Mission in Sierra Leone), and those peacekeeping troops along with British troops began to oversee the disarmament and electoral process. The mission expired and the troops withdrew at the close of December 2005. However, the UN authorized a new assistance mission beginning in 2006 to help assure stability in Sierra Leone.

The System of Government

Sierra Leone is a constitutional democracy with a unicameral legislature.

EXECUTIVE

Historically, political power in Sierra Leone has been vested in the executive branch of the government. The 1991 constitutional revisions created an executive composed of the president, the vice president, and a cabinet of more than 17 ministers.

From 1971 until 1996 the president was the leader of the single constitutionally legal party and was thus the sole candidate in presidential elections. But in the 1996 election, candidates from 13 political parties stood for election. As mandated by the constitutional reform of 1991, the president's term of office is now limited to two five-year terms. The president appoints the vice president and cabinet from among the members of the House of Representatives. The president is both head of state and head of government and, in the past, he has had wide-ranging legislative powers. He has the constitutional right to dissolve the House of Representatives and call new elections. The president is also commander in chief of the armed forces.

LEGISLATURE

The House of Representatives is a unicameral body of 124 seats, 112 of which are elected by popular vote and 12 of which are for paramount chiefs who are elected separately. The 2002 election was a milestone given the 10-year civil war. More than 20 parties competed, with the SLPP gaining 83 seats, the All People's Congress (APC) 27, and the Peace and Liberation Party (PLP) 2. Representatives are elected for five-year terms. Bills pass in the House with a simple majority, but a two-thirds majority is required for measures that would change the constitution.

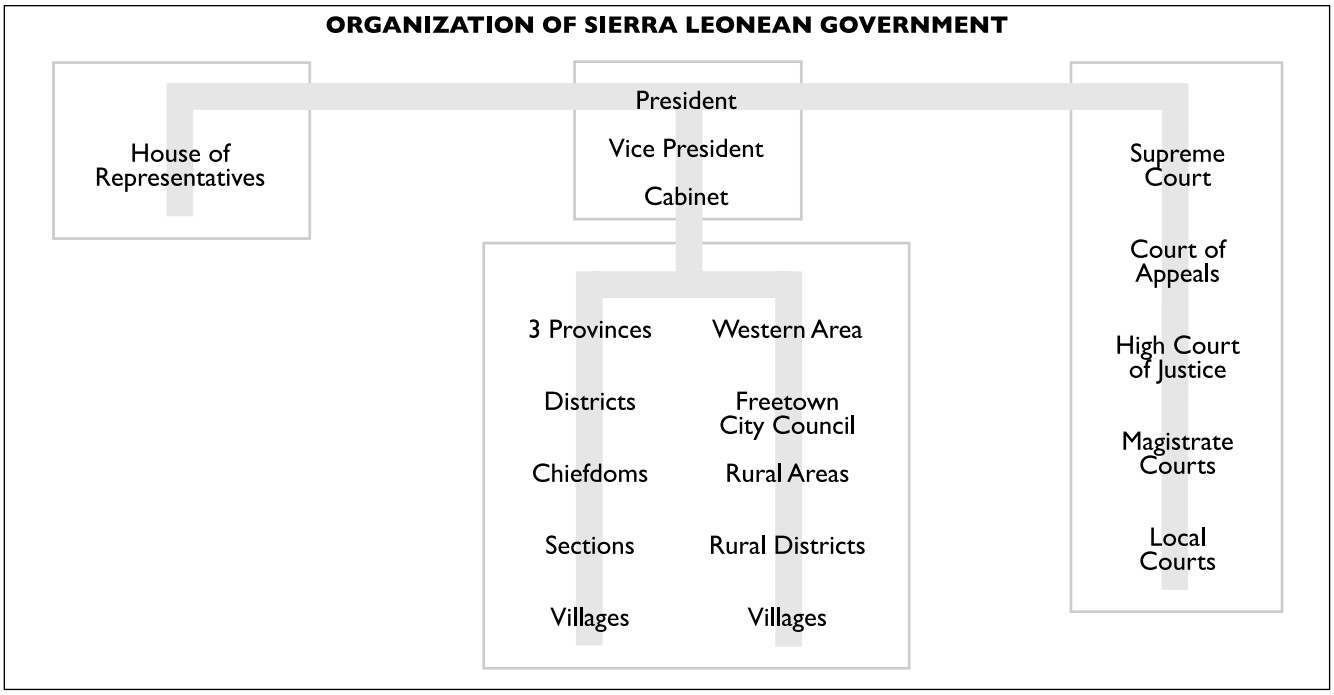
JUDICIARY

As outlined in the constitution, the judiciary consists of the Supreme Court, the Court of Appeals, and High Court of Justice. The latter is the court of record and has jurisdiction over inferior and traditional courts. Judges are appointed by the president on the advice of the Judicial and Legal Service Commission and are subject to the approval of the legislature.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Sierra Leone is divided into three provinces (Northern, Southern, and Eastern) and the Western area, which includes Freetown, the capital and largest city. It is difficult to discuss local governance given the many years of civil violence and the displacement of more than half the population. But historically, local government in the Western area was directed by a council, part of which was elected and part appointed. This council also appointed the mayor of Freetown. Each of the three provinces had a governing minister appointed by the president with the rank of a cabinet officer.

The most important position on a local level was that of paramount chief of one of the 148 chieftaincies. These chieftaincies were administrative units of a similar size and were not the same as traditional



tribal divisions. The 148 chieftaincies were grouped into 12 chieftaincy districts, each of which was represented in the House of Representatives by one of its paramount chiefs. The chiefs were selected by the chiefdom council of their districts, which was elected by the taxpayers of the district. The office of paramount chief was restricted to members of "chiefly families." Since most districts have more than one of these noble families, competition for the chieftaincy was vigorous. Most of the political power of the paramount chiefs comes from their role as government administrators, which allows them to allocate funds and jobs.

The Electoral System

Sierra Leone has universal adult (age 18) suffrage, and voting is by secret ballot. In the past the electoral system was less important in the selection of national leaders because there was only one legal party. In the 1996 election Kabbah was challenged by John K. Smart of the United National People's Party (UNPP). The election was marred by considerable violence and the fact that many Sierra Leoneans had yet to return to their country.

The most recent national election was held on May 14, 2002, and more than 20 parties vied for seats. The APC offered a modest challenge to the SLPP, and the elections were peaceful thanks largely to the presence of an international peacekeeping force. The next national election is scheduled for 2007. There is an electoral commission whose task it is to conduct, supervise, and register voters and all public elections.

The Party System

Party politics in Sierra Leone is an outgrowth of competition for the 148 chieftaincies. While the chiefs have little impact on national policies, their ability to allocate government funds, projects, and jobs on the local level has made control of the chieftaincy extremely valuable. Before 1978 rival factions for a chieftaincy formed an alliance with one of the national parties, with the victorious national party installing its candidates in the chieftaincies.

As of 2005 the political system is being reestablished after the long civil war, as is party politics. More than 50,000 Sierra Leoneans died during the conflict, and about 1 million were displaced. Therefore, political arrangements and loyalties are still in flux and the electorate is rather unpredictable. In any event, old loyalties and concerns about tribal politics are likely to resurface. At present the party system is dominated by the APC and SLPP.

Major Political Parties

ALL PEOPLE'S CONGRESS (APC)

Siaka Stevens formed the APC in the preindependence period. As a businessman and a union organizer, Stevens developed close ties to the more modern elements of Sierra Leonean society, so the APC came to represent modernization and a sense of opposition to the traditional power of the chiefs. From independence in 1961 until 1968 the country was governed by the Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP), originally an alliance of elites from the Northern and Southern provinces who were opposed to political control by the Creoles of Freetown, a mixed-race group who had dominated the political system under the British. When the first SLPP leader, Sir Milton Margai, died in 1964, his brother Albert took over the party. The Margais were from the Mende tribe of the Southern Province, and their continuing hold on the party leadership alienated the ethnic groups of the Northern Province, chief of whom was the Temne. Albert Margai's attempts to alter the political system to solidify his power raised fears in the north that the Mende would come to dominate the country. These fears gave Stevens and the APC the victory in the 1967 elections.

Stevens was arrested by the army on Margai's orders and subsequently went into exile. The following year a military coup deposed Margai and invited Stevens to return to Sierra Leone and form a government, which he did. During the mid-1970s the electioneering of the SLPP and other opposition parties was gradually curtailed, and after 1973 Sierra Leone was a de facto one-party state. The 1978 constitution banned all parties in Sierra Leone except for the ruling APC. Most of the leaders of the SLPP were absorbed into the APC, and competition between parties was ended. Several SLPP leaders resigned from politics rather than join the APC. Until 1990 the government stifled all criticism; opposition to the APC was mainly carried on by ineffective and splintered expatriate groups until demands for change began in the 1990s. In the 1996 election the APC received only five seats in the legislature. Since 2002, however, the APC has reemerged in Sierra Leone politics. Key political actors in the organization are Ernest B. Koroma and Ben Kanu. The APC received 27 seats in the National Assembly in the 2002 elections. At the local level, the APC won the Western area in municipal elections, giving them control over Freetown.

SIERRA LEONE PEOPLE'S PARTY (SLPP)

The SLPP was the ruling political party from independence until 1968. In the 1967 election Siaka Stevens's party, the APC, received a majority of the seats in the House of Representatives, but a military coup prevented Stevens from assuming leadership of the government. Disunity within the army contributed to Stevens's return from exile and his assumption of powers as prime minister. Although there was a by-election in 1972 and a general election in 1973, the SLPP failed to contest the elections and no opposition was represented in the legislative assembly.

Another general election was held in May 1977, a year earlier than scheduled, in which the SLPP secured 15 of 85 elective seats. In June 1978 a new constitution provided for a one-party system, which was adopted by the House of Representatives. Members of the SLPP either joined the APC and remained in the assembly or they left. The SLPP as a political forced slipped into oblivion until the turmoil of the civil unrest. The March 1996 elections marked the return of the SLPP. The party led the return to civilian rule and won the 2002 elections, with Ahmad Kabbah winning the presidency.

The SLPP is well organized and, given Kabbah's leadership during the civil war, the organization has received broad support among individual and organizational (corporate) members. SLPP is quick to note that it was APC misrule that led to the civil war. As part of the party platform, the SLPP calls for investing in youth (significant given the number of child soldiers), human rights, the rule of law, and rebuilding the institutional capacity of the state. These are all significant and necessary goals, but the devastation and amount of reconstruction necessary may prove to be very taxing upon a new civilian government.

The constituency and stronghold of the SLPP is primarily in the southern and eastern parts of the country, but Kabbah has no political, tribal, or religious bias. Although a Muslim, he is married to a Catholic. The slogan of the SLPP is "One country, one people!" But increasingly, the party is being associated with one ethnic group, the Mende.

Minor Political Parties

There are now more than 20 political parties in Sierra Leone, but most are quite minor. Among the lesser parties are the Peace and Liberation Party (PLP), which won two seats in the House of Representatives in the 2002 elections, and the Revolutionary United Front Party (RUF), which has

made the transition from a rebel military force to a political party.

Other Political Forces

MILITARY

Beginning with the Stevens government, the military has played the most dominant role in Sierra Leonean politics. Three major coups in the 1990s contributed to political instability and civil violence. After the 1997 coup Koroma abolished the constitution, created another cabinet, produced legislation by military decree, banned all political parties, and accused the Kabbah government of neglecting the Sierra Leonean army in favor of the Nigerian forces used as presidential bodyguards. The international community was severely critical of the coup, and regional and international forces organized to oust the new military junta from power. Koroma has since reinvented himself politically and is now with the Peace and Liberation Party (PLP), which won two seats in the legislature in 2002.

REVOLUTIONARY UNITED FRONT PARTY (RUF)

The rebel force RUF operated without clear ideological orientation and was internally unstable. Led by Corporal Foday Sankoh, the RUF began fighting against the government in May 1991. Although the RUF under Sankoh's leadership signed a November 1996 peace accord with the Kabbah government, by February 1997 the Kabbah government intercepted an RUF communiqué from its leader ordering troops to attack the government's army.

The RUF role was further complicated by the apparent detention of Sankoh by the Nigerian government in collaboration with a faction within the RUF. On March 15, 1997, on an invitation by the Nigerian government, Sankoh was placed under "house arrest." Captain Philip Sylvester Palmer, spokesperson for the RUF leadership, announced that week that Sankoh had been removed as leader because he was blocking the peace process by refusing to cooperate with the UN special envoy to Sierra Leone and thus jeopardizing a speedy return to normalization.

In May 2000 the RUF abducted 500 UN peacekeepers and attempted to sack Freetown. The attack was prevented, and Sankoh was captured and charged with war crimes. Now a political party, the RUF claimed the jailed Sankoh as their president, but he was never released and died in custody in 2003.

ECOWAS (ECONOMIC COMMUNITY OF WEST AFRICAN STATES)

ECOWAS has played a unique peacekeeping and peace-promoting role in Sierra Leone. As acting president of ECOWAS and in an odd twist of fate, Nigeria has taken the military and financial lead in the effort to restore the elected government in Sierra Leone. The African Union and ECOWAS orchestrated and sustain diplomatic, economic, and armed efforts to reinstate Kabbah's government. The ECOWAS Cease-Fire Monitoring Group defeated Koroma's forces in February 1998. In addition, the crisis in Sierra Leone took on global significance. The United Nations, Great Britain, the United States, and nongovernmental organizations were also significant actors involved in bringing a positive resolution to the civil war.

National Prospects

The SLPP is recognized as leading the country from civil war, and the votes the party received in the 2002 elections represented that recognition and a mandate from the people. The capacity of the Kabbah government to maintain control and support political dissent without retreating to one-party rule will be its first test. The peacekeeping troops' departure in 2005 will also test the security and stability of Sierra Leone, especially given the insecurity of the region, which includes Nigeria, Liberia, and Guinea. However, the United Nations authorized a new UN assistance mission in the country beginning in 2006 in an effort to prevent a return to violence after the peacekeepers leave. The country's Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which was set up after the war to prosecute war criminals, may indeed be beneficial to the social health of the country, but without enough resources and commitment on the part of citizens, it risks failure.

The economic and social costs of years of civil violence and political instability will be difficult to overcome, since Sierra Leone is not a country of considerable resources and wealth, although oil was recently discovered. Given the challenges, constructing democracy, ensuring economic growth, and overseeing recovery will be a very difficult mandate for the government of Sierra Leone to undertake.

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REPUBLIC OF SINGAPORE

By K. Roberts
Revised by Ha Huong



Singapore is situated at the tip of peninsular Malaysia and comprises an island and several islets with a total land area of approximately 647.5 square kilometers. In 2005 the multiracial population of Singapore was 4.4 million, with a breakdown of 76.8 percent Chinese, 13.9 percent Malays, 7.9 percent Indians, and 1.4 percent other ethnic groups.

Singapore was founded by Sir Thomas Raffles in 1819 as an outpost for the British East India Company to protect its trade to China, and it grew rapidly into a multiracial community. Favored by a deep harbor sheltered from the monsoons, Singapore's strategic position helped it develop into an important trading center for the region. It became a British Crown Colony in 1867, and its strategic position led to its development as an important military base for the British that contributed to the economy in terms of both capital and employment. Singapore remained a British Crown Colony until 1959, when it attained internal self-government. Singapore achieved full independence in 1963 and joined Malaya, Sarawak, and Sabah to form an independent Malaysia. Differences in approach to ethnic politics led to the separation of Singapore and Malaysia in 1965.

The System of Government

Singapore is a parliamentary republic. The legislature consists of a unicameral Parliament of elected members, nonconstitutional members, and nominated members. At independence, Singapore inherited a constitutional system similar to the Westminster system in which the head of state holds a largely ceremonial position. In 1991 the Singapore government took a decisive step away from the Westminster system when it made the decision to create an elected president who would hold the "second key" to the national reserves.

EXECUTIVE

The executive consists of the offices of the head of state and the cabinet. Until 1991 the president possessed no real executive power, and the effective power lay with the prime minister and the cabinet. As the prime minister and the cabinet were elected members of Parliament, the executive was thus a parliamentary executive. This system remained in force until 1991, when fundamental constitutional change transformed the role of head of state from a nonexecutive position to a fully elected president possessing vital veto functions.

The three main functions of the president are to protect the country's substantial financial reserves, to preserve the dignity of the public service, and to prevent the possible abuse of power by the executive under the Internal Security Act, the Corrupt Practices Act, and the Maintenance of Religious Harmony Act. Before the president can use the discretionary power of veto, he or she must first consult an advisory body called the Council of Presidential Advisors.

The president is elected for a term of six years, and there is at present no limit to the number of

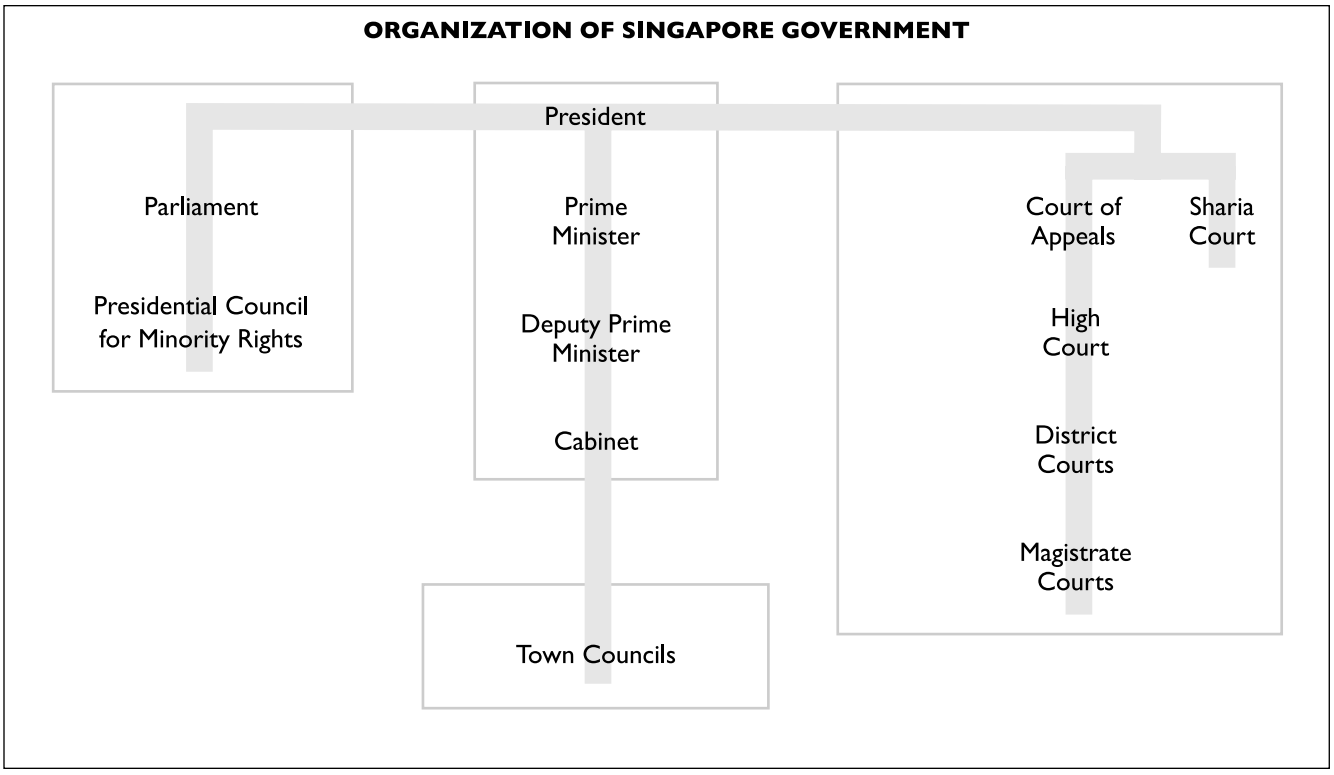
terms that can be served. Although the president holds considerable power under the amended constitution, executive power is shared with the prime minister and the cabinet. The president can exercise only certain discretionary power in designated areas. Outside of those areas, the president must act under the authority of the cabinet. The areas of discretion are the appointment of the prime minister, withholding consent to a request for the dissolution of Parliament, withholding consent to any bill, withholding concurrence and approval of appointments and budgets of statutory boards and government companies, withholding concurrence in relation to the detention or further detention of any person under any law or ordinance made or promulgated under the Special Powers against Subversion and Emergency Powers, making of prohibition orders against religious leaders who violate the Maintenance of Religious Harmony Act, and consenting to investigations undertaken by the Corrupt Practices Investigations Bureau.

The complexity of the new role of the president has meant that there has already been a need for modifications in the role. The first major amendment came in the year following the election, when the power to veto defense and security measures was removed. It is expected that there will be more amendments in the future.

The cabinet possesses the primary executive power and is responsible for all public policies. Over time, the power of the executive has increased and decision making in Singapore is concentrated in the hands of a strong executive. It is responsible for the general direction and control of the government, and it is collectively responsible to Parliament. Without the support from Parliament, the government may be forced to resign. The leader of the party winning the majority of parliamentary seats will be the prime minister, who has the sole authority to summon the cabinet. The cabinet comprises the prime minister (PM) and the deputy prime minister (DPM), both of whom are appointed by the president and other ministers.

Ministers are appointed from members of Parliament by the president acting on the advice of the prime minister. The prime minister may grant the responsibility for any department or subject to any minister. Ministers can be assisted by parliamentary secretaries appointed for this purpose from among the members of Parliament by the president acting on the advice of the prime minister. The prime minister also has the power to allocate permanent secretaries to each ministry to supervise the department or departments to which they are allocated.

The first presidential election was held in August 1993. Before candidates could be nominated, they



had to satisfy the stringent conditions felt to be necessary for a position of vital custodial responsibility. Ong Teng Cheong and Chua Kim Yeow were the two candidates for election in 1993. Chua Kim Yeow was a former accountant general, and Ong Tong Cheong was deputy prime minister and chairman of the People's Action Party (PAP). His candidature was seen by some observers as an attempt to politicize the role of president and to safeguard the political power of the PAP. Winning 58.7 percent of the vote, Ong Teng Cheong was sworn into office on September 1, 1993, as the first elected president of Singapore, having resigned from both previous offices. His term of office was for six years. During his term President Ong had frequent disagreements with the government. In the 1999 presidential elections, S. R. Nathan emerged victorious. In 2005 Nathan again won the presidency.

LEGISLATURE

The Singapore legislature consists of a unicameral Parliament. The party winning more than 50 percent of the parliamentary seats will form the government. Members of Parliament (MPs) from other parties become opposition members of Parliament. The Parliament represents the public, while the government is accountable to the Parliament. The main function of the Singapore Parliament is to make new laws and to revise old laws as necessary. It also scrutinizes and approves the government budget. Its ability to make laws is limited by the constitution. Any act inconsistent with the constitution may be declared null and void by the courts.

New bills are given three readings. In the first reading, only the title of the bill is mentioned so that the MPs can collect necessary information. In the second reading, the MPs will debate about the bill. If the majority of MPs approve the bill, the bill will be referred to the Select Committee for vetting the clauses of the bill. The MPs can debate about and the public can also comment on the clauses of the bill. In the third reading, only minor amendments can be made to the bill. If some MPs still disagree about the bill, it has to be reconsidered by the Select Committee. With the exception of money bills, urgent bills and bills that concern security, defense, public safety, peace, or good order in Singapore, bills that have reached the final stage toward becoming law are then presented to a nonelected advisory body, the Presidential Council for Minority Rights (PCMR). It is the role of the PCMR to study every bill to see whether it discriminates against any racial or religious group and make a report. In the case of a favorable report, the bill is presented to the president for his assent and the bill will become an act of Parliament. An act must be published in the Government Gazette to become effective. In the case of an adverse report, the bill can either be returned to Parliament for further amendment or can be submitted to the president for assent, provided the bill received the support of at least two-thirds of the total parliamentary membership. Since 1970 the PCMR has not presented a single adverse report. The MPs can introduce their own bills as private member's bills.

From 1968 until 1981 Parliament consisted only of elected representatives from the People's Action Party (PAP). In 1981 the first opposition member, Joshua Jeyaratnam of the Workers' Party, was elected to Parliament in a by-election held for the seat of Anson. In 1984 two opposition members were returned. There were only one and two opposition MPs in 1991 and 2001, respectively. The government recognized that the voting public desired an opposition and moved to create the illusion of opposition by forming two new classes of members of Parliament: nonconstituency members of Parliament (NCMPs), actual opposition members who ran unsuccessfully for election; and nominated members of Parliament (NMPs).

Under the constitution, up to six NCMP seats can be offered to unsuccessful opposition candidates who have received at least 15 percent of the possible votes. They have all the rights and privileges of elected MPs except that they cannot vote on money and supply bills, constitutional amendments, motions of no confidence in the government, or motions to remove the president.

In 1990 provision was made under the constitution for six nominated members of Parliament—government appointees who have not actually run for office. Under this scheme, the government could politically co-opt citizens who had distinguished themselves in the fields of the arts, academia, public service, or industry. They are appointed for two years and can be reappointed. This enables the government to use the special talents and skills of the NMPs. Like NCMPs, NMPs have full rights but are restricted in participation on certain matters. Unlike the NCMPs, nominated members of Parliament have not participated in the electoral process. The high standard of candidates has given the system some credibility and has certainly raised the standard of debate, and there is some suggestion that the number of NMPs may be raised to eight. However, the introduction of this scheme does not extend political participation, nor is it any real substitute for an active opposition.

Further modifications were made in the electoral process in 1988 with the introduction of team constituencies called Group Representation Constituencies (GRCs) that consisted of three single-member constituencies combined together. Voters in GRCs voted for a team of three candidates in place of the traditional single candidate. In each team constituency, one member of the team must be a representative of an ethnic minority group in Singapore. In defending the introduction of this scheme, the PAP claimed that this would produce a Parliament that better reflected the multiracial population of the republic, that is, by ensuring that Malays and Indians are represented in Parliament in a country dominated numerically by Chinese.

However, political commentators in Singapore have suggested that ethnicity was not the central consideration in the introduction of larger electoral units and that the main reason was an attempt to preempt opposition in single-member constituencies by diluting opposition votes with a substantial pro-PAP vote from neighboring communities.

The scheme was introduced at the 1988 elections, and 13 groups of constituencies were nominated as GRCs. Before the 1991 elections the number of GRC constituencies was increased to 15 and the number of MPs to be elected to each team was increased from three to four. In 1996 the maximum number of candidates in a GRC was increased again to six.

Group Representative Constituencies have come to dominate the electoral system in Singapore. In the 1996 general election there were four six-member GRCs, six five-members GRCs, and five four-member GRCs, leaving only nine single-seat individual constituencies, making a total of 83 elected representatives. In 2001 there were nine five-member GRCs and five six-member GRCs and nine single seat wards with a total of 84 elected representatives.

JUDICIARY

At independence, Singapore inherited a system of law that was inherently British. In recent years, the Singapore government has taken steps to develop a legal system that it perceives as more appropriate to conditions prevailing in Singapore. In 1993 the Application of English Law Act was passed. Under this act, the commercial law of Singapore continues to be based on English commercial law, but it limits the automatic reception of future English commercial law and specifies the extent to which English commercial statutes are applicable to Singapore.

The Singapore legal system includes two levels: the Supreme Court and the Subordinate Court. The Supreme Court comprises the Court of Appeals and the High Court. Supreme Court judges are appointed by the president on the advice of the prime minister and the chief justice and have security of tenure until they reach the age of 65. The president appoints other judges with the chief justice's advice.

The Court of Appeals is now the highest court in Singapore. The Court of Appeals can hear only civil and criminal appeals from the High Court. Generally they are conducted by a panel of three judges, and decisions are made in accordance with the opinions of the majority. Supreme Court judges are appointed by the president on the advice of the prime minister and the chief justice and have security of tenure until they reach the age of 65.

Subordinate courts possess limited original jurisdiction and are subject to the control of the Supreme Court. The main subordinate courts are the district courts and the magistrates courts. They have authority to deal only with a particular class of cases or where the amount of dispute falls below a prescribed sum. However, the authority of the subordinate courts has been extended considerably in recent years.

The district courts hear both civil and criminal cases. The civil cases are limited to cases of monetary claims up to $100,000, proceedings for the grant of probate, and administrative actions where the estate did not exceed $3 million. Criminal cases are limited to trying offenses punishable with fine only or for which the maximum jail term does not exceed 10 years. The cases are heard by a district judge. District judges serve a fixed term, and, as they are part of the administrative legal service, they can be transferred back to administration.

The civil and criminal jurisdiction of the magistrates courts is limited to civil cases with claims not exceeding $30,000 and to criminal cases punishable with fine only or offenses where the maximum jail term does not exceed three years. Specialized courts include Juvenile Court, Coroners' Court, Traffic Court, Criminal (day and night) mention Court, Filter Court, Centralised Sentencing Court, and small claim tribunals. In 1995 a Family Court was set up to provide a forum for the resolution of a wide range of family matters such as domestic violence.

In accordance with the Muslim Law Act, the Muslim community is governed by Islamic law (sharia) in a separate system that consists of the sharia court and its appeal board. Jurisdiction by these Muslim courts is limited to disputes dealing with marriage, betrothal,

nullity of marriage, judicial separation, and the disposition of property on divorce. All parties must be Muslim or have been married under Muslim law. The court is presided over by a president appointed by the president of Singapore. The president of Singapore also has power to revise any decision of the Muslim Court and submit it to the Singapore Council of the Islamic Religion, the Majlis Ugama Islam, Singapura. The appeal board has the power to confirm, reverse, or change the result of the sharia court. Singapore also has an Industrial Arbitration Court (IAC) (1960) functioning as a high court. The IAC aims to settle industrial and trade disputes, certify collective agreements, and meditate and advise on matters related to industrial relations.

The judicial system in Singapore is based on deterrence, and many of the features of the Singapore criminal procedure reflect the government's interest in bringing offenders to justice. Statements to the police have been made admissible, and the right to silence of accused persons has been restricted. Many of the offenses carry mandatory sentences that include the death penalty. The government believes that mandatory sentences reduce disparities in sentencing and believes that mandatory caning for many offenses, including vandalism and drunken driving, constitutes a strong deterrent and has contributed to the high rate of personal security in Singapore. There is also a strong emphasis on internal security enacted under the Internal Security Act, which makes provision for detention without trial. This has been criticized by both local and foreign groups, but the government defends the practice as necessary to contain the threat of Communist conspiracy and secret societies.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Singapore does not have a multilevel government. Groups of estates form local units or towns. In 1988 the Town Council Bill created town councils of 18 to 21 citizens to act as a form of nonelected local government in the electoral constituencies. Singapore has 16 towns (2004) and their boundaries depend on the boundaries of electoral divisions after every general election. The town councils were placed under the leadership of the elected MP. Town councils were allocated a budget and given the task of administering the towns. This included managing the use of public property, looking after maintenance and renovation, collecting rubbish, and caring for the local environment. The government hoped that the introduction of local government would encourage townspeople to participate in grassroots political activities and contribute to the management of their local communities.

By 1988 a large-scale public housing program had succeeded in providing housing for more than 80 percent of the population. Economic growth in Singapore had created a substantial middle class, and this enabled a high proportion of Singaporeans to purchase their apartment from the government. The PAP had recognized that the individual apartment owners were eager to retain the value of this investment. The introduction of town councils forced apartment owners to consider carefully the crucial role of managing the public housing developments and the implications of a vote for the opposition. In 1994 the PAP embarked on a long-term plan to upgrade public housing complexes, thus increasing the resale value of each upgraded apartment.

The PAP made it clear that a vote for the opposition would result in the postponement of upgrading works in that electorate, resulting in a drop in the resale value of apartments in that area. In 1996 local government was strengthened further by the PAP proposal to establish community development councils to run crucial services such as child care centers and libraries. Lack of support for the PAP at election time would result in reduced services to these councils.

The Electoral System

Candidates for president must be Singapore citizens aged 45 years or above, be on the current electoral roll, and satisfy the Presidential Elections Committee that he or she is of good character and integrity. The candidates must hold an important executive position in one of the major public service departments, a statutory board, or of any company with a paid-up capital of at least $100 million or its equivalent. This was felt to be necessary to show that the candidate had the experience and ability to administer and manage the complex financial and political affairs that formed part of the extensive power of the elected presidency.

Candidates for Parliament must be Singapore citizens of at least 21 years of age and be proficient in one of the four official languages, English, Mandarin, Malay, or Tamil. General elections must be held at least once every five years. There is no limit to the number of terms served by a member of Parliament. There are Single Member Constituencies (SMCs) and Group Representation Constituencies (GRCs). Each SMC has one single MP and each GRC has a group of three to six MPs to represent their residents. In 2004 Singapore had nine SMCs and 14 GRCs. Any citizen of Singapore

who is over the age of 21 and is normally resident in Singapore may add his or her name to the electoral roll. Overseas voting can be conducted in five major cities. However, the government will decide whether overseas voting is allowed for each election.

Voting is compulsory in Singapore, and a secret ballot is used. Singapore uses a simple plurality system or "first-past-the-post" wherein the candidate who secures the greatest number of votes is declared to have been elected.

The Party System

In the early years of independence, the political life of Singapore was vigorous and competitive. Two parties, the People's Action Party and the left-wing Barisan Socialis, dominated Parliament. It appeared that Singapore was on the way to developing a two-party state. However, in 1965, the Barisan Socialis decided to boycott the elections, and its failure to participate in parliamentary debate robbed the party of its credibility. Also in 1965, the arrest of key men in the organization left the Barisan Socialis without effective leadership. The destruction of the left-wing unions and the grassroots organizations such as the Singapore Rural Dwellers Organization left the party without a power base. The Barisan Socialis returned to participatory politics in 1972 but failed to win a single seat. In 1968 the People's Action Party won all seats in the Parliament, and Singapore developed into a one-party-dominant party system.

The government has not moved to prevent the formation of political parties, but there are structures in place that put severe restraints on the activities of opposition party candidates. In addition, the introduction of Group Representation Constituencies makes it more difficult to find able minority opposition candidates from a weak and divided opposition.

Major Political Parties

PEOPLE'S ACTION PARTY (PAP)

HISTORY

The PAP was formed in 1954 and has been in power in Singapore since winning the state assembly election in 1959. The party has been under the leadership of Lee Kuan Yew since its formation. At that time the party had two district wings, the moderates and the pro-Communists. In 1957 the pro-Communist faction took control of the party organization through the Central Executive Committee (CEC) elections. They won six of the 12 seats on the CEC. The moderates refused to take office and later regained control when five pro-Communist CEC members were arrested. The intraparty struggle left political legacies that have determined the structure of the party and shaped the development of the one-party state in Singapore.

ORGANIZATION AND FINANCES

Following this temporary loss of control of the executive committee, the moderate leadership reorganized the party in order to keep tighter control. Four types of membership were created, probationary members, ordinary members, probationary cadre members, and full cadres. Only full cadres were allowed to vote in the election for the CEC. All members aged from 17 to 40 can join the Young PAP branch with specific functions such as policy and Internet studies. All women members can join the Women's Wing, which takes care of women's and family issues. A Board of Selection of moderates was created to select cadres, and this allowed the moderates to exclude pro-Communist members from membership in the CEC and keep tight control on the party. This structure remains in place today. The information about the cadres is kept confidential. The CEC remains the executive body of the party and is elected by party cadres at the party conference held every two years. The CEC consists entirely of the parliamentary ministerial wing of the party and is the base of real political power in Singapore. The CEC voting is a "closed system."

At the local level, the party operates branches and sub-branches in the parliamentary constituencies. Branch committees are appointed by the CEC, and MPs usually act as chairmen of the local branch committees. The branches are involved in nonpolitical activities such as organizing government-sponsored campaigns. Choice of electoral candidates is by patronage and rarely involves the branch committee.

The PAP has three sources of income: subscriptions, levies on members of Parliament, and private donations. Branches are expected to be financially autonomous. The branches raise money through such activities as kindergarten classes, community dinners, and the sale of party publications. Sizable donations are generally given to the party's central executive committee, and figures for this are not available. Election expenses are the responsibility of the branch, although the party provides posters and pamphlets.

POLICY

At independence, the government inherited a democratic framework, but there was no social basis for democracy. The mainly migrant population was a mix of heterogeneous races whose political culture did not encourage the concept of political participation, and under paternalistic colonial rule they had become accustomed to centralized decision making. This legacy favored the development of a paternalistic and authoritarian government that characterized the PAP style.

Independence proved to be a time of economic and political uncertainty for the new state, but the leadership developed an ideology of survival that was used to galvanize the support of the population for the government's domestic policies. The leadership believed that the survival of the new island state depended on the willingness and the ability of the individual to adopt such principles as social discipline and "ruggedness" that embodied the notion of personal sacrifice in the national interest. A major aspect of this ideology was the acceptance that only the PAP could insure the survival of Singapore by determining national interest. The PAP developed a pragmatic, interventionist style that emphasized centralized public administration. Under the strong and powerful leadership of Lee Kuan Yew, Singapore achieved high rates of economic growth through export-oriented industrialization. Economic success brought improved standards of living, and this was reflected in continued victory at the polls and complete political dominance for the PAP.

LEADERSHIP

Singapore was ably served by the first generation of political leaders. Under the leadership of Lee Kuan Yew, Toh Chin Chye, and Goh Keng Swee, the republic achieved high rates of economic growth that brought improved standards of living for the population. However, the leadership understood that political succession can be a destabilizing experience for a young country, and, in 1972, it embarked on a search for a second-generation team. The selected candidates were drawn from the top ranks of bureaucracy, industry, and the military rather than from the ranks of the party. Successful candidates underwent a period of political apprenticeship. By 1984 the successor team of seven was considered ready, and the team chose Goh Chok Tong as its leader. Lee Kuan Yew stood down in 1990, and Goh Chok Tong became the new prime minister. Unlike Lee, who did not believe that democracy could create good government and focused on a "strong, forceful State" led by "an effective, determined leadership," Prime Minister Goh focused more on open discussion, participation, and consensus. Lee Hsien Long (Lee Kuan Yew's son) became prime minister in August 2004.

PROSPECTS

The PAP leadership has shown that it can respond to electoral change. In 1984 the population demonstrated a need for increased opposition, and the PAP responded with the introduction of the NMPs and the NCMPs. Support for the PAP dropped substantially during the 1980s, and, in 1991, its share of the total votes cast fell to 61.0 percent. The PAP responded to electoral decline by introducing structural changes such as GRCs to make it more difficult for opposition parties to make political gains. The introduction of town councils was a crucial measure in reviving flagging PAP support in the housing estates. In 1996 the PAP announced plans to postpone upgrading work in opposition electorates and to withhold funding to opposition-held community development councils. The PAP share of the total votes cast increased to 65 percent. In 2001 the party won over 75 percent of the vote. This ability to react promptly to changing demands has enabled the PAP to retain power and has hindered the development of a strong opposition. In the absence of a credible opposition, the PAP is likely to remain the dominant party in Parliament in the foreseeable future.

Minor Political Parties

There are numerous registered opposition parties in Singapore, but many of these are no longer active. The Barisan Socialis was a strong force in the early years of independence but is no longer active. The major opposition parties as of 2005 are the Workers' Party (WP), National Solidarity Party (NSP), Singapore National Malay Organization (PKMS), Singapore Democratic Party (SDP), and the Singapore People's Party (SPP). Of these, only the Singapore Democratic Party, Workers' Party, and the Singapore People's Party have won seats in Parliament. The Internal Security Act has been used as one of the policy tools to guard against foreign manipulation through the opposition political activities.

SOCIALIST FRONT

(Barisan Socialis)

The Barisan Socialis was formed in 1961, when a pro-Communist faction of the PAP led by Lim Chin Siang departed to form its own party. The party boycotted the

elections in 1965 and gradually lost whatever power it had accumulated. It merged with the Workers' Party in 1988.

WORKERS' PARTY (WP)

The Workers' Party was started by David Marshall in 1957 and has traditionally appealed to the working class and the lower middle class. The party manifesto shows a commitment to improvement in living conditions for lower-income earners. In 1971 lawyer J. B. Jeyaratnam became the party secretary-general. The party manifesto was revised at that time to focus on "amending and repealing" PAP initiatives with which the Workers' Party disagreed.

For 13 years until 1981, the PAP held all the seats in Parliament. In 1981 Joshua Jeyaratnam of the Workers Party was successful in winning a by-election. In the 1984 general election, Jeyaratnam was able to retain his seat. He was disqualified as MP in 1986 due to false declaration of party accounts. He did not stand in the 1991 general election but stood in the 1996 general election. He did not win but was eligible to enter Parliament as a nonconstituency member.

In 1991 the Workers' Party candidate Low Thia Khiang won the seat of Hougang. The creation of GRCs had given the opposition parties the challenge of finding three suitable candidates including a minority candidate. The Workers' Party strongly contested the GRCs of Eunos and Bedok. It polled 47.6 percent of the vote in Eunos and 38 percent in Bedok. Low, the new leader of the WP, won one seat in the 2001 election.

SINGAPORE DEMOCRATIC PARTY (SDP)

The SDP was founded in 1980 under the leadership of Chiam See Tong who was an independent candidate in the 1976 general election and could claim a membership of 280 in 1995. The SDP has the best electoral record of the opposition parties. Although the SDP contested three seats in the 1980 general election, it did not win any seats. In the 1984 general election the party won one seat out of four contested. In 1988 the SDP won one seat out of 18 contested, and in 1991 it won three seats out of nine contested. In 1996 it won one seat, and in 2001 it won no seats.

The SDP operated until 1984 without a party manifesto and campaigned on the need for an opposition to act as a check on government arrogance. In 1984 the acting secretary-general of the party, Chee Soon Juan, wrote a book called *Dare to Change* that was adopted as the party manifesto. In 1997, as a result of an internal power struggle, Chee toppled Chiam to become the party leader.

The SDP had polled well in the 1991 election, but division within the party reduced its chances of a successful campaign in 1996. As a result of this split, Chiam See Tong left the party and joined the newly formed Singapore People's Party (SPP). The SDP did not succeed in winning a seat in the 1996 general election.

SINGAPORE PEOPLE'S PARTY (SPP)

In the 1996 general election Chiam See Tong retained his seat but with a much reduced majority. In 1996 his electorate remained a single-member constituency. The government had moved to increase the number of Group Representation Constituencies in the 1996 general election, and only nine single-member electorates were retained. That his electorate was left untouched suggests that his opposition activities were not seen as a threat by the government.

The SPP is a moderate party and mainly appeals to lower-middle-class and unskilled blue- and white-collar workers. However the SPP does not offer any real alternative to the PAP, and many of its votes represent a protest vote. In 2001 Chiam registered the Singapore Democratic Alliance (SDA), comprising a handful of other parties. The SDA won one seat in the 2001 election.

Other Political Forces

CIVIL SOCIETY

In many societies, political participation is possible through the voluntary associations and groups that make up civil society. In Singapore, civil society was discouraged for many years, and interest formation was encouraged through the government-sponsored community centers in each constituency. However, by the mid-1980s rapid economic growth had produced a growing middle class that was becoming alienated from the government. Interest groups were formed and civil society began to tentatively reemerge. Most interest groups, namely, the Association for Muslim Professionals (AMP), the Roundtable, the Nature Society of Singapore (NSS), and the Association of Women for Action and Research (AWARE), try to influence public policy in their particular areas of interest by lobbying and working closely with the government. The AMP (1991) is known for its

journal *Karyawan*, seminars, and talks. The AWARE (1985), a feminist organization, focuses on the interests of women and is very careful in choosing issues to discuss with the government.

Some other community groups are Mendaki (Council for the Education of Muslim Children), self-help groups, and the Inter-racial Confidence Circles. These groups are well recognized by the government due to their expertise and their cooperation.

Recently, Singapore has sought to broaden civil society by relaxing the registry of societies and introducing the Speaker's Corner in Hong Lim Park in 2000. This is an open forum for different groups to discuss issues of concern, except for issues threatening multiracial harmony or national security. The speakers must register at the police station and must follow the law. Some groups focus on issues related to democracy, human rights, elections, and public policy. Despite the limitations imposed by the government, the groups represent an attempt to produce some independent political space.

National Prospects

In Singapore, there have been extensive modifications in the political system that was inherited from the British at the time of independence. Economic growth brought social change and a demand for increased political participation. In response to demands for opposition, the government has created nonconstituency members of Parliament, nominated members of Parliament, Group Representative Constituencies, and town councils. Suggested changes in the system of "one-man, one-vote" are another response to calls for electoral change. Singapore is more open in receiving feedback from the public by introducing 27 feedback groups. These groups help Singapore achieve political objectives by giving the residents a sense of participation and consultation. Rapid economic growth had produced a substantial level of national reserves, and the government sought a method of protecting these by creating an elected presidency.

In this way, the government has shown that it is capable of responding to social and economic change with rapid and extensive modifications in the political system, requiring, in some cases, extensive constitutional amendment. Continued economic growth will no doubt bring further social change, and it is reasonable to expect that there will be further changes in both the political and the judicial systems as the need arises. In the past the People's Action Party has shown that it can readily adapt to changing circumstances, and this ability has kept the party firmly in power since independence. A combination of an ineffective and divided opposition and a weak civil society is unlikely to provide any substantial challenge to its power in the near future.

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SLOVAK REPUBLIC

(Slovenska Republika)

By William D. Pederson, Ph.D.
Revised by Tom Michael



The Slovak Republic, or Slovakia, gained its independence from Czechoslovakia on January 1, 1993. A land-locked state of approximately 5.4 million people (2005 est.) located in Central Europe, it is bordered by Poland to the north, Ukraine to the east, Hungary to the south, and Austria and the Czech Republic to the west. This predominantly Roman Catholic nation is governed by a parliamentary democracy. The unicameral legislature, presidency, and Supreme Court are in the capital city of Bratislava.

For centuries Slovakia was part of larger empires; for less than three decades during the 20th century it experienced democratic rule, first as part of Czechoslovakia and more recently as a new nation. It was first part of the Great Moravian Empire (830–907), then under Hungarian rule from the 11th century until the early 20th century. Slovakia was called Upper Hungary under the Hapsburgs. As part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Slovaks were pressured to relinquish their national identity. Nonetheless, a nationalist revival took place during the late 18th and 19th centuries.

The goal of sovereignty was realized at least partially after World War I under the leadership of Thomas G. Masaryk, the founder and first president of the Republic of Czechoslovakia (1918–35). Despite Masaryk's democratic leadership, some Slovaks felt frustrated within the unitary state. The even greater dissatisfaction of Sudeten Germans within the new democratic state provided Adolf Hitler with the justification to occupy Czechoslovakia after the Munich Agreement of 1938. A puppet fascist Slovak state was established in March 1939 under the national cleric Monsignor Jozef Tiso; however, the depth of Slovak resistance to Hitler is reflected in the Slovak National Uprising, which began in August 1944 and continued for several months before it was suppressed. In contrast, the Czechs engaged in passive resistance only during World War II.

The Czechoslovak state was restored in 1945 with some concessions to Slovak demands for autonomy by means of a regional legislature (Slovak National Council) and an executive in Bratislava, but the limited autonomy was short-lived. Ironically, the Communist seizure of power in 1947–48 indirectly promoted Slovakia's nationalism. In January 1968 Alexander Dubček (1921–92), a Slovak, was made head of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia. The subsequent reform movement, known as the Prague Spring, which was in part a delayed de-Stalinization program, was crushed on August 21, 1968. Nonetheless, Communist Czechoslovakia was federalized in January 1969, affording Slovaks some national institutions with limited autonomy, at least in theory, on their soil. Moreover, Dubček's replacement as head of the Communist Party was a fellow Slovak and early supporter, Gustav Husák (1913–91), a principal architect of the new federated system.

Though Husák oversaw the dismantling of most of the reforms associated with the Prague Spring, including the purge of approximately a half million of Dubček's most active supporters, he remained a Slovak nationalist. He had been jailed by the Nazi-backed

Slovak puppet government from 1940 to 1943, then played a role in the 1944 Slovak revolt against the puppet government. A member of Czechoslovakia's central committee of the Communist Party, he was purged from the party in 1951 on the trumped-up charges of "nationalism" and of plotting to succeed Marshall Tito of Yugoslavia. After serving a six-year sentence, Husák wrote a history of the 1944 Slovak uprising. His sentence was declared illegal in 1963, and he subsequently spent five years rising in the party hierarchy, identifying with Dubček, who condemned Slovak nationalism.

Although Husák's government was one of the sternest in Eastern Europe, it focused on improvements in the standard of living of the entire country. Slovakia, historically an agricultural area, began to industrialize after the 1948 Communist takeover. Enormous heavy-industry and armaments plants were built, making the area dependent on the Soviet Union as a customer.

The Communist system of Czechoslovakia fell apart within 23 days during the "Velvet Revolution" of late 1989, leaving opposition forces unprepared for the sudden transition to parliamentary democracy. Economic, political, and ethnic tensions between the Czechs and the Slovaks overwhelmed the new leadership, and the 74-year-old union was split in two.

The System of Government

Slovakia is a parliamentary democracy with a unicameral legislature. The Slovak constitution was signed on September 3, 1992, and became effective on January 1, 1993, with the creation of the independent Slovak Republic.

EXECUTIVE

The executive branch of government of the Slovak Republic includes the prime minister, deputy prime ministers, and other ministers. This branch acts as the supreme body of executive power and is responsible to the National Council (the parliament). The prime minister is appointed and dismissed by the president. On the prime minister's recommendation, the president appoints and recalls the other members of the government (cabinet). If the prime minister resigns, the whole government falls. If the National Council passes a vote of no confidence in the prime minister, the president may dismiss the person and the government fails.

To adopt a governmental resolution, the consent of an absolute majority of all government members is required. As a body, the government decides on bills, decrees, domestic programs, international treaties, foreign policy, and drafts of the state budget.

The head of state is the Slovakian president, who serves a five-year term and is limited to two consecutive terms in office. According to the constitution, the president is the representative of the state at home and abroad. Until 1999 the president was elected by secret ballot in the National Council, requiring a three-fifths majority. Legislation introduced in 1998 replaced this with direct presidential elections. The president possesses veto power and is empowered to dissolve parliament if it does not pass the government's program on the third try within a six-month period. On the other hand, parliament retains the power to remove the president, which weakens that office as a potential independent mediator between the legislature and the government. The president is required to listen to the opinion of the chair of the National Council, which must call new elections within 30 days if the government's program is not approved. The president also appoints and dismisses the prime minister and other members of the government and serves as the commander in chief of the armed forces.

Before Alexander Dubček's death in November 1992, it was considered likely that he would be elected Slovakia's first president. After his death the election of the country's first president in early 1993 assumed increasing importance. The first prime minister, Vladimir Mečiar, had assumed all presidential duties and was using the position to expand his own power base. The judges of the Constitutional Court were named by Mečiar against the expressed will of the National Council. As a result of these actions, parliament failed to elect the nominee of the prime minister's political party, a rejection viewed as a personal defeat for Mečiar, foreshadowing his ouster a year later. The opposition political parties warned the prime minister repeatedly before the election that his close allies as president and chairman of the Slovak National Council were unacceptable.

The prime minister's party selected Michal Kovác, who was elected the Slovak president on February 15, 1993. Kovác, former Federal Assembly chairman and former deputy chairman of the Movement for a Democratic Slovakia, repeatedly urged Mečiar to broaden the former prime minister's two-party coalition government. Kovác was forced to become an independent upon accepting the presidency. He enjoyed one of

the highest levels of public support among Slovakia's political leaders. He was succeeded, after a brief period of vacancy, by Rudolf Schuster, chairman of the Party of Civic Understanding (SOP), who defeated Mečiar in the second of two rounds of voting, with 57 percent of the total. Schuster held the post from 1998 until 2004, falling out in the first election round in 2004 after getting only 7.4 percent of the vote. Mečiar, on the other hand, had rebounded into the second, deciding round, where he faced Ivan Gašparovič of the Movement for Democracy (HDZ). Gašparovič, benefiting from the support of the leftist party called Směr ("Direction"), won with three-fifths of the vote and became the next president of the republic.

LEGISLATURE

The supreme legislative power is vested in the National Council of the Slovak Republic, formerly the Slovak regional legislature. The unicameral legislature has 150 deputies, elected by secret ballot for four-year terms in universal, equal, direct elections.

The National Council has the power to pass laws, approve the state budget, and supervise government activities. It can recall the president by secret ballot and pass a vote of confidence or censure on the government or its members. The National Council also elects judges, including the chairman and vice chairman of the Supreme Court and the Constitutional Court.

The first elections held in Slovakia since its independence took place in 1994. Eighteen parties participated. The 76 percent turnout of the registered voters returned the Movement for a Democratic Slovakia (HZDS) to dominance. It was a vindication for the populist Vladimir Mečiar, who won 35 percent of the vote. He was later rebuffed in the parliamentary elections of 1998, when the HZDS won 27 percent of the vote but lost nearly a quarter of its former electoral support. In contrast, the five-party opposition, the Slovak Democratic Coalition (SDK), won more than three-fifths of the seats in the National Assembly.

In the 2002 elections to parliament, HZDS returned to the winner's circle, with 19.5 percent of valid votes, earning 36 of the 150 total seats. The Slovak Democratic Coalition and Christian Union (SDKU), with 15.1 percent of the vote, captured 28 seats. Trailing close behind, Direction took 13.5 percent of the vote and 25 seats, followed by Party of the Hungarian Coalition (SMK), with a percentage of 11.2 and 20 seats on the National Council.

NATIONAL COUNCIL

Party	1998 Seats	2002 Seats
People's Party–Movement for a Democratic Slovakia (HZDS)	43	36
Slovak Democratic Coalition (and Christian Union) SDK (SDKU)	42	28
Party of the Democratic Left (SDL)	23	—
Slovak Hungarian Coalition (SMK)	15	20
Slovak National Party (SNS)	14	—
Party of Civic Understanding (SOP)	13	—
Direction (Směr)	—	25
Alliance of a New Citizen (ANO)	—	15
Christian Democratic Movement (KDH)	—	15
Slovak Communist Party (KSS)	—	11

JUDICIARY

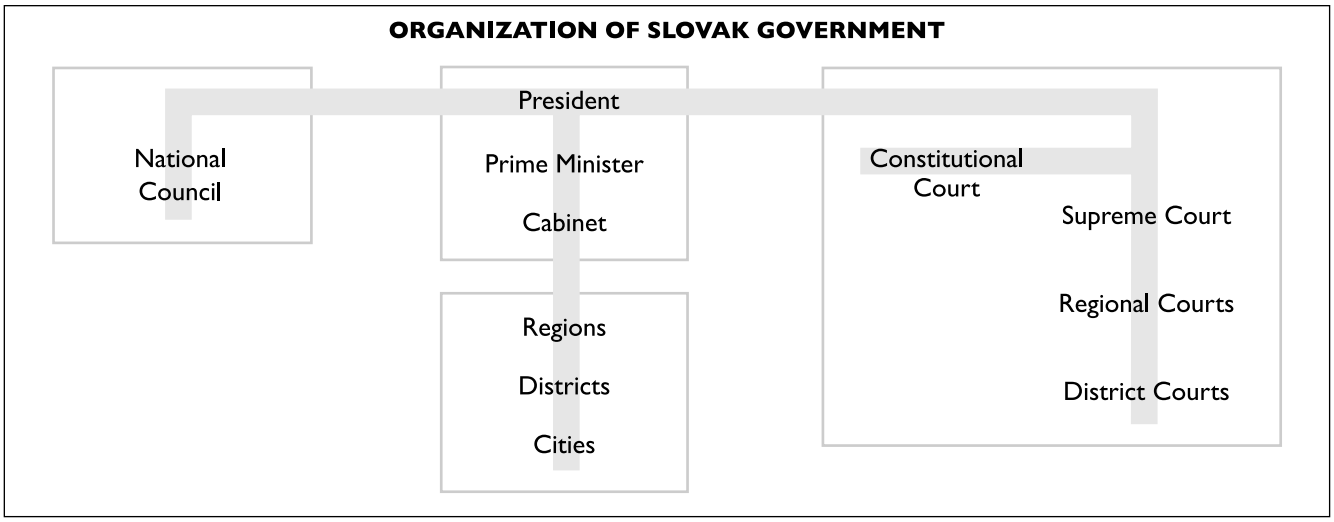
Judicial power in Slovakia is exercised by independent and impartial courts of justice. The judiciary comprises courts of three levels: (1) district courts, (2) regional (county) courts, and (3) the Supreme Court of the Slovak Republic. Judges are elected to four-year terms by the National Council. After the initial term is completed, judges can be granted positions for life. Slovak judges are further classified into professional and lay categories. The latter group are otherwise employed persons vested with the same powers as the professional judges.

Another court, the Constitutional Court, is responsible for ensuring the constitutionality of government decisions, resolving power-sharing disputes, and protecting the rights of citizens. The 10 judges of the Court are appointed by the president for seven-year terms. They are not allowed to be members of political parties or to participate in political activities.

Slovakia's laws are enforced by the prosecutor-general who is appointed by the president on the recommendation of the National Council.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The Slovak constitution deals very briefly with local administration, which is handled by regional and



local authorities. Until 1996 Slovakia consisted of four regions (western, central, eastern, and Bratislava), subdivided into 38 districts. But the new "regionalization" act divided the country into eight regions with 79 districts to prevent the Hungarian minority from having a majority in any region. Regional and district representatives have been appointed by the prime minister for four-year terms. Considerable financial and economic autonomy is allowed for city councils and mayors, and there is a striking independence of voters at the local level. There were regional and also district and municipal elections in 2001 and 2002, respectively.

The Electoral System

Slovakia is divided into 79 districts for voting purposes. Each district has a chief who plays a major role in preparing for elections. These positions are filled by the cabinet based on a supposedly competitive process. The franchise is restricted to permanent residents at least 18 years old. Campaigns begin 23 days before an election and must end 48 hours before voting. No polls may be published seven days before elections. There is a 5 percent electoral threshold necessary to obtain representation in parliament (coalitions of two parties require 7 percent and coalitions of four parties require 10 percent).

The Party System

Initially, there was a deliberate effort to avoid the use of the word "party" because of its associations with the Communist Party. Alternative words such as movement, union, and alliance were chosen to identify political parties and social groups. For example, the Public against Violence group formed a coalition with the Civic Forum in the June 1990 elections. These two organizations had common roots in opposing the Communist Party in the preceding decades. At the federal level in Czechoslovakia, they emerged as the dominant political force, able to determine the composition of the first non-Communist government, the so-called Government of National Understanding. The end of the Communist Party's monopoly of power was heralded by the restoration of multiparty democracy.

Because the 1990 elections took place while the electoral system was still in flux, the results were not predictive of long-term political alignments, and new parties came and went in the first decade of Slovak independence. In the early 2000s the leading parties and/or coalitions were HZDS, SDKU, SMK, and Směr.

Major Political Parties

PEOPLE'S PARTY–MOVEMENT FOR A DEMOCRATIC SLOVAKIA

(Ľudová strana–Hnutie za demokratické Slovenso; HZDS)

The Movement for a Democratic Slovakia traces its roots to the Public against Violence (PAV), which Vladimir Mečiar served as a founding member. The

debate over the future of Czechoslovakia led to turmoil during 1991. In March of that year Mečiar was forced to resign as Slovak prime minister after he was accused of harming Czech-Slovak relations by his stance favoring full autonomy for Slovakia. He left the PAV to form the HZDS.

In the elections of June 5–6, 1992, the HZDS emerged as the dominant Slovak party, both in the Federal Assembly and in the Slovak National Council, winning 74 of the 150 seats. Mečiar was reinstated as prime minister of the new HZDS-dominated Slovak government in late June.

The Slovak National Council overwhelmingly approved a declaration of Slovak sovereignty on July 17, 1992, supported primarily by HZDS deputies in the Federal Assembly who had blocked the dissolution of Czechoslovakia. However, in late November 1992 the Federal Assembly, by a margin of only three votes, finally approved dissolution on the third effort.

The presidential election in January–February 1993 brought the growing internal divisions within the HZDS to the surface. The autocratic behavior of the prime minister led to the resignation of the HZDS foreign affairs minister, Milan Knazko. In March, Knazko formed a liberal party composed overwhelmingly of HZDS members—the Alliance of Democrats—in opposition to Mečiar's government. One year later Mečiar was ousted as prime minister. The party's representation in parliament had dwindled to 55 deputies. But Mečiar and the HZDS staged a comeback during the fall 1994 election, which returned them to power. However, the HZDS fell from power after the September 1998 election. Though it won 27 percent of the vote, which represented the largest vote garnered by a single party, the HZDS lost nearly a quarter of its former electoral support.

In 2000 the HZDS added "People's Party" to its title. In 2002 it gained a plurality with 36 seats and almost one-fifth of the vote. At the same time, party leader Mečiar, under investigation for corruption, had seen his political stature wane.

DIRECTION (SMĚR)

Formed in 1999, Směr is a center-left political party that pushed for Slovakia's entrance into NATO and the European Union, both of which were realized in 2004. Směr came to prominence in the 2002 elections, when it captured 25 parliamentary seats with 13.5 percent of the vote. In 2003 it absorbed the Party of Civic Understanding. The party's president is Róbert Fico, a former member of the Party of the Democratic Left.

ALLIANCE OF A NEW CITIZEN

(Alliancia Nového Občana; ANO)

The acronym ANO for this center-right party means "Yes." Formed in 2001, it pursues a reform-based agenda. It had a strong showing in the 2002 general elections, claiming 8 percent of the vote and winning 15 seats in parliament. Its president is Pavol Ruško, a media company executive.

SLOVAK COMMUNIST PARTY

(Komunistická Strana Slovenska; KSS)

Formed in 1992, the Slovak Communist Party pursues a Socialist agenda. It is separate from the former Soviet-era Communist Party that had morphed into the Party of the Democratic Left in 1991. The Slovak Communist Party maintains relations with similar left-wing organizations internationally. As anti-Communist fervor waned in the early 21st century, the party saw its fortunes rise. In the 2002 elections for parliament, it won representation on the National Council after taking 6.3 percent of the vote; 11 seats were awarded to the Slovak Communist Party. Its president is Jozef Ševc.

SLOVAK DEMOCRATIC COALITION AND CHRISTIAN UNION

(Slovenská Demokratická a Krest'anská Únia; SDKU)

Growing out of the Slovak Democratic Coalition (SDK), SDKU was formed in 2000 in order to mount a challenge for the 2002 general elections. In 1998 the SDK had won 26 percent of the vote, capturing 42 seats. It comprised an alliance of five parties, including the Social Democrats, the Greens, and the Hungarian Coalition. The SDKU, in the 2002 elections, earned 28 seats on the National Council with 15.1 percent of the vote. The party is led by Mikuláš Dzurinda, the prime minister of Slovakia since 1998.

CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC MOVEMENT

(Krestanko-demokratické hnutie; KDH)

The Christian Democratic Movement was established in 1990. The party derives its policies from an effort to apply Christian values to the Slovak situation. It gained parliamentary representation in the first free elections in 1990 when it obtained the largest number

of votes cast in the Slovakian November election (27.4 percent compared with 20.4 percent for Public against Violence, which ran second). During the first electoral term the KDH was represented in the government, and between April 1991 and June 1992 it was the strongest political party in Slovakia. Ján Carnogurský, party chairman and former Catholic dissident, was the Slovak prime minister during this period prior to Slovakia's achieving independence. He replaced Vladimir Mečiar, who was accused of being too aggressive in advocating full autonomy for Slovakia. Some of the KDH's leaders pushed forcefully for Slovak autonomy within a common state during this period.

The June 1992 electoral results saw the KDH fall to third place with about 9 percent of the vote, compared with the HZDS with 37 percent and the SDL with nearly 15 percent. Some of the new ministers in Josef Moravcik's early 1994 government were from the Christian Democratic Party, which remains a party on the right. Carnogurský, a fierce opponent of Vladimir Mečiar, played a strong role in the 1994 election, in which the KDH retained its traditional 10 percent share of the vote.

In early 1997 it entered into a cooperation known as the Blue Alliance with the Democratic Party and the Democratic Union. It merged with the SDK in 1998.

SLOVAK HUNGARIAN COALITION

(Strana maďarskej koalície; SMK)

This party represents the Hungarian ethnic minority in Slovakia. It is led by Béla Bugár. In 2002 the party won 20 seats in parliament.

Minor Political Parties

PARTY OF THE DEMOCRATIC LEFT

(Strana demokratickej lavice; SDL)

The Party of the Democratic Left represents reform-oriented members of the former Communist Party of Slovakia (Komunisticka strana Slovenska; KSS). The old party organization was pivotal in the liberalization of the 1960s. Alexander Dubček led the Slovak Party for five years before assuming its helm in Prague, the same path his successor, Gustav Husák, later followed. The KSS avoided most of the purges after the Prague Spring in 1968. Although half a million members were dropped in Czechoslovakia as a whole, only 50,000 were removed in Slovakia.

The reconstituted party (SDL), after the "Velvet Revolution," held its first congress in December 1991. Support for the old Communist Party had increased to 14 percent in Slovakia in the November 1990 elections (and 17.4 percent in the Czech Lands). In the June 1992 elections it won approximately 13 percent of the vote in both the Czech Lands and Slovakia. The latter level of support closely paralleled the support it garnered between World War I and World War II. The SDL continues to be the party with the most resources, largely because it inherited the property of the Communist Party.

Former chairman of the SDL Peter Weiss served as vice chairman (first deputy chairman) of the Slovak Parliament in 1994. The party, part of the 1994 five-party coalition government, won the second largest number of seats (29) in the National Council in the June 1992 elections, while the KSS received fewer than 1 percent of the vote. After Vladimir Mečiar's ouster as prime minister in March 1994, his successor added new ministers from the SDL and the Christian Democratic Party, as well as from several minor parties. In April 1996 Josef Migas replaced Weiss as party chairman. Migas was selected as parliamentary speaker by the four-party coalition victory of the SDK after the September 1998 election.

The SDL draws its strength from older voters—as well as other individuals—politically compromised by their roles under the old regime. It is supported also by those who fear change and the likely subsequent impact of economic reforms. The party supports the idea of democratic centralism with an emphasis on world peace, human rights, and ecological concerns. It supports the transition to a market economy and rejects political extremism. At its second congress in May 1993, it adopted policies based on the principles of, and applied for membership in, the Socialist International. It is led by L'ubomír Petrák.

SLOVAK NATIONAL PARTY

(Slovenská narodná strana; SNS)

The Slovak National Party claims to be the oldest political party in Slovakia, dating its founding to 1860. It is the self-proclaimed heir to the pre–World War II Ludaks Party (the Slovak People's Party), which was a nationalistic, antidemocratic party inspired by religious mysticism. Party leaders advocated Slovak autonomy and established relations with Hitler. After its leader, Andrel Hlinka, died in 1938, the party changed its name to Hlinka's Slovak People's Party, which proclaimed an independent state of Slovakia in March

1939, though in fact it was a Nazi puppet state. When it resumed activity in April 1990, it was the first major organization to promote Slovakia's independence as the primary mission on the party. In late summer 1990 it led nine Slovak political parties in calling for an independent state. The party's strength suggested both the existing power of ethnic issues as well as its potential in advocating extreme nationalistic positions.

Public opinion polls indicated that the SNS was the strongest party in Slovakia during 1990, but it received only 3 percent of the November vote in the local elections. However, it had won 13 percent of the vote for the Czechoslovakian lower chamber (the House of the People) and 11 percent for the upper chamber (the House of Nations) in the June 1990 elections.

During the June 1992 elections the party won 15 seats. It won 9 seats in 1994, 14 in 1998, and 0 in 2002. The SNS's slogan was "Free Citizenship, Local Rule, a Sovereign Slovakia." An extreme-right-wing political party with a Christian orientation, the SNS considers private ownership as the source of national wealth. The SNS opposed the membership of Slovakia in NATO. The party is led by Peter Súlovsky.

Other Political Forces

Slovakia's entrance into both NATO and the European Union in the spring of 2004 signal international alliances that will likely play a key role in the country's politics in coming years. Internally, labor unions may also exert more influence on the political process than in the past. Strikes were relatively rare until 2004, when there were a number of protests against private enterprises.

National Prospects

Slovakia's short electoral history as an independent state already reveals great political fluidity. With its entrance into both NATO and the European Union, the Slovak Republic is becoming more integrated with its western neighbors. The center-right ruling coalition has enjoyed a period of strong economic growth, despite opposition from nationalist and populist factions in the country.

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REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA

(Republika Slovenija)

By Stephen Markovich, Ph.D.
Revised by Daniel Skinner



Slovenia is a small country situated in Central Europe. Bordered by Italy, Austria, Hungary, and Croatia and by 29 miles of coastline along the Adriatic Sea, it covers 12,700 square miles and has just over 2 million people (2005 est.). Of these 2 million, 83 percent are Slovene, so the country is extremely homogenous in population; Croats, Serbs, other South Slavs, Hungarians, and Italians, among others, make up the remainder.

Following the death of Tito in 1980, Slovene leaders sought new political and economic arrangements that would allow more autonomy for the constituent Socialist republics of Yugoslavia, yet remain a part of Yugoslavia. Working with the Croats, the Slovenes initially proposed a loose federation for Yugoslavia and subsequently an even looser confederation for the country. When these proposals were rejected by the Serbian leaders in Belgrade in favor of more centralization, the Slovenes, on June 25, 1991, seceded from Yugoslavia to become a sovereign nation-state.

Before the Slovenes could take these first steps, however, they had to survive a 10-day war with the Yugoslav National Army, an army now dominated by Serbian forces. After successfully defending their new country, the Slovenes proceeded to draft a new constitution which they affirmed through a referendum and promulgated on December 23, 1991.

The System of Government

Slovenia is a parliamentary democratcy with a bicameral legislature. It has a separation of powers through independent executive, legislative, and judicial branches, and affirms the democratic premises of free elections and competitive parties.

EXECUTIVE

The Republic of Slovenia has a dual executive consisting of a president and a prime minister. The president is elected directly by the people for a term of five years and may serve no more than two consecutive terms, and the prime minister is the head of the party or coalition of parties that controls the National Assembly. Since the early years of the new republic the president has presided over the country to keep it on a democratic track and the prime minister has assumed the responsibility of initiating and implementing policies.

According to the constitution, the president represents Slovenia as the head of state, nominates a candidate for prime minister, appoints state officers, accredits and accepts ambassadors, calls elections for the lower house, proclaims laws enacted by parliament, heads the armed forces as commander in chief, and grants honors and pardons. Though these powers are broad and sometimes ambiguous, Milan Kucan,

the first man to be elected to the presidency, was circumspect in exercising them, a precedent that has held well. Unlike his counterparts in Serbia and Croatia, Slobodan Milošević and Franjo Tudjman, respectively, Kucan did not use his office to expand his control and neutralize the opposition. On the contrary, he did his best to work with the opposition in furthering the interests of Slovenia and, most significantly, to work within the limits of constitutional principles and parliamentary acts.

The prime minister of Slovenia has played a prominent role as one of the two executive leaders of the country, particularly after Janez Drnovšek assumed the office in 1992 and regained election in 1996. Drnovšek, who later went on to become president, appointed and led coalition governments that have enacted laws and implemented decisions to further the democratic development and market economy in the country. While there were some bumps along the way and some serious difficulties, to be sure, overall his governments were so successful in the transition stage that Slovenia is routinely praised in the West and the country was admitted to NATO and the European Union in 2003 and 2004, respectively. The success of the government may be attributed in part to Drnovšek's leadership and in part to the cooperative work of the coalition governments, initially composed of several shifting combinations of parties and more recently composed of the Liberal Democratic Party, People's Party, and Democratic Party of Pensioners. These coalitions have made the government work and have laid the foundation for parliamentary democracy in Slovenia. This foundation has further been buttressed by the efficiency of the system, by governmental cabinets that number about 20 members, and by a parliament that has only 90 deputies in the lower house.

LEGISLATURE

The Slovenian parliament consists of two houses, a lower house called the National Assembly (Drzavni Zbor), which holds most of the legislative power, and an upper house called the National Council (Drzavni Svet), which is primarily an advisory body. Of the 90 deputies of the National Assembly directly elected by the people for four-year terms, 50 are selected proportionally, although this equation differs from election to election. The 40 members of the National Council are elected by occupational groups and local interests for five-year terms.

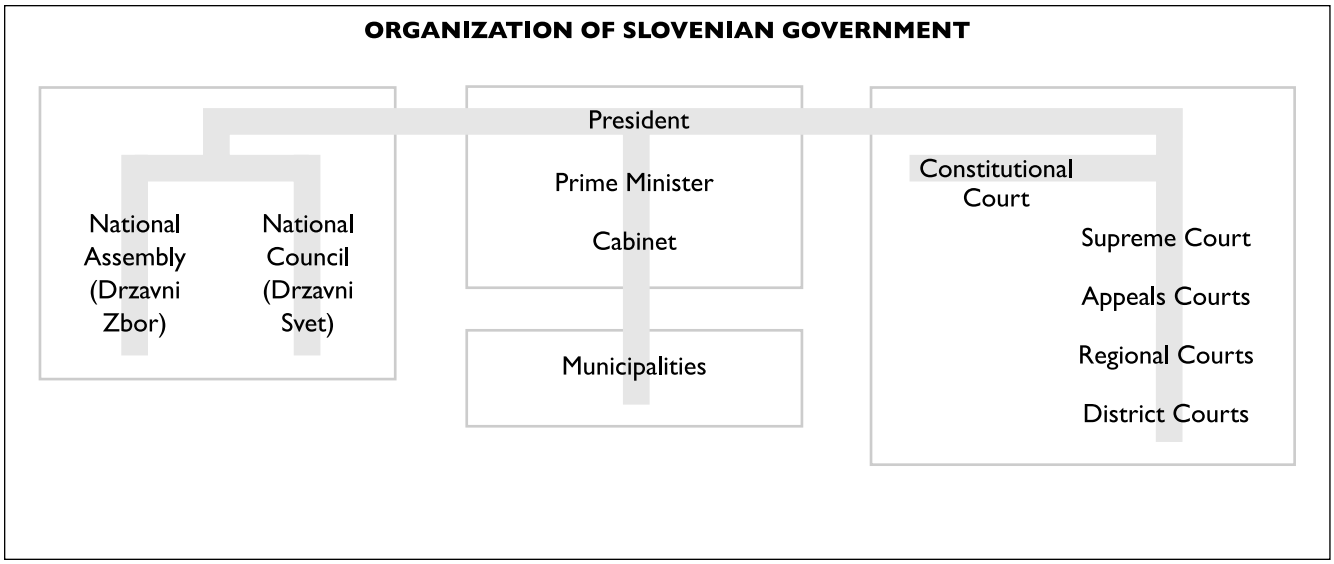
The major functions of the National Assembly are legislative and supervisory. In its legislative functions, the Assembly considers bills, usually introduced by the government, and enacts them into laws by majority vote; interestingly, the legislative powers are not detailed in the constitution but, with some exceptions involving individual rights, are left to the discretion of the National Assembly itself, an arrangement that approaches the principle of parliamentary sovereignty rather than limited government. In its supervisory functions, the Assembly can question the government and call ministers to account, collectively and individually, and it has done so; in 1992 it removed Loyze Peterle as prime minister through a vote of no confidence and likewise in 1996 removed Zoran Thaler as foreign minister. In addition to its legislative and supervisory functions, the National Assembly also ratifies international agreements, confirms ministerial and judicial appointments, initiates referenda, and of course represents constituencies.

The National Council does not have direct legislative powers yet does have sufficient authority to make legislative suggestions and to require reconsideration of bills. Thus, it may recommend bills and offer its opinions on legislation, but it cannot introduce bills on its own. It can, however, force the National Assembly to reconsider a bill already passed; when a bill is sent back for recommendation, it must be passed by a majority of all 90 deputies in the Assembly and not just a majority of those present and voting. To date, the National Council has functioned in a manner consistent with its constitutional description, that is, it has functioned as a consultative body rather than as an authoritative upper house.

JUDICIARY

In Slovenia today there is a system of regular courts and a special Constitutional Court. The regular court system was reorganized in 1993 under a new law that established a Supreme Court, 4 appeals courts, 11 regional courts, and 44 district courts. These courts consider all civil and criminal disputes, except those covered by specific labor and social courts established in 1994. There are also three levels of public prosecutors who handle criminal cases and an ombudsman who is responsible for protecting human rights and fundamental freedoms.

The Constitutional Court is composed of nine judges appointed for nine-year terms by a Judicial Council and confirmed by the National Assembly. The Court's major roles are to see that laws and regulations conform to the constitution, to decide disputes between branches of the republic government, and to decide dis-



putes between the republic and local governments. In these roles, it does possess the power of judicial review; laws, regulations, and actions may be declared null and void immediately or may be stayed up to a year before the Court makes a final determination.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Following their declaration of independence and adoption of a new constitution, the Slovenes undertook the task of restructuring their local government. They completed this task in 1994 when they established 147 new municipalities (although this number has since been readjusted to 193), each of them governed by a mayor and a council. The mayor and council members in each municipality are elected directly by the people; in the smaller municipalities, members are elected by a plurality of votes and in the larger, by proportional representation. Unlike the former Communist communes that implemented national laws in addition to handling local matters, the new municipalities are responsible for local matters only. The republic has plans to adopt regional governing bodies; if these come into being, they may well correspond to the 12 existing regions that are used for statistical purposes only.

The Electoral System

All Slovene citizens who have reached the age of 18 have the right to vote; those age 16 and older who are employed can also vote. On the national level this vote may be cast in presidential and parliamentary elections. The president of the republic is elected directly by the people for a five-year term and is eligible for a second term. In order to be elected, a candidate must receive a majority of the votes cast; if no candidate receives a majority on the first ballot, then a runoff is held between the top two candidates in a second ballot. In the first presidential election under the new constitution, held in 1992, Milan Kucan, running as an independent in a field of eight candidates, easily won election with 64 percent of the vote on the first ballot. In 1997, again as an independent in an eight-man field, Kucan won a second presidential term, this time with 56 percent of the vote on the first ballot. In the first transfer of the presidency since independence, Janez Drnovšek succeeded Kucan in 2002, winning 56.5 percent of the vote.

The 90 deputies in the National Assembly are elected directly by the people for four-year terms, 88 of them in a system of personalized proportional representation and two of them by Italian and Hungarian minorities, respectively. The proportional representation system is rather complicated as it uses the same election to distribute seats on two levels; about half of the seats are distributed on the proportional vote of each party on the constituency level, and the remaining half of the seats are allocated on the basis of each party's proportional support on the national level. Following the 1992 election the 88 seats were divided among eight parties, the largest shares going to the Liberal Democrats, who won 22 seats, and the Christian Democrats, who won 15. Following the 1996 election seven parties gained Assembly seats; the Liberal

Democrats again led with 25 seats, but this time the Slovenian People's Party came in second with 19 seats although, as the merger with the Slovenian Christian Democrats has attested, changes in Slovenian politics have increasingly emphasized the importance of building coalitions, which has all but forced the SLS to seek support from a wide array of political factions, including conservative religious groups without leftist origins. For the distribution of the remaining seats, note that small parties do not gain any seats unless they win at least 3 percent of the popular vote.

The 40 members of the State Council are elected for five-year terms to represent local interests and occupational groups. Of the 40 members, 22 are elected directly by the people in 22 individual constituencies especially created for Council elections and 18 are elected by members of occupational groups. The latter include four representatives of employers, four representatives of employees, four representatives of farmers, small business, and independent professionals, and six representatives of nonprofit organizations such as academic, cultural, and medical institutions. Only members of the occupational groups can vote for the representatives of their respective groups. Since the State Council has limited legislative powers, the elections for this house have not been as significant as elections for the National Assembly.

The Party System

Following the enactment of the parliamentary law permitting a multiparty system on December 27, 1989, political parties rapidly proliferated in Slovenia, as they did in all of the post-Communist societies in East Europe. Within a few weeks there were some 70 parties in the country, but many of these were destined to vanish on their own or fold into collective mergers. Thus, when the first multiparty elections were held in 1990, only 17 parties participated and only nine of these won seats in the main legislative chamber; furthermore, six of the nine formed a coalition called DEMOS (Democratic Opposition of Slovenia), which was significant because it defeated the former Communists and became the new government. After independence, however, DEMOS itself fragmented and gave way to new parties and party alignments. Still, few of these parties and alignments had the strength to endure over time and even fewer had the support to gain legislative representation.

In the 1992 parliamentary elections only eight parties won Assembly seats, in 1996 elections only seven, and in 2004, eight. Today the Slovene system is down to five major parties and several minor parties. Four of the five major parties can be described generally as centrist or right-of-center in their orientation and only one, the United List, can be labeled left-of-center. Since the United List is modest in terms of influence, the Slovene system is unusual in that it lacks a strong, competitive party on the left.

In the 2004 legislative elections the Slovenian Democratic Party, or SDS (the former Social Democratic Party of Slovenia), won 29 Assembly seats, followed by the LDS with 23 seats. Below the two major parties are the United List of Social Democrats of Slovenia (ZLSD) with 10 seats, New Slovenia (NSi) with 9 seats, and the SLS (which had since merged with SKD) with 7 seats.

Major Political Parties

SLOVENIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY

(Slovenska Demokratska Stranka; SDS)

The Slovenian Democratic Party, formerly the Social Democratic Party of Slovenia (SDSS), was founded in Ljubljana in 1989. At that time it adopted a moderate left-of-center program based in part on Socialist traditions that emerged in Slovenia in the 1890s and in part on political philosophies advocated by European social democrats in the 1980s; as a result of this mixture, the party championed democratic principles, social welfare, trade unionism, labor-management cooperation, and free enterprise—providing it did not harm the workers. As long as the party was headed by its initial leaders, France Tomsic and Joze Pucnik, it maintained a left-of-center position. However, when Pucnik was succeeded by Janez Janša, the party underwent a contradictory change, shifting from a moderate leftist party to a rightist nationalist party. Janša—often described as colorful, flamboyant, devious—has been in constant controversy; at one time he was minister of defense in a coalition government but was dismissed from that office by the prime minister and at another time he was charged with involvement in some arms-smuggling deals. Despite this controversy, or perhaps because of it, and despite a small party membership of 6,000, Janša's aggressive style and nationalist speeches have attracted a hard core of voter support, enough to raise the party from four seats and a low ranking in 1992 to 16 seats and third place in the National Assembly in 1996, and eventually to 29 seats in 2004, at which point Janša became prime minister. He headed

a coalition government that included the SLS, the NSi, and the Democratic Party of Pensioners (DeSUS).

LIBERAL DEMOCRACY OF SLOVENIA

(Liberalna Demokracija Slovenije; LDS)

The roots of the Liberal Democracy of Slovenia go back to the League of Socialist Youth of Slovenia, an organization that developed an independent streak when the Communists were still in control in the 1980s and that emerged as a new party in 1990 when it was renamed the Liberal Democratic Party. In 1994 it expanded its political umbrella to absorb three minor parties—the Democratic Party, the Socialist Party, and the Greens—and assumed its present name, the Liberal Democracy of Slovenia. An organized, pragmatic party with about 20,000 members and a solid core of popular support, it has done well in all free elections held in the country since 1990. In the 1992 elections, in fact, it won 22 seats in the National Assembly, more than any other party; as a result, the LDS and its leader, Janez Drnovšek, led a three-party coalition that formed the government of Slovenia.

The party emphasizes democratic principles, a market economy, civil liberties including equal rights for women, environmental protection, and governmental decentralization. Though the party has had difficulty in sustaining these principles in practice, often being accused of contradictory compromises, and while some of their leaders have been scathed by political scandals, usually involving blatant corruption, it has managed to overcome opposition attacks on its compromises and corruption and sustain its early momentum and success. Thus, in the 2000 parliamentary elections the LDS won 34 of the 90 seats, maintaining its status as the largest party, and again became the leading party in a coalition government headed by Janez Drnovšek as prime minister, and later, in 2002, by Anton Rop. In 2004, however, the LDS lost the elections to the SDS, winning 23 seats to the SDS's 29.

SLOVENE PEOPLE'S PARTY

(Slovenska Ljudska Stranka; SLS)

The Slovene People's Party is the former Slovene Farmers' Alliance that was formed in 1988 as a broad coalition opposed to the League of Communists of Slovenia. The Alliance then became the first party to crack the one-party monopoly of the Communists. By 1990 it won representation in the old legislature and also in the new government as part of the victorious DEMOS coalition. In the 1992 elections, running on its own, it gained 10 seats in the new National Assembly and ranked fifth among the parties, and in the 1996 elections it won 19 seats and ranked second, only six seats behind the leading Social Democrats. In 2004 it won seven seats and joined the coalition government led by the SDS.

Initially the Farmers' Alliance was established to unite the farmers of the country, as its original name suggests, and now, as the People's Party, it still relies on rural constituencies for hard political support. With over 30,000 members and a national network of branches, the SLS is firmly supported and well organized. It is a moderate conservative party in orientation, one that favors democracy and free enterprise and one that concomitantly favors private property on the one hand and economic assistance to less-developed areas on the other.

NEW SLOVENIA

(Nova Slovenija; NSi)

This fairly new center-right party won nine seats in the 2004 elections, at which point it joined the ruling coalition led by the SDS. Its leader is Andrej Bajuk.

UNITED LIST OF SOCIAL DEMOCRATS OF SLOVENIA

(Zdruzena Lista Socialnih Demokratov Slovenije; ZLSD)

The United List is the successor to the Communist Party, the League of Communists of Yugoslavia (LCS). By the end of the 1980s the LCS was becoming more and more independent of the national Communist Party and finally broke away completely in January 1990 when the Slovenian delegation, led by Milan Kucan, walked out of the party congress in Belgrade. After restructuring its organization and revamping its goals, the LCS changed its name to the Party of Democratic Renewal in time for the 1990 election. Since the former Communists had led Slovenia to independence and since their new party now trumpeted democracy, they thought they could win the election and regain power legitimately, but the voters were tired of Communists and replaced them with the DEMOS coalition. In subsequent elections they continued to slip. Prior to the 1992 election, they revamped the organization again and merged with three smaller parties to form the United List of Social Democrats but managed to win only 14 seats. In the 1996 election they dropped

even further, winning less than 10 percent of the popular vote and gaining only nine seats. ZLSD experienced a resurgence in 2000 under the leadership of Boest Paber, winning 12 percent of the popular vote (11 seats). In 2004 the party won 10 seats.

Minor Political Parties

Other parties that have parliamentary representation include the Democratic Party of Pensioners of Slovenia (DeSUS), a small moderate party that won only four seats in the National Assembly in 2004 but has more significance than its size warrants due to its being a junior partner in the ruling coalition government. Another minor party is the Slovene National Party (SNS), an ultranationalist right-wing party that won six seats in 2004.

Other Political Forces

More than the other parts of the former Yugoslavia, Slovenia was able to maintain a high degree of autonomy in media and extra-governmental political forces throughout Milošević's reign. The Slovene media remains an important (albeit highly conservative) forces in Slovene politics, although many critics are concerned about what they see as a union forming between the media and government. Slovenia's decision to join Western institutions such as NATO and the European Union brought with it a previously unseen degree of political mobilization from the left. Anti-NATO and anti-EU groups, for example, staged large protests in Ljubljana in 2002 and 2003. Slovenian politics has also witnessed an increase in ethnic tensions and xenophobia resulting from an influx of Bosnians and Serbs in Slovenia, a problem heightened by new border and immigration restrictions required by the EU. In response, political groups such as the Office for Interventions (OFI) were formed, launching extensive protests in coalition with several other antinationalist and anti-European integration organizations.

National Prospects

In the transformation from Titoist Socialism to democratic capitalism, the Slovenes have done better than the other republics of the former Yugoslavia and better than most Eastern European countries in the post-Communist era. Not only have they managed to escape the devastation and expense of extended wars, but they have also succeeded in sowing firm roots for continuing democratic development and economic progress.

Much of the credit for these achievements has to go to former president Milan Kucan and current president Janez Drnovšek. Kucan carried out his role carefully and effectively; at times he used his influence and prestige to step into the political fray in order to keep the system on track and at times he has stayed out in order to let party rivals find a consensus on their own, thereby giving them much needed experience in the process of democracy. Drnovšek too has played his part beneficially, both for himself and for the country; with skill and tact he has ably forged several governmental coalitions that have taken his country through the difficult stages of post-Communist change.

By their governing styles, Kucan and Drnovšek gained support and legitimacy for the new Slovenian system, internally and externally. Internally the people's confidence in the system and its leaders is growing by the day, and externally the confidence of other countries in Slovenia is manifesting itself in words of praise and acts of state. Specific manifestations of the latter are Slovenia's full admission into several international organizations such as the United Nations, NATO, the European Union, and the World Bank. Internally and externally, then, Slovenia is solidifying its status as a legitimate nation-state, one that should do well in the coming years.

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SOLOMON ISLANDS

By Eugene Ogan, Ph.D.



The Solomon Islands became an independent member of the British Commonwealth in July 1978. For 86 years before that date, the islands had been under a British Protectorate. The country consists of six large islands, 20 smaller ones, and hundreds of small islets and coral reefs. The total land area is 29,785 square kilometers, and the population was estimated at 538,000 in 2005. Most of these are ethnically Melanesian, but there are also Polynesians and about 4,000 Micronesians relocated from the Gilbert Islands. Malaita and Guadalcanal are the most heavily populated islands. Some 80 percent of the people still live in traditional village communities, pursuing a subsistence economy. There are more than 80 vernacular languages, but the official language is English, and the most widely spoken is Solomon Islands Pidgin.

The System of Government

The Solomon Islands is a parliamentary democracy with a unicameral legislature.

EXECUTIVE

At independence the constitution established a modified Westminster form of government with the British monarch as head of state. A Solomon Islands citizen is appointed, on the recommendation of the National Parliament, as governor-general to represent the monarch. The governor-general's term of office is five years, with the possibility of reappointment for a second term. His powers are limited.

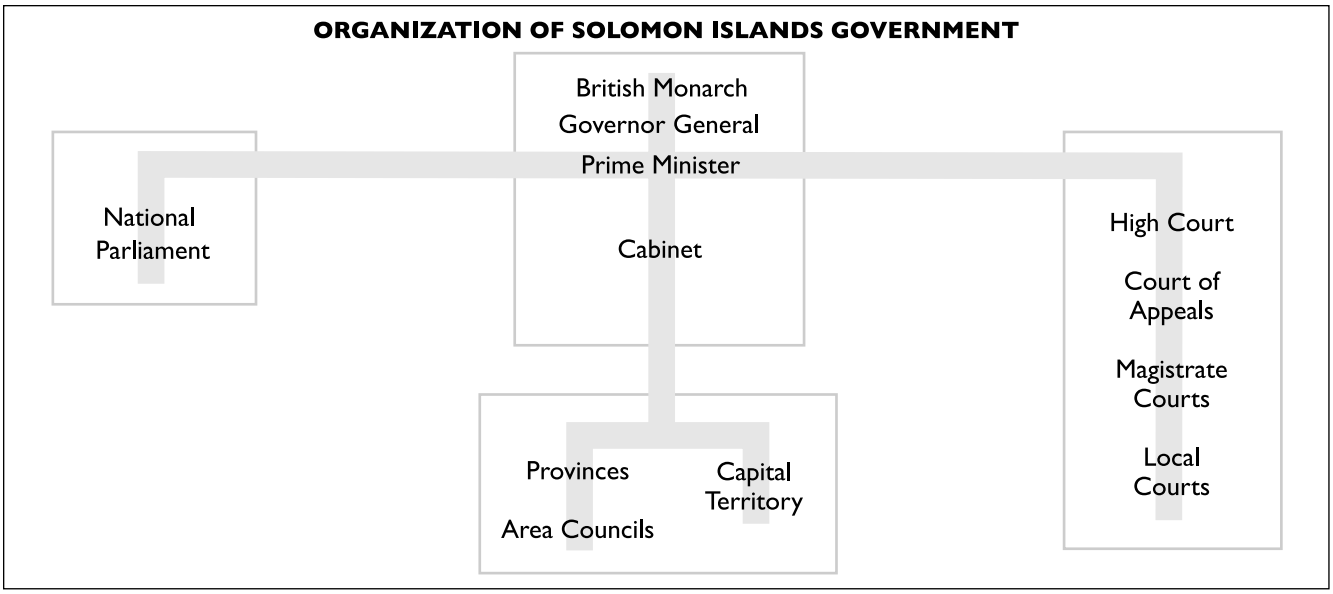
The prime minister and his cabinet exercise effective executive power. The prime minister is elected by and from members of the National Parliament and in turn appoints ministers from the parliamentary membership.

LEGISLATURE

The members of the National Parliament are elected to a term of four years. The constitution sets the number of single-member parliamentary constituencies at not less than 30 nor more than 50, and constituency boundaries must be reviewed at least once every 10 years. A speaker presides over Parliament, elected by the members from among their number, as is a deputy speaker. Parliament can dissolve itself before the four-year term is over by an absolute majority vote. In that case, a general election must be held within four months.

JUDICIARY

A High Court, headed by a chief justice and such other judges as Parliament may provide, has unlimited jurisdiction in all cases. A Court of Appeals was established in 1982. The chief justice and the president of the Court of Appeals are appointed on the advice of the prime minister, in consultation with the Judicial Service Commission. There is also a system of magistrates' courts, local courts, and customary land appeal courts,



each with limited jurisdiction. The last two deal with customary matters.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Because of geographic and linguistic fragmentation, there has been continuing pressure to decentralize government functions in the Solomon Islands. The Provincial Government Act was passed in 1981, and establishment of these bodies has proceeded since then. In 2005 there were nine provinces, each with a provincial assembly, a premier elected by and from the assembly, and a staff; the capital territory (Honiara) also had its own local government. Ordinances passed by the assembly require assent of the responsible cabinet minister to have effect. Functions that can be passed to provincial governments range from cultural and environmental matters to public holidays and liquor laws. The system of area councils established in the 1950s was retained after independence, and there are several in each province. Their main functions are to maintain order and good government and to provide health and welfare services in their respective areas.

The Electoral System

Suffrage is universal for adults age 18 and older. Elections are held every four years but can be held more frequently if Parliament dissolves itself.

The Party System

Political party membership is fluid in the Solomon Islands. The name of one of the major parties, Association of Independent Members, provides some idea of the ease with which parliamentarians move back and forth. The current prime minister, Allan Kemakeza, who assumed office in 2001, leads the People's Alliance Party (PAP).

Major Political Parties

PEOPLE'S ALLIANCE PARTY (PAP)

In the 2001 elections the PAP captured 40 percent of the vote and 16 seats in Parliament. The party is led by Allan Kemakeza, who also serves as prime minister.

ASSOCIATION OF INDEPENDENT MEMBERS (AIM)

The AIM won 13 seats in the 2001 elections.

SOLOMON ISLANDS ALLIANCE FOR CHANGE COALITION (SIACC)

In the 2001 elections the SIACC captured 40 percent of the vote and 12 seats in Parliament, just behind the PAP. The party is led by Bartholomew Ulufa'alu.

PEOPLE'S PROGRESSIVE PARTY (PPP)

In the 2001 elections the PPP captured 20 percent of the vote and 2 seats in Parliament. The PPP was the dominant party in the country in the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s, before being eclipsed by the PAP and the SIACC in the 2000s. The party is led by Mannaseh Damukana Sogavare.

Minor Political Parties

Minor parties include the Solomon Islands Labor Party, led by Joses Tuhanuku.

Other Political Forces

Ethnic violence has contributed to the instability of the political system, and an ethnic militia occupied the capital in 2000 and forced the elected government to resign. In 2003 Australia led an international force to stop the unrest that resulted from the takeover and to disarm the ethnic militias.

National Prospects

The Solomon Islands has been wracked by political unrest since an armed takeover of the capital Honiara in June 2000 forced the elected government to resign. An interim government yielded to an election in December 2001. This placed Sir Allan Kemakeza in office as prime minister, heading a coalition government. In July 2003, reacting to continuing social unrest, Australia led an international force, Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands (RAMSI), to restore order. RAMSI is widely regarded as a successful intervention. However, serious constitutional questions, including pressure for decentralization to district level, remain.

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SOMALIA

(Soomaaliya)

By Mark DeLancey, Ph.D.
Revised by Florina Laura Neculai



Somalia, a nation of 8.5 million (2005 est.) on Africa's east coast, was formed by the unification of the British Somaliland Protectorate and the United Nations Trust Territory of Somalia at independence in 1960. It was known as the Somali Republic until 1969. On October 15, 1969, President Abdi Rashid Ali Shermarke was assassinated, parliament dissolved, and government leaders arrested.

The last central regime came to power in a bloodless coup on October 21, 1969, under the leadership of the head of the armed forces, General Mohammed Siad Barre. He became president of the renamed Somali Democratic Republic and instituted his own USSR-inspired policies. The previous multiparty parliamentary system was abolished, and a single-party system came into existence. While Barre's regime was popular at first and it accomplished several significant tasks, it slowly devolved into a one-man, one-ethnic-group, highly authoritarian rule, with Barre and his small group of advisers ever more isolated from major elements of the population. A series of wars with Ethiopia, civil war in the north, and the strangulation of the economy as the costs of war and corruption grew rapidly and destroyed Barre's popularity. His tactic of arming various clans in a policy of divide and rule backfired, for it eventually provided his enemies with the ability to overthrow him. The anti-Barre coalition (the United Somali Congress) then broke down, and fighting between the clans ended the last vestiges of central government.

Barre's rule ended in January 1991, and, after a brief interlude, major fighting broke out in November 1991 in Mogadishu, the capital, between the forces of the self-declared president, Mohammed Ali Mahdi, and those of the Somali National Alliance, led by Mohammed Farah Aideed. At about this same time, the Somali National Movement, a party of the northern-based Isaak clan led by Abdirahman Ahmed Ali Tour, declared the independence of the Republic of Somaliland. Another important force, among the many armed groups involved, was the remnants of President Barre's supporters now led by his son-in-law, General Mohammed Siad Hersi, also known as General Morgan, located in the south, near the city of Kismayu.

From 1991 to 2000 the country had no proper government. As this struggle led into chaos, complicated by drought, major starvation broke out. In December 1992 U.S. military forces intervened in an effort to end the civil war and allow food aid to be brought to the population. In May 1993 this operation was taken over by the United Nations, although the United States continued to play a major role. When the UN moved from ending starvation to attacking General Aideed and his forces, the UN/U.S. intervention lost much of its popularity, both in Somalia and in the United States. In March 1994 U.S. forces withdrew, leaving behind a greatly weakened UN force and increasing evidence that chaos was returning. After suffering severe casualties, in 1995 the UN also withdrew without succeeding in restoring order.

A new government was chosen in August 2000 with a three-year mandate. Its mandate expired in August 2003. In August 2004 a new transitional parliament secured a five-year mandate, and a president and prime minister were chosen.

The System of Government

As of 2005 there is no permanent national government in Somalia. A transitional federal government since 2004 is operating under a five-year mandate to draft a new constitution.

EXECUTIVE

In October 2004 Abdullahi Yusuf Ahmed was chosen president and chief of state by the transitional federal government. Yusuf then appointed Ali Muhammad Ghedi prime minister and head of government. Ghedi chose a cabinet.

LEGISLATURE

A transitional federal government is operating in Nairobi, Kenya, in the form of a 275-member parliament. The members were chosen as follows: 61 seats were allotted to each of the four major clan groups (Darod, Digil-Mirifle, Dir, and Hawiye); the remaining 31 seats were divided among minor clans. A prime minister and cabinet were chosen from this body.

JUDICIARY

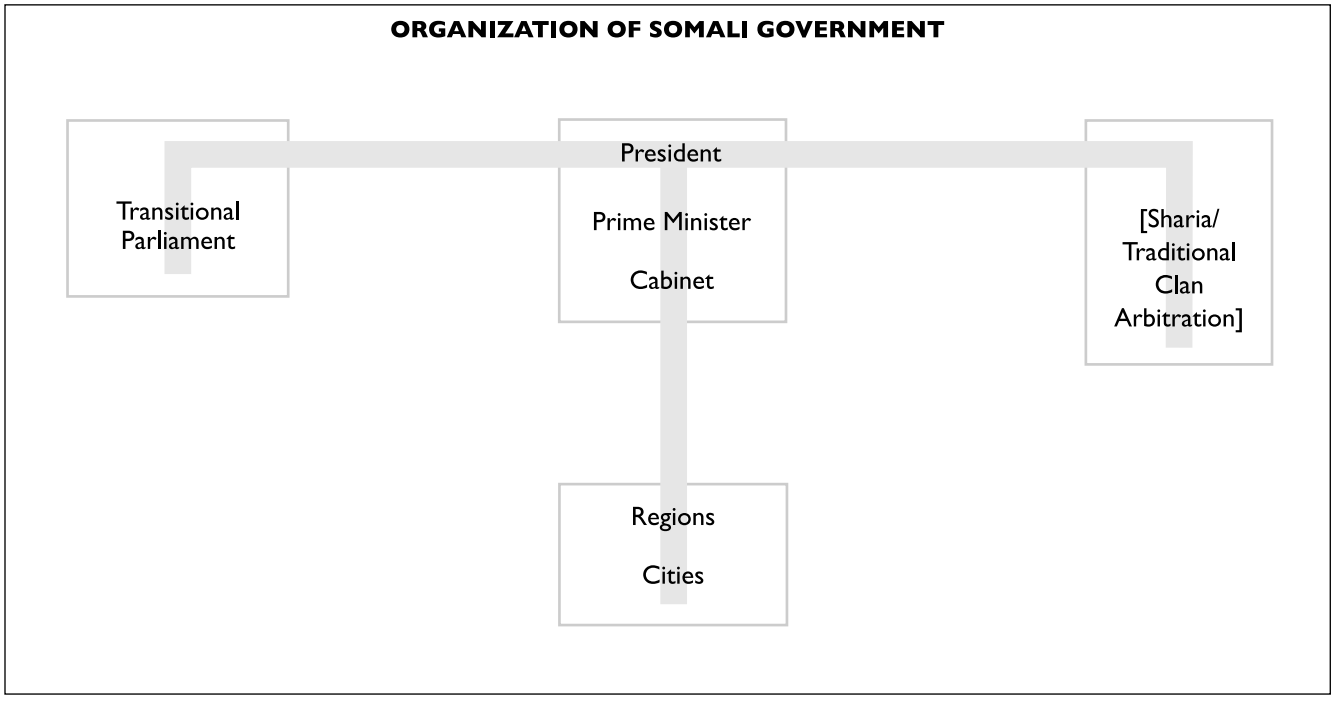
There is no national judicial system operating in Somalia as of 2005. The legal system that had been in place reverted to Islamic law (sharia) or traditional arbitration as judged by the clans.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Various cities and regions in Somalia continue to govern themselves, such as the Puntland central region. Government is based on clan affiliation.

The Electoral System

Somalia is supposed to have universal suffrage for those 18 years of age or older. In 2000 the transitional national government mandate was to create a new constitution for the country and hold elections. Neither of these tasks was accomplished. In 2004 a transitional federal government was formed with a new five-year mandate, but as of 2005 elections had not yet been scheduled.



The Party System

There are no political parties in Somalia. Traditional clan divisions compete for power in the transitional federal government.

Major Political Parties

There are no political parties in Somalia.

Minor Political Parties

There are no political parties in Somalia.

Other Political Forces

ETHNIC GROUPS

The Somali people constitute one ethnic group and share a common language, culture, and history. However, there is a problem of "tribalism" that has been opposed in principle by the various governments of the country. Particularism in Somalia takes the form of affiliation with the clan groupings of the traditional Somali social structure, based on kinship. There are six clan families: Darod, Dir, Ishaaq, Hawiye, Digil, and Rahanweyn; each clan is divided into several subsidiary clans quite capable of opposing one another and forming alliances with other clans. This capacity for flexible, cross-cutting alliances underlies the overall unity of the Somali people, but when effective political power is limited to members of only a few clans, the consequences of alienating the others can be severe. When Somali governments have contained representatives of each of the clan families, a relatively peaceful governance has prevailed, but when President Siad Barre allocated all key positions to members of three Darod subclans—his own (Marehan) and those of his mother (Ogaden) and his son-in-law (Dolbahante)—the balance was upset. Clans now represent the major political forces of the country.

RELIGIOUS GROUPS

Virtually all Somalis are Muslims, and Islam was enshrined in the 1979 constitution as the religion of the state. Religious leaders do enjoy the respect of a deeply religious people, and they have played a role in mediating the ongling conflicts in the country.

National Prospects

Respect for Islam and attempts to overcome remnants of the divisive clan system will be enduring features of any Somali political system in the future. As of 2005 anarchy continued to reign, with President Yusuf battling various warlords over where the country's capital should be located.

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REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

By B. David Meyers, Ph.D.



On May 10, 1994, Nelson Mandela, who had spent 27 years in prison for his political activities, became the first black president of South Africa. He became the 10th leader of that country since its union in 1910 and the first elected with the participation of the previously disenfranchised black majority. F. W. de Klerk, the former president and the leader of the party that had initiated apartheid, served as one of two deputy presidents.

Previously, white South Africans (13 percent of the population) had dominated the country. Two other minority groups, Coloureds (3.3 million persons of mixed racial descent) and Indians (1 million persons of Asian descent), had, by 1984, achieved some limited political power of their own, racially defined houses of a unique tricameral legislature. Blacks, who constituted 76 percent of South Africa's people, were politically disenfranchised and suffered severe social and economic disadvantages from years of discrimination and apartheid, a policy of "separate development" for people of different races.

In November 1993, after more than two years of negotiations, de Klerk, leader of the governing National Party, along with Mandela, leader of the long-outlawed African National Congress (ANC), and representatives of numerous other political groups, completed a 226-page interim constitution. Following elections and two further years of negotiations, they completed a permanent constitution that was phased in over a three-year period.

Although de Klerk and Mandela jointly won the Nobel Peace Prize for 1993, the years of negotiation were marked by large-scale political violence that killed over 12,000 people. Much of this violence occurred between ANC supporters and their Inkatha Freedom Party opponents in the black townships of KwaZulu/Natal. Other violence was carried out by both black and white extremists and by members of the security forces.

Despite such problems, political negotiations had made possible one of the most substantial realignments of political, social, and economic power ever completed at a bargaining table rather than a battlefield. One by one, de Klerk's "power-sharing" proposals, which would have preserved a white veto power, were abandoned, leaving a new system that gave the previously disenfranchised black majority control of the new government.

The System of Government

South Africa is a presidential republic with a bicameral legislature.

EXECUTIVE

The leader of South Africa is a president with broad executive powers. He is elected by the National Assem-

bly, and his greatest source of power is his leadership of the Assembly's largest party. The president conducts foreign policy and commands the armed forces. He can be removed by a vote of no confidence or by impeachment. The president has no veto power. The president is limited to two five-year terms.

Following the 1994 elections Nelson Mandela was chosen president. The ANC's Thabo Mbeki was chosen as one of the deputy presidents, and de Klerk was named the other. In February 1995 President Mandela announced that he would not be a candidate for reelection in 1999. In December 1997 Mandela stepped down as president of the ANC in favor of Mbeki. Mbeki became the nation's president following the national elections in 1999, when ANC won almost a two-thirds majority in parliament. ANC's sweeping victory in 2004 returned Mbeki to that position for five more years.

Until mid-2005 the nation's deputy-president was Jacob Zuma. Zuma, a long-time ANC leader, is a member of the Zulu tribe and had helped insulate the ANC, most of whose officers are Xhosa, from charges of tribal favoritism. However, Mbeki fired Zuma in June 2005 following a corruption scandal. Although it is not required and, given ANC electoral successes, not politically necessary, Mbeki has included members from rival parties in the cabinet.

LEGISLATURE

Since 1994 South Africa has been governed by a nonracial bicameral legislature. The members of the 400-seat National Assembly are chosen by the voters under a system of proportional representation. The National Council of Provinces, which represents provincial and local concerns, consists of 90 members, appointed by the parties in the provincial legislatures in proportion to their strength. Of each province's 10-member delegation, four positions are for "special" or "floating" delegates who will not always be the same person. The provincial premier often serves as a delegation leader, thus ensuring a clear link with provincial interests. Other "special" delegates may have expertise on various matters under discussion. In addition, the Council includes a delegation from the South African Local Government Association (SALGA). The SALGA delegation, which may not vote, comes from the nine provincial local government associations to represent local government concerns.

During their first two years, the National Assembly and the Council of Provinces served as a constitutional assembly. In May 1996 they completed a permanent constitution for South Africa. This was adopted by the required two-thirds vote and went into force over a three-year period.

Ordinary legislation becomes law if passed by a majority vote in both houses. If rejected by either house or if differences between two versions of the same bill cannot be worked out by a conference committee, legislation can be passed by a majority vote of the total membership of both houses.

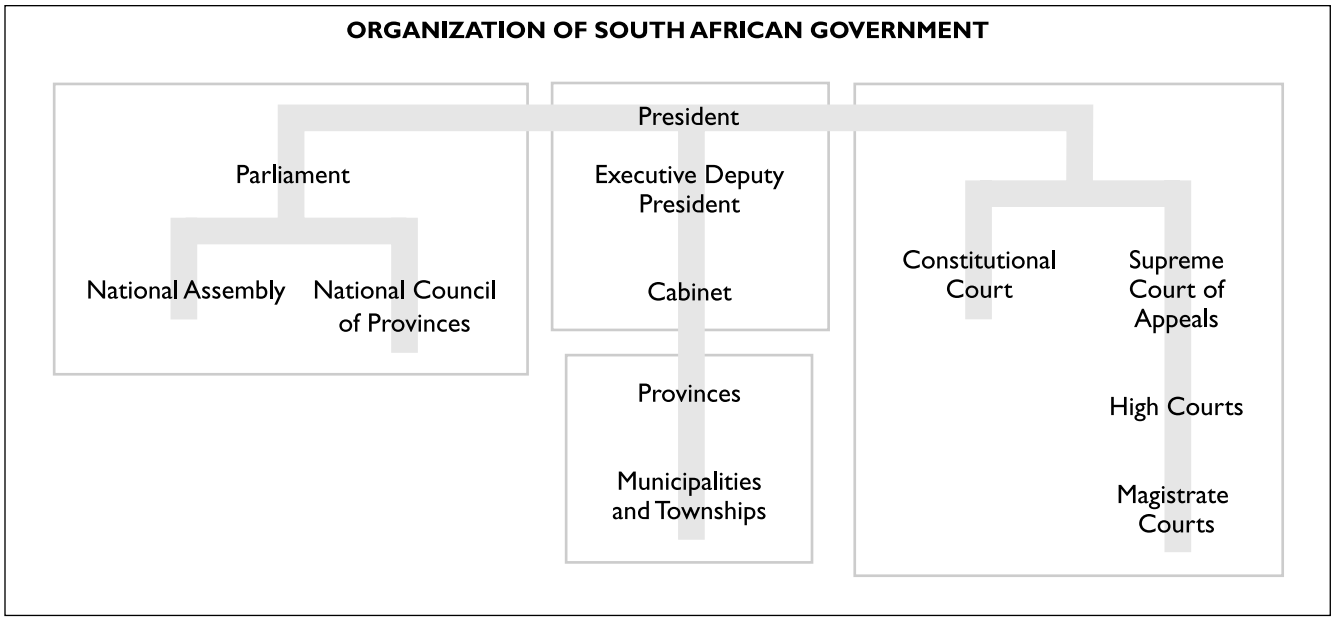
The critical function of the Council is in dealing with legislation affecting the concurrent powers of the provinces. If the Assembly passes, but the Council rejects, such legislation, and the differences between the two branches cannot be worked out by a Mediation Committee, it can become law only if it then obtains a two-thirds majority in the Assembly.

In 1994 the ANC and its coalition allies won 252 of the 400 Assembly seats and 60 of the 90 voting seats in the Council. In 1999 it won 61 Council seats and 266 Assembly seats, one seat shy of a two-thirds majority. In 2004 the ANC captured 279 Assembly seats and gained majority status in eight of the nine provincial assemblies. This is at least symbolically important, as a two-thirds vote in the Assembly and support of at least six of the nine provinces is required to amend all but one section of the South African constitution. The first article, which insures basic rights, can be changed only with a three-quarters vote.

SOUTH AFRICA NATIONAL ASSEMBLY: SEATS BY PARTY, 2004

Party	Seats
African National Congress (ANC)	279
Democratic Alliance (DA)	50
Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP)	28
United Democratic Movement (UDM)	9
New National Party (NNP)	7*
Independent Democrats (ID)	7
African Christian Democratic Party (ACDP)	7
other parties	13
Total	400

**joint ANC in August 2005*



JUDICIARY

At the top of South Africa's judicial system is a Constitutional Court that can find acts of parliament unconstitutional and invalid. It is also responsible for resolving disputes between provincial governments and the national government.

The 11-member Constitutional Court includes a judge-president chosen by the president. In an attempt to depoliticize the Court, the other judges are chosen by the national president and cabinet from a list provided by the independent Judicial Service Commission. The term of office for these judges is seven years.

For the Court's first president, Mandela chose Arthur Chaskalson, who had been one of his defense lawyers in his 1964 treason trial and served as an adviser in writing the interim constitution. All of the other judges were also known to be opponents of apartheid and to be sympathetic to the ANC. Despite this, the Constitutional Court has remained independent and has not hesitated to rule against the government. In summer 1996 the Court ruled that the draft of the new constitution took too much power from the provincial governments and would need to be rewritten.

In December 1995 Mandela named a fellow Nobel Prize winner, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, to head a special Truth and Reconciliation Commission to investigate political crimes committed under apartheid. The commission made numerous recommendations on prosecutions or amnesty.

Another new element in the system is the public prosecutor, who investigates government corruption, incompetence, discourtesy, prejudice, and undue delay. The prosecutor's office may act on its own initiative or in response to complaints.

Whereas previously, parliament was not legally restrained from infringing individual rights and liberties, the constitution now contains a lengthy bill of rights that includes equality before the law and the right to life, human dignity, property, freedom of expression, assembly, association, a speedy and fair trial, basic education, religious tolerance, and a wide range of socioeconomic rights. Nonconstitutional judicial matters are heard in an extensive system of local magistrate courts, high courts, and a Supreme Court of Appeals.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

South Africa has a three-tier system of government. The national, provincial, and local levels of government all have legislative and executive authority in their own spheres. The three levels are defined in the constitution as "distinctive, interdependent, and interrelated." Since independence South Africa had included four provinces: Cape Province, Natal, Orange Free State, and Transvaal. The latter two were independent Afrikaner republics until 1902, and all four were separate British colonies until 1910. During that year the South Africa Act joined the four in what was essentially a unitary political system with a few concessions to provincial interests.

In the drafting of the 1994 constitution, the legacy of racial and tribal differences made the issue of the provincial governments one of the most difficult to resolve. The minority races (represented primarily by the National Party) and the Zulu tribesmen (represented by Inkatha) believed that their interests would be best protected by a system with a high degree of provincial autonomy.

The ANC, which favored unitary government, agreed to the creation of nine provinces whose governments have exclusive powers in only a few specific areas. On most issues, the constitution demands cooperation between the different levels of government. The provincial governments are subject to the laws of parliament, and the central government apparently reserves the right to intervene on most issues. Questions concerning these arrangements have to he resolved by the Constitutional Court.

In the 2004 elections the ANC gained a majority in seven of the provincial parliaments, and together with its NNP ally 50 percent of the seats in another. Inkatha holds the most seats in KwaZulu/Natal.

On the local level, the ANC holds majorities in most town and city councils. Under the constitution, local governments are guaranteed a slice of national revenues and a nonvoting voice in the National Council of Provinces.

The Electoral System

At South Africa's establishment in 1910, there were approximately 23,000 black and Coloured voters in Cape Province and some Indian voters in Natal. After 1936 a series of laws progressively eliminated all black and Indian suffrage and representation. The Coloureds' voting rights had been guaranteed by the South African constitution, but in 1960, the National Party amended the constitution to exclude them too. In 1983 another constitutional revision returned the franchise to persons of Indian and Coloured descent but Blacks remained excluded.

In 1994, for the first time, all South Africans over 18 years of age were eligible to vote. Of the 22 million potential voters, 16 million were blacks, none of whom had previously participated in a national election.

On the national and provincial ballots each party is identified by name, initials, symbol, and a photograph of its leader. This visual approach is used to counter high illiteracy rates among blacks, Coloureds, and Asians. Elections are conducted by an Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) headed by a prominent South African jurist. The commission conducts programs of education on how to vote, prepares and distributes ballots, monitors the elections, and tabulates the results.

Members of the National Assembly are elected by proportional representation: 200 from national party lists and 200 from provincial party lists. In the same election, voters also choose members of the provincial legislatures, also by proportional representation, with each province serving as a single electoral district. The provincial legislatures choose their own premiers and multiparty cabinets. Town and city council elections are held separately.

Party System

ORIGINS OF THE PARTIES

Historically, South Africa's political parties reflected the cleavage between the Afrikaner and the English communities among whites. From 1910 to 1948 the main partisan struggle was between a party dedicated exclusively to Afrikaner interests and a party of reconciliation that included members of both white communities. Elections were close and were usually decided by the swing of Afrikaner voters between the two parties.

The National Party, originally representing solely Afrikaner interests, gained control of the government in 1948. By 1960, when an English-speaking South African was included in the cabinet, the party was moving toward Anglo-Afrikaner reconciliation and increasingly attracting the support of non-Afrikaner whites. This trend greatly weakened the reconciliation parties to the left.

Meanwhile, extreme right-wing members of parliament, expelled from the National Party in 1969 and 1982, formed new parties, one of which, the Conservative Party, became the largest opposition party in the House of Assembly. Following Mandela's release from prison and the start of the movement toward majority rule, a number of other white-supremacist parties were created.

Nonwhite political groupings can be traced hack to the founding of the National Indian Congress by Mahatma Gandhi in 1894 and the African National Congress in 1912. Prior to the emergence of the National Party as the dominant party of government in 1948, the Indian Congress and the ANC usually tried to cooperate with the government and pressed their views gently through petitions and delegations. The first mass, nonviolent protests against the political

exclusion of blacks were launched in the 1950s. In the 1960s nonviolence was abandoned as a principle but was necessarily used as a tactic by largely unarmed, defenseless black protesters facing the full power of the police and army. Finally, in 1990, after a 30-year ban, the ANC, the Pan-Africanist Congress (PAC), and the South Africa Communist Party (SACP) began the transition from outlawed liberation groups to political parties. The strength of ANC, and the perception of its domination by Xhosa tribesmen, encouraged Zulu leaders to create Inkatha to protect their tribal interests. The proportional representation system for awarding legislative seats at all three levels of government has encouraged the formation of numerous small parties.

THE PARTIES IN LAW

In 1985, as part of the rising tide of reform, parliament repealed a law that restricted party memberships to specific ethnic groups. In 1990 the bans on the ANC, the PAC, and the SACP were removed.

In preparation for the 1994 elections, a stringent code of electoral conduct was enacted. This code prescribed what one South Africa newspaper called an "electoral wonderland" wherein politicians were barred from telling lies or propagating false accusations and all parties were required to facilitate access to all potential voters and to refrain from any attempt to restrict anyone's meetings, rallies, or marches. Parties were also forbidden to plagiarize, disfigure, or destroy each other's campaign materials. Finally, all campaign activity was prohibited during the last 48 hours before the polls opened. This idealistic code is frequently ignored. In 2003 the constitution was amended to allow national and provincial legislators to switch parties without losing their seats.

PARTY ORGANIZATION

South African political parties have national, provincial, and local levels of organization. The highest authority at each level is an annual conference, but most decision making takes place in a much smaller executive committee. Most parties include a youth league and a women's organization.

CAMPAIGNING

The 1994 campaign marked a turning point in South African history. Traditionally, South African elections involved only white parties and politicians and tended to be low-key. Members of parliament were elected from single-member districts, most of which were traditionally safe for one party. Although some districts were hotly contested, only the National Party could realistically expect to win control of the government. During this era, campaigns consisted largely of pamphleteering, political rallies, church socials, town hall meetings, and other small-group get-togethers of voters and candidates. The state-owned radio and television could not be used for campaigning.

In contrast, the 1994 campaign with its newly enfranchised voters, numerous parties, and proportional representation (which meant that even small parties could elect members of parliament) was an exciting, highly visible, tumultuous affair. The mood often more closely resembled a colony's transition to independence than an election in a long-sovereign state. Mandela barnstormed across South Africa's provinces, spending much of his time speaking to the newly enfranchised blacks living in the satellite villages outside the white cities. In these areas he was usually met with support verging on delirium.

As the electorate included millions of first-time voters, many of whom were illiterate, there was a major effort at registration and voter education by the electoral commission and the parties. A major theme of the ANC campaign involved voter education as part of an effort to turn out as large a vote as possible. ANC posters displayed sample ballots, and there were calls for everyone to get proper identification to ensure eligibility to vote. Television was widely used in the voter-registration and education campaigns and carried a debate between de Klerk and Mandela.

The ANC's campaign appeared to be concerned with both winning the election and being able to govern successfully afterward. There was an effort to win by huge margins without, at the same time, raising utopian expectations that an ANC government would be unable to fulfill. At least equally important were efforts to reassure the minority communities that they had nothing to fear from an ANC victory.

Some white voters, led by the Conservative Party's election boycott, chose to stay at home rather participate in the balloting. Two of the major predominantly black parties, the Pan-Africanist Congress and the Inkatha Freedom Party, also considered boycotting the elections. Many members of the Pan-Africanist Congress had been reluctant to give up the armed struggle, and a severely divided central executive committee finally led the party into the elections. In addition to

its late start, the PAC was financially strapped and, in many areas, poorly organized.

The Inkatha Freedom Party presented a more serious and prolonged boycott threat. Inkatha, in the negotiations over the new constitution, had demanded more authority for the provincial governments and special privileges for the Zulu monarchy. When the constitution did not include such provisions, Inkatha's central committee called on the government to abandon the election and urged Inkatha supporters to oppose it in every way possible. In the weeks preceding the election there were many violent clashes between IFP and ANC supporters.

Because Inkatha had the support of vast numbers of Zulus, as well as some whites, Indians, and Coloureds, its self-exclusion would have cast severe doubts on the legitimacy of the election and the new government. Finally, 10 days before the polling began, the party reversed its position and agreed to participate. Despite this delayed start, Inkatha's powerful organization successfully turned out the vote in the Zulu areas.

In contrast, the 2004 campaign was described, even praised, in newspapers, as "dull." Some observers saw it as a referendum on ANC's performance over the previous decade. The ANC stressed its record of accomplishments and promised to pursue policies of "black economic empowerment," poverty alleviation, and job creation. Most of the highly splintered opposition (33 parties contested the national and/or provincial races) expressed concerns with one-party domination of the political system and criticized alleged ANC failures at job creation, and in combating HIV/AIDS, corruption, and crime.

Opposition hopes were limited from the start. Inkatha hoped to keep control of the KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Council and the Democratic Alliance to do the same in Western Cape Province; it was unsuccessful on both fronts.

INDEPENDENT VOTERS

Most South African parties now try to appeal beyond their traditional supporters, but their success has remained limited. Despite some movement in the 2004 elections, South African voting is still largely determined by race and tribe. The ANC remains the party of choice of most non-Zulu blacks; Inkatha's efforts to expand its Zulu base were unsuccessful, and the Democratic Alliance remains the choice of white English-speakers. The post-election dissolution of the New National Party may leave its supporters up for grabs.

Major Political Parties

AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS (ANC)

HISTORY

The African National Congress was formed in 1912. For many years it was an elitist organization of middle-class blacks. Its leaders tried to promote multiracialism and oppose white domination through rational argument and pressure exercised through letters, petitions, and delegations.

South Africa's industrial boom during World War II brought new life to the ANC because it stimulated urbanization and labor organization among blacks. These same years saw the rise of the National Party, whose repressive policies galvanized black opposition. In 1944 ANC's young militants established the Congress Youth League (CYL) and began to preach direct confrontation with the government. In 1949 CYL leaders Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu, and Oliver Tambo gained positions on ANC's national executive committee.

During the 1950s, under the leadership of Albert Luthuli, a nonviolent activist and recipient of a Nobel Peace Prize, the ANC increased its activities and visibility. Confrontation with the government took the form of strikes and civil disobedience. In a campaign intended to get the support of the masses and of the outside world, the ANC, together with other antiapartheid organizations, elected 3,500 representatives to a congress of the people, held in June 1955. Here they adopted the "freedom charter," which denounced the government for being founded on injustice and inequality and stated the goal of creating a democratic-socialist state without distinction of race, sex, or creed.

The campaign made little headway, and in 1959 some of the ANC's more activist members broke with the organization to form the Pan-Africanist Congress. Both organizations began campaigns against laws that required all blacks to carry passbooks to indicate that they had official permission to be in areas reserved for whites only. Such laws made it more difficult for blacks to find employment and keep their families together at the same time.

On March 21, 1960, passive resistance to the pass laws triggered the "Sharpeville massacre," in which the police killed 69 unarmed blacks. During the weeks that followed, the ANC and PAC were banned and their leaders went underground or into exile. Luthuli's freedom of movement was sharply restricted by the

government, and the leadership of the party passed to Mandela, already in exile. Sharpeville and its aftermath also resulted in the conclusion of a long debate within the ANC over the party's possible use of violence. Mandela founded the Spear of the Nation (Umkhonto we Sizwe), a military arm of the ANC, to attack strategic and, later, occasional civilian targets. While secretly visiting South Africa in 1962, Mandela was arrested and sentenced to life imprisonment.

For almost three decades ANC's top leaders were either in prison or in exile. Within South Africa, a period of relative quiescence ended in 1976 as a new generation began wide-scale protests against the entire apartheid system. These protests resulted in the deaths of 575 people in the Soweto uprising of 1976 and thereafter became nationwide. Massive protests flared again in the 1980s after Coloureds and Indians were enfranchised but blacks remained excluded. Such protests made many of the black townships ungovernable and led the government to declare a state of emergency.

A campaign to free Mandela linked these new urban activists with the ANC's jailed and exiled leaders. The ANC's and Mandela's popularity grew, and the party's outlawed flag was frequently displayed in public.

Shortly after his release from prison in 1990, Mandela resumed the presidency of the party. Secret negotiations, which Mandela had begun with de Klerk while still in prison, led to the agreement to write a new constitution that would radically alter the political system. The ANC's popularity made it the clear leader in the multiparty negotiations and made its success in the 1994 elections a foregone conclusion. In 1997 Mbeki replaced Mandela as the party's leader.

ORGANIZATION

The ANC's highest authority is its national conference, but most decisions are made in its national executive committee of approximately 30 members headed by the party president and secretary-general. Although the conference frequently serves only to legitimate choices already arrived at by the executive committee, there is no clear monopoly of power by the smaller group.

This structure of conferences and executive committees is repeated at the regional and area levels. At the lowest level, the party has local branches throughout the country and tries to get grassroots participation in policy making and in choosing candidates for government and party offices.

The party includes a women's league and a youth league, both of which are powerful, independent of, and sometimes embarrassing to the party leaders. The party's former military wing, which was also highly independent, has been integrated into South Africa's defense force.

POLICY

For decades the policies of the ANC were those of the 1955 "freedom charter," which called for the creation of a nonracial, democratic country with equal rights for all races. In addition, it spoke of instituting Socialism in a plan that would include nationalization of the country's mineral wealth, banks, and industrial monopolies.

At the ANC's national policy conference in May 1992, a new policy document, essentially an election manifesto, was adopted. In this document, "Policy Guidelines for a Democratic South Africa," the ANC maintained its nonracial political goals but, to the dismay of the militants, abandoned most of its Socialist advocacy.

In power the ANC has supported racial reconciliation and a series of plans to meet the needs of the impoverished masses without risking the flight of capital or skills from the country. Despite the party's Socialist traditions, once in power, its economic policies have been fiscally conservative. The ANC government has provided schools, electricity, clean water, and low-cost housing to millions of South Africans. Critics charge that the promise of "black empowerment" remains far from fulfillment. The government has been hesitant and inconsistent in its effort to battle the HIV/AIDS pandemic and unwilling to criticize publicly the actions of President Robert Mugabe in neighboring Zimbabwe.

MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY

Membership in the ANC is open to people of all races. Although the membership is predominantly black, there are substantial numbers of whites, Indians, and Coloureds. Members of these minority groups have sometimes held party positions. Similarly, although Xhosa predominate among ANC members, all of South Africa's black ethnic communities are found within the party. Even among the Zulu, where Inkatha has its core of support, the ANC has gained widespread membership.

FINANCING

During the years the ANC was banned, its financial support came from outside South Africa. Sources of funds included the United Nations and foreign governments, charities, businesses, and individuals. Since 1990 it has also been able to raise funds, largely from

fees, promotions, donations, and the sale of party materials within South Africa. Since 1994 the ANC has received sizable contributions from some of South Africa's largest corporations.

LEADERSHIP

During the years it was banned, the ANC developed many different sets of leaders. There were those in jail with Mandela, those in exile with Tambo, those leading the Spear of the Nation, and those active secretly in the townships or more openly in the civic organizations, trade unions, and other antiapartheid organizations.

In party elections in December 1994, Mandela was reelected ANC president without opposition. Also unopposed, the South African deputy president, Thabo Mbeki, was chosen as ANC deputy president, confirming his status as Mandela's heir. Jacob Zuma, a Zulu, was chosen as national chairman.

Following the 2004 party conference, Mbeki remained the party president, with Zuma as deputy-president. However, Mbeki fired Zuma in June 2005 after a corruption scandal Nelson Mandela is an ex-officio member of the National Executive Committee (NEC), whose other members include Patrick Lekota, the national chairperson, and Kgalema Motlanthe, secretary-general. With the possible exception of Lekota, whose position is largely ceremonial, all NEC members are close Mbeki allies.

Below and outside of the NEC there is much less unity among party leaders. The party's long-term alliance with the South African Communist Party (SACP) and the Conference of South African Trade Unions (Costa) is strained; since 2002, for the first time, the SACP's leader is not a member of ANC's National Executive Committee. In 2002 the ANC Women's League replaced its controversial president, Winnie Mandela, who had frequently differed with the party's more moderate leaders, with Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula. The ANC Youth League, which has a long history of differences with the party leaders, is led by Malusi Gigaba, its president since 1996. In the provinces and municipalities, local party leaders, many of whom did not experience long terms in jail or exile, frequently criticize the policies and practices of the aging national leaders.

PROSPECTS

The ANC's overwhelming victories in the 2004 national elections have made clear its predominant position in South African politics. There is no party, or coalition of parties, that could be expected to threaten its predominance in the foreseeable future. As the party is highly popular with South Africa's black youth, including those currently too young to vote, its electoral strength may increase in the coming years.

Probably the greatest threat to ANC predominance comes from possible ruptures within the party ranks. Historically, its more militant members have tended to grow impatient with its leaders, and there are many who already believe that the senior leadership has been too compromising and have lost touch with the demands of the rank and file. There has been some talk about ANC militants joining with trade unionists and the Communists in a new workers' party. Such sentiments could easily increase if the ANC-led government is unable to improve the socioeconomic conditions of its supporters. An effort to amend the constitution to allow Mbeki a third term as the nation's president might also serve to divide the party.

NEW NATIONAL PARTY (NNP)

HISTORY

The New National Party (NNP), formerly the long-dominant National Party (NP), ceased operations shortly after the 2004 elections and officially ceased to exist in September 2005. The party, which ruled the country from 1948 until 1994, and which then helped to institute the transition to majority rule, saw its share of the popular vote drop precipitously as it failed to attract black support and saw its white followers desert to either the more liberal Democratic Alliance (DA) or the more conservative, largely Afrikaner, Freedom Front.

The party was founded in 1914 under the leadership of General James Hertzog in order to oppose an Anglo-African coalition pledged to reconciliation between the rival white ethnic groups. Traditionally, the party sought to counter white poverty, particularly among Afrikaners, by pressing for legislation that protected white workers by excluding blacks from certain skilled and semiskilled jobs.

Following overwhelming electoral defeats in 1938 and 1943, Afrikaner nationalists rebuilt a Purified National Party under the leadership of Dr. D. F. Malan. The NP then won the 1948 South Africa election with explicit appeals to Afrikaner nationalism and white supremacy. The party won parliamentary majorities in all of the subsequent general elections until 1994.

In 1994 the NP won 22 percent of the vote and got 82 seats in the National Assembly, six cabinet positions,

and a deputy presidency for de Klerk. In spring 1996, after helping to write and adopt the permanent constitution, de Klerk and the other NP members dropped out of the government in order to lead the opposition in the Assembly. As its voter base abandoned it, NP received 6.9 percent of the popular vote and 28 Assembly seats in 1999 and 1.6 percent and only seven seats in 2004. In early August 2004, party chairman Marthinus van Schalkwyk announced that it was folding for lack of voter support and that he would apply for ANC membership. The party voted to disband itself in 2005.

INKATHA FREEDOM PARTY (IFP)

HISTORY

Inkatha was founded in 1975 by Chief Gatsha Buthelezi, who was at that time the chief minister of the KwaZulu homeland. Originally a Zulu cultural group, Inkatha metamorphosed into an antiapartheid organization and, more recently, into a political party. It remains strongly identified with its founder and with Zulu interests.

As members of the United Democratic Front (a surrogate for the then outlawed ANC) moved into Natal in the 1980s, there began a series of bloody clashes between supporters of Inkatha and the ANC. The clashes continued into the 1990s.

Because of concerns with possible domination by the ANC, Inkatha supported a federal system with substantial power left to the provincial governments. Largely unsuccessful in this goal, Inkatha initially boycotted the 1994 national election, reversing this decision only days before the balloting.

In the 1994 national elections Inkatha won a majority of the votes in KwaZulu/Natal but received few votes elsewhere. With 43 seats, it was the third-largest party in the National Assembly. Within KwaZulu/Natal, Inkatha won 41 of the 81 seats in the provincial legislature, giving it a slim margin of control. In the more recent elections IFP's support declined. It captured 34 National Assembly seats in 1999 and only 28 in 2004. In 2004 it also lost control of the KwaZulu-Natal provincial legislature.

ORGANIZATION

The party's highest decision-making body is its general conference, but most decisions are regularly made by its five-member National Executive headed by the party president, Chief Buthelezi. Like most South African parties, there is a women's league and a youth wing.

POLICY

Inkatha supports the devolution of as much power as possible to provincial, local, and traditional governments. It wishes to protect traditional leaders and to preserve traditional law and courts. At the national level it seeks to separate the position of head of state and head of government. Its economic policies are strongly pro-business and stress deregulation and privatization wherever possible.

IFP has been highly critical of the ANC's hesitance to more actively combat HIV/AIDS. This issue is particularly poignant to Buthelezi, who has lost two children to the disease.

MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY

Among the Zulu, Inkatha's support comes primarily from the more traditional and rural people, many of the more urban Zulus having joined the ANC. During the early 1990s there was a brief, short-lived surge of new racial-minority members, as many South Africans sought alternatives to both the ANC and the NP.

FINANCING

Inkatha receives financial support from its members and some South African businessmen. It received secret and illegal support from the South African government during the apartheid era.

LEADERSHIP

Despite the party's decline Buthelezi remains the party president and undisputed leader. The secretary-general of IFP is Rev. Musa Zonde.

PROSPECTS

Inkatha remains predominantly a Zulu tribal party, and even this base appears to be thinning.

DEMOCRATIC ALLIANCE (DA)

HISTORY

The Democratic Alliance (DA) was formed in 2000 from a merger of primarily white liberal parties that trace their ancestry back to the Federal Progressive Party. The FPP was long personified by Helen Suzman, often the only antiapartheid voice in the South African Parliament. In 1989 the FPP joined with two smaller antiapartheid groups to become the Democratic Party (DP), which in turn, in 2000, allied with other liberal parties and organizations to form the Democratic Alliance. In the 1999 elections the Democratic Party captured 9.5 percent of the vote and 38 seats in the Assembly. This

was sufficient to make it South Africa's second strongest party and the official leader of the opposition. In 2004 the Democratic Alliance strengthened its position as South Africa's official opposition with 12.4 percent of the national vote and the capture of 50 Assembly seats.

ORGANIZATION

Similar to most South African parties, although the Democratic Alliance Annual Conference is its highest authority, most decision-making takes place in the much smaller national executive committee. There are similar structures and practices at the provincial and local levels. The party includes a Youth Organization and a Women's Network. The party is organized in all nine of South Africa's provinces.

POLICY

The DA espouses liberal democracy based on individual rights, nonracial policies, and the existence of a strong democratic opposition. Its nuanced policy positions usually place it between those of ANC and Inkatha on such issues as federalism and the proper government role in civil and economic affairs.

MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY

The core membership of the Democratic Alliance and its predecessors has been white, English-speakers. Its growth in recent years is the result of successfully maintaining this constituency while gaining increased support from all of South Africa's other ethnic communities. As of 2005 the Democratic Alliance was trying to recruit members from the ranks of now-defunct NNP.

FINANCING

Financing comes from party dues, contributions from business and private sources, and the sale of party materials including books, t-shirts, and desk accessories.

LEADERSHIP

Tony Leon is the party president. His personal history closely parallels that of the party as he was an organizer for the Federal Progressives, then leader of the Democratic Party, before attaining his current position. Joe Seremane, a black who was imprisoned during the apartheid era, serves as party chairperson.

PROSPECTS

The Democratic Alliance will likely remain, if not continue to grow, in its position as South Africa's official opposition.

Minor Political Parties

SOUTH AFRICAN COMMUNIST PARTY (SACP)

The SACP has long been closely linked with the ANC, and as usual the two organizations, along with the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), presented a common list of candidates in 2004.

The SACP was established in 1921 and banned in 1950. In 1961 it joined with the ANC in taking up arms against the state as part of the Spear of the Nation. Along with the ANC and PAC, it was legalized in 1990. It offers a leftist influence on the ANC. This influence has weakened in recent years.

The party's popular general secretary, Chris Hani, was assassinated by white extremists in April 1993 and was succeeded by Charles Nqakula, who now serves as national chairperson. The more powerful, general secretary is Blaze Nzimande.

PAN-AFRICANIST CONGRESS (PAC)

This radical black nationalist group broke away from the ANC in 1959 in protest at its alliance with the Communist Party and its policy of admitting whites as members. Like the ANC, it was banned from 1960 to 1990, and many of its leaders were jailed along with Mandela. The PAC's armed wing, the Azanian People's Liberation Army, claimed responsibility for many terrorist attacks on whites and was known for its slogan, "one settler, one bullet." In January 1994 the PAC president, Clarence Makwetu, announced that the PAC would suspend the armed struggle and participate in the elections. The party platform calls for sweeping land redistribution and state control of the economy. The PAC captured five National Assembly seats in 1994 and three in 1999 and 2004. The party's top authority is its national congress, but most decision making is done by an executive committee headed by party president Stanley Mogoba.

AFRICAN CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY (ACDP)

The African Christian Democratic Party is an organization of Christian fundamentalists. Its platform calls for a transformation of South Africa based on family values, morality, and ethics. It supports school prayer and opposes abortion. In the 2004 election the ACDP won seven seats in the National Assembly. The party leader is Reverend Kenneth Meshoe.

FREEDOM FRONT PLUS (FF +)

In March 1994 General Constand Viljoen, the former commander of South African defense forces, formed the Freedom Front for those white separatists who believed that a strong showing at the polls would better serve their interests than would an electoral boycott. The Freedom Front received only slightly over half of the 800,000 votes it had hoped for and had little influence in drafting the constitution.

To better contest the 2004 elections, the Freedom Front merged with the remnants of the once-powerful Conservative Party and with the Afrikaner Unity Movement and changed its name to Freedom Front Plus. The party's goal is the creation of an autonomous Afrikaner homeland. In the elections the FF+ increased its Assembly seats from three to four and captured a total of five seats in provincial legislatures. The party is now led by Pieter Mulder, whose father was a long-serving member of the apartheid-era National Party government.

UNITED DEMOCRATIC MOVEMENT (UDM)

In September 1997 the United Democratic Movement was founded by two prominent politicians, Roelf Meyer, who had been a leader of the National Party's moderate wing, and Bantu Holomis, a former member of the ANC and the president of the nominally independent Transkei homeland. The two, one black and the other white, hoped to attract support across racial lines for the new party's moderate-conservative social democratic positions.

Initially dismissed as a curiosity, the party has won sufficient support in the polls to become South Africa's fourth largest party. In 2004 it won nine seats in the National Assembly and 10 in provincial legislatures.

During the last decade the party has moved leftward as it has become an advocate for land and wealth redistribution and a larger governmental role in the economy. In the political sphere it supports a presidential system with a separate election of the chief executive and changes in the allocation in the National Assembly so as to give more representation to minorities. In 2002 it took a case against the government to the Constitutional Court in an effort to void legislation that allowed members of parliament to switch parties while retaining their seats. Bantu Holomis is the party's president.

INDEPENDENT DEMOCRATS (ID)

The Independent Democrats were formed in 2003 by Patricia de Lille, who had formerly been chief whip of the PAC and a trade union leader. Lilly is well known as an outspoken HIV/AIDS activist and a whistle-blower on alleged government fraud and corruption. In 2004 the party won seven National Assembly seats and seven seats in provincial legislatures.

Other Political Forces

WHITE EXTREMISTS

Probably the best known of the many white extremist organizations that have emerged in recent years is the Afrikaner Resistance Movement (Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging) headed by Eugene TerreBlanche. This paramilitary group, dedicated to white supremacy, has been charged with numerous acts of terrorism. Its support is believed to be extremely limited.

CONGRESS OF SOUTH AFRICAN TRADE UNIONS (COSATU)

The trade union federation, always closely associated with the ANC, again participated in the 2004 elections as part of the coalition that included the ANC and the Communists. The relationship between the ANC government and the unions' militant rank and file has been increasingly strained, including union strikes against government decisions, as the ANC has moved to more conservative economic policies. COSATU is led by its president, Willy Madisha, and its general secretary, Zwelinzima Vavi.

National Prospects

In the early 1990s it was popular for pessimists to predict that South Africa was headed for a massive bloodbath. Despite turmoil, and even some violence, this has not occurred. Now, an often-expressed concern is that the ANC's political dominance and practices threaten democracy and are creating a de facto one-party state. Less pessimistic observers point out that the ANC's control of the government since 1994 has provided political stability during a period of revolutionary change. Furthermore, it has allowed the development of low-cost housing and the extension of electrical and water services to go forward without becoming ensnarled in partisan debate.

Constitutional democracy still appears to be assured by the presence of numerous, outspoken opposition parties, a Constitutional Court that has not hesitated to

rule against the government, an increasingly independent labor union movement, and a raucous and unfettered press that thrives on allegations of government fraud and corruption. The South African economy has a sound base in the country's abundant supply of natural resources and a well-developed transportation and communications infrastructure. The banking system and the stock exchange have remained strong.

South Africa's continued political stability and the underlying strengths of its economy should be sufficient to allow the government to deal with the nation's major economic and social problems. These include a high rate of unemployment, the continued poverty of long-disadvantaged groups, a high, although declining, crime rate, and the vast costs of the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

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KINGDOM OF SPAIN

(Reino de España) (Regne de Espanya)

(Erresuma Espaninia)

By Jan Knippers Black, Ph.D.
Revised by William Godnick



Spain is a nation of 40.3 million people (2005 est.) on the Iberian peninsula in southern Europe. The Spanish political system has essentially completed its transition from traditional and provincial authoritarianism to a modern European-style parliamentary monarchy. The monarchy has been discontinuous in recent Spanish history. Besieged by enthusiasts of the republican cause, King Alfonso XIII renounced the throne in 1931. The pretender thereafter, Don Juan de Borbón y Battenberg, became a severe critic of Franco's policies and lived in exile. Seeking a successor, Franco bypassed Don Juan and, in 1969, named the pretender's son, Don Juan Carlos de Borbón y Borbón (born 1938), prince of Spain and king-designate.

Franco was confident that the young prince, schooled at all three of Spain's military academies as well as the University of Madrid, would carry on his policies and maintain the authoritarian system he had established. But as a matter of either principle or pragmatism, King Juan Carlos chose to identify himself with the unmistakable aspirations of the overwhelming majority of the Spanish people and to move the government firmly toward democracy.

The Spanish political system is characterized by a number of major cleavages. The most important one during the early years of transition was that between the advocates of civilian democratic rule and the advocates of military imposed authoritarianism. The former category includes the king, both of the major parties and most of the minor ones, the unions, and most business interests—in effect, most of Spanish society. The authoritarian groups include a few violence-prone organizations linked with racist and anti-immigrant ideologies. Though the advocates of democracy are overwhelming in numbers, their opponents' command of arms and their willingness to use them have meant that at least until the late 1980s, they could not be written off as inconsequential.

A second major cleavage is that between the proponents of political modernization and the defenders of traditionalism. Although the groups and categories on opposing sides of this cleavage and of the democratic/authoritarian one often overlap, the issues and motivations involved are different and the overlap is only partial. This cleavage coincides more nearly with one of urban versus rural or of political participants versus nonparticipants. It groups on one side members or supporters of political parties, unions, or other modern organizations and institutions and on the other side those who are disinclined to participate in elections and whose primary allegiance is to the Roman Catholic Church.

A third cleavage is that between centralists and regionalists. It pits the king, the armed forces, all of the national parties, and other national organizations and institutions against the regional parties and other advocates of extreme decentralization and regional self-determination. The most readily justifiable claims for regional autonomy are those of Catalonia, while the most extreme are those of the Basque country. The national parties of the left have supported limited regional self-rule, but not absolute self-determination.

The final major cleavage, and in the 1990s and early 2000s the most important by far, is that between right and left within the community of political participants and modernizers committed to the process of transition to constitutional rule. The line in this case fell initially between the center-left Spanish Socialist Workers' Party (PSOE) and the now-defunct, center-right Union of the Democratic Center (UCD). Since 1982 that line has fallen between the PSOE and the right-wing Popular Alliance (AP), renamed in 1989 the Popular Party (PP). This cleavage defines the issues governing the particulars of the electoral process, of constitutional provisions, and of laws.

These cross-cutting cleavages have militated against the very dangerous prospect of polarizations; but they have also rendered extremely difficult the process of identifying areas of consensus. The post-Franco constitution, therefore, has tended, on many issues, to record conflicting aims rather than to resolve them.

A bicameral legislature, the Cortes, was brought into being by a 94.2 percent majority vote in a popular referendum on the Law for Political Reform in December 1976 and the Electoral Law (1977). The Cortes served as the constituent assembly for the drafting of a new constitution. That Cortes was dominated by the UCD, with the PSOE in a strong minority position.

All of the national parties were in agreement that the constitution should be one that would allow for alternation of governments and permit any of the parties to govern in good conscience. Rather than limiting the document to an expression of broad and basic principles, however, they chose to address themselves in detail (169 articles, 15,000 words) to highly controversial issues. However, these issues are often dealt with in ambiguous and, in some cases, seemingly contradictory language that may in time result in serious problems of interpretation.

The new constitution was approved in 1978, first by the Cortes on October 31, then by national referendum on December 6. With 345 of the 350 members of the Congress of Deputies present, 325 voted to approve it. In the Senate, with 239 of the 248 members present, 226 voted approval. Opposition came primarily from the extreme right, the extreme left, and the extreme regionalists, particularly the Basques. For the referendum, turnout was 67.7 percent of eligible voters, of whom 87.8 percent voted approval. Turnout was lowest in historically apathetic Galicia; opposition was highest in the historically separatist Basque country.

The first prime minister to serve under the new constitution was Adolfo Suárez González of the UCD. He resigned in 1981 and was succeeded briefly by Leopoldo Calvo Sotelo of the same party. PSOE leader Felipe González Márquez was elected prime minister in 1982 and was reelected in 1986, 1989, and 1993. He was edged out in 1996 by José María Aznar of the conservative Popular Party (PP). Aznar was elected to a second term as prime minister in 2000. In 2004 PSOE leader José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero was elected prime minister in large part reflecting broad national sentiments against the PP-led government's political and material support for the U.S. occupation of Iraq.

The System of Government

Spain is a parliamentary monarchy. The government is headed by a president elected by the legislature. The king serves as head of state and as commander in chief of the armed forces.

EXECUTIVE

The king is "the head of state and symbol of its unity and permanence" according to the constitution. He sanctions and promulgates laws and is commander in chief of the armed forces. After consulting with representatives of the political parties, and based on the results of national elections, the king nominates a candidate for president of the government (also known as prime minister). The candidate must then win a vote of confidence in the Congress of Deputies. If after two months no candidate has been able to win a vote of confidence, the king must dissolve the Cortes and call for new elections. The current king is Juan Carlos de Borbón, who is expected to be replaced eventually by his only son Felipe de Borbón, since Felipe's older sisters, as women, are not eligible to govern by law.

Executive authority is vested in the president (prime minister). The president and his cabinet are collectively responsible to the Congress of Deputies. The government is subject to a vote of censure, but the motion of censure must include the name of the candidate who is to succeed to the presidency. This "constructive" censure, borrowed from the West German constitution, was favored by both of the major parties as a stabilizing feature.

LEGISLATURE

Legislative power is vested in the bicameral Cortes. The lower house, the Congress of Deputies (Congreso de Diputados), at present has 350 members who are

directly elected to four-year terms by proportional representation from the 50 provinces. Barcelona and Madrid have 33 and 32 deputies, respectively; the 48 other provinces have from three to 15. The North African enclaves, Ceuta and Melilla, have one deputy each. The upper house, the Senate (Senado), at present has 208 members directly elected to four-year terms by simple plurality. The 47 mainland provinces elect four each and the enclaves two each. The two Canary Island provinces elect 11 senators, and the Balearic Islands province elects five. An additional 48 members are elected, on a population basis, to represent the "self-governing communities."

The Congress of Deputies has by far the stronger role. Bills passed by the Congress must be approved by the Senate, but the Congress can override a Senate vote by a simple majority. Nor can the Senate long delay legislation. It is required to act on congressional bills within two months and, in some cases, within 20 days.

The role and composition of the Senate were subjects of great controversy during the constitutional debates. The initial proposal of the UCD, that all senators be elected indirectly by the legislative assemblies of the autonomous regions, was unacceptable to the PSOE and other parties of the left. Even the formula ultimately accepted left the more conservative rural areas greatly overrepresented. Thus, the left, fearing that the Senate would block any progressive measures initiated in the Congress of Deputies, refused to agree to grant significant powers to the Senate. There is now an ongoing debate within the legislature to make the Senate a territorially representative body along the line of the German Länder.

Popular initiative is permitted with a minimum of 500,000 signatures. The constitution also provides that "political decisions of special importance may be submitted to all citizens in a consultative referendum." A referendum may be called by the king at the proposal of the president following authorization by the Congress of Deputies.

The constitution may be amended by a three-fifths majority of each of the two chambers of the Cortes. On the petition of one-tenth of the deputies or senators, an amendment may be submitted to referendum. Amendment to Articles 1 to 9, 15 to 29, and 56 to 65, defining civil liberties and the basic characteristics of the state, call for a more consensual procedure. They would require a two-thirds majority of both chambers, the immediate dissolution of the Cortes, new elections, a two-thirds majority of both chambers of the new Cortes, and a national referendum.

While the Cortes is elected to a four-year term, the president can advise the king to call new elections earlier. This happened in 1982, when Prime Minister Calvo Sotelo's ruling party, the UCD, disintegrated, and he could no longer rely on a majority in the Congress.

ELECTIONS OF MARCH 14, 2004

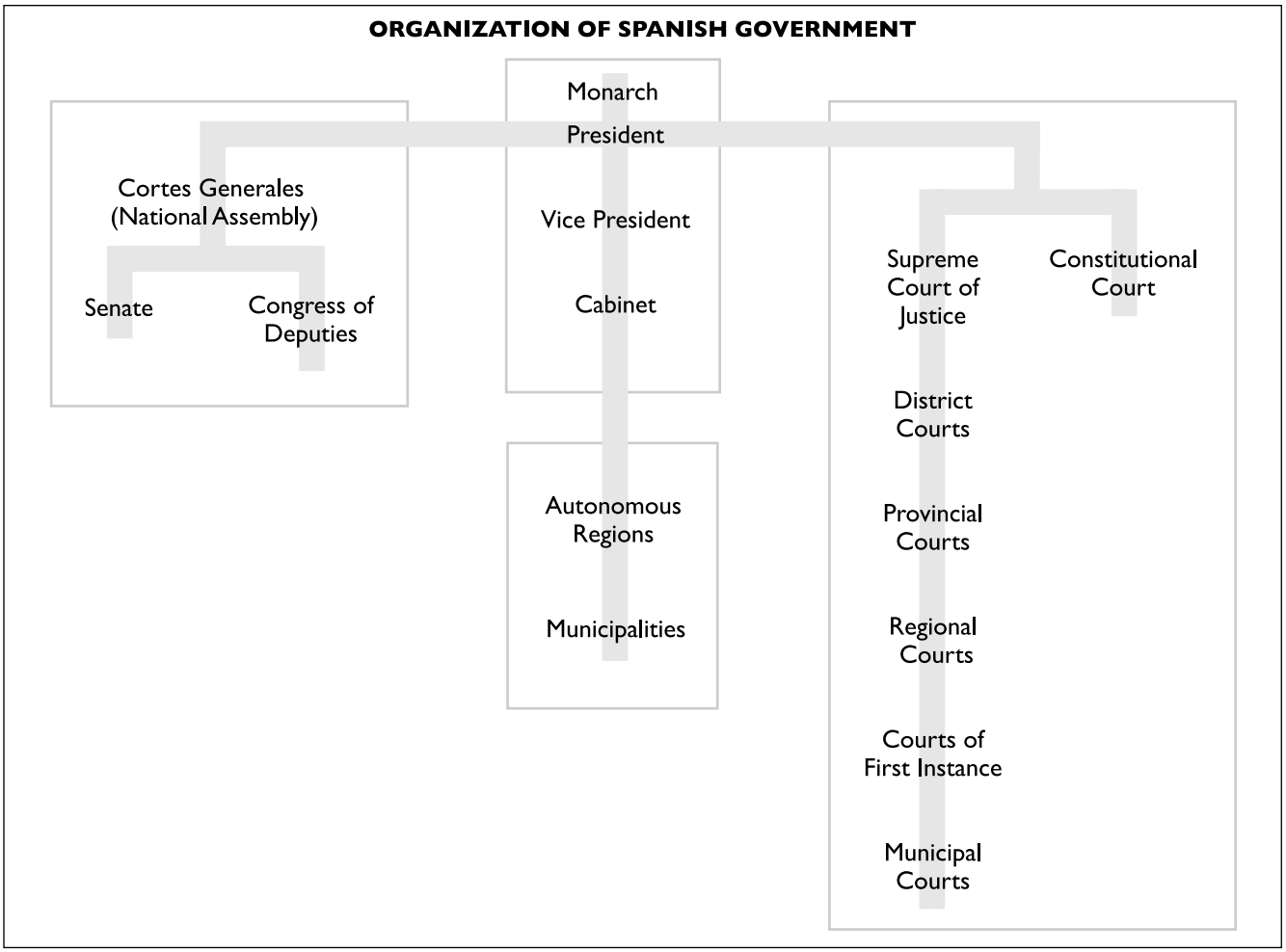
Party	%	Diputados	Senado
Partido Popular (PP)	37.7	148	102
Partido Socialista Obrero Español (PSOE)	42.6	164	81
Izquierda Unida (IU)	5.1	5	—
Convergéncia i Unió (CIU)	3.2	10	4
Euskadi Alberdi Jerzale/Partido Nacionalista Vasco (PNV)	1.6	7	6
Coalición Canaria (CC)	0.9	3	3
Bloque Nacionalista Gallego (BNG)	0.8	2	—
Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya (ERC)	2.8	8	*
Partido Andalucista (PA)	0.7	0	—
Eusko Alkartasuna (EA)	0.3	1	—
Others	2.3	0	12

** 12 In coalition with PSC, ICV and EUA representing Catalonia interests*

JUDICIARY

Judicial authority is vested in an independent court system. Ultimate recourse on most matters of adjudication is to the Supreme Court, but constitutional questions are referred to the Constitutional Court consisting of 12 judges serving nine-year terms. Of the Constitutional Court's members, two are to be named by the government, two by the General Council of the Judiciary, four by the Congress of Deputies, and four by the Senate. The Constitutional Court, a relatively conservative body, has been kept busy as a consequence of the many ambiguities of the constitution.

The judiciary has been one of the last institutional vestiges of the Franco regime. Even by the mid-1980s



about half the judges were holdovers. But changes can be seen. In the fall of 1985 the Judicial Council was reconstituted. It was elected for the first time by parliament, and also for the first time it included a woman.

Extraordinary political tribunals are prohibited, and the jurisdiction of military courts is limited to members of the armed forces, except in the event of a state of siege. The jurisdiction of military courts over members of the armed forces has already proved troublesome, as military conspirators against the democratic system have been dealt with in very lenient fashion. The death penalty was recently eliminated as punishment from military legislation.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Prior to the Franco regime, Spain had a long history of regional autonomy and, under the Second Republic, local self-government. Under Franco, all regional autonomy was abolished and the central authority was paramount at all levels. With the restoration of democracy, the new government found itself under intense pressure to restore regional autonomy.

Article 2 of the constitution addresses itself to the state's territorial jurisdiction: "The constitution is based on the indissolubility of the Spanish nation, the common and indivisible country of all Spaniards, and recognizes and guarantees the right to self-government of the nationalities and regions of which it is composed and to solidarity amongst them all." The article recognizes Catalonia, the Basque country, and Galicia as "nationalities." In mid-1981 agreement was reached among the major parties on the broad outlines of a plan for the reinstatement of regional autonomy, and in 1982 the Organic Law on the Harmonization of the Autonomy Process was enacted. In accordance with the legislation, 17 more or less "historic" regions were to gain varying degrees of autonomy.

All top municipal offices and council seats are filled by direct election. Among the national parties until the 1990s, the more conservative ones were strongest in the smaller towns. The Socialists and, to a lesser extent,

the Communists tended to sweep the major cities in the 1980s. In 1993, however, the Popular Party (PP) edged out its rivals in Madrid and several other cities in the northern and central provinces. Local and regional elections held in 2003 slightly favored the PSOE, though the PP held onto the mayor's seat in Madrid and maintained control over Valencia and other small cities and towns in central Spain.

The Electoral System

The constitution specifies that each province is to have a minimum number of deputies (at present two), the remainder to be allocated in accordance with population. It also requires that seats be allocated in accordance with a relatively simple form of proportional representation. These provisions represent a past compromise between the UCD and the PSOE. The minimum representation for each province establishes overrepresentation of the rural areas where the more conservative parties are stronger. In return for accepting that disadvantageous provision, the PSOE insisted upon proportional representation in order to avoid being forced into a formal electoral alliance with the Spanish Communist Party (PCE).

In lower house elections, the voter can indicate his or her preference only for a list, not for a particular candidate. Parties are required to obtain at least 3 percent of the vote in any given province to win a seat in that province. For the Senate, voters mark their ballots for individual candidates, who may be party nominees or independents. The four candidates in each province receiving the largest number of votes are the winners.

For the general elections of 1982, 80.2 percent of the 26.5 million registered voters turned out. Turnout in 1993 was about 84 percent. By 2004 participation in national elections had dropped to 75.7 percent.

The Party System

ORIGINS OF THE PARTIES

The only national parties to survive the 3½ decades of the Franco dictatorship were the Socialists (PSOE) and the Communists (PCE). Their organizations were maintained underground and in exile, and many of their members suffered severe persecution. Franco tolerated no parties other than his own, originally the Falange and later an amorphous group known as the National Movement, which subsumed the Falange. Several individuals who were associated with it emerged as leaders of new parties. The National Movement, as such, died with Franco.

Carlos Arias Navarro, appointed prime minister by Franco at the beginning of 1974, shared Franco's aversion to party politics but felt that a measure of liberalization before Franco's death would ease the mounting tension in the system. Thus, as one aspect of the *apertura,* or political opening, he promised to permit the creation of political "associations." However, as the associations were required to pledge allegiance to the principles of the National Movement, only supporters of the regime bothered to form such associations. One of these was Adolfo Suárez, who established the Union of the Spanish People (UDPE).

After Franco's death the Arias government proposed and the Cortes (then comprised, for the most part, of Franco appointees) approved, in June 1976, a very selective legalization of political parties. A center-right group known as the Popular Party (PP) requested and received recognition under that legislation.

The government of Adolfo Suárez, appointed by King Juan Carlos in mid-1976 to succeed that of Arias, was reluctant to recognize the Communist Party, fearing that such a move would provoke a strong reaction from the military. The PSOE, however, and other left-of-center parties refused to apply for legal status, denying credibility to the process of liberalization, until the government agreed to legalize all parties. Under this pressure, the government in February 1977 finally announced new legislation whereby it renounced its discretionary power in the granting of legalization.

THE PARTIES IN LAW

Article 6 of the constitution of 1978 addresses itself to political parties in affirming that political parties express political pluralism, concur in the formation and manifestation of the popular will, and are a fundamental instrument for political participation. Their creation and the exercise of their activities are free insofar as they are compatible with respect for the constitution and the law. Their internal structure and operation must be democratic.

Parties are partially subsidized by the state in proportion to the vote they receive in the parliamentary elections. There is significant movement toward reforming the political party financing system where parties may receive monies only from the public financing system and are required by law to refuse monies from businesses and individuals though this concept is not yet consolidated into law.

PARTY ORGANIZATION

Party organization varies widely. Policymaking is highly centralized in the parties on the left and right extremes. Local initiative and participation in party policymaking is more common in the PSOE. Only in the leftist parties, including the PSOE, is party organization highly structured and formalized.

CAMPAIGNING

Formal campaigning in parliamentary elections is limited to a three-week period. Television is the most important campaign medium. The state provides free television time to the parties on the basis of the number of seats they hold in the Congress of Deputies, with special provisions made for smaller parties that are unrepresented. Radio speeches and personal appearances are also common. Campaigns are oriented more to personalities than to issues.

Major Political Parties

POPULAR PARTY

(Partido Popular; PP)

HISTORY

The Popular Party, known until January 1989 as the Popular Alliance (Alianza Popular; AP), was organized shortly after Franco's death and won 16 seats in the 1977 elections. PP contested the elections of June 1986 as part of the Popular Coalition (Coalicion Popular; CP), along with the Liberal Party (PL) and the Popular Democratic Party (PDP). But the coalition, having won 105 congressional seats, disintegrated within a few months of the election. Much of the defection was in response to the leadership of Manuel Fraga Iribarne, who resigned the presidency of the AP at the end of the year. As the PP in 1989, the party's vote climbed to 25.9 percent. In 1993 it climbed again to 34.8 percent, and with 38.9 percent in 1996, it took control of the Cortes. In 2004 its support in general elections dropped slightly to 37.7 percent, largely in response to President Aznar's support of the U.S. invasion of Iraq and the sending of Spanish troops as well as in reaction to the government's response to the Madrid terrorist train bombings of March 2004.

ORGANIZATION

The PP is weaker at the mass level than the leftist parties. Its organizational structure is relatively loose, and local strength depends on the prestige and activity of local notables. The more powerful of these notables have considerable influence on party policy, particularly in their regions. PP

POLICY

Early party leaders saw themselves as guardians of the traditional order that the Franco regime championed. The AP distinguished itself from ultraright groups by conceding the need for political reform and renouncing violence. Its shrill anti-Marxist rhetoric, however, was viewed as provocative by some who might otherwise have sympathized with its stress on law and order. The change in the party's name in 1989 was intended to overcome its extremist image and appeal to a broader constituency, reaching into the center of the political spectrum.

MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY

Originally, as the AP, the party was based on firm supporters of the Franco regime. It was stronger in the rural and semirural areas than in the major cities, showing particular strength in the northwestern region of Galicia. In a nation in which political activity was systematically discouraged for over a generation, the AP's deference to traditional and economic elites gave it an advantage among voters who were politically passive.

Since the 1980s, however, it has come to be a broadly based party both geographically and ideologically. The AP collected new activists and constituents in 1983 from the collapsing UCD. After changing its name in January 1989, the PP absorbed some of its former coalition partners, including the Liberal Party (PL) and defectors from Christian Democracy (DC)—formerly the PDP—and entered into electoral pacts with the Galician Centrists (CG), the Navarrese People's Union (UPN), and the Social Democratic Center (CDS). The party again picked up new adherents from the disintegrating CDS in 1993. The PP continues to show strength in the north but has expanded its following in the center of Spain as well, including urban areas.

FINANCING

The party is very well financed by members' contributions and by gifts from banking and industrial interests.

LEADERSHIP

Until the mid-1980s the party was led by sexagenarians who occupied important positions in the Franco regime. The party leader during the early 1980s, Manuel Fraga Iribarne (born 1922), served as Franco's

minister of information and tourism from 1962 to 1969. After the near dissolution of the Popular Coalition in 1986, Fraga resigned from the leadership of the AP, although he retained his congressional seat. After the elections of 1989 he became president of the Galician region.

Antonio Hernández Mancha was named AP president in early 1987. After the reorientation and name change, José María Aznar assumed the presidency of the Popular Party. Aznar is credited with having weeded out many of the party's old-guard right-wing extremists. After the general elections of 2004 Aznar stepped down and Mariano Rajoy became secretary-general.

PROSPECTS

Having transformed itself so as to appeal to modernizing European-oriented economic elites, as well as to the social conservatives of its original base, the party has grown steadily since the beginnings of the transition to democracy.

SPANISH SOCIALIST WORKERS' PARTY

(Partido Socialista Obrero Español; PSOE)

HISTORY

The PSOE was founded in 1874 and grew rapidly in the North, especially in Asturias where the General Union of Workers (Unión General de Trabajadores; UGT) had been most successful in organizing the working class. The party participated, with other groups of the democratic left, in the coalition government of the Second Republic (1931–36). Socialists and other republicans put up a valiant defense in the Civil War of 1936 to 1939 but suffered devastating defeat.

By the time of Franco's death, the party had splintered, and while Socialistic leanings were widespread, organization, as such, was weak. With technical assistance and financial support from other European socialist parties, however, it grew very rapidly, attracting reform-oriented Spaniards who distrusted the UCD because of its ties to the Franco regime. It won 29 percent of the vote and 118 seats in the Congress of Deputies in the elections of 1977, slightly more in 1979, and major victories in regional elections in Andalusia in May 1982.

PSOE popularity peaked in the general elections of October 28, 1982, when the party took 46 percent of the vote and 202 seats in the lower house—an absolute majority. Its margin dropped to 39.8 percent and 175 seats in 1989 and to 38.6 percent and 59 seats in 1993. The 1993 shortfall forced the party to seek coalition with the Catalan regionalist party, Convergence and Union (CiU), a coalition that proved to be costly in policy terms and, ultimately, unreliable electorally. Felipe González lost his parliamentary majority when the CiU withdrew from the pact in July 1995, and he was forced to advance general elections to the spring of 1996.

The loss of another percentage point in the 1996 elections meant the loss of parliamentary leadership. The PSOE won 37.5 percent of the vote, 141 of the 350 seats in the lower house and 81 of the 248 in the Senate. The PSOE reclaimed ground with 42.6 percent of the vote in the 2004 general elections, in part because of support for its political commitment to bring Spanish troops stationed in Iraq back home. PSOE leader José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero became the new prime minister.

ORGANIZATION

The organizational structure of the PSOE is highly elaborate, with strong democratic procedures. Delegates are elected from local chapters to provincial and regional conferences that, in turn, elect delegates to the national conference, the party's highest formal authority. The national conference elects the party leadership, though there has been little real competition for these posts since the party leader is in undisputed control of the organization.

The Socialist Party of Catalonia (PSC) is an autonomous affiliate of the PSOE. The Andalucian Socialist Party is not affiliated with the PSOE.

POLICY

The party advocates autonomy for historical regions within a federal system while opposing the unfettered self-determination demanded by the Basques. The PSOE has sought to protect the interests of workers and the disadvantaged against excesses of the capitalist system and favors economic planning and government intervention to improve the economy and facilitate income redistribution.

In power from 1982 until 1996, the PSOE government, headed by Felipe González, placed a very high priority on integration with the European Community. Backing participation in NATO and the Maastricht Treaty on European Union, with its surrender of aspects of economic policymaking, was costly in terms of intraparty unity and support from the party's youth and labor constituencies. Not surprisingly, the party's electoral platforms have pledged measures to reduce unemployment and promote job training.

MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY

Membership in the PSOE is "regulated," as opposed to "open." Candidate members must accept the party platform and be willing to pay dues. They must also be nominated by members and must be accepted by the local party assembly. Party membership doubled between the elections of 1977 and 1979. It stabilized in the early 1980s at about 100,000 (only about 1.8 percent of its voters) in 2,900 local chapters. The membership, almost equally divided between manual laborers on one hand and white-collar workers, professionals, and the self-employed on the other, is older on average than either the party's leadership or its electoral base. The party's historical ties with the UGT have been maintained.

In the early 1980s PSOE strength was geographically dispersed, with foci in the north and east as well as the south and particularly in the major cities. By 1993 the PSOE had been edged out by the Popular Party in northern and central Spain, including even Madrid, but the PSOE swept the south, particularly González's native Andalucia.

PSOE's constituency, compared with that of the PP, is young, urban, more active politically, and less devout, but not necessarily anticlerical. It also includes an increasing number of the elderly, who have been beneficiaries under the Socialist government of a range of entitlements and services. It is predictably less affluent than the PP, although the distinction is not a sharp one. The PSOE draws support from a broad range of occupational and income categories.

FINANCING

Membership dues account for a major proportion of the party's income. Contributions from some businesses and assistance from other European Socialist parties add to revenues.

LEADERSHIP

The virtually unchallenged leader of the party from 1974 to 1997 was Felipe González (born 1942 in Seville), who became prime minister in late 1982. A labor lawyer from Andalucia, González was a political moderate and a highly charismatic figure. Public opinion polls showed him to be second only to the king in personal popularity. In 1997, however, González declined to run again for secretary-general of the party. He was succeeded in that role by Joaquín Almunia and later by Josep Borrell and José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero.

Party leadership in general is highly educated, upwardly mobile, and professionally or technocratically oriented. Working-class backgrounds are virtually absent among the party elite, and even at party congresses manual workers are in a tiny minority.

PROSPECTS

The resurgence of the PSOE as the dominant party in the 2004 general elections was largely a referendum on the PP's policy of support for the United States in Iraq and mismanagement of information related to the Madrid train bombings rather than overwhelming support for its own policies. It will be challenged to produce policies that respond to its base of political support while also falling in line with the economic requirements of the European Union and in meeting the demands posed by the global economy.

Minor Political Parties

SPANISH COMMUNIST PARTY

(Partido Comunista de España; PCE)

Since 1960 the PCE has been dominated by its Euro-Communist faction. The party has entered into a coalition with the United Left as many of its traditional supporters have moved toward the PSOE. In 2004 the party's secretary-general was Francisco Frutos.

UNITED LEFT

(Izquierda Unida-IU)

In 1986 the PCE, its regional ally, the United Socialist Party of Catalonia (PSUC), and several smaller parties formed a coalition known as the United Left. Smaller members included the Socialist Action Party (PASOC), a splinter of the PSOE, the Progressive Federation (FP), the Carlist Party (PC), the Humanist Party (PH), and several small ecological and pacifist groups. The coalition won only seven seats in the lower house in 1986, but in the general elections of 1989 it won 18 seats in the Chamber of Deputies and one Senate seat. It again elected 18 deputies in 1993 and improved to two senators. In 1996 it increased its seats in the lower house to 21, but lost its two Senate seats. By the 2004 general elections the United Left's participation in the lower house had dropped to five.

With seasoned leadership and a solid base in the labor movement, particularly the Workers' Commissions (Comisiones Obreras; CCOO), which operated extralegally but effectively during the last years of the France regime, the PCE and its coalition can be expected to maintain a small foothold in parliament.

CONVERGENCE AND UNION

(Convergencia i Unió; CiU)

Catalan interests have been represented by a coalition known as Convergence and Union. Its position on regionalism has been moderate compared with that of the Basque parties. In 1982 the CiU and the Catalonian Republican Left (Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya; ERC) ran a combined slate for the Senate and won nearly half the Catalonian seats.

The CiU won majority control of the Catalanian legislature in March 1992, and in the general elections of June 1993 it won 17 deputy and 15 senatorial seats. Thereafter it entered the government as an ally of the PSOE. It proved impossible, however, for the PSOE government to satisfy both its coalition ally and its own popular base on economic issues. (In the end it satisfied neither.) The relatively affluent Catalans want to collect and keep more of their own tax revenues—monies sorely needed to subsidize impoverished southern regions. They also want more government regulation of labor and less of capital.

In 1995 the CiU withdrew its support from the PSOE and after the 1996 elections offered it equally tenuously to the new PP government. In those elections it won 4.6 percent of the vote, translating into 16 deputy and eight senator seats. In 2004 the CiU remained the third strongest force within the lower house, albeit well behind the PSOE and PP, and it brings together the interests of nationalist Catalans of both center-right and center-left tendencies.

The party was led for more than two decades by the pragmatic and charismatic Jordi Pujol, who was also the regional president. He was succeeded by Arturo Mas.

BASQUE NATIONALIST PARTY

(Partido Nacionalista Vasco; PNV)

The Basque Nationalist Party was established in 1893 as the first modern political expression of Basque regionalism. It is a conservative, Catholic party with middle-class leadership and a constituency of peasants. Its goal is the preservation of the Basque language and social customs through self-determination. During the Franco years the party survived in exile in France.

The PNV won a plurality in the Basque Parliament in 1984 and formed a regional government under the leadership of Carlos Garaicoetxea Urizza. An intraparty dispute over the devolution of power to individual Basque provinces, however, led to his replacement as premier and party leader in 1985 by José Antonio Ardanza. In 1987 the party entered into a legislative pact with the PSOE's local affiliate, the Basque Socialist Party (PSE). The PSE, in turn, absorbed the Basque Left (EE) after the elections of 1993.

The PNV launched a major campaign in 1989 to pressure separatists to end their armed struggle. A demonstration in Bilbao in March of that year drew a crowd of some 200,000. In the general elections of 1989 and 1993 the PNV won 1.2 percent of the national vote, taking five seats in the lower house, six in the upper in 1989 and five in each house in 1993. In 1996 it won 1.3 percent of the vote, holding its five deputy seats but losing one senator. In the 2004 elections the PNV improved its standing in the legislature with seven seats each in the lower house and the upper. Part of its improved standing can be attributed to votes from Basques who would have otherwise voted for the banned United People Party (Herri Batasuna, HB). HB was banned because of alleged associations with Basque terrorist groups.

REPUBLIC LEFT OF CATALONIA

(Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya; ERC)

The ERC has emerged as the fourth largest force in parliament. This party, traditionally identified with independence discourse, has moved more toward social issue advocacy under it leader Josep Luís Carod. In the 2004 general elections the ERC achieved eight seats in the lower house.

GREEN CATALONIA INITIATIVE

(Iniciativa per Catalunya–Verds; ICV)

The ICV traces it roots back to the Unified Socialist Party of Catalonia, though it now identifies itself as eco-Socialist. In recent years the party has modernized and become more urban in character, attracting the progressive middle class and liberal professionals. The ICV has renewed a once estranged alliance with the United Left in order to participate more directly in the legislature.

GALICIAN NATIONAL BLOCK

(Bloque Nacionalista Galego; BNG)

The (BNG) maintains a small but consistent participation in the lower house of the legislature with a progressive platform that counters the traditional two-party hold of the PP-PSOE in Galicia. The BNG has increased its public support after a modernization process that abandoned the concept of armed conflict in the name of regional independence.

Other Political Forces

MILITARY

Most Spanish military officers are the sons of officers, and many trace their professional lineages back several generations. The castelike structure and mentality of the armed forces were reinforced until 1984 by the maintenance of a military court system, which permitted the military to operate virtually independently of civil authority. Military officers tend to keep to themselves socially as well as professionally, to read the same newspapers, such as *Alcázar*, and to otherwise avoid "contamination" by civilian society. There is some evidence, however, that this system is gradually being broken down by the lure of higher salaries in business. The developing trend appears to be for the sons of high-ranking officers to opt for careers in business and for new officers to be the sons of noncommissioned officers.

There is also a regional bias in the armed forces. Since the times of the conquistadores, officers and military families have come disproportionately from the more nearly feudal areas of Estremadura, Castile, and Andalusia. There are relatively few officers from the more prosperous and more nearly autonomous Basque country and Catalonia.

The Spanish army, in general, is highly traditional in the sense of commitment to a centralized state; to conservative Catholic values; to the ideas of monarchy, authority, and order; and, of course, to an important and privileged position for the army in society. The navy and air force are less traditional, more technocratic, and more closely associated with the U.S. military, but they are necessarily neither less political nor more liberal. In the early 2000s the Spanish military began to transform its vision from that of purely national security (protecting state interests) to incorporate other aspects of what has become known as human security (protection of individuals, communities, collective regional interests, etc.). Approximately 1.6 percent of Spain's 177,000 soldiers participated in peacekeeping missions in Afghanistan, Bosnia, Kosovo, and, until just after the 2004 elections, in Iraq.

The Civil Guard is a more clear-cut vestige of Francoist Spain. Its command structure is integrated with that of the regular armed forces. As with the military, the Civil Guard has begun a modernization process that has reoriented its mission toward the preservation of public security rather than exclusively protecting state interests, though the degree and profundity of these changes are open to interpretation. However, the Civil Guard has begun to look beyond its national borders and has been involved in the training of new civilian police forces in Central America, among other places, as part of the government's international cooperation policy.

Four military conspiracies were foiled between mid-1977 and late 1982. In the 1980s plans for the modernization and depoliticization of the armed forces were to bring them into line with the forces of other European countries and to align their salaries with those of civilian government employees. The army was reduced in strength by one-fourth of its officers and one-third of its men, and promotion was to be on merit rather than seniority. Whereas during the Franco era the armed forces had been concentrated around Madrid and other major cities to deal with threats from the "internal enemy," those forces were redeployed and oriented toward external defense planning. Conscripts were allowed to serve in their native regions.

In the 1990s, in a Spanish republic firmly attached to the European Union, there was every reason to believe that military intervention—by force of arms—in civilian politics was out of style. The Serra reforms, establishing civilian responsibility over the armed forces, backfired in more dramatic ways in the mid-1990s. Blame for the murder of suspected Basque terrorist leaders and activists operating from French territory in the 1980s came to rest with the PSOE government. Though then president González denied any knowledge of the affair and the Senate committee investigating the allegations declined to call him to testify, the scandal was among the factors contributing to the PSOE's defeat in 1996. The Spanish military and police forces are subject to the same shortcomings as any armed force delegated a monopoly over the management of violence and coercion, though as member forces of the UN, EU, NATO, and other ad hoc international coalitions, they appear to have turned the corner in terms of modernization and adherence to international standards.

BASQUE SEPARATISTS

While the cultures of other nationalities in Spain are variants within the Spanish nation—and their languages related to Latin—Basque culture is different. The Basques are thought to have been in Spain since Paleolithic times, and their language is apparently unrelated to any other known language.

Basque nationalism surfaced with the founding of the PNV in 1893, but it did not become a major factor in Spanish politics until a part of the PNV's youth wing left the party in 1959 and founded the

Basque Nation and Liberty (Euzkadi ta Azkatasuna; ETA). The ETA seeks to achieve independence through revolutionary violence. There is no reason to believe the Basque majority is in sympathy with either the means or the goals of the ETA. Nevertheless, there is widespread sympathy for the ETA as a result of the violence employed by the Franco government to repress it, violence so indiscriminate that it was seen as an attack on the Basque people as a whole.

The ETA's terrorism is most often directed against the army and the Civil Guard. Terrorists are tried in civil courts and, from the military's point of view, are treated too leniently. Military casualties from terrorist action combined with a perceived disparity between the treatment of terrorists and conspiratorial officers have been a primary element in the friction between the civil government and the military. Continued terrorist activity, therefore, only increases the military's frustration and inclination to political activism.

The PSOE government, with AP concurrence, in late 1983 adopted a set of new measures to deal with ETA terrorism. Judges were empowered to ban political associations that supported terrorism and to order detention of suspects without trial for up to 2½ years. Penalties for terrorist crimes were increased, police were given extended powers of search and surveillance, and incentives were offered for prisoners to turn informer. Taking a different tack, the government announced in late 1984 that it was willing to enter direct negotiations with the ETA, hinting that there might be a prospect of amnesty for those not guilty of crimes.

Neither approach proved effective, nor did the establishment of a regional government with considerable autonomy and with its own Basque police force. Separatist violence continued, with the killing of at least six Civil Guards and more than a dozen policemen in 1983 and 1984 and several kidnappings for ransom. Meanwhile, the ETA had split into two branches, ETA-m and ETA-pm, and had spawned other guerrilla organizations; and it was being "balanced" on the far right by death squads such as the Anti-Terrorist Liberation Group (GAL), which ETA spokesmen claimed was a parapolice force. GAL claimed responsibility for the murder of one HB deputy-elect and the wounding of another in an attack in November 1989. The cease-fire that had been declared by the ETA's military arm was short-lived, but by 1993 its leadership had been severely decimated by arrests on both sides of the border between Spain and France.

For the Spanish national authorities, the political party United/People Herri Batasuna (HB) has been identified as the political wing of ETA. The party denies any links to ETA. There have been a number of attempts to ban the party, and it has frequently changed its name to avoid this.

In 2002 there were renewed attempts by the Spanish government to ban the party. In June, parliament passed legislation that made parties that supported terrorism illegal. In July HB was penalized 24 million for vandalism and street violence in 2001. Following an ETA car bomb attack on August 4, the parliament was recalled. The party was suspended for three years by Judge Baltasar Garzón to allow him to investigate the party links to ETA. The ban refuses them representatives in elections and the right to hold public demonstrations or rallies, and it freezes their assets. The Spanish parliament voted for an indefinite ban, 295 to 10. Before the illegalization effort, a dissenting minority left the party to form Aralar. Aralar is opposed to armed violence.

In 2003 HB was declared illegal in Spain. In spite of legal text forbidding its reorganization under another name, former members planned to run for the provincial and local elections of May 2003 under the names of Autodeterminaziorako Bilgunea (AuB, Meeting Place for Self-determination) and a plethora of local lists. Most of these lists were considered a disguise for HB by the Spanish Supreme Court. This decision was confirmed by the Spanish Constitutional Court in a hurried verdict.

In May 2003 HB went into the U.S. list of terrorist organizations; in June, into the European one. In May 2004 a list named Citizen's List/Herritarren Zerrenda (HZ) was presented in Spain and France in the elections to the European Parliament. Spanish tribunals rejected it as a successor of HB.

Since the Madrid train bombings in 2004, there have been a series of low-profile and sometimes secret negotations between different regional politicans, mostly from the Basque country and Catalonia, to try to find common ground for peace and, at minimum, to put in place cease-fires.

National Prospects

Spain's measured and relatively peaceful process of transition to democracy, begun in the mid-1970s, has been completed, and by the early 2000s it was a full-fledged and influential member of the international community and of the European Union in particular. For better or worse, Spain has become more entwined with and more like the rest of the industrialized world. Having escaped from the isolation of the

Franco years, Spain is now a player on the world stage. In 1992 the Olympic Games were held in Barcelona, and the World's Fair, marking the quincentennial of Columbus's first voyage, was hosted by Seville. In 1993 Spain had its turn to chair the UN Security Council; in 1995 Spain's foreign minister, Javier Solana, was chosen to head NATO; and in 2003 Spain joined the U.S. led coalition to oust Saddam Hussein from Iraq. But Spain also had soldiers and casualties in Bosnia, and its participation in Iraq was highly controversial and generally unpopular with the general public. Most gravely, on March 11, 2004, Spain was rocked by a series of bombings on trains in Madrid. Apparently carried out by Islamic fundamentalists with links to al-Qaeda, the bombings killed nearly 200 people and were seen as a major factor in the PSOE's return to power in the legislative elections held a few days after the attacks. It remains to be seen if the popular reaction to the 2004 Madrid bombings will have a lasting impact on politics in Spain. In addition, the problem of regional autonomy remains a significant issue in Spanish politics.

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DEMOCRATIC SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF SRI LANKA

(Prajāthānthrika Samājawādī Janarajaya Šrī Laṁkā)

By Gamini Samaranayake, Ph.D.



The Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, known as Ceylon prior to 1972, is a unitary state within the British Commonwealth. It is situated in the Indian Ocean and separated from the Indian subcontinent by the Palk Strait. The island has a coastline of 1,200 kilometers and is 25,332 square miles (65,608 square kilometers) in area. The country extends through its greatest length of 270 miles (435 kilometers) from Point Pedro in the north to Dondra Head in the south. Its greatest width is 140 miles (225 kilometers) from Colombo in the west to Sangamankande on the east coast.

As of 2005 Sri Lanka's population is just over 20 million. The clustering of the population in a few geographical areas is evident in the wide variation in the density of population, from 1,506 in the western provinces to 115 in the North-Central Province. Much of the population is concentrated in the southern, central, and western parts of the country, and 72 percent live in rural areas.

Sri Lanka is a multiethnic society in which 74 percent of the population is Sinhalese, with smaller numbers of Tamils, Moors, Indian Tamils, Burghers, and Malays making up the remainder. The Sinhalese are said to be descendants of the "Aryans" of North India and speak Sinhala. About 90 percent of the Sinhalese are Buddhists. They are concentrated mainly in the southern, the western, and the highland regions of the country. The Tamils are said to originate from the Dravidian stock of South India and speak Tamil. Most Tamils are Hindus, although both communities have been exposed to the influence of Christianity. The Tamils are concentrated mainly in the northern and eastern provinces, and almost three-quarters of them are found in the other seven provinces. The Moors speak Tamil and are followers of Islam. They live in the major metropolises and in the eastern province. The Indian Tamils are descendants of the plantation workers brought from South India by the British in the mid-19th century. They speak Tamil and most are Hindus. They are mainly concentrated in the plantation sector of the central province. The Burghers are descendants of the Portuguese and the Dutch. They speak English and are Christians. The Malays are descendants of the Malay traders and soldiers brought to the country during the British period. They speak Malay and practice Islam. Use of English is most widespread among urban and educated classes, and it serves as a link language among different linguistic groups.

Sri Lanka has two generalized systems of caste, one in the Sinhalese society and the other in the Tamil society. It is agreed that the highest caste in status and numbers among the Sinhalese is the *goigama* (cultivator) caste. They include about half of the Sinhalese population and are found throughout the country. The *karava* (fisher), *salagama* (cinnamon peeler), and *durava* (toddy tapper) castes are also considered to possess high status but are deemed to be below the *goigama* in the caste hierarchy. They include two-thirds or more of the Sinhala population. The remaining one-third or less are distributed among as many as 20 separate

castes of lower status including the *vahumpura* (jaggery makers), *batgama,* and *berava*.

In the Sri Lankan Tamil caste structure, the *brahmins,* the *vellalas* (cultivators), the *karaiyars,* the *mukkuvas* (fisherfolk), the *koviyars* (domestic servants), the *thattar* (goldsmiths), the *nadduvar* (musicians), and the *vannar* (laundrymen) are ranked in ascending order. In addition, one-fourth of the Tamil society belongs to the "untouchable" caste. The caste structure and barriers within the Tamil society are more rigid than among the Sinhalese. However, both systems continue to be socially divisive and have a profound impact on social and political life in the country.

The first postindependence government structure was based on the Soulbury constitution (1948–72) with a bicameral legislature. It comprised a Senate and a House of Representatives, and the executive comprised a cabinet headed by the prime minister and a governor-general representing the British crown.

In 1972 the First Republican constitution abolished the Senate and the governor-general and replaced them with a president nominated by the prime minister. The present government structure is based on the Second Republican constitution of 1978. Its aim is to establish political stability in order to enhance economic development.

The System of Government

Sri Lanka is a presidential republic with a unicameral legislature.

EXECUTIVE

From 1947 up to 1978 Sri Lanka had a British-type prime minister-cum-cabinet system of executive. Since 1978 it has had an executive presidential system similar to the Gaullist model under the Fifth Republican constitution of France. The president of the country is elected by the people and holds office for a period of six years. At the election the candidate who receives more than one-half of the valid votes is elected president. No president can be elected for more than two terms. The legislature can remove the president through an impeachment—although only for constitutional violation or abuse of power—by a two-thirds majority.

A striking feature of the executive is the power vested in the office of the president. The president is the head of state, the head of government, the head of the cabinet of ministers, and the commander in chief of the armed forces. According to the constitution, he or she has authority to declare a state of emergency and submit bills of national importance to a referendum.

The president enjoys a certain authority vis-à-vis parliament. As the head of state and as a member of the cabinet, he or she is not directly answerable to the legislature. The president has the powers to summon, prorogue, and dissolve parliament within the provisions stipulated in the constitution. Appointments for the higher judiciary are also made by the president. The constitution renders presidents immune from legal proceedings both in their official and their private capacity. Consequently, the presidential executive system has come under severe criticism. It is currently being reviewed for revision.

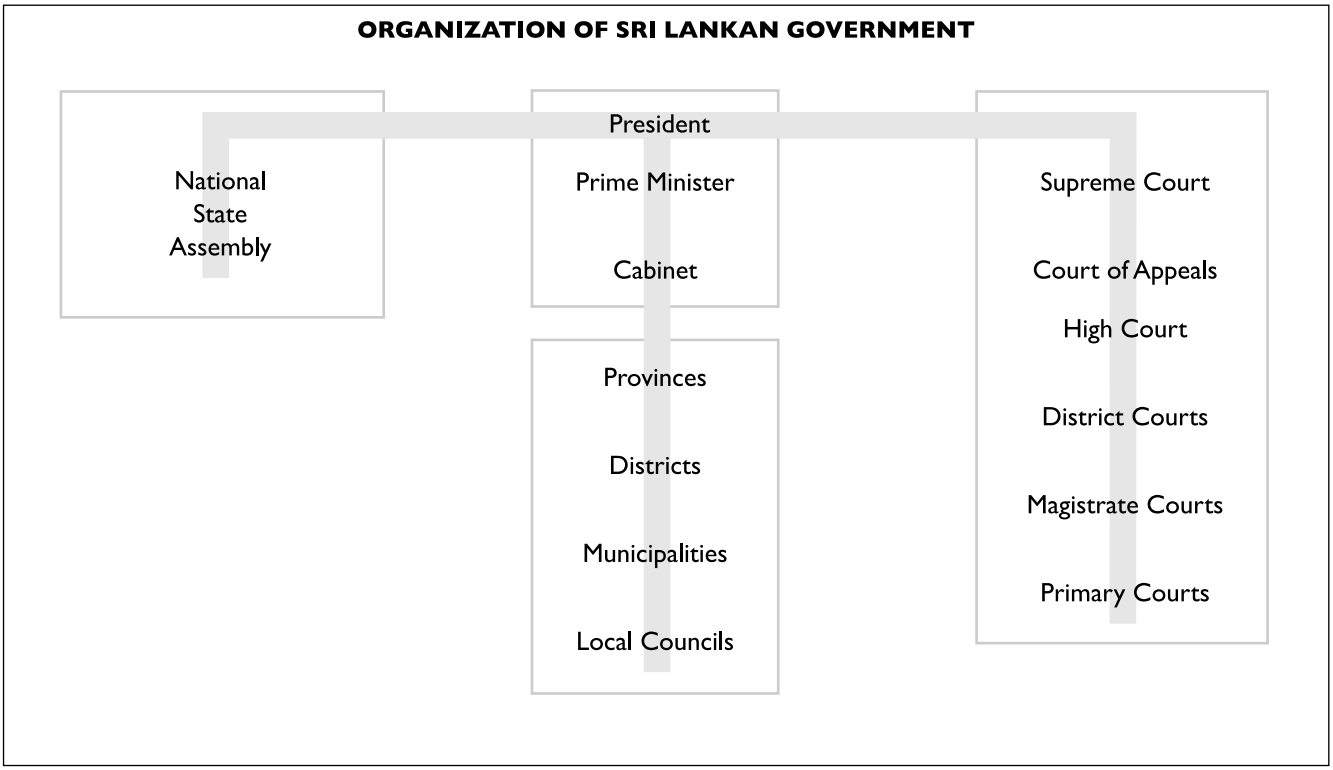
In the presidential election of 1994 Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaranatunga received 62 percent of the votes and was elected as the first female president of the country. She was reelected in December 1999 with 51 percent of the votes. In 2005 Mahinda Rajapakse was elected president.

LEGISLATURE

The legislature, the National State Assembly (Jathika Rajya Shabhawa), is a unicameral body comprising 225 members. Unless dissolved before the end of the term, a parliament constituted after a general election has a life span of six years. However, the constitution provides for the president to extend by means of a referendum the life of a sitting parliament for another term. In 1982, the government of the United National Party (UNP) had a referendum instead of a general election in order to extend the term of parliament for six years. The parliament has powers to enact laws and to control public finance.

The president appoints the prime minister and the cabinet from the parliament. The constitution does not delineate any special function and powers vested with the prime minister. The prime minister has emerged over the years as the government's chief spokesperson in parliament. Consequently, the role of the prime minister is seen as primarily ceremonial. All cabinet ministers appointed by the president from parliament continue to be legislators as well.

All vacancies in parliament are filled not through a by-election but by nominating a new member. The leader of the party makes the nomination. The party is empowered to expel any of its members from parliament and to seek replacements from among party cadres. Besides, the constitution does not encourage MPs to cross over



from party to party. In the election of 2004 the United People's Freedom Alliance (UPFA) won 109 seats, while the UNP and other parties received 116 seats.

JUDICIARY

Sri Lanka has a multitude of legal systems, some of which are indigenous and some of which have been adopted from other countries. There are three indigenous special laws prevailing in Sri Lanka. The Kandyan Law is derived from the laws that existed during the Kandyan Kingdom and was maintained by the British as a result of the treaty signed in 1815. The "Muslim Law" was recognized by the Portuguese, the Dutch, and the British as a valid legal system for the Muslims. The "Thesawalame Law" applies to the Tamils of Jaffna. These traditional laws have been revised and reformed by the legislature and operate mainly in the fields of marriage and the transfer and inheritance of property.

Roman-Dutch law (a contribution of Dutch rule) and English law are the systems of law that are generally applied. The introduction of English law into Sri Lanka has been either through legislation or through judicial decision. It applies in many areas of the law such as commercial law and administrative law. Under the constitution of Sri Lanka, judicial powers are vested in parliament. Parliament exercises this judicial power mainly through courts and tribunals. The main source of criminal law is the Penal Code, a law enacted by the legislature.

The present court system however, is a product of the constitution of 1978 and the Judicature Act, No. 2, of 1978. Basically, in descending order, the contemporary organizational structure of the judiciary in the country can be broken down as follows: the Supreme Court; the Court of Appeals; the High Court; the district court; the magistrates' court; and the primary court. According to Section 105 of the 1978 constitution, the first three courts are the institutions vested with the administration of justice that protect, vindicate, and enforce the rights of the people. The lower courts are considered judicial institutions created by parliament.

The Supreme Court is the highest and final superior court of Sri Lanka. It is composed of the chief justice and six to 10 judges appointed by the president. Appointments to the Supreme Court are made from other ranks of the judiciary as well as from the bar. In 1996 the first female judge was appointed to the Supreme Court from the law faculty of the University of Colombo. The retirement age of judges is 65. The removal of a judge from office cannot be effected except by an order of the president, which must be preceded by a two-thirds vote in parliament.

The Court of Appeals is the first appellate court of the original court and certain tribunals. It exercises original jurisdiction in election petitions against members of the National State Assembly and in "writ" applications. It is also empowered to issue injunctions to prevent any "remediable mischief" that could result before a party is able to bring an action in a court of first instance. It consists of the president of the Court of Appeal and between six and 11 judges appointed by the president of Sri Lanka.

The High Court is a court of record and consists of between 10 to 20 judges. They are appointed by the president and are removable by and subject to disciplinary control by the president on the recommendation of the Judicial Service Commission (JSC). Prior to the 13th amendment to the constitution, High Courts were located in each judicial district in Sri Lanka. With the introduction of the provincial council system in 1987, a High Court was located in each administrative province. Consequently, High Courts are known as the High Court of the province. The appointments and transfers of judges to the High Courts are made by the chief justice. The High Court has criminal as well as civil jurisdiction and exercises power over the statutes passed by the respective provincial councils.

The district court is the main civil court and is located in each judicial district. It has jurisdiction over issues pertaining to civil matters, such as cases relating to land ownership; litigation in relation to tenancy cases; actions to recover debts in excess of Rs 1,500; action for breach of trademark and patent rights and copyright; claims for compensation in excess of Rs 1,500 for injuries suffered due to negligence; and divorce cases.

The magistrates' court is the lower criminal court and has jurisdiction over all offenses committed within the judicial division. Less serious offenses that are of a more serious nature than those tried in the primary court are tried in the magistrates' court. There is provision to appeal to the Court of Appeals against the verdict of the magistrates' court.

The primary court has exclusive jurisdiction in civil and criminal cases. In every judicial division there is a primary court. The following types of actions are dealt with by the primary courts: claims for debts or damages that do not exceed Rs 1,500; actions for the enforcement of local authority by-laws and the recovery of revenue due to such authorities; and disputes over the possession of land. The duty of a primary court judge is to induce the parties involved to settle amicably, whether it be a dispute or a criminal offense. If parties arrive at a settlement, it shall be entered as the court's decision. Primary courts have been given a special jurisdiction in relation to land disputes.

The appointments, transfers, disciplinary control, and dismissal of the judges of the above-mentioned courts are vested in the Judicial Service Commission. The judiciary comes under the government via the Ministry of Justice.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Until 1979 there were four types of local government bodies: municipal councils, urban councils, town councils, and village councils. These institutions functioned directly under the Department of Local Government. In 1979 the number of municipal councils and urban councils was increased, town councils were abolished, and the area of village councils was enlarged to cover town council and village council areas, which were renamed pradeshiya sabhas (regional councils). The village councils were subsumed by the *pradeshiya sabhas,* and a system of *gramodaya mandalayas* were established in each *grama niladhari* (village officer) division, which is the smallest administrative unit as an "umbrella organization" for the community-based organizations. Currently, 13 municipal councils (MC), 38 urban councils (UC), and 257 *pradeshiya sabhas* (PS) come under the local government system in Sri Lanka. In the local government elections of March 1997 the People's Alliance led by the Sri Lanka Freedom Party won seven municipal councils, 20 urban councils, and 194 *pradeshiya sabhas,* while the UNP won five MCs, 11 UCs, and 43 PSs. In the local government elections of 2002 the majority of the municipal councils, urban councils, and *pradeshiya sabbas* were won by the UNP.

The concept of regional government was introduced through decentralization and devolution of power as a solution to the ethnic conflict between the majority Sinhalese and the minority Tamils. First, the district development councils (DDC) were established at the district level in 1981. They comprised the members elected by the system of proportional representation (PR) by the voters of the district, as well as the members of the central legislature within the district. The district minister (DM) was the head of the district development councils (DDC).

In 1987 Sri Lanka adopted a system of devolution of power with the passing of the 13th Amendment to the constitution. The new system has created eight provincial councils whose members are directly elected by the people for a period of four years. While Sri Lanka

has nine administrative provinces, there are eight provincial councils due to the temporary merger of northern and eastern provinces. Each council has a governor who is the representative of the central government and is appointed by the president. A board of ministers, headed by a chief minister, assists the governor. The board is selected from among the council members. Among the powers that are devolved in the constitution to the province are local government affairs, education, police and law and order functions, housing and construction, plan implementation, social services and rehabilitation, agriculture, rural development, health, and irrigation and land development. Except for the northeast, the rest of the seven provincial councils were won by the United People's Freedom Alliance (UPFA) at the Provincial Council Elections of 2004. At present the provincial council in the northeast is not functioning due to the ongoing civil war.

The Electoral System

A British-type electoral system based on a formula of "first-past-the-post" along with a single-member system of electoral constituencies existed until the election of 1977. In 1978 it was replaced with a system of proportional representation (PR). Under the PR system Sri Lanka is divided into 24 electoral districts. Each political party as well as the independent candidates have to submit a list of candidates at the election. Since 1990, 40 percent of the candidates in the list must be between 18 and 30 years of age. Every voter at an election of parliament, in addition to his or her vote for the party or group of independents, shall be entitled to indicate preferences for not more than three candidates nominated by the same political party or independent group. However, in the local government election, a single voter could give all three preferences to one candidate.

Out of 225 members of parliament, 196 are elected on a district basis by universal adult franchise and 29 are appointed from the national list submitted by the political parties contesting the general elections. This is based on the national performance of the parties in proportion to the percentage of votes obtained on the national scale. The leading party at the election in each of the electoral districts receives a bonus seat. This system of PR was put into operation during the local government elections of May 1979.

Since 1931 universal franchise has been successfully and successively used to elect representatives to the legislature. Sri Lanka enjoys a high degree of voter participation. At the eight general elections held from 1947 to 1994, electoral participation exceeded those of Britain and India. Until the 1980s over 80 percent of the population voted in general elections. The lowest percentage of 56 percent, which was recorded at the presidential election of 1988, was a result of political violence. In 2004 the turnout was 75 percent.

The Party System

Since the beginning of independence, Sri Lanka has had an advanced and well-established political party system. It is a multiparty system that tends toward a two-party system. There are almost 51 political parties recognized by the Election Commissioner. Of these, the center-right United National Party (UNP) and the center-left Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) are two major alternative parties whose origins are linked to the nationalist movement in the country. Both parties are well organized and have a block vote of millions. The Lanka Sama Samajaya Party (LSSP), which originated in 1935, is the oldest left-wing political party in Sri Lanka. The Ceylon Workers Congress (CWC) is based on the Indian Plantation population and its trade union movement. It is the major ethno-class political party-cum-trade union in the country. The CWC is the most powerful trade union in South Asia. The Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP) or the People's Liberation Front (PLF) is the newly emerging left-wing party. In addition, some political parties, such as the People's Liberation Party of Tamil Eelam (PLOTE), the Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front (EPRLF), the Tamil Eelam Liberation Organization (TELO), and the Eelam People's Democratic Party (EPDP), are former groups in the Tamil guerrilla movement.

Political parties are not all-island organizations, and minority political parties do not cut across ethnic boundaries. Nevertheless, the major political parties are able to maintain a distinct centralized organizational structure. They have built up a pyramidal structure in which the most powerful inner body is dominated by members of parliament. In addition, the ancillaries, the youth leagues, student leagues, women's organizations, and trade unions are part of the party organization.

Party campaigns are very much a part of the electoral process. In Sri Lanka, as in many developing countries, there are no clearly defined party policies and the parties are based more on the images of leading personalities in the party. In addition to economic issues—mainly unemployment and cost of living—eth-

nic conflict, the peace process and conflict resolution, human right violations, and elimination of corruption are the issues prioritized.

Public meetings conducted by political parties are a major element of the campaign process. Party campaigns are stratified on the basis of district, divisional, and local levels. The local political meetings are conducted at the pradeshiya sabha level. Pocket meetings and house-to-house canvassing are also part of campaigns.

In Sri Lankan electoral history, independent members have had a role, but their significance as vote getters declined in the face of the growth of political parties. In 1947 there were 21 elected independently, while in 1970 the number was reduced to two, and in 1977 to one. Under the PR system the opportunity for an independent candidate to be elected is remote.

Major Political Parties

UNITED NATIONAL PARTY

(Eksath Jathika Pakshaya; UNP)

HISTORY

The United National Party (UNP) was a coalition founded before the election of 1947. Its base was the National Congress (Jathika Sangamaya-1919) and other minor organizations such as the Sinhala Maha Sabha (SMS; Great Council of Sinhalese) and the Ceylon Muslim League. It is a conservative party. The UNP is an umbrella party that was in power for nearly 31 years between 1947 and 1994. The elephant is its symbol.

ORGANIZATION

The UNP is an electoral party with a stable organization. It comprises party branches at the neighborhood level and place of work, electoral divisions, and district divisions. The functions of the branches are confined to election campaigns. The working committee composed of 50 members is the highest decision-making body in the party. The national workers union (*jathika sewaka sangamaya*), the women's union, and the national student union (*jathika sishaya sangamaya*) are important auxiliaries in the organization. Party headquarters are in Colombo.

POLICY

In terms of economic policy, the UNP is in favor of laissez-faire rather than welfare measures. Before 1977 it was committed to a mixed economy with emphasis on agriculture, private-sector development, and foreign investors. Ideologically, the UNP is the neoliberal party in Sri Lanka. It is similar to the Republican Party in the United States and the Conservative Party in the United Kingdom.

MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY

The membership of the UNP is drawn from a multiethnic and multireligious background. Up to 1977 the membership of the UNP was composed of the urban middle class and the rural landed aristocracy. Since the mid-1970s the UNP has widened its electoral base by appealing to the lower-caste voters and the poorer sections of society. It has a loose-knit membership of over 300,000 people. The Western, Uva, and Central provinces are strongholds of the UNP.

FINANCING

Financial support is drawn from donations, contributions, and dues.

LEADERSHIP

The leadership of the party comes from the parliamentary group, which is dominated by the Senanayake and Jayawardene families. From 1947 to 1973 the leadership was dominated by D. S. Senanayake (1947–51), his nephew Sir John Kotalawala (1953–56), and his son Dudley Senanayake (1956–73). From 1973 to 1989 J. R. Jayawardane was the leader of the UNP. The two exceptions were R. Premadasa (1989–93) and D. B. Wijetunga (1993–94), who are outside these family circles. The present leader of the party, Ranil Wickrmasinghe, is a close relative of the late J. R. Jayawardene.

PROSPECTS

The UNP has been a stable political party. As of 2005 it was the major opposition party to the UPFA government. In the parliamentary elections of April 2004 the UNP received nearly 37 percent of the total vote. The party no doubt will continue as an alternative government party in Sri Lanka in the years to come.

SRI LANKA FREEDOM PARTY

(Sri Lanka Nidahas Paksaya; SLFP)

HISTORY

The Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) was founded by S. W. R. De Bandaranaike, after he resigned from the UNP government in 1951. Its base originally was the Sinhala Maha Sabha (1937). It is a center-left or social

democratic party. It was in power from 1956 to 1965 and from 1970 to 1977 in coalition with other left parties. The SLFP formed a coalition with the Lanka Samasamaja Party (LSSP) and the Communist Party (CP) as the People's Alliance (PA) and came to power in August 1994, again in 2000, but lost at the election of December 2001. In 2004 the SLFP formed a new coalition with the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna. (People's Liberation Front) and other minor political parties and named itself the United People's Freedom Alliance (UPFA). It is a party with strong commitment to constitutional methods and a parliamentary system of government. The Hand is the symbol of the SLFP, and the chair was the symbol of the People's Alliance (PA) while betel leaves are the symbol of the United People's Freedom Alliance.

ORGANIZATION

The SLFP has a broad organization comprising party branches, electoral branches, and district branches. It also includes the all island working committee, the executive committee, and the central committee. The headquarters of the party are in Colombo.

POLICY

Party policies are based on the political pronouncements of the late Bandaranaike. From its inception up to the end of the 1980s, the economic policy of the SLFP was based on nationalization and redistribution through state intervention. Now it focuses more on industrialization than rural agriculture. Previously, SLFP followed a strong pro–Third World policy, but currently it is committed to a free-market economy and a policy of devolution of power as a solution to ethnic conflict in the country.

MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY

The party has well over 300,000 members, mostly from the Sinhalese-Buddhist rural areas. It has a Christian Sinhalese and Muslim following as well. The Southern, North Central, and Sabaragamuwa provinces are strongholds of the party.

FINANCING

The main sources of finance are donations, contributions, and dues.

LEADERSHIP

The leadership of the party has come from S. W. R. De Bandaranaike (1951–59) and later his widow Srimavo Bandaranaike (1960–onward). The current president, Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaranatunga, is the leader of the party and also the daughter of the late S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike and Srimavo Bandaranaike. Thus, the leadership of the SLFP is confined to the Bandaranaike family.

PROSPECTS

The SLFP is the main alternative party to the UNP. It has been in power from 1994 to 2001 and returned to power again in 2004. The SLFP is in a position to maintain power with its ability to balance the aspirations of Sinhalese Buddhist nationalism and Tamil minority nationalism.

Minor Political Parties

JANATHA VIMKUTHI PERAMUNA (JVP)

People's Liberation Front (PLF)

The JVP was initially a breakaway group from the pro-China Communist Party in the mid-1960s. The JVP presented itself as a revolutionary movement based among the Sinhalese-Buddhist rural youth of the country. During this period the main objective of the JVP was to capture political power by means of revolutionary violence and establish an egalitarian Socialist government. Therefore, the JVP in April 1971 and between 1987 and 1989 unsuccessfully staged armed insurrections. Frustration among educated rural youth due to socioeconomic grievances was a major cause behind the development of the JVP as a youth political force. It is a political movement that moved from tactics of violence to elections in Sri Lanka. At the local government election in March 1997 the JVP received nearly 4 percent of the vote. In the parliamentary elections of 2000 and 2001 the JVP was able to win 10 seats and 16 seats in the National State Assembly. Being a major partner of the SLFP-led coalition, the United People's Freedom Alliance, the JVP managed to win 39 seats in the Assembly and four portfolios in the cabinet. At present, the JVP is a major partner of the United People's Freedom Alliance (UPFA) government.

FEDERAL PARTY (FP)

(Ilankai Thamil Arasu Kadchi)

The Federal Party (FP), a breakaway group from the Tamil Congress (TC), was formed by S. J. V. Chelvanayakam in 1949. Under his leadership, the FP demanded a federal state as a solution to the minority problems in

the country. In 1956 the FP emerged as a major political party representing the Sri Lankan Tamils. From the mid-1970s, the FP regrouped with other Tamil political parties to form the Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF) to agitate for a separate Tamil state, or Eelam, comprising the Northern and Eastern provinces in the country. In 1977 the TULF, led by A. Amirthalingam, became an official opposition in parliament. The 6th Amendment to the constitution prohibited demands for a separate state, and the TULF lost its seats in parliament. Although the old TULF has disintegrated, the FP remains as the TULF. Though the FP or TULF had a majority of Tamil representatives in parliament, due to the Tamil guerrilla warfare, the parliamentary strength of the party has been reduced to the point of extinction. V. Anandasangaree, the present leader of the TULF, was not able to win a single seat in the parliamentary election of 2004 due to his disagreement with the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). The Tamil National Alliance, the proxy of the LTTE, contested the parliamentary election of April 2004 under the name of the FP.

CEYLON WORKERS CONGRESS (CWC)

The Ceylon Workers Congress (CWC), under the leadership of S. Thondaman, operates as a trade union and a political party for Indian plantation workers. It is the biggest trade union, with a membership of over 600,000 people. The main objectives of the party are to protect the citizenship rights and workers' rights of the Indian plantation workers. It rejects separatism.

The CWC has resorted to coalitions as a tactic to achieve its objectives. From the 1940s to 1950s it was linked to various left political parties, and from 1973 to 1977 it was with the TULF. From 1978 to 1994 it was in the UNP government, and, from 1994 to 2001 it was in the PA government. From 2001 to 2004 the CWC was with the UNP government and joined the UPFA government in September 2004. The Up Country People's Party, led by P. Chandrasekaran, challenged the political wing of the CWC. A. Thondaman, the present leader of the CWC, is a grandson of the late S. Thondaman. The CWC functions on the premise that being in government is the best strategy to serve the Indian Tamil population.

Other Political Forces

There have been two political forces based on ethnicity. The first is the Jathika Hela Urumaya (Heritage of the Sinhalese Nation, JHU) based among the urban middle class Sinhala-Buddhist population. The JHU was formed on the eve of the general election in April 2004. The party vehemently opposed any concession to the Tamil ethnicity, particularly to the LTTE. At the April 2004 general election it was able to win nine seats in the Assembly. All the candidates as well as all members of parliament of the JHU are Buddhist monks. It is a front organization of the Sihala Urumaya, an ultra-Sinhala Buddhist electoral political party. It is similar to the Baratha Janatha Party (BJP) in India. Both Hela Urumaya and the Sihala Urumaya are in favor of a unitary system rather than a federal government in Sri Lanka.

The second is the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), which emerged as a direct result of Sri Lanka's deepening ethnic conflict. The objective of the LTTE is to establish an independent, socialist Tamil state. Consequently, the LTTE used its campaign of violence against the police and other armed forces, Sinhala and Muslim civilians residing along the border, villagers in the Northern and Eastern provinces, and politicians. This group was responsible for assassinating Rajiv Gandhi, the former prime minister of India (1984–89) in 1991, R. Premadasa, the former president of Sri Lanka, and Gamini Dissanayake, a presidential candidate in 1994. The LTTE is the only guerrilla organization to have killed two state leaders in the modern world. It is estimated to have a 14,000-strong cadre comprised of adults and children. The LTTE is perhaps the world's first underground organization with a cadre drawn from children.

National Prospects

In spite of Sri Lanka's commitment to a market economy, which is a precondition for a liberal state and civil society, ethnic conflict and political violence are evident in the present political system. At the macroeconomic level, Sri Lanka's gross national product (GNP) in 2002 was an estimated US$1.56 billion (16.3 billion rupees). The GNP per capita income of Sri Lanka increased from US$120 in 1970 to US$420 in 1990 and US$858 in 2002. However, the economy has not been able to provide adequate employment to all those who join the labor market annually. Estimates of unemployment in 1989 were around 1.2 million, but a more recent Central Bank figure was 1.6 million. By 2005 the unemployment rate was at 7.8 percent of the labor force. In addition, dependence on foreign aid and loans has become an indispensable feature of the country. The problem of unemployment has contrib-

uted to the political violence of the JVP while economic development has been hindered by the ongoing guerrilla warfare of the LTTE.

In August 1995 the president announced the government's proposals for a new system of devolution to eight regions. Consequently, Sri Lanka would be defined as a union of regions, each of which would have considerable powers of law and order, land settlement, and education. Regional councils would have powers to raise taxes and to raise finance from overseas. This proposal, which is significant for Sri Lanka's national prospects, is subject to the scrutiny of the Parliamentary Select Committee and parliament's ratification by a two-thirds majority and a referendum. However, due to the electoral failure of the PA government and the lack of enthusiasm of the LTTE for the proposals, it did not materialize.

Heavy fighting continued to the end of 2001. The LTTE, the largest guerrilla group, used suicide squads in battle and off the battlefield. It is responsible for 168 incidents of violence resulting from suicide bombings in Sri Lanka and India. The United States of America, India, Malaysia, Canada, the United Kingdom, and Australia ban the LTTE as a terrorist organization.

The new government of the United National Front, led by the UNP, signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the LTTE in February 2002. The Norwegian government acted as the mediator. Peace talks began in Thailand on September 16, 2002. After holding six rounds of talks, the LTTE withdrew from the negotiation process in April 2003.

In December 2004 a massive tsunami killed more than 30,000 Sri Lankans; the hardest hit regions were those controlled by the LTTE. In June 2005 the government and the LTTE announced an agreement to share more than $3 billion in international aid for the victims of the tsunami.

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REPUBLIC OF SUDAN

(Jumhūrīyât as-Sūdān)

By Kenneth Perkins, Ph.D.
Revised by Emmanuel Nwagboso



Sudan, the largest country in Africa, covers nearly 1 million square miles in the northeastern part of the continent and shares borders with nine other countries. Only a small percentage of Sudan's 40.1 million people (2005 est.) live in urban or semiurban settings. Culturally and linguistically, Sudan is divided into two distinct regions: the northern two-thirds of the country is largely Arab Muslim, while the southern part consists of heterogeneous ethnic groups culturally and religiously linked to black Africa. The Dinka are the most populous and politically prominent of the southern peoples.

Until its conquest by Egypt in the 1820s, Sudan was a variegated collection of independent states and tribal polities. A revolt in 1881 by Muhammad Ahmad, who claimed to be the Mahdi, a messianic Muslim leader, resulted in the establishment of an independent theocratic state in the north until an Anglo-Egyptian force crushed it in 1898. Sudan became a joint Anglo-Egyptian Condominium in 1899, but this arrangement was little more than a facade for British rule. In 1953 Britain and Egypt agreed to allow self-government and self-determination in Sudan, leading to the country's independence on January 1, 1956.

A low-intensity war of secession that erupted in the south in 1955 not only marred the advent of independence but dragged on for the next 17 years. A military coup led by Lieutenant General Ibrahim Abboud in 1958 temporarily brought multiparty parliamentary government to an end. Six years later, the military regime collapsed in a wave of strikes and riots, clearing the way for a second period of parliamentary politics (1965–69) that lasted until Colonel Jafar Muhammad Numeiry's 1969 coup. By 1972 Numeiry had brought peace to the country by concluding an agreement with the rebels granting regional autonomy to the south.

In the following decade, however, unilateral changes in the status of the south, culminating with the abolition of its regional assembly in 1983, reignited the civil war. Government inability to prosecute the war effectively, combined with the alienation engendered among some Sudanese by Numeiry's 1985 decision to introduce Islamic law (sharia) precipitated a third military coup by General Abd al-Rahman Siwar al-Dahab in 1985. His Transitional Military Council (TMC) suspended the constitution but, as a first step toward returning to parliamentary democracy, held elections for a Constituent and Legislative Assembly in 1986.

A coalition government drawing in the traditionally most influential political parties inaugurated Sudan's third democratic experiment, but after more than three years of feuding and infighting, the politicians had failed to resolve any of the country's most crucial problems. The war in the south showed no sign of abating; no constitution had been adopted; and uncertainties about the applicability of the sharia remained unresolved. Amid this stagnation, the military again took action, seizing power in 1989.

General Umar Hassan Ahmad Bashir headed a Revolutionary Command Council for National Salvation that banned all political parties, arrested many of the discredited politicians, and dismantled much

of the civilian government. Assuming the position of prime minister, al-Bashir named many supporters of the National Islamic Front to key government posts, revealing the close affinity between the RCC and the country's Islamists. In 1991 the military government imposed a sharia-based penal code in northern Sudan but left its application in the south open pending a settlement of the civil war. The Revolutionary Command Council was abolished and replaced by a civilian government in 1993. Elections held in 1996 returned Bashir to the presidency and resulted in a parliament dominated by the NIF, which became the National Congress Party (NCP). A new constitution was adopted in 1998 and suspended in 1999 by the president.

In 2002 the rebels and the government announced a cease-fire and began settlement talks to end the civil war. However, in the midst of these talks a widespread ethnic cleansing effort was directed at residents of the Darfur region by pro-government Arab militias. Pressure by the international community did little to stop the ethnic cleansing. In 2005 the government announced a power-sharing agreement with rebel leader John Garang. Garang died shortly after the agreement, and Salva Kiir took his place as head of the interim administration in southern Sudan.

The System of Government

Sudan is governed by an authoritarian military regime.

EXECUTIVE

General Umar Hassan Ahmad Bashir is the head of state and was, until its dissolution in 1993, chairman of the Revolutionary Command Council for National Salvation. Since 1993 Bashir has headed the civilian government that assumed the duties of the Revolutionary Command Council. His powerful political position is reminiscent of the extensive and unchecked authority vested in the president by Sudan's 1973 constitution, the fundamental law that was suspended at the time of the 1985 military coup. Not until 1996 did Bashir face the electorate. Despite a field of more than 40 candidates, Bashir's grip on power made him the only serious contender, and he won easily, securing more than three-quarters of the 5.5 million votes cast. In 2000 Bashir was reelected with 86.5 percent of the vote. The nearest rival candidate garnered 9.6 percent of the vote. The election was widely believed to be rigged, and several opposition parties boycotted because they believed the election would not be free and fair.

LEGISLATURE

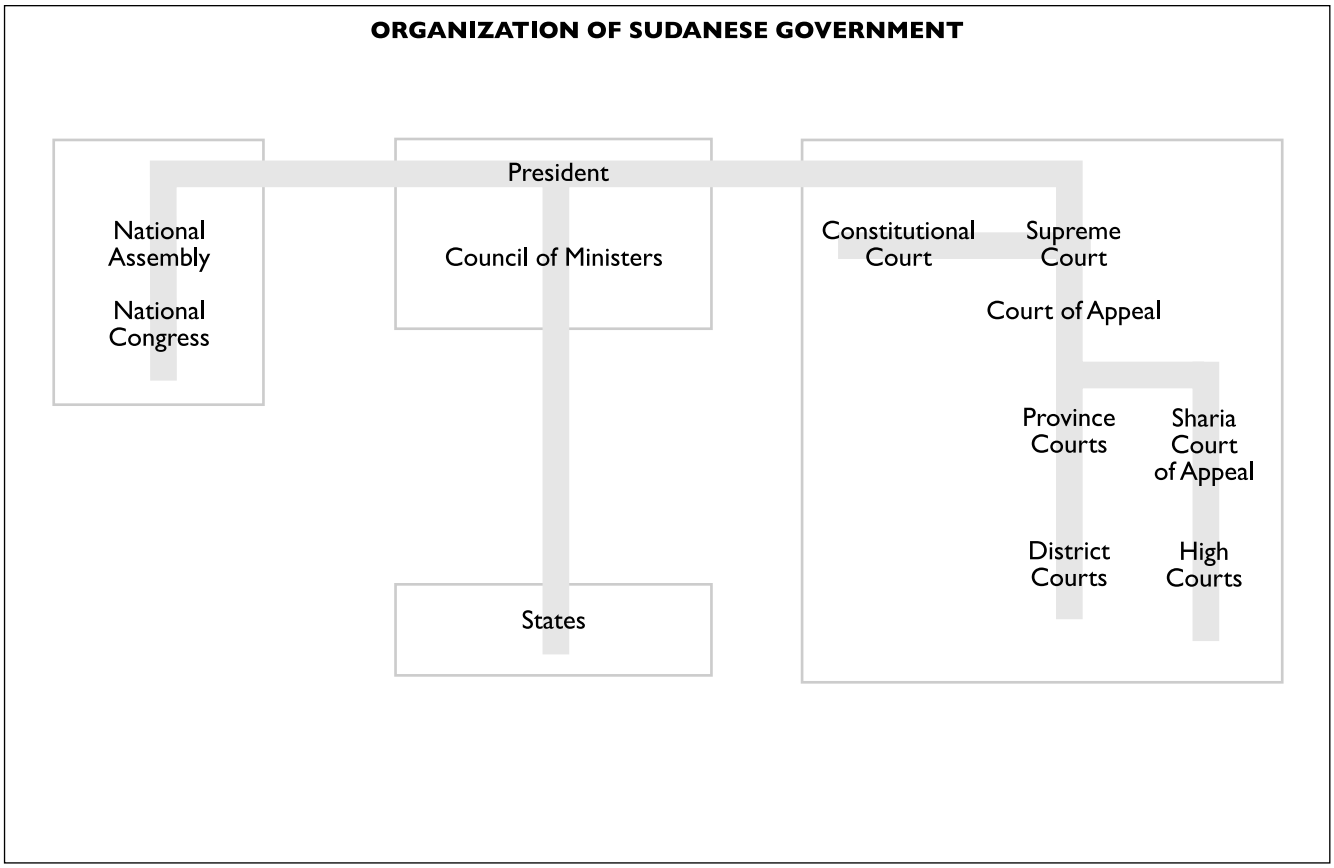
The last National People's Assembly elected under the 1973 constitution (in 1981) consisted of 151 members, including 52 from the north, 16 from the south, 70 representatives of mass organizations, and 13 presidential appointees. Following the 1985 coup, the Transitional Military Council dissolved the Assembly and ruled by decree until the 1986 elections of a new constituent and legislative Assembly. This 264-member body was, in turn, dissolved when the military again took power in 1989.

To fill the legislative void, the Revolutionary Command Council created, in 1992, a 300-member Transitional National Assembly representing the military, the trade unions, and the former political parties, as well as the RCC and other components of the government. The Transitional National Assembly had the right to propose and enact legislation and to vet decisions of the RCC, but had no fixed term.

Voting for the 275 people elected members of the National Assembly took place in March 1996. An additional 125 seats went to individuals designated by the National Congress, an amalgam of political and professional interest groups. With the 1989 ban on political parties still in force, the newly elected National Assembly consisted exclusively of supporters of the National Islamic Front (NIF), an Islamist organization that had been an influential partner of the Revolutionary Command Council since its inception. NIF leader Hassan Turabi secured unanimous election by the Parliament as its president. Opposition leaders denounced the entire electoral process as fraudulent and unrepresentative, noting, along with charges of vote-rigging and intimidation, that the continuing civil strife made it impossible to conduct voting in many southern legislative districts. Legislative elections were held in December 2000. The National Assembly now has 360 seats, 270 of which are popularly elected and 90 that are elected by the National Congress, an assembly of interest groups. Members serve four-year terms. Results of the 2000 election gave the National Congress Party (NCP) 355 of the 360 seats.

JUDICIARY

Prior to 1983 the Sudanese legal and judicial system was based primarily on English common law and Islamic law (sharia), with the jurisdiction of the sharia



courts limited to the personal and family affairs of the Muslim population. In that year President Numeiry decreed the sharia and Qur'anic punishments to be state law throughout the Sudan, despite the fact that almost a third of the country's population, concentrated in the south, was non-Muslim.

After assuming power in 1985 the Transitional Military Council proscribed the Qur'anic punishments but, to avoid alienating those Muslims who wished to retain some measure of Islamic law, did not formally rescind the sharia. Soon after the 1986 elections Prime Minister Sadiq al-Mahdi announced the government's intention to replace the sharia with a legal code based on the "Sudanese legal heritage," and some provisions of the sharia were repealed in 1987.

Between 1986 and 1989, however, the issue of sharia occupied a key place in the political infighting that eventually brought down the civilian government. The southern leadership hesitated to engage in peace talks prior to the definitive termination of the sharia, while the National Islamic Front (NIF) insisted on its applicability throughout Sudan. The agreement by al-Mahdi to freeze sharia legislation as a prelude to peace talks and the convening of a constitutional conference was a crucial factor contributing to the 1989 military coup. The new regime's proposal for a national referendum on the sharia was rejected by southern dissidents, who continued to insist upon the code's abolition. In 1991 the Revolutionary Command Council officially reintroduced the sharia and Qur'anic punishments in northern Sudan but held their application in the south in abeyance pending the settlement of the civil war. The 1998 constitution provided for a legal system based on both tradition and Islamic law. It also established a seven-member Constitutional Court.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Until 1981 Sudan's northern provinces were largely controlled from Khartoum. In that year, in an effort to devolve greater powers on local and regional structures, the Numeiry government established five northern regions in addition to Khartoum Province, the seat of government. The president appointed regional governors and councils of ministers on the recommendation of the regional assemblies (each having 50 to 70 seats) and governors, respectively. Regions were divided

into provinces with provincial commissioners also appointed by the president. In 1985 the Transitional Military Council dissolved the regional assemblies and replaced the regional governors and their councils with military officers. The current governmental structure dates from 1994. Ostensibly seeking to widen local power, the authorities devised a system of 26 states (subdivided into 90 provinces), about two-thirds of them in the north. A council of five ministers responsible for finances and economic development, education and orientation, agriculture and animal resources, engineering affairs, and health and social affairs assists the governor of each state.

Government in the south operated quite differently. In 1972 a 17-year low-intensity north-south civil war ended, paving the way for the creation of an autonomous Southern Region consisting of the provinces of Equatoria, Bahr al-Ghazal, and Upper Nile. The Southern Region had its own constitution (Law for Regional Self-Government in the Southern Provinces), its own High Executive Council and Regional Assembly, and a regional president responsible to the assembly.

In 1983 President Numeiry announced the redivision of the Southern Region into three separate units in an attempt to lessen the concentration of power in Juba, the regional capital, and to dilute the influence of the Dinka tribe. As the largest single group in the unified Southern Region, the Dinka had exercised considerable political power. Many southerners viewed Numeiry's proposal as an unconstitutional tactic to divide and rule the south, deprive it of its autonomy, and subject it to the same laws as the Arab Muslim north—a problem that became more acute with the imposition of the sharia in the same year.

This situation, combined with many southerners' conviction that they benefited from economic development less than northerners (despite the existence of large oil reserves, the country's most important natural resource, in the south), sparked an insurrection. Anya Nya II, a guerrilla group that took its name from the organization that had led the armed battle for southern autonomy between 1956 and 1972, began attacking government installations.

More significant was the emergence of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) and its military component, the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA). Under the leadership of John Garang, the SPLA engaged government forces in the south in a series of battles. Its attacks crippled oil exploration in the area, halted work on the Jonglei Canal irrigation project, and played an important role in the collapse of the Numeiry government.

The Transitional Military Council proposed to address the southern problem by creating a National Transitional High Executive Council composed of southern soldiers and civilians that would supervise the work of a seven-member transitional cabinet, also composed of southerners. Although this policy marked a de facto return to the status quo prior to the 1983 redivision, the SPLM rejected it, maintaining that the High Executive Council represented the TMC in Khartoum, not the southerners. During its year in power, the TMC struggled to curb the war in the south through both military and diplomatic means. The civil unrest and insecurity that prevented the holding of the April 1986 elections in more than half of the southern constituencies, however, attested to the strength and popularity of the SPLM.

Between 1986 and 1989 the SPLM mounted vigorous and successful offensives against government forces in the south. Despite occasional attempts to achieve a negotiated settlement, the issue of the applicability of the sharia proved a formidable obstacle. In 1988, however, members of the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP), a major element in Prime Minister al-Mahdi's coalition, reached an agreement with the SPLM on the suspension of the sharia and a cease-fire in the war zone, to be followed by the convening of a constitutional conference to determine the country's political structure. The opening of talks with the SPLM on the basis of this agreement precipitated al-Mahdi's overthrow in 1989.

Claiming that its first priority was to end the civil war, the Revolutionary Command Council held negotiations with the SPLM soon after coming to power. But the officers' insistence on a national referendum on the sharia and their increasingly evident links with the National Islamic Front (NIF) thwarted the talks, leading to an escalation of the war by late 1989. In 1991 an administrative reorganization that divided the country into nine states enjoying increased powers in the management of local affairs was rejected by the SPLM on the grounds that appointees to gubernatorial and other posts in the three southern states were regime supporters with no concern for local sentiments. As the civil war continued, the SPLM was riven by internal strife. Consequently, government offensives in 1992 were more effective than previous operations and the fighting raged on, largely at the expense of the war-weary civilian population.

Early in 1994 the government implemented an administrative restructuring of the country that divided the southern states of Bahr al-Ghazal, Equatoria, and Upper Nile into eight smaller political units. At the same

time, the southern factions buried their differences in order to confront the most vehement onslaught by the Sudanese army since the renewal of the fighting in 1983. Mediation between Khartoum and the rebel factions by the presidents of Kenya, Uganda, Ethiopia, and Eritrea produced a cease-fire agreement to which the government and the mainstream of the SPLA, but not all of its splinter groups, adhered. Later in the year President Bashir appointed a Supreme Council for Peace, composed of 96 members, more than a third of them southerners, in an effort to create an environment conducive to the promotion of the peace process.

As the negotiations and the cease-fire faltered in early 1995, Garang succeeded in forging alliances with opposition forces in the north. In June representatives of the SPLA and of the most important northern opposition parties met in Asmara, Eritrea. Styling itself the National Democratic Alliance (NDA), the coalition agreed that in the event it succeeded in overthrowing Bashir's government, it would establish a secular political system and allow the southern Sudanese (as well as some minorities in the north) to hold a referendum on secession.

Following legislative and presidential elections in 1996, the government signed peace treaties, the terms of which precluded the possibility of an independent south, with the SPLA-United and the South Sudan Independence Movement (SSIM), two splinter groups that did not belong to the NDA. The NDA coalition, on the other hand, continued to maintain its firm opposition to Bashir and the NIF. Despite rifts within the southern leadership, one of which came to light in an assassination attempt on Garang in Nairobi in November 1998, the war in the south continued. Neither the government nor the SPLA, however, proved able to seize control of the situation and impose a definitive defeat on its enemy. Peace talks and a cease-fire were again enacted in 2002–03, and a power-sharing agreement between the government in the north and Garang in the south was finally announced in 2005. Garang died shortly after the announcement and was succeeded by Salva Kiir.

The Electoral System

In the absence of a fundamental law, voting in the 1996 presidential and legislative contests was held in accordance with legislation dating from the previous nationwide election in 1986. Owing to the ban on political parties, only candidates affiliated with the National Islamic Front stood for the National Assembly. Elections held since 1996 have included other parties (after the 1998 lifting of the ban on political parties). Suffrage is universal at the age of 17 but is not compulsory.

The Party System

Sudanese political parties emerged from the Graduates' General Congress, founded in 1936. The first true party was Ashiqqa (Blood Brothers), established in 1942. It advocated independence from British rule under some form of union with Egypt. Members of Ashiqqa, backed by the Khatmiyya (a religious brotherhood associated with the important al-Mirghani family), were instrumental in founding the National Union Party (NUP) in 1952. Khatmiyya partisans withdrew from the NUP in 1956 to form the People's Democratic Party (PDP), but the two groups merged into the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) in 1968. The conservative, rural, tribal-based counterpart of the Ashiqqa-NUP was the Umma Party, established in 1945 by the Asnar, followers of a brotherhood centered on the family of the Mahdi. It sought independence, but without ties to Egypt. These parties predominated during the first two periods of parliamentary politics (1953–58 and 1964–69). They also fared well in the 1986 elections, together winning more than 60 percent of the seats contested, but their preeminence was challenged between 1986 and 1989 by the newly created National Islamic Front (NIF).

From 1971 until 1985, the Sudan Socialist Union (SSU) was the only legal political organization. The Transitional Military Council's abolition of the SSU and its legitimization of partisan politics prompted some 40 formal parties or groupings of independent candidates to contest the 1986 elections. The Revolutionary Command Council abolished all political parties when it seized power in 1989. Nevertheless, the traditionally influential parties in the north, as well as a number of southern groups (most notably the Sudan People's Liberation Movement), have retained their political identity and cohesion since their formal dissolution. In 1998 the National Assembly passed legislation authorizing the restoration of political parties in the following year. President Bashir invited opposition leaders living abroad to return to Sudan, but most chose to remain in exile. Based on the 1998 law that was revised in 2000, the government now allows political "associations." The associations must still be approved by the government before they can field candidates in any election. All government-approved parties must accept the constitution (although suspended in 1999) and must not advocate or use violence against the regime. There are several minor unapproved parties.

Major Political Parties

NATIONAL CONGRESS PARTY (NCP)

(Al Muttamar al Watani)

The NCP was originally known as the National Islamic Front (NIF). Although formally organized only in 1986, the NIF grew out of the Sudanese branch of the Muslim Brotherhood. This militant religious and political movement advocated the creation of an Islamic state, the establishment of close relations with conservative Arab countries, and the proselytism of non-Muslim southerners. The Brotherhood engaged in electoral politics in the 1960s but, like other parties, had no standing in those years. The Brotherhood's leader, Dr. Hassan Turabi, accepted an appointment as attorney general in 1979. In that position, Turabi played a major role in the implementation of sharia law. Just prior to the 1985 coup, however, he and other Brotherhood members were dismissed from the government, possibly so as to focus criticisms of the decision to impose Islamic law on them.

Turabi established the NIF as a vehicle for Muslim Brotherhood participation in the 1986 elections. The party won 51 seats but declined to enter the ruling coalition because of Sadiq al-Mahdi's avowed intention to abolish sharia law. When the DUP deserted the coalition in late 1988, Turabi became deputy prime minister, and many ministries formerly held by the DUP were given to the NIF. Al-Mahdi's decision in the spring of 1989 to suspend the sharia part of the process of opening negotiations with the SPLM caused the NIF to withdraw from the government.

Although the NIF suffered the same fate as other political parties under the Revolutionary Command Council, the Islamist leanings of General Bashir and his colleagues made for a natural alliance and Turabi became a staunch supporter of the military government, although he held no official post until 1996. Owing to the large number of NIF adherents named to official positions, the organization exerted considerable influence on policymaking, evolving, despite its technically illegal status, into what was, for all intents and purposes, a government party. Its goals were the creation of an Islamist state and the fostering of an Islamicized society.

NIF supporters filled most of the seats in the Transitional National Assembly appointed in 1992, and in 1995 Ali Osman, a prominent figure in the NIF, became the country's foreign minister.

With other political organizations outlawed, the NIF won all the seats in the legislative elections of 1996. A 1998 law reinstituted political parties, but the NIF, now called the National Congress Party (NCP), retained its political dominance. Legislative elections in 2000 gave NCP 355 of the 360 contested seats.

Minor Political Parties

UMMA (NATION)

(Hizb al-Umma)

The Umma is a secular Islamist opposition party. After independence the Umma formed a coalition with the PDP, and Umma leader Abdalla Khalil served as prime minister from 1956 to 1958. In the 1958 elections the Umma won a plurality and formed a coalition government that was overthrown in General Abboud's 1958 coup.

The party reemerged under Sadiq al-Mahdi (born in 1936) after the 1964 restoration of parliament, again forming part of a governing coalition. Although split between 1966 and 1969 by a rivalry, the party nevertheless supplied Sudan's prime ministers until the 1969 coup. Thereafter, the Umma evolved from the party of government to a base of strong opposition.

Free to organize and campaign for the 1986 elections, the Umma won more seats (99) than any other party. It forged a coalition with the DUP, and al-Mahdi became prime minister. Much of the next three years were spent in political maneuvering with Umma allies and the opposition, represented chiefly by the National Islamic Front. Al-Mahdi's decision to pursue peace talks with the SPLM led directly to the military coup that ended parliamentary government and imposed a ban on all political parties.

The Umma's enforced isolation from the political process during the 1990s severely damaged its organizational structure and greatly impeded its capacity to generate and mobilize support. As of 2005 it was beset by numerous factions.

DEMOCRATIC UNIONIST PARTY (DUP)

(al-Hizb al-Dimuqratiya al-Ittihadi)

In 1952 Ismail al-Azhari forged the merger of a variety of groups into the National Union Party (NUP). The party's primary objective was the unity of the Nile Valley. It won a parliamentary majority in 1953 and led

Sudan to independence. In 1956 its Khatmiyya wing defected to create the People's Democratic Party (PDP). In the late 1960s the PDP and the NUP reconsolidated as the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP), which al-Azhari headed until the 1969 revolution terminated parliamentary government. Although DUP dissolved along with other political parties, individual party members remained active in the political process.

The DUP reorganized and won 63 seats in the 1986 elections and formed a governing coalition with the Umma. In 1988 senior DUP members agreed to a proposal for a cease-fire to be followed by the convening of a constitutional conference. When the Umma refused to recognize the accord, the DUP left the government. The DUP later returned to the coalition, but within weeks the military seized power and the political parties were proscribed.

A few members of the DUP were appointed to the Transitional National Assembly in 1992, but the party itself remained illegal. DUP officials joined other opponents of the regime in opening negotiations with the SPLA in 1994 and took part in the National Democratic Alliance meeting in Asmara in 1995. Although the DUP weathered the ban on political activity in the 1990s, it sustained severe setbacks.

SUDAN PEOPLE'S LIBERATION MOVEMENT (SPLM)

While not a political party in the usual sense of the term, the SPLM and its military wing, the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), have profoundly affected Sudan's political system since their founding by John Garang, a renegade army officer, in 1983. The SPLM sought a stronger voice for the south in national affairs, demanded more equitable treatment for the region with regard to economic development, and opposed the implementation of sharia law. At the same time the SPLA actively engaged government forces in the south in battle.

After almost a decade of cohesiveness, the SPLM fragmented in 1991. Riek Machar, a military commander, broke ranks with Garang, whom he accused of dictatorial tendencies. Machar's creation of a rival movement, the Sudan People's Liberation Army-United (later renamed the Southern Sudan Independence Movement [SSIM]), reflected not only policy differences but also ethnic tensions between the dominant Dinka and other tribes, including Machar's Nuer. As the war in the south dragged on, further fragmentation ensued, with some factions breaking away from the SPLA and offering their allegiance to the government. Others, while remaining loyal to the SPLA and collaborating in the face of government assaults, harbored suspicions and antagonisms that weakened the southern cause and wrought additional havoc on the already-hard-pressed population.

SPLA representatives attended the National Democratic Alliance meeting in Eritrea in 1995, and the organization was a signatory to the Asmara Declaration that called for the overthrow of the government and acknowledged the right of southern Sudanese to self-determination. A cease-fire was declared between the Sudanese government and the SPLA in July 2002. During peace talks in 2003 the government proposed to share power for six years and then to allow the southern region to vote for or against independence. Fighting continued even so. On January 9, 2005, after three years of negotiations, a peace agreement between the SPLA and the government that ended the 20 years of civil war was signed. Garang died shortly thereafter and was succeeded by Salva Kiir.

Other Political Forces

MILITARY

Always an important factor in independent Sudan's history, the military has become the ultimate arbiter of political power. Its officers have ruled the country for most of its independent existence (1958–64, 1969–86, and since 1989). On each occasion, leaders of the armed forces, the only institution with an independent base of power and the means to exercise it, concluded that civilian politicians were incapable of satisfactorily addressing the country's most serious problems.

ORGANIZED LABOR

The Sudanese labor force numbered about 11 million in 1996 (the last year for which figures are available), of whom some 80 percent were in the agricultural sector and 20 percent in industry, commerce, and services. Unemployment and underemployment are serious problems, aggravated by natural disasters such as widespread drought, and man-made tragedies such as the civil war. Although Sudan had a strong labor movement tradition dating back to the 1940s, the Revolutionary Command Council abolished all trade unions when it seized power in 1989. Previously, most workers had been affiliated with the Sudanese Workers' Trade Union Federation (founded

in 1950) or the Federation of Employees and Professionals Trade Unions.

As opposition to the government accelerated in the 1990s, the former leaders of a number of professional and labor organizations, especially those with ties to the outlawed political parties, began to play a more active role.

STUDENTS

Students have also been a key component of Sudanese politics for decades. Student organizations have flourished, not only in the universities but also in secondary schools. Students resorted to demonstrations and strikes to protest government political and economic policies on many occasions in the Numeiry era. By themselves, they did not pose a terribly severe challenge to governments, but when they made common cause with labor and professional organizations, they were often able to force government reorganizations, cabinet reshuffles, and policy alterations. Like the political parties and other politicized groups, student organizations were stifled after the 1989 military coup. An undercurrent of political activism continued on university campuses, but only those student agencies connected to the NCP enjoyed relative freedom.

ARAB MILITIAS

In the early 2000s the Darfur region of western Sudan became a chief focus of the international community, as Arab militias known as *janjaweed*, apparently backed by the government, waged an ethnic cleansing campagin against the non-Arab residents of the region. More than a million people were forced from their homes, and a British government report stated that as many as 300,000 of these died either of starvation or were murdered. International pressure slowed the campaign, but as of 2005 the situation in Darfur remained a humanitarian crisis.

National Prospects

Strengthening the Sudanese economy, which was severely crippled even before the renewal of the civil war by poor agricultural performances, excessive inflation, balance-of-payments deficits, and onerous international debts, is an imperative for the country's future stability and development. But until the government can end the war by setting a national course acceptable to the divergent constituencies making up the country, the likelihood of resolving Sudan's economic problems is scant.

Repeated crop failures in the north, particularly in the Kordofan and Darfur regions, along with acute dislocations occasioned by the fighting in the south, have spawned massive internal migrations from those areas to the Nile Valley. This influx, estimated in the early 1990s at almost 2 million persons in Khartoum alone, overwhelmed the capital and other urban centers, whose capacity to provide shelter and other basic services was strained to the breaking point as temporary communities with substandard housing sprung up all around. Refugees suffered maltreatment and abuse stemming from the government's practice of forcibly relocating refugees and the urban population's frequent hostility toward them. The capacity of the refugees to return to their lands and resume productive lives hinges on the restoration of political and economic stability (and the provision of a significant measure of technical assistance), highlighting the urgent need to resolve the civil war and refocus government energies on reconstruction and development.

That, in turn, depends on addressing the questions of Islamization and the status of thesharia in Sudanese society. There are stark differences of opinion between the NCP and the northern Sudanese opposition parties about the nature of an Islamic society. In the case of secular northerners, and even more so with respect to southern non-Muslim Sudanese, differences with the regime over the nature of the state and society are still more pronounced.

These issues, while obviously of great importance to southern Sudanese, are not the only ones that pit the north and the south against each other. Southern grievances go beyond religious differences to fundamental disputes over the proper allocation of political and economic power in the Sudanese state. Since the renewal of the civil war in 1983, a military solution has repeatedly escaped both sides.

The apparent willingness of the NCP to loosen its grasp on the levers of state power, demonstrated by the creation of a Constitutional Court in 1998, the decision to permit the reorganization of political parties beginning in 1999, and the signed cease-fire agreement of 2005, could point toward the start of a process of democratization that, if successful, might change government policies regarding both the war and the status of the sharia in the state. Opponents of the current regime in both the north and the south, however, have held out little hope of Bashir and the NCP allowing such a process to reach fruition.

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REPUBLIC OF SURINAME

(Republiek van Suriname)

By Edward Dew, Ph.D.



Upon independence from the Netherlands in 1975, Suriname, a nation of 438,000 (2005 est.) in northeast South America, became a parliamentary republic. Ethnic antagonisms have traditionally been the major source of Suriname's political cleavages. At times these have been overcome by consociationalism, power sharing among parties representing the ethnic groups. This feat is complicated by the fact that there are at least two parties competing to represent each ethnic group. Roughly 37 percent of the population are East Indian (locally called Hindustanis), another 31 percent are Creole (of African or mixed descent), 16 percent are Indonesian, and 10 percent are Bush Negro (the descendants of runaway slaves). Smaller groups include Amerindians, Chinese, Lebanese, and Dutch.

The System of Government

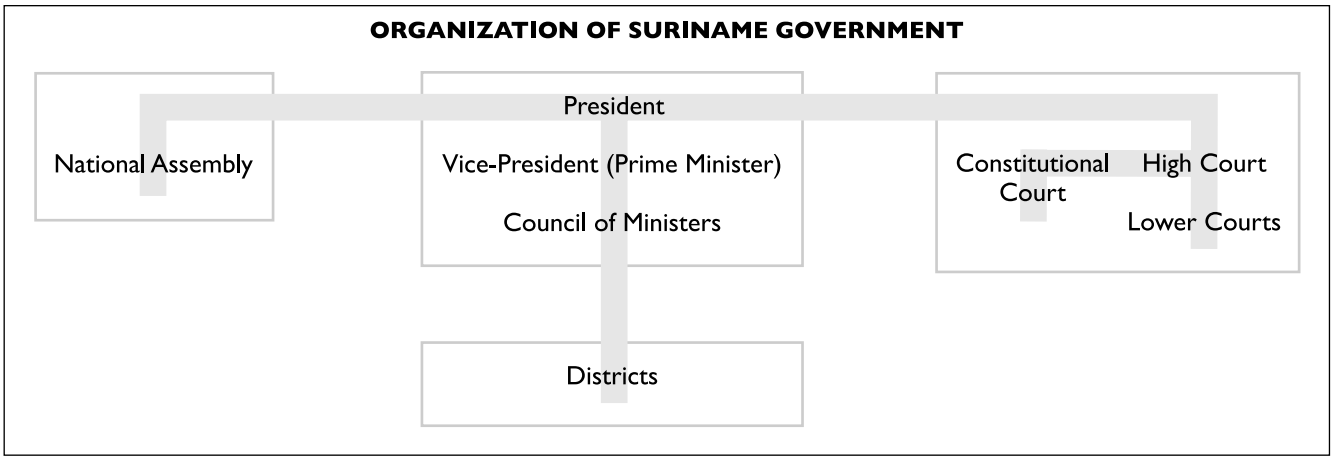
Suriname is a parliamentary republic with a unicameral legislature.

EXECUTIVE

In the 1975 constitution executive power belonged to the prime minister and the cabinet, while the president's role was largely titular and symbolic. After a military coup in 1980 the 1975 constitution was suspended. A reform-minded government under Master Sergeant (later Lieutenant Colonel) Desi Bouterse [BOW-tur-sah] promised a new constitution that would transcend ethnicity. But when he brutally reneged on this promise, the Dutch cut off economic aid and a guerrilla war broke out in the jungle interior.

In 1987 Bouterse acquiesced to the pressure and allowed a return to democracy. The thoroughly revised 1987 constitution created a 51-seat National Assembly that in turn selected the president and the vice president. The vice president (effectively serving as prime minister) chairs the Council of Ministers, while the president, following the French pattern, directs matters of defense and foreign affairs, appoints and removes ministers, and sets and directs the policy agenda. Given Suriname's multiethnic society, selection of the president and the vice president requires two-thirds support in the National Assembly. Lacking this, a special "Peoples Assembly" of all elected officials (local, district, and national) is convened where a simple majority is required for election.

The first government under this arrangement came to power in 1988. Made up of a coalition of Hindustani, Creole, and Indonesian parties in a Front for Democracy and Development, the new government's effectiveness was impeded by military intransigence and the ongoing guerrilla war in the interior. In December 1990 another coup took place. Thinking that their supporters might win power by electoral means, the military left the constitutional structures intact. The 1991 elections saw the multiethnic alliance (now called the New Front) return to power.



The pressures of coping with the military and carrying out structural adjustment policies under the scrutiny of the Dutch government and the IMF cost the alliance support, and in 1996, amid deteriorating social and economic conditions, it failed to achieve a majority in the National Assembly. While constituting the largest bloc there, it was outmaneuvered by a smaller party (the National Democratic Party; NDP), led by the ex-dictator Bouterse. A number of defections from the New Front (all Indonesians and half of the Hindustanis) joined with the NDP to provide a government that lasted from 1996 to 2000. Widespread corruption and fiscal mismanagement led to near disaster for the NDP government, and new elections in 2000 brought the New Front back to power with a comfortable majority. The New Front retained the most seats in the 2005 elections.

LEGISLATURE

The National Assembly, with 51 seats, is elected from 11 districts according to proportional representation. In the 1950s and 1960s, with no ethnic political party capable of winning a majority of seats in the legislature, consociational (or multiethnic) alliances were carefully crafted to transcend these divisions. But these arrangements broke down in the 1970s amid distrust and impossible demands. Ethnic polarization subsequently led to legislative paralysis. The 1980 coup and its military excesses spurred a resumption of consociational behavior by Suriname's major parties in the 1987, 1991, and 1996 elections. Ironically, the alliance that had dominated government from 1987 to 1996 was ousted by another consociational alliance cobbled together by the former military dictator. The New Front's return to power in 2000 and 2005 has provided a more stable coalition of the largest ethnic parties, members of which are proportionally represented in both the legislature and the government positions.

JUDICIARY

The 1987 constitution provides for a system of lower courts, a single High Court, and a Constitutional Court. The document is also strong in its protection of human rights, both civil and social. The courts are both active and effective in adjudicating problems on the day-to-day level, but they have been paralyzed in prosecuting the violations of civil rights identified with the military regime and its alleged involvement in certain kinds of ongoing criminal activity.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Local government before 1987 was the responsibility of district commissioners, directed by the Ministry of Internal Affairs in the capital, Paramaribo. Under the 1987 constitution, local and district councils were to be set up with an elected membership. These structures are now in place. But their effectiveness is doubtful, as they depend on the central government for funding and execution of local policy requests.

The Electoral System

Suriname has a 51-seat unicameral National Assembly. Elections are by proportional representation in a series of 10 multimember districts of various sizes, ranging from the capital, Paramaribo, with 18 seats to the vast interior district of Sipalwini with four and three

other interior districts with three seats each. Terms for assembly members are five years. Regional and municipal council elections are held simultaneously with national elections. Election to the presidency is by a two-thirds vote of the National Assembly, and election to the vice presidency (effectively the prime minister) is by a simple majority of that body. If no candidate can achieve the two-thirds needed for president, a special "Peoples Assembly" of all elected officials (municipal, district, and national) is convened and a runoff is conducted between the two top candidates. A simple majority is required for election.

The Party System

There are four major parties in Suriname and a host of smaller ones, most of them surviving only for one or two elections before disappearing. Three of the four major ones have been around since the beginning of self-government in Suriname.

Major Political Parties

SURINAME NATIONAL PARTY

(Nationale Partij Suriname; NPS)

Founded in 1946, the NPS is the oldest surviving party in Suriname. Its constituency has been the Creole population. Partner with the VHP (below) in consociational governments in the 1950s and 1960s, it rejoined the VHP and KTPI after the 1980 coup to form the Front and New Front governments in the 1980s, 1990s, and 2000s. The current leader is Ronald Venetiaan, Suriname's president from 1992 to 1996 and again from 2000 to the present. Creoles are a largely urban group, and the NPS has focused on labor and social welfare issues.

PROGRESSIVE REFORM PARTY

(Vooruitstrevende Hervormings Partij; VHP)

Founded in 1949 and led for over 50 years by lawyer Jaggernath Lachmon, this has been the principal party of the Hindustanis. Originally oriented to an agrarian constituency, the VHP has widened its base to serve a growing Hindustani urbanization. The VHP joined with the NPS and KTPI to form the Front and New Front alliances in 1987 and 1991. A party split in 1996 led a segment of younger VHP members to defect to the NDP government. After Lachmon's death in 2001 party leadership passed to Ram Sardjoe, who helped to bring the VHP (and the New Front) back into power in the 2000 elections.

PERTJAJA LUHUR

Successor to the Pendawa Lima, the Partjaja Luhur draws its support from the Indonesian group. Its leader is Salim Somohardjo. Like the Hindustanis, Indonesians were imported as contract laborers on the Dutch colony's sugar plantations after the abolition of slavery. It joined the New National Front coalition in 2000.

NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY (NDP)

One of the youngest of the major parties, the NDP was set up by the former dictator Desi Bouterse and Jules Wijdenbosch in 1987 to contest the first democratic elections since the 1980 coup. With its charismatic leadership appealing to the lower classes, the NDP has also managed to attract the support of a multiethnic group of new millionaires. Upon taking power in 1996, the NDP abandoned the New Front's efforts at structural adjustment, producing unprecedented budgetary deficits. Large-scale demonstrations against the NDP-led coalition in 1999 produced a split between Bouterse and Wijdenbosch, and in the 2000 elections the NDP (still led by Bouterse) won seven seats to three for Wijdenbosch's "Democratic National Platform 2000." In 2005 the party won 15 seats in the Assembly, behind the New Front's 23.

Minor Political Parties

The current field of parties includes the mostly Creole Suriname Labor Party, allied with the New Front group; the Democratic Alternative '91, a conservative multiethnic coalition of Creole, Hindustani, and Bush Negro parties that had earlier sought reincorporation in the Kingdom of the Netherlands; the multiethnic Political Wing of the Farmers and Workers League; the multiethnic Progressive Workers and Farmers Union; and the Kerukanan Tulodo Pranatan Ingit (Indonesian Party of High Ideals, formerly Kaum Tani Persatuan Indonesia (Indonesian Peasants Association, KTPI). The KTPI was one of the original members of the National Front, but swung over to the NDP in 1996. In the elections of 2000 and 2005 each received

representation as one- or two-person factions in the parliament.

Other Political Forces

Suriname's longstanding ethnic tensions continue to exert an enormous influence on the country's political system, with the country's major political parties organizing themselves largely along ethnic lines. In addition, the military has played a major role in Suriname's political process, including overthrowing governments via coups in 1980 and 1990.

National Prospects

Suriname is considered by the World Bank to be one of the 20 richest countries in the world in terms of resources. The paralyzing effects of ethnic conflict, corruption, and mismanagement led to almost a decade of negative growth in the 1980s and 1990s. Restoration of the New Front to power, combined with substantial growth in oil and gold production, plus higher world prices for bauxite and alumina, gave Suriname a growth rate for GDP 5.9 percent in 2001 and 2.7 percent in 2002, a per capita increase of 5.2 percent and 2.0 percent for those years. Early figures for 2003 showed that trend to be continuing.

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KINGDOM OF SWAZILAND

(Umbuso weSwatini)

(Umbuso wakaNgwane)

By B. David Meyers, Ph.D.



Swaziland is a small, landlocked, southern African nation of slightly more than 1.1 million people (2005 est.). Unlike most of Africa, the population is ethnically homogeneous, with well over 90 percent of Swazi descent. The country is divided into approximately 70 clans led by the royal Nkosi Dlaminis, who have ruled the Swazi for 400 years.

The System of Government

The current political system, essentially an absolute monarchy, was primarily shaped by King Subhuza II, who ruled from 1921 to 1982. During his long reign, Subhuza expanded the powers of the monarchy as he went from paramount chief to king of the Swazi to king of all of Swaziland. He reestablished Swazi ownership over land and mineral concessions that had been granted to European settlers and speculators, and he vested their management in corporations controlled by the royal family.

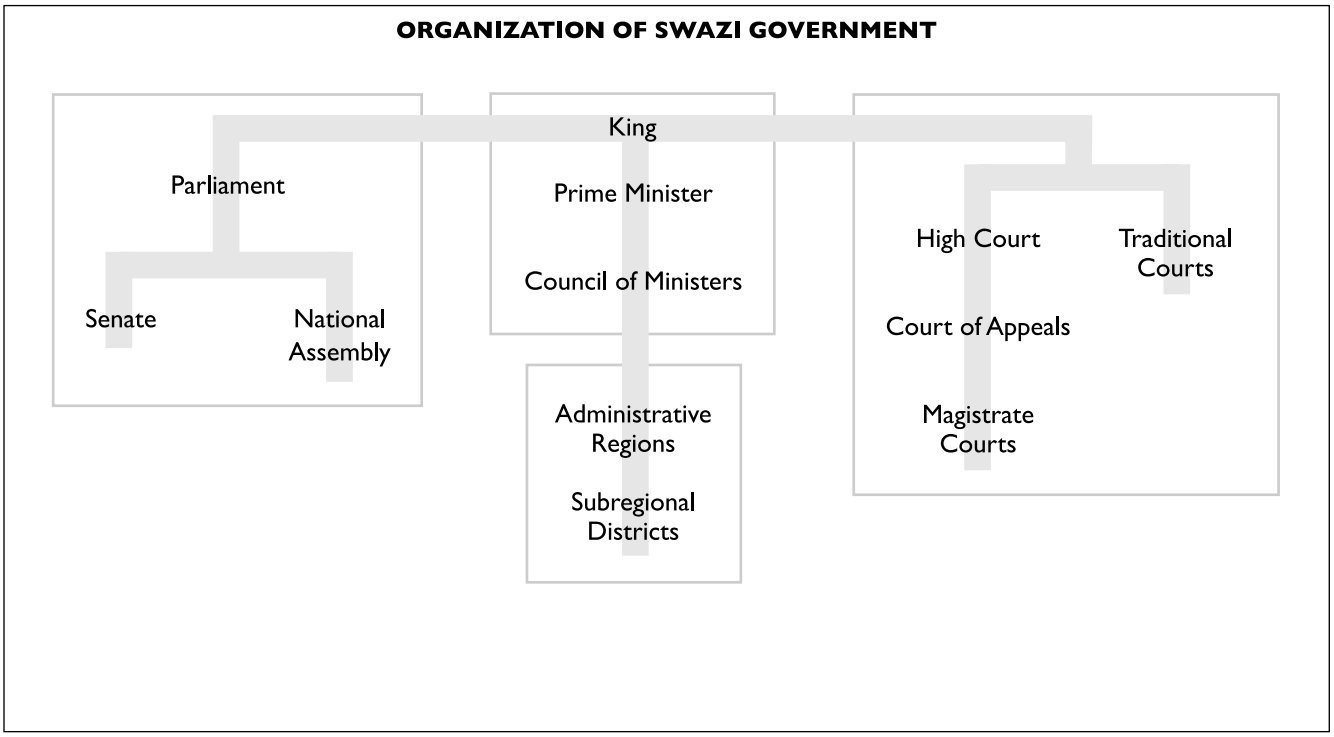
Previously, Swaziland was a British High Commission Territory. During the 1960s a movement for independence was begun by people who also hoped to establish limits on monarchical power. The royalist response was to create their own political party, the Imbokodvo National Movement, which won all of the seats in the new assembly in a preindependence election.

In 1973 the constitution was suspended and all political parties were banned. Since then, Swaziland's politics has been a struggle between the royalists and their traditional supporters and various, primarily illegal, pro-democracy forces. A Constitutional Review Commission, headed by a brother of the king, has presented the outline of a new constitution that would preserve the monarch's powers. Finally signed by the king in 2005, the constitution preserves his authority and retains the ban on political parties.

EXECUTIVE

In 1968 Swaziland came to independence as a hybrid of the traditional Swazi tribal kingdom and an elected, albeit docile, parliament. In elections in 1972, three parliamentary seats were captured by a reform party that proposed limiting the powers of the monarchy. In 1973 strains between the traditionalists and reformers prompted Subhuza to declare a state of emergency, outlaw political parties, suspend the constitution, and dissolve parliament. Since then virtually all power has remained in the hands of the king and his traditional supporters and appointees.

Swazi royal succession is decided after the king's death within the Dlamini family council. Following Subhoza's death, there was a prolonged internecine power struggle that ended with the selection of Mswati III, who was crowned in April 1986. Despite an increasingly active reform movement and some cosmetic changes in the political system, Mswati retains



near-absolute power. He exercises executive authority through a prime minister and Council of Ministers, whom he appoints and can dismiss. In November 2003 A. T. Dlamini was chosen as prime minister.

LEGISLATURE

Swaziland has a bicameral legislature whose functions are limited to debating government proposals and advising the king. Following the recommendations of a special commission appointed by the king in 1993, the National Assembly now comprises 65 deputies, 10 of whom are appointed by the king. The remaining 55 are popularly elected from single-member districts. The upper house or Senate includes 30 members, of whom 20 are appointed by the king and 10 elected by the Assembly.

JUDICIARY

There is a High Court headed by a chief justice and a Court of Appeals. All justices are appointed by the king. The legal system is based on South African Roman-Dutch law in statutory courts. There are also local courts that administer traditional Swazi law.

In recent years there has been conflict between the high courts and the government. The Court of Appeals has not functioned since December 2002, when six judges resigned in protest of the government's refusal to abide by court decisions. The chief justice of the High Court resigned a month later.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Swaziland is divided into four regions administered by officials appointed by the king. Below them, the 55 electoral districts, which have their own leaders (usually one of the more traditional chiefs and their councils), perform the functions of local governance.

The Electoral System

Nonpartisan elections for the National Assembly are held every five years. Huge numbers of candidates are nominated locally to contest the first round of balloting, with the three candidates who receive the highest number of votes in each district going into a runoff. Traditional Swazi leaders claimed that these elections represented a significant democratization of the political system, but the leaders of the reform groups disagreed.

Before elections, leaders of the major reform movements have been arrested, then released under restrictions that prevent them from political activity.

As there are no party platforms and political reform is not a topic for discussion, candidates woo voters with promises of roads, medical clinics, and other employment-generating projects that, in reality, they are unable to deliver. The importance of these elections is further reduced as the king has frequently named royal favorites and supporters who have been defeated to the appointed seats in the Assembly and Senate. Although reformers are prohibited from organizing electoral boycotts, popular turnout for these elections has continually been low.

The Party System

At independence, the most important political parties were the royalist Imbokodvo National Movement (INM) and the Ngwane National Liberatory Congress (NNLC), which called for constitutional reform. The Imbokodvo, which was controlled by the king and his advisers, had its mass base among the Swazi subsistence farmers who make up the majority of the nation's people. Most NNLC support came from urban wage workers and the small, non-Swazi communities. Since 1973 political party activity has been banned, and police frequently harass mass meetings and organizing efforts.

Major Political Parties

There are no political parties in Swaziland.

Minor Political Parties

There are no political parties in Swaziland.

Other Political Forces

As political parties are banned, both INM and NNLC are now considered as political associations and have little importance. There are a number of illegal political parties who often worked together within umbrella organizations seeking reform.

Currently, the most important reform organizations are the People's United Democratic Movement (PUDEMO) and the Swaziland Democratic Alliance. Both seek to end the three-decade-long state of emergency and write a new democratic constitution that would limit or remove the king's political authority. Labor unions, most importantly the Swaziland Federation of Trade Unions, church organizations, youth groups, the Human Rights Association of Swaziland, and the illegal political parties, are affiliated with one or both of these organizations.

Since 1955 agitation for political change has often taken a militant, sometimes violent, form. In turn, the police have increasingly used lethal force against protesters. Opposing the reformers are Swaziland's traditionalist forces, which include the extensive royal family, chiefs, and the peasants who are bound to them by tribal ideology and their control of the land. A great deal of the traditionalists' political and economic power is located outside the formal national government in the "Swazi Nation," personified and led by the king and his tribal council. The king and council control vast revenues through the Tibiyo Fund, which collects and invests the income derived from mining and land concessions.

South Africa, which almost surrounds Swaziland and is its major trading partner, has also been influential. The apartheid governments generally supported the Swazi traditionalists and kept pressure on them to greatly limit ANC activities. More recently, former president Mandela and other democratic southern African leaders have tried to end the eruptions of violence and have brought some pressure for constitutional reform.

National Prospects

Swaziland's unique political system is unraveling. The split between the modernizing and traditional forces is growing, and confrontation has become the norm. The king's traditionalist backers, who have great stakes in the current system, will probably resist any substantial liberalization of the existing system, whereas the increasingly militant reformers are unlikely to be satisfied with anything less. In this stalemated situation, continued unrest and increasing instability seem most likely and the prospects for a smooth transition to democracy are bleak.

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KINGDOM OF SWEDEN

(Konungariket Sverige)

By Neil C. M. Elder
Revised by Tom Michael



Sweden is a sizable country (173,860 square miles, about the size of California) with a population of 9 million (2005 est.). It covers almost 1,000 miles from north to south and almost 300 miles at its widest from east to west. Much of it, especially in the north, is coniferous forest. The most densely populated area lies in the triangle between the three largest metropolitan areas—Stockholm, Gothenburg, and Malmö. The main industries include, in addition to timber and wood products (including paper and pulp), production of metal-based items (including automobiles and aircraft), electrical and electronic products, and, increasingly, pharmaceutical and biotechnological goods.

The System of Government

Sweden is a parliamentary democracy, a constitutional monarchy, and a unitary state. The principle of cabinet responsibility to parliament won final acceptance in 1917; universal suffrage was achieved by 1921. Earlier, executive power had been vested in the king under the constitutional arrangements of 1809, and that power was exercised by him in large, though diminishing, degrees.

The Swedish constitution comprises four separate documents: the Instrument of Government (*Regeringsform*) of 1974, which is the most important of the four; the Act of Succession (for the present royal family), dating from 1810; the Freedom of the Press Act of 1949; and the Freedom of Expression Act of 1991. An amendment of 1979 to the Act of Succession represented a victory for sex equality by allowing female succession, so that the first-born now has the right to the throne irrespective of gender. In addition to these documents, there is also the 1974 Parliament Act, which contains some of the most important rules regulating the legislature and which has a status halfway between constitutional and ordinary statute law.

The new constitutional document of 1974, effective January 1, 1975, ended all opportunity for the monarch to influence the political process but at the same time confirmed the king as head of state (*Statschef*). In large measure this reform simply gave formal recognition to prevailing constitutional practice. Since 1973 the king and titular head of state has been Carl XVI Gustaf.

The power to govern the country is vested in the cabinet (*regering*) headed by a prime minister (*Statsminister*) accountable to parliament. All political power is declared to emanate from the people. Primary legislative power is vested in parliament (Riksdag), which is elected at least once every four years. (Before 1994, elections were held at least once every three years.)

EXECUTIVE

The cabinet is the key policymaking center in the political system as long as it can maintain its parliamentary support. The principle of collective responsi-

bility applies. When a cabinet resigns, parliament votes on a proposal for a new prime minister submitted to it by the speaker of the parliament, after consultations with the leaders of the parliamentary parties and with the deputy speakers. This function passed from the king to the speaker under the 1974 Instrument of Government. The proposal of a new prime minister fails only if an absolute majority votes against it. The speaker then appoints the prime minister, who in turn appoints all the other members of the cabinet. If the prime minister so requests, the speaker can discharge him, as he may if parliament declares that the prime minister does not enjoy its confidence. Other cabinet ministers may be dismissed either by parliament or by the prime minister.

In periods of minority government, crucial decisions are made in talks among party leaders and also in parliament and its standing committees. The first phase of Swedish parliamentarism, through the 1920s to 1932, was marked by a rapid succession of minority governments. The second phase, from 1932 to 1976, was one of Social Democratic dominance and, for the most part, majority government, although some of the governments were coalitions. The period from 1976 to 1982 saw a series of non-Socialist governments. Another such government from 1991 to 1994 was led by Carl Bildt, who was the first Conservative prime minister in more than 60 years. The Social Democrats won the elections of 1982, 1985, 1988, 1994, 1998, and 2002 and returned to power each time in a minority position but with virtually no risk of being ousted. Such an occurrence would have required a general combination of all the other parties in the system against them.

Nearly all cabinet ministers are representatives of the party or parties in power and also are members of parliament, but occasionally an independent expert may be called upon to serve. All ministers may address parliament; none may vote in it. A substitute from the same party takes over the parliamentary duties of any member of parliament (MP) who has been appointed to the cabinet for as long as that MP remains in the cabinet. The substitute has full voting rights in parliament and, although under party discipline, is independent of the minister he replaced.

Ministries are small units, with an average staff of 100, including clericals. The preparation of major legislative measures is thus usually entrusted to commissions of inquiry within guidelines approved by the cabinet. The membership of these commissions is variable at government discretion and may include representatives of interest groups, MPs from both the government and the opposition sides, civil servants, and independent experts. The inquiry stage commonly lasts one to three years. The final report is circulated to relevant administrative agencies and nongovernmental organizations for official comment (Remiss procedure). A summary of the material thus assembled is included as background in the formal papers introducing a government bill to parliament. The process is valued as a contribution to informed public debate and to responsible government. Similarly, the small ministries provide a framework for steering through laws and regulations for the 70 to 80 administrative agencies charged with the day-to-day enforcement of government decisions. These agencies often suggest proposals for change in their respective fields arising out of practical experience. Their recommendations are also customarily circulated for comment in the same way as commission of inquiry reports and are included in any bill that may be later submitted to parliament.

LEGISLATURE

The single-chamber parliament (Riksdag) consists of 349 members. Unlike most parliaments, in which deputies are seated in party blocs along a left-right spectrum, Swedish MPs are seated by constituency, regardless of party.

The ordinary session of parliament runs normally from early October until mid-June the following year. Extraordinary sessions may be held at other periods of the year, but eight months is the usual annual span for parliamentary work.

Parliament elects a speaker and three deputy speakers. These posts are shared by agreement among parties and collectively form the Presidium of the Riksdag. The management of the parliamentary agenda is in the hands of the speaker's conference, consisting of the Presidium together with one representative from each party caucus, the chairs of the parliamentary standing committees, and the deputy chair of the Riksdag Board of Administration. Committee chairs are shared by agreement among the political parties in the same way as presidium posts.

Individual member's proposals (*Motioner*) are some 10 times as numerous as government bills (*Propositioner*). Most, however, are in effect amendments to government bills; some are party alternatives to government proposals; some seek to have the issue they raise investigated by the government. Most fail. The bulk of the legislative program is determined in accordance with the wishes of the prime minister and his cabinet.

The process of constitutional amendment reflects the legislative primacy of parliament, although a modest measure of direct democracy has recently been introduced. Until 1980 all constitutional amendments had to be passed by two successive parliaments, with a general election thus taking place between the first and second votes. Now, in addition to this procedure, a third of the members of parliament can force an amendment to be put to a referendum after one favorable parliamentary vote. This kind of referendum is held at the same time as the general election, and the amendment fails if the votes against equal more than one-half of valid votes cast in the general election. If the amendment passes, parliament again takes up the issues for final decision.

The 1974 Parliament Act consists of a number of important regulations, each supplemented by detailed prescriptions. The key passages are amended in the same way as other constitutional documents, except that an amendment is immediately in effect if it is passed by a three-fourths majority of those MPs voting, and provided that the pro-amendment votes constitute a majority of the whole parliament. The subsidiary clauses are amended in the same way as ordinary statute law, namely, by simple majority. It is for these reasons that the Parliament Act has an intermediate status in the hierarchy of laws.

A measure of direct democracy had been countenanced in the Swedish political system long before the 1974–75 constitutional reform continued it. Parliament may enact a law requiring a special consultative referendum to be held, which has happened on six occasions to date. The first referendum, in 1922, narrowly rejected Prohibition. The second, in 1955, rejected a switch from driving on the left-hand to the right-hand side of the road by a 4-to-1 majority. The third, in 1957, approved a compulsory supplementary pensions scheme. The results of the fourth referendum, in 1980, on how best to manage Sweden's nuclear reactors, were criticized as being inconclusive and vague. The fifth, in 1994, brought Sweden into the European Union (EU) with a 52 percent vote in favor. The following year Sweden became a member of the EU, but, as the sixth referendum would show, would not adopt the euro, the currency of the EU. In 2003 the sixth referendum was held, in which voters disapproved joining the euro zone. Some 56 percent of voters turned back the effort, which was supported by the ruling Social Democrats, a majority of parliament, and the business community. The fifth and sixth referendums were contested by a sizable number of Swedes; both referendums had 83 percent voter turnout. In contrast, the EU elections of 1999 in Sweden had one of the lowest voter turnouts ever, with less than 39 percent voting. The only one of the six referendums to be overturned by a conference of party leaders was the second referendum in 1955.

General elections must be held every fourth year. If the government dissolves parliament between the ordinary elections, the mandate of the ensuing election is valid only for the remaining portion of the regular parliamentary term. No such extraordinary election was called between 1970 and 1994 when general elections had to be held every third year.

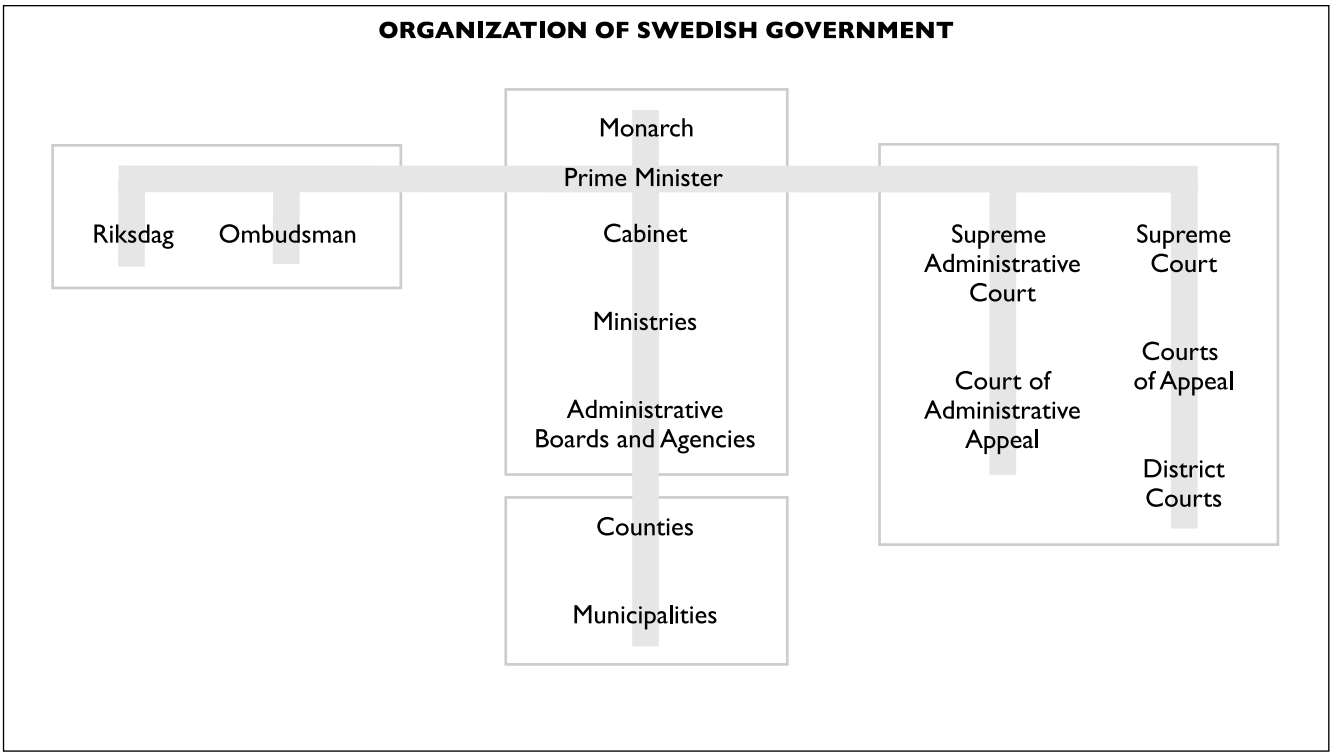
JUDICIARY

The highest courts in Sweden are the Supreme Court (högsta domstolen) and the Supreme Administrative Court (regeringsrätten). The five-member Supreme Court is the final court of appeals for cases raising important issues of legal principle in civil and criminal law. The Supreme Administrative Court performs a similar function for cases arising from the decisions of administrative authorities. These latter cases can be pursued only through a special system of administrative courts. The members of both Supreme Courts are appointed by the government form the ranks of qualified judges.

A constitutional amendment passed in 1979 states that governmental and parliamentary enactments shall not be enforced if they are in "obvious" breach of the constitution. This may be viewed as reinforcing the special section on basic rights and freedoms that was written into the new Instrument of Government of 1974.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Regional government comprises 21 counties (*län*), in each of which the national government is represented by a governor (*landshövding*) and a county administration (*länstyrelse*). The governors are appointed by the national government for six-year terms. Politicians commonly are chosen, and quite often they come from parties in opposition. As a rule, they give up active political involvement when appointed. County councils (*landsting*) are the elected regional units of self-government. The most important business of the national government's county administration is conducted by a board, of which the governor is chairman. Since 1977 the 14 board members of each county have been appointed by the county council. Previously, some members of each board were appointed by the councils



and some were appointed by the national government. Municipalities (*kommun*), of which there were 289 at the beginning of the 21st century, constitute the basic units of local self-government.

Local government functions fall into two main categories: those within the general powers granted by statute and those based on special legislation. The general powers enable local authorities to "conduct their own affairs" and include, for example, cultural matters, leisure activities, parks, and electricity generation. The widest range of these powers is exercised by the municipalities. The specially regulated tasks are usually mandatory and include, among other things, managing the school system, child care, public assistance, and public health and medical care. This last function is by far the most important task of the county councils, which are responsible for running most of the country's hospitals.

The importance of the local government sector has gradually increased and, national supervision of local authorities has been relaxed. At the end of the 20th century the expenditures of county councils and municipalities amounted to less than one-fourth of GDP. Some decisions of local government, such as those affecting urban planning, still require confirmation by the regional branch of the national government.

The Electoral System

The Swedish Parliament is directly elected on a proportional representation basis (St. Laguè). Of the 349 seats, 310 are divided among the country's 28 multimember constituencies in proportion to the number of registered voters in each constituency. The remaining 39 seats are divided between the parties *and* allocated to constituencies through a complex formula (again, St. Laguè), which tries to ensure that party representation in parliament corresponds as closely as possible to the national distribution of votes. A party must obtain 4 percent of the national vote to win a seat, unless it wins a seat in a specific constituency with at least 12 percent of that local vote. The New Democracy Party, for example, fell afoul of the 4 percent scale in the 1994 elections; no party has as yet benefited under the 12 percent local rule.

Any Swedish citizen, age 18 or over on polling day and not legally disbarred, has the right to vote. Aliens resident in the country for three years or longer have been entitled to vote in all local government elections since 1976. Electoral registers are kept for inspection at the local tax office, and cards are sent in advance of elections to all voters, providing them with details of their local polling stations. The ballot form is a party's candidate list. Each party contesting the election dis-

tributes its lists at the polling station. The voters selects the party list of his or her choice and seals it into a special envelope in a screened-off area (the envelope is provided on production of the voter's card), and the voter hands it to the election officer for immediate deposition in the ballot box.

Voters may add or remove names on a party list, and beginning in the 1994 elections they could change the rank order of candidates on a party list if 8 percent of them expressed the same preference on the ballot paper (5 percent in local government elections). The impact of the 1994 change has mainly been to make the parties pay more attention to the marketing of their candidates. In 1998 12 MPs owed their election to this device. More than one list may be run by a party, and votes for each party's lists are aggregated when the total party vote is calculated. Multiple lists are more commonly run by the non-Socialist than by the Socialist parties. A party may put forward different lists in different regions of a constituency or draw up a list with an eye toward a particular category of voters (e.g., Free Church voters). After the vote, the multiple lists are merged to form one rank-ordered list. Voters may split the ticket by taking lists from different parties in the parliamentary, regional, and local elections. No by-elections occur under this electoral system. In case of a vacancy, the seat passes to the candidate next in line on the list.

Elections are held on the third Sunday in September and take place at national, regional, and local levels simultaneously. Consequently, ballot papers (candidate lists) of different colors and markings are employed: plain white papers for municipal elections, blue with a black corner line for county council elections, and yellow with two black corner lines for parliamentary elections. Voting is optional, but voter participation levels are generally high—86 percent, for example, in the 1994 parliamentary elections.

ELECTION RESULTS, 2002

Party	% Vote	Seats
Social Democrats	39.8	144
Moderates	15.2	55
Liberals	13.3	48
Christian Democrats	4.1	33
Left Party	8.3	30
Center	6.1	22
Greens	4.6	17
New Democracy	—	—

The Party System

ORIGINS OF THE PARTIES

Sweden adopted a proportional system of representation in 1909. At that time Conservatives and Liberals dominated the political scene, with Social Democrats a rising third force. Proportional representation enabled the farming population to set up the Agrarian Party to protect their interests, and the Russian Bolshevik revolution led to the emergence of a Communist Party. In the 1930s these political groupings became the components of a remarkably stable five-party system.

The basic line of cleavage within this system lies along the left-to-right axis: Communists-Social Democrats/Agrarians/Liberals/Conservatives. The last three parties are, in Swedish parlance, the "bourgeois" parties, but an urban/rural cleavage has on occasion cut across and softened this pattern, especially during the period from 1933 to 1957, when the Agrarians were twice in coalition governments with the Social Democrats. The balance between the Socialist and non-Socialist sides has often been a narrow one in terms of electoral strengths. The generally pragmatic temper of the four largest parties (i.e., excluding the Communists until the post-1945 era) meant that accommodations have periodically been made across the basic divide. The four parties entered into a national coalition government in 1939–45 with the aim of preserving the country's neutrality. They had earlier proved capable of heading off extremist political movements generated by the economic depression of the 1930s. The Social Democrats dominated the political system from 1933 to 1976; since 1976 there has been a more normal alternation between Social Democratic and "bourgeois" governments, with the latter in power in 1976–82 and again in 1991–94.

THE PARTIES IN LAW

The constitution restricts the distribution of parliamentary seats to registered parties. Parties register themselves with the National Tax Office, which is the central authority for the administration of elections. For registration purposes in a parliamentary election,

a party must show that it has the support of 1,500 voters (for county council elections the figure is 100, and for municipal elections, 50). The party must also show that it can field a certain number of candidates and produce their written consent to nomination. The nomination process is not subject to legal regulation but is left to the parties themselves to manage.

Since 1966 state subsidies have as a general rule gone to parties overcoming the 4 percent barrier to parliamentary representation. In fiscal year 1994–95, for example, 127.2 million Swedish crowns were paid out in accordance with the parties' share of the vote in the 1991 elections, far outweighing party income from membership dues and other sources. No condition is attached to these subsidies, nor is there any public audit of their expenditure. Voluntary compacts among parties are the sole limit on campaign expenditure. There is no legal requirement that party finances be disclosed. Additionally, in an attempt to maintain diversity in the media, the government awards subsidies to the press, which is closely linked to the political parties. The general tenor of these rules is to recognize parties as essential to the democratic process while at the same time providing some reinforcement to barriers against the emergence of new groupings at the parliamentary level. Similarly, the youth organizations of the established parties have received state support grants without strings attached since 1964. Also, since 1969 the parties contesting municipal and county elections have been able to claim subsidies from public funds on the basis of a tariff per seat that varies from one locality to another. Finally, the costs of the ballot papers in all elections are charged to the state.

PARTY ORGANIZATION

Swedish parties are generally associations of dues-paying individual members. The basic organizational structures and the functions of the three main levels of party organization are similar for all major parties. The sets of specialized working groups at the national level and the minutiae of procedure for the nomination of candidates do, however, differ. Candidate nomination procedures often vary within the same party, yet certain crucial characteristics are common throughout the system. By longstanding convention, for example, national party authorities do not seek to interfere in the nominating process for parliamentary candidates, which takes place at the constituency (county) level.

Party cohesion is strong, though MPs do occasionally break ranks when constituency interest requires it. Genuinely maverick behavior is likely to result in failure to win renomination. Stricter measures may on rare occasions be applied, especially on the left: in 1981 the Social Democratic Party national executive supported the expulsion of 24 party members by the party's youth organization on the grounds that they were Trotskyites.

On the local level, party organizations choose local candidates and campaign for them. The amalgamation of more than 850 municipalities in 1971 to less than 300 today has tended to increase the liveliness of party debate about local issues. In varying degrees, depending on the party, local party associations are also linked into the process of nominating and ranking constituency candidates for parliamentary elections. They may also originate motions for submission to party regional or national congresses. Since the late 1960s complaints about the ineffectiveness of some aging local party caucuses have led to the formation of nonpolitical community action groups, especially by younger voters.

At the regional level, party lists are established for parliamentary elections by the county party oligarchy in consultation with representatives from the local organizations or other party figures or, in the case of the Social Democrats, through a regional conference. Party regional executives and full-time party officials play a crucial role in shaping the outcome. Through compromises and accommodations, they balance the disparate interests of groups and occupations on the final ticket. In other respects, they replicate the functions of local party organizations one rung higher in the hierarchy.

At the national level, the Swedish system is characterized by a generally high level of cooperation between the parliamentary blocs and their respective national party organizations. As a rule, the leader of the party is also elected leader of the parliamentary group. In 1981, however, the Moderate Party reverted to a practice—more common with them than with the other parties—of naming the retiring party leader the leader of the parliamentary caucus. The actual process of choosing a new leader when a vacancy occurs has varied greatly, but commonly a special committee representing the top echelons of both the parliamentary and the membership sides of the party plays an important role.

Nominally, the most important national party organs are the periodic congresses of 200 to 350 delegates that elect key party functionaries, draw up election manifestos, discuss constituency motions, and review the stewardship of party executives. By no means rubber-stamp bodies, they can and quite often do take a stand independent of the party leadership, usually by asking it to examine an issue further or to take certain facets of a question into special consideration.

In practice, the real steering of the party's work—except in the case of nominations—comes from the party leader, the party's national executive, and the parliamentary caucus. The growth of the mass media has encouraged the process of centralizing authority in the hands of party leaders who, because of television appearances, are both far better known and far more important to the parties' electoral success than was the case 30 years ago.

CAMPAIGNING

Issues are generally more important than personalities in Swedish elections, but the importance of issues varies from election to election. In the 1985 election, for example, taxation policy was a major issue, while in 1988 environmental issues predominated. The underlying question at other times is whether the Socialists or non-Socialists are adjudged more competent to run the national economy.

Television time for campaigning is allocated equally to all parties represented in parliament. The highlight of the television campaign is a long session on election eve in which the leaders of all the parties participate. The moderator of the session tries to achieve a proportional allocation of time with a stopwatch.

In general, issues are sharpened on television and radio and obscured in elaborate poster campaigns. The posters show the influence of mass marketing and stress general images such as "peace," "work," and "safeguarding the family." One party's poster will occasionally be a "response" to that of another party.

INDEPENDENT VOTERS

About one-sixth of the voters split their votes between parties in the national and local elections in 1985. This was more than twice as many as in 1970 and reflected the general decline in party loyalty voting that occurred in the late 20th century.

Major Political Parties

CENTER PARTY

(Centerpartiet; C)

HISTORY

The Center Party is the modern successor to the Agrarian Party, which began life in 1913, chiefly to represent small farmers. Larger farmers formed their own party in 1915. Both organizations returned their first parliamentary representatives in 1917. In 1921 they merged, under the name Agrarian Party. For the next three decades, the Agrarians polled some 11 to 14 percent of the total vote. They remained first and last a party to protect agricultural interests. In pursuit of those interests, they came to an understanding with the Social Democrats during the Depression (1933). Later they took part in two "Red-Green coalitions" with the Social Democratic Party (1936–39 and 1951–57), both times as the junior partner, but both times with control of the Ministry of Agriculture.

During the second of these coalitions, the party's vote fell to just over 9 percent, a record low. Its traditional support base was hard hit in the 1940s and 1950s by a large-scale drift to the cities, with their growing prosperity and better amenities. In 1920 a total of 44 percent of the workforce was employed in agriculture; by 1965 it was 12 percent. Gunnar Hedlund, the farmer-politician who led the party from 1949 to 1971, supported the change of name to Center Party in 1958 as one move in a major shift of strategy designed to widen the party's appeal. The strategy resulted in a series of successful elections, culminating in a 25.1 percent vote in 1973. Since then, support has ebbed. Nevertheless, the party has provided the prime minister in three non-Socialist coalitions in the person of Thorbjörn Fälldin, its leader from 1971 to 1985. Fälldin I (1976–78) was a tripartite majority government resulting from a victory for the non-Socialists in the 1976 elections. This government fell because of internal dissension—specifically, Center Party opposition to the nuclear power program that had been begun by the Social Democrats and had support from the Conservatives and Liberals. Fälldin II (1979–81) was a similar combination, made possible by interparty agreement to hold a referendum on the nuclear issue in the wake of the incident at the Three Mile Island reactor in the United States. The coalition disintegrated in May 1981 over a tax reform scheme, and Fälldin III, a minority coalition with the Liberals, took its place until defeated in the 1982 election. The Center participated in the Conservative-led coalition government of 1991–94, but it has lost support in every election since 1976 and polled a mere 6.1 percent of the vote in 2002. Its leader, Olaf Johansson, resigned from the government in June 1994 in protest against the decision to build a bridge over the Öresund to Denmark.

ORGANIZATION

The Center Party holds a national conference annually. It is one of two parties that issue central directives

about the procedure to be followed for making nominations to the party ticket.

The party press is not prominent in the country's mass media. The biggest paper is *Skanska Dagbladet*, published in Malmö. The chief party journals are *Svensk politik* and *Politisk Tidskrift*. The youth organization publishes a paper called *Ung Center*, and the women's organization has a paper called *Budkavle* (The Fiery Cross).

The National Farmers' Association (Lantbrukarnas riksförbund; LRF) is formally a nonpolitical organization. In practice it has many close links with the party, both at the voting and at the membership levels and in the composition of the parliamentary caucus.

POLICY

The Center Party achieved much success in the early 1970s by concentrating on environmental issues and opposing Sweden's nuclear power program. The nuclear power issue involved the party in damaging inconsistencies when in government in 1976–78 and 1979–82, and it was upstaged by the Greens in the 1988 elections. It is still hostile to nuclear power but has increasingly espoused an agrarian-oriented, populist program focusing on opposition to rural underdevelopment and urban overdevelopment and support for small businesses, the underprivileged, and decentralization. Its agricultural wing and the National Farmers' Association were in favor of Sweden's accession to the European Union, but its environmentalist wing and the youth league were opposed. The party leadership thus took a low-key stance during the referendum on the issue in 2003.

MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY

The earlier success of the Center Party's drive to widen its appeal is reflected in the fact that from 1956 to 1973 it made gains among all social classes. Since 1973 it has lost almost two-thirds of its vote and reverted to being essentially a party for the defense of agricultural interests. As such it combines the agrarian conservatism of southern Sweden with the small-farmer radicalism of the north.

The party's strongest areas cover two broad swaths of counties to the north and to the south of central Sweden. In general, the party is a significant political factor in rural areas throughout Sweden. Such modest urban support as it continues to enjoy comes largely from those whose background is agricultural.

LEADERSHIP

Olaf Johansson was elected party leader in February 1987, succeeding Karin Söder, who had resigned because of ill health. Johansson is a career politician who was chairman of the Center Youth Organization 1969–71, entered parliament in 1971, and served as a minister in the Fälldin governments. He was minister for the environment in the Moderate-led coalition government of 1991–94. He resigned as party leader in 1998 and was replaced by Lennart Daléus, who in 2001 was replaced by Maud Olofsson.

PROSPECTS

The signs are that the Center Party has entered a period of decline following its phenomenal successes. The decline has been severe and almost continuous since 1976, with a low point of 5.1 percent in the 1998 election. Center support was necessary for the Moderate-led coalition government, but the party is having difficulty finding a distinctive profile. Its appeal has weakened as some of the incoherence of its program has become evident. For example, the equalization of regional living standards requires increased central direction, yet the party stands for increased decentralization. Only the farmers remain a dependable source of support: other Center sympathizers are more volatile. The Center is in danger of degenerating into a minor protest party, dependent on regional support from the farming community. Since the 1994 elections the party has cooperated closely with the ruling Social Democrats, notably in the 1996 budgetary process. But these ties were weakened by the turn of the 21st century.

LEFT PARTY

(Vänsterpartiet; V)

HISTORY

The Left Party is a descendant of the Left Socialist Party of 1917. From 1921 to 1967 it had the name Swedish Communist Party, having joined the Third International in 1919. The Communists experienced repeated schisms and averaged only some 3 percent of the vote in the 1930s and 4.5 percent in the post–World War II period. The party changed its name in 1967 to Left Party Communists, and then it dropped "Communists" in 1990 in the wake of the upheavals in Eastern Europe. In the elections following, it specialized in clearing the 4 percent barrier to representation with not much to spare. In 1998 it bested previous efforts by winning 12 percent of the vote.

ORGANIZATION

The Left Party congress meets at least once every three years. Additional congresses may be convened by the party executive or by local organizations rep-

resenting collectively at least one-third of the total party membership.

The party's main newspaper is *Ny Dag* (New Day). Its theoretical debate is conducted in the journal *Socialistisk Debatt*. The youth organization publishes a paper called *Stormklockan* (The Tocsin).

POLICY

The Left Party dropped Marxism from its program at its 1990 congress. It has in consequence something of an identity crisis. It talks at times of support for a "regulated market economy" and for a "socialist market economy," and it regards itself as a natural ally of the Social Democrats on their left flank. On the whole, it appears to be evolving into a radical democratic and feminist party with a strong environmentalist plank.

MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY

Since 1968 the Left Party has changed character from one of blue-collar workers to a party of white-collar workers with a significant base in the public sector, which has suffered from cutbacks and a sense of insecurity in recent years. In 1991 it recorded its worst election result in two decades, largely because of the impact of the dramatic political transformation of Eastern Europe. In 1994, however, it achieved 6.2 percent of the vote. Its outright opposition to Sweden's joining the European Union contributed to its success. So did the readiness of Social Democratic sympathizers to help it clear the 4 percent barrier to representation in order to maximize the chances of a Social Democratic government after the elections: its support for such a government could be counted upon. In 1998 it reached a record 12 percent of the vote, thanks to Social Democratic austerity programs and continuing worries about the EU. In the 2002 elections the party slid backwards slightly, capturing just 8.3 percent of the vote.

LEADERSHIP

The Left Party's transformation began in 1965 under the leadership of C. H. Hermansson (1964–75), himself a university graduate and a talented television debater. From 1975 to 1993 it was led by Lars Werner, originally a stonemason. In January 1993 Werner was replaced by the considerably younger Gudrun Schyman, once a hard-line Marxist-Leninist (in the 1970s), who brought about a clean break with the party's Communist past. When Schyman resigned her position in 2003, while facing charges of income tax irregularities, she was replaced by an interim leader (Ulla Hoffman) until Lars Ohly was installed in 2004.

PROSPECTS

The Left Party has a volatile electorate. It cannot hope to enter government in the foreseeable future, nor does it seek to do so. It is essentially a party of protest, with marked schizophrenic tendencies oscillating between traditionalist Socialists and radical democrats.

LIBERAL PARTY

(Folkpartiet Liberalerna; FP)

HISTORY

The Liberal Party began life as a parliamentary caucus in 1895. It created a national party organization in 1902. It was then one of the two major actors on the Swedish political scene, rivaling the Conservatives in voting power and alternating with them in government. Under the leadership of Karl Staaff and, later, Nils Edén, the party concentrated its energies on expanding suffrage and on parliamentary reform. With final victory on these issues between 1917 and 1921, the Liberals lost impetus, falling away from a majority of votes at the turn of the 20th century to slightly over 20 percent in 1920 and a mere 11 to 12 percent throughout the 1930s. Their decline was accelerated by a 1923 schism on the Prohibition issue between a rural, Free Church temperance wing and an urban radical "wet" wing. The two factions were not reunited until 1934. From 1948 to 1956 the party revived to become the strongest on the non-Socialist side with almost a quarter of the total vote. Since 1956 it has ranged from a low of 5.9 percent in 1982 to a high of 14.2 percent in 1985, recording 7.2 percent in 1994.

From 1945 to 1976 the Liberals, in common with the other non-Socialist parties, were in opposition. From 1976 to 1982, however, they were the only party continuously in office. They served in all three of Fälldin's governments and formed a minority government of their own in 1978–79 with their then leader, Ole Ullsten, as prime minister. From 1991 to 1994 they took part in Bildt's coalition government of non-Socialists. After a weak showing in the 1998 elections, in which the Liberals barely cleared the threshold of representation with 4.7 percent of the vote, they rebounded in 2002, with a strong showing of more than 13 percent.

ORGANIZATION

The Liberal Party's national congress normally takes place annually except for election years. The party is by far the strongest in terms of the circulation figures for newspapers sympathetic to it. These papers include a

number of the leading dailies, notably *Dagens Nyheter*, and are read by a much wider circle than just the party's voters. The youth organization also publishes a newspaper.

POLICY

Under the leadership of Bertil Ohlin from 1944 to 1967, the Liberals finally moved away from their old attachment to laissez-faire economic policies and toward "social liberalism," which implies a partnership between the state and private enterprise to remedy the ills of the market economy, but no more interference than is required for that purpose. The party is strongly in favor of a vigilant constitutional defense of civil rights and liberties, of equal rights for men and women, and of generous aid to underdeveloped countries. It began supporting NATO membership for Sweden in 1999 and pushed for the adoption of the euro during the 2003 referendum.

MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY

The Liberal Party has lost strength in their old, rural, Free Church bastions, notably Västerbotten county in northern Sweden and Jönköping county in south-central Sweden. Secularizing trends in society at large do much to account for this decline, together with rural depopulation and, to a lesser extent, competition since 1964 from the new Christian Democratic Party. Liberal support now comes fairly evenly from both town and country. Their urban support comes from all classes, but especially from white-collar workers, professional people, and small businesspeople. In no class, however, are Liberals predominant. The more radical young intellectuals who joined them during their postwar peak (1948–56) tended to drift away to the Social Democrats and Left Party Communists under the influence of the New Left wave in the late 1960s. Since 1970 they have lost support to the Center Party and the Moderates. Their geographical spread is remarkably evenly distributed among the country's regions, with a mild concentration (5 percent or so above the average) in Gothenburg and along the western coast. They still preserve something of their old character of an amalgam of Free Church members and what might be called "cultural radicals."

LEADERSHIP

The Liberals cycled through a series of leaders since 1967, after the long tenure of Bertil Ohlin. In 1983 Ole Ullsten (prime minister 1978–79) was succeeded as party leader by 40-year-old Bengt Westerberg, a talented debater and television personality from the right wing of the party. Westerberg had political administrative experience under the non-Socialists governments of 1976–82. He was appointed minister of health and social affairs in the Bildt coalition government from 1991 to 1994. He resigned as party leader after his party's poor showing in the 1994 elections and was succeeded by 38-year-old Maria Leissner after a hard-fought party election in 1995. She had earlier chaired the party's youth league. Lars Leijonborg rose to party leadership in 1997.

PROSPECTS

The Liberals have greater difficulty than any other party in the system in maintaining voter loyalty and a sharp political profile. Cooperation with the Social Democrats across the bloc boundary is a constant temptation to the more radical party members, but it is a high-risk option in terms of voter support. Cooperation with the Moderates appears to be similarly fraught with risk. Nevertheless, a party in the center—as both the Liberals and the Center Party are—is used to operating at the midpoint of a seesaw.

MODERATE PARTY

(Moderata Samlingspartiet; M)

HISTORY

The Moderate Party has since 1969 been the name for what used to be the Right (Högern), the Swedish Conservatives. At the beginning of the 20th century the Conservatives represented the powerful in Swedish society: higher civil servants, industrialists, and large landowners. They polled almost half the total vote on a restricted franchise and alternated in office with the Liberals. They were in large measure a party of resistance to change, opposing suffrage reform, parliamentary democracy, and high expenditure on social welfare. The adoption of the present name was designed to break with the old image of a party of reaction.

The Conservatives began as a parliamentary caucus and created a nationwide party organization in 1904. They began to lose ground after the final modernization of the political system between 1917 and 1921. They polled a quarter of the national vote, however, throughout the 1920s and remained the strongest party on the non-Socialist side until 1948, when they received only 12.3 percent of the vote. Since then they have had a checkered career—ranging from 11.5 percent of the vote in 1970 to 23.6 percent in 1982. Their 21.9 percent in 1991 was enough to give them the leading position in a four-

party, non-Socialist government, the first time they had held the premiership since 1928–30. They had served in the Center-led coalition government of 1976–78 and 1979–81. Their increased vote in 1994 (to 22.4 percent) was, however, not enough to save them from having to go into opposition because all of their coalition partners lost ground in the elections of that year. They won two additional parliamentary seats in the 1998 election, with 22.9 percent of the vote, but stumbled badly in 2002, capturing just over 15 percent of the vote.

ORGANIZATION

The Moderate Party normally holds a national congress every third year in the year preceding a general election. The party newspaper is *Medborgaren* (The Citizen). The Moderates have their own educational and training establishment for party members, the Medborgarskolan. The youth organization runs the paper *Moderat debatt*. There is a student organization, technically autonomous, that publishes a journal called *Svensk Linje*.

POLICY

The Moderate Party is a strong advocate of restraint in public-sector expenditure, of tax reforms to encourage individual enterprise, of a property-owning democracy, and of a powerful national defense. It strongly supports a free-market economy and is hostile to collectivization. In 1969, concurrently with changing its name, it came out for the first time in support of an expansion of social welfare provisions. It now stresses the avoidance of wasteful expenditure in this sector and a greater matching of resources to needs. It supports the nuclear power program. In foreign policy, it strongly supported Swedish membership in the European Union and its single currency, the euro.

MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY

The Moderate Party is, in the main, an urban party, although it is quite strongly supported in the more prosperous agricultural areas of southern Sweden. In the cities, the Moderates command approximately a quarter of the vote of white-collar workers and almost half the vote of higher civil servants and professional people. In addition they have strong backing among entrepreneurs, both large and small. They may be characterized as the party of the upper-income brackets in Swedish society. Their insistence on reduced levels of direct taxation and on the careful management of the public sector helped bring them over a third of the poll in 1979 in the metropolitan areas. They are weak in working-class support and also in the northern half of the country, which is traditionally more radical.

There is a considerable membership overlap between the Moderate Party and associations of Swedish industry. Nevertheless, the Federation of Swedish Employers (SAF) and the Federation of Swedish Industry (SI) are not affiliated with the party.

LEADERSHIP

Carl Bildt was elected party leader in August 1986 at the age of 37, succeeding Ulf Adelsohn, who has led the party since 1981. Bildt came to prominence as chairman of the Moderate Students' organization while at Stockholm University, became personal assistant to Gösta Bohman (party leader 1970–81), and was chief political coordinator for the Moderates in the non-Socialist governments of 1976–78 and 1979–81. He was prime minister in another non-Socialist coalition (1991–94) and resumed his party and parliamentary duties early in 1997 after a period as the EU's representative in Bosnia. The end of the century brought many changes to party leadership. Bildt was replaced in 1999 by a former tax minister, Bo Lundgren, who in turn was replaced in 2003 by Frederik Reinfeldt, who like Bildt before him, took over the post at age 37.

PROSPECTS

The Moderates have gained much support in the past decade at the expense of their non-Socialist competitors, not least among younger voters. The climate of the times—the collapse of Communism in Eastern Europe and the increasing salience of the European Union issue—has favored the Moderates. On the other hand, they are vulnerable to the impact of economic recession, especially when it is reflected in rising unemployment figures. Also, the more they dominate the non-Socialist parties, the weaker their potential allies become. This poses problems in the way of their returning to power.

SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY

(Socialdemokratiska Arbetarepartiet; S or SAP)

HISTORY

The Social Democratic Party came into being in 1889 with Hjalmar Branting as party leader. In 1896 Branting became the party's first MP, although he was elected on a Liberal list. In 1897 the party adopted

a modified version of the orthodox-Marxist Erfurt Program developed by the German Socialists in 1891. Practice, however, was already at variance with theory. The party collaborated with the Liberals in pursuit of the modernization of the political system and gave full support to the parliamentary principle. By 1914 the SAP was polling over a third of the vote. After 1932 its share did not fall below 40 percent until 1993, and it became the dominant party in the system. In 1940 and 1968 it gained an absolute majority of the votes cast, although the earlier of these two results was achieved in the shadow of Nazi domination elsewhere in Scandinavia. After 1968 it experienced fluctuating fortunes, losing office to non-Socialist coalitions between 1976 and 1982 and again in 1991, and winning the elections of 1985, 1988, 1994, and (narrowly) 1998.

The SAP has generally proved extremely resistant to splits on its left. The party's pragmatic policies led in 1917 to a breakaway of radicals to form the Left Socialist Party (V), but voting support fell off only briefly as a result. In 1917 they entered government for the first time, in coalition under a Liberal prime minister. In the 1920s they took turns with the non-Socialist parties in forming unstable minority administrations. In 1932 they came to office on an expansionist economic program to meet the Depression. In 1933 agreement with the Agrarians began what proved to be an almost uninterrupted tenure in office until 1976. The party's position was not quite as impregnable as this record might suggest. Sometimes coalition was necessary (1936–39, 1939–45, 1951–57), and often the balance of advantage over its adversaries was finely poised. Nevertheless, the party appeared to be the natural party of government during this period. Even in opposition, the Socialists have been the single strongest party by a wide margin.

ORGANIZATION

The SAP holds a national congress every third year, in the year preceding a general election. The procedure to be followed in making nominations to the party ticket is centrally controlled.

The party controls a number of newspapers; however, the one with the biggest circulation, *Aftonbladet*, is owned by the umbrella union federation. The party journal, *Tiden*, is the main vehicle for intellectual debate. The youth organization runs a newspaper called *Frihet* (Freedom); the women's organization operates one called *Morgonbris* (Morning Breeze). Christian Social Democrats have their own organization within the party, *Broderskapsrörelsen* (The Brotherhood Movement).

POLICY

Social Democratic Party programs revealed a steadily diluted Marxist content between 1920 and 1960. The party came to stress the welfare state, increased egalitarianism, and "economic democracy" to complete the political democracy already achieved. In pursuit of this aim, the party considerably strengthened union powers vis-à-vis management, notably by the passage of a Co-Determination Act in 1976. This act abolished the employer's unilateral rights to hire and fire and to decide on the organization of production. Employers and unions were now to negotiate on a whole range of issues—for example, the introduction of new equipment, company management and work supervision, the contracting of work—before changes were made.

During the 1950s and 1960s the U.S. economist John Kenneth Galbraith had been the main inspiration. With economic hard times since 1985, however, the party has abandoned its support for an expanding public sector and for Keynesian economic policies in favor of measures to reduce the public debt and switch to contributory financing to maintain a reasonable standard of welfare provision. The party leadership was in favor of Sweden's joining the EU but did not mobilize the party organization in the referendum campaign because it knew most blue-collar workers were opposed to its viewpoint. The popular rejection of the 2003 referendum calling for Sweden's entrance into the euro zone was a great disappointment to SAP leaders, and it displayed some of the internal dissension within the party's rank and file over the issue. There occurred dramatically, but seemingly without political motivation, the assassination of Foreign Minister Anna Lindh days before the referendum was held.

MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY

SAP membership dropped sharply to 259,000 in 1991 (from a peak of 1.23 million in 1983), a consequence of the abolition of the collective affiliation of union members in 1990 after almost a century of operation. Over the previous two decades top trade union leaders had increasingly come to regard the collective affiliation of individual union members as indefensible. So now these members were not affiliated unless they specifically required it. At the same time, local union organizations—clubs, groups, sections—could affiliate collectively with their local party branches ("communes"). Their rights of representation are calculated according to the number of members in the union organization individually affiliated with the party. Despite all these changes the party has more loyal supporters, relatively and absolutely, than any other in the system.

The Social Democrats generally win more votes than any other party throughout most areas of the country, although competition from the Moderates has been stiff recently in the larger cities. The SAP is still predominantly a workers' party, but its support among trade union members has fallen from four-fifths to just over two-thirds since 1968. The increased social mobility of labor has reinforced a tendency for issue voting to bulk larger than loyalty voting. At the same time, the party has made compensating gains in the white-collar sector, especially among younger voters in the lower echelons. Northern Sweden is a fortress of the party, with an absolute majority of votes coming to the party from the north despite a weakening of strength since 1968 in other parts of the country.

The Swedish Confederation of Trade Unions (LO) is formally independent of any party, but in fact it has a natural relationship with the SAP. The two partners regularly hold top-level meetings, and the LO secretariat has inspired numerous important policy initiatives, for example, the principles of labor market policy, a compulsory supplementary pensions scheme, and, in 1976, the worker funds scheme. The LO general secretary is commonly a Social Democratic MP. His weight in the party leadership derives from a union movement with 1.8 million members—nearly all the blue-collar workforce. Union organizations may decide to affiliate with labor communes under the new party rules, but their rights of representation are calculated according to the number of members in the union organization who are individually affiliated with the party.

The Cooperative Movement (KF) has significant overlapping membership with the SAP but not as close a relationship as the LO, despite the degree of affinity between the party and the movement.

LEADERSHIP

The Social Democrats have had only six party leaders since their foundation: Hjalmar Branting (1889–1925), Per Albin Hansson (1925–46), Tage Erlander (1946–69), Olof Palme (1969–86), Ingvar Carlsson (1986–96), and now Göran Persson (1996–present). Palme was a close political confidant of Erlander, serving under him in the Cabinet Office and later in ministerial capacities. Carlsson, who took over the leadership at age 51, came from a working-class background in the textile town of Borås and studied with distinction at Lund University and, for a year, in the United States. He was active in SAP student politics and served under Erlander in the Cabinet Office and under Palme in ministerial positions before being named deputy prime minister in 1982. Persson had been finance minister in Carlsson's government. Popular SAP minister Anna Lindh, who was assassinated days before the 2003 referendum on the euro, was often touted as a potential successor to Persson.

PROSPECTS

The SAP is far too strongly entrenched in Swedish life to ever be in danger of permanent loss of electoral support. It has experienced stormy weather since 1985 but has too often benefited from divisions among its opponents ever to despair of a return to office.

Minor Political Parties

CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS

(Kristdemokraterna; KD)

Founded in 1964, the KDS polled 4.1 percent of the vote in 1994 after a relatively successful showing (7.1 percent) in 1991. It held three portfolios in the 1991 Bildt government. Its long-serving leader continues to be Alf Svensson, a Free Church pastor. The party suffered severely from internal divisions over whether Sweden should join the European Union. In 1998 it revived strongly to poll 11.8 percent of the vote, and in 2002 it took 9.1 percent with 33 seats.

GREEN ECOLOGY PARTY

(Miljöpartiet de gröna; MP)

Founded in 1981, this party briefly entered the Swedish Riksdag in 1988 with 5.5 percent of the vote and 20 seats. It was the first new party in 70 years to achieve representation in parliament, and it was temporarily successful because of concern over acid rain, seal deaths, the Chernobyl disaster, and other environmental threats. After failing to clear the 4 percent barrier in 1991, it came back again in 1994 with 5 percent of the vote and 18 seats. It met the 4 percent baseline again in 1998 (4.5 percent) and in 2002 (4.6 percent). It was helped by its strong anti-EU stance and its declared support for the Social Democrats. It has improved its party organization since 1991, but its political philosophy makes it inherently unstable and prone to internal divisions.

WORKER PARTY COMMUNISTS

(Arbetarpartiet Kommunisterna; APK)

This Stalinist faction, based in the far north, broke with the Left Party Communists in 1977, taking two of the latter's MPs with it. It lost those seats in 1979. Almost

half of its executive resigned in 1990, including the editor of the party newspaper, *Norrskensflamman* (The Northern Lights). The party chairman is Rolf Hagel.

Other Political Forces

The military does not play an active role in the political affairs of the country. Labor unions, on the other hand, are a powerful force in Sweden as in many other European countries. Among the main trade unions are the Swedish Trade Union Confederation (LO) and the the Swedish Confederation of Professional Employees (TCO). Finally, despite the electorate's vote against adoption of the euro, Sweden's membership in the European Union will likely play a pivotal role in the country's internal politics in the coming decade.

National Prospects

The return of the Social Democrats to a second term in office after the September 1985 general election was followed by the most traumatic event in Sweden's post-1945 history, namely the assassination of Prime Minister Olof Palme on February 28, 1986, as he was walking home from a Stockholm cinema. Political violence had hitherto been unheard of in modern Sweden, except on rare occasions by foreign terrorists, against foreign embassy staffs, in the pursuit of imported quarrels. The scene appeared to replay itself when Foreign Minister Anna Lindh was murdered in the run-up to the 2003 referendum on the adoption of the euro.

The country's underlying political stability remains unshaken by the assassinations and by the economic hard times of recent years. The debate surrounding the referendum on entry into the European Union, however, showed that the Social Democrats, the Center Party, and the Christian Democrats were split on this issue. Dissension continued in the politicking prior to the referendum on entering the euro zone. Still, Sweden was buoyed by an advanced, knowledge-based economy and diverse political membership. It was unique in all of Europe when, after the 2002 elections, a record 45 percent of parliamentary members were women.

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SWISS CONFEDERATION

(Confoederatio Helvetica) (Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft) (Confédération Suisse) (Confederazione Svizzera)

By Jeffrey K. Hass, Ph.D.



The System of Government

Switzerland is a democratic confederation that functions similarly to a federal republic. The country's unique political system is founded on the sovereignty of its citizenry and a complex set of institutions that create a balance of power between and within its branches of government. While more power has slowly been accreting in the executive branch, for the most part Switzerland's 20 "full" cantons and six "half" cantons (local regional divisions) retain considerable autonomy. This was the aim of institutional design of the Swiss state: to leave autonomy with cantons and keep Swiss multicultural society intact. A new constitution was adopted in 2000, but this new version is basically a streamlining of the old constitution plus amendments and legislation added on over time. The new constitution for the most part keeps basic institutions and structures intact, and it still provides cantons a good deal of political power.

EXECUTIVE

Unlike in other European democracies, Switzerland's executive is run not by a single individual but rather by the seven-member Federal Council (Bundesrat). The members of the Bundesrat are chosen as individuals at the beginning of a new legislative period by a joint session of parliament. Each year one member of the Bundesrat is elected by a joint session of parliament to the position of *Bundespräsident*, or president of the Swiss Confederation.

The *Bundespräsident* is both head of state and chair of the executive branch; however, this position is essentially formal, without great power. Generally, the *Bundespräsident* acts more as an organizer and coordinator of the Bundesrat, where, according to the constitution, supreme decision-making power lies, than as a prominent central figure setting policy agendas. The vice president acts as assistant to the president and fulfills presidential duties when the president cannot fulfill them.

Decision making in the executive is collegial; the Bundesrat meets 90 times a year in order to consider issues of importance and make decisions. All decisions are arrived at by discussion and majority vote within the Bundesrat.

These decisions are made without transparency—behind closed doors. Further, the constitution stipulates that Bundesrat members act collectively, rather than as individual representatives of particular ministries or as representatives of particular parties. This institutional design is supposed to discourage elite-level competition and strife between parties and foster consensus.

Bundesrat members run the seven main executive departments: the Department of the Interior, the Department of Foreign Affairs, the Department of Public Economy, the Department of Finance, the Department of Transport, the Department of Jus-

tice, and the Department of the Military. In the past these departments and the central government more generally have had only limited influence on internal policies, with more influence in guiding Switzerland's foreign affairs. However, in the early 2000s issues such as the environment and crime have forced the central government and the Bundesrat to expand their spheres of authority over the entire country to help coordinate policies.

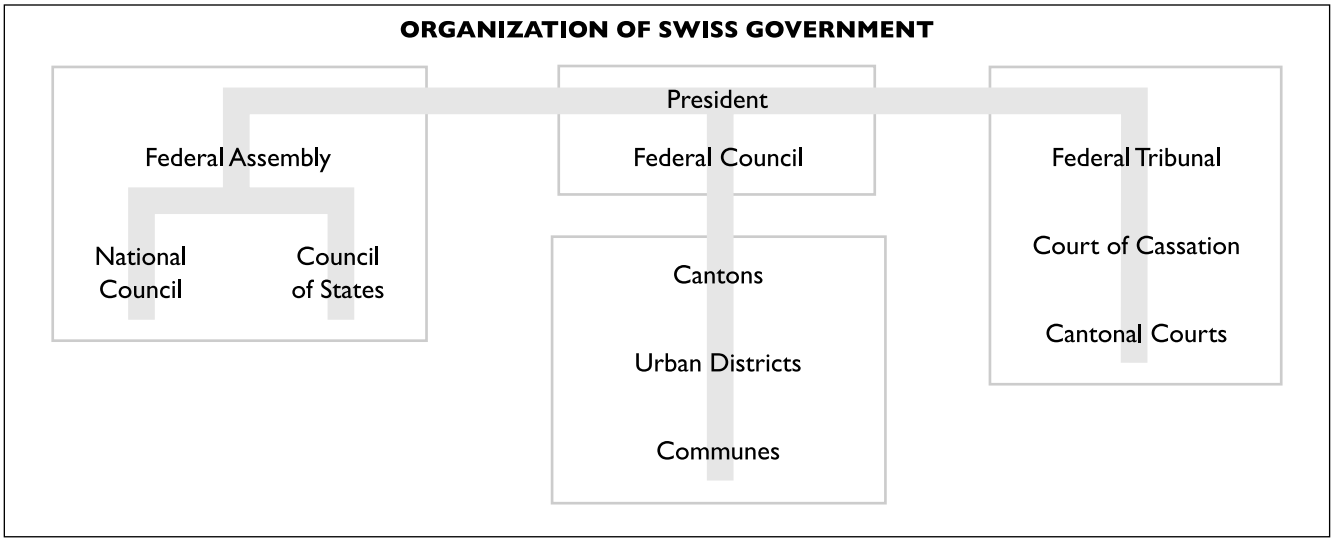
Bundesrat positions were originally assigned to the top four parties according to the "magic formula": two positions apiece to the top three parties—Freethinking Democratic Party, Social Democratic Party, Christian Democratic Party—and one seat to the Swiss People's Party. Unlike other parliamentary democracies—where the majority party or majority coalition makes up the government and minority parties form an opposition—in Switzerland the "magic formula" ensures that the top parties (and there have been the same four top parties since the early 20th century) are all represented at the top of the executive branch. This serves to create consensus and reduce party contention. (This works well in Switzerland because the cantons jealously guard autonomy and the consensual compact holding Switzerland together, unlike other European countries, where one province or region came to dominate the others during nation-building.) The Swiss People's Party, under the leadership of charismatic and blunt-speaking businessman Christoph Blocher, has made impressive gains in the last two parliamentary elections and after 2003 was the leading party. As a result, the "magic formula" was revised, with the Swiss People's Party receiving two positions and the Christian Democrats given only one.

LEGISLATURE

The Federal Assembly (Bundesversammlung), a bicameral body, is the supreme political organization of the country, the ultimate authority for all decisions and issues except those expressly delegated to the individual cantons or to the population as a whole. The two houses are the Council of States (Ständerat) and the National Council (Nationalrat). Neither is more powerful than the other; in this way neither of the two is an "upper" or "lower" house. Both enjoy equal powers of legislation; legislation can be introduced into either side, and one side can veto legislation passed by the other. Also, in spite of the fact that national political power rests with the Federal Assembly, legislative authority is circumscribed by the possibility or obligation to call national referenda. Each year there are usually anywhere from 15 to 20 referenda held in Switzerland, at both the national and the cantonal levels.

The National Council is composed of 200 members who serve four-year terms of office. Each canton sends a number of delegates based on its relative population size, although a canton is entitled to at least one seat no matter how small its population. The Council of States has 46 members, two from each full canton and one from each half canton.

A simple majority confirms the passing of the bill; if the other house passes the bill, then it is sent to the Federal Council for confirmation. Thus for purposes of passing laws the two houses work independently but for the same goal. In certain instances the two houses meet in joint session.



JUDICIARY

Most judicial functions take place on the level of the canton. At the federal level, the Federal Tribunal exists to hear appeals from cantonal courts regarding both criminal and civic cases. If need be, the Federal Tribunal can also review cantonal court decisions grounded in federal laws or procedures. Unlike constitutional or high courts elsewhere, the Federal Tribunal does not have power to rule on the constitutionality of laws, and so it has almost no input on the evolution of Swiss laws. The Tribunal is composed of 30 full-time judges and 30 part-time judges, all of whom are selected by the Federal Assembly. They serve six-year terms. The Federal Insurance Tribunal is part of the Federal Tribunal; it addresses issues involving social security.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Regional political structure is far more important in Switzerland than in the centralized polities of most modern European countries, given the historically decentralized nature of the Swiss system. Citizenship is granted by membership in a community, and most legal and other individual rights derive from the authority and laws of the cantons in which the individual lives.

Political decision making differs according to the size of the canton. In smaller cantons one actually witnesses direct democratic procedure wherein the electorate meets once a year as an entire physical unit in assembly halls to discuss general issues and to elect local representatives. In the larger cantons, local legislative bodies tend to be coalitions—often of more than two parties—as no single party dominates local politics in most cantons or communities.

All cantons are to have unicameral legislative bodies elected through some form of democratic procedure allowing for universal suffrage. All cantons also have their own constitutions that follow the guidelines of, and do not deviate from, the national constitution. The executive branch at the cantonal level, while required to operate in a collegial manner (like the Federal Council), is not as tightly linked to or controlled by the local legislature as is the case at the national level.

The Electoral System

The Swiss have jealously guarded their sense of local autonomy and popular sovereignty, and electoral rules are designed to maintain the ultimate power of Swiss citizens. The referendum is the supreme act of political decision making, trumping any policy initiative from the federal government. Constitutional changes can be initiated from below, if 100,000 voters sign a petition requesting a countrywide vote. Voters can also call for popular review of legislation; this can be initiated with only 50,000 voters' signatures.

This belief in popular sovereignty accounts for the power of the legislative branch and the complex electoral system that focuses on the canton rather than nationwide election campaigning and voting. Elections to the Council of States are by majority voting for individual candidates. Each of the 20 "full" cantons sends two representatives (total of 40), while each of the six "half" cantons sends one representative each, for

ELECTIONS TO THE NATIONAL COUNCIL, OCTOBER 19, 2003

Party	% votes	seats
Schweizerische Volkspartei (SVP)	26.6	55
Sozialdemokratische Partei der Schweiz (SP)	23.3	52
Freisinnig-Demokratische Partei (FDP)	17.3	36
Christlich-Demokratische Volkspartei (CVP)	14.4	28
Grüne Partei der Schweiz (GPS)	7.4	13
Evsangelische Volkspartei (EVP)	2.3	3
Liberale Partei der Schweiz (LPS)	2.2	4
Eidgenössische Demokratische Union (EDU)	1.3	2
Schweizer Demokraten (SD)	1.0	1
Partei der Arbeit (PdA)	0.7	2
Solidarités (SOL)	0.5	1
Alternative Liste (AL)	0.5	1
Lega dei Ticinese (LdT)	0.4	1
Christlich-Soziale Partei (CSP)	0.4	1
Others	2.1	—

Source: Swiss Parliament homepage (www.parlament.ch), www.parties-and-elections.de/switzerland.html

an overall total of 46 representatives. Elections to the National Council are by proportional representation at the level of the canton, rather than national level as is usual throughout Europe. Each canton receives a certain number of seats depending on their population. (Five cantons have only one seat in the National Council, and so here voting is by majority system rather than proportional representation, naturally.)

The Party System

Parties are an important cornerstone of Swiss politics but at the same time are not dominant. First, the electoral system makes alliances, the formation of factions, and general election to the parliament simpler than in other parliamentary democracies. Second, Swiss voters tend to be more independent and less ideologically aligned than voters in other countries; they do tend to vote consistently for the same parties, but this appears to stem less from conviction and more from a sense of stability and custom. Third, interest groups play a major role in parliamentary politics, from contributing money to parties (as the parties are too weakly organized to obtain substantial contributions from supporters) to influencing national politics; some people suggest that in a sense politics is as much a reflection of interest groups as of party ideologies.

The party structures reflect the political structures. Rather than tight-knit national organizations, most parties are really conglomerates of canton-level parties meeting at the national level to coordinate (but not tightly control) programs and policy statements. The lowest level in the party hierarchy is the local cell, which mobilizes popular support, recruits activists, works for or against referenda, and so on. Above the local cell are regional and cantonal levels, where more actual decision making takes place. The real power in political parties is exercised at this level. The national level is composed of central party organs, committees, and congresses, but these have a relatively minor influence on party life. While efforts have been made in the last two decades to improve party discipline and to centralize party organization, such efforts have not made much headway, as localism remains strong within Swiss politics, parties, and people.

ELECTIONS TO THE COUNCIL OF STATES, OCTOBER 19, 2003

Party	Seats
Christlich-Demokratische Volkspartei (CVP)	15
Freisinnig-Demokratische Partei (FDP)	14
Sozialdemokratische Partei der Schweiz (SP)	9
Schweizerische Volkspartei (SVP)	8

Source: Swiss Parliament homepage (www.parlament.ch)

Major Political Parties

CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S PARTY OF SWITZERLAND

(Christlich-Demokratische Volkspartei der Schweiz, Parti démocrate-chrétien suisse; CVP)

The Christian Democratic Party began as the Conservative party in the 19th century. Many conservatives were Catholics, and conservative support came from Catholic cantons, and by the end of the 19th century the Conservative Party had become the Christian Democrats, reflecting broad Christian values (conservatism and a paternalistic state). Unlike other parties, the CVP has more of a centralized, nationally dominated structure. Local and regional party cells do exist, but they are usually small; the bulk of activists and resources are concentrated at the national level.

The fundamental planks to CVP policies and programs have changed little over time. At heart are Roman Catholic concepts of natural law and of paternalist state-society relations, with a stress on individual freedoms versus the state or other outside groups (especially regarding religion), respect for individual choice in education, and respect for the family as an important social unit. In terms of specific policies and state programs, the CVP has called for improvements in welfare (especially for the poor and elderly), landownership reform, support for job creation, state support and investment for research and development institutions, and help for strengthening the family. In foreign affairs the CVP wants Switzerland to engage geopolitical issues; the CVP has called for increased ties with international organizations and institutions, including the United Nations and European Union. Determining exact membership is difficult. Estimates range from 90,000 to 100,000 individuals.

The Christian Democrats traditionally have been one of the top three Swiss parties, but recently the par-

ty's popularity has dropped as the Swiss People's Party has increased its attraction with conservative voters.

FREETHINKING DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF SWITZERLAND

(Freisinnig-Demokratische Partei der Schweiz, Parti radical-démocratique suisse; FDP)

The Freethinking Party was originally the Liberal Party of the 19th century, renamed after the Social Democrats and Swiss People's Party broke off as fractions-cum-parties. The Liberal Party was a traditional 19th-century liberal party—supporting free markets and minimalist state intervention—and the FDP continues this tradition.

While the FDP's policies call for strengthening the federal structure, the FDP also acknowledges the importance of cantonal autonomy and regional and cultural diversity. Along more classically liberal lines, the FDP supports local capitalist efforts (private property and entrepreneurship) and supports tax incentives and reduced central governmental control over the economy. Further, the FDP has called for improvement in social justice issues. The FDP also supports increased research and development and science funding. In foreign policy, the FDP supports continuing neutrality (and rejects joining the United Nations) and a well-prepared national defense force. While the FDP does not suggest Switzerland withdraw from international involvement, it has become cautious about the European Union.

Electoral support for the FDP was fairly stable for many years, partly because it could expand its appeal to conservatism beyond traditionally Catholic regions (a constraint on the Christian Democrats) and because cordial relations between parties dampened their competitive spirit. However, in the 2003 elections its support slipped, with some supporters jumping to the more active and vibrant Swiss People's Party and its leader, Christoph Blocher.

FDP support has remained fairly stable, although with some fluctuations in the number of seats in the legislature. While the FDP's representation in the Council of States has grown, from the low-middle teens to 17 recently, its representation in the National Council has dropped, from the upper 40s and lower 50s in past elections to 45 in recent elections. The FDP receives more support from German-speaking Swiss citizens than from other minorities.

SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF SWITZERLAND

(Sozialdemokratische Partei der Schweiz, Parti socialiste suisse; SPS)

The Social Democrats, perhaps owing to their historical Socialist model, are more centrally organized than other Swiss parties. Cells at the canton level send delegates to national conventions, and the number of representatives they send (and hence their regional voice in the national congresses) depends on the number of members in that region. At congresses a presidium, a central council, is selected, and from the presidium one member is selected president. This president exercises uncharacteristic power for Swiss parties, maintaining a higher-than-usual degree of party discipline in parliamentary voting. The actual membership is difficult to ascertain, but observers suggest that it is around 50,000. While this is smaller than for other parties, it does not appear to be detrimental, as the SPS continues to receive half a million votes in parliamentary elections. Many of these members are blue-collar workers, clerks, teachers, and pensioners. Strong organization also makes dues collection easier and provides a stable source of party funding.

The SPS party program remains moderate. It has called for state regulation and the promotion of a state-run social safety net guaranteeing jobs and consistent economic growth. While the SPS has called for a stronger state role in the economy, it does not call for direct control, but rather state policies that help promote employment, industrial growth, and taxation to shape consumption patterns. In the social sphere the SPS has championed women's suffrage and women's rights. In foreign affairs the SPS favors more ties with the outside world, including membership in the United Nations and closer institutional linkages with other European nations, and it calls for a small but efficient civil defense force.

SWISS PEOPLE'S PARTY/ DEMOCRATIC CENTER UNION

(Schweizerische Volkspartei, Union démocratique du centre; SVP)

The SVP was not created as a distinct political party, as was the case with the other "Big Three" parties. Instead, the SVP began as a polyglot of elites and activists who did not quite fit into the other parties. These

included people on small farms or running small businesses who were not united as a social stratum or in a particular geographical space—making organization of these people, who had fallen into the party cracks, difficult. It is currently the fourth-largest party in Switzerland. Membership appears to be around 55,000 people (one-third of electoral support), who are supposed to pay dues equal to 2 percent of their annual income.

Given the diverse backgrounds and diversity within shared general interests, it should be no surprise that the SVP has had its share of organizational troubles. The party structure is quite loose, with an umbrella national organization heavily dependent on the resources and goodwill of local-level member groups. The SVP is at its most successful (and brings in the most support) when it champions interests that other parties have ignored. For example, it takes away support from the Radical Democrats when they put too much emphasis on industrial policies and development (at the expense of farming interests). The SVP supports the rural and middle classes, which act as a "buffer" balancing support for a strong state and strong industrial interests.

In the early 2000s populist and nationalist factions within the SVP have come to power within the party, moving the SVP platform toward opposition to membership in the European Union and United Nations, restriction of immigration—a potent issue given that up to 20 percent of the population in some cantons is non-Swiss—and restrictions on welfare provision. (The exception is that SVP supports farming subsidies, helping out an important constituency.) Like the Freethinking Party, the SVP appeals to the business community, but it is also trying to make inroads among the francophone community (traditionally the Christian Democrats' turf).

Recently the SVP has enjoyed a surge in popularity, with its proportion of the vote increasing from 14.9 percent in 1995 to 22.6 percent in 1999 and 26.6 percent in 2003. The major reason for this increase is leader Christoph Blocher. A successful businessman who sees himself as similar to Italy's Silvio Berlusconi, Blocher projects an image that is opposite that of the usual polite but gray Swiss politician. Under Blocher the SVP's rhetoric has become more anti-foreigner, for example, blaming foreigners for the rise in crime.

Minor Political Parties

After the big four parties, minor parties gain some representation but usually not more than a handful of seats. The Green Party (Grüne Partei der Schweiz) has made gains and is currently the fifth-largest party in the legislature. The Green Party was born in 1983 when smaller environmental parties decided to merge and consolidate their resources. The party campaigns primarily on a platform of ecological issues.

The Evangelical People's Party (Evangelische Volkspartei) was formed in 1917 and campaigns on a platform of religious values. While ideologically it is not much different from the Christian Democrats, it still has minor appeal in Protestant German areas where vestiges of anti-Catholicism persist. Its support has improved marginally, from 1.8 percent of votes in the late 1990s to 2.3 percent in 2003 (perhaps riding the wave of nationalist sentiment amplified by Blocher's Swiss People's Party).

The Liberal Party (Liberale Partei der Schweiz) appeals to francophone areas of Switzerland. As its name implies, the Liberal Party promotes a pro-market, pro-equality platform, supports welfare, and defends the sovereignty of the citizenry. It generally gains over 2 percent of the overall votes and three or four parliamentary seats.

The Labor Party (Partei der Arbeit) is a leftist pro-labor party with Euro-communist sentiments whose fortunes have declined dramatically since the collapse of communism, although it manages around 1 percent of the national vote and one or two places in the legislature.

Other Political Forces

Switzerland has long maintained its neutrality in foreign affairs, but in the last few decades an increasing number of Swiss citizens have started to favor the country developing stronger institutional ties with international organizations such as the United Nations and the European Union. Switzerland did take small steps in this direction—for example, 35 years ago Switzerland joined the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and joined the United Nations with observer status rather than as a full member (although a March 1986 referendum on joining the UN as a full member was soundly defeated 75.7 percent to 24.3 percent). In 2002 a narrow majority voted in a referendum in favor of joining the United Nations. As for the European Union, although many Swiss, including those in the government, favor eventual integration into the EU, as of the early 2000s the country had not begun formal talks with the EU about the issue.

National Prospects

While there is no doubt that political stability will remain in Switzerland at least for the foreseeable future, there are several issues that the Swiss people must deal with, such as the increasing calls for the country to develop stronger institutional ties with international organizations. Related to this, Switzerland must come to grips with revelations that contradict its "neutral" past. Most recently, there have been accusations that Swiss banks were dealing in stolen Nazi gold and jealously guarding deposits made by persecuted Jews in the Nazi era.

In addition, the Swiss public must deal with issues about Swiss democracy. Long considered citizens of a stable and successful democracy who had avoided the pitfalls of centralization and the chaos of decentralization, the Swiss now find themselves confronted with issues about the nature of their system. The question remains: Will Swiss democracy remain a system of regions united by the tradition of Swiss unity or will centralization and decentralization find a more institutionalized basis in constitutional amendments that make for a starker division of powers?

As the Swiss have to deal with an increasingly globalized economic world and issues such as international crime (e.g., drug and human trafficking), the necessity for coordinating policy and law enforcement through a centralized state will become increasingly strong and could threaten the very pluralism and decentralization that, like their international neutrality, the Swiss have zealously defended for centuries.

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SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC

(Al Jumhuriyya al-Arabiyya al-Suriyya)

By Mahmud A. Faksh, Ph.D.
Revised by Curtis R. Ryan, Ph.D.



Syria is a country of 18.4 million people (2005 est.) located in the Middle East on the Mediteranean Sea, between Turkey and Lebanon. While Sunni Muslims form a majority in all Syrian provinces, except Suwayda and Latakia, Syria is dotted with concentrations of minority groups living mostly in rural areas. Almost 75 percent of the Alawis of Syria, for example, live in the Latakia Province, where they constitute over half of the population. Similarly, more than 90 percent of the Druze are clustered in Suwayda Province, which they dominate numerically. Some 80 percent of Syria's Isma'ilis (a Shia subsect) live in rural areas in Hama Province, while most of Syria's Kurds are scattered along the northern border with Turkey. Greek Orthodox and other Christian minorities also tend to be concentrated in rural towns and villages.

On the whole, demographic statistics for Syria are inadequate and unreliable. But population estimates indicate that roughly 90 percent of Syria's 18 million people are Arabs. Kurds (8 percent) and Armenians (3 percent) constitute the principal ethnic minorities. The Alawis (12 percent), Christians (8 percent), and Druze (6 percent) form the bulk of the religious minorities. However, despite the presence of multiple ethnic and religious minorities, Arab Sunni Muslims account for nearly 70 percent of Syria's population.

President Hafiz al-Asad's rule from 1970 to 2000—the longest presidential tenure in modern Syrian history—brought a measure of controlled stability to the country after a tumultuous period of repeated coups and attempted counter-coups. (There were about a dozen such military interventions after official independence in 1946, giving Syria the distinctive appellation of the "coup country" in the Arab world.) Still, chronic factionalism within the ruling Ba'th Party and periodic flareups of opposition to the al-Asad regime, which took the form of assassinations, insurrections, and strikes, presented the regime with severe challenges—a reminder of Syria's elusive quest for legitimacy and stability.

With the death of President Hafiz al-Asad in 2000, the question of presidential succession arose for the first time in 30 years. The groundwork, however, had already been put into place to ensure that the regime would not turn on itself. The key power factions within the regime—in the party, the bureaucracy, the military, and the intelligence services—rallied around the late president's chosen successor, his son Bishar. Thus, despite Syria's longstanding image as a radical and revolutionary republic, regime change in Damascus turned out to be a kind of dynastic succession.

Speculation had been brewing about the succession ever since the rise to power of President Hafiz al-Asad in 1970, especially given his often weak health, which included a heart attack in 1983. For many years the speculation centered on alternative power centers (such as the Muslim Brotherhood, non-Alawite factions of officers or party-members, etc.) or on various members of Asad's family. The speculation began to focus squarely on the president's son Bishar only in the late 1990s. Hafiz al-Asad had earlier turned to his eldest son, Basil, and began grooming him for the

succession (even while denying these intentions). In 1994, however, Basil was killed in a traffic accident in Damascus. Asad then turned to his other son, Bishar, then an opthalmologist in London, to return to Syria to begin the military and political training his father deemed necessary for the presidency.

Bishar attended the military academy and rose quickly up to the rank of army colonel. At the time of his father's death in June 2000, Bishar was also being introduced into the party apparatus. Hafiz al-Asad had in fact died of a heart attack just one week before the June 2000 Ba'th Party Congress, at which he had intended to ensure that Bishar would be elevated to a top party post. With the president's death, however, the question remained whether Bishar could really succeed his father. Would the ruling elite, much less the general public, let him? But in the six years between the deaths of Basil and Hafiz al-Asad, Bishar had indeed taken on more important and more public political roles. Bishar had, for example, advised his father on key appointments such as the new chief of the armed forces. He also served as the lead Syrian official for affairs in Lebanon and had taken the lead role in the state's much-touted "anticorruption campaign." It was in this latter role that Bishar and his allies were able to isolate key potential opponents within the "old guard."

While the actual succession certainly took place abruptly, and while the regime had barely six years to pave the way for Bishar rather than his late brother, Basil, nonetheless Asad loyalists spent those six years in a concerted campaign to ensure the succession for Bishar. But, as noted above, when Hafiz al-Asad died, Bishar had yet to assume a top party post. He was only 34 years old and the constitution stated one had to be at least 40 years old to assume the presidency. Furthermore, he held insufficient military rank to assume command of the armed forces.

What then followed was orchestrated not just by Bishar and his supporters but also by his father's colleagues and loyalists. These officials formed a largely ad hoc council that openly endorsed Bishar and helped secure the logistical details for his succession. Within a mere 48 hours the Peoples' Assembly convened and changed the constitutional age of succession from 40 to 34 (Bishar's age at the time). The Ba'th Party then officially named Bishar the party's candidate for the presidency, and finally the army promoted him to lieutenant general and also named him commander in chief of the Syrian armed forces. When the mourning period ended, the regime held a presidential referendum in July 2000 in which Bishar secured 97.29 percent of the vote, marking the last formal and official act in the succession to the presidency of Bishar al-Asad.

The System of Government

Syria is proclaimed in its 1973 constitution to be a "democratic, popular Socialist state," under a republican system. In reality, it is neither democratic nor popular, and its Socialism is tantamount to state corporatism and etatism. The political system is dominated by President Bishar al-Asad and the two institutional pillars of the regime: the armed forces and the Arab Socialist Resurrection Party (the Ba'th), with an auxiliary body—the bloated bureaucracy—serving as a pervasive instrument of command and control. Originally conceived as a representative, multiparty democracy following the end of the French Mandate (1920–43), the Syrian system of government has been characterized more by authoritarian-military rule and internecine struggle for power than by legitimate civil authority and parliamentary accountability.

According to the March 1973 permanent constitution, political power in Syria is formally distributed among the legislative, executive, and judiciary branches. Declaring the people to be the source of national sovereignty, the constitution also outlines a democratic, Socialist system with a very dominant executive, at whose helm is the president. In addition, it stipulates the basic principles of the Syrian state, especially the provision that Islam is the state religion (as was the case in the 1930 constitution but not in subsequent ones following independence) and the specified religion of the president and that all legislation is to be based on Islamic doctrine. This was in response to widespread rioting sparked by an earlier draft of the constitution, circulated in January 1973, that omitted the Islamic clause. Hafiz Al-Asad had to yield to mounting Sunni Muslim majority feelings against the secular orientation of his Ba'th regime. Further, the constitution formally commits Syria to Socialist development and the pursuit of economic justice and affirms Syria's identity as a part of the larger "Arab nation" encompassing the whole of the Arab world.

These formal constitutional arrangements are more form than substance, however. They do not describe the realities of power in Syria. The actual distribution and exercise of political power are determined far more

by personal and sectarian relationships than by formal legal provisions.

EXECUTIVE

The 1973 permanent constitution confers broad executive and legislative powers on the president, who is elected to a seven-year term in a popular vote after receiving the recommendation of the Ba'th Party and the nomination of the People's Assembly. In the event of the president's death or permanent incapacity, elections are to be held to determine his successor. It should be noted, however, that since independence this prized preeminent political position of president in the Syrian ruling hierarchy has been achieved more through power struggle and military seizure than through the electoral process.

Lieutenant General Hafiz al-Asad himself, as a minister of defense and head of the air force, gradually emerged as chief executive solely through such nonpolitical means. Commanding the powerful armed forces, by March 1969 he had already established his Ba'th military wing as the dominant force over the radical Ba'th civilian wing, led by General Salah Jadid. But rather than seize power immediately at the risk of losing legitimacy and thereby threatening the facade of Ba'th Party rule over Syria, al-Asad bided his time until September 1970, when, as head of the air force, he refused orders to give air support to Syrian-Palestinian units entering the civil war in neighboring Jordan. Soon after the failed intervention, he completed his takeover of power through a coup in November 1970 (al-Asad's "corrective movement"), ousting his chief contender, General Jadid, and purging the ideologues in the Ba'th civilian wing. Shortly thereafter he was nominated as president by the People's Assembly, which he created in early 1971. He was elected president the same year in a mass plebiscite with 99.2 percent of the votes cast. He was reelected in 1978, 1985, 1991, and 1998, with similar astronomical figures. His 30-year rule was the longest of any Syrian leader in the postindependence period.

As chief executive, head of state, and commander in chief of the armed forces, the president exercises immense power. His position as secretary-general of the Ba'th Party and head of the Progressive National Front—a coalition of minor Arab nationalist, leftist Socialist, and Communist parties that has been dominated by the Ba'th since its founding in 1973 and used to give the regime a semblance of participation and power sharing through inclusion in the People's Assembly and in the cabinet—is further indication of his extensive control over Syrian political life. Further, the constitution grants him the power to appoint and dismiss the vice presidents, the prime minister, and the Council of Ministers.

The president may also dissolve at will the People's Assembly and take over its legislative functions during its adjournment—with the proviso that his legislative acts be approved in its next session. In times of emergency, the president may assume legislative functions even when the Assembly is in session. The Assembly's power to veto or amend presidential decrees by a two-thirds vote is more of a legal fiction than a real practice. When moved by the need to submit political questions to a "higher" authority, the president may circumvent the People's Assembly altogether by holding mass referenda whose results cannot be challenged by the Assembly.

Hafiz al-Asad was known for his manipulative and calculating skills and was careful to make important decisions on domestic and foreign policy issues in consultation with crucial interest groups and political forces, especially the three main pillars of the ruling hierarchy: the top army officers, the regional command of the Ba'th Party, and the upper echelons of the state bureaucracy. Examples of such collaboration include al-Asad's intervening in the Lebanese civil war in June 1976, introducing economic liberalization in the 1970s, and further economic relaxation and openness in the 1990s, as well as partaking in the Western-led international alliance against Iraq in the first Gulf War. When al-Asad was not using his praetorian guards to crush open challenges to his regime, his power was limited by the real need to maneuver his way between competing groups and interests within the power structure, with an eye to building a semblance of consensus and creating a sense of shared responsibility—all to further his legitimacy and acceptance of the special role of his Alawi community (a heterodox Muslim sect representing 12 percent of the population).

Assisting the president in the administration of state affairs is the Council of Ministers. Ministers are drawn from ranking Ba'th Party members, who hold key portfolios, and their allies in the National Progressive Front, plus a few technocrats. These ministers are entirely beholden to the president, and only a few have access to real power. Actual power is exercised by an inner circle centered around the president. The influential circle is comprised of some 40 to 50 people with key positions in the armed forces, security, and intelligence and in the government, all under the president's direct command.

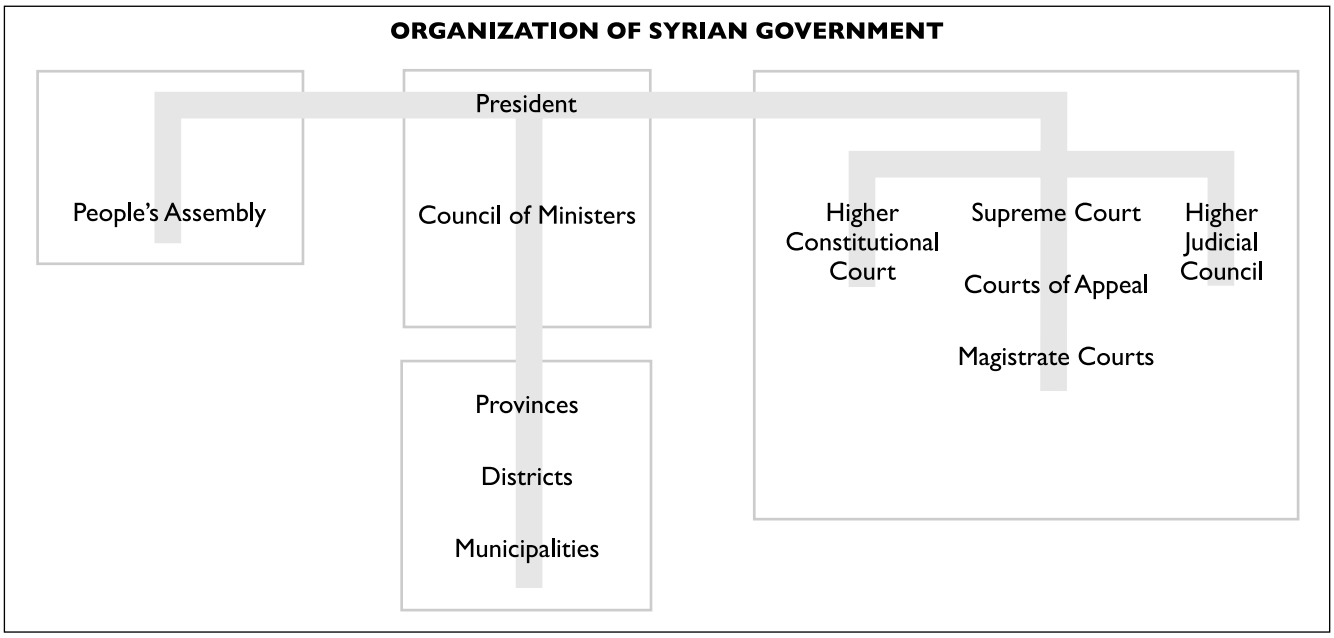
Despite this concentration of power within a small clique, Hafiz al-Asad tried over the years to give the appearance of representative government by appointing ministers from several parties of the Progressive National Front and from a wide range of regional locations and ethnic and religious backgrounds. Since the early 1970s non–Ba'th Party members have held approximately half of the cabinet posts, with some portfolios assigned to independent technocrats. However, the most important posts are still held by Ba'th Party members and military officers.

LEGISLATURE

Created in February 1971, only three months after al-Asad's assumption of power, the People's Assembly began as an appointed body. It replaced the old Syrian parliament that had existed until 1966, when it was terminated by the radical wing of the Ba'th Party, the neo-Ba'th, led by General Salah Jadid. The 173 members of the People's Assembly were all appointed by President al-Asad for a two-year term. Seats were distributed among the five political parties constituting the newly established Progressive National Front: the Ba'th Party (87 seats); the Arab Socialist Party (11 seats); the Syrian Communist Party (8 seats); the Socialist Unionist Party (4 seats); and the Arab Socialist Movement (4 seats). The remaining seats were reserved for independents who nevertheless toed the government line.

Early in 1972 the People's Assembly began drafting a constitution, a revised form of which became the permanent constitution approved in a national referendum in March 1973. It provides for a People's Assembly whose elected members serve four-year terms. The Assembly is given broad powers under the new constitution: to debate government policy, pass legislation, approve the state budget and development plans, and ratify international treaties. In theory, the Assembly has the power to vote "no confidence" in any individual minister or group of ministers, but it cannot oust the government, which is responsible to the chief executive. In reality, however, presidential prerogatives over the legislative process—including the right to dissolve the Assembly and to enact legislation in its stead during its periods of recess—render the People's Assembly supine: a rubber stamp for the regime.

On occasion the Assembly could challenge the government, but not the president, as occurred in the 1987 no-confidence vote in the minister of construction and the censuring of incompetent cabinet ministers, which prompted a number of cabinet changes by the president. Similarly, the issue of efficiency was behind the dismissal of the minister of electricity in 1994 for failure to deliver adequate power supply. Although these few instances show that the People's Assembly is becoming a little less servile in its role as a representative body, especially at a time of increasing economic openness (*infitah*) and entrepreneurial business activities, the fact is that Syria remains essentially a Ba'th-run state with the president as the ultimate decision maker.



In the most recent elections for the People's Assembly, which were held in March 2003, all the candidates of the PNF (the Ba'th and its allies) won seats. Together they hold 167 seats, with the Ba'th controlling 135 and its allies the remaining 32 seats. The remainder of the 250-seat Assembly is occupied by independents largely representing the budding interests of the rising wealthy businessmen and merchants in the cities who aspire to play a greater role in economic policy by moving the country away from the old socialist orientation and toward a more open market economy.

The fact remains, however, that all these groups revolve within the orbit of the Ba'th under the supreme command of the president. And, in essence, the People's Assembly serves more as an instrument of co-optation to legitimize the one-party state and ratify its laws than as a representative body with competing groups and interests. Indeed, all political activity outside the PNF is prohibited.

JUDICIARY

Nominally independent of the government, the judicial branch also cannot escape the hegemonic power of the chief executive. Justices of the Higher Constitutional Court, which rules on the constitutionality of laws and resolves electoral disputes, are appointed by the president. So too are the members of the Higher Judicial Council, whose job is to ensure the independence of the judiciary; yet, ironically they are also beholden to the president.

While religious (sharia) courts are still to be found in Syria, they have been largely supplanted by the secular courts, and their jurisdiction has been reduced to merely personal status matters (marriage, divorce, inheritance, child custody, and so on). The highest secular court, called the Supreme Court, serves as a court of ultimate appeal. Below it are the courts of appeals and the local-level "magistrate" or "peace" courts.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Government at the subnational level is organized along provincial lines. Each of the 14 provinces (*muhafazat*) has a governor appointed by the central government and a provincial council consisting of both elected and appointed members who serve four-year terms. Provinces are further subdivided into districts, each with its own elected district council and appointed district officials.

Local governments collect taxes, resolve disputes, direct public services, and license businesses; they also transmit information and ideology to the local population. On occasion, they may also convey to the central government the opinions and concerns of citizens. Government administration at all levels is carried out by a somewhat politicized civil service, many of whose members belong to the Ba'th Party.

The Electoral System

The constitution provides for popular and direct election of the president and the People's Council. Suffrage is universal over 18. The president is elected to a seven-year term, must be a member of the Ba'th Party, and most often runs unopposed. Candidates for the People's Council are selected by the Ba'th Party and run for four-year terms.

The Party System

Although several parties ostensibly operate on the political stage, it is inaccurate to characterize Syria as a multiparty state. In fact, all parties but one exercise only nominal influence over policymaking. The preeminent party—the one deserving of thorough treatment—is the Arab Socialist Resurrection (Ba'th) Party. Since 1972 it has been the dominant member of a five-party coalition, the Progressive National Front. The Front's charter, issued in March 1972, proscribes political activity by parties or groups outside the coalition; yet, such activity does exist. The five members of the Front include the Ba'th Party, the Arab Socialist Union, the Socialist Unionist Movement, the Syrian Democratic People's Party, and the Arab Socialist Movement. Outside the Front, illegal political forces include the Muslim Brotherhood, the Communist Action League, and the National Alliance for the Liberation of Syria.

While it would seem that the Progressive National Front would serve to promote wide participation in policymaking, in reality it was fashioned by President al-Asad to end Ba'th isolation and exclusiveness as the ruling party without actually diminishing its primacy. Indicative of its status is the clause of the Front's charter recognizing the Ba'th Party's exclusive right to mobilize students, unions, and members of the armed forces. The central command of the Front, on the other hand, is given the responsibility of helping formulate

foreign and domestic policy and promoting national unity. But here too Ba'th representation far outweighs that of the other four parties. Of the 18 members of the Front's central command, 10 are Ba'th members, including the central command's president who is also secretary-general of the Ba'th Party and chief executive of the Syrian state. The remaining four parties are each allotted two positions on the central command of the Front.

Major Political Parties

ARAB SOCIALIST RESURRECTION (BA'TH) PARTY

HISTORY

Established in the mid-1940s by two Damascene school teachers, Michel Aflaq and Salah al-Din al-Bitar, the Ba'th Party came to power in March 1963 in the wake of a military coup led by Ba'th military officers, along with other nationalist and unionist officers. Shortly thereafter, following a brief power struggle, the Ba'th came out on top and dominated the regime by virtue of its military strength and political organization.

The origin of this party grew from the desire of its founders to break with the traditional order and establish a new and strong Arab society. This vision is manifested in the party's ideology: an eclectic mix of nationalism, Socialism, and pan-Arab ideals seeking to create the model Arab nation. It is broad enough to have wide appeal, with multiple renderings by different groups. Radical change, according to the ideology, is achieved through a total overhauling of the foundation of traditional society—Arab unity, freedom, and Socialism (the Ba'th trinity) is the ultimate goal.

Initially, the party attracted young high school and university students who were receptive to the new nationalist-revolutionary rhetoric. They clustered around its two founders, pondering its Arab revivalist mission. Somewhat like a student debating society, they were then reluctant to enter the rough-and-tumble of political life. Indeed, its chief ideologue, Aflaq, hoped to shape the thinking of the young generation but was afraid to vitiate the ideology of the party by actively engaging in politics. At the time, he believed that the desired spiritual attitudinal transformation of Arab society could not be achieved by coercion or by political machination.

The turning point came in 1953, when the Ba'th merged with the Arab Socialist Party of Akram al-Hawrani, whose program of Socialism and mobilization of landless peasants (*fellahin*) helped to reorient the party's focus toward active political involvement. In the meantime the defeat in the 1948 Palestine war against Israel and the subsequent succession of army coups, beginning with the first coup of Colonel Husni al-Za'im in March 1949, provided further impetus for political action and highlighted a strategy to induce rapid change: military takeover. Al-Hawrani's close connections with influential military officers, which he constantly nurtured, proved instrumental in catapulting the Ba'th Party onto center stage during the 1950s. Further, a quadrupling of the party's membership between 1952 and 1954 (from 500 to 2,000) gave it a new momentum. All this greatly enhanced the Ba'th political fortunes and pushed it farther to the left. It became the most influential force in Syrian politics, except for the brief union with Egypt (the United Arab Republic, 1958–61), when it—along with other parties—was dissolved by Egyptian leader Gamal Abdel Nasser.

But the merger between Aflaq's Arab Resurrection and al-Hawrani's Arab Socialists never cohered into a unified body; rather, each continued to cultivate its own following. And while Aflaq and al-Bitar and their leftist intellectual cohorts remained committed to a transnational, pan-Arab transformation throughout the Levant, al-Hawrani and his followers focused on political and social change in Syria. Additionally, a dichotomy between civilian and military wings and between moderates and radicals became a fixed feature of the Ba'th Party. Exacerbating this factionalism in the 1950s was the minimal coordination among the cells, in the absence of a strong central command structure.

Nearly a month before the March 1963 Ba'th coup in Syria, a coalition of nationalists, pro-Nasserist, and Ba'th officers took power in Iraq. With the Ba'th now in control of two adjacent countries, a national command of the party was created to coordinate transnational Ba'th policy. Regional commands, one each for Syria and Iraq, were also set up as the supreme party organs in each state. Over the next few years the Syrian regional command became increasingly dominated by the radical Ba'th military officers and their civilian allies in the rural branches. Their ideological and personal differences with the traditional leaders in the national command, especially Aflaq and al-Bitar, would soon flare up in a "neo-Ba'th" military coup in February 1966 led by the ideologue General Salah Jadid. The radical Syrian officers ousted the old Ba'th guards and imposed a neo-Marxist ideology of social

and economic reconstruction. The two founders were accused of betraying the Ba'th revolutionary mission and had to flee to Lebanon.

The new regime's radical policies and its heavily minoritarian-sectarian composition, especially the predominant Alawi sect, caused widespread discontent, erupting into antigovernment riots. Taking advantage of this general dissatisfaction was one of Jadid's more moderate Alawi associates—a man crucial to the success of the February 1966 coup, Lieutenant General Hafiz al-Asad—who became Jadid's chief contender. In the ensuing power struggle between the two following the defeat in the 1967 war against Israel, al-Asad, as minister of defense, consolidated his support among army officers against Jadid, the assistant secretary-general of the Syrian Ba'th regional command, and his radical party supporters. By November 1970 al-Asad had established complete control over the reins, deposing Jadid and purging his fellow ideologues in the party. Al-Asad installed a more moderate regime, which has been in place ever since. Although both Jadid and al-Asad were members of the Alawi religious sect, which became a dominant political force, al-Asad recognized the necessity of stabilizing the country by seeking some accommodation with the Sunni majority population, especially in the urban centers, by tempering Jadid's more extreme economic policies and by establishing better relations with other Arab countries.

ORGANIZATION

Under the leadership of Hafiz al-Asad, the Ba'th Party was consolidated and expanded. Originally the party sought to emulate the Leninist-Communist model of party organization. However, it has been unable to achieve its founders' aim of building a rigid hierarchy of disciplined cadres organized into cells, which would provide the exclusive pool for recruitment into the highest party and government positions. During its 50-year history, the party has on occasion achieved some approximation of the ideal, but for the better part it has been plagued by factional rivalry, ideological disputes, and irregular recruitment and advancement patterns stemming from nepotism and regional and sectarian considerations.

Party cells have been established in a variety of settings—villages, schools, and factories. A hierarchy of cells, divisions, and branches make up the basic structure of the Syrian Ba'th Party. At the apex are the regional and national commands. Party ideology and interpretation of political affairs are disseminated by the party's newspaper, *al-Ba'th*, and by the government papers, *al-Thawrah* and *Tishrin*. (There are no privately owned newspapers of any significance in Syria.) Young people are reached through the revolutionary youth federation, which recruits them into the party.

Under Hafiz al-Asad, central party organs exercised more control over lower levels of the organization, a practice that has continued under Bashir al-Asad. Local party leaders, for example, are appointed to their offices by the central government, led by the president. Top members of the party may reach down into the lower levels to promote and purge members and to suspend or impose party rules. Delegates to party central congresses, however, are elected at the local level, and representatives to top party organs, such as the regional command, are elected from among the ranks of central congress delegates. Hafiz al-Asad's rise to power also prompted a greater distinction between the military and civilian wings of the party, with the military gaining ascendancy over the party as the backbone of the regime. Indeed, over the course of 30 years the regime of Hafiz al-Asad became increasingly Alawi-dominated and heavily reliant upon the army and security forces, to the detriment of party rule in Syria. The party was reduced to a subservient organization serving to legitimate al-Asad's rule.

POLICY

The Ba'th Party has always strongly advocated pan-Arabism, although its actual commitment to the concept declined considerably following the failed Syrian-Egyptian union. The old guard in the national command of the Ba'th Party, led by Aflaq and al-Bitar, continued to pursue reunion with Egypt even after the 1961 secessionist coup that broke Egyptian dominance over Syria. But in 1966, with the rise to power of the young radicals in the regional command of the Ba'th, al-Asad among them, the desire to unify the Arab world gave way to an almost exclusive preoccupation with Syrian and regional problems and interests. The predominant commitment to Socialist development took the form of radical land reform and nationalization measures. President al-Asad's economic policies, while more moderate than those pursued by Jadid, had been—until recently—conceived and executed within the framework of Socialist reconstruction in Syria. Still, lip service had continued to be paid to Arab unity even during the most prolonged periods of Syrian isolation from the Arab world. Today, the cause of Arab unity is moot, superseded by calls for Arab solidarity within the framework of the existing Middle Eastern nation-state system.

As to foreign policy considerations, Syrian foreign relations have been dominated by issues of war and

peace with Israel, the civil war in Lebanon, and Syria's aspired role as a regional power. Strong American economic and military support to Israel had been paralleled by increasing Syrian dependence on Soviet technical and military aid. While President al-Asad sought to build stronger ties with the Arab states, he had kept close associations with the Soviet Union. More than 2,500 Soviet advisers were stationed in Syria, operating in various military, technical, and educational fields. With its definite anti-American stance on the Arab-Israeli struggle, Syria led the Steadfastness and Confrontation Front of Arab states against the late Egyptian president Anwar el-Sadat's peace policies with Israel and condemned the Camp David agreement. In the post–Soviet era and bereft of the Soviet patron, President al-Asad tilted toward the West to achieve his newly proclaimed "strategic goal" of peaceful settlement with Israel, as opposed to his earlier aim of "strategic parity," and the maintenance of Syria's dominant role in Lebanon as a regional player.

After the outbreak of the Lebanese civil war in the mid-1970s, Syria deployed some 35,000 troops in Lebanon to prevent its disintegration into small sectarian states and to protect Syria's strategic security interests there. Throughout the conflict, which lasted until 1990, Syria refused to budge on its involvement in Lebanon or to let any other foreign power dominate the country. It ultimately emerged victorious, with the Saudi-brokered Ta'if accord in late 1989, which established the basis for national reconciliation under Syrian guardianship. This was followed by the May 1991 Treaty of Brotherhood, Cooperation and Coordination between Syria and Lebanon, tying Lebanon's security, defense, politics, and economy to Syria's. The treaty was accorded international, particularly U.S., approval, hence giving tacit admission to Syria's position as a regional power. In 2005, in the face of international pressure, Syria finally withdrew its troops from Lebanon.

LEADERSHIP

The core of the Ba'th Party elite has been drawn chiefly from the rural, lower-socioeconomic, and minority (non-Sunni) groups. This is in sharp contrast to the preindependence period elite, which was comprised primarily of wealthy landowning and merchant families and upper-class educated Sunnis based in the cities. It is highly significant that one of the few avenues of social mobility open to members of religious minority and ethnic groups during the French mandate period (1920–46) was military service. In particular, the Alawis of Syria sought enrollment in the military academy in greater numbers than other groups in the population as a means of social and economic advancement. By comparison, the well-to-do Sunni urban classes showed an aversion to military service through payment of a fee. Accordingly, minority groups have always been overrepresented in the military relative to their percentage of the population (about one-third). Many of them rose through the ranks, and some estimates indicate that almost all army units are under command of Alawi and Druze officers. This is a significant factor in the primacy of the military wing over its civilian counterpart. Further, there are strong indications that most military officers belong to the Ba'th Party.

The Ba'th elite is not comprised exclusively of individuals from minority sects. There are many highly placed Sunnis, including the vice president, Abdul Halim Khaddam, the defense minister, Mustafa Tlas, and the former army chief of staff, Hikmat al-Shihabi. Still, the Alawis hold such a disproportionate number of the most crucial posts that there is a widespread perception that the government is predominantly an Alawi preserve.

PROSPECTS

The Ba'th is firmly entrenched in the Syrian system as the ruling party. Even the military, having secured its predominance in the party, need not openly intervene in day-to-day politics because it is assured a decisive voice in the making of important policy decisions. Nonetheless, especially in the late 1970s and early 1980s, the Ba'th regime had encountered widespread and intense opposition to its rule. In particular, the largely Alawi character of the regime, its secular ideology, and rampant corruption at all levels of government had led to increasing protests spearheaded by the Muslim Brotherhood.

Much of the antiregime opposition had taken the form of terrorist attacks, such as assassinations and bombings, carried out primarily by the Muslim Brotherhood. Perhaps the most dramatic attack was the June 1979 killing of 60 cadets (mostly Alawis) at a military academy in Aleppo. Between 1979 and 1980 demonstrations and riots broke out in that city and spread to other cities, protesting government economic policies and calling for democracy, an end to secularism, and the release of political prisoners. The regime's response was one of repression, using its special security forces to sweep all centers of opposition. The cycle of violence climaxed in the uprising in Hama in February 1982, which was put down ruthlessly by government troops with the loss of an estimated 20,000 lives.

The lessons of Hama, along with the emergent "mutual understanding" between the regime and the

urban merchant class in the wake of the economic liberalization policies, have kept potential opposition under a lid in recent years. However, control remains more a function of the regime's vast network of security and intelligence agencies (al-Mukhabarat) than a manifestation of popular support.

Minor Political Parties

The only other parties that are allowed to function on the Syrian political scene are the Ba'th Party's junior partners in the Progressive National Front. These are the Arab Socialist Union, the Arab Socialist Movement, the Socialist Union Movement, and the Syrian Democratic People's Party. They are represented in small numbers in the People's Assembly and in the Cabinet. All four parties espouse Socialist programs that are acceptable to the Ba'th. The Arab Socialist Union and the Socialist Union Movement are both Nasserist parties that hold onto the legacy of unity with Egypt and remain committed to the cause of pan-Arabism.

The Arab Socialist Movement represents the remnants of the Arab Socialist Party of Akram al-Hawrani, which merged with the Ba'th Party in 1953, only to split off in 1963 over policy and personal differences. Al-Hawrani himself disavowed the party in his determination to reject both the Progressive National Front and the Ba'th.

The Syrian Democratic People's Party, formerly the Syrian Communist Party, is one of Syria's older parties, which had been led for many years by Khalid Bakdash until his death in July 1995. Under his leadership, the party was closely tied to the Soviet Union, advocating anti-imperialism and Marxist Socialism. In the early 1980s the party split into two factions when one of its members, Riyad Turk, challenged the pro-Moscow leadership of Bakdash. The party's Communist-secular ideology has limited its popular appeal, making it less attractive than the two Nasserist parties.

Other Political Forces

MILITARY

The Syrian armed forces are not only a formidable fighting force but also constitute one of the most powerful interest groups in Syria. As the principal pillar of the regime serving internal security and external defense needs, the military is given the lion's share (more than 50 percent) of the national budget. In the wake of domestic insurrection, al-Asad also doubled military pay (compared to a 50 to 75 percent hike in civil servants' salaries), probably to maintain the loyalty of the troops. Officers also enjoy substantial fringe benefits, such as travel allowances, duty-free imports, interest-free loans, subsidized housing, and free medical care. Military intelligence and special security units keep watch over members of the armed forces and carry out frequent purges of officers suspected of disloyalty. More than half of the officers are Ba'th Party members, and the majority of the ranking officers in command of important units are Alawis.

MUSLIM BROTHERHOOD

This Muslim fundamentalist organization was first founded in Egypt by Supreme Guide Hasan al-Banna in 1928. It grew into a transnational Islamic structure with branches in other Arab-Muslim countries. The ideological aim of the organization is to bring about a transformation of state and society according to Islamic doctrine. The Syrian Muslim Brotherhood led the fight against Ba'th secularism and socialism and Alawi domination. Its militant tactics had the effect of galvanizing widespread Sunni majority resentment against the regime.

No single individual could be identified as the leader of the Syrian Muslim Brotherhood, although Marwan Hadid and Issam al-Attar—the former having died and the latter being in exile—could be considered important figures. Another is Adnan Sa'd al-Din, who helped organize during the 1980s the National Alliance for the Liberation of Syria—an opposition front of the Muslim Brotherhood and other groups, which launched in the spring of 1986 a campaign of bomb attacks in Damascus and other Syrian cities. An equally prominent leader of the Muslim Brotherhood was Sheikh Abdul Fattah Abu Ghudda, who died in Saudi Arabian exile in 1997. He was succeeded by his disciple Ali al-Bayanouni.

Government repression seems to have contained Brotherhood activities for now; membership in the organization is punishable by death. Still, it is doubtful that the regime has been able to uproot the organization entirely.

National Prospects

As he established himself as his father's successor, Bishar al-Asad concentrated on consolidating his regime. Yet the main issues that confront the second

Asad regime are actually the same as those that confronted the first: getting back the Golan territory lost to Israel in the 1967 Arab-Israeli War and reforming the economic and political system. The regime, state institutions, and indeed the entire country still bear the imprint of Hafiz al-Asad's 30-year rule as president from 1970 to 2000. Given the chronic instability and frequent military coups d'état that had plagued the country from 1946 until 1970, Asad's longevity is that much more remarkable.

Under Bishar, as under his father before him, the regime bases its power on the Ba'th party, the military, an extensive security apparatus, and the empowerment in particular of the Alawi community. Having survived violent challenges to the regime in the 1980s, such as the Muslim Brotherhood uprisings, in the 1990s President Hafiz al-Asad had begun slowly and cautiously to open the system, especially economically. With the *Infitah* (economic opening) policy, the state relaxed many of its controls, allowing for greater levels of privatization, private investment, and joint ventures with transnational companies. In some respects, the intention was to co-opt the Sunni urban business elite to the regime. At the same time, while maintaining majority control under the Ba'th and its allies, the state allowed more independents to run for elections to the parliament.

The economic and political imperatives driving this small opening turned in large part on the ending of the cold war. With the collapse of the Soviet Union, Syria had lost its great power patron and most importantly its pipeline of economic aid. The new political and economic reforms were part of a broader adjustment process in the post–cold war era, which even included warmer relations with the United States. When Syria's longtime rival Iraq invaded Kuwait in 1990, Asad surprised many in the Arab world and the West by supporting the coalition against Iraq. The longstanding rivalry between Asad and Saddam Hussein obviously continued, but the policy choice was also strongly influenced by the collapsing Soviet Union (and with it, much of Syria's foreign aid). Syria needed economic support. By joining the coalition and deploying Syrian troops to Saudi Arabia, Syria began to establish warmer ties to the United States, the European Union states, and the oil-rich Arab monarchies of the Persian Gulf. By the end of the war President Asad had arranged for the "Damascus Declaration"—a new regional alignment bringing together Syria, Egypt, and the six Arab monarchies of the Gulf Cooperation Council (Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates).

Following the 2000 political succession from Hafiz al-Asad to Bishar al-Asad, Syrian foreign policy continued to focus on the standoff with Israel, further enhancing ties to the Gulf states, the United States, and the European Union, while still maintaining the alignment with Iran. Syrian foreign policy under Bishar also emphasized a warming trend in relations with Jordan, while also trying to end some of the hostility with Iraq. However, when the United States under President George W. Bush invaded Iraq in 2003, continuing to occupy it thereafter, new strains developed in U.S.-Syrian relations. In December 2003 the United States put in place the Syria Accountability and Lebanese Sovereignty Restoration Act. The act's list of complaints included concerns over the development of weapons of mass destruction and Syrian support for Palestinian groups deemed to be terrorists by Washington. In 2004 the U.S. government argued that Syria had not complied with U.S. concerns and demands and imposed sanctions on the country. In 2005 tensions with the United States escalaed further when former Lebanese prime minister Rafiq Hariri was assassinated in Beirut. Many in Lebanon suspected that Sryian military elements were responsible for the killing. The Syrian government denied the charge but was forced to pull its troops out later in 2005, ending over 30 years of presence in Lebanon.

The chilling of the international atmosphere had corresponding effects on Syria's domestic political climate. The hard-line U.S. policy strengthened the hand of corresponding hard-liners within the Syrian regime, confirming the trend of deliberalization. This follows an earlier period of openness and reform that had heralded the arrival of the new regime of Bishar al-Asad. In what became known as the "Damascus Spring," the incoming president had released more than 700 political prisoners, appointed reformers to key policy posts, and encouraged more open political discussion in Syrian politics and society. Discussion groups or salons surfaced throughout the country, only to be shut down in 2002 and 2003 as part of a government crackdown. The shifts between liberalization and deliberalization that have marked Bishar's rule attest to the intraregime tensions between reformers and hard-liners. Yet despite the reversals, many Syrian dissidents remained hopeful that the president would ultimately sideline the old guard he inherited from his father and more genuinely embark on the political and economic reforms that he has espoused.

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TAIWAN

(Zhonghua Minguo)

By Karl J. Fields, Ph.D.
Revised by Leon Newton, Ph.D.



The government of the Republic of China, frozen for nearly four decades as an authoritarian minority regime in imposed exile on the island of Taiwan, has since the 1980s become increasingly a government for and by Taiwan's 22.7 million people (2004 est.). Taiwan—comprising one large island and a number of much smaller outlying islands and archipelagoes—is roughly the size of California (36,000 square kilometers), straddles the Tropic of Cancer, and is separated from the Chinese mainland by only 130 kilometers at its narrowest point. With the exception of less than half a million aboriginals, local inhabitants consider themselves ethnically Han Chinese (China's dominant ethnic group). However, Taiwan has been linguistically, culturally, and politically divided by a subethnic distinction between the "Mainlander" minority and the "Taiwanese" majority, the latter group now constituting some 80 percent of the island's population.

Between 1 and 2 million Mainlanders accompanied Chiang Kai-shek to Taiwan following the defeat of Chiang's Nationalist forces at the hands of Mao Zedong and the Chinese Communists in 1949. Chiang and his followers viewed Taiwan—recently reverted from Japanese colonial control—as a temporary staging ground for a military recovery of the Chinese mainland. Chiang imposed Nationalist Party or Kuomintang (KMT) rule on some 6 million local Taiwanese inhabitants whose ancestors had immigrated to Taiwan in successive waves since the 17th century. While intermarriage and the passage of 50 years have blurred this division, the issues of regime legitimacy and national identity still punctuate the increasingly pluralist politics of this island republic whose dominant KMT party still claims sovereignty over all of China.

This grandiose claim and mission of "national recovery"—essential to the legitimacy of KMT rule—has over time become increasingly unrealistic. The expansion of popular elections as well as dramatic steps by the incumbent émigré regime over the past two decades to localize and democratize the KMT have allowed the interests of the Taiwanese majority—including discussion of independence from China—to begin to prevail. The lifting of martial law in 1987, the ending in 1991 of the "Temporary Provisions" to the constitution, and the elimination of the military's garrison command (executors of martial law) in 1992 have led to dramatic changes in Taiwan's civil society and sweeping constitutional and political reforms. Draconian restrictions on the press, media, and opposition political parties have been lifted, nurturing genuinely pluralist electoral contests at all levels and moves toward the consolidation of democratic political institutions and the emergence of a civic culture. Ironically, it is now the external threat of military intervention by the People's Republic of China, which continues to view Taiwan as a renegade province of the PRC, not the domestic legitimation of imposed exogenous rule, that stands as the primary obstacle precluding Taiwan's independence.

The System of Government

Taiwan's system of government can best be described as a de jure parliamentary republic in which the president still retains a great deal of de facto formal and informal power, leading some scholars to classify Taiwan as a semipresidential system. Constitutional reforms have concentrated on the parliament's legislative powers that the 1947 constitution had spread throughout the government but that historically had been effectively and authoritatively exercised by the ruling KMT, whose chairman was also the national president. The election of Chen Shui-bian of the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) as president in 2000 marked the first peaceful transfer of power from the KMT. The extent to which executive power will shift from the president to the premier in future administrations remains uncertain.

Taiwan's present government structure reflects a foundation in the 1947 constitution intended for the governance of the whole of China, nearly four decades of authoritarian rule by an organizationally Leninist party, and four rounds of constitutional reform during a decade of democratic consolidation in the 1990s. The current constitution as amended in 2000 and "additional articles" maintain the framework of the original five-power constitution while making governance both more democratic and more relevant to Taiwan's actual conditions. The central government consists of the office of the president, the National Assembly, and five governing *Yuan* (branches)—Executive, Examination, Legislative, Judicial, and Control.

EXECUTIVE

The Executive Yuan or cabinet is the highest administrative organ of the state, and its president, or premier, is the head of government. The premier and his cabinet carry out the day-to-day responsibilities of government and also present administrative policies to the legislature and respond to legislative interpellations. The Executive Yuan may grant emergency powers to the national president, who is constitutionally the head of state, if and when the country is faced with imminent danger to its security or serious financial or economic crisis. The premier, along with other members of the cabinet, are appointed (without legislative consent) by the president of the republic. The president also appoints the members of the Control and Examination Yuans and the grand justices of the Judicial Yuan. Appointments to these three branches are all confirmed by the National Assembly. The president may also dissolve the Legislative Yuan, but only after the premier requests such action following a vote of no confidence on the premier and his cabinet. The president also maintains primary responsibility for foreign affairs, national defense, and cross-strait relations with the PRC through the National Security Council, a branch agency of the presidential office.

The president is popularly elected every four years and may serve for only two terms. Indirectly elected by the National Assembly in 1990, Li Denghui was reelected in 1996 in the first-ever popular presidential election in Taiwan or, for that matter, in any Chinese society. Chen Shui-bian was elected in 2000 and reelected in 2004. His presidency marks the first held by an opposition party leader—that is, from a party other than the KMT. The next presidential elections are to be held in 2008. Chen will not be eligible to run.

LEGISLATURE

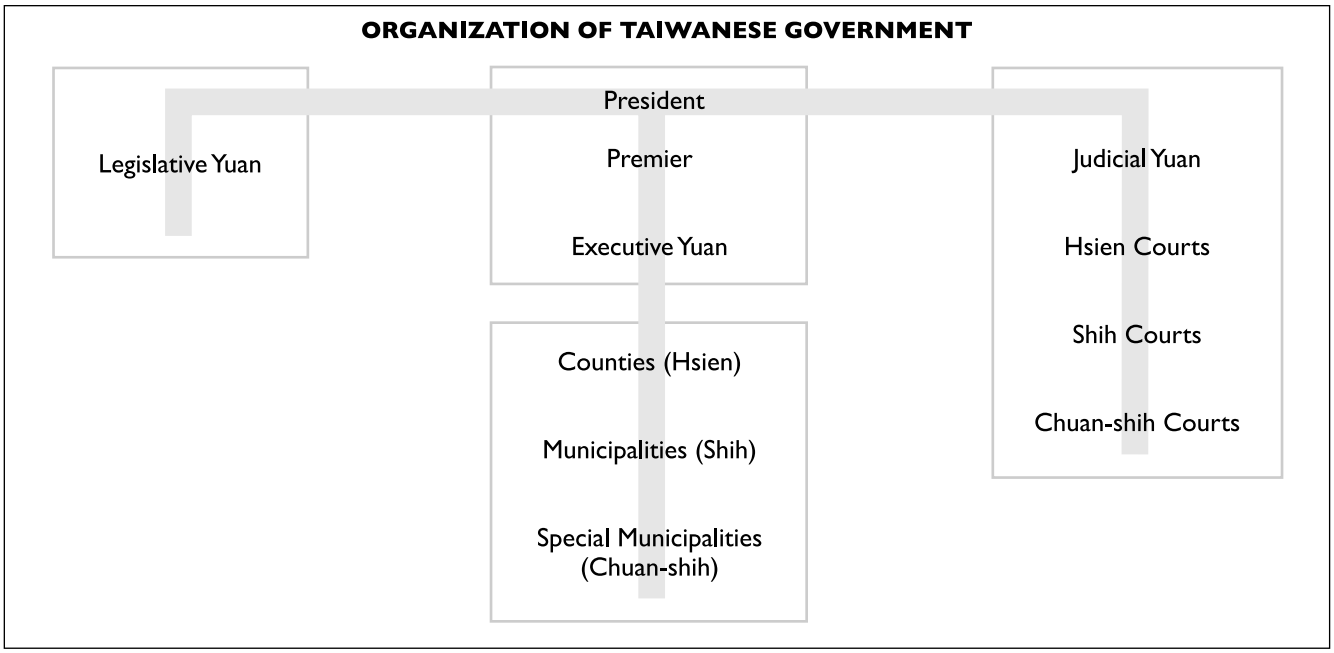
The Legislative Yuan (Lifa Yuan) is Taiwan's principal lawmaking body. As of 1998 constitutional reforms have set the enlarged membership of the legislature at 225 seats, of which 176 are directly elected from geographical districts in Taiwan. The remaining 49 seats are allocated by a method of proportional representation. Representatives serve for three years and are eligible for reelection. Constitutional reforms in 2000 reduced the number of seats in the legislature from 225 to 113 beginning with the 2007 election.

The Legislative Yuan is empowered to force the premier and cabinet to step down through a vote of no confidence, although it may not take a vote of no confidence on the same premier twice within a one-year period. The legislature is also authorized to impeach the president and vice president for treason or rebellion, if such a measure is initiated by a majority and passed by two-thirds of the legislators.

The National Assembly, which long was the de facto organ for choosing new presidents from the KMT, was disbanded in 2005.

JUDICIARY

The Judicial Yuan, the highest judicial organ of the state, interprets the constitution, administers the court system, and supervises the conduct of trials carried out in its subordinate organs. It is composed of 15 grand justices who are nominated and, with the consent of the Legislative Yuan, appointed by the national president. The justices serve for eight-year, nonconsecutive terms.



Recent constitutional reforms have also rendered the Control Yuan a quasi-judicial body. Formerly invested with the powers of impeachment, its members are now essentially ombudsmen with no party affiliation. No longer an elective body, its 29 members are appointed by the president (with Legislative Yuan approval) for six-year terms.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Government and elections below the national level were previously divided into three tiers: provincial, county/municipal city, and city/village. One of the most significant and controversial consequences of recent constitutional reforms has been the elimination of the provincial level, leaving the county as the primary regional entity.

This county system consists of 16 county magistrates and the mayors of five municipal cities other than Taipei and Kaohsiung. (These two cities are considered special municipalities with essentially provincial status whose mayors were popularly elected to four-year terms for the first time in 1994.) These 23 city and county executives and their councils have become increasingly powerful in this new streamlined system of local governance. It is hoped these reforms will enhance the efficiency of governance and weaken the influence of money politics in what have been notoriously corrupt local elections.

The Electoral System

Elections for the Legislative Yuan are a complex blend of proportional representation and direct election. Of the existing 225 members, 168 are directly elected, 41 are elected by proportional representation, and the remainder are reserved for overseas and aboriginal citizens in a mixture of voting types. Presidential elections are now by direct popular vote. Members served three-year terms.

The Party System

This combination of SNTV and PR allocation with territorial, at-large, and overseas lists of candidates has led to factionalism within parties and the tendency for breakaway parties to emerge. Under circumstances of increasing pluralism, this has greatly diversified a political panorama that was for decades largely one-dimensional. As of 2004 a total of 108 political parties had registered with the Ministry of Interior, but most have had little impact on electoral politics. The six most significant political parties are the Nationalist Party (Kuomintang or KMT), the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), the People First Party (PFP), the Taiwan Solidarity Union (TSU), Non-Partisan Solidarity Union (NPSU), and New Party (NP). These parties generally align into one of two coalitions: the pan-blue

coalition favors reunification with China and consists of the KMT, PFP, and NP, while the pan-green coalition favors Taiwanese independence and consists of the DPP and TSU. In the 2004 elections the opposition pan-blue coalition won a majority of legislative seats.

Major Political Parties

NATIONALIST PARTY

(Guomindang; KMT)

The KMT controlled the military and government that ruled Taiwan after it was given back by Japan in 1945 until 2000. But the KMT has its origins much earlier in China as the revolutionary vehicle of Sun Yat-sen and other Chinese nationalists in their efforts to oppose the ruling Manchu dynasty of China during the first two decades of the 20th century. Sun permanently named this organization the Guomindang (transliterated in Taiwan as Kuomintang, hence KMT) in 1919 and in the following year began a four-year reorganization of the party under the tutelage of Lenin's Communist International and along the lines of Lenin's principle of democratic centralism. With Sun's death in 1925, Chiang Kai-shek assumed leadership of the party and then nominal control of China in 1927. The KMT party-state survived Japan's 1937 invasion of China but not the civil war waged against the Chinese Communists for control of the mainland. Chiang and the KMT were forced to relocate with nearly 2 million supporters to Taiwan in 1949.

Organizationally, though not ideologically, the KMT has been Leninist in terms of both its democratic centralism within the party and its organizational parallelism between the party and the state. In its relations with society, the KMT regime adopted an authoritarian corporatist approach, generating a social support base by creating wealth and co-opting potential allies. Private social organizations were either proscribed or penetrated by party cells and supervised by party cadres. Historically, these party cadres controlled the education system, labor organizations, mass media, and, through the political commissar system, even the military.

The KMT congress meets every four years to elect the party's central committee, which holds plenary sessions each year. The central committee in turn approves (and increasingly has voice in selecting) the central standing committee, which is the most influential organ in the KMT and, up to this point, the primary policy-making institution in Taiwan. National president Lee Teng-hui was first elected party chairman by the national congress in 1988 and then reelected (by unprecedented secret ballots) in both 1993 and 1997. Lee's four-year term expired in 2000, and he was replaced by Lien Chan. In 2005 Lien was replaced by Ma Ying-jeou.

The gradual process of political liberalization has begun to sever the linkages between the KMT and the state, particularly at the middle and lower levels of government administration. Leninist in organization, the KMT is not, nor was it ever, Leninist or even truly Socialist in ideology or policy. The KMT professes support for the values of freedom and democracy and places strong emphasis on capitalism, free trade, and industrial development. Sun Yat-sen's "Three Principles of the People" (*sanmin zhuyi*) called for democratization after a period of tutelage, and the KMT permitted early on in Taiwan genuine local political participation and contestation. This was done as a means of co-opting local elites, to appease American patrons, and as a safety valve for political disgruntlement. The KMT's long-dominant policy of "recovering" the Chinese mainland has given way in recent years to factional differences over the pace, form, and even substance of this goal of reunification.

In 2000 the KMT was ousted from power for the first time since 1945, when the DPP's Chen Shui-bian was elected president. In 2004 the party won 79 seats in the legislative elections, while its presidential candidate, Lien, lost an extremely narrow race (.2 percent margin) to the incumbent Chen. In 2005 Lien became the first KMT leader to visit mainland China since 1949.

DEMOCRATIC PROGRESSIVE PARTY

(Minzhu jinbu dang; DPP)

Prior to the lifting of the ban on new political parties, opposition politicians were grouped under the term *dangwai*, meaning "outside the party." Mostly Taiwanese and in favor (at least privately) of Taiwan's independence, these *dangwai* politicians came together in an informal grouping during the 1970s. In 1977 they managed to win 21 of 77 seats in the Provincial Assembly as well as other local elective offices. Although the formation of new political parties was illegal under martial law, by 1980 the *dangwai* had essentially become a political party and campaigned as such against the KMT during the first half of the 1980s.

It was primarily *dangwai* politicians who formed the DPP in 1986. The DPP was the first and remains the most successful new political party formed in Taiwan. Ironically, the organizational structure of the DPP closely resembles that of the KMT, with a national congress, central executive committee, and central standing committee, all of whose members serve two-year terms. The party chairman is elected by the national congress from among the 11 members of the central standing committee.

The DPP has only approximately 100,000 declared members and not nearly the financial resources or organizational and electoral experience of the KMT. Its popular support base is nonetheless nearly as large as that of the KMT, because of its ability to claim representation of the Taiwanese subethnic majority. The policy that most easily distinguishes the DPP from the KMT (and New Party, as well) is its support of self-determination for Taiwan, a euphemism for independence or the permanent political separation of Taiwan from the Chinese mainland. Although Taiwan independence has always been a key plank in the DPP's party platform, too vigorous promotion of this policy has prompted both PRC saber rattling and electoral defeats for DPP candidates. This has led the party's mainstream leadership to downplay the independence theme and to embrace a broader range of social welfare, labor, and environmental issues. This softening on the independence issue, however, combined with the DPP's interparty cooperation with the KMT on constitutional and electoral reforms, led more radical advocates of independence within the DPP to establish the Taiwan Independence Party (Jianguodang; TAIP) in 1996.

In March 2000 DPP candidate Chen Shui-bian became the first opposition party candidate to win the presidency. His victory resulted in the first-ever transition of the presidential office from one political party to another in the ROC. Chen won a narrow reelection in 2004. The party won 89 seats in the legislative elections of 2004, but its pan-green coalition lost the majority to the KMT-led pan-blue coalition.

PEOPLE FIRST PARTY (PFP)

After the 2000 presidential election supporters of unsuccessful candidate James Soong called on him to form a new party. He formed the People First Party, which attracted KMT and New Party members, making it the third largest party in the Legislative Yuan. The party earned 40 seats in the Legislative Yuan in the 2001 legislative elections and 34 in the 2004 elections.

TAIWAN SOLIDARITY UNION (TSU)

Founded after the 2000 presidential elections by Lee Teng-hui, this party advocates "reviving the economy, stabilizing the political situation, consolidating democracy, and strengthening Taiwan." TSU will oppose the practice of some businesses of "investing in the mainland while leaving nothing but debt back in Taiwan." In the 2004 elections TSU secured 12 seats in the Legislative Yuan.

NON-PARTISAN SOLIDARITY UNION (NPSU)

The NPSU was founded in June 2004 by Chang Po-ya and won six seats in the Legislative Yuan in the 2004 elections. The party does not align itself with any other party and has even declined to publicize what its platform is.

NEW PARTY

(Xindang; NP)

Disagreement over the issue of national sovereignty, along with charges that the KMT was corrupt and undemocratic, prompted a handful of prominent KMT politicians to break away from the KMT and form the New Party in 1993. The NP has found support from (predominantly Mainlander) voters dissatisfied with the DPP's advocacy of independence and fearful that the indigenization of the KMT has led to the corruption of both its ideals and its electoral practices. The NP claims a membership of over 70,000 but has failed to broaden its appeal to the extent of the DPP. The NP differs from both the KMT and the DPP in organizational structure, relying on those already holding public office for its leadership. The New Party was almost dissolved after the 2001 elections because many of its members joined the People First Party. It won one seat in the 2004 elections.

Minor Political Parties

Minor parties include the Chinese Youth Party, Labor Party, Chinese Liberal Democratic Party, Farmers' Party, Non-Party Alliance, Green Party Taiwan, Taiwan Independence Party, Natural Law Party, Demo-

cratic Alliance, New Nation Association, and Taiwan Number One Party.

Other Political Forces

TAIWAN INDEPENDENCE MOVEMENT

National debate over the issue of Taiwan's national identity has opened up. The KMT traditionally has supported the belief that Taiwan will eventually reunite with mainland China. The independence movement opposes that idea, instead advocating an independent and sovereign nation that would enter the United Nations as a free state. The election of the pro-independence Chen in 2000 and 2004 has complicated Taiwan's ties to the People's Republic of China, which has refused to open diplomatic relations with Chen. In 2005 the independence movement received a boost when a new law allowing public referenda on constitutional changes was passed. China fears that such referenda might lead to public votes on the issue of Taiwanese independence.

National Prospects

Since the early 1990s Taiwan has witnessed a political transformation comparable in magnitude to the economic transformation for which the country is perhaps more famous. Taiwan has experienced a democratic transition from a single-party authoritarian system to a multiparty democratic system. The transformation was solidified by the election of Chen in 2000 and his reelection in 2004. In the future the continued democratization of Taiwanese politics will have a large impact on the central issue of reunification with the mainland.

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REPUBLIC OF TAJIKISTAN

(Jumhurii Tojikiston)

By Sergei Gretsky, Ph.D.
Revised by Roger D. Kangas, Ph.D.



The Republic of Tajikistan, a nation of 7.1 million people (2005 est.), is a landlocked Central Asian state with a territory of 143,100 square kilometers. Tajikistan first appeared on the political map of the world in 1924 as an autonomous republic within Uzbekistan. In 1929 it became a Soviet Socialist Republic within the USSR, and in December 1991 it emerged as an independent country as a result of the breakup of the Soviet Union. In December 1992 Tajikistan plunged into civil war, which left more than 50,000 dead and caused the migration of approximately 1 million mostly economic and ethnic (Russian, German, Jewish, and Ukrainian) refugees. Though the country has been proclaimed a democracy in the new constitution adopted in 1994, the civil war delayed the process of political and economic reforms necessary to dismantle the old authoritarian system.

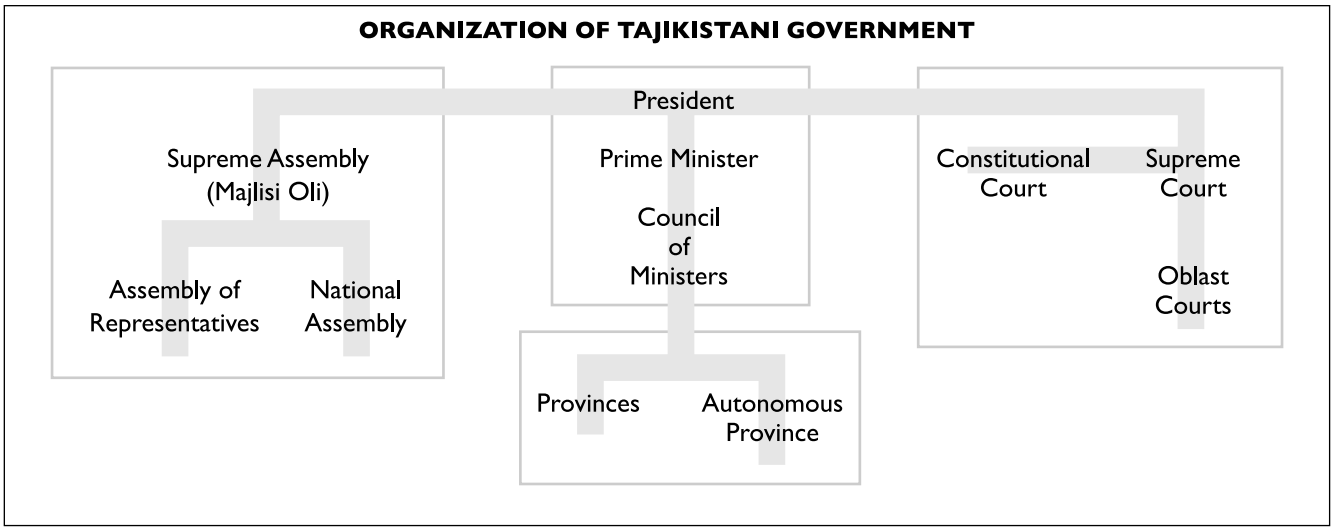
The System of Government

Tajikistan is a mixture of authoritarianism represented by a strong presidency and a weak multiparty parliamentarism that excludes banned opposition parties.

EXECUTIVE

The post of the president of the Republic of Tajikistan was introduced in the 1994 constitution that came into being when Imomali Rahmonov became president. In accordance with the constitution, the president is head of state and of the executive branch of power. The president cannot simultaneously be a deputy of the country's parliament, Majlisi Oli, and there is a two-term limit. Rahmonov has been able to consolidate his authority over time and appears to have no real opponent. In the November 6, 1999, election, he garnered 97 percent of the popular vote, with slightly more than 2 percent going to his sole rival, Davlat Usmon. A June 22, 2003, referendum extended his term to seven years and will allow him to run for another term in 2006 (the referendum discounted his first five years in office).

The president has a suspension veto, that is, the right to cancel decrees of Majlisi Oli or even suspend Majlis's activities, if he perceives its decisions contradict national interests. In addition to appointing the government, the president appoints the chairmen, deputy chairmen, and the judges of the Constitutional Court, the Supreme Court, and the High Economic Court, who are then confirmed by parliament. All other judges in the country are appointed by the president on the recommendation of the minister of justice. The president also appoints *hoqims* (governors who are heads of provincial, city, or town executive and legislative branches simultaneously) who are accountable directly to him. The president has extraordinary powers to declare a state of emergency in the case of possible infringement of the country's independence or territory, civil rights violations, or natural disasters. He can



extend the state of emergency over the constitutionally set limit of three months.

Tajikistan also has a prime minister, who is responsible for the management of the legislature's activities. This executive is under the authority of the president and has not been a dominant figure in Tajik politics. Since 1999 Oqil Oqilov has been prime minister. The president is the chairman of the government of the country, while the Council of Ministers is directly headed by the prime minister, who is appointed by the president and confirmed by Majlisi Oli. The president's administration consists of 14 state and senior advisers and 19 other advisers. Subdivisions of the government that are overseen by deputies of the prime minister are simultaneously subordinate to presidential advisers. The separation of responsibilities between the prime minister and the head of the president's administration, who officially holds the post of minister without portfolio, is unclear.

LEGISLATURE

The bicameral Majlisi Oli is the highest representative and legislative body in Tajikistan. Originally a unicameral assembly, the legislature became bicameral in 2000. Elections in February and March of that year selected members of the revised legislature. The Majlisi Namoyandagon (Assembly of Representatives) is the lower house, and it is comprised of 63 representatives serving five-year terms. These are all selected by popular vote in single-member districts. The Majlisi Milliy (National Assembly) is the upper house and is comprised of 33 members also serving five-year terms. This body reflects the various regions of the country, with 25 members selected through regional assemblies. The president appoints the remaining eight members.

JUDICIARY

In accordance with the constitution, the Constitutional Court, the Supreme Court, and the High Economic Court, military courts, the Court of the Mountainous Badahshon Autonomous Province, and provincial, city, and district courts constitute the judiciary of Tajikistan. The constitution stipulates the independence of the judiciary, but the mechanism of their appointment—by the president instead of majlises of all levels—undercuts this independence.

The constitution proclaims equality of all citizens before the law and guarantees that the judiciary will administer justice in accordance with the principles of conformity to laws of Tajikistan, collegial investigation of cases, open court procedures, the right of the defendant to defense, and the principle of controversy.

The 1994 constitution provided for the formation of the Constitutional Court for the first time in Tajikistan's history. In accordance with Article 89, the Court makes the final ruling on the correspondence to the constitution of laws, bills, edicts, and any kind of legal acts adopted by the president, Majlisi Oli, the government, courts of all levels, and other government and nongovernmental institutions. The Court also decides disputes between government agencies concerning the delimitation of their terms of reference. Article 84 of the constitution prohibits the formation of extraordinary courts.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The reform of regional and local government began after the adoption of the law on local government on December 1, 1994. In accordance with the law, regional and local government consists of representative (majlis of peoples' deputies) and executive (*hoqim* with his administration, hoqimyat) bodies. *Hoqims* at all levels are appointed by the president, act as his representatives, and are subordinate directly to him. Their functions include control over the execution of the laws of the country, presidential decrees, and resolutions of higher majlises. The *hoqim* makes the decision on convening the sessions of the majlis, chairs sessions, presents guidelines of economic and social development of his administrative unit for *majlis*'s approval, and hires and fires heads of administrative bodies and managers of industrial enterprises within his jurisdiction. Among the prerogatives of the *majlis* of peoples' deputies are the confirmation of the *hoqim* and his deputies, the formation of standing and ad hoc commissions, and the approval of the local budget and the guidelines of socioeconomic development presented by the *hoqim*.

In villages, *jamoats* were introduced to replace village soviets (councils). A *jamoat* is a gathering of representatives selected by inhabitants of village administrative subunits such as streets and blocks. The chairman of the *jamoat* is nominated by the *hoqim* of the district and is elected by the jamoat. The *jamoat*'s functions include land and property issues, maintenance of law and order, sanitation, and urban development. Decisions are taken by open ballot.

All in all, the reform of government in the country following the adoption of the new constitution gave more autonomy and authority to local bodies of government, though at the expense of narrowing the electivity of mid- and low-level officials.

The Electoral System

Article 27 of the constitution provides for elections and referenda to be held on the basis of universal, equal, and direct suffrage in a secret ballot. The right to vote and to be elected is guaranteed to every citizen who is 18 years or over. For Majlisi Oli deputies, eligibility is set at 25 years of age, and presidential candidates must be between 35 and 65 years old. All elections in Tajikistan are held on the absolute majority formula. The only exceptions are for the members of the upper chamber in the Majlisi Oli who are appointed by the president.

One serious difficulty in the electoral system remains the registration of citizens who have not returned to their home districts, even though the civil war effectively ended in 1997. In addition, it is estimated that nearly 1 million Tajiks work and live outside the country, especially in Russia. Tracking these voters is extremely difficult for the resource-strapped electoral commission.

The Party System

ORIGINS OF THE PARTIES

The inception of the multiparty system in Tajikistan dates to the height of former USSR leader Mikhail Gorbachev's perestroika. In 1989 Rastokhez ("Resurrection") Popular Movement, the first non-Communist political group, was launched in the country. Rastokhez represented the interests of Tajik nationalists and worked to revive a Tajik national culture and language, greater political and economic autonomy from Moscow, and environmental protection. Later, it became part of the UTO. After opposition parties were banned in 1993, Rastokhez ceased to exist as an independent group.

The other two political parties that emerged before the fall of the Soviet Union and that, together with Rastokhez, constituted the UTO, were the Islamic Renaissance Party of Tajikistan and the Democratic Party of Tajikistan (Hizbi Democrati Tojikiston; DPT). DPT was formed in December 1990 to support the process of perestroika and advocated the construction of a secular democratic country with a vibrant civil society. In 1995 the party split into two wings. One wing, headed by Jumaboi Niyozov, remained within the ranks of the UTO, and the other, headed by the original chairman of the party, Shodmon Yusuf, aligned itself with the Rahmonov regime. Officially, the party remains outlawed.

Since that time political parties have developed within the country, as opposed to being part of exiled opposition groups. The post–civil war environment has seen a reduction in the number of parties and organizations.

THE PARTIES IN LAW

The Tajik constitution and Law on Political Parties and Organizations set the standards and requirements for political parties. In the early 2000s several parties were able to register, including true opposition parties such

as the Islamic Renaissance Party. However, smaller parties have been unable to register, suggesting that the law is not applied evenly.

PARTY ORGANIZATION

Political parties in Tajikistan generally organize themselves along the lines most familiar to them, namely that set by the previous Communist Party of Tajikistan (CPT) of the Soviet era. Leadership plays a key role in each political party and organization, so the actual structure of each is relatively weak.

CAMPAIGNING

Throughout the 1990s campaigning for political office was almost unheard of in Tajikistan, outside of the initial presidential election in 1991. In the 2000 legislative elections there was a greater effort to sway voters, and several international election and party assistance organizations were active in Tajikistan. These same organizations, such as the International Foundation for Election Systems (IFES), are hoping that upcoming elections will be more active in this respect. However, the 2005 elections for the Assembly of Representatives, in which the ruling party won nearly all the seats, was criticized by international observers as failing to meet international standards.

INDEPENDENT VOTERS

It is simply impossible to assess the level of voter awareness in Tajikistan, given the paucity of data on the subject. That the president's party did not capture one-third of the electorate in the 2000 elections suggests that there are voters loyal to other individuals and parties. The true sense of "independent voting," however, is not certain in the country.

Major Political Parties

PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF TAJIKISTAN (PDPT)

(Hizbi Demokrati-Khalkii Tojikston)

The PDPT was organized as a pro-government party in 1994 to support Rahmonov's election campaign. The bulk of its members are former members of the Popular Front of Tajikistan, a Kulob-based group that fought against the UTO in 1992–93. The chairman of the party is Abdulmajid Dostiev. The party's goal is to strengthen Tajikistan's independence, build a secular democratic country with the strict separation of powers, balance regional interests, and implement market-oriented economic reforms.

The PDPT emerged as the dominant political force in the post–civil war environment and is considered the main pro-presidential organization in the country. Rakhmonov is the ultimate leader of this party, although the chairmanship is not technically his. Membership in the PDPT is uncertain, although official statistics suggest that it is well over 100,000. In the 2005 elections for the Assembly of Representatives, the PDPT won 52 of the 63 seats.

Minor Political Parties

ISLAMIC RENAISSANCE OF TAJIKISTAN (IRT)

(Nehzati Islomii Tojikiston)

IRT first emerged as a branch of the All-Union IRP, whose founding congress convened in Astrakhan (Russia) in 1989. In October 1991 the Tajik branch broke off from the All-Union IRP. It was legalized in December 1991. In June 1993 the Rahmonov government banned it along with the other parties and groups of the UTO for the alleged intention of working to install an Islamic state by force. In December 1993 IRT disbanded itself to become one of the constituent parts of the Movement for the Islamic Revival of Tajikistan (MIRT). MIRT was cofounded by Qadi Akbar Turajonzoda, chief Muslim cleric of Tajikistan since 1988 and one of the leaders of the opposition, his followers, and previously unaffiliated individuals who found themselves in exile in Afghanistan after the breakup of the civil war. In post–civil war Tajikistan, the IRT has recast itself as a defender of state order and has renounced the use of violence. Its leader, Said Abdullo Nuri, remains a prominent figure in Tajik politics and has encouraged other opposition figures to remain as such. In the early 2000s public opinion polls indicate that citizens of Tajikistan are wary of Islamic extremism, which has only hurt the support for the IRT. Indeed, it has become common to hear the view that the "Islamists," and hence the IRT, were directly responsible for the 1992–97 civil war.

The party's agenda includes the revival of Islam and the promotion of Islamic literacy, a greater role for Islam and Quranic injunctions in political and social life, and the adoption of some of the basic provisions of sharia (Muslim law) as part of the country's civil

code. The initial goal of the IRT—the establishment of an Islamic state in Tajikistan—was dropped from the party's platform in 1991. Tajik Islamists now speak of a lengthy period that is needed to reeducate the population in the spirit of Islam and prepare the grounds for an Islamic state. In the 2005 legislative elections it won two seats.

COMMUNIST PARTY OF TAJIKISTAN (CPT)

(Hizbi Communisti Tojikiston)

Tajik Communists proclaimed their independence from the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) shortly after the failed August 1991 hard-liners' coup in Moscow. After the coup the CPT not only lost its status of ruling party but also was outlawed until the Supreme Soviet cleared it of charges of involvement in the coup. By the early 2000s the CPT was a party of CPSU veterans, Russian and other minorities, and various regional elites. Membership is approximately 60,000.

The party is a collective member of the Union of the Communist Parties–CPSU, a successor to the CPSU, whose goal is to restore the USSR. Though this goal is not directly spelled out in the CPT's platform, which was adopted in June 1996, it is clearly stated in various clauses. The platform calls for the return to the "Socialist path of development," the Soviet system of government, and state form of property. The party supports the deeper integration of Tajikistan with the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and favors a union with Russia similar to the union between Russia and Belarus. In keeping with the Bolshevik tradition, the Communists do not rule out a "nonparliamentary" method of coming to power. In 2005 the party won four legislative seats.

Other Political Forces

Tajik politics remains in a state of development with political parties attempting to differentiate themselves from each other. In addition, there exists the problem of outside extremist groups that could play a part in Tajik politics. Specifically, the Islamic Movement for Uzbekistan (IMU) continues to transit through the country, although its primary target remains the neighboring government in Uzbekistan. Likewise, the Tajik minority in Afghanistan remains a key force in cross-border trade and an influence in the southern regions of Tajikistan.

Hizb ut-Tahrir (HT) is another political force that has become more prominent in recent years. Although it professes not to use violence, its aim to create an Islamic state in the region has raised concerns among elements in both the government and the population who would like to see Tajikistan remain a secular state. This organization is more prevalent in neighboring Uzbekistan, although cells exist in Tajikistan.

National Prospects

The fact that outside experts still refer to Tajikistan as "war-torn" or relate the current situation to the civil war can give one the impression that the country remains in a dire situation. However, international organizations and even private businesses are slowly developing a foundation for economic growth in the country that leads some Tajiks to be more optimistic about future prospects. The major challenge for Tajikistan remains the status of neighboring Afghanistan. If that country can develop and remain stable, then the likelihood of Tajikistan becoming better connected to the regional economy increases. Likewise, relations with Uzbekistan, which are often tense, have an effect on Tajikistan's ability to develop its economy and social base.

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UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA

(Jamhuri ya Muungano wa Tanzania)

By Terry M. Mays, Ph.D.



The United Republic of Tanzania, a multiparty state governing over 36 million people (2005 est.), was formed in 1964 by the union of Tanganyika and the islands constituting Zanzibar. The two countries, which experienced very dissimilar political development before the union, achieved independence from Great Britain in 1961 and 1963, respectively.

Germany held Tanganyika as a colony from 1884 until 1919. After the German defeat in World War I, a League of Nations Mandate assigned administration of Tanganyika to Great Britain. The area became a United Nations Trusteeship Territory following World War II in 1946. The British granted Tanganyika full independence on December 9, 1961, under the leadership of Julius K. Nyerere, president of the Tanganyikan African National Union (TANU).

Nyerere worked at first within the bounds of the parliamentary system the country inherited from the colonial period and cooperated closely with the largely British bureaucracy. However, relations with Britain soon became strained, and radicals within TANU became stronger and more vocal, particularly over the issue of Africanization of the bureaucracy. At the same time, Nyerere objected to elitist attitudes among black leaders and to increasing social stratification. To cope with these problems, he gradually instituted reforms in party policy and government structure resulting in a radically altered relationship between party and government.

From independence, Tanganyika and later Tanzania was a de facto a one-party state. In his 1965 treatise, *Democracy and the Party System*, Nyerere stated that in a country such as Tanzania, where the vast majority of the population remained unfamiliar with politics, voters were not prepared to choose from among many candidates. He argued that a democratic one-party system would more appropriately meet the needs of the nation. TANU's status as that one party was written into the 1965 interim constitution. Although supremacy of the party officially ended in 1992, it continues to dominate the government through a different name.

Government and party leadership structures are generally parallel on the national, regional, and district levels. A great deal of overlap of party and government leadership exists on all levels, particularly in the higher echelons. The transition to a multiparty state in 1992 has not altered this process significantly due to the continued dominance of the Revolutionary Party, the successor to TANU, in Tanzanian politics.

Political developments on Zanzibar were significantly less peaceful than on the mainland. The islands, ruled by an Omani sultanate since the early 19th century, became a British protectorate in 1890. When independence came on December 10, 1963, the island's politics was characterized by sharp antipathy between a minority Arab elite and the majority Africans, with a large mixed-race group, the Shiraz, split between the two camps.

Shortly after independence, the Arab-dominated government canceled elections, which the Afro-Shirazi Party (ASP) was expected to win easily. A bloody

revolution followed in January 1964, and the ASP, led by Abeid Karume, seized the government. Three months later, Karume arranged the union with Tanganyika. Karume ruled Zanzibar with a handful of men through the Zanzibar Revolutionary Council (ZRC). Their administration was marked by paranoia and corruption as well as violence against the Arab and Asian minorities.

The 1964 union was superficial as Karume made little attempt to work with Nyerere, was indifferent to TANU policies, and showed little interest in his own constitutional role as union vice president. Zanzibar remained politically and economically autonomous, while receiving more tangible political benefits from the union than did the mainland. The 1965 interim constitution dealt with issues primarily of concern to TANU and the mainland and had little application to Zanzibar.

Karume was assassinated in 1972 and was succeeded by Aboud Jumbe, who initiated steps to broaden the government's basis of power within Zanzibar. He strengthened the ASP and relegated many of the powers of the revolutionary council to the ASP and ministerial positions. In addition, Jumbe attempted to moderate abuses of power and curtail corruption. He proved more willing to cooperate with Nyerere, and the relationship between the two parts of the country significantly improved. Jumbe took his role as Tanzanian vice president seriously and became active in national politics. The rapprochement between Zanzibar and the mainland culminated in the merger of the ASP and TANU in 1977 into the Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM), also known as the Revolutionary Party, and represented the first step toward full national integration.

A political crisis instigated by Zanzibari pressure for a better deal under the Tanzanian constitution forced Jumbe's resignation early in 1984. Some Zanzibaris intended to use this conflict as the rationale to reestablish an independent state. The ruling Revolutionary Party selected Ali Hassan Mwinyi to fill the vacancy left by Jumbe's resignation. Mwinyi was later elected president of Zanzibar, which automatically qualified him to be nominated as vice president of Tanzania and vice chairman of the CCM.

On August 15, 1985, President Nyerere announced to delegates of a special congress of the ruling CCM that he had named Mwinyi as his successor and the sole candidate for the presidential election that was scheduled for October 27, 1985. Mwinyi was duly elected by 92.2 percent of the total votes cast and was sworn in as Tanzania's new president on November 5, 1985. During the swearing-in ceremony, Nyerere handed over to Mwinyi the instruments of power, including the country's 1984 constitution and the election manifesto of the CCM. Nyerere remained an important figure in the politics of the CCM until his death in 1999. President Mwinyi's new cabinet consisted of first vice president and prime minister, Joseph Warioba; second vice president, Idris Abdul Wakil; deputy prime minister and minister of defense, Salim Ahmed Salim, who later became the secretary-general of the Organization of African Unity; and 14 ministers and six ministers of state. Wakil had previously been elected Zanzibar president on October 15, 1985, to replace Mwinyi in that post. Nyerere retained the important position of chairman of the CCM, which allowed him to maintain dominance in Tanzanian politics.

Mwinyi continued the liberalization of the national economy following the failure of Tanzania's Socialist experiment. In 1989 Mwinyi assumed the defense minister portfolio. Zanzibari calls for independence continued despite the selection of Mwinyi as president of the union. Salim Amour, assuming the position of president of Zanzibar in 1990, discounted any referendum on independence for the island.

Political opposition to Mwinyi increased by 1990 with the formation of two groups, the Tanzanian Democratic Forum (based in London) and the Tanzanian Youth Democratic Movement. Nyerere resigned as chairman of the CCM in August 1990 and was replaced by Mwinyi. In 1991 leading Tanzanian political figures formed the Tanzanian Legal Education Trust and later the Union for Multiparty Democracy and Civic United Front to steer the country toward a multiparty political system. In February 1992 a special congress of the CCM ratified a constitutional amendment officially establishing a multiparty system for the state with a multiparty presidential election set for 1995.

Tanzania held multiparty elections for the presidency and parliament at the end of October 1995. Benjamin Mkapa represented the CCM in the election for the presidency since the constitution prohibited Mwinyi from seeking a third term. The 10 opposition parties, citing fraud, withdrew from the election after the first round of balloting and paved the way for Mkapa to become president. The opposition parties declared that they lacked confidence in the National Electoral Commission, and independent monitors described the process as chaotic. The voting in Dar es Salaam had to be repeated due to irregularities. CCM candidates received the majority of the seats in parliament. On Zanzibar, President Amour received a narrow majority of the vote (50.2 percent) to retain power on the island.

Tanzania's second multiparty elections occurred in October and November 2000. Tanzanians went to the polls on October 29, 2000, and reelected Mkapa to a second five-year term as president. Mkapa received 71.7 percent of the vote followed by Ibrahim Lipumba (16.3 percent), Augustine Mrema (7.8 percent), and John Cheyo (4.2 percent). CCM candidates won over 90 percent of the seats in the legislature. However, elections for the Zanzibari legislature were marred by accusations of voter intimidation and vote rigging. Commonwealth observers confirmed the charges, and Mkapa voided the election results for 16 seats. Opposition parties declared their intention to boycott the rescheduled election for those seats, citing the need to void the entire election process on the island. The November 5, 2000, voting resulted in a CCM victory for all 16 seats, leading to the party dominating the Zanzibari legislature. Political violence followed on Zanzibar and on Pemba, resulting in the deaths of at least 23 individuals and the expulsion of 16 boycotting CUF party members from the national parliament. In October 2001 the CCM and CUF signed a reconciliation agreement and in 2003 agreed to a formula for the selection of individuals to fill vacant seats in the legislature including those of the expelled CUF representatives.

The System of Government

Tanzania is a presidential republic with a unicameral legislature.

EXECUTIVE

Constitutionally, the president is head of state and commander of the armed forces. The president also held the position of CCM chairman prior to 1985 and after 1990. He has broad powers to arrest and pardon, to deport, and to dismiss students from the university. Former president Nyerere admitted that he had sufficient power under the constitution to be a dictator. He was, however, an extremely popular president who invoked his harsher powers only occasionally. The president is elected every five years by popular vote. Originally, a single presidential candidate was nominated by CCM. The political system now allows for multiple candidates representing a wide range of political parties.

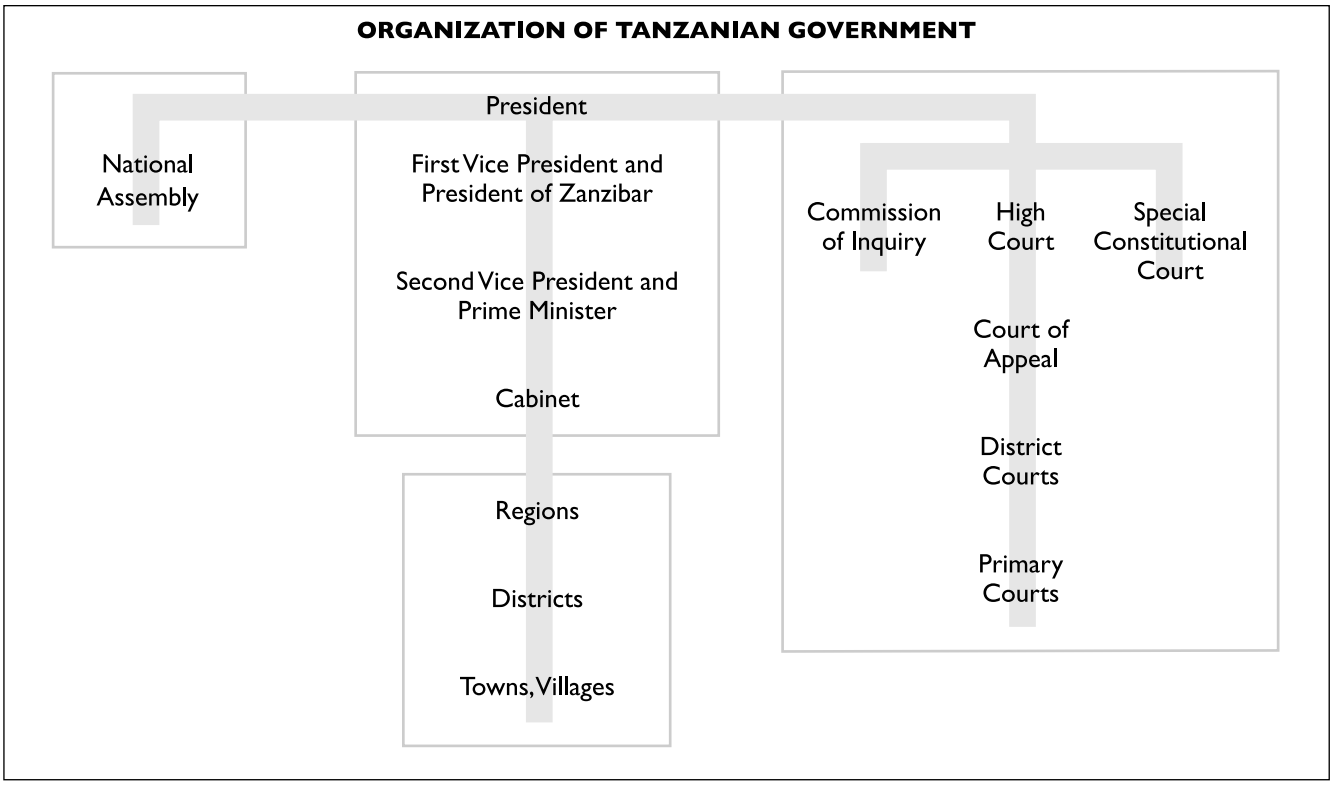
The president appoints two vice presidents. One vice president must be the president of Zanzibar unless the Tanzanian president is from Zanzibar, in which case the first vice president must be from the mainland. The president of Tanzania also appoints the prime minister of the union to serve as his second vice president. The prime minister of the union and all other ministers are selected from among the members of the National Assembly. The two vice presidents and the ministers constitute the cabinet, which is presided over by the president. The prime minister of the union represents the president in the National Assembly.

Newly independent Tanzania inherited a largely British civil service, but by the early 1970s over half of civil service posts were held by Africans. The civil service has grown immensely since independence, however, and still includes Asian and white Tanzanians. Many of the most educated and qualified people in Tanzania are in the civil service, attracted by relatively high salaries. Civil servants may run for political office only if they resign their positions after being nominated, but few choose to do so. As in most developing countries, the overall quality of the civil service is erratic. President Benjamin Mkapa's second, and last constitutional, term of office ended in October 2005. In presidential elections held in 2005 Jakaya Kikwete, who had long served as foreign minister, won the presidency.

LEGISLATURE

The National Assembly (Bunge) is a unicameral body that has legislative jurisdiction only for the mainland and for foreign affairs. Constitutionally, the president cannot legislate without the Assembly and must sign all bills of the legislature. If the president chooses to use his veto power, the Assembly may override him by a two-thirds majority vote. However, the Assembly is not a truly deliberative body that formulates legislation. It is, instead, an important forum of debate and a platform for broader explanation and defense of policy. It acts as a sounding board and a support gatherer, and its primary function, ultimately, is to ratify those policies. Recent changes and democratic reforms may eventually alter the political independence of the National Assembly. Nearly all major political figures in Tanzania are members of the National Assembly.

All members of the Assembly were originally required to be CCM party members in good standing. However, opposition political parties were legalized in 1992. Originally, if an Assembly member went too far in opposing party policy, he could be expelled from the party and automatically lose his Assembly seat. The party first asserted this authority in 1973 when a group of assemblymen rallied to defeat an income tax



bill that would have sharply increased their own taxes. Former president Nyerere used his powers as party chairman to expel some members of the group.

The National Assembly consists of 274 members: 232 members are elected directly from the mainland, 42 seats (some of which are reserved for women) are appointed, and 1 seat is allocated for the speaker. The prime minister of the union, who also holds the position of second vice president in the executive branch of government, leads government business in the Assembly.

The Zanzibar House of Representatives is responsible for legislation that pertains to the island. Of its 75 members, 50 delegates are elected by voters on Zanzibar, 10 seats are reserved for presidential nominees, 10 members are appointed from organizations affiliated with the CCM or must be women, and 5 seats are held for regional commissioners.

JUDICIARY

The Special Constitutional Court of the United Republic interprets the national constitution. Half of its members are selected by the national government and the other half by the government of Zanzibar. The High Court, located in Dar es Salaam, consists of a chief juctice appointed by the president and 29 additional justices appointed by the president after consultation with the chief justice. This body is the final court of appeals. There is also a national appeals court that was established in 1979 as a replacement for the Court of Appeals for East Africa. This Tanzanian Court of Appeals is presided over by a chief justice and four justices. The judicial system also includes primary and district courts. Magistrates are elected. The Zanzibari court system is organized in a similar manner as that of the national government. There are provisions for the inclusion of Islamic law within the Zanzibari system.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Tanzania is divided into 26 regions, including 21 on the mainland, 3 on Zanzibar, and 2 on Pemba. Each region contains from two to six districts. Top leadership on each level includes a representative of the government, a civil service head, and representatives of the CCM. Individual national ministries also have offices on each level.

There are over 8,000 registered villages, each with an assembly made up of everyone 18 years of age or older. The assembly elects 25 residents over age 21 to a village development council that can legally do anything

necessary for the economic and social development of the village. Unlike many countries in modern Africa, where traditional tribal structures often compete with the national government, no one ethnic group in Tanzania has sufficient political or economic power to stand against the government. Of the over 120 ethnic groups in Tanzania, the Sukuma is the largest and yet makes up only 13 percent of the population. The disintegration of the traditional ethnic organizations under German and British rule has deprived many groups of local power, and in most areas traditional functions have been taken over by the CCM party and government.

An important element of national government disintegration has been the attempts by some Zanzibari political leaders to secede from the union with mainland Tanganyika. Under the union, Zanzibar is autonomous except in areas of defense, foreign relations, domestic Tanzanian affairs, and finance.

The Electoral System

Each district elects one member to the National Assembly for a five-year term. There is universal adult (age 18) suffrage. Prior to the establishment of a multiparty state, nominees for directly elected seats in the Assembly were chosen at the district level by the party conference. A candidate had to be nominated by at least 25 registered voters in the district to be eligible for consideration by the district conference. The district conference then culled the list and passed it on to the national executive committee, which designated the two nominees who would finally compete for the seat. The committee attempted to take local preferences into account. Tanzania's first national multiparty election altered this system to allow genuine competition for seats.

The Party System

Between 1977 and 1992 two parties controlled the political system of Tanzania. The Tanganyika African Union (TANU) managed the government of the mainland (Tanganyika), while the Afro-Shirazi Party (ASP) did the same on Zanzibar. In 1977 these parties merged to form the CCM. Domestic and international pressure persuaded the CCM to allow Tanzania to evolve into a multiparty state in 1992. Opposition parties have yet to gain sufficient popular support to seriously challenge the CCM in national elections and have accused the CCM and government of election violations.

Major Political Parties

REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

(Chama Cha Mapinduzi; CCM)

HISTORY

Despite the official transformation of Tanzania to a multiparty system, the CCM is still the most important political party and dominates Tanzanian politics. The evolution of the CCM can be traced back to a group known in 1943 as the African Association, a social welfare organization formed by educated Africans. In 1948 this group evolved into the explicitly political Tanganyikan African Association (TAA). By July 1954 the TAA became the Tanganyikan African National Union (TANU), led by Julius K. Nyerere, an eloquent, British-educated teacher and political activist. The party adopted its current name when TANU and Zanzibar's ASP were united in 1977. Today, the party remains the most influential political organization in Tanzania.

The CCM dominated the October 2000 national elections by receiving 244 of the 274 elected and appointed seats in the National Assembly. Mkapa received 61.4 percent of the vote to capture the presidency of Tanzania. In elections held in December 2005, the party won 206 of the 232 elected seats. The party's presidential candidate, Jakaya Kikwete, likewise won an overwhelming victory. If multiparty democracy is allowed to survive in Tanzania, the CCM will remain the dominant party in the political system for the near future due to the extent of its grip on all elements of society. The CCM has seen the formation of at least two unofficial organizations that are attempting to attract party members on Zanzibar.

ORGANIZATION

CCM party organization has five levels: national, regional, district, branch, and cell. Local organization is not uniformly present or effective throughout the country. Parts of the country are not easily accessible, and illiteracy and nonparticipation in politics are higher in some areas than others. The party's presence and activities often depend on the attitudes and skills of local leaders.

The president generally serves as the chairman of CCM. He and the vice chairman are elected to five-year terms by the delegates to the party's national conference. Officially, they can be removed by two-thirds vote of both mainland and Zanzibari national conference members. A chief executive secretary and two

deputy chief executive secretaries are in charge of party administration.

Although the national conference is officially the supreme organ of CCM, policymaking and power are in the hands of the central committee, which meets at least twice a month, more frequently than any other national party organ. Its membership consists of the CCM chairman and vice chairman, 30 high-ranking party leaders nominated by the national executive committee (NEC), and up to 10 members nominated by the chairman. Four major standing subcommittees of the central committee oversee government activity, while a fifth supervises party activities. The central committee is also responsible for preparing the national executive committee agenda, reviewing candidates for leadership posts at all levels, appointing party secretaries and commissioners, routine party administration, and political education programs.

The NEC is the chief executive organ of the CCM. Officially, it decides on and initiates policy. However, its agenda is set by the central committee, and, in reality, it does little in the area of policy initiation. The NEC is a large body consisting of all central committee members, all regional chairmen and secretaries, all chairmen and secretaries of the designated mass organizations, 20 members from the mainland elected by the national conference, and 20 from Zanzibar elected by the Zanzibar revolutionary council. The NEC, then, is made up of the inner ruling group and a sizable body of middle-level party officials. The body meets every six months.

The NEC's primary function is to review central committee decisions. It monitors the conduct and performance of party members and has the power to dismiss members from leadership positions. It also granted final approval to the nominations of candidates for the National Assembly prior to 1992. Decisions in the NEC are made by consensus or, failing that, by majority vote of those present and voting. Decisions on the relationship between Zanzibar and the mainland require the approval of two-thirds of both the mainland and Zanzibari delegations.

The national conference meets once every five years and is, formally, the supreme organ of CCM. The infrequency of its meetings and its size make it difficult for the conference to be a genuine policy-making body, and it has become less important over the years. The conference functions mainly to confirm or repudiate any decision of any organ or officer of the party. It is also the body that is responsible for amending the constitution and electing the chairman and vice chairman of the party.

The conference is chaired by the party chairman and consists of all the members of the executive committee, all members of the Assembly, all members of the Zanzibar revolutionary council, all district chairmen and secretaries, 10 members elected from each party district conference, and 1 member from each designated mass organization.

The conference has two standing committees, in which the power of party is outstandingly clear. The first committee consists of all CCM members of the Assembly. Its responsibility is to ensure implementation of party policies in parliament. The second committee consists of all members of the Zanzibar revolutionary council and is responsible for ensuring that party policies are carried out in Zanzibar.

Regional and district boundaries are the same for both the party organization and the government. Party responsibility for each region or district is in the hands of a secretary who is appointed by the national party chairman. The secretary convenes all meetings of party organs in his area. Regional and district chairmen are elected to five-year terms by regional and district conferences. They preside over working committees responsible for the routine administration of party affairs and over executive committees, which supervise defense, security, and developmental affairs in the area and monitor the conduct of party members and government institutions. Responsibility for approving nominees for party leadership at the next lowest level falls to the working committees. Both bodies contain representatives of the next lower level of party organization; the executive committees also include the National Assembly members of the region or district and representatives of the designated mass organizations. The working committees meet at least every two weeks, the executive committees every six months.

Regional and district conferences meet every 30 months to elect the regional and district chairmen and representatives to the working and executive committees. The district conference also elects representatives to the regional and national conferences. While these bodies are formally the supreme organs of the party in the regions and districts, they function more to promote party cohesiveness and facilitate the transmission of party objectives to the local, or branch, level.

Party branches are of three types: those formed of whole villages, those formed in the workplace (industrial), and those formed in the larger towns and cities (ward). A branch is supposed to have at least 50 members. The branch secretary is appointed by the party's central committee, while the branch chairman is elected by all branch members (in large branches by all

cell leaders) for a five-year term. The branch executive committee membership includes the chairman, the secretary, six persons elected by the branch, all district conference members in the branch, and representatives of designated mass organizations in the branch. The committee's primary function is to transmit and explain party directives to the rank and file and to convey local public opinion up the ladder to the higher organs of the party. Larger branches are divided into cells that have primary responsibility for neighborhood and workplace security and political education.

The CCM includes five designated mass organizations (DMOs): the youth organization, the union of Tanzanian women, the union of Tanzanian workers, the union of cooperative societies, and the Tanzanian parents association. The DMOs replaced the independent unions and organizations of the 1960s. Their primary function is the political mobilization of the people under the CCM umbrella. Each mass organization can make rules governing its own operation, but the rules must be approved by the party's national executive committee. Their activities are conducted under the supervision of the party central committee. The organizations are represented on all levels of party organization and in the National Assembly while their chief officers are appointed by the party chairman or the central committee.

UJAAMA POLICY

To avoid what Nyerere saw as the negative aspects of industrialization—inequality between rural and urban areas, the development of an economic elite, and consumerism—the party has emphasized rural development. In 1967, in a landmark speech known as the Arusha Declaration, Nyerere formally put forth his alternative to industrialization. He provided an "ideology" called "African Socialism" based on *ujaama*, which is translated literally from Swahili as "familyhood." *Ujaama*, in the sense that Nyerere used it, referred to a pattern of equality, cooperation, interdependence, and sharing that he believes to be characteristic of traditional African families and rural communities.

Ujaama villages, as opposed to the traditional isolated *shambas* (small farms), were to be the foundation on which the Tanzanian society and economy would be built. They would be cooperative communities in which the majority of Tanzanian citizens would live and share scarce agricultural equipment and health and education facilities. Economically, cooperative farming was supposed to be more efficient. In addition, citizens living in villages would be easier to mobilize politically.

Among the other policies introduced at this time, "self-reliance" and a leadership code were the most important. "Self-reliance" was a slogan developed to discourage Tanzanians from being excessively reliant on foreign and government assistance. A strict leadership code was adopted to stem corruption and elitism among government leaders.

Policy implementation in both sections of the country did not proceed smoothly. People did not flock to the *ujaama* villages, and in some cases, officials resorted to force to meet their quotas for advancing *ujaama*. The government sometimes used force to remove rural migrants from urban areas where a new, moderate industrialization policy led to a demand for labor.

The overall economic situation in Tanzania became dismal following the implementation of economic Socialism. Crop production was stymied by droughts and ineffective cooperative organization. Agricultural production is estimated to have declined by as much as 50 percent following the implementation of the dislocations. International market prices for Tanzanian export crops have remained low, while prices for imported necessities, especially oil and fertilizers, have remained high. A difficult foreign exchange problem, therefore, became worse and not better while Tanzania became more dependent on foreign aid. In recent years Tanzania has slowly reversed its Socialist experiment and moved toward a system based on free-market incentives.

MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY

No reliable figures are available for CCM's membership. It is a mass, not an elite or a "vanguard," party and is not interested in excluding people. Any citizen 18 or older can apply for membership after taking a course of instruction in the party creed, policy, and objectives. The citizen's application is considered by the branch executive committee, which forwards its recommendation to the district executive committee. This body has the power to accept or reject applicants, but rejected applicants can reapply. If members are dismissed for poor conduct, they can reapply later.

Top leaders of the party seem to truly desire broad support for party policies. Efforts have been made to decentralize the party (as well as the government), to delegate responsibility, and to encourage debate within the membership as long as the basic policies of socialism and egalitarianism are not questioned. Communication between and among party levels appears to be encouraged and is facilitated by the extensive overlap of leaders from the local to the national level. In fact, the party is highly centralized, and its policies require national direction.

Party members must pay an inexpensive entrance fee and monthly dues. Given the intermingling of party and government affairs and personnel, it is probably safe to assume that most party activities are heavily subsidized by the government.

LEADERSHIP

The party leader and president of Tanzania is Jakwaya Kikwete, the former foreign minister who won the 2005 election to replace outgoing president Benjamin Mkapa.

Minor Political Parties

CIVIC UNITED FRONT (CUF)

CUF became an official nationally recognized political party on January 21, 1993. Also known as the Peoples' Party, it is the most powerful party opposing the CCM. CUF's power base is on Zanzibar. CUF is a divided political organization that managed to secure the second highest number of seats (19 of the 232 directly elected seats) in the National Assembly in the 2005 elections. The party's chairman and presidential candidate, Ibrahim Lipumba, received 11 percent of the popular vote and finished second overall in the 2005 presidential balloting.

PARTY FOR DEMOCRACY AND PROGRESS

(Chama Cha Demokrasia na Maendeleo, CHADEMA)

CHADEMA, led by Bob Makini, became an official nationally recognized political party on January 21, 1993, and held four seats in the National Assembly after the 2000 elections. Its support held steady in the 2005 elections.

Other Political Forces

MILITARY

The military in Tanzania does not play an important role in politics. However, in 1964 the military staged a revolt, taking over communications in the former capital city of Dar es Salaam, forcing the president to flee, and sparking violence in the streets. The military took this action to protest the slow Africanization of the officer corps and to demand higher wages. The revolt was quickly put down with the help of the British, and the military was subsequently reorganized. Nothing similar has occurred since, but the army probably retains a potential for disruptive action if it becomes sufficiently dissatisfied.

The military is commanded by the president and is subordinate to the government. Total armed forces in 2003 were 27,000, which includes an estimated 23,000 in the army. There is also an 80,000-member citizen's militia.

National Prospects

One of the greatest issues facing the state continues to be the demands for dissolution of the union. Mainlanders resent what they perceive as increasing Islamic interference from Zanzibar in the Tanzanian government as well as costly government subsidies to the island. Zanzibaris desire to regain their complete political and economic freedom from the union. Many mainlanders are calling for the formation of a third government in the state to represent Tanganyika as a separate entity in the union in the same manner as the Zanzibari government. The establishment of a separate Tanganyikan government would probably herald the first step toward disintegration of the union.

The CCM party still maintains a strong political hold on the state. However, at any point the CCM party could feel threatened and use its political clout to negate the constitutional amendment establishing a multiparty democracy in Tanzania. Dissatisfied elements within other political parties could also move to seize the government and/or eliminate the political competition if they can acquire adequate political/military backing. However, such a situation is remote at this time, since Tanzania has now held three successive multiparty elections.

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KINGDOM OF THAILAND

(Ratchaanachak Thai)

By Robert A. Dayley, Ph.D.



The Kingdom of Thailand is located in the heart of mainland Southeast Asia covering an area of 514,000 square kilometers (335,500 square miles). Geographically, it is cradled by Myanmar, Laos, and Cambodia to the west, north, and east, respectively; and by the Gulf of Thailand, the Andaman Sea, and Malaysia to the south. The kingdom is populated by 65 million people (2005 est.), 75 percent of whom are ethnically Thai (predominantly Buddhist); the remaining 25 percent include a large segment of highly assimilated Chinese (14 percent), a small segment of Malay-speaking Muslims (3 percent), and a number of small, non-Thai-speaking populations, many of whom live traditional lifestyles in the mountainous areas of the north.

As a political entity, the Kingdom of Thailand (formerly Siam) was the only country in the region to escape European colonialism. Thailand's legacy of kingship, independence, and Buddhism created a political culture grounded in reverence for "nation, religion, and king." In 1932 the absolute monarchy was directly challenged by nationalist revolutionaries in a bloodless coup and replaced by a constitutional monarchy. Thailand has since experienced periods of elected and nonelected governance, the latter often following successful military coups. Between 1932 and 1991 the country experienced 10 successful coups and seven coup attempts. Indeed, the frequency of coups has led scholars to characterize Thai political history as a "vicious cycle" patterned by a coup d'état, military rule, constitutional reform, general elections, parliamentary governance, political crisis, another coup d'état, resumption of military rule, and so forth. Thailand's bureaucracy, significant even before 1932, was the key institution of stability amidst this cycle of coups. Appropriately labeled a "bureaucratic polity" by Western and Thai scholars alike, Thailand's day-to-day political life was dominated by bureaucratic and military institutions for many decades.

Although Thailand experienced, on average, one coup every five years between 1932 and 1979, only one successful coup has occurred since that time. Over time, democratic practice in Thailand has gradually consolidated through longer periods of elected rule and peaceful transitions of power from government to government. The military's presence in politics and policymaking slowly declined as the political position of big business and the middle class grew with rapid economic development. Thailand's boom economy (from 1986 to 1995) brought with it new challenges to democratic development. In 1988 the election of a civilian prime minister, Chatichai Choonhavan, was viewed by many as a move toward greater democratization. Chatichai was a successful businessman who symbolized Thailand's economic dynamism. However, a successful military coup led by Suchinda Kraiprayoon in 1991 proved to be a setback for electoral politics. In the eyes of the public, corrupt politicians shared the blame with the military for the coup. Elections in March 1992 saw Suchinda's new political party Samakhitham win a majority victory. Two months later street protests against Suchinda's government resulted in a

violent military crackdown followed by an intervention by the king and a collapse of the government. A second round of general elections in September of that same year pitted "devil parties" (what the press called those who were part of the collapsed Suchinda government) against "angel parties" (those not associated or formerly allied with Suchinda).

During the 1990s Thailand's political system underwent significant reform. Where military and bureaucratic power once inhibited democratization, official corruption and "money politics" began to characterize the polity's still developing parliamentary institutions. Political power increasingly followed successful businessmen rather than high-ranking generals and bureaucrats. Ministerial posts in the cabinet, granted as spoils in an election victory, evolved into coveted offices in which lucrative deals were brokered between the public and private sectors. Public opinion was often sidelined. Frequent changes in government became the norm. Built from multiparty coalitions, elected governments during this period became vulnerable to division and collapse. Coalition infighting and intraparty factionalism produced a system characterized by cabinet reshuffles, no-confidence motions, political scandals, and frequent dissolution of parliament. Critics within and without Thailand labeled the democratic system "chaotic," "anarchic," and "ungovernable."

Few Thais question democracy in principle. More challenging has been establishing a functioning democratic system that is legitimate, durable, and devoid of widespread corruption. As a result of political instability in the 1990s, a push for political reform swept the national consciousness. In 1996 the Constitutional Drafting Assembly (CDA) was formed. CDA membership included one representative from each of Thailand's 76 provinces and 23 additional professional experts. As the constitution reform process picked up momentum, a new event shook Thailand's system. In an episode of national embarrassment, a regional-wide economic crisis was triggered in mid-1997 by Thailand's shaky and politically tied financial system. It was amidst this financial crisis, and the government instability that followed it, that a new constitution was finalized and adopted in late 1997.

Written with the input of citizens, NGOs, and civil society, and approved by the King, the "People's Constitution" is currently awarded a degree of popular legitimacy beyond Thailand's 15 previous constitutions—documents typically drafted by victorious military coup groups. Created with the intent to make significant changes to the country's political and electoral system, the charter focused on certain goals: stable government; more efficient law-making; more accountable elected representatives; decentralization of power; reduced political corruption; and eradication of the widespread practice of vote-buying during elections. Although many pre-1997 features of Thailand's political system continue to characterize Thai political life, the adoption of the 1997 constitution marks a turning point in what can be understood as Thailand's current political system.

The System of Government

Thailand is a constitutional monarchy with a bicameral legislature.

EXECUTIVE

As a constitutional monarchy, Thailand's reigning monarch is the country's head of state. The head of government and chief executive of the Thai democratic regime is the prime minister. Both institutions play central roles in wielding power, the former through moral authority and informal cultural power, the latter through constitutional authority situated in a parliamentary system dominated by personality-based political parties and a traditionally strong bureaucracy.

The preeminent political and cultural institution in Thailand is the monarchy. Dating from the 18th century, the Chakri dynasty has ruled through nine successive monarchs. In spite of the loss of absolute power in 1932, the significance of the monarch remains unmatched by any other actor in Thailand. The legitimacy of the Thai state, and each of its governments, emanates from the throne. Civil servants (*kharatchakan*) are literally the "servants of the crown." Under the reign of Thailand's current monarch, King Bhumibol Adulyadej (1946–present), the prestige and power of the monarchy have grown. Over time, the king has become an active force while skillfully managing to "stay above politics." On occasion, when the country seems to need his influence most, the king uses his power to help resolve national crises (e.g., civilian-military clashes in 1973 and 1992; a leadership crisis in 1997; nationwide flooding in 1980, 1983, and 1995). The king also wields influence in many areas of policymaking through the Royal Crown Property Bureau and through various developmental initiatives under sponsorship of the crown. The members of the

king's Privy Council are generally politically connected senior officials who also wield informal power as a result of their advisory role.

Since 1932 executive authority in Thailand has generally rested with the prime minister. Over time the actual power of the prime minister has waxed and waned vis-à-vis the power of the military, the bureaucracy, the parliament, and the cabinet. During periods of military rule, nonelected prime ministers exercised power with relative ease while elected prime ministers necessarily proceeded more carefully to avoid upsetting the military and coalition partners or risk government collapse. Following the period of government instability during the first half of the 1990s, a degree of political stability now characterizes the office. It is difficult to determine, however, the extent to which personality and political style, as opposed to constitutional reforms, are indeed responsible for the recent strengthening of executive power. Prime Minister Thaksin Shinnawatra, elected in 2001 and again in 2005, for example, has successfully fused his personal biography, charismatic personality, and parliamentary majority to enhance the power of the office.

Thailand's traditionally powerful bureaucracy remains an important arm of executive power. The Council of Ministers, or cabinet, falls under the authority of the prime minister who appoints ministers and deputy-ministers. Cabinet portfolios vested with authority to manage bureaucratic ministries and departments are appointed by the prime minister and remain the focus of much political party activity. In an effort to rationalize the bureaucratic system, the number of government ministries was reduced in 2002 from 40 to 20; the number of appointed cabinet seats, however, remained the same.

LEGISLATURE

Thailand has experimented with various forms of unicameral and bicameral legislatures since 1932. In a system where legislative lawmaking is slow and cabinet policymaking can be swift, Thai parliaments have been politically weak relative to executive institutions.

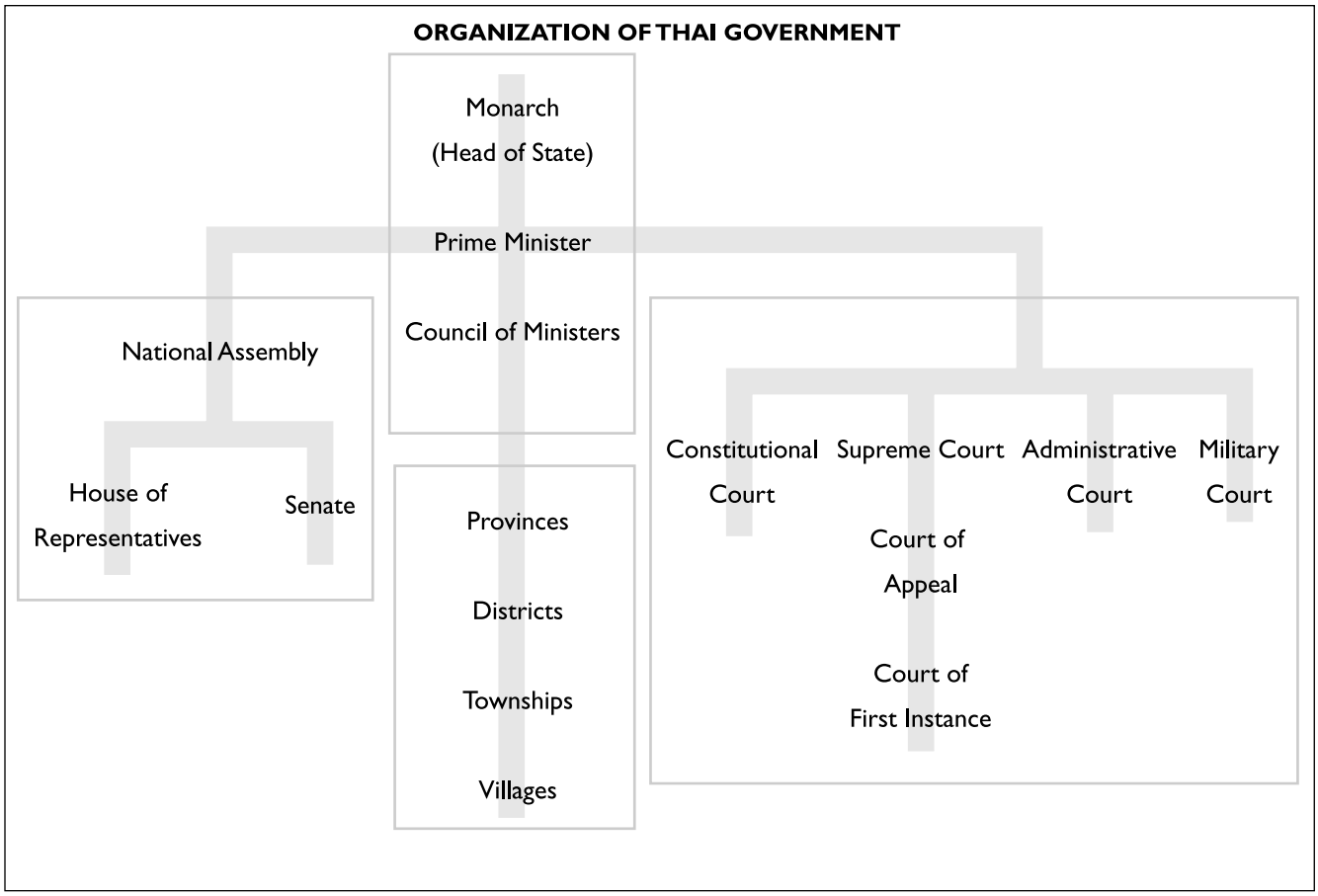
From 1979 to 1997 the Thai National Assembly (Rathasapha) was bicameral with a four-year term for elected members of the House of Representatives (Sapha Phuthaen Ratsadorn) and overlapping six-year terms for members appointed to a less powerful Senate (Wuthi Sapha). Full terms for elected members in Thailand were never met, however, because governments collapsed or parliaments were dissolved before terms expired. Ongoing parliamentary instability consequently became a focus of constitutional reformers. These reformers blamed Thailand's parliamentary instability on the use of multimember electoral districts, loose rules regarding party affiliation, and the ease of motioning for no-confidence votes, among other things. To strengthen the National Assembly, the 1997 constitution adopted significant changes to the electoral system and the legislature.

The new charter created a German-style mixed system of electoral representation for a 500-member House: 100 candidates elected from party lists and 400 from single-member districts, each serving a four-year term. Political parties must receive 5 percent of the national vote to qualify for party list membership. Parties with more than 5 percent of the total vote are awarded seats proportional to their national vote totals. The rationale for adopting party lists was to encourage political parties to put forward highly qualified individuals for policymaking but who might lack the skills needed for success in traditional head-to-head election races.

The Senate, formerly appointed, is now elected. It differs considerably in makeup and purpose from the House. The Senate includes 200 members elected for six-year terms under a simple majority system. Candidates for the Senate must be nonpartisan and are not allowed to campaign in any form except though self-introduction leaflets and state-sponsored public appearances. Moreover, during campaigns, discussion of policy issues is disallowed but nonpolitical introductions about a candidate's background are permitted. If elected, senators are not allowed to run for two consecutive terms. The constitution states that the Senate's role is not to support the majority government but to act as a check on the partisan-based politics of the House. Under the new constitution, the Senate is also granted powers of selecting or endorsing appointed officials in many of the government's most authoritative bodies, including, for example, the Constitutional Court and the National Counter-Corruption Commission.

Under the new charter all candidates for parliament (except former MPs and senators) must also hold a bachelor's degree. To discourage "party hopping" before elections, candidates for the House must also be affiliated with a party for at least 90 days before standing as a party candidate. No-confidence motions, so routine in the past, now require a larger number of supporters as well as serious nomination of an alternative prime minister.

Voting is now officially compulsory in national elections—although enforcement of this requirement



remains uncertain (roughly 30 percent of eligible voters did not vote in the 2001 general election). Polls are administered by the Senate-appointed Election Commission, a new creation of the 1997 constitution. Formerly, this important governmental function was housed within the Ministry of Interior and subject to political pressure, particularly by the incumbent government. The charter also strengthened the National Counter-Corruption Commission (NCCC) and established new rules regarding the disclosure of each candidate's assets and wealth.

JUDICIARY

Prior to 1997 judicial power in Thailand was not fully independent of political power. Thai constitutions always reserved powers for senior politicians and bureaucrats to interpret law and its constitutionality. The 1997 constitution declares the constitution as the basis for all law under which political and administrative leaders derive authority. Judicial review, for the first time, is now independent of executive and legislative authority. Thailand's old system, vulnerable to "rule by law," is gradually being replaced by a new system designed to move toward the "rule of law."

Four types of courts exist under the 1997 constitution: The Constitutional Court, the Administrative Court, the Military Court, and the Court of Justice. The Constitutional Court is newly created to adjudicate the constitutionality of laws and to interpret other constitutional questions. It comprises 15 members appointed by the king upon advice of the Senate. The first set of 15 judges was appointed through a complex process that involved not only the Senate but also the members of the Supreme Court and the Administrative Court. The Administrative Court, also newly created, renders judgment on disputes between the private sector and state organs. The Military Court adjudicates cases that fall within its jurisdiction according to the 1955 Act for the Organization of the Military Court.

Most civil and criminal cases in Thailand fall under the jurisdiction of the Court of Justice. It is organized into three levels: the Supreme Court, Courts of Appeals, and Courts of First Instance. The 1997 constitution removed the administrative powers of the

Ministry of Justice over the judicial system and created a new Office of the Judiciary. This office is independent from the ruling government, thus insulating courts from political interference. It is headed by a secretary-general who reports to the president of the Supreme Court.

Despite constitutional changes to the judicial system, the rule of law in Thailand is often challenged by a status-oriented political culture in which both deference to power is strong and the exercise of power is often viewed as justifying itself. To a certain degree, the rule of law ideal espoused in the 1997 constitution has yet to be fully realized in practice. Extrajudicial actions by Thai police and governmental authorities in the areas of drugs and terrorism are not uncommon and draw the attention of local and international human rights advocates. In addition, almost as soon as it was created, the Constitutional Court experienced challenges to its legitimacy following a highly politicized judge selection process and a number of controversial cases (one involving the removal of a deputy prime minister and another exonerating the prime minister of charges of campaign fraud).

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Thailand's once highly centralized system of local government has recently been somewhat decentralized as a result of the 1997 constitution. Budget authority and autonomy have been expanded at the local level, although features of central control remain. Two traditionally powerful bureaucratic institutions oversee local administration: the Ministry of Interior and its own Department of Local Administration (DOLA). Under DOLA fall the administrative divisions of provinces (*changwat*—76 total), districts (*amphoe*), townships (*tambon*), and villages (*mubaan*). Provincial governors, district heads, and many other local officials are appointed by the Ministry of Interior. Because many of the central ministries and departments are represented at the district level and because everyday services rendered to the people are carried out by district officers, district offices are generally the most important units or local administration. At the village level, the elected leaders of groups of households (*phuuyaibaan*) are also key figures in linking the government to the people and vice versa.

At the local level are also various forms of self-government: provincial administration organizations, municipalities, sanitary districts, *tambon* administration organizations, and special administrative bodies for Bangkok and Pattaya City. These governments are led by or associated with elected councils and have charge or share in providing services at the local level.

The Electoral System

The Thai electoral system is based on universal suffrage for citizens over 18 (changed from 21 in 1995). Prior to the adoption of the 1997 constitution, elections to the House of Representatives were based on multimember districts where voters could cast one to three votes depending on the constituency's allotment of seats. The new electoral system, used for the first time in January 2001, gives each voter two ballots: a party-list ballot and a single-member district ballot. That election included 37 parties and over 3,700 candidates for the 500 seat assembly. New elections were held in 2005.

Voter turnout in Thai elections is generally strong; typically higher than most established democracies. In the last seven elections the percentage of Thais at the polls averaged between 60–70 percent for each election.

RESULTS OF 2005 GENERAL ELECTION

Party	House Seats
Thai Rak Thai	375
Democrat	96
Chart Thai	26
Mahachon	3
Total	500

The Party System

Over 150 political parties have been created in Thailand since 1932. Most of the parties were built around particular individuals rather than policy platforms and never experienced a succession of leadership. In the three-year period of political openness in the mid-1970s, no less than 60 parties were created before the suspension of democracy in 1976. When parties were again legalized for elections in 1979, only six former parties reemerged, along with seven new ones. Since that election the number of parties contesting for elections remained in the low teens until 2001, when

37 parties competed. Although the number of parties is relatively high, the number of "effective parties"—those with real potential to gain control of the government or effectively oppose parties in control—is low. Only four to six parties were effective parties in each of Thailand's seven elections since 1983. Only two parties exist today that were formed in the late 1970s: the Democrat Party (Prachatipat) and Thai Nation Party (Chart Thai). Both of these parties are institutionalized beyond the personalities that created them and have experienced multiple changes in party leadership.

Thailand's other major parties emerged more recently out of Thailand's economic boom and the rise of a prominent business class. Old-style networks that tied political families together with military and bureaucratic elites are somewhat fading to new networks of business leaders and politicians. Family name can still carry one far in the political system although many are now entering politics as a result of individual skill and political acumen.

Although political parties in Thailand can be classified on a left-right political spectrum, fierce competition for seats in parliament has required parties to lean toward pragmatism over ideology. In this respect, Thai parties are similar to the "catchall parties" that tend to dominate politics in many established democracies.

To a large degree Thailand's party system may be conceived of as an informal system dominated by personalities, networks, and party factions. It can also be characterized as a vibrant multiparty system where patronage politics and factional loyalties are of greater importance than ideology and party cohesion. The electoral fortunes of Thailand's longtime established parties continue to center on the ability of party leaders to keep important factions from splitting off for political opportunism. Because the spoils of victory (cabinet positions) are so coveted, many politicians and political factions pursue a minimal winning coalition strategy rather that try to build a large-scale party around an ideologically based platform. A minimal winning coalition strategy leaves more cabinet positions open for fewer coalition party leaders. From the perspective of many Thai politicians, a willingness to switch parties (a.k.a. "party hopping") improves the odds of portfolio appointments and patronage opportunities for oneself and for core faction members. Many party leaders do not aggressively attempt a national electoral strategy. Instead, they seek to secure a reliable base of voters that will reelect them in spite of what party title they may happen to champion in a given election. In general, the key element in electoral success for all parties is mobilizing votes during campaigns, not in developing local-level branches between elections. These longtime strategies are being challenged by the new Thai Rak Thai Party.

Thai political parties are organized from the top down. Although grassroots party participation exists during elections, Thai parties are elite rather than mass organizations. Recent attempts to create mass-based parties failed to reach intended goals. The Moral Force Party (Palang Dharma), founded in the late 1980s, was initially successful in mobilizing an active party membership. But party leadership was gradually taken over by business interests, and the party assumed the elite character of other Thai parties. The New Aspiration Party, founded in 1990, also made an attempt to develop grassroots party organizations but quickly learned that electoral success in Thailand was possible without them. In its long history, the Democrat Party has also attempted, with variable success, to establish local-level branches. More recently, Thaksin Shinawatra's Thai Rak Thai (TRT) experienced unprecedented electoral success that indicates broad mass appeal. However, much of TRT's electoral success in 2001 was built on wooing proven candidates rather than through grassroots organization. Indeed, during that electoral race, no party fielded as many former MPs as did the newly created TRT. In any event, the strategy worked, and in 2005 TRT won an even more resounding victory in the legislative elections.

Before the 1997 constitution, campaign contributions in Thailand were not monitored by law or by any governmental electoral commission. Consequently, the nexus between financial support and political campaigning was of critical importance in Thai politics. Large business groups in Thailand backed political parties with huge sums of money during campaigns. Because electoral outcomes were uncertain, many business groups diversified their campaign donation "portfolio" (as wise investors do) to protect themselves. Political parties opened themselves to donations and reciprocated the transaction through a variety of means: allowing business executives to run on the party's ticket, articulating the donor's policy preferences after the election, and securing government contracts for supporters. Under the 1997 constitution a new electoral commission, with prosecutorial powers, was established to run elections and make campaign finances and practices more transparent to the public.

During election campaigns, parties use campaign money for various legal and illegal campaign practices. One such illegal practice, "vote buying" (or "vote selling," depending on one's perspective), is so widespread

it is virtually institutionalized. According to many reports the practice of vote buying continues in spite of mechanisms in the new constitution to curtail it. In practice, vote buying begins with a campaign network somewhat similar to a standard canvassing operation. The methods used, however, vary by degrees in considering what is fair and democratic. Candidates and parties will mobilize "vote leaders" (*huakanaen*) to contact voters and persuade them to pledge their votes in exchange for gifts, food, campaign promises, and cash. Voters are also given such rewards in exchange for attending campaign rallies and political events. By exploiting existing social relations that tie voters to educational, governmental, religious, and other local leaders—including mafia godfathers (*jao pho*). A skilled *huakanaen* can often mobilize entire communities or villages to support a single party.

Parties compete for voters by offering higher and higher sums of cash per vote. During the 1995 and 1996 general elections, votes reportedly multiplied their previous value—from 25–50 baht ($1–$2) to 100–500 baht ($4–$20). During the first election under the new constitution in 2001, the going rate was typically 500 baht ($12.50) and often as high as 1,000 baht ($25). The Thai Farmers Research Center estimated that parties spent 25 percent more in 2001 than in 1996 on the entire campaign, including vote-buying activities. Such evidence proved disappointing to reformers hoping new electoral rules would eliminate vote buying. In fact, most parties learned to get around new rules by allocating vote-buying funds before the national assembly was dissolved and campaigning became official, when such contributions are viewed as gifts rather than vote buying.

Although the new constitution is not fully effective in preventing vote-buying, the practice has never been as universally condemned and closely monitored as it is today. Organizations not connected with the government, such as PollWatch and P-Net (People's Network for Elections in Thailand), play an increasingly important watchdog role during elections by producing evidence of rule violations and encouraging candidates to comply with electoral rules. The Election Commission now issues "red cards" and "yellow cards" to candidates who disregard or violate campaigning rules. The amounts candidates and parties spend on vote buying and standard electoral practices are extremely high.

People debate the effectiveness of vote buying in Thai elections. Political parties generally view it as a necessary and expected practice from the voters. Political reformers and Thailand's urban middle class seek to eradicate the practice, labeling it undemocratic and corrupt. Others argue, however, that voters who sell their votes are less interested in the cash than in pledging their vote as an investment for patronage benefits between elections in the form of new roads, bridges, schools, and irrigation systems. According to this view, voters who sell their votes are merely maximizing their self-interest as all voters do.

Widespread vote buying aside, Thai elections are generally free from gross electoral fraud. In recent years, electoral campaigns in Thailand have taken on characteristics similar to ones in other democracies: opinion polls are conducted, publicized, and manipulated; campaign advertisements flood the television and air waves; formal debates between party leaders are held and widely watched; even pop stars and public figures are used by parties to promote candidates or to run for office directly. In general, the press operates freely during campaigns and candidates speak their minds without fear of physical retribution. Campaign-related violence, when it does happen, taints particular races but not the legitimacy of elections as a whole.

Major Political Parties

THAI RAK THAI

(Thais Love Thais)

The Thai Rak Thai Party (TRT) was formed by Dr. Thaksin Shinawatra in 1997 and has since become the most important political party in Thailand. Thai Rak Thai represents both old-style Thai politics—characterized by charismatic party leaders, autocratic tendencies, and political factionalism—and "post-1997" Thai politics—characterized by rising nationalism and impatience with politics-as-usual due to Thailand's economic crisis, and by changing electoral politics due to constitutional reform.

At the peak and center of Thai Rak Thai is Thaksin Shinawatra. The story of Thaksin's political ascendance prior to the creation of TRT is interwoven with the party's rapid and unprecedented electoral success. To a certain degree, Thaksin the individual is more significant politically than the party itself. Unlike the Democrat Party and Chart Thai parties, which have stood the test of time and experienced changes in party leadership, TRT and Thaksin are virtually synonymous. It remains to be seen if this new and formidable party will become institutionalized in Thailand's party system. TRT's initial popularity and success, however, suggest the party would indeed need to experience a

surprising and spectacular collapse before its grip on political power in Thailand is lost.

Thaksin's political rise can be attributed to financial success in the private sector and the cultivation of a can-do, take-charge image in the public sector. Thaksin is a former official in the national police with a doctorate in criminal justice from Sam Houston State University (1978). Born in 1949, Thaksin is reputedly Thailand's richest man. His business fortune was built on a combination of high demand for communications technology and restricted government concessions awarded to his companies to meet this demand. Through aggressive entrepreneurship Thaksin's businesses led Thailand during it boom years selling computers, mobile phones, pagers, satellite communications, and the systems that support them. Before entering politics Thaksin's fame as a telecommunications tycoon was well known by the Thai public.

Thaksin's initial venture into politics helped to define his image as a non-traditional politician from outside the system. In the early 1990s he joined Chamlong Srimuang's Palang Dharma Party (Moral Force Party), a new party with a clean, outside-the-system reputation grounded in Buddhist values. The party, similar to TRT later, offered to voters a vague populist policy platform. When the party faded in parallel with Chamlong's own political career, Thaksin emerged as an important face of Palang Dharma. In a somewhat surprising move, Palang Dharma joined Banharn Silaparcha's less than reputable Chat Thai–led government coalition in 1995. Thaksin was awarded a post as deputy prime minister on the promise that he could alleviate Bangkok's traffic woes in less than six months. In spite of visible efforts, the traffic problem was not alleviated. Thaksin salvaged his image somewhat in 1996 by taking the moral high-ground and engineering a partial pull out of Palang Dharma from Banharn's corrupt and discredited government before its collapse. Palang Dharma faded from the scene after Thaksin left the party. He formed TRT just as Thailand's economic crisis was taking shape.

From 1997 to 2000 Thaksin was without a prominent position in government and stood to gain politically from criticizing those in power for bungling Thailand's recovery from the Asian economic crisis. By the end of the Democrat Party's term in 2000, the timing was perfect for an alternative party to emerge. The Chart Thai and the New Aspiration parties were tainted with causing Thailand's economic woes, and the Democrats were tainted with failing to pull Thailand out of it more quickly. Into this political vacuum stepped the untainted Thaksin.

Using a populist platform built on a resurgent mood of nationalism in the country, the newly form TRT attracted numerous sitting MPs eager to dump their discredited parties and attach themselves to Thaksin's rising star. A ruling by the Election Commission to suspend the new constitution's 90-day party-hoping rule benefited Thaksin's recruitment efforts tremendously. The fact that Thaksin's private fortunes left little question about TRT financial backing was another significant pull factor. As for the electorate, rural voters were promised that each of Thailand's 70,000 villages would receive a 1 million baht development grant and that farmers would be provided debt relief. Urban elites too were promised by Thaksin the creation of a quasi-governmental debt restructuring body and that Thailand would distance itself from the unpopular IMF. TRT's first election in January 2001 brought the party only three seats short of an outright majority. The seat count gave TRT almost double that of the rival Democrats. It was an unprecedented showing for any party in recent Thai politics.

Following victory, Thaksin pursued an organizational strategy to build a "grand coalition government" in a manner uncharacteristic of Thai party politics. By co-opting other parties into an ever-increasing coalition government, and by absorbing some of these parties through mergers, the TRT sought to build a supermajority invulnerable to censure and no-confidence motions. Two major parties of the 1990s, New Aspiration and Chart Pattana, were each eventually compelled to merge with TRT, as was the smaller Seritham Party. The new electoral rules also created incentives for small- and medium-sized parties to hedge against poor showings at the polls. Moreover, with each party merger, TRT's financial base became more formidable to its opponents who had to think about facing TRT candidates in their home districts. The result of TRT's grand coalition strategy was control of an astounding 366 seats in the new 500-member House. In the 2005 elections the party consolidated its support, winning a stunning 376 House seats.

The only serious electoral setback for the TRT was the Bangkok gubernatorial race in 2004. Fearful of losing in Bangkok, TRT did not initially field a candidate even though it held the gubernatorial post for the previous four years. It later endorsed the candidate who eventually lost to the Democrat candidate. Despite the party's electoral success, growing popular resentment toward TRT and Prime Minister Thaksin's autocratic leadership style has emerged over time. TRT's most vocal opponents come from civil society, the press, and progressive urbanites. Thaksin's critics have called him

a dictator bent on dismantling the democratic reforms of the 1997 constitution. Some call his grand coalition strategy the "UMNO-ization" of Thai politics, in reference to Mahathir bin Mohammed's co-option strategy that has rendered Malaysia a virtual one-party dominate system for the last two decades. It is well known that even the king has expressed concern that Thaksin may be misusing authority against the interest of the country, and in December 2005 the king even publicly rebuked the prime minister for his authoritarian ways.

Although the intensity of distrust and outright hatred of Thakin may be growing among some segments in Thai society, TRT's most serious vulnerability may remain within the party itself. TRT, like the many Thai parties before it, is more an assemblage of factions than a party linked by ideology and platform. These factions carry names and are discussed openly by faction members and the press. Inner-TRT politics resembles the coalition politics of the past. To be sure, TRT has inherited the factions of the parties with which it has merged (e.g., Wang Nam Yen, Chon Buri, Wang Bua Ban, Wang Phya Nak, Suchart-Newin factions, etc.). One can imagine that a single major policy failure or single political scandal that taints Thaksin or other TRT leaders could deepen factional cleavages and lead to mass defections to the next promising party.

In spite of its electoral success, it is too early to tell if TRT will emerge as a mass-based party that can outlast Thaksin's political fortunes. The rise and fall of Thaksin's Palang Dharma mentor Chamlong Srimuang is a recent reminder of the pitfalls of populist-oriented parties built around the charisma of a single leader. It is also too early to determine if the rise of the TRT represents the beginning of a new period in Thai party organization in which larger parties become the norm and replace the medium-sized party system that is arguably better suited for delivering patronage. Thai political history suggests that political factions will endure longer than the fortunes of the particular parties and prime ministers with whom they seek opportunism.

DEMOCRAT PARTY

(Prachatipat)

The Democrat Party is the oldest and most institutionalized political party in Thailand. Founded in 1946 by Khuang Aphaiwong, the Democrats have competed in elections for over 50 years. Originally a pro-royalist party, the Democrat Party has since leaned center-left on the Thai political spectrum. The party has resisted influence from the military, even during the decades when the military's dominance over politics was pervasive. The Democrats have been most successful in elections following events that have disgraced the military (e.g., military-led crackdowns of street protests in 1973 and 1992) and when the party has been able to win over Bangkok's fickle electorate (e.g., the elections of 1986 and 1996). Most significantly, in elected governments since 1986, the Democrats have led either the government or the opposition bloc.

Over its long history, the party has sought to promote local-level branches with limited success. In essence, the party remains dominated by elites. Like other parties, it has experienced factional disputes that have led to defections and spinoff parties. Nevertheless, among parties in Thailand, the Democrats are respected for their strong organizational apparatus and party discipline.

The policies of the Democrat Party today are different from those of the party in the 1970s, which party leaders characterized at that time as "mild socialism." Today the party is "pro-development"—as are virtually all Thai parties—and has built important links with Thai business leaders and industries. Senior members of the Democrat Party come largely from business, the professions, and the bureaucracy, and most are from Bangkok or provincial cities in Thailand's south. Claiming over 100 branches, the party has support in all regions.

Originally, the Democrat Party was financed largely from among its own members. Bichai Rattanakul, Pornthep Thajaphibul, and other wealthy members supported the party through their finance, construction, industrial, and beverage companies. More recently, the party has found support from companies outside the party, including large communications conglomerates that have profited from rapid economic growth and Thailand's semiprivatized telecommunications industry.

Since 1946 six leaders have led the Democratic Party: party founder Khuang Apiwong, Seni Pramod (twice prime minister), Thanat Khoman, party financier Bhichai Rattakul, Chuan Leekpai (twice prime minister), and Banyat Bantadan. The Democrats' record of leadership succession is unmatched by any other Thai party. In spite of their party's long history, however, Democrat leaders have rarely assumed the premiership.

Chuan Leekpai, a civilian lawyer with no military or bureaucratic experience and the longtime leader of the party's southern arm, was party leader of the Democrat Party from 1990 to 2003. Following the Democrats' electoral victory in September 1992,

Chuan became prime minister and served until 1995. Chuan's exit from office was coupled with public concern over his indecisive leadership style. He remained party leader, however, and made a political comeback in the 1996 general election campaign where he and the New Aspiration Party leader, Chavalit Yongchaiyudh, essentially competed head-to-head for the premiership. Following Chavalit's resignation, Chuan assumed the premiership three years after his first tour as prime minister.

Following the Democrats devastating electoral defeat at the hands of Thaksin Shinawatra's Thai Rak Thai Party in 2001, the party experienced a number of defections and underwent a leadership struggle. Eventually, Banyat Bantadan was elected by party members to replace Chuan as leader in 2003. Like Chuan before him, Banyat is from the South. In Banyat's shadow is the articulate Bangkokian Abhisit Vejjajiva, a younger leader who seems destined to be the face of the party in the future. The leadership struggle left the party more factionalized than it was under Chuan's leadership. The so-called conservative wing of the party split off from the Democrats and helped to found Mahachon, or the Masses Party.

With its long history and proven ability to survive leadership changes, the Democrat Party will likely remain a major party in Thai politics for some time to come. To the extent it can maintain the sympathy of the Bangkok electorate and position itself as a viable alternative to other leading parties, it will likely have more opportunities to lead the government. In the long term, the prospects of the party look very good. It remains to be seen whether or not Banyat, Abhisit, or someone else, can return the party to power. Indeed, if it is to unseat the TRT, the party will need to far exceed its past electoral success and make inroads into constituencies north of Bangkok. Defections of southern Democrat MPs to TRT prior to the 2005 elections signaled it may be years yet before the party will lead the government; the party won only 96 House seats in the 2005 elections in a crushing defeat to the TRT. On the other hand, it is possible to see the departure of disaffected factions as an opportunity for the Democrats to rebuild their base. The Democrats will likely remain the main opposition alternative to the TRT and Thailand's second most important party in the foreseeable future. It is too early to tell if a new party, Mahachon, formed by former Democrats, can seriously challenge the Democrat Party to become TRT's primary rival in future elections. The Democrats future success rides as much on the political fate of Thaksin and Thai Rak Thai as it does on its own actions.

THAI NATION PARTY

(Chart Thai)

Although the Thai Nation Party (Chart Thai) was formed in 1974, its origins date back to the 1950s and Field Marshall Pin Choonhavan's political clique known as the "Soi Rajakru" group—named after the Bangkok street of Pin's residence. Pin's son Chatichai and son-in-law Pramarn Adirekson formed the Chart Thai Party to contest the 1975 elections. In that election, Chart Thai won 28 seats running civilian rather than military candidates in rural districts. Since that election, Chart Thai has been a major political party in Thailand. It served in all four coalition governments under Prem in the 1980s and in five of the seven coalition governments between 1988 and 1998.

Chatichai replaced Pramarn as party leader in 1986. In the subsequent 1988 elections, Chart Thai won a plurality victory with 87 seats and Chatichai became Thailand's first elected prime minister since the 1973–76 period. The party led Thailand's economy to double-digit growth rates and reoriented the country's foreign policy by emphasizing improved relationships with its Communist neighbors in Indochina.

Chatichai's cabinet was nicknamed by critics as the "buffet cabinet" for its patronage-oriented political style, and Chatichai was known for directly confronting the military on numerous occasions. On February 23, 1991, Chatichai's elected government was overthrown by the military in a coup. Chatichai went into exile in Great Britain, and the coup group froze his private assets as well as those of a number of cabinet ministers who were investigated for being "unusually wealthy."

In 1992 Chatichai returned to politics and defeated Chart Thai to form the National Development Party (Chart Patthana). Banharn Silapa-archa, a savvy provincial businessman and longtime Chart Thai member, has since served as the party's leader. Tainted as a "devil" party for joining the blood-stained Suchinda government, Chart Thai did not join the Democrat-led coalition government between 1992 and 1995. In the 1995 election, however, Chart Thai won a total of 92 seats and Banharn, nicknamed "Mr. ATM" for his reputation for patronage, became prime minister.

Plagued by scandal and coalition infighting, Banharn's administration lasted only 16 months. The party suffered a major setback in the 1996 elections following the defection of numerous candidates including one faction led by Snoh Tienthong (Banharn's inner-party rival) and another led by Vatana Asavahame.

Relying heavily on rural political patrons and networks, the Chart Thai Party was weakened by disloyalty and factionalism following Banharn's failed leadership as premier. However, the party's long history, relative to most other Thai parties, makes it somewhat attractive to new candidates.

On the Thai political spectrum the party is center-right, but its reputation for patronage-oriented policies is more significant in terms of the party's political image. Its members come largely from provincial business networks, as well as national businesses. The traditional strength of voter support has been in the central provinces of Thailand.

Until Chatichai's defection in 1992, the party's financial support was grounded largely on the fortunes of Chatichai, Pramarn, and Banharn (built from investments in finance, oil, textiles, chemicals, construction, and sugar). More recently, the party has formed links with large retail, communications, agribusiness, and industrial conglomerates as sources of finance.

Three leaders have led the party since 1974: Pramarn Adirekson, Chatichai Choonhavan, and Banharn Silapa-archa, who continues to lead the party into the 2005 elections. Banharn once told the press that being out of the governing coalition is "to starve oneself." Under his leadership, Chart Thai has demonstrated a pattern of politicking its way into government coalitions with every major party at some time in the past decade. It was no surprise when, following the 2001 general election, Banharn's Chart Thai joined the TRT in its coalition. Following a landslide TRT victory in the 2005 elections, Chart Thai was forced into the opposition when TRT decided to form its own government. Chart Thai won 26 seats in the 2005 elections.

Prior to Banharn's failed stint as prime minister, Chart Thai was a major party. The 1996, 2001, and 2005 elections show Chart Thai's decline into a medium-sized party. Trying to make something positive out of Chart Thai's decline, Banharn has sought to remake Chart Thai's image. He contends that the old-style politicians have left and that the party is now in the hands of younger, less-corrupt, reform-minded members.

In the near future Chart Thai faces two challenges. First, party leaders may be tempted to go the way of New Aspiration and Chart Pattana and merge with the TRT itself. Second, the question of the party's future after Banharn steps down as leader is uncertain. Nevertheless, given its history spanning three decades it is possible, although not assured, that Chart Thai can withstand these challenges and survive as a middle-sized party under Thailand's new electoral system.

Minor Political Parties

The Thai party system has long been characterized by numerous minor parties. Such parties are basically vehicles for politicians who have resisted joining larger parties or defected from larger parties in hopes of remaining in politics. The new constitution makes it far more difficult for minor parties to succeed. Many small- and medium-sized parties have disappeared since the constitution went into effect. Kitsangkhom (Social Action Party), Palang Dharma (Moral Force Party), and Prachakorn Thai (Thai Citizen's Party), once important swing parties, have all faded with their leaders. Others have merged with TRT to survive, including the larger Kwaamwangmai (New Aspiration Party) and Chart Pattana (National Development Party), and the smaller Seritham (Liberal Democratic Party).

In spite of the new constitutional mechanism to encourage the stability of existing parties, new political parties are forming in the wake of the TRT's rise and the Democrat's struggles. Out of the ashes of the small Ratsadorn Party, Mahachon (the Masses Party) was formed in 2004 in preparation for the 2005 general elections. Its founders include a former secretary-general of the Democrat Party, Sanan Kachornprasart, and a leading political scientist, Anek Laothammatas. Other than Sanan and Anek, Mahachon includes few luminaries. In the run up to the election the party was reportedly trying to woo Supachai Panitchpakdi, the outgoing director-general of the World Trade Organization, as party leader. Most observers gave Mahachon little chance to succeed due to its odd blend of the once conservative wing of old Democrats, a once communist fugitive turned academic policy wonk, and, perhaps, the once leader of the WTO, an institution unpopular with disenfranchised laborers and farmers. In the end, the party won only three House seats in the 2005 elections.

In September 2004 Thailand's Election Commission approved the creation of another new party eligible to compete in the 2005 general elections, the "Alternative Party." Its leader is an agricultural researcher, Aroon Munkong, and its secretary-general is an unknown Thammasat University law student, Wiroon Jintanakul. The party has pledged to disband in two to five years after its goal to introduce constitutional amendments is completed. The seemingly single-issue party, without serious financial backing, is unlikely to survive following its first election, when it won no House seats.

Other Political Forces

In terms of broad trends it is possible to distinguish the political forces that are in decline (the military and the Buddhist Sangha) with political forces that are in ascendance (big business, NGOs, mass media, and multilateral economic institutions such as the International Monetary Fund and the World Trade Organization).

Of the political forces in decline in Thailand, the military stands out as most remarkable. For decades the Thai military was the dominant actor in post-1932 political life. The military often seized power from civilian governments by force or stood as a virtual praetorian force with tremendous power to veto or blackmail nonmilitary governments. Indeed, almost all prime ministers in the decades since 1932 have come from military backgrounds. Following its last coup d'état in 1991, and an unpopular crackdown on civilian protestors in 1992, the power of the military quickly faded. Its political role is now more professional as generals have returned "back to the barracks." With respect to policymaking, the Thai military remains influential in issues of national security and defense. With respect to nonmilitary issues it plays a lesser role and competes with other interest groups for policy influence. Barring some gross abuse of civilian power the military is unlikely to return to its former praetorian tendencies.

The Buddhist Sangha (state-sponsored monastic order) is another traditional political force in decline. Once a powerful actor in Thai politics, institutional Buddhism was traditionally conservative and often allied itself with those in power (including military leaders) rather than playing the role of governmental critic. As Thai society has opened politically and socially, new religious movements have challenged the influence of the Sangha. Popular Buddhist movements such as Wat Thammakai and Santi Asoke (both independent of the state-related Sangha) and a trend toward more diverse expressions of spiritual life have served to push the role of the Sangha to the periphery of political influence in spite of its formal status.

Of the political forces with rising influence in Thailand, big business is unquestionably most significant. Thailand's economic success has been driven largely by private sector investment, local and foreign. Political parties share close ties to the private sector as money politics has come to dominate Thailand's electoral system. Big business influence in day-to-day policymaking overshadows that of all other nonstate actors.

A growing civil society is also shaping Thai politics. Both NGOs and the mass media are increasing their presence as Thai democracy consolidates. While some NGOs focus energies on independent development work, many others direct their attention to changing government policy. Some of the more active NGOs pressure the government to change policies related to the environment, rural development, labor, and poverty. One particularly important pressure group since the mid-1990s has been the Assembly of the Poor, an umbrella organization that mobilizes thousands of rural and urban poor who rally in the capital and elsewhere in protest and other forms of civil disobedience. The effectiveness of public campaigns by groups such as the Assembly of the Poor is due in part to an active broadcast and print media. Thailand's mass media is among Asia's freest. In spite of moves by recent prime ministers toward censoring Thailand's state-owned media (and politically tied private media), the nonstate media remains active and serves an important function in Thailand's rising information-based society.

A final category of actors in the Thai political system is also important to mention: multilateral economic institutions. The World Bank, for example, has been active in Thailand for a number of decades funding and directing large development projects. More recently, and more controversially, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Trade Organization (WTO) are now major players influencing Thailand's monetary, fiscal, and trade policies as well as its overall development strategies. Following Thailand's currency collapse in 1997, the government turned to the IMF for needed funds. The conditionality attached to these loans proved to be consequential to all sectors of the economy and to Thai society generally. In late 2003, after a slow recovery, Thailand completed its repayment of IMF loans ahead of schedule. With the memory of unpopular IMF-led structural adjustment fresh in the minds of policymakers and the public alike, the current shared sentiment in Thailand is a future more autonomous from outside international forces. While relations have proven controversial, Thailand's membership in the IMF and WTO is likely to continue. In the case of the WTO, one of Thailand's own, Supachai Panitchpakdi, became the body's director-general in 2002—a symbolic recognition of Thailand's commitment to multilateral coordination of economic management.

A final issue that deserves mention is the Islamic rebellion that is active in southern Thailand. Discontent among the minority Muslim population had been simmering for years, but it exploded in 2004 in a wave of violence. Muslim separatists, perhaps assisted by international Islamic organizations, are behind the

attacks. The government responded to the attacks with heavy-handed retaliation, which only threatened to exacerbate the problem.

National Prospects

In the realm of politics, the future of Thailand and its party system looks bright. Over the last two decades, the system has transformed itself from a "vicious cycle" of coups and alternating periods of military and elected rule to a constitutionally engineered system led by elected civilians that is designed to create party stability and more lasting governments.

Thailand's future prospects also look bright because of the institutionalization of democratic procedures and practices more generally. Since 1992 Thailand has experienced five governments that have assumed power through peaceful elections and constitutional means. The 1991 coup and May 1992 military crackdown were perhaps the final episodes in the post-1932 "vicious cycle" of military-dominated politics. Future coups are more unthinkable than ever. The Thai political system has evolved into one inclusive of competitive elections, vibrant party politics, alternating leadership, and active citizen participation.

Not only should Thailand's recent string of democratic elections and peaceful transfers of power be recognized as indicators of democratic consolidation but also the society's ability to successfully reform its political system without violence or undo interference from the military or other cultural institutions of authority. The peaceful drafting, passage, and implementation of a new constitution exemplify the preference among Thai citizens and elites (including the military) for peaceful rather than violent political change. Moreover, Thailand has transcended its worst economic crisis in decades by enhancing democratic practices rather than reversing them.

Before its creation in 1997, the average life of a Thai constitution was just over four years. The new constitution was in its eighth year at the time of the 2005 general elections. While this fact bodes well for the constitution's durability, some questions remain about the extent to which the document may be overlooked and disregarded by the powerful TRT government, in particular, questions related to the full autonomy of the judiciary, the realization of civil liberties in practice, and the relationship among big business, money, and political power. To a certain degree, these questions are primarily about democratic practice rather than core values and political structure, and they are familiar to democracies everywhere. Over time, Thai society seems poised to resist the authoritarian impulses of its past and to be numbered among the world's successful functioning democracies.

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DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF TIMOR-LESTE

(Repúblika Demokrátika Timor Lorosa'e)

(República Democrática de Timor-Leste)

By Jeroen Adam



The Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste, or East Timor, with a population of 1 million (2005 est.) and by far the poorest country in the East Asian region, became independent on May 20, 2002, and can therefore be seen as the first new nation of the 21st century. The former Portuguese colony won its independence for the first time in 1974 after 400 years of Portuguese colonial rule when the Portuguese army launched the Carnation Revolution against the dictatorial Salazar regime in mainland Portugal. Timor-Leste was left behind in a state of chaos and confusion and became divided because of a bitter fight between the FRETILIN (Frente Revolucionaria de Timor-Leste Independente; the Revolutionary Front for an Independent East Timor) and the UDT (União Democrática Timorense; Timorese Democratic Union). This civil war gave the perfect pretext for Indonesia to invade the country at the end of 1975 and occupy it in a brutal and oppressive way. It is largely estimated that the oppression by Jakarta caused the death of anywhere from 100,000–200,000 East Timorese in a direct or indirect way. After the fall of Indonesian dictator Suharto in 1998, protests broke out in Dili to claim independence. Finally, after strong UN pressure, the East Timorese were given the opportunity by the Habibie government to decide in a referendum whether they wished to remain the 27th province of Indonesia. On August 30, 1999, amidst very violent outbreaks between pro-independent and anti-independent militias, the East Timorese voted in favour of independence with 78.5 percent of the voters approving. After the intervention of a United Nations peacekeeping force and a UN interim government, the largely Roman Catholic country finally became independent in 2002.

The prime minister as of 2005 was Dr. Mari Alkatiri, chairman of and one of the founding members of FRETILIN, the party that won 55 of 88 seats for the national parliament in the election for the Constituent Assembly in August 2001. Because of this huge victory, it is evident that the majority of the government consists of FRETILIN members. However, FRETILIN on its own was too weak to effectively govern the country and therefore decided to enter into a coalition with the Democratic Party (PD), which ranked second in the 2001 elections. Furthermore, there are also several independent politicians who are appointed as minister or vice minister in order to give the government more weight and power.

The System of Government

Timor-Leste is a parliamentary republic with a unicameral legislature.

EXECUTIVE

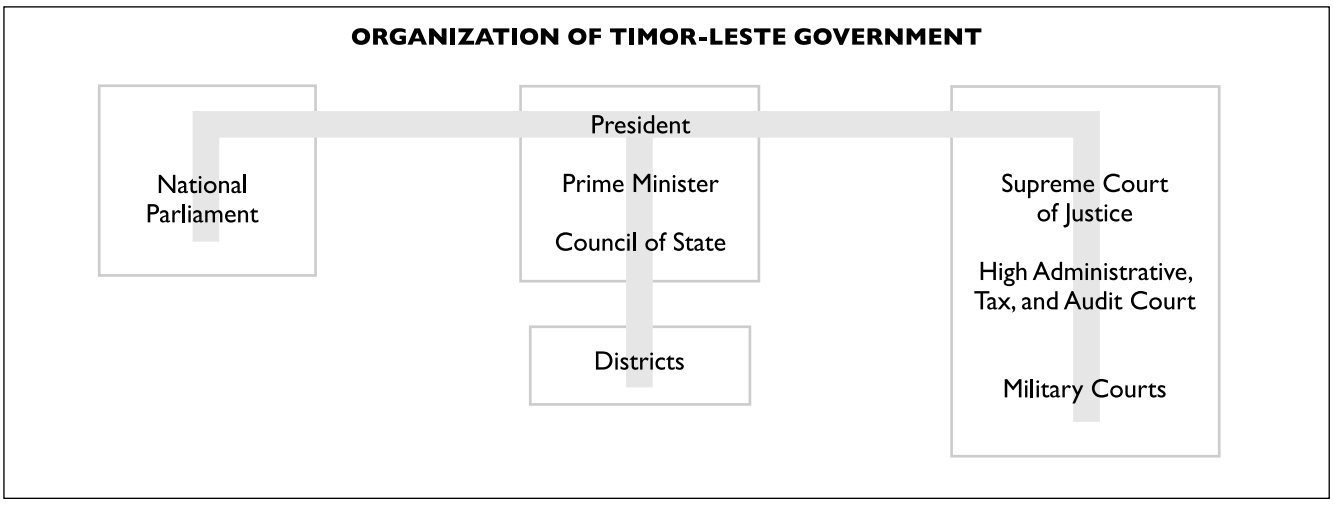
Officially the executive power of Timor-Leste is located in the government, which comprises the prime minister, the ministers and vice-ministers, and the secretaries

of state. No executive power is officially given to the president, who is a symbolic head of state. In practice, however, Timor-Leste has a semipresidential system with two centers of executive power. First, there is the government headed by the prime minister and, second, the executive authority of the president. The president is the supreme commander of the Defence Forces and holds the power to veto any statute to request the Supreme Court to review the constitutionality of government rules. The president can also convene extraordinary sessions of the national parliament and dissolve parliament in case of a serious institutional crisis preventing the formation of a government or the approval of the state budget. The president is assisted by the Council of State, which has an advisory role.

This semipresidential system poses a certain destabilizing threat to the country. The current president (Xanana Gusmão) and prime minister (Mari Alkatri) have long been rivals. Both Alkatri and Gusmão were among the pioneers in the FRETILIN, which in its earliest phase was a resistance movement in which all kinds of political ideologies could flourish. With the invasion of the Indonesians in 1975, however, the call for a hard-line nationalist-Marxist line within the FRETILIN became louder, and Gusmão was more and more displeased with the rise of what he saw as "left-wing extremists." He was also displeased with the fact that the FRETILIN saw itself as the only real East-Timorese resistance movement. Alkatri, on the contrary, could be seen as one of the representatives of the hard-line Marxist side of the FRETILIN and someone who conceived the FRETILIN as the only credible resistance movement in East Timor. Because of this dissatisfaction with the FRETILIN, Gusmão founded in 1986 the CNRM (National Council of Maubere Resistance), which he viewed as an umbrella organization for all East Timorese resistance movements. Of course, the main objective for founding the CNRM was to decrease the hegemonic position of the FRETILIN. The tensions between Gusmão on the one side and the FRETILIN and Alkatri on the other became unbearable, and ultimately Gusmão left the Fretilin in 1987. He took the FALINTIL, the official armed wing of the FRETILIN of which he was the commander, with him. He declared from that moment on that the FALINTIL was nonaligned with any political party. Since then, the rift between Gusmão and the FRETILIN has never been completely repaired, although the FRETILIN lost much of its Marxist radicalism throughout the 1990s. This rift still has a destabilizing effect on the country today. It is, for instance, clear that the East Timor Defence Force (ETDF) is aligned with Gusmão, whereas the Timor-Leste Police Service is aligned with Alkatri. Consequently the rivalry between these two agencies remains high, and several violent clashes have occurred.

LEGISLATURE

The legislative power in Timor-Leste lies with the (unicameral) national parliament. The parliament consists of 88 members who have a term of office of five years. Revisions of the constitution of Timor-Leste can be made by a majority of two-thirds of the members of parliament. Under the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET), the beginnings of parliament emerged in the NCC, the National Consultative Council, comprised of UNTAET and East Timorese representatives. This



council was nonelected and strictly advisory and so quickly came under strong criticism for being unrepresentative. To deal with this problem, the UNTAET installed the NC, the National Council, which was composed only of East Timorese representatives, but this body lacked any sense of legitimacy because it too was not elected. Therefore, the NC prepared for the election of a Constituent Assembly in August 2001. In this election each district could elect one representative; the remaining 75 seats would be decided by nationwide proportionality. There were 16 parties and five independents who contested the votes. Four parties won the lion's share of the 88 seats. It is remarkable that the FRETILIN won all the 13 seats that could be elected directly by the 13 different districts.

Because no specific parliamentary elections were held, this voter turnout for the Constituent Assembly became the voter turnout for the National Parliament, which came into being on May 20, 2002.

JUDICIARY

There are, according to the constitution, three categories of courts in the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste: the Supreme Court of Justice and other courts of law; the High Administrative Court, Tax and Audit Court, and other administrative courts of first instance; and military courts.

The Supreme Court of Justice is the highest court of law, and the president of the Supreme Court of Justice is appointed by the president of the republic for a term of four years. The judges of the Supreme Court are appointed by the Superior Council for the Judiciary. It is among the tasks of the Supreme Court of Justice to review and declare the unconstitutionality and illegality of normative and legislative acts by the organs of the state. The state is represented by public prosecutors, of which the Office of the Prosecutor-General is the highest authority. The office is headed by the prosecutor-general who is appointed by the president for a term of six years.

The most important judicial issue so far in the history of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste has been the condemnation of the perpetrators of the massacres that occurred in 1999 at the time of the independence referendum. In Indonesia, President Wahid created an ad hoc court for Timor-Leste, whose deliberations proved greatly disappointing for most East Timorese. First, the court interpreted the events of 1999 as a civil conflict between two rival East Timorese factions. Second, the court characterized the Indonesian military as being responsible merely for failing to guarantee public safety, instead of orchestrating the violence that took place. Evidence clearly proved that certain members of the Indonesian military bore an enormous responsibility for the massacres, and the international community has subsequently exerted considerable pressure on Jakarta to jail those responsible for the violence.

On the East Timorese side, the UNTAET organized the "Serious Crime Unit." which consisted of a mélange of international and local judges. Although this unit worked at a very slow pace, there were some important symbolic cases that were handled correctly and positively. But because of the slow pace and the huge costs of this court, the East Timorese parliament considered a general amnesty on the second anniversary of nationhood on May 8, 2004. Human rights nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) seriously criticized this general amnesty and, at the time of writing, it was still not clear whether parliament would in turn transform the idea of a general amnesty into effective law.

Another major problem is that only a few top officials implicated in the main atrocities could be handled by the court, allowing many ordinary militia members who were also actively involved in the events of 1999 to go unprosecuted. Therefore, the UNTAET established a Commission for Reception, Truth, and Reconciliation that, mainly based on the experience of post-apartheid South Africa, set up village hearings before which thousands of militia members must confront their victims. The Catholic Church in East Timor has organized many such reconciliation meetings at the grassroots level. The outcomes of these reconciliation meetings have varied, dependent largely on the actors involved.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The country is divided into 13 administrative districts: Aileu, Ainaro, Baucau, Bobonaro (Maliana), Cova-Lima (Suai), Dili, Ermera, Lautem (Los Palos), Liquica, Manatuto, Manufahi (Same), Oecussi (Ambeno), and Viqueque.

Because the UNTAET and later central East Timorese government concentrated almost all their efforts on strengthening the central institutions, no time was left to concentrate on the institutions of the subnational level. Also, the constitution of the republic remains vague about processes of decentralization and subnational governments. Practically, this means that institutions on the regional and the local level

are currently almost nonexistent. This government of President Alkatri has, however, initiated a process of consultation about and research on suitable local government models for East Timor.

The Electoral System

Timor-Leste has a very fragile electoral tradition. In fact, only two elections have been held to date (not considering the very chaotic and violent period in 1975), and they were both UN-supervised. The first election was held in August 2001, with participation by more than 91 percent of the electorate, to choose the Constituent Assembly, which some time later became the first national parliament of Timor-Leste. This means that, strictly speaking, elections for parliament have never taken place and the first real parliamentary election will be held in August 2006. According to the constitution of Timor-Leste, the members of the national parliament have a term of office for five years.

The second election was held in April 2002 to choose the president of the republic. Here also, the voter turnout was very high, with 86 percent of the electorate going to the ballot boxes. These first presidential elections involved a struggle between Xanana Gusmão and Francisco Xavier do Amaral, the first president of independent Timor-Leste in 1975. Gusmão, who, as the leader of the FALINTIL, was and is perceived as the national symbol of resistance against the Indonesians, won the elections with 83 percent of the votes. In fact, there was no doubt that Gusmão, because of his popularity, would be elected president. The problem however, was that initially nobody wanted to take the challenge to compete with Gusmão. Finally, Amaral, the leader of the Timorese Social Democratic Association (ASDT), decided to compete for the election because he considered it essential that in a full-grown democracy there should be at least one serious opposition candidate.

The president has a term of office for five years, and this term may be renewed only once. A second round of elections is organized when no candidate wins more than half of the votes.

The Party System

ORIGINS OF THE PARTIES

Any understanding of contemporary Timor-Leste must include consideration of the history of the most important political parties, particularly that of FRETILIN, which was the most important resistance movement against the Indonesian forces. The history of the East Timorese political parties dates to May 1974, when the Portuguese allowed the formation of independent political parties. This action resulted in the birth of many political parties, of which the three most important were the UDT (União Democrática Timorense; Timorese Democratic Union), the ASDT (Associação Social Democrática Timorense; Timorese Social Democratic Association), and the APODETI (Associoção Popular Democrático de Timor; Timorese Popular Democratic Association). These big three were followed by two smaller parties, the KOTA (Klibur Oan Timor Asuwain; Association of Timorese Heroes or Sons of the Mountain Warriors) and Trabalhista, a left-leaning workers party.

The APODETI, led by Arnaldo dos Reis Araujo, was the only real pro-Indonesia party at that time. The party itself was essentially a creation of Jakarta and was sponsored by Indonesia. There is little knowledge about pro-Indonesia feelings at the time of the first decolonization, so it is very difficult to measure the popularity of the party. The UDT was led by Mario Carrascalão and his brother João and aimed for a progressive autonomy within a federation with Portugal. The UDT can be seen as fervently anti-Communist and thus a party of the right. Its main supporters were found among the Liurai, the regional elite within Timor Leste. The main supporters of the ASDT, on the contrary, could be found among the young urban elite. The ASDT can be seen as a broad anticolonial movement that incorporated diverging political visions and demanded independence through a 10-year plan. It was without doubt the most radical and best organized party of all the major political parties at that time. Its founding president was Amaral. A major shift happened when the ASDT changed its name to FRETILIN (Frente Revolucionária do Timor-Leste Independente; Revolutionary Front for an Independent East Timor) in September 1974 and asked for immediate independence. In January 1975 FRETILIN and UDT joined in a coalition, but the UDT withdrew on May 26. This resulted in a civil war between the UDT and the FRETILIN, in which the FRETILIN formed its armed wing, the FALINTIL (Forças Armadas de Libertação Nacional de Timor-Leste; Armed Forces for the Liberation of East Timor). In the end, because of the military strength of the FALINTIL, FRETILIN won this civil war and declared Timor-Leste independent on November 28, 1975.

This action offered the perfect pretext for Indonesia to invade the country eight days later, and a provisional Timorese government was established, consisting uniquely of APODETI members. On July 17, 1976, Suharto signed the Bill of Integration, thus making East Timor Indonesia's 27th province. Jakarta started a political program of forced "Indonesianization" in East Timor, in which education was given in Bahasa Indonesian and traditional cultural habits became forbidden. These policies were imposed in a very brutal and aggressive way and would eventually be symbolized by the Dili massacre. In November 1991 there was a memorial mass in Dili for a boy who was killed by the armed forces. Unfortunately, the religious service occasioned a bloodbath when Indonesian armed forces opened fire on the crowd. The massacre was recorded on video by a journalist, thus allowing the international community a vivid portrait of the atrocities committed by the Indonesian army in East Timor. One of the consequences of the Dili massacre was that the United States reduced its financial and moral support for the TNI, the Indonesian armed forces.

Another consequence of this oppressive regime was that political activity became completely controlled by Jakarta,. Thus, the East Timorese were not allowed to participate in any election until 1982. In this election Golkar, the military party and vehicle of Suharto, won 82 percent of the votes, but it is clear that elections in the Suharto era could not be considered free and democratic. All the political parties had to go underground, and the FRETILIN and certainly its armed wing, the FALINTIL, were obliged to continue as guerrilla resistance movements. Several leaders of the FRETILIN, as well as other organizations, went into exile, where they gradually developed a unified coalition of opposition against the common enemy. This coalition was also made possible because of the declining Marxist ideology within the FRETILIN. Ultimately, this growing consensus among the several resistance movements culminated in the creation of the CNRM in 1987, which functioned as an umbrella resistance coalition. With the fall of the Suharto regime and the invasion by UN-armed forces to guarantee a free and open referendum, a second democratization process occurred, which quickly divided the members of the CNRM and ultimately culminated in the formation of new political parties. Of the four parties that won the majority of votes in the August 2001 election, there were three parties that were completely new, namely, the PD, the Social Democratic Party (PSD), and the ASDT, along with FRETILIN.

Major Political Parties

REVOLUTIONARY FRONT FOR AN INDEPENDENT EAST TIMOR

(Frente Revolucionária do Timor-Leste Independente; FRETILIN)

The main victor of the 2001 elections, the FRETILIN had by then already existed for 27 years and was built on structures and personalities well known to most East Timorese. Mainly because of its symbolic function as the most important resistance movement to Jakarta, the FRETILIN easily won the majority of the votes.

DEMOCRATIC PARTY

(Partido Democrático; PD)

The Democratic Party was established in June 2001. The party is mainly based on the structures of the RETINIL (Resistençia Naçional dos Estudiantes de Timor-Leste; National Resistance of East Timorese Students), a faction that broke away from the FRETILIN because younger members disagreed with the older generation. The head of the party is Fernando de Araujo, who is now vice minister for foreign affairs and cooperation. Two other PD politicians are also members of the Alkatri government.

Minor Political Parties

SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY

(Partido Social Democrata; PSD)

The PSD, led by former UDT leader Mario Carrascalão, is another new party. It won 8 percent of the votes in the 2001 elections. The PSD is mainly characterized by its moderate and centrist views and has been able to attract some former FRETILIN and UDT officials.

TIMORESE SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC ASSOCIATION

(Associação Social Democrata Timorense; ASDT)

The ASDT was founded by Francisco Xavier do Amaral, founding member of the original ASDT and challenger of Xanana Gusmão in the presidential elections. The ASDT and Amaral are especially popular in the Mambae-speaking East Timorese areas.

Other Political Forces

Two armed organizations also play an important role in political affairs. The East Timor Defence Force (ETDF) is the national army of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste. The army is for the most part based on the structures of the FALINTIL, the armed wing of the FRETILIN, which followed its leader Gusmão when he left the FRETILIN in 1987. Because of ETDF's historical relationship with the FALINITIL, whose primary loyalty has always been to Gusmão, many observers have serious questions about the long-term loyalty of the armed forces to the Alkatri-led government.

Timor-Leste Police Service (TLPS) is the national police of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste. In contrast to the ETDF, the TLPS is primary loyal to the FRETILIN. Therefore it seems that the TLPS and the FDTL are emerging as rival agencies. This has become clear in the (sometimes violent) clashes that have already occurred between the two groups.

National Prospects

The challenges that the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste is facing in the future are immense. These challenges are in the first place political and in the second place economic. East Timor is still searching for its political and institutional identity and finds itself still in a learning phase. Problems of decentralization, subnational centers of power, judicial organization, and so forth are still unresolved and must be handled in a wise and determined way. The problem is that from 1999 on the East Timorese had to start from zero in efforts to build the political and economic infrastructure of their country. While this process of nation-building normally takes decades, East Timor had to do everything in a couple of years. Although the country's democratic institutions have been helped by the strong support of the international community, they are still relatively weak and in need of shoring up.

Besides these political and institutional problems, the country is also facing huge economic challenges. With 42 percent of its inhabitants still living below the poverty line and a GDP real growth rate that has been negative since independence, the economic prospects for East Timor are not very bright. For example, many East Timorese are dependent on a very unstable and fluctuating coffee market. The country has placed considerable hope on its oil and gas reserves in the Timor Sea, but here too there are numerous problems. The Australians are now claiming the rights over these oil and gas reserves in the Timor Sea, and the two countries are fighting a judicial battle about these reserves, which are essential for the economic survival of Timor-Leste.

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REPUBLIC OF TOGO

(République Togolaise)

By Benjamin N. Lawrance, Ph.D.



Togo, a small, narrow country in western Africa with an estimated 2005 population of 5.6 million, was first colonized by Germany in 1884, then by Britain and France under international treaty. The United Nations administered the region and named the Togoland areas trusteeships in 1946. When the Gold Coast became independent as Ghana in 1957, it incorporated British Togoland. On April 27, 1960, French Togoland became the independent Republic of Togo.

During Togo's first years of independence, Ewe peoples from the south dominated the government, but the Kabyé and other northern groups dominated the army. Sylvanus Olympio, an Ewe who had been prime minister of French Togoland, was the first president of Togo. In 1963 a group of northern army officers assassinated Olympio. The officers installed one of Olympio's political opponents, Nicolas Grunitzky, as president. However, the government under Grunitzky remained unstable.

In 1967 army officers led by Étienne Eyadéma, a Kabyé, overthrew Grunitzky in a bloodless coup. Eyadéma took over as president. In 1969 the Rally of the Togolese People (RPT), headed by Eyadéma, became Togo's only legal political party. Eyadéma was confirmed as president in a 1972 referendum. He also won presidential elections, unopposed, in 1979 and 1986. The state and administration were highly centralized. He began to identify himself by his second name, Gnassingbé, in 1974. Under Eyadéma, large numbers of Kabyé and other northerners were given government jobs. In addition, Eyadéma supporters, who used force to help him maintain power, controlled the military.

In the early 1990s Eyadéma's opponents held protests to demand democratic reforms. Heavy violence broke out between protesters and Togolese security forces. In 1991 the government legalized political parties, and in 1992 Togo adopted a democratic constitution (revised in 2002). But Eyadéma maintained his grip on power. He won presidential elections in 1993, 1998, and 2003, but many people believed the elections were rigged, and the international community did not recognized their legitimacy. His government was often been accused of using intimidation and violence against political opponents. Eyadéma died in early 2005, and the military attempted to install his son, Faure Gnassingbé, as the new president. However, international criticism forced Gnassingbé to step aside until new elections could be held. In the elections held in April 2005, Gnassingbé won the presidency with 60 percent of the vote. Despite widespread street violence and protestors denouncing the fairness of the elections, a court upheld the result.

The System of Government

Togo has a presidential, democratic multiparty political system, in which the military plays a central role.

EXECUTIVE

The president is Togo's most powerful official position. Under the 1992 constitution, the chief of state and head of government is the president. He or she is elected by universal suffrage for a five-year term by popular vote of all Togo's citizens and may be a member of a political party.

The term may be repeated only once, and the president must be of Togolese nationality. A presidential vacancy is filled by the speaker of the National Assembly. A special election must be held within 60 days. The president may dissolve the National Assembly after consulting with the prime minister, but only after it has completed its first year in session.

The president appoints a prime minister and the Council of Ministers (Conseil des Ministres). In a system that mirrors the French Republic's division of powers, the president is solely responsible for external affairs, whereas the prime minister and ministries involve themselves exclusively in domestic affairs.

LEGISLATURE

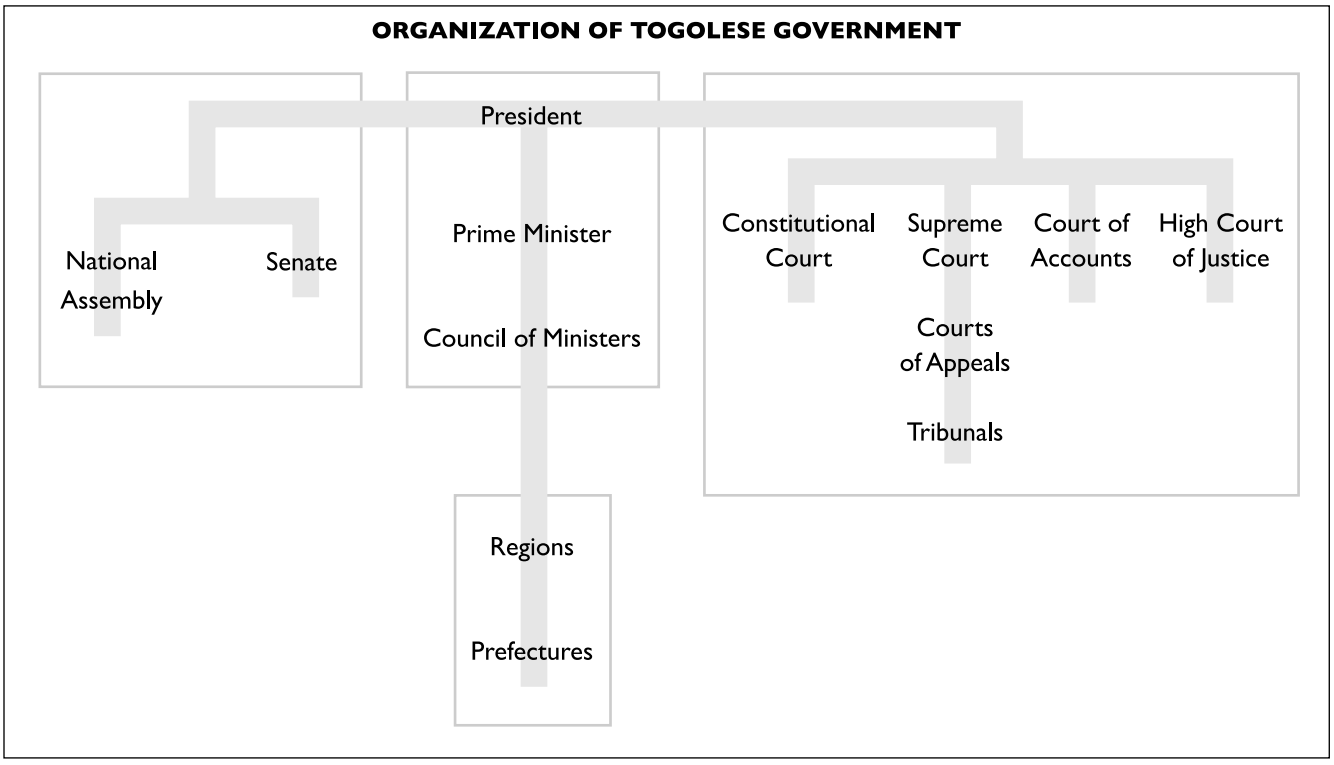
The 1992 constitution provided for a bicameral legislature consisting of the lawmaking body, the National Assembly (Assembleé Nationale), and the body of advisory review, the Senate (Sénat). The former consists of 81 members, elected by the people to five-year terms by universal suffrage. Deputies may run for successive terms. Elections must be held within 30 days of the dissolution of the Assembly. The latter, of little significance and largely ignored, consists of two-thirds of elected representatives of the five regions of Togo and one-third of distinguished individuals selected by the president.

Both the Assembly and the Senate elect a president of the chamber from among its members. Both chambers convene publicly twice a year, in April and October, for sessions lasting no longer than three months. The executive may convene both chambers in an extraordinary session. The Assembly may, with a two-thirds majority, hold a vote of no confidence in the government, upon the passage of which, the government, led by the prime minister, must tender its resignation.

The 1992 constitution also provides for an Economic and Social Council that may be consulted about the legislative agenda of government and/or bring to the attention of the government matters of pressing economic or social interest.

JUDICIARY

The 1992 Constitution provides for a Supreme Court (Cour Suprème), a Constitutional Court, a Court of Accounts (Cour des Comptes), a High Court of Justice,



and a Council of Magistrates (Conseil Supérieur de la Magistrature). The civil and criminal judicial system is based roughly on French civil law and customary law.

The Supreme Court holds the highest jurisdiction of the state with respect to administrative and judicial matters and government audit. It also has jurisdiction regarding contentious local elections. There is no recourse against its decisions, which constrain the executive, the legislative, and all lower jurisdictions. Government consults on all administrative and jurisdictional issues. It can, at the request of the executive, be charged with the formulation and modification of all legislative and regulatory texts, prior to their review by the National Assembly. It is divided into two chambers—the judicial and the administrative chambers—each with separate jurisdictions.

The Constitutional Court is composed of nine members, each with a renewable seven-year term. The president selects three members; three are elected by a two-thirds majority of the Assembly; and three by a two-thirds majority of the Senate. The president of the republic selects the president of the court and may cast the deciding vote.

The Court of Accounts is responsible for the fair and equitable functioning of government and the private sector. It governs all accountability pertaining to the enacting of laws and reports annually to the Assembly.

The High Court of Justice is composed of the Supreme Court and four elected members of the National Assembly. It is convened exclusively to deal with high treason or dereliction of duty with respect to the president of the republic or the ministers of government.

The Council of Magistrates is responsible for the oversight of the judicial system. It is composed of nine members—the president of the republic, the president and vice president of the Supreme Court, four magistrates from the lower Courts of Appeals and Tribunals, one deputy elected by secret vote from the National Assembly, one individual who is neither deputy nor member of the government, chosen by the president of the republic. It is presided over by the president of the Supreme Court, and the membership serves a four-year term, renewable once only.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Togo is divided into five administrative divisions, called regions: De La Kara, Des Plateaux, Des Savanes, Centrale, and Maritime. Elections have not been held recently for local government, with the exception of the mayoralty of Lomé, the capital city.

The Electoral System

Suffrage extends to all citizens 18 years and older. The election of the president requires an absolute majority, and the constitution provides for a second, runoff election. The election for the National Assembly takes place over two consecutive months and is based on proportional representation. The constitution provides for an independent National Electoral Commission to ensure and administer freedom and fairness in voter enrollment and election procedures.

The Party System

The multiparty constitution provides for freedom of political organization on every level of Togolese society. Since the scrapping of the one-party system, dozens of parties have organized and registered. In 1992 there were over 60 parties, although there has been some consolidation. There is no state financing of political parties, and there are no restrictions on campaign fundraising. No polling data are available on campaigning, independent voters, or related topics.

Major Political Parties

RALLY OF THE TOGOLESE PEOPLE

(Rassemblement du Peuple Togolais; RpT)

The RPT was headed by President Gnassingbé Eyadéma until his death in February 2005; after that event the party supported the candidacy of his son Faure, who emerged as the new president following elections in April 2005. The party was the only legal political party up until 1991, when the multiparty system was initiated. The RPT still controls most aspects of Togolese society, including parliament and the armed forces. The RPT won the 2002 legislative elections, securing 72 out of 81 Assembly seats.

Minor Political Parties

The two main opposition parties, the Union of Forces for Change (UFC) and the Action Committee for Renewal (ACR), boycotted the 2002 legislative elections. The legislature is currently controlled by the RPT (72), with the following smaller parties and independents holding the remaining nine seats: Juvento; the

Movement of the Believers of Peace and Equality or MOCEP; Rally for the Support of Development and Democracy; and the Union for Democracy and Social Progress. No minor party is even close to challenging the supremacy of the RPT.

Other Political Forces

Dominant officers in the military had both tribal and regional ties to President Eyadéma, and following his death in 2005 they moved to install his son Faure as president. Although the latter stepped down until formal elections could be held, his subsequent easy victory still prompted some observers to characterize the regime change as a military coup.

National Prospects

Togo faces a bleak political and economic future. Its economy is in shambles and desperately in need of reform and investment. All international development aid was suspended in 1992, and its renewal is contingent on democratic change. However, the tumultuous election of Faure Gnassingbé in 2005 did not bode well for the country's democratic future.

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KINGDOM OF TONGA

(Pule'anga Fakatu'i 'o Tonga)

By Eugene Ogan, Ph.D.



The constitutional monarchy of Tonga is unique among Pacific Island nations. In 1875 its first constitution blended traditional Polynesian social stratification with English common law and democratic institutions. The nation's historical ties with Great Britain are reflected in its membership in the British Commonwealth. As this Polynesian-English mixture developed over the succeeding century, the Tongan sovereign has maintained preeminence despite increasing pressures for greater democracy. Tonga consists of about 150 islands, about 40 of which are inhabited. There are three main groups: Tongatapu in the south, Ha'apai in the center, and Vava'u in the north. In 2005 the population was estimated at 112,000. There is considerable emigration, primarily to New Zealand, Australia, and the United States, and remittances from Tongans overseas constitute a significant source of income.

The System of Government

Tonga is a hereditary constitutional monarchy with a unicameral legislature.

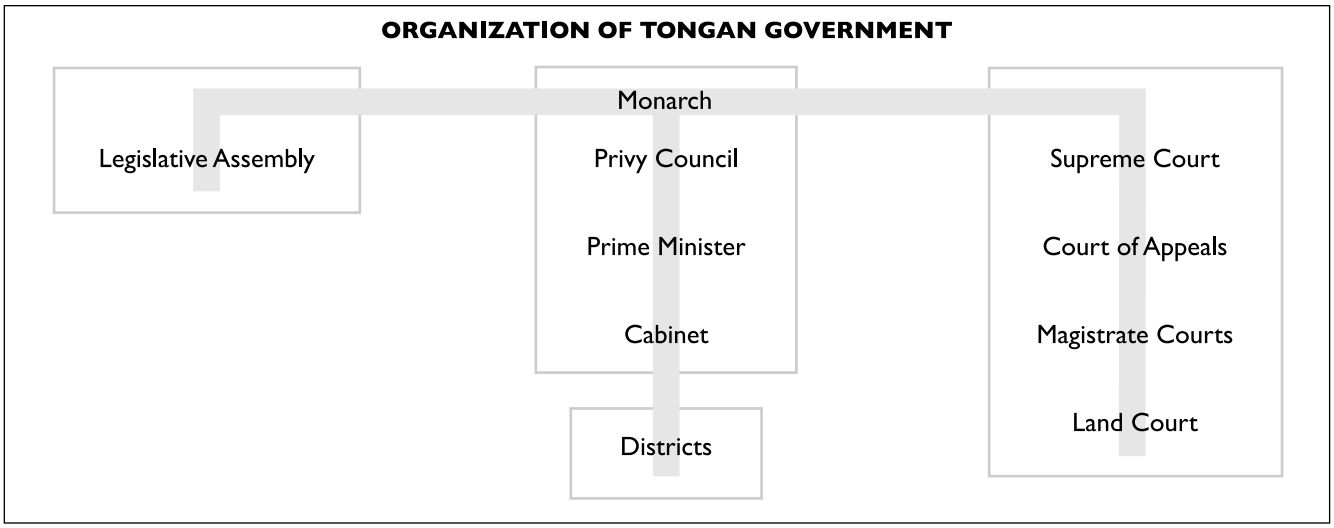
EXECUTIVE

The Tongan monarchy has secured perpetual succession, backed by constitutional authority, from the current king, Taufa'ahau Tupou IV. Succession is through the male line or, if there is no male heir, through the female line. The royal line is protected by the requirement that the sovereign's consent be given to the marriage of any member of the royal family, and this authority has been exercised in recent years to annul marriages. The sovereign, heirs, and royal estates are immune from impeachment or legal challenge.

Executive authority rests with the Privy Council, presided over by the sovereign. As the highest executive body, the Privy Council acts as the final court of appeals in all but criminal cases and can make laws subject to parliamentary confirmation. Members of the Council are appointed by the sovereign and include the ministers of the cabinet, the governors of Vava'u and Ha'apai, and such other ministers as the sovereign wishes to appoint.

LEGISLATURE

The Legislative Assembly is a unicameral body with both appointed and elected members. It is composed of the Privy Council, nine representatives of the nobles, and nine representatives of the commoners. The noble members are elected by the approximately 30 holders of noble titles. Every Tongan subject 21 years or older who is not a noble is qualified to be both an elector and a representative of the people, chosen from five electoral districts. A significant limitation is the requirement that no person holding salaried office as a public servant may also serve as an elected representative in the Assembly. Support of the executive is essential to the lawmaking



process, so there is no true separation of executive and legislative powers. This has become an important issue in recent elections, and pro-reform candidates have been elected as representative of the people.

JUDICIARY

Judicial power in the kingdom is vested in the Court of Appeals, Supreme Court, the magistrates' courts, and the land court. Most of the actual judicial work is carried out by a chief police magistrate and 10 magistrates of magistrates' courts, sitting in nine locations. Magistrates are appointed by the prime minister with the consent of the cabinet. The land court is presided over by a Supreme Court judge appointed by the Privy Council; because of nobles' and other hereditary rights to land many transactions are settled informally out of court.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

In addition to the governors of Vava'u and Ha'apai, local government is carried out by a system of district officers. There are 23 districts, and in each the officer is elected to a three-year term. By unwritten custom, nobles are regarded as having responsibility for people living on their lands.

It is clear that the royal family and the nobles wield continuing power in Tonga, despite the presence of institutions inspired by a more democratic way of life in Great Britain. Noble control of land is particularly important in a country that lacks resources to support anything but an agricultural economy. Members of the royal family occupy key positions in the Privy Council.

The Electoral System

Suffrage is universal for all citizens age 21 and older.

The Party System

Until 2005 the only active party in Tonga was the Tonga Human Rights and Democracy Movement (THRDM), formerly the People's Party, which was established in 1994. In 2005 a second party, the People's Democratic Party (PDP), was formed.

Major Political Parties

TONGA HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY MOVEMENT (THRDM)

Long the only active political party in Tonga, the THRDM is led by Huliki Watab. In elections for the Legislative Assembly held in 2005, the party won seven of the nine elected seats.

Minor Political Parties

PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC PARTY (PDP)

This party was registered in 2005. Its first leader is Teisina Fuko.

Other Political Forces

In 2005, after a decade of negotiations, Tonga was admitted as a member of the World Trade Organization. The government hopes that membership will increase its trading opportunities and strengthen the economy.

National Prospects

The 2004 collapse of Royal Tongan Airlines, headed by one of the crown princes, has added to increasing criticism of royalty's handling of economic affairs. Despite government attempts to control the nation's independent press, such criticism continues to grow. In September 2005 a protest march was held in the capital, Nuku'alofa, in which the marchers demanded democratic reforms. It remains to be seen if economic stagnation and political pressures will eventually transform Tongan politics.

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REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

By Thomas D. Anderson, Ph.D.
Revised by Soeren Kern



The Republic of Trinidad and Tobago is a parliamentary democracy that was granted independence from Britain in 1962. It consists of two islands with a combined area of 5,130 kilometers (about 80 percent of which is Trinidad) some 30 kilometers east of Venezuela across the Gulf of Paria. The population of 1 million (2005 est.), with 5 percent on Tobago, is ethnically complex, with blacks (43 percent) and East Indians (40 percent) being the most significant in political matters. Of the remainder, 14 percent are classed as of mixed origins. The official language is English, although Hindi, French, and Spanish are spoken commonly.

The System of Government

Trinidad and Tobago is a parliamentary democracy with a bicameral legislature.

EXECUTIVE

The head of state is a president elected to a five-year term by a joint session of the legislature following the general election. The president appoints as prime minister the leader of the majority party. The prime minister holds functional executive powers through a cabinet appointed from the legislature.

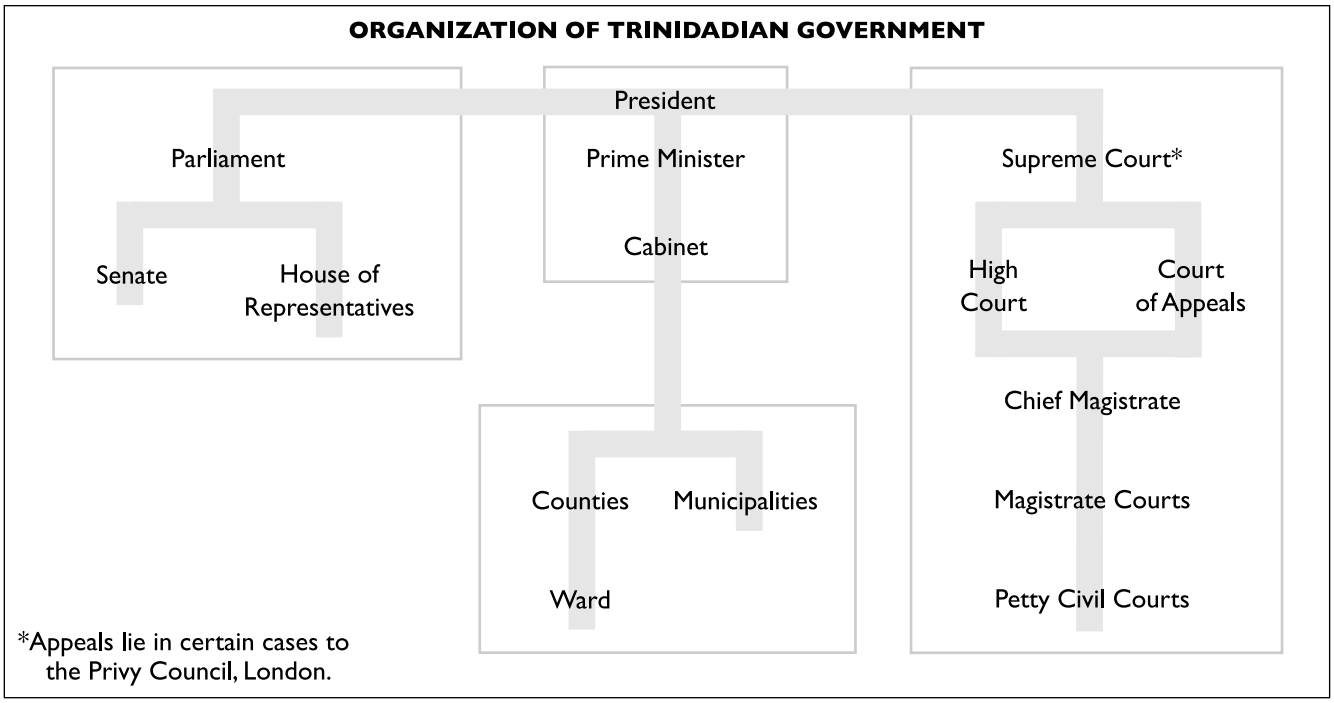
LEGISLATURE

The bicameral Parliament includes a 36-member House of Representatives and a 31-member Senate. Members of the Senate are appointed by the president: 16 on the advice of the prime minister, 6 on the advice of the leader of the opposition, and 9 on the advice of community, social, and economic organizations. Members of the House of Representatives are elected by direct popular vote to five-year terms. The speaker is elected by the House from outside its membership. Two seats are assigned to Tobago.

Bills may be introduced in either chamber, but money bills can come only from the House. Constitutional amendments and money bills must be passed by both bodies to take effect, but other legislation may become law if the House passes them twice.

JUDICIARY

The justice system is based on English common law. The Supreme Court of Judicature consists of the High Court and the Court of Appeals. The High Court chief justice is appointed by the president on the advice of the prime minister after consultation with the leader of the opposition. He is assisted by 10 other judges appointed by the president on advice of the Judicial Service Commission, chaired by the chief justice. The Court of Appeals consists of the chief justice and three other judges and is the highest court. Further appeals go to the Privy Council in London.



REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Political subdivisions consist of five self-governing cities, nine counties, and the ward of Tobago. Cities are administered by elected mayors and city councils, elected for one-year and three-year terms, respectively. Counties are administered by councils of aldermen chaired by councilors elected in a similar one-year and three-year pattern. Tobago was given a measure of self-government in 1980 and is governed by the Tobago House of Assembly. In 1996 parliament passed legislation that gave Tobago greater autonomy than any previous legislation in political, financial, and social issues. The Tobago House of Assembly, however, has no powers of lawmaking and is still bound by the constitution of the republic. Tobago has its own 15-member National Assembly, which chooses the island's administrator.

The Electoral System

Members of the House of Representatives are chosen by universal suffrage by voters 18 years old or older. They are elected by simple plurality in single-member constituencies. Elections and constituency boundaries are overseen by the Elections and Boundaries Commission.

The Party System

The formation of political parties has few barriers, and independents commonly appear on the ballot. Party organization is well developed and functions in democratic fashion, though in practice dynamic personalities have determined party policies. Continuing efforts by minor parties to form coalitions that can challenge the major party, the People's National Movement (PNM), characterize the political scene. In the past, parties were based in large part on ethnicity (black and East Indian), but since the mid-1980s policy issues have become increasingly more important campaign themes.

Major Political Parties

PEOPLE'S NATIONAL MOVEMENT (PNM)

The PNM was formed in 1956 by the late Dr. Eric Williams, a distinguished historian. Its roots lie in the Teacher's Economic and Cultural Association, an organization of black professionals with political interests. Williams was its spokesperson. Using sound grassroots organization principles, the party dominated the legislature beginning with the 1956 elections. Financially dependent on membership dues,

it has drawn its main support from the black middle class, although it has been able to broaden its support base over time. From the start the PNM has had a nationalistic, pro-independence platform, with moderate-to-conservative economic and foreign policies. It encourages foreign investments. George Chambers assumed leadership upon the death of Williams in 1981. The PNM's domination of the country's politics since before independence lasted until it lost power as a result of the 1995 elections. The party's most dramatic test was in July 1990 when, during an armed insurrection by an Islamic fundamentalist group—the Jumaat-al-Muslimeen—its prime minister, Arthur N. R. Robinson, was held hostage, beaten, and threatened in an effort to force his resignation. Robinson instead ordered the military to "attack with full force," and the militants were subdued. A native of Tobago, Robinson was elected president in mid-1997.

Patrick Augustus Mervyn Manning was appointed prime minister following inconclusive elections in December 2001. He was returned to power in elections in October 2002 after the PNM won 20 of the 36 parliamentary seats, with the opposition United National Congress (UNC) winning 16 seats.

NATIONAL ALLIANCE FOR RECONSTRUCTION (NAR)

In September 1984 four opposition parties—the United Labour Front (ULF), the Democratic Action Congress (DAC), the Organization for National Reconstruction (ONR), and the Tapia House Movement (THM)—united to form the NAR and contested the 1986 elections. The NAR is the successor to the National Alliance for Trinidad and Tobago, likewise formed to confront the PNM in 1981. The effect was to create a broadly based body, with special strength on Tobago. Although the PNM prevailed as usual, an opposition had been created with credible connections across the country. The party won no legislative seats in 2002. As of 2005 the leader was Lennox Sankersingh.

UNITED NATIONAL CONGRESS (UNC)

Like the NAR, the UNC is a relatively new party that emerged in 1989 primarily with members from the United Labour Front (ULF). The ULF had been founded in 1976 as an outgrowth of an alliance between the oil and sugar workers' unions and was the first racially plural political force in Trinidad. Its first few years were marred by policy and personality disputes between Baseo Panday (oil) and Raffaque Shaw (sugar), but eventually Panday emerged as dominant. Panday is a charismatic figure, a former bodybuilder, film actor, and lawyer whose political roots stemmed from work in organizing oil workers. In the 1995 election Panday's UNC and Manning's PNM tied at 17 seats each. Panday first attempted to persuade Patrick Manning to bring the PNM into a so-called national front administration, but the overture was rejected. Ray Robinson then brought his NAR into a coalition with Panday to give a ruling majority to the UNC. In 2002 the UNC won 16 legislative seats, second only to the PNM's 20 seats. In 2005 Panday announced that he would be willing to cede the party's presidency to Winston Dookeran as long as he could retain the title of party chairman.

Minor Political Parties

There are several minor political parties, such as the Movement for Social Transformation (MOTION) led by David Abdullah; the National Joint Action Committee (NJAC) under Makandal Daaga; the Republic Party (RP) (NJAC) under Makandal Daaga; the Republic Party (RP) headed by Nello Mitchell; and the National Development Party (NDP) headed by Carson Charles.

Other Political Forces

Press freedom is guaranteed in the constitution, and as a result the country has a generally free and open press.

National Prospects

Unlike most of its Caribbean neighbors, Trinidad and Tobago has a significant mineral and agricultural economic base, the former consisting of petroleum and natural gas production. Add in refining, an expanding light manufacturing sector, and tourism, and its economic prospects are promising. Nonetheless, the major income source is petroleum exports, and the fluctuation in world price levels of this commodity has had a significant impact.

But Trinidad and Tobago is experiencing a transition from an oil-based economy to a natural gas–based economy. Trinidad and Tobago is now the fifth largest exporter of liquefied natural gas (LNG) in the world. It has become the leading exporter of LNG to

the United States and now supplies some 65 percent of U.S. LNG imports.

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REPUBLIC OF TUNISIA

(al-Jumhūrīyât at-Tūnisīyâ; République Tunisienne)

By Michele Penner, M.P.A., Ph.D. ABD
Revised by Rima Habasch, Ph.D.



The Republic of Tunisia is located in North Africa, bounded by Algeria to the west, Libya to the southeast, and the Mediterranean Sea to the north and east. Tunisia is a small country—about two-thirds the size of the United Kingdom—with an area of approximately 164,150 square kilometers (63,380 square miles). Whereas the vast majority (over 95 percent) of Tunisia's population of just over 10 million (2005 est.) is Sunni Muslim Arab, the republic is also home to Catholic (15,000) and Jewish (3,000–10,000) communities. Tunisians are steadily moving from rural areas into cities, putting pressure on the government to provide urban residents with jobs and social services.

The System of Government

A French protectorate beginning in 1881, Tunisia gained its independence in 1956. The 1959 constitution declared Tunisia a democratic presidential republic. In practice, the president and the executive branch have dominated a weak legislature and judiciary, and one political party has nearly monopolized electoral competition. Since the 1970s a number of opposition parties have emerged to challenge the status quo; however, these parties are without exception extremely weak and hold out little hope of more substantially democratizing Tunisian politics in the foreseeable future.

EXECUTIVE

The constitution vests executive authority in the president, who serves simultaneously as head of state and head of government. The president has broad, far-reaching powers. He selects the prime minister and other members of the cabinet, the Council of Ministers. The cabinet is responsible to the president, not to parliament. Other presidential prerogatives include proposing legislation, vetoing legislation proposed by parliament, ruling by decree when parliament is out of session (the constitution allows it to be in session only six months of the year), and declaring states of emergency. The president is chief of the armed forces as well.

The 1959 constitution provided that the president would be directly elected at the same time elections take place held for members of parliament and would hold office for five-year terms. Independent Tunisia has known only two presidents, and in no election has a second candidate been allowed to challenge the incumbent. Habib Bourguiba, leader of Tunisia's independence struggle, served as the republic's first president. In 1974 Bourguiba had himself designated president for life, bringing a temporary end to regular presidential elections in Tunisia.

The transition from Bourguiba to Tunisia's second president, Zine el-Abidine Ben Ali, occurred in 1987. Bourguiba's health had been failing for nearly 20 years. At the time the constitution stated that the prime minister assumes the presidency in the event that the

president dies or becomes incapacitated. On November 6 Prime Minister Ben Ali obtained testimony from a panel of doctors that Bourguiba was incompetent and could no longer remain at his post. Ben Ali became president the following day.

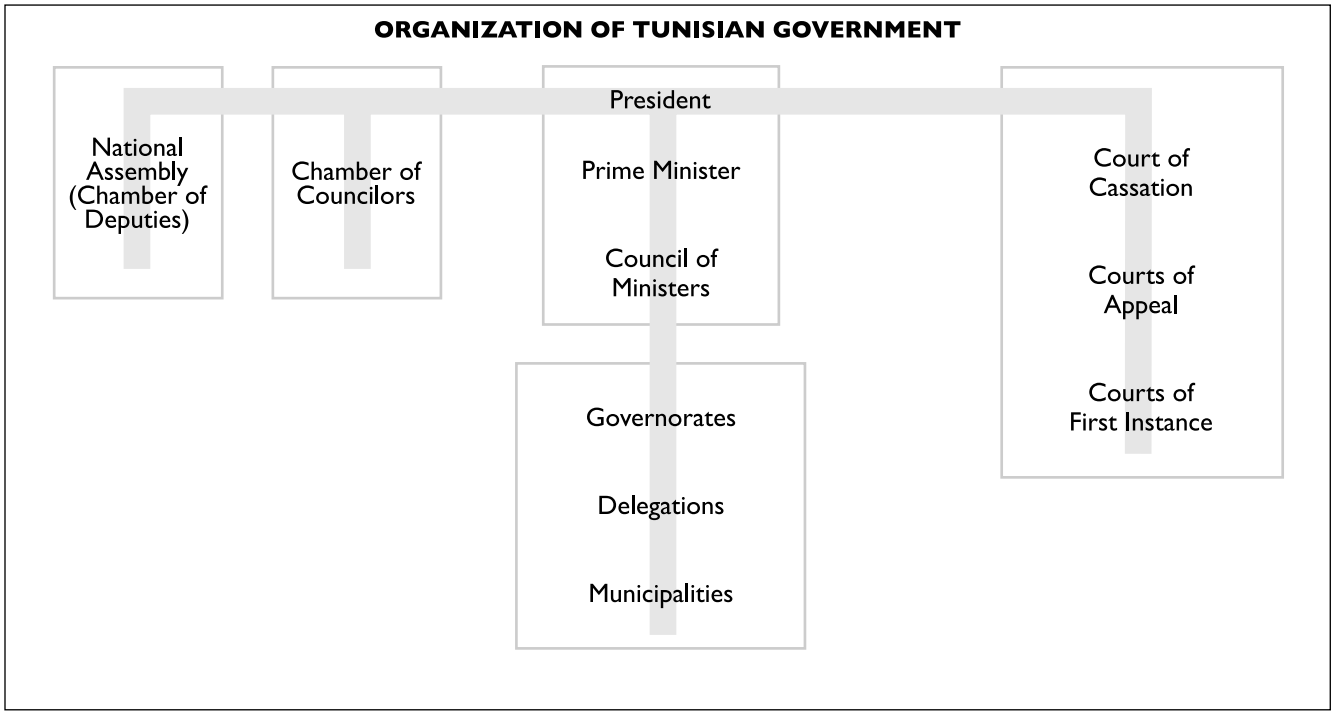
Ben Ali amended the constitution in a number of important ways. He abolished the institution of life presidency and returned Tunisian politics to the pre-1974 norm of presidential elections every five years. Parliament also passed an amendment stating that a president may be reelected only twice. In addition, Ben Ali changed the constitutional provision regarding presidential succession such that if the president dies or becomes ill, the president of the National Assembly (rather than the prime minister) becomes president for an interim period of up to 60 days, during which time new elections must be held. Furthermore, a president must be at least 40 years of age and not older than 70 years at the time of the nomination. The constitutional amendment of May 2002 changed this provision and extended the eligible age for presidential candidates to 75 years.

In the 1989 presidential election Ben Ali won 99.27 percent of the vote. He improved his performance in 1994, gaining 99.91 percent of the vote. Three factors help explain this increase in support for Ben Ali. He restored stability to a country that had long been anxious about Bourguiba's declining health and the question of who would succeed him. He suppressed an Islamic movement that many Tunisians feared would trigger a civil war similar to that which unfolded in neighboring Algeria. Finally, Ben Ali had presided over several years of impressive economic growth. In the elections of October 1999 Ben Ali was elected for a third term, gaining 99 percent of the votes with an estimated voter turnout of 89 percent. Although in 1988 Ben Ali had endorsed the constitutional amendment limiting the presidency to three terms, he supported an amendment in 2002 that allowed him to run for a fourth term in the 2004 presidential elections. He ultimately won with 94.5 percent of the vote.

LEGISLATURE

The Tunisian legislative branch consists of a bicameral parliament, the National Assembly (Assemblée Nationale, Majlis al-Nuwwab) or Chamber of Deputies, which as of 2004 consisted of 189 members elected to five-year terms, and the Chamber of Councilors (Majlis al-Mustasharin). Twenty percent of the seats in the Malis al-Nuwwab are reserved for opposition parties.

The constitutional amendment of 2002 foresaw the creation of an upper house, the Chamber of Councilors (Majlis al-Mustasharin). The Council, which came into being in 2005, is composed of three groups: The first group is made up of one or more representa-



tives of each governorate and is elected by an electoral college from each of the municipal councils in the governorates. The second group is composed of representatives from trade unions and professional associations and is elected nationally. Finally, the third group is appointed by the president and is composed of leading personalities. Each group has equal representation. Although the constitution does not define the number of members, it stipulatesthat the Majlis al-Mustasharin may not exceed two-thirds of the number of members in the Chamber of Deputies.

The Chamber of Deputies is dominated by the ruling party, the Constitutional Democratic Rally (al-tajammu' al-dusturi al-dimuqrati; Rassemblement constitutionnel démocratique; RCD), and is very weak relative to the executive branch. It has no power of presidential impeachment. The legislature can draft laws, but the president's legislation takes precedence over its own proposals. In addition, legislative procedures guarantee approval for presidential proposals *prior* to plenary debate. The president must secure legislative ratification of any law he wishes to implement. Yet the president is also head of the ruling party. Thus the RCD's parliamentary majority means that ratification is never in question. Similarly, while the legislature has the right to override a presidential veto with a two-thirds majority, this has never loomed as a realistic possibility.

In the 1989 legislative elections the RCD won 80 percent of the vote and every National Assembly seat. Islamist candidates, running as independents, captured 14 percent of the vote. The Movement of Social Democrats (Mouvement des démocrates sociaux; MDS) received less than 4 percent of the vote. Opposition groups accused the Ben Ali regime of rigging the election. The demarcation of constituencies heavily favored the ruling party. The election fell short of "free and fair" in other respects as well: one-fourth of the electorate allegedly did not receive their voting cards on time, and campaigners could address voters only in closed halls.

The RCD dramatically improved its showing in the 1994 legislative elections, gaining nearly 98 percent of the vote. Its improved performance in part reflected Ben Ali's popularity as president. His efforts to rejuvenate the party also appear to have improved its electoral fortunes. Significantly, the 1994 elections were the first in Tunisian history to see opposition parties win seats in parliament. In the October 1999 elections the RCD emerged as the winning party with 148 seats, that is, 82 percent of the total number of seats, followed by the Movement of Social Democrats (MDS) with 13 seats, the Unionist Democratic Union (UDU) with 7 seats, the Popular Unity Party (PUP) with 7 seats, Renewal Movement (Harakat al-Tajdid) with 5 seats, and the Liberal Social Party (PSL) with 2 seats. The opposition thus increased their numbers of seats considerably from 19 to 34. The elections of October 2004 again saw RCD win, this time with 152 seats out of 189. The MDS won 14 seats, followed by the PUP (11 seats), the UDU (7 seats), the Renewal Movement (3 seats), and the PSL with 2 seats. The opposition seats increased from 34 to 37.

JUDICIARY

Although the 1959 constitution affirmed the principle of an independent judiciary, it did not establish a supreme court charged with considering the constitutionality of national laws. Moreover, the president is empowered to appoint judges, making the Tunisian judiciary, like its legislature, weak relative to the executive branch.

Prior to Tunisian independence, religious courts administered Islamic law. After independence Bourguiba abolished this judicial system and replaced it with a new one based on the French model. The Code of Personal Status replaced Islamic law in the domains of marriage, divorce, and children's affairs. The Code gave women equal rights with men in these matters and outlawed polygamy.

During the 1980s Bourguiba used the State Security Court to prosecute leaders of Tunisia's Islamic movement and to harass other opposition figures. In 1988 President Ben Ali abolished this court along with the post of prosecutor-general of the republic. He has also made efforts to separate the judiciary from the executive branch of government. The highest court in Tunisia is now the Court of Cassation. Below it are courts of appeal and courts of first instance.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Tunisia is divided into 24 regional governorates (*gouvernorats, wilayas*). The governorates are divided into 100-plus delegations (*mutamadias*), which are in turn divided into over 1,000 municipalities (*shaykhats*). After independence, the line separating regional and local organs of the government from those of the ruling party became quite blurred.

Central government control over the administration and fiscal policy of the local council remains tight. Taxes and fees, which account for 63 percent of

local revenues, are determined by the central government and collected by both local and national bodies. Remaining funds are allocated by the government.

The regional legislative assembly consists of both elected and appointed members. There are 257 municipal governments in cities, whereas there are no local governments in rural areas. Local council members serve five-year terms. According to the constitution 20 percent of seats are reserved for opposition parties.

The Electoral System

Until 1993 the Tunisian electoral system worked to assure that the ruling party would control every seat in the National Assembly. Voters chose from among lists of candidates fielded by various parties. Voters' effective range of choice was extremely narrow because parties other than the ruling party were either banned or boycotted elections or performed poorly. The electoral system's majoritarian nature guaranteed that the ruling party would monopolize parliament.

In 1993 Ben Ali presided over a change in the electoral law that guaranteed that a small number of National Assembly seats would go to opposition parties. The new law retains a majoritarian list system at the district level but adds a degree of proportional representation at the national level. The electoral code was changed in the constitutional amendments of 1998. The number of legislators was increased to 182 (since increased again to 189), and approximately 20 percent of the Chamber of Deputies (National Assembly) is reserved for members of opposition parties. As a result of the legislative elections held in October 2004, the legislature houses five opposition parties in addition to the majority RCD. The opposition parties are the Social Democratic Movement (MDS) with 14 seats, the Union of Democratic Unionists (UDU) (7 seats), the Popular Unity Party (PUP) (11 seats), the Social Liberal Party (PSL) (2 seats), and the Harakat el-Tajdid with 3 seats. The ruling RCD won 152 seats.

The Party System

Until the 1980s Tunisia had a one-party system of government. The ruling party monopolized parliament, and no legal opposition parties existed (with the partial exception of the Tunisian Communist Party, which halted operations in 1963). Importantly, the ruling party has not always been called the RCD: its origins lie in the Destour (Arabic for "constitution") Party of the 1920s; it became the Neo-Destour in the 1930s; and it took the name Parti socialiste destourien (Socialist Destourian Party; PSD) in the 1960s in conjunction with a changed policy focus advocating increasing state involvement in the economy. In 1988, under President Ben Ali's leadership, the PSD became the RCD.

The RCD's roots are found in the Destour Party, which was founded in 1920 in opposition to the French colonial regime. The Destour did not demand Tunisian independence but called for increased Tunisian participation in government and for parity in the legal rights enjoyed by French and Tunisian citizens. The party built a modest organizational base, primarily in Tunisia's northern towns, opening 40 branches and enrolling 45,000 members by 1924.

Within a decade a rift developed inside the Destour. A group of young party militants, led by Bourguiba, began criticizing the Destour's political gradualism. In 1934 Bourguiba's faction formally detached itself from the Destour, taking the name Neo-Destour. The new party made Tunisian independence an explicit goal and came to dominate the nationalist movement. It organized not only town dwellers but the rural masses as well; by 1949 it could boast 500,000 members.

At independence the Neo-Destour was the largest, best-organized, and most prestigious political organization in Tunisia. Under Bourguiba's leadership, it dominated national, regional, and local politics for two decades. Over time, however, many Tunisians became disenchanted with the authoritarian nature of the one-party system as well as with troubling socioeconomic developments, including unemployment and a growing income gap between rich and poor. Opposition groups and movements began to emerge in the late 1970s.

During the 1980s popular discontent and criticism of the regime reached levels that prompted Bourguiba's government to recognize three opposition parties. A process of mild political opening continued during Ben Ali's presidency. Ben Ali recognized several opposition parties, and he also invited all national political and social organizations to participate in the drafting of the National Pact, a document signed in 1988 that established a political framework within which signatory groups agreed to act as they worked to address the nation's problems.

Key liberalizing aspects of the pact include its criticism of the ruling party's monopoly on power, its

commitment to the right to form political parties, and its pronouncement that policy differences and political dissent do not constitute sedition. The National Pact has not yet ushered in a truly competitive multiparty system, however. Tunisia is best described as having a one-party-dominant system: the RCD remains the most powerful party by far; however, opposition parties contest legislative elections and place members in the National Assembly.

Major Political Parties

CONSTITUTIONAL DEMOCRATIC RALLY

(al-tajammu' al-dusturi al-dimuqrati; Rassemblement constitutionnel démocratique; RCD)

The RCD is Tunisia's dominant political party. Its basic unit is the cell, a group of party members living in the same area or sharing the same profession. Groups of cells are called circonscriptions. In each governorate, a coordinating committee supervises circonscriptions' activities. Party congresses are held periodically, convened by the party's executive body, the Politburo, whose members are appointed by the party president (who is president of the republic). At party congresses, a central committee is selected and charged with determining party policy.

The ruling party was particularly strong and effective during the first decade following independence. Its 1,200-plus local cells met regularly to discuss national problems, generate public awareness of development goals, and organize public involvement in efforts to meet those goals. The party also assisted citizens with personal problems and dispensed patronage.

During the 1970s and 1980s, however, the party machine weakened. Grassroots-level activities declined. Popular participation in party affairs fell dramatically, and increasing complaints about the suppression of dissent within the party could be heard. Most party committees did little more than dispense sufficient patronage to maintain the support of local clients. The party's ability to mobilize Tunisia's youth was extremely limited.

In 1988 President Ben Ali began the task of rejuvenating the party. By the end of his first year in office, the RCD claimed it had replaced nearly 40 percent of its cadres and that the average age of party members had dropped to the mid-30s. In July 1993 the RCD convened the Congrès de la persévérance (Perseverance Congress), the goal of which was to reinvigorate party activists. As a result of Ben Ali's efforts, RCD candidates for parliamentary seats in 1994 were younger and newer to politics relative to those candidates who had contested past elections. Since 1994 the party has retained its grip on power, winning 152 of 189 seats in the 2004 legislative elections.

Minor Political Parties

All Tunisian opposition parties are extremely weak relative to the ruling party. Each is troubled by internal rivalries and personality conflicts. None has articulated specific policy programs. Opposition parties receive state subsidies toward the cost of their campaigns and publications. In the most recent elections of 2004, opposition parties increased their combined parliamentary seats to 37.

MOVEMENT OF SOCIAL DEMOCRATS

(Mouvement des démocrates sociaux; MDS)

The MDS was founded by Ahmed Mestiri, who was expelled in 1971 from the ruling party for having fought to liberalize the one-party regime. It is considered Tunisia's main opposition party. Its platform is a liberal, social democratic one that calls for multiparty competition, increased social legislation, the augmentation of individual and group freedoms, and the separation of the ruling party's apparatus from that of the state. The MDS draws support from intellectuals, the liberal professions, and some business circles. The party has lost a number of its leaders to an RCD effort to co-opt opposition figures by offering them posts in the ruling party or government. In the 2004 elections the MDS won 14 seats in parliament.

RENEWAL MOVEMENT

(harakat el-tajdid; Mouvement Ettajdid)

The Mouvement Ettajdid is the new incarnation of the Tunisian Communist Party (Parti communiste tunisien; PCT), which was founded in 1920. Government pressure forced the PCT to suspend its activities in 1963, but it was allowed to resume operations in 1981. In 1993 the party renamed itself, officially reject-

ing Communist ideology while maintaining a Socialist policy orientation. In the 2004 elections the party won three parliamentary seats.

POPULAR UNITY PARTY

(Parti de l'Unité populaire; PUP)

The PUP is the more moderate, Tunisia-based branch of the Mouvement de l'Unité populaire (MUP), which was founded by Ahmed Ben Salah in Paris in 1973. The MUP refused to participate in the ruling party–dominated political system. The PUP took a more compromising position vis-à-vis the regime, choosing to work within the system to effect change. The PUP platform is Pan-Arab and Socialist; it sees the state as having a key role to play in the achievement of economic development and social justice. In the 2004 elections the PUP won 11 seats.

UNIONIST DEMOCRATIC UNION

(Union démocratique unioniste; UDU)

The UDU is a relatively new opposition party whose performance in the 1994 election surprised many. It presented lists in 23 districts and won three National Assembly seats. The UDU draws the support of some intellectuals, and observers suggest its relative success in 1994 may reflect the continuing appeal of its leftist, Arab nationalist ideology to some sectors of Tunisian society. In 2004 the UDU won seven seats.

SOCIAL LIBERAL PARTY

(Parti social libéral; PSL)

The PSL managed to present candidate lists in only seven electoral districts in 1994. In 2004 it won two parliamentary seats.

SOCIALIST PROGRESSIVE RALLY

(Rassemblement socialiste progressiste; RSP)

The RSP, whose members espouse a variety of leftist and Marxist ideologies, presented lists in only eight districts in 1994. It won no seats in 2004.

PROGRESSIVE DEMOCRATIC PARTY

(Hizb al-Dimocrati al-Takadumi; PDP)

The relatively new PDP boycotted the legislative elections of 2004. It is led by Néjib Chabbi.

Other Political Forces

ORGANIZED LABOR

Founded in 1946, the General Union of Tunisian Workers (Union générale des Travailleurs tunisiens; UGTT) is a trade union confederation whose membership totals over 400,000. The UGTT derives a significant amount of prestige from the important role it played in Tunisia's independence struggle. By virtue of its prestige and its large constituency, the UGTT has always been an important actor in Tunisian politics. Since independence the ruling party has resorted to co-optation, manipulation of intraunion rivalries, and force to maintain its political dominance over the union. The most severe confrontation between the state and the union occurred in 1978. After a period of prolonged recession, the UGTT called a general strike to protest the impact of the government's conservative economic policies on labor. The strike was accompanied by widespread rioting by the urban poor, and at least 100 citizens died and hundreds more were arrested as the army moved in to restore order.

ISLAMISTS

The Islamic Tendency Movement (harakat al-ittijah al-islami, Mouvement de la Tendance islamique; MTI) emerged in the late 1970s under the leadership of Rashid Ghannouchi. It protested the social and economic hardships it held the Bourguiba regime responsible for and called for a return to Islamic law, especially where social legislation was concerned. The government refused to legalize the movement. Nonetheless, by the 1980s the MTI was the single largest group opposing Bourguiba, having won support from students, middle-class professional groups, and junior members of the police and armed forces. In 1987 Bourguiba ordered a crackdown on the MTI that saw scores of its leaders tried for plotting to overthrow the republic.

In 1989 the MTI changed its name to the Nahda (Arabic for "renaissance") Party (hizb al-nahda; Parti de la renaissance), hoping to win recognition as a political party from the Ben Ali government. Ben Ali refused, and his government mounted a second crackdown on the group in 1991, arresting and trying scores of its leaders. While the movement is, for the moment, politically emasculated, it is unlikely that popular support for its goals and norms has disappeared.

In 2002 a bomb exploded at a coastal resort, killing 19 people, of which 11 were German tourists. The terrorist organization al-Qaeda claimed responsibility.

MILITARY

During the first two decades of Tunisian independence, its military played no significant role in politics. Increasing domestic discontent, however, has forced the government to use the army repeatedly to quell incidents of civil disorder, including the 1978 general strike, the 1980 Gafsa incident (in which Libyan-backed Tunisian rebels seized the southern city), and riots triggered in 1984 by the government's reduction of staple food subsidies. The army has not been pleased with this trend and, as a result, has taken an increasing interest in government policies. Moreover, because President Ben Ali rose to his position via an army (rather than a party) career and because he created a Council for National Security that includes two top military officials, many conclude that the Tunisian army of the early 2000s is more politically visible and influential than it has been in previous decades. In 2004 an international human rights group claimed that Tunisia had kept some political prisoners in solitary confinement for years. The government denied the claim.

National Prospects

Events suggest that President Ben Ali and his ruling RCD party can continue to comfortably dominate Tunisian politics as long as two conditions hold. The first is that economic growth continues and is substantial enough to produce sufficient employment for Tunisia's increasingly younger, more urban population. The second is that opposition parties continue to be inarticulate, riven with internal strife, and relatively unpopular. If, however, either economic performance falters and/or opposition parties become stronger, then the Ben Ali regime will likely come under increasing pressure to further liberalize the political system.

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REPUBLIC OF TURKEY

(Türkiye Cumhuriyeti)

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Revised by Murat Cemrek



Turkey occupies an extremely strategic location in the eastern Mediterranean, standing at the crossroads between Asia and Europe. Its control over the straits that link the Black Sea to the Aegean and the Mediterranean give Turkey a vital strategic importance. During the cold war, Turkey was NATO's "Eastern flank" vis-à-vis the USSR; today it provides the road to the new republics in the Caucasus and Central Asia. The Republic of Turkey occupies an area of 814,578 square kilometers, of which only 24,378 lie in European Thrace while the rest are in Asia. It borders on Greece, Bulgaria, Russia, Ukraine, Georgia, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Iran, Iraq and Syria, countries with which it proceeds to cultivate harmonious relations.

HISTORY

The history of modern Turkey may be divided into three periods. The first lasted from 1923, when the republic was established, to the military intervention of 1960. Although Turkey made a transition to multiparty politics in 1946, the first genuine free elections replacing the Republican People's Party (RPP) in power by the Democrat Party (DP) took place in 1950. The second ran from 1960 to 1980 and also was ended by military intervention. The third has gone from 1980 until the present.

The 1980 military intervention was the most significant political event since the coup of 1960. Just as the 1960 regime gave the republic new liberal institutions, the aim of the 1980 regime was to turn back the clock because the ruling elites found the post-1960 liberal institutions into be a luxury for an underdeveloped country like Turkey. The regime soon transformed Turkey from a democratic republic with a bicameral legislature and a multiparty political system to a country under the temporary rule of a five-man military junta. After almost a decade of escalating political terrorism, economic recession, violent labor strikes, and short-lived coalition governments, the Turkish military seized power in a bloodless coup on September 12, 1980, for the declared purpose of saving the country from civil war and restoring the "foundations of democracy."

Subsequently, the military ruled the country through the National Security Council (NSC; Milli Güvenlik Konseyi) headed by General Kenan Evren, chief of the general staff and head of state (Devlet Başkani). The NSC took over the legislative functions of parliament, which it dissolved, and appointed a mixed civilian-military Cabinet headed by the retired admiral Bülent Ulusu to handle the day-to-day business of government.

The NSC declared martial law, prohibited all political activity and labor strikes, disbanded the left- and right-wing trade unions, placed restrictions on the news media, and replaced hundreds of civilians in government posts with military officers. On October 27, 1980, the NSC approved the "Law Regarding Constitutional Order," which defined the NSC's duties and authorities and superseded various parts of the

1961 constitution. The NSC also dissolved all political parties on October 16, 1981, and had their property confiscated.

The NSC convened a Consultative Assembly in Ankara on October 23, 1981, and charged it with the responsibility of drafting a new constitution, a new election law, and a new law on political parties. In November 1982 the new constitution was approved by over 90 percent of the 20 million voters who were told that if they did not approve the constitution, the military regime would continue to rule.

In the same referendum, General Evren was elected president of Turkey for a seven-year term. The constitution gave the president extensive powers of appointment and decree and sharply curtailed the power of parliament. It barred all members of the last parliament from political activity for five years and the leaders of the major parties for 10 years.

Traditionally, the Turkish military has regarded itself as the guardian of the secular reforms of Kemal Atatürk, the republic's founder. The 1980 coup was the third time the military deemed it necessary to intervene after the 1960 coup and 1971 when the military gave the civilian government an ultimatum, which resulted in the resignation of the latter. The 1980–83 military rulers believed Turkey's stability depended on their ability to root out extremists, provide conservative institutions that would depoliticize the country, and liberalize the economy in keeping with trends in the capitalist world of British premier Margaret Thatcher and U.S. president Ronald Reagan. They crushed terrorism ruthlessly: before the coup, on average, 20 political murders a day took place; a year later the figure had dropped to a few killings a month. Thousands were arrested, tried, and incarcerated, resulting in the "depoliticization" of political life and leading people to turn to an "Islamic" solution backed by Turkish-Islam synthesis, the ideology constructed by a group of scholars organized in the Intellectuals Hearth, legitimating the authoritarian rule with references to early Turkic state models and to Islam.

NSC ALLOWS SOME POLITICAL ACTIVITY

By 1983 the NSC restored political life by permitting the creation of new parties and the holding of fresh elections. But it exercised strict control over the entire party formation and election process; it permitted only three out of 15 newly created parties to participate in the election. The NSC discarded many names including Erdal İnönü, son of the second president İsmet İnönü—one of the founding fathers of the Turkish Republic, the leader of the RPP from 1938 to 1973—and the leader of the Social Democracy Party (SODEP) in the electoral process. The Motherland Party (MP) amalgamation of (religiously) conservative, nationalist, liberal, and social democratic tendencies of Turgut Özal won the 1983 election. With a 92.9 percent voter turnout, the MP took 45 percent of the vote and 212 seats in the new Assembly. Necdet Calp's Populist Party (PoP) received 30 percent of the vote for 117 seats, while the Nationalist Democracy Party (NDP) of Turgut Sunalp, a retired general who stood for law and order, won only 23 percent of the vote and 71 seats. This was viewed as a rebuff to the generals.

The veteran political party leaders outlawed by the 1982 constitution returned to politics following the 1987 referendum, which catalyzed the MP to hold the general elections shortly afterward in the same year. The MP won 36.3 percent of the vote and 292 of the seats in parliament vis-à-vis Erdal İnönü's Social Democrat Populist Party's (SDPP) 24.8 percent and 99 seats, Süleyman Demirel's True Path Party (TPP), 19.1 percent and 59 seats, Bülent Ecevit's Democratic Left Party (DLP), 8.5 percent, Necmettin Erbakan's Prosperity Party (PP), 7.2 percent, Alparslan Türkeş's Nationalist Labor Party (NLP); 2.9. The 10 percent threshold rule allowed Özal to secure a parliamentary majority and to form his second government on December 21, 1987. The MP's votes in the 1989 local elections oriented Özal to be elected as the president of the republic on October 31, 1989. Thereafter, Yıldırım Akbulut first helmed the MP until he was replaced by Mesut Yılmaz.

The 1991 elections resulted in the TPP winning 27.1 percent of the votes and 178 seats vis-à-vis the MP, 24.1 percent and 115 seats; the SDPP, 20.8 percent and 88 seats; the PP, 6.9 percent and 62 seats; and the DLP, 10.8 percent and 7 seats. The noteworthy point in the 1991 general elections is the success of the alliance of the Nationalist Action Party (NAP), which changed its name from NLP to its pre-1980 name in 1992, and the Reformist Democracy Party (RDP) under the umbrella of the PP. However, in less than two months this alliance dissolved with the abandonment of the NAP's 18 deputies and RDP's three deputies. The Kurdish nationalist People's Labor Party (PLP) formed an alliance with the SDPP providing 22 seats to the former in the parliament. The election resulted in the TPP-SDPP coalition government and showed the gradual erosion of popular support backing center-right and center-left parties because the Islamist and nationalist-oriented parties, either Turkish or Kurdish, started to take root.

The suspicious death of President Özal on April 17, 1993, brought Prime Minister (PM) Süleyman Demirel to the presidency, which enabled Tansu Çiller to helm the TPP and become the PM leading the TPP-SDPP coalition government, which remained intact.

TUMULTUOUS 1995 ELECTIONS

The general election of December 1995 created a major crisis in Turkish political life when the Islamist Prosperity Party emerged as the strongest party. Though it won only 21.38 percent of the popular vote and 158 seats in the Assembly, defeating the TPP, with 19.18 percent and 135 seats and the MP, with 19.65 percent and 132 seats, its success alarmed the modernist elite especially the military, the praetorian guardians of the Kenalist secularism, which carried out three coups in 30 years since the transition to multiparty politics. They saw this party as a threat to the secular system founded by Kemal Atatürk. For a short moment, "the threat" was averted when the two center–right parties (TPP and MP) agreed to form a coalition in March 1996 to keep the Islamists out of power. But the coalition was fragile given the animosity between the two leaders, Tansu Çiller and Mesut Yılmaz, even though their parties were ideological twins.

As the coalition went into action, Prosperity's leader, Necmettin Erbakan, began a court action for libel against the deputy PM, Tansu Çiller, who had accused him during the election campaign of being involved in drug trafficking. Later he introduced a motion in the Assembly to investigate Çiller's vast personal wealth and real estate holdings. When the question came before the Assembly, the PM, Mesut Yılmaz, agreed to support the investigation against his coalition partner, thus putting an end to the government.

The only way for Çiller to put a stop to the investigation was to form a coalition with Erbakan's party, even though that meant going back on her word that she would never form an alliance with the Islamists, whom she had described as "hypocrites" and the "forces of darkness." It was doubtful whether this coalition between an Islamist and a secularist party would win a vote of confidence. But the government parties won the Assembly's confidence with a vote of 278 to 265 on July 8, 1996, thanks to the affirmative votes of the Grand Unity Party (GUP), which entered parliament as seven deputies on the MP ticket as a result of a pre-election alliance between two parties. This coalition term was marred by scandals, and its life was always precarious. But the aggressive, antisecular activities of its Islamist supporters alarmed the generals, who issued a number of warnings and finally forced the resignation of Prime Minister Erbakan in the NSC meeting on February 28, 1997, when the top military generals handed the government an ultimatum about Islamic revivalism. The government could endure until June 1997. President Süleyman Demirel then asked Mesut Yılmaz to form the new coalition, and he did so in partnership with the DLP, one of the two social democratic parties in the Assembly and the Democratic Turkey Party (DTP), split from the TPP. The other, the Republican People's Party, agreed to support the coalition in parliament.

However, the corruption scandal of the MP, the senior party of the coalition government, in the privatization of state banks paved the path for the parliamentary probe that triggered its fall since the RPP had withdrawn its support. The political vacuum ended with Çiller's maneuver to back a temporary minority government of Bülent Ecevit's DLP until the general elections and local elections to be held on April 18, 1999, which received support from the MP and the RPP. The capture in Kenya of Abdullah Öcalan, the leader of the Kurdish separatist Kurdistan Workers Party (KWP)—still known as PKK though it changed its name, first, to Kurdistan Freedom and Democracy Congress (KFDC) in April 2002 and then to Kurdistan People's Congress (KPC) in late 2003 to stave off inclusion on checklists of terrorist organizations maintained by the United States and the European Union—both eased the DLP into the position of frontrunner in the elections with 22.2 percent of the votes and 136 seats and increased support for nationalist tendencies resulting in the NAP's success at 18.0 percent and 129 seats. Other results saw the Virtue Party (VP), moderate inheritor of the defunct Islamist PP, with 15.4 percent and 111 seats; the MP, with 13.2 percent and 86 seats; the TPP at 12.0 percent and 85 seats, and three deputies were elected as independents while the RPP with 8.7 percent and the Kurdish Nationalist People's Democracy Party (PDP) with 4.8 percent of the votes, respectively, did not secure parliamentary representation. The results led to an uneasy troika coalition of the DLP-NAP-MP that became the longest-lived coalition government in Turkish political history. Interestingly, despite the reluctance of the NAP toward Turkey's European Union (EU) membership bid, the coalition government passed three harmonization packages including constitutional amendments.

RISE OF RECEP TAYYIP ERDOĞAN

However, the government became increasingly unpopular with its overwhelming corruption scandals attached to all parties of the coalition and its unending internal crises, which led the government to lose ground in the general elections held on November 2, 2002. The results were shocking, since the Justice and Development Party (JDP), with Islamist roots, and the RPP were the only two parties to be represented in parliament with 34.3 percent of the votes and 363 seats and 19.4 percent and 178 seats, respectively; nine deputies were elected as independents. Another noteworthy incident is the success of the Young Party (YP) led by Cem Uzan, the ex-CEO of one of the biggest Turkish conglomerates specializing in media and the telecommunications and cement industries. Though Uzan could not imitate Silvio Berlusconi's Forza Italia in parliamentary success, his party prevented the major parties' rise in parliament with his populist nationalist discourse, in which he cursed IMF prescriptions on the crisis-torn Turkish economy, coupled with a successful campaign backed by his media.

The November 2002 elections produced results equivalent to a political earthquake for the mainstream parties, since the TPP received 9.6 percent; the NAP, 8.4 percent; the YP, 7.3 percent; the Kurdish Nationalist Democratic People's Party (DPP), 6.1 percent; and the MP, 5.1 percent of the votes, respectively. The fall of the DLP to 1.2 percent from 22.2 percent in the previous elections reveals the volatile character of the Turkish electorate. An interesting highlight is that Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, the popular leader of the JDP, could not enter the elections since his candidacy was outlawed by the High Election Board before the elections. Thus, the government was established under the premiership of Abdullah Gül. The jailing of Fadıl Akgündüz, the independent deputy from Siirt, a southeastern city, who lost his parliamentary immunity, opened the path to a replay of the elections in this city and enabled Recep Tayyip Erdoğan to form the current government.

The System of Government

Turkey is republican parliamentary democracy with a unicameral legislature.

EXECUTIVE

Under the 1924 constitution the presidency was a party office; the chief of state was elected by each Assembly for a concurrent term. Until the 1960 coup all presidents were members of the majority party. The 1961 constitution, however, separated the presidency from party politics. Henceforth, each president was to be elected for a single seven-year term by the Turkish Grand National Assembly (TGNA) from among its own members. Under the 1982 constitution executive power is vested in the president of the republic and the Council of Ministers (Bakanlar Kurulu).

The president is the head of state. He presides over the Council of Ministers, sends representatives to foreign states and receives the representatives of foreign governments, ratifies and promulgates international treaties, and exercises powers of pardon and commutation. He appoints the prime minister (*Başbakan*) as well as members of the Council of Ministers and can dissolve parliament.

Until 1960, with the single exception of Celal Bayar (1950–60), all presidents came from the highest ranks of the military. After 1961 they played a critical extraconstitutional role as mediators between the leaders of the military and the political parties. General Cemal Gürsel, the first president under the 1961 constitution, had headed the National Unity Committee (NUC), the junta that governed Turkey after the 1960 coup until 1961. General Cevdet Sunay, the former chief of the general staff, succeeded him. Each had been recommended to the Assembly by the armed forces. This led military generals to perceive the office of the president as "the fifth star" of general epaulets ornamenting their shoulders.

The prime minister is head of government. He and his cabinet compose the Council of Ministers. The president designates the prime minister from among the members of the TGNA. Although the president usually designates the leader of the majority or plurality party, he has occasionally designated an independent to form an "above-party" government.

With the exceptions noted above, before 1983 real executive power belonged to the prime minister and the Council of Ministers. The prime minister–designate chose the candidates for the various ministries in his cabinet from within or without parliament. The president formally appointed them. Since the coalitions of the 1970s the Council of Ministers has usually consisted of the prime minister, one to three deputy prime ministers, 20 to 24 ministers, and up to seven ministers of state without portfolios. Except for the "above-party" governments of 1960–61, 1971–73, and 1980–83, all have been drawn from the TGNA. In addition to considerations of skill and experience, they have been selected for reasons of political

expediency. Since 1983 the prime minister–designate has presented his government's program to the new unicameral Assembly for a vote of confidence. Only with an affirmative vote can the government be formed. Thereafter, the Council of Ministers maintains close contact with the legislature, with individual ministers appearing before the Assembly to debate legislation and to respond to questions.

The 1982 constitution dramatically increased the president's powers, on the model of French president Charles de Gaulle's Fifth Republic to underline the state's interests vis-à-vis individual political interests. When he deems necessary, the president may call parliament into special session or dissolve it and call for new elections. He may initiate challenges to legislation in the Constitutional Court. In addition to appointing and dismissing ministers, he appoints the justices of the Constitutional Court, the Military Court of Appeals, and the Supreme Council of Judges and Prosecutors. He also controls higher education by appointing the members of the Higher Education Council and university presidents. In times of crisis, the president together with the cabinet is empowered to declare a state of emergency, martial law, or military preparedness.

LEGISLATURE

The Turkish Parliament, the unicameral Grand National Assembly of Turkey (Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi), has 550 members who are elected for five-year terms. However, elections have generally been held before the end of five-year terms, which reveals the fragile political structure. The last election was held on November 2, 2002, in which only JDP and RPP could surpass the 10 percent threshold and entered parliament with 34.3 percent of the votes and 363 seats and 19.4 percent and 178 seats, respectively, and 9 independent deputies. It is noteworthy that 90 percent of the previous parliament was renewed in the 2002 election.

TURKISH GRAND NATIONAL ASSEMBLY AFTER GENERAL ELECTIONS OF NOVEMBER 2002

Party	Percentage	Seats
Justice and Development Party	34.3	363
Republican People's Party	19.4	178
True Path Party	9.6	—
Nationalist Movement Party	8.4	—
Young Party	7.3	—
Democratic People's Party	6.1	—
Motherland Party	5.1	—
Felicity Party	2.5	—
Democratic Left Party	1.2	—
Independents	1.0	9

JUDICIARY

The Turkish republic, founded in 1923, abandoned the Ottoman Empire's Islamic Canon law (sharia) and adopted a secular constitution as well as secular legal codes from Europe (the Swiss Civil Code, the Italian Penal Code, and the German Commercial Code, all from 1926). Although the 1924 constitution proclaimed the independence of the courts, alleged interference with the judicial system by the democratic government (1950–60) led the framers of the 1961 constitution to introduce the Constitutional Court (Anayasa Mahkemesi), which reviews legislation to ensure its constitutionality. A National Security Council decree, however, stated that the Court could not question the constitutionality of laws, decrees, or communiqués approved or issued by the NSC after its takeover on September 12, 1980.

The Council of State (Danıştay), reorganized in 1964 and modeled after the French Conseil d'État, serves as the highest administrative court and the "organ of advice" to the executive. The High Court of Cassation (Yargıtay) is the highest court of appeals, and it can confirm or reverse verdicts rendered by lower civil and criminal courts.

In addition to civilian courts, there are military courts charged with handling all military cases as well as keeping the right to try civilians related to offensive critics against the military. The State Security Courts were responsible with cases related to terrorism and organized crime and they were replaced with the professionalized courts in response to the European Union's democratization demands from Turkey with respect to the latter's membership bid.

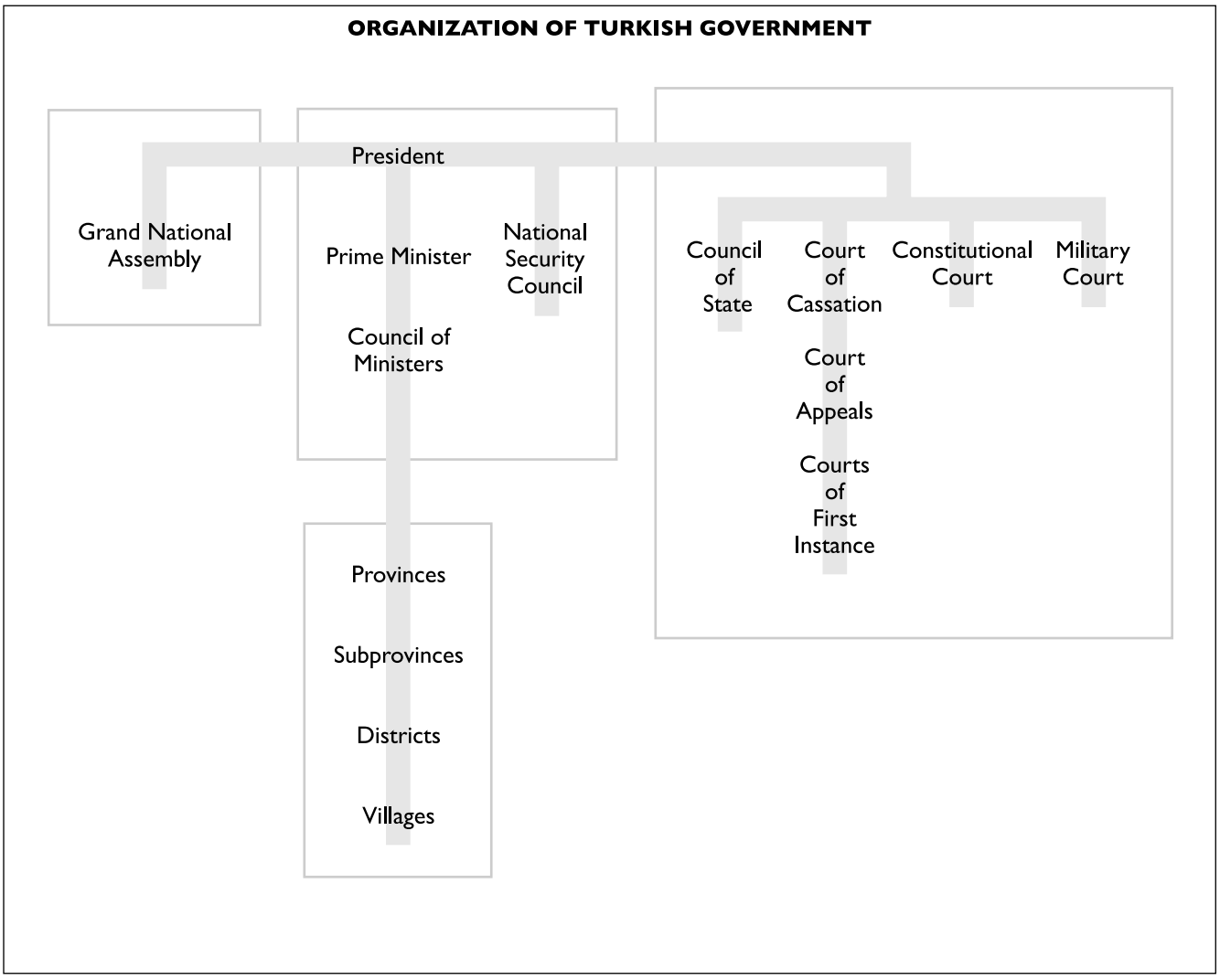
REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The responsibility and authority for local government is centralized mainly in Ankara, especially in the Council

of Ministers and the various state ministries. Administratively, Turkey is divided into provinces (*il*), which are further subdivided into subprovinces (*ilçe*), districts (*bucak*), and villages (*köy*). Each of these administrative units, with the exception of the village, is headed by an official who is appointed by the president and responsible to the Ministry of Interior. Although the village chief (*muhtar*) is popularly elected, he too is answerable to the Ministry of Interior.

The office of the provincial governor (*vali*) is located in the province's largest city, while subprovincial seats with subprovincial governors (*kaymakam*) are located in subprovinces (*genel meclisi*). Locally elected councils are attached to the offices of *vali* and *kaymakam*, but they advise only; authority descends from Ankara.

Except for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, all ministries have departments on the provincial level. Because their provincial officers are responsible in the first instance to the local *vali* and in the second instance to their own ministries, a certain confusion and ambiguity often results. This situation developed historically out of the Ottoman tradition in which governors-general were in charge of the provinces. In addition to these national units of administration, Turkey had some 3,000 municipalities as of 2005, each with an elected mayor (*belediye başkani*) and council (*belediye meclisi*). The relationship between the municipality and the party government is one of tutelage. Turkey is composed of 81 provinces, 16 of which are greater municipalities formed during the mid-1980s, 850 subprovinces and some 2,300 towns (*belde*) and 37,000 districts and villages. Although the JDP took 1,247 of the town municipalities in the March 2004 local elections, it aims to curtail their number in order to balance administrative expenses.



A recent law downgrades town municipalities into villages if their population numbers less than 2,000.

The Electoral System

There had been two futile attempts to make a transition to multiparty politics during the single-party era of Kemal Atatürk, but both the Progressive Republican Party (PRP) and Free Republic Party (FRP) were closed after less than a year, alleging that the parties had been involved in religious reactionist insurgencies, in 1925 and in 1930, respectively. Thus, Turkish politics operated under a single-party regime until 1946, when the first elections under multiparty politics were held, though they were marred by fraud. Until 1934 the voting franchise was limited to males over 18 years of age, and the national electoral system was indirect. People voted for secondary electors who selected the actual deputies to the Assembly. In 1934 women were given the right to vote and run for national office, and 15 women were elected to the 1935 Assembly. In 1946 the law was amended, and in 1950 direct suffrage was introduced, resulting in the first free elections in the republic and the defeat of the RPP, which had been in power for 27 years. Voter participation has always been high, especially in rural areas.

Elections are supervised by the High Election Board, which both certifies election results and serves as the original and final court for all complaints of irregularities regarding election matters. The board has 11 members, six elected by the General Assembly of the Court of Cassation and five by the General Assembly of the Council of State from among its own members.

The 1983 electoral law is still valid. Based on the d'Hondt system, it preserves proportional representation but disadvantages small parties, requiring them to win at least 10 percent of the national vote in order to obtain seats. The law assigns one TGNA seat to each province and allocates the remaining seats by the populations of electoral districts.

The Party System

Political life in the republic has been dominated by the following parties: the Republican People's Party (1923–50), the Democrat Party (1950–60), and a period of coalition governments (1961–65) before the Justice Party's dominance (1965–71). After political life was restored in 1973 following the military ultimatum of March 1971, there were coalitions led by the RPP and the JP with Islamist and ultranationalist parties until the military intervened once again on September 12, 1980. With the restoration of political life in 1983, the newly formed MP of Turgut Özal ruled the country until 1991, when once again the country reverted to coalition governments, until 2002.

Following the 1980 takeover, the NSC announced new laws on political parties and elections. These laws stipulated that leaders and administrators of the parties active on September 11, 1980 (the eve of the coup), were prohibited until 1992 from engaging in political activity. In addition, persons who were members of parliament on January 1, 1980, were not allowed to form parties or serve as administrative officers in them until 1987. The NSC hoped that these laws would not only keep out the former, corrupt politicians but bring new blood into the political process. When new parties were formed in 1983, many of the people who formed or joined these parties were without political experience and had joined the parties for what they could get. However, a referendum in 1987 permitted the banned politicians like Demirel and Ecevit to reenter political life.

Major Political Parties

JUSTICE AND DEVELOPMENT PARTY (JDP)

(Adalet ve Kalkinma Partisi)

The JDP emerged in 2001 from the ashes of the defunct Virtue Party (Fazilet Partisi; VP). Merve Kavakçı, a female deputy having entered parliament on the VP ticket from Istanbul, attempted to take her oath of office wearing her headscarf after the 1999 elections. This triggered protest by secularists in parliament, and the prosecutor of the republic filed a suit against the VP, which resulted in its closure in June 2001 on the basis of violating the secularism principle. The closure of the VP led to the emergence of two Islamic-rooted parties: the Felicity Party (FP), led by the former VP leader Recai Kutan, and the Justice and Development Party (JDP), led by the popular former mayor of Istanbul, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. A split also occurred between the traditionalist and reformist wings of the VP. Almost half of the VP deputies passed to JDP after its establishment in August 2001, and the JDP experienced tremendous success in its first general elections in 2002, with 34.3 percent of the votes and 363 deputies. It consolidated these results in the March 2004

local elections, with 41.6 percent of the votes and 1,761 of the municipalities.

MOTHERLAND PARTY (MP)

(Anavatan Partisi)

The Motherland Party (MP) was formed by Turgut Özal (1927–93) and soon became "his" party. It was politically conservative and pragmatic, favoring economically liberal policies, private enterprise, and alliances with both Western and Muslim countries. It won a plurality of the vote in both the 1983 parliamentary and the 1984 local elections. Özal was born in the eastern province of Malatya. After graduating as an electrical engineer from Istanbul Technical University, he went on to head Turkey's State Planning Organization. He went to the World Bank in Washington in 1971 and joined the Sabanci business group on his return. Later he entered politics but failed to be elected on the Islamist ticket. He was brought into Demirel's 1979 cabinet, where he designed and directed the economic recovery program. He was appointed "economic czar" in the postcoup government.

Özal claimed that his party included all elements from the pre-1980 political spectrum, from the center-left to the religious right, as he himself had been a member of the Salvation Party. This proved to be the party's weakness, for the party began to decline as soon as the pre-1980 leaders reemerged after the 1987 referendum that restored their rights. Only through the manipulation of the electoral system and patronage could Özal win elections, though with narrower margins.

After Özal was elected president in October 1989, there was a struggle for power between the conservative-religious and the liberal-secular factions in the party, and the liberals under Mesut Yılmaz finally won the contest in June 1991. As president, Özal continued to control the party, and Yılmaz was able to acquire full control only after Özal's premature death in April 1993. The party continued to decline until it had become the third party in the 1995 general election. Neverthless, given the failure of any party to win an overall majority, Motherland was able to lead coalition governments in 1996 and 1997.

The MP under the leadership of Mesut Yılmaz continued its gradual decline based on a status quo mentality and allegations of corruption until the 2002 elections, when the party hit bottom, leaving it outside the parliament. Thus, Yılmaz had left both the helm of the party and active politics. Ali Talip Özdemir, elected to the chairmanship, left his seat to Nesrin Nas after a short time. However, she could not avert the steady decline, receiving 2.5 percent of the votes and 106 municipalities in the 2004 local elections.

REPUBLICAN PEOPLE'S PARTY (RPP)

(Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi)

The Social Democrat Populist Party (SHP) resulted from the November 1985 merger of the Populist Party (PoP) and the extraparliamentary Social Democracy Party (SDP). Both parties had been formed in 1983, but the NSC had prevented SDP from entering that year's election. In the 1984 local elections, however, SDP entered and won 23.4 percent of the vote, versus only 8 percent for the PoP.

Both were social democratic parties composed primarily of former RPP supporters. Necdet Calp, the PP's first chairman, had served as the late Ismet İnönü's private secretary. The SDP chairman was Erdal İnönü, İsmet İnonu's son. Erdal entered politics in 1983 after teaching physics in Turkish universities for many years. The SDPP was chaired by Aydın Given Gürkan, who had been elected PP's chairman at that party's June 1985 congress. The two left-of-center parties merged to become a strong opposition and viable alternative to the ruling MP.

The SDPP lost its social democratic monopoly after Bülent Ecevit's wife, Rahşan, formed the Democratic Left Party (DLP) in 1984. In the local elections of 1989 SDPP became the first party, with 28.69 percent of the vote, and the DLP won 9.25 percent, while TPP and MP won 25.8 percent and 21.69 percent, respectively. SDPP's performance in running the municipalities was marred by corruption, elitism, and inefficiency, and as a result its vote in the 1991 general election declined to 20.8 percent and 88 seats. Its decision to share power with Demirel's TPP led to further decline, as the Social Democrats were forced to abandon many of their principles under pressure from their senior free-market partner on such issues as the Kurdish question, human rights, and democracy. Kurds who supported the SDPP were expelled from the party and went on to form their own parties, thus depriving the SDPP of the Kurdish vote. Meanwhile, the RPP reemerged once the ban on pre-1980 party names was lifted, further dividing the social democratic movement.

This division ended when SDPP and RPP merged under RPP's banner. Such was the confusion among the voters that in the December 1995 election, the new RPP won only 10.71 percent of the vote and fell behind the Democratic Left, whose vote rose to 14.64 percent.

That is how the situation stood in August 1997, when Ecevit's party was in partnership with Mesut Yılmaz's MP. The question on everyone's mind was the merger of these two parties and the emergence of a united social democratic front. However, this dream was never realized due to the reluctance of Ecevit based on his distrust of Deniz Baykal, who inherited leadership of the RPP from Hikmet Çetin shortly after the merger of SDPP and RPP. (Çetin became NATO senior civilian representative in Afghanistan since 2003.) The failure of RPP and the success of DLP in the 1999 elections did not help; even Baykal had resigned from the leadership, which was filled by Altan Öymen until Baykal's return to the party chairmanship in September 2000. In the 2002 elections the picture was reversed, with the success of the RPP under Baykal's leadership and the failure of Ecevit, but the parties are still apart because of the personal enmity of the leaders rather than ideological rifts. Following the bad results of the 2004 local elections, with the party winning only 18.2 percent of the votes and 472 municipalities, the opposition wing urged the convening of an extraordinary party congress in July 2004. Although Baykal kept his seat, he could not appease the opposition, and two of the deputies resigned from the party a week after the congress. Nevertheless, the history of RPP, the oldest party in Turkish politics, could be also evaluated as the history of inner party conflict including 41 congresses, 11 of which were extraordinary, in its history of 71 years (with nine years of interval after the closure in 1981). The importance of the party lies in its lengthy existence—it was established by Kemal Atatürk on September 9, 1923, before the establishment of the republic, and it kept control of the government until the 1950 elections as an authoritarian single party. Moreover, Baykal has become the symbol of factionalism either as the opposition or as the leader of the RPP.

Minor Political Parties

TRUE PATH PARTY (TPP)

(Doğru Yol Partisi)

The failure of the Nationalist Democracy Party (NDP) in the 1983 election did not bode well for its future. Its leader, the retired general Turgut Sunalp, was uninspiring, and he was replaced after the party's poor showing in the 1984 local elections. A year later the NDP decided to merge with the TPP formed by Hüsamettin Cindoruk, acting as proxy for Demirel. By the beginning of 1986 the party structure created by the generals had virtually disintegrated and most of the prominent politicians who had been banned were already active behind their proxies.

The referendum of September 1987 brought them into the open. As the MP declined, its position on the center-right was taken by TPP. It won the election of 1991 with 27 percent of the vote, and Demirel formed a coalition with the SDPP. Demirel gave up the party's leadership when he was elected president on May 16, 1993. He was succeeded by Tansu Çiller (1946–) the following month; she became the first woman to lead the party and Turkey's first female prime minister.

Çiller, a professor of economics educated in the United States, was expected to give the party a dynamic, modern image and to challenge Mesut Yılmaz's Motherland Party for the leadership of the center-right. She continued to lead the coalition with SDPP. When the strain of the coalition became too much, President Demirel announced in October 1995 that an early general election would take place on December 24.

The election results were a setback for Çiller, but she refused to resign. It is remarkable how quickly the TPP had become Çiller's party, for she was able to oust all rivals, even those like Cindoruk who had been one of its founders. The charges of corruption against her and the threat of a parliamentary investigation led to the breakup of the coalition with MP. The coalition with the PP ended under military pressure, and after June 1997 her party remained in opposition. She survived until the November 2002 elections, when "her" party could not pass the 10 percent threshold and she left politics. Mehmet Ağar, the ex-police chief, who has been minister of justice and minister of interior affairs during the TPP coalitions with the MP and the PP, respectively, resigned from the TPP because of his alleged relationship to the scandal that linked government to organized crime. Although the courts did not arrest him, he could not return to the TPP due to Çiller's negative attitude. He was elected as an independent deputy in the 1999 and 2002 elections and won the party helm after Çiller's abandonment of the party, and Ağar is the TPP leader as of 2005. Ağar's TPP became slightly better off after the March 2004 local elections, winning 10 percent of the votes and 384 municipalities.

NATIONALIST ACTION PARTY (NAP)

(Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi)

This ultranationalist party was closed down by the generals in 1980 and emerged as the Nationalist Labor

Party (Milliyetçi Çalışma Partisi) when political life was restored in 1983. It regained some of its dynamism when the charismatic Alparslan Türkeş returned to the party's leadership in 1987, but it remained a minor party, only influential in alliance with some other party of the right. When the ban on pre-1980 party names was lifted in July 1992, it again adopted its former name, the NAP. Throughout the 1980s and into the 1990s the party was ideologically divided. Some members favored adopting a more Islamist line instead of extreme nationalism. This group broke away under the leadership of Muhsin Yazıcıoğlu to form a new party, the Grand Unity Party (Büyük Birlik Partisi) in January 1993. This divided the party's vote and made it less effective. The death of Türkeş in 1997 led to a struggle for the leadership of the party between Devlet Bahçeli and Tuğrul Türkeş, son of Älparslan Türkeş. Devlet Bahçeli won the helm of the party and moderated the neofascist discourse to some extent. This oriented Tuğrul Türkeş to establish his own Enlightened Turkey Party (ETP), which did not sound like much to the nationalist voters. He was once again in the loser camp when he made a pre-election alliance with Çiller in the 2002 elections. Bahçeli, on the other hand, increased the NAP's votes to 18.0 percent in the 1999 elections, enough to receive the post of deputy PM and several key ministries for his party. However, the allegations of corruption about the Ministry of Infrastructure's auctions following the notorious earthquake that devastated parts of Turkey on August 17, 1999, degraded the NAP's popularity before the public. This resulted in a decrease in NAP's votes to 8.4 percent in 2002, forcing them to remain outside parliament. Thereafter, Bahçeli declared his resignation, but in the NAP's congress he was reelected to the party leadership.

Other Political Forces

MILITARY

The 1950–60 period of DP rule was the one in which the military enjoyed the least political power. Under the Democrats, the military's budget received less priority than formerly, inflation eroded officers' fixed salaries, and officers' status declined markedly relative to those of the rising urban and provincial commercial entrepreneurs. When the DP became repressive and ordered the military to put down antigovernment demonstrations, the officers staged a coup, on May 27, 1960, declaring they had acted in the name of Atatürk.

Since the 1960s the military has developed several of Turkey's major investment institutions. The largest is Armed Forces Pension Fund (AFPF). Headed by retired general Nazmi Yavuzalp, AFPF invested large amounts of capital (obtained through voluntary deductions from the salaries of military personnel) in numerous Turkish industries, from automobile and tire manufacturing to retail outlets. With so many officers and enlisted men relying on Turkey's economic development for investment and retirement incomes, the military can have little patience with radical labor unions or ineffective governments that appear to mismanage the country's funds. Today, AFPF is one of the leading conglomerates in Turkey, with companies in the automotive, food processing, and banking sectors. The financial power of the military increases their anxiety concerning the smooth functioning of the capitalist system.

ORGANIZED LABOR

Throughout his life, Atatürk opposed all class-based organizations, including labor unions. Labor unions were first permitted in 1947, but they were denied the right to strike. After legislation in 1963 legalized strikes, lockouts, and collective bargaining, labor unions began to grow in size and political importance. The number of unions climbed from 432 in 1960 to 863 in 1977, while their estimated total membership jumped from 253,000 to about 3.8 million. Unions continued to be prohibited from having organizational affiliations with political parties.

In the late 1970s about 70 percent of union members belonged to the Confederation of Labor Unions of Turkey (CLUT), Türkiye İşçi Sendikalari Konfederasyonu (TÜRK-İŞ), the oldest and most moderate major confederation in Turkey. It pursued a pragmatic "above-party" strategy. About 20 percent of union members belonged to the militant, leftist Confederation of Revolutionary Labor Unions (CRLU) (Devrimci İşçi Sendikalari Konfederasyonu [DISK]), established in 1967 by dissidents desiring a more active political policy. It alternately favored the Marxist Workers' Party (WP) and the Republican People's Party. About 100,000 workers belonged to the Confederation of Nationalist Labor Unions (CNLU) (Milliyetçi İşçi Sendikalari Konfederasyonu [MISK]), founded in 1969 as a right-wing, pro–Nationalist Action confederation. Only about 20,000 workers belonged to the Confederation of Due Labor Unions (CDLU) (Hak İşçi Sendikalari Konfederasyonu [HAK-İŞ]), founded in 1977 as a right-wing, pro–NSP grouping.

During the 1970s many unions, especially those associated with CRLU, engaged in frequent and violent

strikes, forcing the government to declare martial law in the major industrial areas. In June of 1980, about three months before the coup, there were almost 48,000 workers on strike, affecting 203 workplaces. Almost 90 percent of the strikers were CRLU.

After the coup the NSC suspended many labor union rights and banned all confederations and most of their member unions with the exception of the moderate CLUT. The leaders of the other confederations were placed under arrest pending the outcome of investigations into alleged illegal activities. In June of 1981 the last CRLU chairman, Abdullah Baştürk (a former RPP deputy), and 51 other CRLU officials were formally charged with instigating violent demonstrations and conducting other illegal activities with the aim of establishing a Marxist-Leninist state. The military regime crushed the unions, depriving them of their ability to protest and make economic gains that would enable their members to keep up with inflation. Özal's governments followed a low wages policy toward labor in order to compete in world markets. Thus, he challenged trade unions while settling free-market economy in Turkey. The CRLU returned to activity in 1991 with further democratization in Turkey, and it has regained most of its previous members. The CDLU became more noticeable with rising Islamic tendencies in the 1990s, but it was keen on advocating the rights of labor vis-à-vis businessmen, either Islamic- or secular-oriented. The CLUT has followed its mainstream policy and kept its organization intact, especially in state economic enterprises (SEEs), which have been privatized. It is interesting that the ex-chairmen of the labor confederations have entered parliamentary politics: Necati Çelik of CDLU entered parliament on the PP ticket and received the post of minister of labor during a short-lived PP-TPP coalition; Rıdvan Budak of CRLU served as a deputy from DLP during 1999–2002, and Bayram Meral of CLUT became a deputy on the RPP ticket after the 2002 elections.

STUDENTS

During the early decades of the republic, university students were a small, politically moderate elite. By the 1950s their numbers had increased markedly and they gained prominence by playing a leading role in the opposition movement against Prime Minister Adnan Menderes and the DP government. The government had alienated the students and the historically pro-RPP faculty by refusing to promote teachers critical of the government, by curbing unfavorable political expression by the press and individuals, and by ordering the army to suppress antigovernment campus demonstrations.

Thanks to the political liberalization that followed the 1960 coup, political activism among university students accelerated dramatically. From the late 1960s to the late 1970s the number of university students doubled to 315,000. The period was also one of rising inflation, high unemployment, and a decline in quality of the expanding educational system. The massive influx of students in certain fields of education such as law, political science, sociology, and history was grossly disproportionate to the employment opportunities available in those fields. Student discontent was critically heightened and expressed itself in the formation of numerous radical right- and left-wing organizations, which did not hesitate to develop bloody street fights against each other.

After the 1980 coup the military government quickly disbanded the radical student organizations and rounded up their members. Many were tried and convicted of crimes ranging from murder and kidnapping to armed robbery. The mass of moderate students, who had been caught up in the crossfire, welcomed the peace that finally returned to their campuses. Since 1983 all political student organizations have continued to be outlawed. Only educational and cultural associations are allowed. Small fractions of leftists continued to operate into the 1990s, carrying out demonstrations against symbols of the regime. Students have also moved into the Islamist camp and are active on campuses, especially in the provinces. Most students abandoned politics after the repression of the 1980s. However, in recent years, there has been a revival of student activism in support of secularism as a reaction to the Islamist threat. The Islamist students also become more involved in protests against the ban on headscarves, which in effect outlawed female students from getting a higher education since the 1980s. Veiled, female students were naturally at the forefront of these protests, but their male mates did not leave them to protest alone. However, pressure on veiled, female students increased so much that they were left with the options to leave the university and their education, to continue it abroad, or to use a wig and abdicate the headscarf.

INTEREST GROUPS

Several associations promote Turkey's major private business interests. Two of the most important are the Turkish Union of Chambers and Stock Exchanges (TUCSE) and the Turkish Industrialists and Busi-

nessmen's Association (TIBA). The first handles private-business contracts with foreign firms and has established the Supreme Negotiation Council to study the role of the private sector in Turkish-EU relations. Established in 1971 by prominent businessmen and industrialists, TIBA operates a respected research center known for economic studies and forecasts that influence government decisions.

Both organizations favored Demirel's JP because of its pro-private-sector attitude. However, they became impatient with the JP-led coalitions in the late 1970s and welcomed the 1980 military action. They supported the postcoup economic recovery program of Turgut Özal. Initially, TIBA supported the MP, but with the rise of Demirel's TPP, the business community's support was divided between the two center-right parties that had similar programs but could not unite because of their rivalries based on mutual adversaries of its leaders, which continued during Mesut Yılmaz's and Tansu Çiller's leaderships. The export-oriented policies of Özal led small and middle-sized enterprises to learn about international markets and to enhance their organization vis-à-vis the big bourgeoisie represented by TIBA. Thus, the Independent Industrialists' and Businessmen's Association (IIBA) was established by religiously conservative entrepreneurial circles in 1990 and has become the largest business interest group, though it represented only 10 percent of the GDP at its highest level of membership of around 4,000. Moreover, the organization has undergone several trials due to the speeches of its chairmen, allegedly inciting hatred against the secular nature of the political regime after the toppling of the PP-TPP coalition government. The rise of the JDP in politics led the IIBA to regain importance on the Turkish daily agenda.

ETHNIC GROUPS

Approximately 80 percent of Turkey's 69 million people are ethnically Turkish. The rest are Kurds, Arabs, Slavs, Bulgars, Greeks, Armenians, Jews, Gypsies, Circassians, and Georgians. According to law, all share the same rights of Turkish citizenship, but due to the historical anxieties of the Turkish state, minorities are disadvantaged educationally, socially, and economically.

With an estimated population of 20 percent, the Kurds constitute the largest and politically most important ethnic minority. Most Kurds in Turkey live in the underdeveloped eastern provinces and are organized for the most part into tribes of pastoral nomads and peasant farmers. Their Indo-Iranian language is unrelated to Turkish. Because of their geopolitical separation as well as internal social and dialect variations, the Kurdish people have never unified into a single national movement, although separate national movements have existed among them in Turkey, Iraq, and Iran. In Turkey, about two-thirds of the Kurds are Sunni Muslims of the Shafii rite (as opposed to the dominant Turkish Sunni Hanafi rite) and one-third are Alevis, an offshoot of Shiism. Hence, Kurds differ from the Turkish majority linguistically, religiously, geographically, and socially.

In its desire to develop a unified Turkish nation-state, the government under Atatürk prohibited the use of Kurdish and certain other minority languages in schools, government affairs, and the public media. Kurds were referred to as Mountain Turks, and Kurdish was regarded as a crude Turkish dialect.

During the multiparty period, local Kurdish notables entered into alliances with various political parties, especially the New Turkey Party (NTP) in the 1960s, the JP, the RPP, and the Marxist Worker's Party (WP). Such alliances did little to develop the Kurdish area economically or free it culturally. In the 1970s many left-wing radical groups appealed to the Kurds for support, describing them as economically exploited and culturally suppressed people in a capitalist system. About 15 small and uncoordinated Kurdish separatist organizations allegedly existed at that time. After the 1980 coup the military quickly disbanded them and rounded up their leaders. Over 2,000 Kurds were prosecuted for a variety of separatist activities. In 1984 the Kurdistan Workers' Party (KWP), known as the PKK, began an insurrection in southeastern Anatolia, which the government forces have failed to crush. This insurrection has led to massive destruction in the region and a great loss of life and created a blot on Turkey's human rights record. The capture of the KWP leader Abdullah Öcalan led the separatist organization to declare a truce unilaterally. His trial fostered discussions on capital punishment, which Turkey has abrogated in steps toward its EU membership. Recently, the KWP issued a new declaration about ending its unilateral truce, which led to sporadic attacks on Turkish security forces. The terrorist attacks of the KWP had caused a crackdown on the legitimacy of the Kurdish parties, which resulted in their closure because of accusations of connections to the KWP. However, the jailed Kurdish deputies were released after 10 years and now seem to strive adamantly for peace in Turkey. Öcalan, on the other hand, is still in jail on an island and awaits trial before the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR)

after the Turkish court's decision to execute him despite Turkey's abrogation of capital punishment.

RELIGIOUS GROUPS

During the republic's early decades, Atatürk was determined to disestablish Islam as the state religion. He abolished the caliphate, closed religious schools and religious brotherhoods (tarikats), and prohibited religious dress in public. A number of Muslim orders, such as the Ticanis, the Nurcus, and Nakshibendis, revolted and were crushed. In recent times, the only serious move against secularism came from the National Salvation Party (NSP, later known as the PP, VP, and FP). Turkey is said to be 98 percent Muslim (80 percent Sunni and 18 percent Shiite—mostly Alevi). Conservative Sunni Muslims tended to support the religiously tolerant DP from 1950 to 1960 and, thereafter, its successor, the JP. Very conservative Sunnis backed the NSP. They regarded the Alevis not only as heretics but as fifth-column Communists. Many of the Alevis (who are Turks, Arabs, and Kurds) favored the RPP, believing its strong stand on secularism protected them from the Sunni majority. Some supported the short-lived Unity Party of Turkey (UPT), which was founded by Alevis for Alevis, but it never caught the imagination of the Alevi voters and therefore never took off.

During the chaotic 1970s and later in the 1990s, provocateurs, probably of both right and left, inflamed tensions between the two sects in low-income urban areas and in a number of eastern provinces. Clashes became so violent that martial law had to be declared and extended to maintain peace. But this violence raised Alevi consciousness and led them to protest and organization locally. They demanded to have their identity recognized by the state and be represented in the Governmental Directorate of Religious Affairs. Moreover, the Alevis also established the Peace Party (PeP) under the leadership of Ali Haydar Veziroğlu, but the party dissolved itself in 1999 after three years.

National Prospects

By the late 1980s it had become clear that the structural changes brought about by the military regime had failed to produce the desired political and socioeconomic stability. The "new politicians" had failed to acquire roots, and the old politicians such as Demirel, Ecevit, Erbakan, and Türkes, whom the generals had wanted to keep out of the arena, were back in control of parties. The generals had succeeded in uprooting the emerging two-party system that had been evolving since 1960, and this added to the confusion. The two center-right and two center-left parties with essentially the same programs refused to unite due to their leaders. These divisions disillusioned and alienated the electorate, which turned in desperation to the untried option of the Islamists, represented by Necmettin Erbakan's PP. Given this political instability, governments were unable to deal with the country's social and economic problems. Inflation and unemployment have been rampant, which fostered political fragmentation and escalating corruption and prepared the basis for the harsh economic crises of November 2000 and February 2001. The coalition government's stand-by agreements with the IMF in 1999 were severely hampered by these economic crises, which compelled Turkey to seek further aid from the IMF and World Bank. This led to a deepening of political fragmentation since Kemal Derviş, a former vice chairman of the World Bank who became the economic czar with a ministerial post in order to overcome the February 2001 economic crisis, took action first in establishing the New Turkey Party (NTP), and then moved on to the RPP, from whose list he won a seat in the 2002 elections.

The emergence of the Islamists as a strong force has placed the secular regime under threat. This became evident during the coalition between the PP and the TPP in 1996–97. Military pressure ended this coalition and led to a coalition of Motherland, Democratic Left, and Democrat Turkey—parties that were ideologically incompatible but forced into a marriage of convenience by the Islamist threat imposed by the generals.

The strong movement to bring about the merger of three center-right parties (Motherland, True Path, and Democrat Turkey) as well as that of the RPP and the Democratic Left failed. However, the 2002 elections produced a two-party system since only the JDP and the RPP could enter parliament. The JDP, despite its Islamic roots, proved its sincerity in keeping Turkey's face turned toward the West, in line with the Kemalist vision, by its zealous legislation of six additional harmonization packages convergent with EU demands that the country consolidate democracy before its possible EU membership. The steps taken toward the EU also curbed the privileges of the military to some extent, enlarging the space between civilian politics and the historical legacy of military intervention as much as possible. The JDP did not neglect good relations with the United States, which supports Turkish EU membership. Recent permission given to begin broadcasting in two dialects of Kurdish and the release of Kurdish deputies from jail were perceived as positive

developments, polishing the notorious human rights record of Turkey.

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REPUBLIC OF TURKMENISTAN

(Turkmenostan Respublikasy)

By Roger D. Kangas, Ph.D.



Turkmenistan is one of the five Central Asian successor states to the former Soviet Union. Gaining independence in 1991, this country of 5 million people (2005 est.) and 488,100 square kilometers borders Iran and Afghanistan to the south and Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan to the north. According to recent demographic statistics, Turkmenistan has one of the highest birth rates in the world, with nearly 40 percent of the population under the age of 15. This translates into future pressures for employment and even water and land usage, given the highly arid environment and the small percentage of arable land available in Turkmenistan.

The System of Government

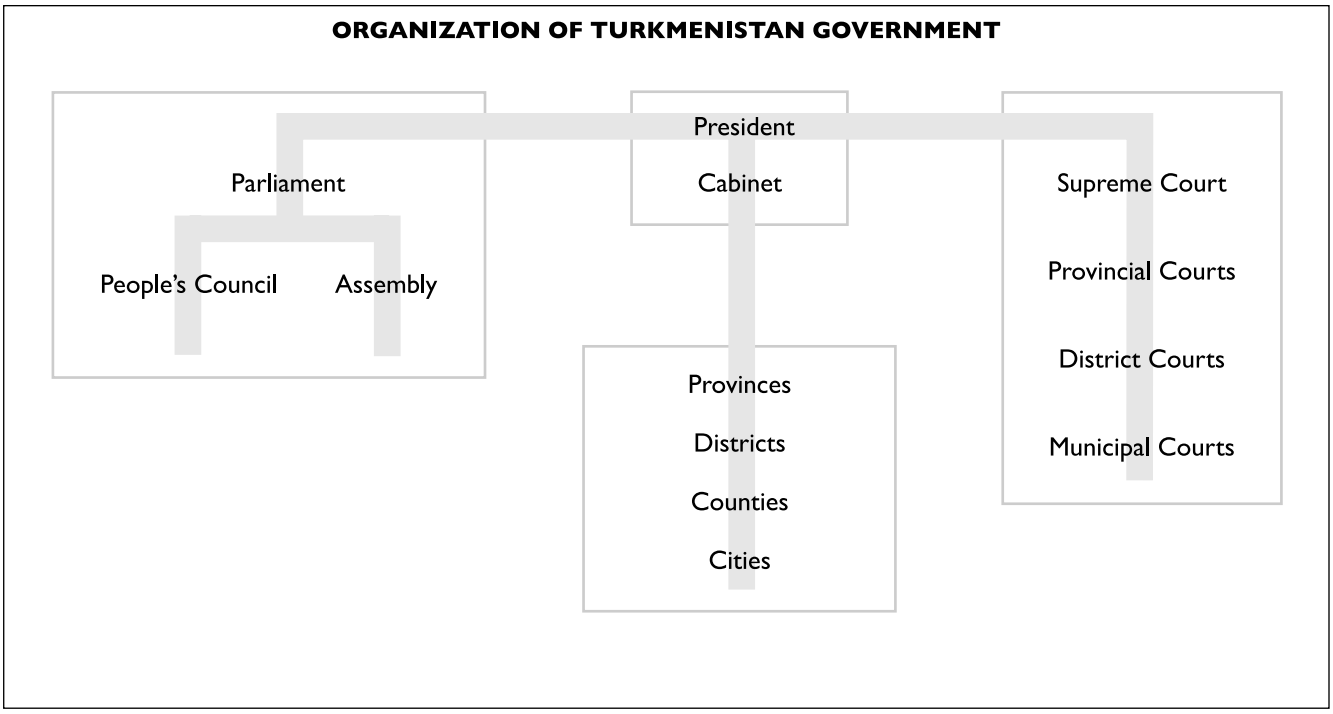
Although its constitution declares it to be a democracy, Turkmenistan is, de facto, an authoritarian state under the leadership of Saparmurad Niyazov. Indeed, the organization Freedom House listed Turkmenistan as the "least free" state of the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. Clan relations remain important in this country—a carryover from the pre-Soviet era.

EXECUTIVE

Complete authority is vested in the office of the presidency. Not only is Niyazov head of state, he is also the head of government and commander in chief of the armed forces, and all levels of the government ultimately answer to him. Niyazov was elected on October 27, 1990, as president of the Turkmen Soviet Socialist Republic. On June 21, 1992, he ran again in the first postindependence election, garnering 99.5 percent of the vote in an uncontested race.

A referendum on January 15, 1994, extended his term to the year 2002 (with 99.99 percent approval). On December 28, 1999, the Mejlis (Assembly) voted unanimously to extend President Niyazov's term indefinitely. Consequently, presidential elections are not slated for future years. A November 25, 2002, assassination attempt on President Niyazov only prompted him to further solidify his control of the political system and weaken the authority of subordinates within the executive branch. Previously, there was a separate prime minister, but as of 2005 Niyazov holds that portfolio as well.

Combined with a stringent authoritarianism is a cult of personality that surrounds Niyazov. Officially renaming himself Turkmenbashi, or "Head of the Turkmen," Niyazov has placed himself at the center of Turkmen politics and is seen as the one person who can unite the country. Since 1992 every major city has had streets and buildings named after Turkmenbashi, and even the city of Krasnovodsk has been renamed Turkmenbashi. Every evening, broadcasts of his speeches can be seen on Turkmen television, and banners and placards bearing his image adorn the streets of Ashgabat. President Niyazov has also emphasized the importance of a two-volume set titled *Rubnama,* ostensibly



written by him. The books focus on the historical and cultural mission of the Turkmen people and the exposition of Turkmen values. These are required reading for all school-age and university students in the country, and the mass media pay considerable attention to their edification. There exists a strong parallel to the worst of the Brezhnev-era excesses—both in the cult of personality and in the lavish lifestyle that the leader bestows upon himself.

LEGISLATURE

There are several layers of legislatures in Turkmenistan that are all subservient to the presidency. The main elected legislature is the 50-member Mejlis (Assembly) reduced from the 177-person Soviet elected in 1990. While the constitution affords the Mejlis a great deal of power in the areas of lawmaking and legislative oversight, it is, in fact, nothing more than a sounding board for the president and his policies. To date, the Mejlis has not challenged or overturned a presidential decree.

A second legislative body, the Halk Maslakhaty (People's Council), is a fusion of executive and legislative officials. Members of the Mejlis, as well as local-level leaders and executive branch officials, make up the Halk Maslakhaty, whose function is technically listed as the "most representative body in Turkmenistan." Whereas the Mejlis focuses on laws and the implementation of policy, the Halk Maslakhaty is to deal with issues of larger constitutional concern, treaty ratification, and presidential oversight. That Niyazov heads this organization as well, in his capacity as prime minister, puts the latter power into question.

In recent years, the Halk Maslakhaty has taken on a more prominent role vis-à-vis the Mejlis. Because this body has 2,450 members, its ability actually to conduct meaningful sessions is limited, and it largely provides a forum for President Niyazov to present his policies.

A third legislative body is the Council of Elders (Aqsaqalar), which is an unofficial entity not even mentioned in the constitution. The Council is comprised of an undetermined number of tribal and regional leaders—all selected by the president to participate. A relatively new body, this organization is to be a vehicle through which Niyazov can disseminate his ideas and policies to the regional and local levels.

JUDICIARY

The current constitution of Turkmenistan was passed on May 18, 1992. This document, the Supreme Court, and the Supreme Economic Court are supposed to be the foundation of all law in the country. Again, as with other principles, they are subservient to the president. All court justices are appointed by the president for five-year terms and can be dismissed by him "on constitutional grounds." To date the courts have not challenged his authority.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Turkmenistan is divided into five *velayats* (provinces) and the capital city of Ashgabat. Each has its own council and appointed *hakim* (governor) both answerable to the central government. Revenues and spending at the local level are dictated from above.

Those regions are further broken down into *etraps* (districts), which form the basic level of political control and representation in Turkmenistan. Each *velayat* has its own legislative body (Halq vekilleri) whose members also hold five-year terms, parallel to the national-level Mejlis.

The Electoral System

Elections are slated only for the 50-member Mejlis, which is "winner-take-all" with a 50 percent plus one required minimum. Legislative elections for Mejlis are held in five-year intervals. There are 50 single-member districts within which all registered candidates are permitted to run campaigns. Elections for the Mejlis have been held in five-year intervals, beginning in December 1994. The December 19, 2004, election saw 140 registered candidates vie for the 50 seats. Indeed, three constituencies required runoff elections in January 2005. In addition, the government announced that voter turnout was just under 77 percent—well below the standard 99 percent turnout that has traditionally marked Turkmen elections. That said, the president approved all candidates and each, in turn, swore loyalty to him. Furthermore, international organizations were prohibited from observing the election.

As noted, the last presidential election took place on June 23, 1992. A referendum held on January 15, 1994, resulted in the extension of Niyazov's term in office until the year 2002. The 1999 decision to extend the president's term for life means that until there is a succession in the country, presidential elections will not take place.

The Party System

ORIGINS OF THE PARTIES

The current political party system in Turkmenistan is a direct result of the Soviet period. During that time, the Communist Party of Turkmenistan (CPT) was a subservient organization to the larger Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU). Top officials in the former were most always members of the latter's central committee. After independence Niyazov "banned" the CPT, although this meant nothing more than changing its name to the Democratic Party of Turkmenistan (DPT). The unofficial parties come from either disgruntled members of the DPT or intellectuals who were involved in the glasnost-era movement Agzybirlik, which advocated greater cultural and linguistic rights for the Turkmen.

Section II, Article 28 of Turkmenistan's constitution outlines the rights and parameters of political parties. Technically, political parties can exist in the country so long as they abide by Turkmen law and do not advocate the overthrow of the current system. In addition, citizens cannot form political parties around ethnic or religious groups.

PARTY ORGANIZATION

The political parties, as they exist in Turkmenistan, follow the example of the former CPT, in that they have political bureaus and secretariats and are headed by a "first secretary." In addition, in the case of the DPT, there is a party congress that meets annually.

CAMPAIGNING

Campaigning in Turkmenistan is almost unheard of. With no true opposition candidates, voters are not presented with alternative views and programs. Indeed, electioneering is low-key, with few leaflets and newspaper articles on the president's platform. Niyazov ran unopposed during his presidential election and extended his stay via referendum, as noted above. Technically, according to the law on elections, candidates are permitted to promote their views and hold rallies. The reality is that few, if any, have ever taken place.

INDEPENDENT VOTERS

There are no reliable survey data to suggest party affiliation and preference in Turkmenistan, nor the sense that there is an "independent electorate." With Niyazov receiving over 99 percent of the vote, there is little one can say about the veracity of voting statistics. Ultimately, with no choice in the elections, the concept of independent voting is seemingly irrelevant. Even the option of "abstaining" is moot, as reports of people

who have not voted but who nevertheless have been listed as doing so are common.

Major Political Parties

DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF TURKMENISTAN (DPT)

HISTORY

At its 25th Congress (December 1991), the Communist Party of Turkmenistan (CPT) renamed itself the Democratic Party of Turkmenistan (DPT) to reflect the new "post-Soviet reality." The major difference was that whereas the CPT had been ultimately responsible to the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU), the DPT is responsible only to Niyazov.

ORGANIZATION

Niyazov remains at the apex of this organization, which has retained the structure and offices of the CPT. The party has branches in each of the five velayats as well as at local levels. By all indications, however, local party activity—that which was carried out by primary party organizations during the Soviet era—is almost nonexistent. Any decision from Ashgabat regarding local political activity is binding.

MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY

Membership remains a privilege, just as it was with the former Communist Party of Turkmenistan. Membership rolls suggest that there are 60,000 people who are active in the party. New members must be sponsored, as in the past, and pass through a probationary period.

POLICY

The DPT published a manual in 1994 that described the party as an advocate of democratic and economic reform and listed in detail the measures it would take, under the leadership of Niyazov, to achieve these goals. It also claimed to be a proponent of individual rights, the rule of law, and ethnic equality. Interestingly, the party leadership is also clear in its belief that such goals will not be achieved in the short run, suggesting that calls for democratization and political liberalization are simply premature. Instead of "formal democracy," Niyazov stresses that the immediate objective should be discipline and stability.

FINANCING

There is no open record of DPT financing and expenditures. Presumably, members pay a certain dues level.

LEADERSHIP

The DPT remains under the firm command of Niyazov. It is difficult to tell who may be possible successors to the leader. Experts also suggest that as in most authoritarian regimes, palace intrigue at the top remains hidden and the real factions will not be known until after Niyazov's death.

PROSPECTS

For the reasons noted above, the DPT, in spite of its overwhelming control of the system, is actually facing a serious crisis. As long as the political leadership of the country remains personalized, the party as a vehicle for politics and a forum for political hopefuls remains stunted. As with other Central Asian states, "party politics" is taking a back seat to cabinet-level politics and thus has become of less interest to the leadership. In addition, clan loyalties could divide the party in the long term.

Minor Political Parties

PEASANTS PARTY FOR JUSTICE

As the DPT has retained the primacy of its predecessor, CPT, any other party by definition is a "minor" one. Indeed, there is only one legal minor party, the Peasants Party for Justice, in Turkmenistan, although, there are a number of unregistered groups. This one loyal opposition party was allowed to register shortly after independence. However, its current status is unclear, and it appears to be moribund.

PARTY FOR DEMOCRATIC DEVELOPMENT

Founded in December 1990 as the Democratic Party of Turkmenistan, this party of intellectuals and self-proclaimed democrats rode on the wave of opposition parties that were springing up all over the Soviet Union. Chaired by Durymurat Hoja-Muhamedov, it tried unsuccessfully to register as a legal party in December 1991. The following April, in response to the CPT's changing its name to the DPT, this group was forced to rename itself the Party for Democratic Development. Because it remains an underground organization, not much is known about its current

operations other than that it operates out of Moscow and, for a while, published the journal *Ata Watan* (Fatherland Homeland).

UNITY

(Agzybirlik)

Originally a glasnost-era product, Unity sought to increase awareness of Turkmen history, culture, and language. This party was founded by Nurberdi Nurmamedov in September 1989 during the height of the glasnost period in Soviet history. However, after independence, Unity made several efforts at forming a political party, but, like the PDD, it was unsuccessful.

Other Political Forces

OPPOSITION FORCES

The Union of Democratic Forces was founded in 2003 by a collection of opposition figures who met in Prague, Czech Republic, among them Avdy Kuliev, Aleksandr Dodonov, Nurkukhammet Hanamov, and Nazar Suyonov. Each of these individuals had attempted to form political parties in the 1990s in Turkmenistan but they were prohibited from doing so.

Other reported organizations include the Popular Front of Turkmenistan, as well as the student organizations Purpose (Nazaryet) and Opinion (Maksat). Information on each of these, unfortunately, is neither accurate nor reliable, as none are registered in the country and the leaders are not prone to discuss their situations. Supporters tend to exaggerate the membership rolls while detractors tend to underestimate them. Given the repressive political climate in Turkmenistan, it is doubtful that any of these parties will make a difference, and most certainly the opposition groups will not be permitted to run for any seats in future elections. Outside experts see the Turkmen opposition as comparable to the dissident movement during the Brezhnev period of the Soviet Union. As of the early 2000s it numbered fewer than 100 active members.

TRIBAL AFFILIATIONS

Turkmen politics, like that of other Central Asian states, is heavily influenced by regional and clan factors. In very basic terms, the Tekke tribe remains the most important in the country, with Niyazov coming from the Ashgabat branch (Akhal). In addition, there are Yomud, Erszani, and perhaps a dozen smaller tribes in the country. Interestingly, these groups tend to be regionally based, and in an effort to gain their loyalties, Niyazov often staffs top velayat positions with people from that region's dominant clan. Thus, Yomuds tend to dominate the west and north, the Tekke the south and southeast, and the Erzsani the east. Within each group, there are loyalties to regional leaders and it is this cadre of officials that could influence Turkmen politics, especially in the post-Niyazov era. While Niyazov promotes the notion of a Turkmen identity, it has been questioned whether such loyalties will fade at that time—in much the same way that Yugoslav nationalism seemed to vanish with Tito's death.

National Prospects

The regime of Saparmurad Niyazov is a firmly entrenched, authoritarian, one-party political structure, and there is little evidence to suggest that it will voluntarily reform the state anytime soon. Political opponents are imprisoned and often go into self-imposed exile, and even potential rivals from within the political apparatus are constantly reshuffled from post to post, preventing any opportunity to forge anti-Niyazov alliances. The November 2002 assassination attempt on Niyazov only increased the persecution of opposition figures, with many, including former foreign minister Boris Shikhmuradov, being subjected to televised show trials in which they "confessed" their crimes to the state. The current international concerns about terrorism play into the hands of Niyazov, who can affix the label of "terrorist" on any opponent.

The concern about opposition raises another key point in Turkmen politics: succession. Because the current system does not foster individual initiative in the top leadership, it is difficult to assess who might be part of any future leadership arrangement. Most likely, future leaders will emerge from the inner cabinet, as they benefit most in the current system.

The presence of energy wealth in the country and the desire of foreign investors to have a stable environment within which to work also suggest that Niyazov will not face too much international criticism for his policies, further reinforcing his leadership style. The drawback to this is that any reform efforts—political and economic—will be modest at best, as there is no incentive to enact real change. This could bode ill for the country if the expectations of energy wealth are

not realized in the near future. This wealth, based on the extensive gas reserves in the country, has prompted Niyazov to claim that Turkmenistan will be the "second Kuwait." However, logistical, transport, and even legal questions plague the country, and it seems that in the short run, only nominal benefits will be derived from energy exports.

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CONSTITUTIONAL MONARCHY OF TUVALU

(Fakavae Aliki-Malo i Tuvalu)

By Eugene Ogan, Ph.D.

The tiny nation of Tuvalu achieved its independence from Great Britain in 1978. As the Ellice Islands, it had been incorporated in Britain's Gilbert and Ellice Island Protectorate (later Crown Colony) in 1892. When preparations for independence began in the 1970s, Tuvaluans, who are ethnically Polynesian, feared being outnumbered by the larger Micronesian Gilbertese population. They voted in a 1976 referendum to be treated separately and became independent on that basis.

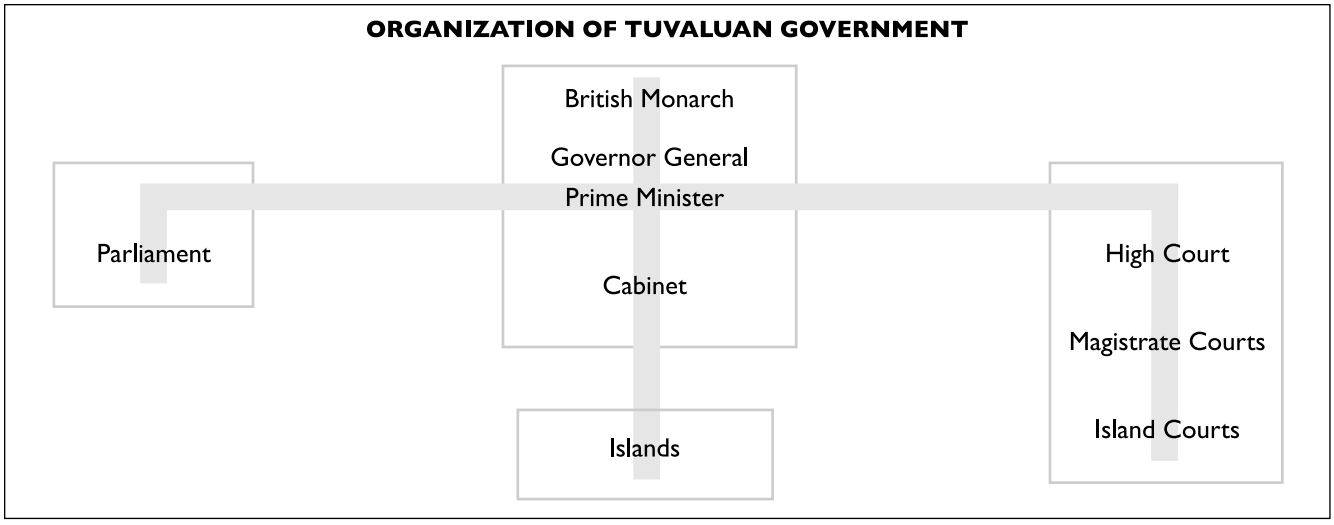
Tuvalu is made up of nine atolls, eight of which are inhabited, with a land area of less than 10 square miles. However, it has established an exclusive economic zone of 200 miles around the islands, guaranteeing fishing rights over some 900,000 square kilometers of ocean. The population is estimated at 11,300 (2005).

The System of Government

Tuvalu is a constitutional monarchy.

EXECUTIVE

The independence constitution was revised in 1986. Tuvalu remains a member of the British Commonwealth, and the



British monarch is the titular head of state, represented by a Tuvaluan governor-general. He is appointed by the monarch on the advice of the prime minister in consultation with parliament, and his functions are largely ceremonial. The cabinet holds real executive authority. It is made up of the prime minister, elected by parliament from among its members, and not more than four ministers.

LEGISLATURE

The parliament consists of a single chamber, the Fale I Fono, of 12 members. Elections are held every four years—or sooner if parliament is dissolved by the governor-general under constitutional provisions. Four islands elect two members each, two join to elect one member, and three islands each elect a member. Parliament can remove the prime minister by passing a no-confidence vote, but its members have immunity from legal action for speech or acts during its proceedings.

JUDICIARY

At the lowest level, judicial authority in Tuvalu lies in a system of island courts and land courts. There is an island court with three lay magistrates on each inhabited island. These are distinct from each island's land court, with six members, which adjudicates cases relating to customary land rights. This function includes probate and adoption matters, reflecting the traditional connections between kinship and land tenure. Appeal may be made to a magistrates' court, and then to a High Court. The chief justice of the High Court must be a solicitor or barrister qualified to practice in a country with a legal system like that of Tuvalu. The 1993 incumbent also served as chief justice of Nauru. Final appeal lies with the British monarch acting in council.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Funafuti, the main island, has a town council; the other inhabited islands have island councils. Each council consists of six members, elected for four-year terms. Members of parliament, whose electorates are within a council's area, serve ex officio, as does every medical officer resident in a council area. Councils are responsible for local services.

The Electoral System

Suffrage is universal for adults 18 years of age and older. Candidates for parliament must be 21 years of age or over.

The Party System

There are no political parties in Tuvalu, although members of parliament sometimes organize themselves in loose groupings.

Major Political Parties

There are no political parties in Tuvalu.

Minor Political Parties

There are no political parties in Tuvalu.

Other Political Forces

Tuvalu is one of only a few countries to have formal diplomatic relations with the government of Taiwan. The latter has provided financial aid and built Tuvalu's administrative headquarters.

National Prospects

A small, ethnically homogeneous country like Tuvalu is not as vulnerable to political turmoil as are Pacific Island nations like Papua New Guinea or Vanuatu. There are no major political parties. However, the personal nature of Tuvalan politics does lead to relatively frequent changes of prime minister. The nation's economic position was greatly improved beginning in 1987 when a trust fund was established with donations from Australia, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, Japan, and South Korea. This fund was augmented by the sale of a satellite domain designation to an overseas firm. The trust fund is now regarded internationally as a model of prudent financial management in a developing country. The country is threatened by global warming and rising sea levels, which may one day overrun the islands.

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REPUBLIC OF UGANDA

(Jamhuri Ya Uganda)

By Tobias J. Lanz
Revised by Daniel G. Ogbaharya, Ph.D.



Uganda, a nation of about 27 million people (2005 est.), is a former British colony that gained its independence in 1962. In 1967 a new constitution altered the Westminster system inherited from the British, giving the president full executive authority. Four years later President A. Milton Obote was ousted by General Idi Amin in a military coup. After the ouster of Amin, Obote was reelected to the presidency. Obote was overthrown again in 1985 in an intramilitary struggle by an Acholi group that remained in power only six months. In 1986 the National Resistance Army (NRA), under Museveni Yoweri, overthrew the government after a protracted military struggle.

Museveni's political party, the National Resistance Movement (NRM), established an interim military government that reorganized the national legislature and renamed it the National Resistance Council (NRC). Museveni suspended all political party activity. The first national legislative elections were not held until 1989. From 1990 to 1996 the NRM sought national reconciliation to further unity and stability. Museveni offered amnesty to former political opponents and agreed to restore each of Uganda's traditional monarchies as ceremonial and cultural entities. In 1991 he also invited all Asian Ugandans, who had been expelled by Amin, to return to Uganda to reclaim their property. National presidential elections were postponed until 1996, followed shortly thereafter by the second national legislative elections. Museveni won both the 1996 and 2001 presidential elections.

Much of the divisiveness in Ugandan politics can be attributed to sharp ethnic and religious differences, especially the north-south (Nilotic-Bantu) divide. The Bantu-speaking peoples, who make up two-thirds of the population, reside in the central and southern portions of the country. The north is populated by Nilotic (Acholi, Langi, Alur) and Nilo-Hamatic (Karamojong, Teso, Sebei) peoples. Other groups include Sudanic peoples and immigrants from neighboring countries. More than 60 percent of the population is Christian (about 55 percent Catholic and 45 percent Protestant), 16 percent is Muslim, and the remainder follows traditional ethnic religions.

The System of Government

Uganda is a unitary state with a mixed presidential-parliamentary democracy.

EXECUTIVE

According to the 1967 constitution, executive power is vested in the president, who is elected by the National Assembly for a five-year term. The president selects the prime minister and cabinet from among the members of the National Assembly. The cabinet meets to discuss policy options and coordinate among ministries. Legislative proposals originate with the cabinet.

After the 1985 coup executive power was vested in a military council, the chairman of which was the head of state. Following the 1986 coup an executive presidency was established. The president maintains a cabinet of ministers that consists of a vice president, a prime minister, 3 deputy prime ministers, and 15 ministers. Prior to the 1989 legislative elections the president appointed all members to the NRC. After reinstatement of national legislative elections in 1989 and 1996, the majority of representatives to parliament were locally elected, with the remainder appointed by the president.

LEGISLATURE

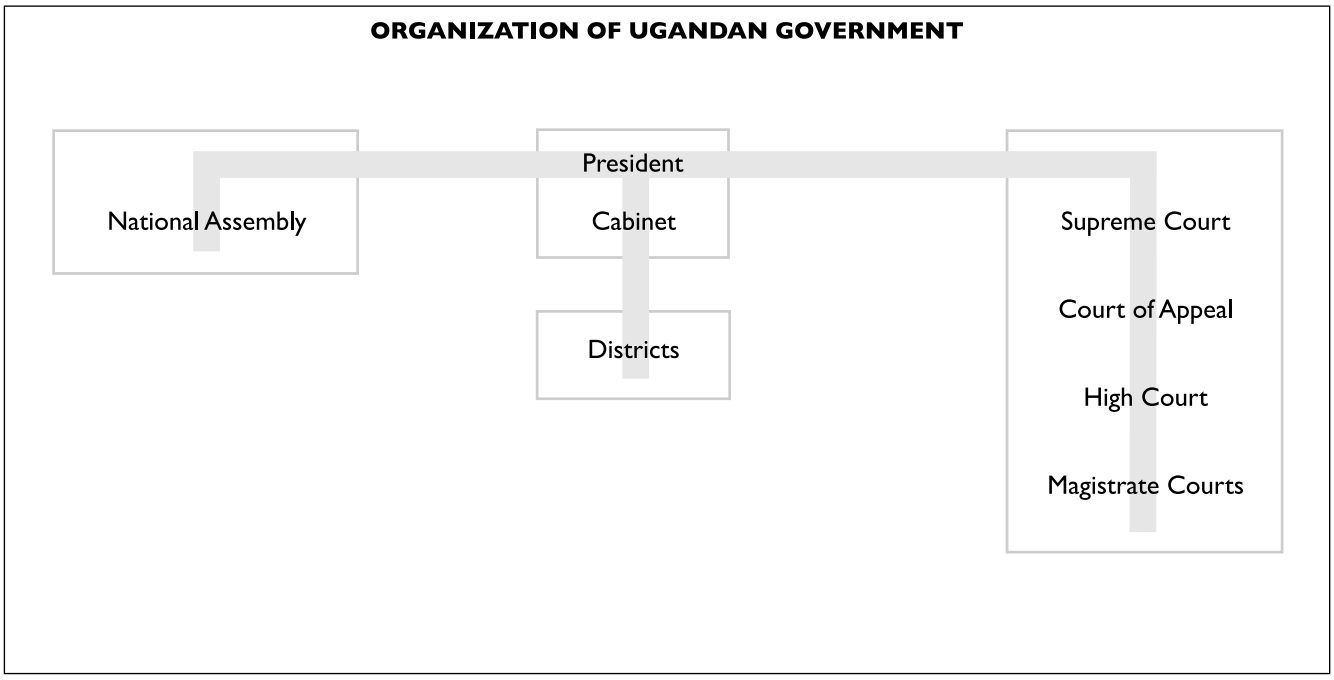
Before Museveni took power, the National Assembly had 146 members, 126 of whom were elected from single-member electoral districts for five-year terms. The president nominated 10 military representatives, and another 10 members were appointed by majority vote in the Assembly. The Assembly-appointed members enhanced the majority party's strength and permitted the president to recruit ministers from among nonparty experts and political figures who failed to get elected in their districts.

The National Resistance Movement (NRM) abolished the National Assembly and established the NRC in 1986. It comprised 80 members nominated by the executive. In 1989 membership was expanded to 278, of which 210 members were elected by district-level resistance committees (RCs). The president nominated the remaining 68 seats, including 34 women and representatives of youth organizations. In 1989 the government also extended the period of interim rule until 1994. This five-year extension was predicated on the amendment and adoption of a new constitution, under which political party activities would resume and both presidential and legislative elections would be held.

In 1994 a Constituent Assembly was established that comprised 288 seats (214 elected and 74 appointed). This body further extended the NRM's term in office, until 1996. During this period, a new constitution was promulgated (1995) under which the NRC was redesignated as the Ugandan National Assembly and resistance committees were renamed local councils (LCs). The political function of the LCs remains relatively unchanged as they are responsible for electing members to parliament. As of 2005 the Assembly includes 303 members, of which 214 are directly elected.

JUDICIARY

Uganda has a Supreme Court, a Court of Appeal, a High Court, magistrate courts, and resistance council courts. The Supreme Court is the final court of appeals in Uganda. It is composed of three judges, including a chief justice. The High Court has full criminal and civil jurisdiction over all matters in the land. It consists of



the principal judge and 20 associate judges. Magistrate courts are regional courts whose jurisdiction is limited to their respective magisterial areas. Each area has a supreme magistrate and three categories of lower magistrates. Resistance council courts were established to replace chiefs, thereby providing more neutral adjudication in local civil disputes.

Chief judges are appointed by the president under the advice of the Judicial Service Commission, which is independent from the control or counsel of other political bodies. Once appointed, judges serve for life and may be removed only for physical and mental incapacity or misconduct.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The Ugandan national, regional, and local administrative structure is derived from the Local Government Statute of 1993, the 1995 constitution, and the local government act of 1997. According to these legislative acts, the primary units of the local and regional government systems are Local Councils. There are five levels of Local Councils: Local Councils at village, LC1; parish, LC2; subcounty, LC3; county, LC4; and district, LC5. The highest level in the Ugandan administrative system is the national parliament, and the Movement's National Executive Committee (NEC).

Uganda is divided into 56 districts for administrative purposes. Each district is headed by a district administrator. There are also governing bodies at the local level. Despite this range of subnational polities, the 1967 constitution established a strong central government at the expense of local and regional political power. Idi Amin strengthened this tendency by abolishing local councils and administrative bodies. The trend has been reversed under National Resistance Movement rule. The introduction of elected local councils in villages, subcounties, and regions throughout the country was designed to curtail the power of local chiefs and create more direct channels between individuals and the state.

Since independence, local politics has been plagued by disruptive competition among politicians, civil servants, and military men. As a result, local people are often confused as to who is in charge at the national level. Many of the reversals in local and regional political power can be traced to the rampant ethnic and military conflict that has engulfed the nation in recent years. Moreover, as political power has changed at the national level, large areas of the country have remained under the control of resistance groups. The inability of the central government to control these ethnic and religious enclaves has also increased violence and indiscipline.

The Electoral System

The first election after independence occurred in 1980; it was a direct election by secret ballot. Voters chose among individual candidates in each electoral district. The parties vying for power were the Democratic Party (DP), the Uganda People's Congress (UPC), and the Uganda Patriotic Movement (UPM). The UPC emerged the winner in what was widely believed to have been an unfair election. Both the DP and the UPM charged that the UPC had rigged the voting at the local level. Yet, the Commonwealth Observer Group accepted the results, allowing Dr. Milton Obote to retain power as a "freely elected" president.

The second election, in 1989, was organized by the National Resistance Movement (NRM) on the basis of the resistance committee (RC) political structure. Resistance committee positions at the village, parish, subnational, and national levels were voted upon. The 1989 election was not by secret ballot. Instead, voters lined up behind the candidate of their choice and the votes were counted accordingly. Although opposition leaders charged this would easily lead to coercion and corruption, the government stated that cost and time restrictions forced them to adopt this method. Overall, the elections were regarded as fair, as many former UPM and DP members were elected to the NRC. However, the structure of the elections was criticized. The failure to allow political parties to campaign and compete for votes was viewed both as undemocratic and as a means for the NRM to maintain its control over the country's political process.

After increased criticism from international donor agencies and domestic political pressures, the Museveni regime slowly moved to establish democratic national elections. After being postponed several times, presidential elections were held in May 1996, followed by legislative elections in June. The NRM won a resounding victory in both national contests. It retained a strong majority in the Ugandan parliament, and in the presidential race Museveni won with 74.2 percent of the vote. Paul Ssemogerere of the DP captured only 23.7 percent. International observers described the elections as free and fair, which established the legitimacy of Museveni's presidency. The president had built a broad base of support and triumphed in every section of the country except the

north. After his victory, the president announced that a multiparty democracy would not be restored for at least another five years.

The president was reelected for a five-year term in the elections of 2001. In February 2003 the NRM began to consider a transition from "Movement or nonparty" democracy to multiparty pluralism. Consequently, political parties other than the NRM will be expected to sponsor candidates in upcoming presidential and legislative elections.

However, observers of Ugandan politics express concern at the controversial political and constitutional developments that were initiated after the 2001 elections to ensure a third term for the current president. After his contested reelection in 2001, President Museveni launched a series of constitutional and political reforms to secure a third term in 2006. He established a Constitutional Review Commission (CRC) in 2001 in an attempt to repeal Article 105(2) of the 1995 constitution, which limited the presidency to two five-year terms. The CRC is reported to have recommended a return to multiparty politics and a national referendum on the issue of presidential term limits. There has also been a proposal to abolish the pillar of human rights protection in Uganda, the Uganda Human Rights Commission (UHRC), which has played a crucial role in improving the human rights record of the country and curbing corruption.

The Party System

Uganda's party system has run the gamut of no-party, one-party, two-party, and multiparty systems. After the Amin regime, two parties emerged to capture the loyalties of most Ugandans; both were centrist and emphasized development issues. The Democratic Party was right-of-center, focusing on individual freedoms and private enterprise. The Uganda People's Congress was left-of-center and favored government control of the economy, national unity, and order. Both parties were opposed by extremist parties of the left and right. The NRM has been the most successful extremist party in that it parlayed a military guerrilla campaign into national political power.

Campaigns have been as much exercises in local "pork barrel" politics as forums on national issues and leadership. Parties have emphasized what they will do for local constituencies, often promising ethnic groups separate administrations to win support. National politicians have maintained strong ties to local ethnic, religious, and tribal elites to build support. Although political parties were banned under the NRM, party identity and loyalty remain important aspects of Ugandan political life.

Major Political Parties

NATIONAL RESISTANCE MOVEMENT (NRM)

The NRM grew out of the Uganda Patriotic Movement (UPM), which had been the country's third-largest party after the Uganda People's Congress (UPC) and the Democratic Party (DP). The UPM was represented by Yoweri Museveni in the 1980 presidential elections. But after losing that bid for the presidency, in what became a hotly contested election, Museveni went underground to work for the violent overthrow of the UPC government. During this period the UPM aligned itself with other military and civilian opposition groups to form the NRM.

Museveni emerged as a key figure in organizing the transitional government after the 1985 coup. As differences between the Okello regime and Museveni widened, the NRM claimed jurisdiction over outlying areas of the country. This led to open military conflict between the government and the National Resistance Army, the military arm of the NRM. After a short struggle, the NRA emerged victorious and captured Kampala in 1986. Museveni became the president of Uganda.

The NRM formed national resistance committees at local, regional, and national levels. These committees make political decisions and elect members to higher RC levels. The RCs are in many ways part of the political machinery of the NRM; thus, no distinction between political parties and the government exists. In fact, the NRM openly states that it is a political movement and not a party. Its purpose is to guide Uganda on the path to political and economic modernity.

Lieutenant General Yoweri Museveni remained in firm control of the party and the government as of 2005. A radical Marxist who followed a traditional Marxist approach to political struggle and local participation, he now appears to have toned down his rhetoric to build a national coalition. He has military and political leadership skills, having served in previous governments and led the struggle to topple the Okello regime in 1986.

DEMOCRATIC PARTY (DP)

Founded in 1954 in reaction to Protestant political leadership in Buganda, the Democratic Party appealed first to Catholics suffering from discrimination in Buganda and later to Catholics throughout the country. The DP strength was concentrated in areas where the French Catholic Church had set up schools and hospitals. The party won nationwide elections in 1961. Led by Benedicto Kiwanuka and Basil Bataringaya, it ran the government until the UPC victory in 1962.

The DP was banned in 1969 when Milton Obote created a one-party state. Nevertheless, support remained strong. In the 1980 elections the party won 51 of 126 seats in the National Assembly. Following the fall of Obote in 1985, the DP helped forge the government headed by Paulo Mwanga. Despite the suspension of political party activity under the Museveni regime, the DP has remained active in the Ugandan government. Key ministerial positions, including finance and justice, have been given to ranking DP members.

The DP opposes state control over social and economic matters. It favors a mixed economy and a multiparty political system. In the past the party has indicated its dissatisfaction with the excessive powers of the presidency and the involvement of the military in politics. It remains opposed to the one-party state that has emerged under NRM rule.

The DP arose in response to the domination of Ugandan politics by the UPC and its Protestant constituency. As such, the party evolved to provide the country's Catholics with a means of political power and representation. The DP's current membership and constituency still reflects this. Its primary support has come from Bantu areas in and around Kampala and the Masaka region in the far south. Its support in Protestant and Muslim regions in the north and east is fairly weak.

The party was led by Paul Kawanga Ssemogerere from the early 1960s until his retirement in 2005. He was replaced by John Ssebaana Kizito.

UGANDA PEOPLE'S CONGRESS (UPC)

The UPC evolved from a collection of sectionalist nationalist groups. It was formed after Milton Obote left the Baganda-led Uganda National Congress (UNC) in 1959. Together with other political factions, he formed the UPC in 1960. In order to consolidate power, Obote skillfully built coalitions and summarily eroded the power of his competitors to emerge as the nation's president in 1967. In an attempt to build a unitary state, all political parties were banned in 1969. Obote remained in power until overthrown by Idi Amin in 1971.

The UPC came to power again after the elections of 1980. After numerous DP defections, the UPC held 91 out of 126 seats in the National Assembly by 1983. After the military coup of 1985, General Okello suspended the constitution and dissolved the National Assembly. Obote fled the country. With the ascendance of Museveni, the UPC has given qualified support to the NRM and has played a part in its broad political alliance.

The original membership of the UPC consisted of Protestant members from the northern (Nilotic) regions of the country. Yet it has gained substantial support among other ethnic and religious groups, namely, Sudanic and non-Baganda peoples in the south. Its Socialist-nationalist agenda appeals to intellectuals, workers, and students, giving it some cross-cutting political appeal. The party has fared poorly in and around Kampala and the southern (Baganda) regions that are heavily Catholic. Milton Obote led the party until his death in 2005, when he was replaced by his wife, Miria.

Minor Political Parties

Among the smaller parties in Uganda are the Conservative Party, the Forum for Democratic Change, the Justice Forum, the National Democrats Forum, and the Uganda Green Party.

Other Political Forces

The bureaucracy and army rival political parties in power and influence. Even though the government is legally headed by a president and sometimes the National Assembly, the civil service has a near monopoly on formal education, technical matters, and government rules and regulations. On the other hand, the army has a near monopoly on the use of force and has been instrumental in determining the level of political stability in the country.

Politicians, bureaucrats, and soldiers establish themselves either through wealthy connections or salaried occupations, thereby setting themselves apart from the masses, both rural and urban. Competition among these various elite groups has been compounded by

ethnic and religious affiliations. This is a situation that has defined much of the nation's political history, and it is likely to continue into the future.

In the early 2000s the president came under international criticism for his country's military involvement in the civil war in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Museveni charged that Ugandan rebels were operating in the area. One such rebel group, the Lord's Resistance Army, has been active in northern Uganda and is responsible for attacks against civilians.

National Prospects

Uganda faces a long-awaited transition from the Movement System, where political parties were barred from power competition, to its first multiparty elections under the NRM rule. Opposition parties question the government's decision to allow political pluralism, claiming that it is a calculated political move designed to secure a third-term presidency for Museveni. It is also feared that a return to multiparty politics may lead to a renewal of ethnic and communal conflicts, thereby endangering the unity and stability that Uganda has enjoyed under the NRM for the last two decades. On the other hand, if NRM succeeds in retaining power through a fair and free multiparty election, Uganda will have made an important stride in its evolution to viable, stable, and prosperous democratic pluralism.

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UKRAINE

(Ukrayina)

By Jeffrey K. Hass, Ph.D.



The independent nation of Ukraine was born on December 1, 1991, when Russia's Boris Yeltsin, Belarus's Stanislav Shushkevich, and Ukraine's Leonid Kravchuk agreed to disband the Soviet Union and create the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). Since then, Ukraine's political history (much like its economic history) has been marked by the confusions, contradictions, and conflicts that go hand in hand with state building. Overshadowed on the world stage by its "bigger brother," Russia, Ukraine nevertheless has tried to forge its own path in terms of policies, political structure, political culture, and political identity.

The Ukrainian economy has been in a state of crisis since 1992. As an integral part of the Soviet economy, agriculture figured importantly; Ukraine contributed one-fourth of Soviet agricultural production. The military-industrial sector was also vital to Ukrainian output; one of the world's largest rocket-producing complexes is in Ukraine's Dnipopetrovsk. Ethnicity has been an important part of Ukrainian politics—eastern Ukraine has a strong Russian component, while Ukrainian nationalism has its home in the west. However, tensions have not led to confrontations (except for a brief moment when Crimea considered secession).

HISTORY

On August 24, 1991, after the failed putsch attempt by Soviet hard-liners, the Ukrainian Parliament declared Ukraine independent of Soviet authority. Soon afterward, Leonid Kravchuk defeated Vyacheslav Chornovil in the December 1991 presidential race. Kravchuk and the Verhovna Rada (Ukraine's parliament) now faced the tasks of reforming the Ukrainian economy and building the institutions of government and state bureaucracy. While nodding to the necessity of economic reforms, President Kravchuk focused early on building the image of Ukraine the nation and on creating the powers of the executive and political coalitions. In April 1992 parliament approved constitutional changes granting the president the power to name his cabinet of ministers. Further, Kravchuk called for presidential control over local councils and executives to give him the power to control the country more directly, and he also called for the creation of a State Council (of which the president would be chairman). As a result of Kravchuk's political games, parliament's conservatism, and the inability of any of the political actors to implement economic reforms, the political atmosphere became polarized, with Kravchuk's personality and actions at the center of a growing maelstrom.

Under increasing criticism for Prime Minister Fokin's inability to implement economic reforms, Kravchuk replaced him with Leonid Kuchma, a people's deputy and general director of the Southern Machine Construction Factory in Dnipropetrovsk. In November 1992 Prime Minister Kuchma secured emergency powers for six months, giving him in theory more power than President Kravchuk. However, such powers in practice were of little use in the face of a conservative

parliament that retained important powers for itself, such as the power to veto the prime minister's emergency decrees. Tensions over power and policy led to a split between president and prime minister. Because of this split, the refusal of parliament to extend the period of emergency powers, and the falling economy (punctuated by strike waves in Donbass in June 1993), Kuchma resigned three times, his third resignation accepted by parliament in September 1993.

In 1993 the economy continued to deteriorate while no real reforms were implemented. Confrontations between Ukraine and Russia over the Black Sea Fleet flared from time to time, and Crimean nationalism surged along with Russian nationalism. The height of political tension was reached in June 1993, when strikes swept through the radical Donbass in eastern (i.e., pro-Russian) Ukraine (home to miners' strikes that wracked Mikhail Gorbachev's Soviet Union in 1989 and 1990).

The March 1994 elections brought left-wing parties into power, and a split between the more Socialist and pro-CIS east and the nationalist west became apparent. Kravchuk, who needed to expand beyond his western base into the east, appointed Vitalii Masol as prime minister, an appointment viewed as a sop both to the leftist parliament and to the left-leaning eastern provinces.

In the June and July 1994 elections Ukrainians chose Leonid Kuchma, who issued presidential decrees putting him in charge of the government and subordinating regional councils to presidential authority—implementing changes Kravchuk had only discussed. The year 1995 saw more political instability as parliament and the president quarreled and a vote of no confidence forced a cabinet reshuffle. Finally, a new constitution was approved in the Verhovna Rada on June 28, 1996, after a 16-hour all-night discussion of final points.

In the background, economic decline and rising western nationalism helped the rise of leftist sentiments throughout Ukraine, leading Kuchma to dismiss his acting prime minister, Marchuk, for being too far to the left. Marchuk was replaced by the first deputy prime minister, Pavlo Lazarenko, leading to a shakeup in the cabinet and a later government restructuring. In the wake of clearer rules of power, Kuchma pushed reform, helping slow economic decline and set the stage for increased investment. While temporary relapses occurred, Kuchma's reforms helped bring in IMF loans and international investment. To augment his own power, Kuchma attempted to play the *kompromat* game—the threat of using compromising materials against opponents to gain advantage, a tactic used well by Russia's Vladimir Putin and company. He also tried to shape the political arena so that his party and heir to the presidency would lead Ukrainian politics, to assure his own continuing influence and safety from future prosecution. However, Kuchma was better at copying than implementing the tactics of Russia's political elite. Opponent Viktor Yushchenko, Kuchma's former prime minister, managed to organize the largest coalition in the Rada after 2002 (Viktor Yushchenko Bloc—Our Ukraine). Only because Our Ukraine could not form a majority and create a government did Kuchma maintain any influence in the Rada: Kuchma had to rely on allies in the Communist Party and the For Ukraine bloc to create a parliamentary majority friendly to the president. Head of Ukraine's Central Bank from 1993 to 1999 and architect of monetary reform in 1996 (lowering of inflation and the introduction of a new currency, the hryvnia), Yushchenko served as prime minister from December 1999 to April 2001. During his tenure he improved fiscal discipline, legislated land reform, lowered state subsidies to struggling enterprises, and increased state support of financial discipline and Ukraine's investment climate. His popularity and support of increased transparency in government earned him Kuchma's suspicion, and the two fell out in 2001. At this point Yushchenko set out to challenge Kuchma—much as Kuchma had challenged and defeated his presidential boss, Kravchuk, after those two had fallen out.

While Kuchma indicated that he would not seek a third term in office, he apparently did not want to leave without guarding his influence and position afterward. To this end he tried to promote his head of presidential administration, Viktor Medvedchuk (among Ukraine's most powerful oligarchs). However, despite Kuchma's attempts at media control, the voting public remained wary of Medvedchuk, and Kuchma turned to Prime Minister Viktor Yanukovych to be his new means to defend his interests and influence after leaving office. The Yushchenko camp repeatedly reported that the Kuchma-Yanukovych camp were carrying out underhanded tricks, for example, passing around fliers attributing fascist views to Yushchenko. More generally, forces in the state loyal to Kuchma tried to increase control of the media—for example, suddenly cutting the transmission of television coverage of a commemoration of journalist Georgii Gongadze's death. News also leaked about presidential directives prescribing what type of news was acceptable for broadcast, with the threat of harassment by the tax

authorities or other state bodies against those failing to comply (similar to Vladimir Putin's tactics in Russia).

In the autumn of 2004 Viktor Yushchenko suffered what he and his camp claimed was an assassination attempt through poison. His pock-marked face—apparently the result of dioxin poisoning—was a visible reminder of the dangers of presidential politics in post-Soviet Ukraine. At the end of November 2004 the election was held, and early polls showed Yushchenko heading toward victory. However, the final returns showed Yanukovych the winner. Immediately crowds gathered at Freedom Square in Kiev to protest against what was framed as electoral fraud. Reports quickly emerged about fixing of vote tallies throughout Ukraine and links to Russian advisers and Russian money. Meanwhile, the numbers of protesters in Kiev swelled to over 100,000, thanks in part to efforts by organizers, some of whom had experience with formal democratic politics and mobilization in Serbia, and to financial support from local businesses, who helped pay for food and medical aid for protesters. After several days and mounting pressure, the Ukrainian Supreme Court—Kuchma appointees known for independent thinking—declared the election null and void because of procedural improprieties in voting and counting. They ruled for a repeat of the election on December 26. Yanukovych protested, but to no avail. In December, Ukraine became increasingly polarized between the north and west (Yushchenko's base)—more Ukrainian in identity and desiring closer ties to Europe—and the south and east (Yanukovych's base)—more Russified and desiring closer links to Russia. Rumors of a potential split between east and west emerged but remained no more than occasional mutterings. Yushchenko comfortably won the rematch with Yanukovych.

The System of Government

Ukraine is a democratic republic with a unicameral legislature. The Ukrainian political structure resembles the three branches of government characteristic of Western systems: the executive, the legislative, and the judicial. The executive branch is responsible for implementing policy, for setting Ukraine's overall political course, and for supervising relations with foreign states. The legislature is responsible for passing laws and for checking the powers of the executive. The judiciary has the duties of addressing legal recourse, defending civil rights, and resolving legal disputes.

EXECUTIVE

According to the 1996 constitution, ultimate executive authority resides with the president, who is elected for a five-year term. The president represents Ukraine in foreign affairs; appeals to citizens with "annual and extraordinary statements"; organizes or liquidates ministries; revokes acts of the Council of Ministers; creates courts and appoints one-third of the judges of the Constitutional Court; declares national emergencies and mobilizes armed forces (declarations of war must be submitted to the Verhovna Rada); and vetoes laws passed by the Rada. Further, according to the constitution, citizens may not "infringe upon the honor and dignity of the president." The president may be impeached if a special Rada commission finds the president guilty of treason or some major crime and two-thirds of the 450 members vote for indictment. If the Constitutional Court finds the special commission's procedures and conclusions in line with law, the Rada may, with a three-fourths vote of 450, officially impeach the president.

Directly under the president is the prime minister and the cabinet, or Council of Ministers. The president appoints the prime minister, whose term of office depends on the good graces of the president. The duties of the prime minister and the Council of Ministers concern fundamental implementation of policy and maintaining the day-to-day operations of the state bureaucracy. The prime minister's aides include a first deputy prime minister, a general deputy prime minister, six deputy prime ministers for special areas (e.g., economic reform), heads of the various ministries (agriculture, coal, culture, defense), and chairmen of state committees. Ministers are appointed by the president and serve unless the Rada passes a vote of no confidence or until presidential elections, at which point the Council of Ministers must resign.

The duties of the prime minister and Council of Ministers concern drawing up and implementing economic and social policies, such as on finances and prices, on employment policy, on education, on environmental issues, and on culture. Ministers are responsible for directing the workings of executive organs throughout Ukraine (the state bureaucracy) and managing state property. Further, local state administrations, which exercise executive authority at the local level, are subordinate to and appointed by the ministries and the president.

One interesting aspect of Ukraine's executive is the position of the prime minister. Usually the prime minister is appointed by and answerable either to



the president (strong presidential system) or to parliament (systems with weak presidents and strong parliaments). Ukraine stands in between these two: the prime minister and cabinet answer to *both* the president and parliament, either of whom can appoint or dismiss. This places the cabinet in a difficult position: it has to appeal to the interests and demands of two bosses, president and parliament, and it can get caught in the crossfire. This accounts in part for more frequent cabinet turnovers than in many other post-Socialist countries. It also means, however, that the cabinet could potentially play parliament and president off against each other, as it stands in the middle and could argue to each boss that it must satisfy the other for any policy success. Overall, this institutional setup has not aided political stability.

LEGISLATURE

The highest legislative body in Ukraine is the Supreme Council (Verhovna Rada). The Rada is made up of 450 members. Originally they were all elected through individual races, but in October 2001 a new electoral law took effect that split membership in the Rada: half of its members are elected in individual races and half by party lists (as in Russian elections). While not all 450 places were filled in the first elections, the Rada can meet if a quorum of places (two-thirds, or 300) is filled.

The main power of the Rada at present resides in the legislative duty of adopting laws and the state budget. Further, the Rada holds the power to declare war, to impeach the president, to appoint and dismiss the head and half of the members of the Ukrainian National Bank, and to select one-third of the membership of the Constitutional Court. The Rada monitors the activities of the ministers and with one-third support (150 votes) can introduce and, with a majority vote (226), pass a resolution of no confidence in the prime minister and cabinet. The president can dissolve the Rada if, within 30 days of a single regular session, plenary sessions cannot be convened for whatever reason; however, the president cannot dismiss the Rada in the last six months of his term.

Legislation is introduced in the Rada and, if it receives majority support, goes to the president for his signature. (If the Rada passes legislation, the speaker signs it, making it official.) The president has 15 days to sign or veto the legislation; after 15 days the legislation is considered official law. In the case of a veto, the Rada can reconsider the legislation and, if 300 members support it, the bill becomes law and the president must implement it within 10 days.

JUDICIARY

Ukraine's judiciary suffered from the same problem as judiciaries throughout the CIS that followed the Soviet model of a judiciary as an appendage of the state. The creation of the new Ukrainian government required restructuring the judicial system.

The courts in Ukraine are the primary administrators of justice. Ukraine follows a continental system,

where judges hear arguments for individual cases and then rule according to the legal code; there is no formal role for legal precedent (as in an Anglo-American judicial system). The Ukrainian system does allow for trial by jury in criminal cases. With the exception of the Constitutional Court and Supreme Court, court decisions emanate either from a jury or from the judge of the particular court, depending on the level of the court and the issue at hand.

The Constitutional Court and Supreme Court stand at the apex of the judicial system. The Constitutional Court decides matters pertaining to questions or violations of the constitution; other courts, with the Supreme Court at the top, serve to mediate conflicts, serve justice in cases of violation of law, and hear petitions and appeals.

Judicial bodies are located at the local level and handle local cases involving criminal misdeeds, disputes between parties, and attempts at recourse. Ukrainian courts, like those throughout the CIS (and in much of the world), are hampered by backlogs of cases, by vagaries in legal codes, by weak mechanisms for enforcing court decisions, and by a dearth of qualified, professional legal personnel.

Judges for the Constitutional Court are appointed by the president and by the Verhovna Rada. For other courts, judges are recommended and then elected by the Verhovna Rada and have life tenure in the job unless they violate constitutional restrictions, such as belonging to a political party or suffering loss of citizenship.

Judges are legally independent, but informal pressure is often exerted on judges to make "favorable" decisions. This has been one of the more egregious aspects of corruption plaguing Ukraine.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Ukraine is a republic composed of 24 provinces (oblasti), one autonomous republic (Crimea), and two municipalities with oblast status (the capital Kiev and Sevastopol, in the Crimea). Each oblast is headed by a governor with an oblast legislature.

The Electoral System

Under Ukrainian election law, half of the 450 seats in the Rada are allocated to parties able to gain 4 percent or more of the national electoral vote. A party gaining more than 4 percent is entitled to a number of seats equal to the proportion of votes of the total votes cast for parties overcoming this 4 percent barrier. (Thus a party receiving 5 percent of the party-based vote might get more than 5 percent of the seats allocated to party lists.) Places are filled in the order candidates appear on the party lists. The remaining 225 seats are still filled via direct election rather than via party list. All citizens age 18 and over are eligible to vote.

The Party System

Ukraine's party system, like systems elsewhere in the post-Communist world, remains in flux, with little grassroots organization or firm structure. The majority of registered parties are basically inactive, and many candidates to the parliamentary elections have no formal party affiliation. Active parties are usually too small to garner much support, and so the tendency is for parties to unite in coalitions or blocs. Party discipline should not be taken for granted, and so party strength cannot be measured solely by its representation in the Verhovna Rada. Regardless, the more important parties structure the political action in the legislative branch, and their political ideologies range from moderate Communist and leftist to moderate right-wing and nationalist.

ELECTIONS, VERHOVNA RADA, MARCH 30, 2002

Party	% vote (party list)	seats
Viktor Yuzhchenko Bloc Our Ukraine	23.6%	112
Communist Party of Ukraine	20%	102
For United Ukraine	11.8%	21
Electoral Bloc Yuliia Tymoshenko	7.2%	21
Socialist Party of Ukraine	6.9%	24
Social Democratic Party of Ukraine	6.3%	24
Unity	1.1%	4
Democratic Party of Ukraine/Democratic Union	1.2%	4

Note: The number of seats is based on results of the party list and individual races. Parties that do not overcome the electoral barrier can still gain seats from individual races.

Major Political Parties

VIKTOR YUSHCHENKO BLOC OUR UKRAINE

(Blok Viktora Yushchenka Nasha Ukraina)

Our Ukraine is an umbrella coalition of anti-Kuchma pro-reform parties. As a result, it contains many diverse ideologies, although some similar beliefs run through most parties here, such as anti-Communism and holding bases in western Ukraine. (Recall that Kuchma is from the somewhat Russified eastern Ukraine.) The Liberal Party is based in eastern Ukraine, particularly Donetsk, and represents business interests (especially coal). Other member parties are based in western Ukraine, and are more nationalist. Some nationalist groups are more radical, such as the Congress of Ukrainian Nationalists, whose rhetoric can be radical but whose actions in opposition to Kuchma are more restrained. One of the more historical members of Our Ukraine is Popular Front (Narodni Rukh), founded in 1990 as the first major non-Communist organization. Rukh is nationalist and right-wing, but inclines more toward being pro-reform and pro-West rather than xenophobic. Rukh supports Ukraine's entry into NATO and the European Union. Membership in the Viktor Yushchenko Bloc includes the Congress of Ukrainian Nationalists, Liberal Party, Youth Party of Ukraine, Ruch, Christian-Popular Union Party, Party of Reform and Order, Republican Christian Party, Solidarity, Ukrainian National Movement, and Forward Ukraine.

ELECTORAL BLOC YULIA TYMOSHENKO

(Viboirsy Blok Yulii Tymoshenko)

Hailing from eastern Ukraine, Yulia Tymoshenko is the leader of the Motherland Party, which claims to organize over 100,000 people (although the degree of involvement of this mass is likely to be rather low). Her successes as vice prime minister for energy propelled Tymoshenko's image and ambitions, but this earned her Kuchma's jealousy, and his informal political machinations drove her out of the government. In 2001 she led the parliamentary democratic opposition calling for Kuchma's resignation and soon was arrested (although the charges were later dropped as groundless). In 2002 Tymoshenko organized a coalition of smaller populist and social-democratic parties, which won 21 seats in the 2002 election. The basic program of this electoral bloc is reenergizing the Ukrainian "nation." While not steadfastly pro-market, the coalition accepts markets as necessary. To make markets less destructive, the electoral bloc supports increased legal support for justice and support for stronger cultural and spiritual development of the Ukrainian people and its sense of nationhood. This coalition is made up of the Ukrainian People's Party Assembly, the Ukrainian Republican Party, the Ukrainian Social-Democratic Party, and the All-Ukrainian United Patriots.

FOR UNITED UKRAINE

(Za Edinu Ukraiinu)

For United Ukraine is a coalition of parties representing organized economic interests. This coalition is made up of Agrarian Party of Ukraine, People's Democratic Party of Ukraine, Party of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs of Ukraine, Regional Party, and Labor of Ukraine. One of its more important members, Agrarian Party of Ukraine, represents collective farm leaders. The Party of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs of Ukraine represents heads of large firms (private and state-owned). The coalition's goals are social-democratic, left-leaning, and include: more effective and generous social and pension provision for the weaker in Ukrainian society; increased autonomy and voice for Ukraine's regions vis-à-vis the center; support for Ukrainian family's and children; support for employment in the industrial and agricultural sectors; increased state support for small business and entrepreneurship; greater attention to ecological concerns; improved "social rights" to pensioners and invalids; support for developing Ukrainian culture; and closer ties to Europe.

SOCIALIST PARTY OF UKRAINE (SPU)

The Socialist Party was created in 1992 in response to legislation making the Communist Party formally illegal. Gathering strength from eastern Ukraine, the Socialist Party stresses a slower market transition, with more state regulations and a halt to privatization. The SPU has also called for closer ties with Russia and the CIS and championed the Russian language for equal status with Ukrainian. (Ukrainian is currently the official state language; Russian is recognized as a legitimate language but is not required for holding high office.) Socialists and their Communist brethren have often cooperated in parliamentary elections and in parliamentary procedures, making up the largest bloc within the Rada.

COMMUNIST PARTY OF UKRAINE (CPU)

The CPU is one of the larger parties of Ukraine. Temporarily outlawed after the failed August 1991 coup, the CPU secured the right to organize as a party on October 5, 1993. Like the Socialists, the Communists have their political base camp in eastern Ukraine. Headed by the party chairman, Petro Symonenko, the Communists have called for more state control in the economy, increased support for social entitlements, closer ties with Russia and the CIS, and opposition to private property in land.

SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF UKRAINE (SDPU)

The SDPU was founded in 1990 and in that same year split into two factions, the Social Democratic Party of Ukraine and the United Social Democratic Party of Ukraine. The United Social Democratic Party veered to the left, advocating democratic socialism in its more Soviet form. The SDPU faction moved to the right, advocating social democracy over unadulterated Socialism. In debates in May 1992 over whether to join the New Ukraine coalition, the "mainstream" of SDPU decided to join with the coalition "Congress of National Democratic Forces," leaving a rather emasculated SDPU trying to ally with other social democrats, especially the Party of Democratic Rebirth of Ukraine.

PARTY OF DEMOCRATIC REBIRTH OF UKRAINE (PDRU)

Founded in 1990, the PDRU has its origins in the Democratic Platform movement within the Communist Party of Ukraine. This movement, centered in Kharkiv, found the Communist Party too dogmatic and antireform and viewed Rukh as too nationalistic, and so PDRU was born. PDRU leaders and members are champions of market reforms; because of this and because they avoid nationalist rhetoric, PDRU positioned itself in opposition to President Kravchuk and voiced early support for the policies of the former prime minister and later president Leonid Kuchma. The PDRU also does not shy away from supporting closer economic links with other CIS nations, particularly Russia. PDRU was an initial founder and supporter of the New Ukraine coalition but later withdrew its support. At its September 1993 party congress, PDRU was torn by conflicts between opposing wings: social democratic versus liberal, eastern versus western members, Ukrainian versus Russian members. PDRU hopes to be able to create centrist blocs, thus avoiding a parliamentary and political tilt to either extreme. Democratic Rebirth has had a decline in fortunes as other pro-democracy blocs have emerged around charismatic or popular individual figure, which Democratic Rebirth lacks.

RUKH

Rukh was the first significant opposition movement to the Communist Party of Soviet Ukraine, founded in 1988 as a democratic popular front known as the Ukrainian People's Movement for Restructuring (perestroika). Because of its status as first-comer, Rukh was able to become the most important party among center-right democratic and nationalist forces. Rukh has supported Ukrainian independence and has taken a nationalist stance on several issues; however, Rukh is not radically nationalist. In February 1993 Rukh officially registered as a political party. It had a membership of 50,518 on the eve of the 1994 parliamentary elections.

Rukh leadership tries to portray the party as a "constructive opposition." Throughout the transition period, Rukh has supported Ukrainian statehood and nation- building but has not employed extreme nationalist language to the same degree as other rightist groups. Rukh has also called for economic reform, including selling state industries, implementing more rapid market reforms, and attracting foreign investment. To maintain representation in parliament, Rukh has taken part in various coalitions, from the Bridge (Most) coalition in 1996 to the Viktor Yushchenko Bloc in 2002.

NEW UKRAINE

Founded in January 1992, New Ukraine was created by center-left parties with two goals: to offset the growing power of nationalist Rukh and to generate support for market reforms. With their political bases in the east, center-left parties had witnessed the collapse of the industrial economy of the more Russified eastern portion of the country; however, these centrist parties did not share the state-centered solutions of the Socialists or Communists. Hence, New Ukraine brought together both center-left politicians and economic/business elites to push for privatization and market reforms. Further, New Ukraine strongly campaigned for the resignation of Prime Minister Vitold Fokin because of his inability or unwillingness to push for economic reform, for early parliamentary elections, and for improvement of ties with the CIS and particularly with Russia. With

support from the eastern regions, New Ukraine backed Leonid Kravchuk as prime minister and later in the 1994 presidential election. New Ukraine later become the "party of power" allied with Leonid Kuchma. Its fortunes waned in 2002, as opposition to Kuchma gathered strength.

Minor Political Parties

There are numerous minor parties in Ukraine, many of which are aligned with one of the major coalitions. Smaller parties holding seats in parliament include the Unity Party and the Democratic Party of Ukraine/ Democratic Union.

Other Political Forces

While the armed forces served as a prop for Communism in East Europe, the armed forces in the Soviet Union proper were subject to strict civilian control. This tradition continued in Ukraine, and even during the tense days in December 2004, when crowds gathered in Kiev and some local political elites talked of secession from Ukraine, the heads of the armed forces publicly noted that they would not intervene in the political process. Trade unions, also sometimes a political force elsewhere, have not been active. Partly this is a legacy of Soviet Communism, under which unions were co-opted and controlled by the Communist Party. Unions were not able to improve their position once Communism fell, and economic decline and financial problems for industrial enterprises have led to some deindustrialization and weakening of union membership. Civic organizations and associations are underdeveloped, although there has developed a greater sense of opposition and awareness of the need for balance among political forces than in neighboring Belarus and Russia, where civil society is weak.

National Prospects

Although the political situation in Ukraine at its founding in 1991 was characterized by inconsistencies and confusion, both the political and economic spheres stabilized after Leonid Kuchma became president. A new constitution was ratified, a new Verhovna Rada was elected, and relations with Crimea were normalized.

However, Ukraine's problems surrounding its search for identity and institution-building remain. The search for a Ukrainian identity is an ongoing concern for Ukrainians, since there is a lack of cultural unity within the country. Ukraine's boundaries do not correspond to ethnic lines: they are administrative creations, drawn up by Stalin. Eastern Ukraine has closer cultural ties to Russia, whereas western Ukraine has closer cultural ties to Eastern Europe, to which Ukraine belonged before being absorbed by the growing prerevolutionary Russian empire. Given these differences, the Ukrainians in the eastern part of the country do not feel the need to create a unique Ukrainian national identity, while those in the western part want to forge a Ukrainian state but are threatened by the east's lack of enthusiasm and by Crimean separatism.

The second aspect of the development of national identity concerns how identity is defined. At present, Ukrainian nationalism is defensive in nature, a double reaction against Moscow and Soviet control in the late 1980s and against the threat of Russian imperialism in the 1990s (as seen in conflicts with Crimea and with Russia over the Black Sea Fleet, supplies of oil and natural gas, and control of the Soviet nuclear arsenal). However, defensive nationalism does not create, at least immediately, a concept of what the nation *is*. While defensive reactions certainly can push a people to create their own identity (as in France or Russia), this path takes longer.

This is not to say that Ukraine is in danger of becoming an intolerant fascist state. Quite the contrary: since 1995 the vocalism of right-wing parties has been balanced by the actions of president and parliament to focus on less nationalistic issues such as delineating institutional powers and repairing the moribund economy. Kuchma's pro-CIS feelings were balanced by dedication to an independent Ukraine; language issues were resolved by giving Ukrainian primacy but allowing other languages to be used in everyday life, creating the foundation for a multicultural state. Ukrainian nation-building could take a turn in the direction of intolerance, depending on economic performance, the decisions of political elites, and the actions of neighbors such as Russia or of dissidents in the Crimea. But Ukrainian identity may well come to contain a unique component combined with genuine tolerance.

Certainly the strengthening of the presidency under Kuchma and the clarification of the rules of power that took place during his term are victories for institution-building, but they constitute only a start. As in most CIS nations, Ukraine faces the task of creating democratic institutions and new bases of

authority compatible with a market economy. Over time, political actors have created rules for the political game—a new constitution being the cornerstone—and have learned trust and compromise. However, with enforcement still questionable and with political habits and practices still new, there will be some instability in the near term.

There is hope, nonetheless. The executive and legislature appear to have reached an accord of sorts on setting policies and reducing conflict. The politics of building national identity—with its potential for ideologically driven conflict—has given way to the politics of building consensus and a stable, working polity. Finally, Kuchma tried by legal and less-than-legal means to augment presidential power, but his opposition managed to organize successful resistance in society and the Rada—in contrast to Vladimir Putin's successes in controlling the media and legislature and increasing presidential control of politics.

The victory of Viktor Yushchenko and his public supporters in November–December 2004 against electoral fraud, and victory in the second election, has been at the least a minor victory for democracy. Whether Yushchenko can successfully prosecute corruption from the Kuchma regime and create more open, transparent politics and policymaking has yet to be seen—even the most honest politician in post-Soviet politics faces incredibly powerful and entrenched interests among managers, new capitalist elites, and federal and regional state officials and politicians feathering their nests with bribes and other spoils of power. However, Ukraine has had two successful presidential challenges—Kuchma versus Kravchuk and Yushchenko versus Yanukovych—and segments of society mobilized quickly against Yanukovych's attempt to steal the election. This suggests that there may be some hope for political reform and development, and perhaps movement into the European Union and NATO in the future.

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UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

(al-Imarat al-'Arabiyyah al-Muttahidah)

By Fred H. Lawson, Ph.D.



The United Arab Emirates (UAE) is a federation of nonparty autocracies in which a variety of federal institutions have been set up that are intended to supplement the personalist regimes of the individual member states. The federation was formed in December 1971 by the rulers (emirs) of six of the autonomous principalities (emirates) lying along the northwestern coast of the Arabian Peninsula: Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, 'Ajman, Umm al-Qaiwain, and Fujairah. The ruler of Ras al-Khaimah initially refused to join the federation on the grounds that Abu Dhabi and Dubai were being accorded disproportionate influence in federal institutions. But in February 1972 this emirate became the seventh member of the UAE, which has a combined population of perhaps 3 million citizens (2005 est.), of which perhaps half are non-nationals.

Unity among the various emirates that make up the UAE has been buttressed by a measure of complementarity among their respective economies. Abu Dhabi and Dubai produce significant quantities of petroleum for export, bringing in considerable amounts of foreign exchange that can be used by the federation to fund industrial and infrastructural projects. Ras al-Khaimah and Fujairah grow fruits and vegetables for sale to the more arid parts of the union, while Sharjah and Dubai are important centers of commerce and finance. Fishing remains the most important sector of the economies of 'Ajman and Umm al-Qaiwain. Economic complementarities are reinforced by the emirs' shared political interests in maintaining both their autonomy from more powerful Gulf countries and their dominance over the professional administrators and large communities of expatriate workers inside the union. Consequently, the UAE has been able to survive as an integrated political entity in spite of persistent tribal and other conflicts of interest among the federation's member states.

The System of Government

Alone among the Arab states, the UAE is a true federal system, in which the seven emirates exercise a wide range of powers under the auspices of a unified, cooperative structure. The constitution, which was ratified in June 1996, grants the federal administration full responsibility for foreign relations, immigration policy, education, and national infrastructure while reserving for the individual emirates all other governmental duties and prerogatives.

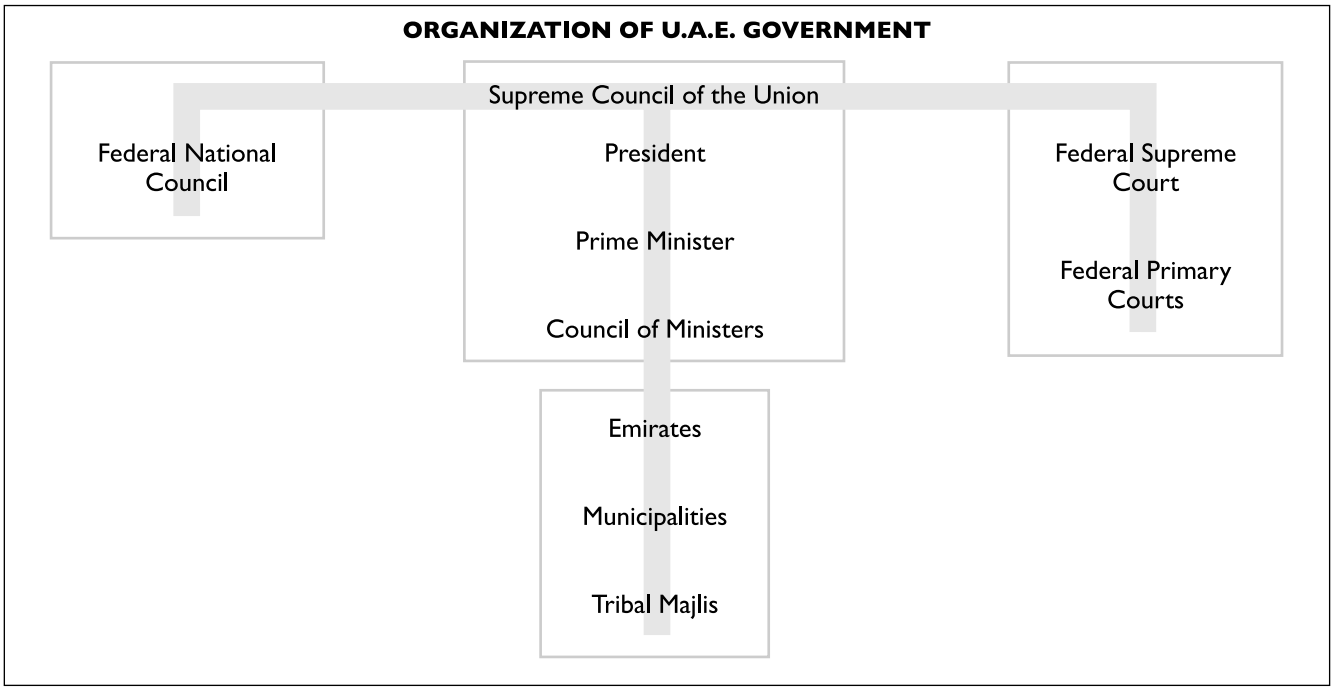
EXECUTIVE

Executive authority for the federation is vested in three closely related institutions: the Supreme Council of the Union (SCU), the president and vice president of the UAE, and the Council of Ministers. Of these, the SCU is the most important, as its approval is required for all significant governmental activities. The SCU consists of the rulers of the federation's seven member states and meets

on a regular basis. Decisions of the SCU on substantive matters must be reached with the consent of five of the seven emirs, including those of both Abu Dhabi and Dubai. Among the most vital of this body's powers are those of promulgating federal legislation, supervising the disposition of federal monies, electing the UAE president and vice president, approving the appointment of federal officials, and ratifying international agreements and declarations of war or national emergency.

The president is empowered by the draft constitution both to call and to chair SCU meetings, to select and dismiss the premier and other cabinet ministers, to nominate federal judges, and to supervise the implementation of all federal laws and decrees. In November 1979 the SCU adopted a measure that placed the president in charge of the federation's unified security and intelligence services and gave him control over the issuing of immigration and residence permits. These powers, in conjunction with his close supervision of the UAE armed forces, put the president in a dominant position within the central administration. The term of office for both the president and the vice president is five years. The UAE's first president, from its founding in 1971 until his death in 2004, was Sheikh Zayid bin Sultan Al Nuhayyan, the longtime ruler of Abu Dhabi. He was replaced by his son, Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayid.

The Council of Ministers draws up initial drafts of all laws and decrees and submits them to the Federal National Council for discussion. It also prepares the federation's annual budget and oversees the day-to-day operation of all federal agencies. Initially, Abu Dhabi was allocated six ministerial posts, Dubai the prime ministership and three other portfolios, Ras al-Khaimah four cabinet positions, Sharjah three, Umm al-Qaiwain and 'Ajman two apiece, and Fujairah one. Virtually all of these offices were held by members of the emirates' ruling families. By January 1977, when the UAE's third cabinet was announced, both the size and the composition of the Council of Ministers had changed substantially. Although several new ministries—such as those of petroleum and mineral resources, fisheries, and Islamic affairs—had been created in 1974, others were disbanded or consolidated; the total number of cabinet positions dropped from 27 to 22. Furthermore, the proportion of ministers not related to the region's ruling families rose from 11 of 27 in December 1973 to 12 of 22, with the Al Nuhayyan of Abu Dhabi suffering the greatest loss of representation. This decline in Abu Dhabi's presence inside the cabinet was compensated for in the winter of 1977–78, when the minister of the interior, Sheikh Mubarak bin Muhammad Al Nuhayyan, was delegated wide-ranging powers to ensure internal security. In partial compensation for these changes, the ruler of Dubai, Sheikh Rashid bin Sa'id Al Maktum, was made prime minister in June 1979 in addition to his serving as UAE vice president. After Sheikh Rashid's death in 1990, his son Sheikh Maktum assumed both the vice presidency



and the premiership. As of 2003, 12 of 24 cabinet ministers were drawn from the ruling families.

LEGISLATURE

Representatives to the Federal National Council (FNC) are appointed by the ruler of each emirate for two-year, renewable terms. Abu Dhabi and Dubai each send eight delegates to this assembly; Sharjah and Ras al-Khaimah each send six; 'Ajman, Umm al-Qaiwain, and Fujairah each send four. The council is empowered to make recommendations on laws and decrees submitted to it by the Council of Ministers and to debate issues of general concern. But the FNC may not enact legislation on its own, and any actions it takes with regard to proposals submitted to it can be overruled either in the Council of Ministers or in the SCU. During periods in which the FNC is not in session, the Council of Ministers is authorized to send draft laws directly to the SCU for approval without convening the assembly for discussion. The FNC can be dissolved by the UAE president at will, but such an order must include a call for the convening of a new FNC within 60 days.

Since the 1990s the FNC has discussed the disposition of the federal budget, the effects of the federation's immigration policies on its economic development, and the social implications of rising fuel costs within the UAE. More significantly, during the term of Tiryam 'Umran Tiryam as its speaker, this body called for closer integration of the UAE's member states and the adoption of a permanent federal constitution, despite clear signals from the SCU that most of the union's emirs favored an extension of the draft constitution of 1971. The SCU in 1976 firmly rejected a proposal to select at least some members of the Federal National Council in ways other than appointment by the individual rulers. Calls such as ones made in mid-1979 for the direct election of the FNC have not elicited a positive response from the SCU. Even modest proposals to augment the role of the FNC in domestic policymaking, such as those raised at a public forum in March 1993, have been routinely ignored.

JUDICIARY

Three kinds of courts operate within the UAE. First, on the federal level, a Supreme Court, consisting of five judges appointed by the president, adjudicates disputes among the member states, as well as those between individual emirates and the central administration. This court also decides whether or not proposed laws and decrees are constitutional. Lower federal courts deal with civil and commercial cases when these involve aspects or agents of the federal government. Federal judges have come primarily from other Arab countries, notably Jordan, Sudan, and Iraq. Second, in Abu Dhabi, Sharjah, and Fujairah, local courts are administered by the federal Ministry of Justice. Third, in the remaining four emirates, judicial affairs are handled largely by the rulers, who benefit both financially and politically from adjudicating local disputes.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

According to the 1996 constitution, any powers and responsibilities not explicitly vested in the federal authorities are considered prerogatives of the administrations of the individual member states. Thus each emirate is free to determine its own internal political affairs, retains control over its own natural resources, and is permitted to maintain its own armed forces. But in each of these areas, federal institutions have begun to extend their own authority at the expense of local officials.

When the ruler of Sharjah was killed during the course of a coup attempt led by his brother in January 1972, for example, the SCU responded by dispatching federal troops to the emirate to suppress the revolt. The federal government then recognized another of the slain ruler's brothers, Sheikh Sultan, as the new emir, all without the participation or prior consent of Sharjah's ruling family.

Similarly, in an effort to achieve some degree of coordination with regard to production and pricing policies among the UAE's oil-exporting members, the Council of Ministers created an Energy Commission in September 1980 to augment the largely impotent federal Ministry of Petroleum and Mineral Resources. The Energy Commission, in cooperation with the much more successful Central Bank established that December, has greatly increased the level of integration in the UAE economy. However, Ras al-Khaimah and Umm al-Qaiwain continued to oppose the extension of centralized control over members' natural resources in the expectation that they might win greater influence over national oil policy if and when sizable hydrocarbon reserves should be discovered in their own territories.

It was announced by the Supreme Defense Committee in 1976 that the armed forces belonging to each UAE member state would be merged into three federal commands, led by the sons of the rulers of Abu Dhabi, Dubai, and Ras al-Khaimah. Although the implementation of this project has been subject to continual delays, work was started on three

consolidated army bases and two air bases in the spring of 1981. The resignation of Sheikh Sultan bin Zayid Al Nuhayyan as commander of the UAE Defense Forces at the end of February 1982, and his replacement by another of Sheikh Zayid's sons, does not appear to have derailed the central administration's efforts to create a unified military establishment under federal control.

Despite trends toward greater unification, major differences in local administration across the emirates remain. In Abu Dhabi, the ruling family as a whole retains considerable influence over public policymaking and occupies predominant positions in the Abu Dhabi Investment Authority, the ruler's consultative council, the emirate's larger economic enterprises, and the civil service. In Dubai, on the other hand, the emir has tended to deal with the ruling family in a more authoritarian fashion, allying himself with members of the merchant elite, Western-educated technocrats, and representatives of foreign firms, while keeping the number of administrative agencies to a minimum. In Ras al-Khaimah, there is a third type of local rule in which the emir acts as a mediator among rival tribal and village factions. Finally, 'Ajman enjoys a long tradition of limiting the power of the emir by means of a local council that meets on a daily basis.

The Electoral System

Both the president and the vice president of the federation are formally elected to office by the Supreme Council of the Union. At the end of 1999 the crown prince and de facto ruler of Ras al-Khaimah commented publicly that it was time for members of the Federal National Council to be popularly elected rather than appointed. This comment was triggered by Sheikh Zayid's remark a year earlier that the FNC could be transformed into an elected body, if that were what the people desired. No further steps in this direction have been undertaken.

The Party System

Political parties are illegal in the UAE.

Major Political Parties

There are no political parties in the UAE.

Minor Political Parties

There are no political parties in the UAE.

Other Political Forces

RADICAL ORGANIZATIONS

In the larger emirates, support for radical organizations such as the Popular Front for the Liberation of Oman and the Arab Gulf (PFLOAG) and the pan-Arab Ba'th Party had come primarily from well-to-do families such as the Shurair family in Dubai and the al-Owaiss family in Sharjah. Arab nationalist sympathies can also be found among certain influential members of the ruling families in these two emirates, including Sheikh Maktum bin Rashid of Dubai. But in Ras al-Khaimah and the smaller emirates, where the gap between rich and poor is not as great as it is in Abu Dhabi and Dubai, settled bedouin are the people most likely to support radical movements. In January 1976, for example, a violent demonstration broke out in one of Ras al-Khaimah's northern villages. The demonstrators protested not only the lack of water and electricity in the district but also a new federal regulation that relaxed the requirements for local citizenship. Leaders of the protest charged that rich foreigners were buying up land in the emirate and charging inflated rents to the local inhabitants. Similar sentiments have occasionally appeared in other rural areas of the UAE's poorer member states, while PFLOAG sympathizers have been active in Dubai's secondary schools and Abu Dhabi's armed forces.

MINORITY COMMUNITIES

Ethnic Persians, Indians, and Baluchis constitute influential communities in virtually all of the UAE's urban centers. These communities have dominated commerce and finance in Sharjah and Dubai for decades, and their position has sparked repeated social disorders both by their own populations and by poorer Arabs against what they consider to be foreign dominance over the local economy. When Iran occupied the islands of Abu Musa and the Tumbs in late 1971, for instance, demonstrators in Sharjah and Ras al-Khaiman set fire to banks and shops owned by both resident and nonresident Persians. On the other hand, a violent demonstration on the part of indigenous Persians in support of the Islamic Republic of Iran occurred in Dubai in February 1979.

WORKERS

Industrial actions by workers in the UAE during the early 1960s were firmly suppressed by the local rulers and their British advisers. But with the influx of expatriate laborers into the federation after the mid-1970s, protests by workers in the larger emirates became more frequent and widespread. In February 1976 Indian and Pakistani laborers employed at the dry dock in Dubai struck for higher wages and better working conditions; 10 months later riot police in that same emirate broke up a larger strike by South Asian workers engaged in building a new sewer system. By the early 1980s indigenous government employees and professionals had adopted similar tatics. Demonstrators have merged demands for economic betterment with calls for greater popular representation in the Federal National Council, as well as for an end to foreign control over the federation's economic affairs.

National Prospects

Following the 1990–91 Gulf War, discussions of the desirability of moderate political reforms gained a wide audience in intellectual and student circles throughout the UAE. Such ruminations set the stage for the publication in the Sharjah newspaper *al-Shuru'* of a series of editorial commentaries on the wave of democratization sweeping across Eastern Europe and North Africa. The essays outlined both positive and negative consequences of the adoption of a competitive electoral system, while hinting at the difficulties that were likely to accompany similar reforms in the Arab Gulf states. In short, few if any demands for greater popular participation in policymaking have been voiced in the UAE. The economies of the various emirates suffered little if any dislocation as a result of the war, and the federal government allocated increased funds for social welfare projects throughout the 1990s. Consequently, the UAE's rulers have faced little pressure to liberalize their respective political orders.

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UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND

By William G. Andrews, Ph.D.
Revised by Michael Levy, Ph.D.



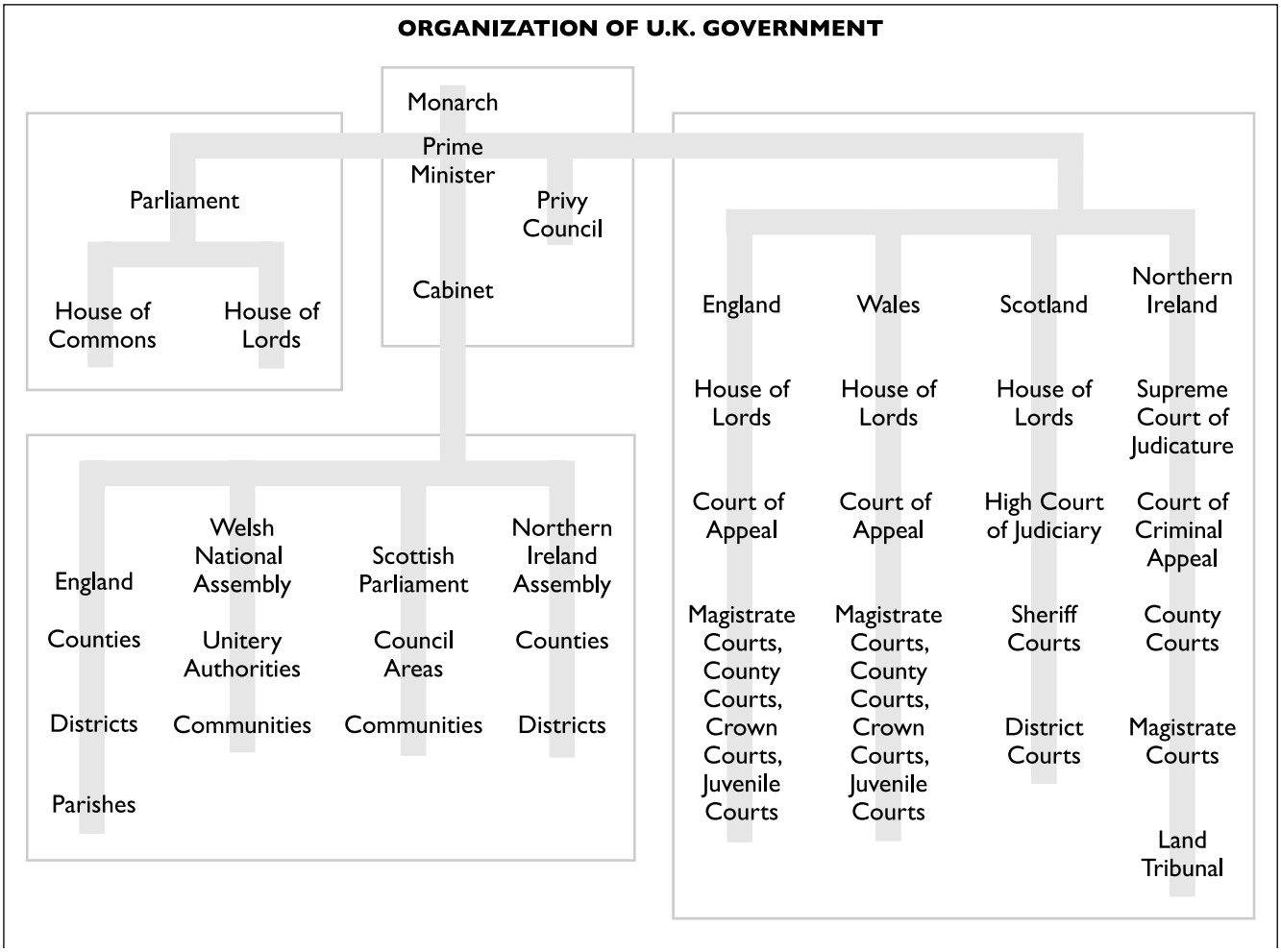
The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland lies in northwestern Europe and consists of four countries: England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland. England, Scotland, and Wales constitute Great Britain and have a population of about 58 million people, while Northern Ireland, consisting of the six northeastern counties (commonly referred to as Ulster) on the neighboring island of Ireland, has a population of about 1.7 million people.

The System of Government

The United Kingdom is a constitutional monarchy. Though it consists of four separate countries and Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland each have their own legislatures (with varying degrees of devolved power), the United Kingdom has a unitary form of government. The British political system dates at least to William the Conqueror in 1066 and has evolved since then, with several abrupt constitutional breaks. The four countries were joined over a period of several centuries. England, which has traditionally been the dominant partner in the kingdom and contains about more than four-fifths of its population, was joined with Wales legally and administratively in 1536 and 1542. Scotland, which had its own monarch and Parliament, agreed to unite with England and abolish its Parliament in 1707. Northern Ireland joined with the remainder of the island of Ireland through the Act of Union in 1800 (which entered into force in 1801). By the early 20th century, however, nationalists in Ireland sought independence from the United Kingdom, and in 1921 separate Parliaments for northern and southern Ireland were established, the southern Irish legislature evolving into a Parliament for an independent Republic of Ireland in 1922.

An important constitutional break that has affected the United Kingdom's constitutional settlement was the Glorious Revolution (1688–89), in which King James II was deposed as king and replaced by William and Mary. In taking the throne, William and Mary agreed to a settlement that enhanced the rights of Parliament and, simultaneously, reduced that of the monarchy. This settlement, known as the British Bill of Rights, set the country on an evolutionary path toward democratic rule. The regime of coordinate executive and legislative branches that was founded then gradually became a parliamentary system by the mid-19th century. By the mid-20th century further evolution had given the queen's first minister such ascendancy over the government and Parliament that some observers labeled the regime "prime ministerial" or even "presidential."

Because of the evolutionary nature of the regime, it lacks a codified constitution. The closest British attempt at such a document was the Instrument of Government of Oliver Cromwell and the Puritan Commonwealth of the 17th century. Its failure provided little incentive to try again. Nevertheless, the British have a clear set of principles to regulate the



conduct of their politics and government, much of it in formal legislative and executive acts.

The earliest and best known of these documents is the Magna Carta of 1215, by which the nobility limited the king's authority. Others emerged from the great constitutional struggles of the 17th century: the Petition of Right (1628), Habeas Corpus Act (1679), Bill of Rights (1689), Act of Settlement (1701), Act of Union with Scotland (1707), and the Place Acts (1740s). Other constitutional statutes are the 19th-century reform acts that expanded suffrage. British constitutional principles underwent much additional codification in the 20th century through such laws as the Parliament Acts (1911 and 1949), the Statute of Westminster (1931), the Ministers of the Crown Act (1937), the Life Peerages Act (1958), and the Renunciation of Peerages Act (1963).

The British constitution has been framed even more by convention than by statute. Some of its most fundamental features have become established through the elevation of practice into principle. Such cornerstones of the system as the unitary state, ministerial responsibility, Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition, and the suprapolitical monarchy have all emerged that way. A constitution of such origin would seem likely to be highly unstable, as an act of Parliament or executive action might alter it. Nevertheless, the British political class has worked with this system for so long that it rarely makes changes abruptly or without deliberation, and it seldom disagrees in significant ways on the content of the constitution.

EXECUTIVE

The executive branch of the system has five main components: the monarch, the prime minister, the cabinet, the government, and the civil service. The reigning monarch is the head of state, the ceremonial chief executive. The prime minister is the head of the government, the functional chief executive. The cabinet is the collective chief executive; the government is the

leadership of the administration; and the civil service is the administrative staff that implements the decisions of the cabinet and government.

The British monarchy is among the most venerable institutions of its type in the world. It has survived since Roman times, the only interruption in its reign having been the brief period of the Puritan Commonwealth (1649–60). The House of Windsor has held the throne since 1714, but its hereditary connections to the Crown can be traced through collateral lines much further back.

The monarchy has a broad range of important formal powers that it rarely exercises in practice. They include the power to appoint and remove all civil and military officers, an absolute veto over all laws, and authority to make foreign and defense policies and to implement them through the diplomatic corps and armed forces. The monarch also has the power to dissolve Parliament and to call for new elections and to bestow honors such as peerages and knighthoods. Through the centuries, however, these formal powers have been gradually reduced, so that the monarch generally follows the advice of government ministers, particularly prime ministers, and acts primarily as a figurehead, the symbolic embodiment of the state and nation. The monarch and other leading members of the royal family represent those elevated abstractions on all sorts of ceremonial occasions, from launching ships and dedicating buildings to receiving ambassadors and opening sessions of Parliament. In private, the monarch acts as a confidential adviser to the prime minister. The king or queen receives a constant flow of official dispatches on all important public business and has "the right to be consulted, the right to encourage, the right to warn" (Walter Bagehot 1826–77).

Throughout much of the second half of the 20th century, the reigning monarchs rarely used their own discretion in performing public acts. In 1957 Sir Anthony Eden resigned as prime minister without recommending a successor, leaving the Conservative Party with a parliamentary majority but no titular leader. While either R. A. Butler or Harold Macmillan would have been accepted by the party, Queen Elizabeth consulted two elder Conservative statesmen and appointed Macmillan. Had she chosen to consult others who would have given different advice, she might well have named Butler. That exception underlines the normally nonpolitical character of the institution.

In contrast to the monarch, prime ministers are in the vortex of politics. Although they have been called "first among equals," their actual power is much greater. The prime minister's power is based on the role of chairing the cabinet. He or she controls its membership and the attendance of nonmembers at its meetings, schedules its meetings, drafts its agenda, directs and summarizes its deliberations, draws the conclusions from them, and supervises the implementation of its decisions. That power is further enhanced by the process of democratic election. British national elections turn largely on the issue of the incumbency of the prime ministership.

Voters select members of Parliament (MPs) largely on the basis of their preferences for the prime ministerial candidates of the major parties. Thus, the winner has a popular mandate that cannot be matched by other members of the government. However, the prime minister's power is restricted by the principle of collective responsibility. The prime minister's actions require the acquiescence of the other members, which is usually obtained. A revolt by ministers, such as that which caused the ouster of Margaret Thatcher in 1990, is rare because the cabinet members know that the voters tend to impose severe penalties on disunited governments. On the other hand, disgruntled influential party members can inflict heavy political costs on prime ministers without open rebellion. A prime minister's awareness of this vulnerability acts as an important restraint.

Collective responsibility requires that all political decisions of the government be taken by deliberation and agreement in the cabinet. All members of the government must support all cabinet decisions loyally, regardless of their own opinions or views expressed in cabinet. Decisions should be reached by consensus. The principle of collective responsibility stipulates that cabinet members who oppose government policy and feel compelled to make that opposition known in public must resign from the cabinet.

The principle of collective responsibility has been attenuated somewhat in recent decades. Some new practices have reinforced the traditional reality of prime ministerial preeminence in the meetings. In some cases, cabinet committees make decisions binding on the whole cabinet without review by it. In others, the prime minister takes important action without prior reference to the cabinet. In still others—notably the decision to join the European Economic Community in the 1970s—the cabinet cannot agree and its members take opposing positions publicly. The rise of a cabinet secretariat responsible to the prime minister and a decline in cabinet secrecy have undermined the concept of collective responsibility still further, and in the early 21st century Clare Short, a member of the cabinet, was openly critical of Prime Minister Tony Blair's decision to enter a U.S.-led coalition to

invade Iraq and topple the Iraqi government of Saddam Hussein, resisting for a time resigning from the cabinet. After finally deciding to resign her office, Short remarked in a speech to the House of Commons that "there is no real collective responsibility because there is no collective," suggesting that the prime minister had such a firm hold on policy that other cabinet members held little sway over government decisions. Another important concept is individual ministerial responsibility, whereby ministers are accountable for the department or agency that they head and are answerable to Parliament.

A typical British cabinet includes some 20 senior ministers. Its exact size and composition depend on the circumstances of the moment and the preferences of the prime minister. The heads of the principal ministries are always members, as is the leader of the House of Commons. Often, one or two cabinet members will be ministers without portfolio or ministers on short-term assignment, such as negotiating entrance to the European Economic Community.

The cabinet is part of the government, which, in recent years, has numbered about 100 members. Most of them belong to the majority party in the House of Commons, but a few are always drawn from the House of Lords. Besides the cabinet members, the government includes non-cabinet ministers, ministers of state (deputy heads of major ministries), parliamentary secretaries or undersecretaries (administrative assistants to ministers), and parliamentary private secretaries (constituency and parliamentary assistants to ministers). Finally, the chief whip and assistant whips of the majority party (officers responsible for liaison between the government and Parliament) are de facto members of the government.

The prime minister is appointed formally by the monarch. Normally, this is not a discretionary decision. Usually, the House of Commons has a single-party majority, and that party has a designated leader. In such cases, the monarch must appoint that leader. If no party has a majority or the majority party has no designated leaders, the monarch may use some small measure of discretion in selecting a prime minister. Even that must be done so carefully and be so generally acceptable that no suspicion of political manipulation by the monarch arises. The other members of the government are appointed by the monarch on nomination by the prime minister. The official opposition forms a shadow cabinet, with members responsible for questioning government ministers and acting as party spokesperson on their policy areas. When the opposition comes to power, members of the cabinet are often drawn from the shadow cabinet. The non-cabinet members of the government are selected by the prime minister taking into account factional and electoral considerations, the preferences of the cabinet, personal compatibilities, and political and personal competence.

LEGISLATURE

The British Parliament is bicameral in form. Its two chambers are the House of Commons (the lower house) and the House of Lords (the upper house). It consists of some 650 members. Like most legislatures, the House is not an accurate cross section of the British population occupationally. Business management and teaching are the most common occupations, comprising about two-fifths of MPs. Law is much less common than in the United States Congress, accounting for one-tenth of MPs. The most common occupations are teaching for Labour MPs and business for Conservatives.

Women made great strides in winning election to the House of Commons in the late 20th century, particularly in the 1990s. In 1918 there was only one woman member of the House of Commons. From the 1920s to 1983 women never constituted more than 5 percent of MPs. From 1987 onward, however, women candidates made significant gains, largely the results of a systematic Labour Party policy that imposed all-women shortlists for many constituencies in the 1997 election. In 1992 women held 60 seats (9.2 percent) in the House of Commons, but in 1997 women won 120 seats (18.2 percent) in the House of Commons (18.2 percent), 101 of which represented the Labour Party. Women held their gains in 2001, when 118 (17.9 percent) women won seats; 95 of the women were from the Labour Party. In 2005, 127 female MPs were elected; 97 of these were from the Labour Party.

The Commons is headed by the speaker, who serves as its presiding officer. The speaker is a member of the House of Commons and is elected by the chamber. However, after his or her election, the speaker (and three deputies) serves as a nonpolitical and nonpartisan officer, responsible mainly for ensuring order and decorum in the proceedings. Speakers may suspend members found in breach of the rules of the House of Commons. By tradition, to ensure the nonpolitical character of the office, the speaker is generally not opposed for reelection by major party candidates. Speakers are required to run for reelection in the constituency that they represent, but they generally run unopposed by the major parties. The speaker of the House represents the House of Commons in its rela-

tions with the House of Lords and with the monarch. The speaker also serves as chair of the House of Commons Commission. All speakers but one have been men. In 1992 Betty Boothroyd was elected as the first woman speaker in the history of Parliament; she served until her retirement from the House of Commons in 2000. The chairman of Ways and Means presides over the House when it meets in committee of the whole. The chairman is assisted by a deputy chairman and by a panel of committee chairmen appointed by the speaker at the beginning of each Parliament. All officers are expected to conduct the sessions of the House in the same spirit as the speaker.

Besides presiding over the committee of the whole on occasion, the members of the panel of chairmen preside over the standing committees of the House on assignment by the speaker. The other members of the standing committees are nominated by a Committee of Selection chosen by the party whips and controlled by the government. Usually, seven or eight standing committees, denominated A, B, C, D, and so on, serve at a time. Each has 16 to 50 members, composed on a basis that takes into account the members' qualifications and special interests and the partisan composition of the House. Also, the members include the minister in charge of the bill to be considered by the committee and one or more of his junior ministers, plus their counterparts on the opposition front bench (leaders). Standing committees are reconstituted and new chairs appointed each time they receive new bills.

The standing committees are mainly forums for the various viewpoints and technical advisers to the government. A committee rarely recommends substantive changes in bills that are not acceptable to the government. In a sense, the committee stage is a dress rehearsal for the more public performance in plenary session. Another part of the Commons' committee system is the select committees. Although they may be appointed for only one session, they tend to be renewed and to acquire the character of standing committees. Select committees deal especially with oversight of the executive branch. Some are oriented functionally. Select committees hold hearings and gather evidence and report their findings to the House of Commons. The number of select committees varies but now generally ranges from 25 to 30. They include committees on public accounts (to audit the expenditure of parliamentary appropriations), deregulation (to promote and monitor the reduction of governmental controls), and statutory instruments (to ensure that executive regulations conform to legislation). Others "shadow" various ministries, such as Treasury, Home Affairs, Agriculture, Defense, Education and Employment, and Foreign Affairs.

Three select committees have specific geographic concerns: Scottish, Northern Ireland, and Welsh Affairs. The whips appoint select committees in proportion to the partisan division of the House. The use of subcommittees and expert advisers has increased, as select committees have become more common, active, and important and have produced an increasing volume of reports. In one survey, 90 percent of the MPs considered the select committees "very or fairly successful" in obtaining information from the departments, but they were not regarded as very helpful in controlling the government.

The Commons has an officer, the parliamentary commissioner for administration, to assist it in dealing with complaints by citizens against the bureaucracy. The commissioner receives complaints on referral from MPs, investigates them, and recommends corrective action where appropriate. About 1,000 cases are handled in a typical year, about one-third of which are found to have merit. The most important organizations in the Commons are the political party caucuses, the main instruments for the organization of the business of the House. The government works through its party caucus to ensure that its agenda receives the necessary attention. Opposition to and criticism of the agenda is organized by the other major party's caucus. The distribution of floor time, the referral of bills, the scheduling of parliamentary activities, the designation of debaters and committee members, and so on, are arranged by the party whips within the caucuses and by negotiations between them. The whips use the caucuses to ensure party voting discipline.

Besides the committees and caucuses, the Commons registers groups of MPs that give special attention to specific topics. They are open to MPs of all parties. All-Party Groups consist of at least 20 qualifying members (10 from the government party and 10 from opposition parties) are divided into country groups (relating to a specific country or region of the world) and subject groups (relating to a specific issue). Members of the House of Lords may also join an All-Party Group, and though the All-Party Groups are generally made up of only backbench members of Parliament, ministers may also join a group. There are also Parliamentary Groups, which are made up of members of Parliament as well as outsiders. These organizations study and promote but have no direct, official role in the legislative process.

In a sense, the work of the House in plenary session resembles that of its committees, writ large and

more public. It debates bills and resolutions mainly to ventilate the leading political issues publicly with a view to influencing the voters at the next general election. Only rarely does a Commons debate affect significantly the content or fate of a bill. Most of the time, dissenting MPs suppress their personal preferences and those of their constituencies in the interests of party unity, and votes are cast along straight party lines. Though party discipline is the norm, there have been some exceptions to this rule, such as the rebellions of Conservative MPs opposed to the Conservative government's policies on European integration in the 1990s and Labour MPs against Tony Blair's Iraq policy in the early 21st century. Despite such exceptions, backbench MPs are, in effect, party soldiers who must obey orders or face expulsion. However, they serve as virtually the only reservoir of political leadership in the country. The Commons is now considered the sole route to the prime ministership and, with only a few exceptions, the only way to reach the cabinet.

One small legislative sop left to the backbenchers is private members' time, which is reserved for consideration of private members' bills. Such bills often deal with narrow personal items and matters of conscience. However, that hardly affects the government's dominance. Because time for debating private members' bills is quite limited, only a handful of members are able to put forward a bill each session. A ballot is held early in a parliamentary session, and the first 20 MPs whose names are drawn are able to introduce a bill. Debate on these bills occurs on Fridays. Backbench MPs may also introduce bills on Tuesdays or Wednesdays under the "ten-minute rule," which allows a member to give a brief speech. Though some of these bills become law, many do not. In fact, the government initiates about 80 percent of the bills enacted. Also, more than 90 percent of the government's bills become law in the same session compared with about 15 percent of private members' bills. Even those figures understate the government's control. In fact, nothing is passed that the government is determined to prevent and nothing fails that the government insists on passing.

In addition to its legislative work, the House in plenary session holds a question period at the beginning of each day's session. For about an hour, ministers respond to inquiries and follow-up questions posed by MPs. Half an hour of Wednesday's session is reserved for the prime minister. From 100 to 150 questions are submitted for oral answer each day, and about a third of them get responses. Also, about 40,000 questions are submitted for written answers each year. As with debates, questions that deal with policy matters are aimed more at public opinion than at substantive change in policy. During each session there are 20 so-called "Opposition Days," in which the opposition parties may choose the issue to be discussed.

The government is subject to the will of the House of Commons, and the prime minister, cabinet, and government may be removed from office through a vote of confidence or motion of censure.

The Commons rarely—only once since 1924—exercises this constitutional prerogative. The exception was the overthrow of the government of James Callaghan by a margin of one vote on March 28, 1979. That Labour government had been formed by Harold Wilson in October 1974 with a majority of three seats but lost seven seats in by-elections, three by defections, and one to the speakership. Also, two were vacant by the end of March 1979. Thus, even that exception resulted from the erosion of party strength, not a breakdown of party discipline. It still conformed to the underlying principle of British government that MPs are elected to support their party leaders and may break ranks only on insignificant matters in the most extreme circumstances.

The Commons sits about 160 days each year. The legal term of each Parliament is five years. It may be dissolved early by the monarch on the request of the prime minister. Usually, the prime minister decides to dissolve after very limited consultations with the most senior leaders of the government; it is not usually a matter for cabinet discussion. Most dissolutions are called because Parliament is near its end and the prime minister believes the moment to be electorally propitious for the government party. At other times, Parliament may be prorogued because it lacks a working majority. Since 1945 only the 1959 and 1992 Parliaments have run full term. In both cases, the incumbent government lost the election.

The upper chamber of the British Parliament is the House of Lords. Traditionally, it included all the hereditary peers of the realm. In 1958 Life Peerages were created. These expire with the death of the bearer. Also, peeresses now sit in the Lords. Hereditary peerages still can be created, but only two have been since 1964, both to elderly men without heirs. Beginning in the late 1990s the House of Lords underwent major reforms. Legislation passed in 1999 reduced the number of hereditary peers from more than 750 to 92. Over the next several years the government announced plans to introduce additional reforms. As of 2005 there were about 700 members of the House of Lords. In

addition, the Lords includes up to 12 Lords of Appeal (who form the highest appellate court in the realm) and 26 bishops of the Church of England.

The House of Lords was once the dominant parliamentary chamber, but its power declined with the rise of democracy. The Parliament Acts of 1911 and 1949 left it with only a suspensive veto: it can delay money bills only 30 days and other bills one year. The absence of constituency pressures and party discipline sometimes enables the Lords to play an independent legislative role, which it has done increasingly in recent years. For example, since the early 1970s government bills have been defeated in the House of Lords about 20 to 25 times per year. However, the House of Lords has long had large disparity in its party composition, with Conservative members comprising by far the largest contingent. As a result, Labour governments have suffered many more defeats than Conservative governments. For example, though the Conservative government of Margaret Thatcher was defeated in the House of Lords only three times in the 1986–87 session, a Labour government in 1975–76 was defeated on 126 votes, and Tony Blair's Labour government was defeated 39 times in 1997–98.

The organization of the House of Lords is much less formal than that of the Commons. Its main officers are the lord chancellor, a member of the cabinet, as its speaker, and a lord chairman of the committees; other government supporters serve as leader and deputy leader of the House. The committee system is much less elaborate than in the Commons. Only one standing committee reviews government bills, and occasional sessional and select committees report on special matters.

JUDICIARY

The British courts are nonpolitical institutions with no authority to review acts of Parliament or the executive for constitutionality. The head of the system in England and Wales is the lord chancellor, a member of the government and speaker of the House of Lords, who exercises the judicial functions of that office without political considerations. All judicial appointments are made for life by the monarch on recommendation of the lord chancellor and the government. Scotland's judicial system varies considerably from the English but is equally nonpolitical. The Law Lords in the House of Lords are the highest court of appeals in the United Kingdom, though there have been proposals to create a Supreme Court. More recent constitutional statutes have included the 1998 acts devolving limited home rule on Scotland and Wales.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Although power is largely centralized at the national levels, regional assemblies exist for Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland, all of which were created in the late 1990s. Northern Ireland had an assembly from the 1920s until 1972, when Home Rule was suspended. Following the signing of the Good Friday Agreement in 1998 and its ratification by voters in both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, a new Northern Ireland Assembly was established. The government of Northern Ireland is discussed in a separate chapter.

In September 1997 referendums were held in both Scotland and Wales on government proposals to establish legislative bodies with varying powers. In Scotland the referendum passed overwhelmingly, with 74 percent of voters approving the creation of a Parliament and 64 percent supporting a proposal that gave the new Parliament tax-varying powers. The 129-member Scottish Parliament is responsible for policy areas previously administered by the Scottish Office of the British government, including health, education, housing, local government, law enforcement, economic development, transportation, agriculture, the environment, and the arts. In these policy areas, the Scottish Parliament may alter or overturn decisions taken by Parliament at Westminster. The Scottish Parliament also has the power to vary the United Kingdom tax rate within Scotland by a maximum of 3 percent. It can raise or lower the United Kingdom income tax by 3 percent. It does not have jurisdiction over foreign policy, defense, social security, or macroeconomic and fiscal policy. Governmental functions are performed by the Scottish Executive, a team of ministers headed by a first minister chosen by the Parliament. Its members serve fixed four-year terms.

The 60-member National Assembly for Wales has more limited authority than the Scottish Parliament. The assembly deals with the matters previously administered by the Welsh Office as well as the responsibilities of some 80 governmental committees in Wales. However, unlike the Scottish Parliament, it lacks the authority to enact or amend most laws. The government is led by the Welsh Assembly Government, headed by a first minister.

The present system of local government for England and Wales went into effect in 1986, though there was a substantial reorganization in the 1990s.

Local government is funded largely through property taxes and grants from the central government. Many parts of England have a two-tier structure of local government that includes county and district councils, though in some areas there is a single governmental unit, known as a local authority. In 1986 the power of the Greater London Authority was abolished by the government of the United Kingdom. In 2000, however, Greater London, which is led by a directly elected mayor, regained some of its powers. Greater London has 32 boroughs, as well as the Corporation of the City of London (the historical and financial core of the city). Each borough has a local council. Within England there are six metropolitan counties (Greater Manchester, Merseyside, Tyne and Wear, West Midlands, South Yorkshire, and West Yorkshire). Within these six metropolitan counties are 36 district councils, whose authority includes local services such as fire protection and civil defense. England also contains numerous nonmetropolitan counties, which have responsibility for services such as education, transport, and planning. The nonmetropolitan counties are further subdivided into several districts that are responsible for more local concerns. There are also nearly 10,000 parish governments, which provide some local services.

Wales has 22 unitary authorities that have responsibility for areas such as housing, education, libraries, fire and police services, and social services. The unitary authorities are broken into communities, many of which have local councils.

Scotland is divided into 32 council areas, each of which is led by a local council. The local governments provide an extensive array of services that include education, transport, social services, housing, and police and fire services. Scotland also contains some 1,200 community councils, which have no legal authority but are consulted on local issues.

At all levels, local government units are directed by councils that are elected every four years. The regional and local units are, within their spheres, relatively independent. Government at the lower level is not supervised by that at the next-higher level.

The Electoral System

British popular elections choose members of the House of Commons, the European Parliament, and local councils. Also, Scottish, Northern Irish, and Welsh voters elect the members of their legislative institutions. Westminster MPs are elected by simple plurality from single-member districts. By-elections fill interim vacancies using the same system. The Scottish Parliament has 73 members elected from single-member districts and 56 by proportional representation from party lists in the eight Scottish European Parliament districts. Forty members of the Welsh Assembly are elected from single-member constituencies. The other 20 are elected by proportional representation from party lists. The members of the European Parliament are elected by proportional representation from multimember districts.

Legislation enacted in the 1940s requires that Commons constituency boundaries be reviewed and readjusted for population changes on a periodic basis based on recommendation by a nonpolitical council. There are separate boundary commissions for England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland. Redistributions attempt to equalize the constituencies within each country, but disparities remain that are larger than those allowed in the United States. In 2001, for example, the smallest constituency was the Western Isles, located in Scotland, which had only about 22,000 electors, while the largest was the Isle of Wight, in England, which had more than 100,000. Part of the discrepancy has been based on legislation requiring a minimum of 71 seats for Scotland, a rule abandoned following the creation of the Scottish Parliament. Wales also has traditionally been overrepresented in the Parliament at Westminster. The largest discrepancies are between the countries, with Scotland and Wales each average about 55,000 electors, while Northern Ireland constituencies average about 67,000 voters, an English constituencies about 70,000.

Suffrage extends to all British subjects who are at least 18 years of age, with certain minor exceptions. Peers and peeresses, convicted felons, and the insane are not eligible to vote. Voter registration is usually through postcard forms sent out by the government. The register is open at certain specified times and qualified voters who have been omitted may enroll. Nevertheless, an estimated 5 to 10 percent of the eligible voters do not register. Turnout of registered voters since World War II has averaged about 75 percent but has fallen in recent decades. Polling day is always a Thursday. Official paper ballots are provided under rigorous controls at the polling stations. On each ballot are printed the name, address, and party affiliation of each qualified candidate for the seat from that district.

In addition to local, national, and European elections, the United Kingdom—particularly London, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland—have held referendums. On June 5, 1975, the British public voted to join the European Community (now the European

Union). In 1979 voters in Scotland and Wales were given the opportunity to endorse the creation of regional assemblies. Though a majority of voters in Scotland favored such a proposal (a majority opposed it in Wales), the legislation that called the referendum required that the proposal gain the support of at least 40 percent of registered voters, a condition that was not met. In 1997 voters in both countries voted in favor of proposals that yielded limited autonomy to each country (greater in Scotland than in Wales). In 1998 voters in London endorsed a plan to reestablish a Greater London Authority with a directly elected mayor, and that year voters in Northern Ireland supported a proposal that reestablished a Northern Ireland Assembly. Though use of referenda are rare in the United Kingdom, they have increased in recent decades, and on major constitutional issues involved regarding Britain's relationship with the European Union (such as the European constitution or joining the euro, the European Union's single currency), leaders of the major parties have endorsed their use.

The Party System

ORIGINS OF THE PARTIES

Britain has had basically a two-party system since the Whigs and Tories (Royalists) emerged in the late 17th century. They were replaced by the Liberals and Conservatives after the Reform Act of 1832, and Labour supplanted the Liberals in the late 1920s. However, the Liberals survived as a minor party and since 1970 have been joined in the House of Commons by several other minor parties. In several elections—1910, 1923, 1974, and 1992—the major parties were so evenly matched that minor parties held the balance of power at some point during the Parliament.

GENERAL ELECTIONS RESULTS (1959–2005)

Year	Cons.		Labour		Lib/Dem		Others		Total Vote
	%	Seats	%	Seats	%	Seats	%	Seats	
1959	49.4	365	43.8	258	5.9	6	0.9	1	35,397,080
1964	43.4	304	44.1	317	11.2	9	1.3	0	35,892,572
1966	41.9	253	47.9	363	8.5	12	1.7	2	35,964,684
1970	46.4	330	42.9	287	7.5	6	3.2	7	28,344,807
1974	38.2	297	37.2	301	19.3	14	5.3	23	31,340,162
1974	35.9	277	39.3	319	18.3	13	6.6	26	29,189,104
1979	43.9	339	36.9	268	13.8	11	5.5	17	31,222,279
1983	42.4	397	27.6	209	25.4[a]	23[a]	4.6	21	30,670,905
1987	42.3	376	30.8	229	22.6[a]	22[a]	4.3	23	32,536,137
1992	41.9	336	34.4	271	17.8	20	5.8	24	33,612,693
1997	31.4	165	41.9	419	17.2	46	4.5	19	31,613,191
2001	31.7	166	40.7	412	18.3	52	5.5	27	26,367,383
2005	32.3	197	35.2	356	22.0	62	10.5	31	26,981,410

[a] *Alliance*

Britain has a two-party system in the sense that the two major parties have won about 95 percent of the seats in general elections since World War II. However, that figure has declined to less than 90 percent in recent elections. The system is also bipartite in that the two major parties are substantially equal in strength and frequently alternate in power. From 1945 until 1979 they occupied office almost identical lengths of time. However, the Conservatives formed the governments continuously from 1979 to 1997.

THE PARTIES IN LAW

British law is virtually silent on political parties. No laws deal exclusively with political parties as organizations, and general legislation on associations makes no explicit distinctions with respect to them. Laws on charitable societies expressly exclude organizations that are primarily political. Election laws deal almost entirely with candidates, rather than parties; party affiliations could not even be mentioned on the ballots until 1969.

The governmental subsidies for the opposition are paid to the parliamentary groups, rather than the parties themselves. In practice, those funds are used mainly to support extraparliamentary activities. Beyond these references, parties as such are generally untouched by British law.

PARTY ORGANIZATION

The main British parties have dues-paying memberships and elaborate organizational structures that generally provide for a considerable degree of intraparty democracy and local influence on party policy. However, few citizens (about 2 percent) are members of a political party, and even fewer are activists.

The basic working organizations of the parties are the constituency associations based on the parliamentary districts. They nominate and run the candidates for Parliament, though often with input from the national party. The candidates need not be residents of their constituencies, and the national party makes sure its major figures are nominated in "safe" districts, a practice that seldom causes friction with the constituency associations.

CAMPAIGNING

Parliamentary election campaigning in Great Britain falls into two clear-cut phases and is conducted mainly at two levels. The precampaign begins when a general impression forms that an election is likely within a few months. The official campaign begins when Parliament is dissolved and continues through the 17 working days until election eve. The precampaign phase may last two years or more; also, it may be very short or, in the case of a "snap" election, nonexistent. Campaigns are conducted mainly at the national and constituency level, though regional party offices perform certain coordinating functions.

The local constituency associations nominate the party candidates, usually from lists of acceptable applicants provided by the national party headquarters, which also reviews and approves the constituency nominees. For the 1997 election the Labour Party required many local associations to nominate only women on their short lists, with the result that a record number of women were elected. A candidate may also appear on the general election ballot if he or she is nominated by two voters in the constituency and submits paperwork that is signed by eight additional voters. All candidates must pay a £500 deposit, which is refunded if the candidate receives at least 5 percent of the total votes cast. The national organizations prepare campaign broadcasts; publish party election manifestos; arrange national tours for party leaders to appear at rallies, press conferences, and other public occasions; prepare posters, stickers, and other campaign material that is not specifically local in content; and continuously review campaign strategy and tactics and coordinate changes with the local organizations. Finally, the national organization places advertisements, especially in newspapers; these advertisements do not endorse any specific candidate and thus are not chargeable against candidate expenditure.

The constituency organization handles local campaigning, which includes the candidate's tours of the district with speeches, question periods in local meeting halls, and handshaking in public places. Local party workers canvass door-to-door, distributing national party materials as well as brochures on local issues and the candidate's election speeches.

The principal means by which the state regulates those activities are financial. A legal limit—varying somewhat by constituency—is placed on the amount of money that can be spent on behalf of each parliamentary candidate. A candidate may spend a maximum of £5,483 plus an additional amount per constituency, depending on whether it is for a county or borough constituency. Thus, on average a candidate may spend about £9,000. For by-elections, however, a higher limit of £100,000 is imposed. Candidates may also send an election leaflet to all voters in a constituency with having to pay postal charges. Legislation enacted

in 2000 attempted to place some controls on party finances. Parties could accept donations greater than £200 only from individuals registered to vote in the United Kingdom or from European Union–incorporated companies that do business in the country, as well as trade unions. All large donations (defined as greater than £5,000) must be disclosed. The legislation also set spending limits, allowing each party to spend no more than £30,000 for each constituency in which it competes. In practice, campaign costs are several times as great as those specified by law. Precampaign expenses vary greatly by election, tending to be quite substantial if an election comes later than anticipated. On the other hand, "snap" elections involve virtually no precampaign expenses. Firm estimates are not available, but precampaigns probably cost the constituency organizations as much, on the average, as the official campaigns, amounting to more than £75 million generally. In addition, an indeterminate amount is spent by nonparty groups and individuals apart from direct support of individual candidates.

Party funds for campaigning come from three main sources: membership dues, donations, and candidates' payments of personal expenses. The parties vary greatly in their reliance on the different categories.

INDEPENDENT VOTERS

About two-thirds of the constituencies are generally considered "safe," that is, virtually certain to give a majority to the same party in every election (except in landslide elections). About 10 percent of the electorate seem to switch parties from election to election. Many independents become candidates but almost never win unless they are longtime MPs who have been dropped by their parties and run as independents in the constituencies they have represented.

Major Political Parties

CONSERVATIVE AND UNIONIST PARTY

HISTORY

After the Reform Act of 1832, Sir Robert Peel began to form the Conservative Party from the old Tory Party that had emerged in the late 17th century as the political ally of the king. In 1834 Peel established local "registration societies" that evolved gradually into constituency Conservative Associations. In 1867 about 50 of those organizations formed the National Union of Conservative and Constitutional Associations and called for annual conferences. Three years later, Benjamin Disraeli created the Conservative central office. In 1912 a faction of the Liberal Party opposed to Irish Home Rule allied itself to the Conservatives and "Unionist" replaced "Constitutional" in the name. In 1948–49, the party underwent sweeping reorganization. It controlled the government during most of the period between the end of World War I and the end of World War II. Since then it has alternated in office with Labour. The party's most important leaders in the twentieth century were Stanley Baldwin (1923–37), Winston Churchill (1940–55), Harold Macmillan (1957–63), Edward Heath (1965–75), and Margaret Thatcher (1975–90).

ORGANIZATION

The Conservatives traditionally had the best party organization in Britain, although their electoral rout in 1997 hurt them badly in terms of structure. Their organization at that time included constituency committees in all districts in Great Britain. Nearly half had full-time paid agents (about 300 in 1992), three times as many as Labour and 10 times as many as the Liberal Democrats. The constituency committees are joined together in the National Union of Conservative and Unionist Associations. The Union holds an annual conference that is, in theory, the sovereign decision-making organ of the party. Historically, the Conservatives have kept most factional and personal rivalries behind the scenes and tend to accept the decisions of the official leadership with little open questioning. As a result, the conferences have generally resembled pep rallies more than deliberative assemblies, though that superficial harmony was shattered in the late 20th century by public squabbling over Britain's place in Europe.

The Conservatives maintain a central office and a network of regional offices in England and Wales. The Scottish Conservatives have a separate central office. The Northern Irish Official Ulster Unionists are an independent party closely allied to the Conservatives. Though that arrangement broke down in the 1992 elections under the strain of the sectarian conflict in Ulster and nine Conservative candidates opposed UUP nominees, no serious Conservative candidates ran in Ulster in 1997, 2001, or 2005.

At the European Union level, the party is a member of the European People's Party, a conservative pan-European political party.

Power is highly concentrated in the national party. The leader appoints the chairman and other officials of

the central office, controls indirectly the executive organs of the National Union, and selects the members of the party's shadow cabinet. Until 1963 leaders of the Conservative Party were said to "emerge" through informal processes. That year, Lord Home was picked through an elaborate series of "soundings" of the party elite.

From 1965 to 1998 the party leader was selected by Conservative members of the House of Commons. A candidate would win on the first ballot only with an absolute majority of the votes and 15 percent more than the runner-up. Failing that, a second ballot would be held four days later that would require an absolute majority. If a third ballot was required, only the three top candidates from the second round could run and a preferential voting system ensured that a winner would emerge. The winner of that balloting was then confirmed in office by a meeting of Conservative members of the House of Commons and House of Lords, prospective parliamentary candidates, and the members of the executive committee of the National Union. Following the 1997 election the party's new leader, the 36-year-old William Hague, attempted to modernize the party and enhance the party's appeal to the electorate. Under the rules adopted in 1998, nominees emerge and are voted on by Conservative MPs. Successive rounds are held, with the candidate with the lowest total being eliminated until two candidates remain. The winner is then chosen by Conservative Party members. The rules were first used in 2001 following Hague's resignation after the 2001 general election. Conservative MPs may call for a new leadership election if 15 percent of them sign a vote of no confidence letter against the sitting leader. If the leader then fails to win a majority of the MPs' votes, a new leadership election is triggered in which the current leader is unable to stand for reelection.

POLICY

Current Conservative policies follow the general line of reducing the involvement of government in the affairs of individuals. The party advocates curbs on labor union power and the welfare state, lower taxes, strong measures against crime, decentralization of education, tight limits on immigration, deregulation, and privatization of the economy. It wants to maintain British rule in Northern Ireland and a strong military force. Internationally, it remains firmly committed to NATO but is badly divided on European integration.

MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY

The Conservative Party has the largest dues-paying membership in Britain. The party acquired its mass-membership character in the years after its 1945 defeat and at one time had a membership list of 2.5 million, the largest of any democratic party in the world. As a result of internal conflict and other factors, Conservative membership rolls declined dramatically in the 1990s. Whereas the party claimed some 750,000 members in the early 1990s, by the early 21st century its membership had declined to less than 350,000. In comparison to the other political parties, the Conservative Party membership is disproportionately older.

The party draws its support disproportionately from people of professional and business backgrounds. The party is weakest among trade union members.

Other important differences that set off the Conservative voter are housing tenure, religious leanings, age, and geography. Conservative candidates draw best among those who own their own homes but do poorly among public-housing tenants. Religiously, the party is strongest among members of the Church of England and the Church of Scotland, whereas it draws fewer voters among Roman Catholics. The older the voter, the more likely that person is to vote Conservative. About one-fourth of voters under age 35 have voted Conservative in recent election, while two-fifths of those 55 or older have done so. Geographically, Conservative strength is concentrated very much in southern England and the Midlands. In that most populous region of the United Kingdom, with about one-half of the seats in Parliament, the Conservatives usually outdraw their rivals by wide margins. In every other region, they almost always trail Labour. Traditionally, the Conservatives have been stronger among women than men, but such a gender gap has disappeared.

Interest-group support for the Conservatives comes mainly from the business and agricultural communities. The party is associated closely with a number of business and farm organizations such as British United Industrialists, the Economic League, Confederation of British Industry, Aims (a confederation of business groups opposed to nationalized industry), and the National Farmers Union. In addition, many corporations, smaller groups, and political action organizations are allied with it.

FINANCING

Traditionally, the Conservative Party has been very secretive about its finances. With the reforms of 2000, however, the sources of most of its funds are now public. About 90 percent of its income is derived from donations, mainly from business corporations and the remainder from affiliation fees paid by the constituency associations. Those associations raise and spend

an average of about $20,000 each in nonelection years, most of which goes for their agent's salary. One-third to one-half of that comes from members' dues, which are set by each association, and the rest is donations, again mainly from businesses. A small amount is earned from gambling games and bazaars. When in opposition, the parliamentary delegation receives a government subsidy of about $500,000 per year.

PROSPECTS

After the Conservatives won their unprecedented fourth straight general election in 1992, they promptly went into a tailspin. They split badly—especially over further European integration—with one former Conservative prime minister (Thatcher) attacking the government for recklessness and another (Heath) berating it for timidity. A series of sex and corruption scandals buffeted the party further. Public opinion surveys gave its prime minister the lowest popularity ratings in history and recorded more sustained dissatisfaction with governmental performance that ever before. That sentiment cost the Tories a humiliating defeat in the 1997 elections. Despite the modernization efforts by William Hague, the party failed to recover in 2001, suffering a second landslide defeat.

Yet the party has weathered similar situations in the past and emerged triumphant. The party continued to suffer discord under Hague's successor, Iain Duncan Smith, but it began to coalesce following the election of Michael Howard as leader in 2003. The party also benefited from public dissatisfaction with the Labour Party's failure to deliver on many domestic priorities and for Tony Blair's decision to back the U.S.-led war effort against Iraq in 2003. In 2004 it finished first in the elections to the European Parliament and in local elections, boosting its prospects for capturing control of the central government. And in new Parliament elections in 2005, the party still finished well behind Labour but gained 33 seats over its 2001 performance. After the election Howard resigned as party leader and was replaced by David Cameron.

LABOUR PARTY

HISTORY

The British Labour Party was formed in 1906, succeeding the Labour Representation Committee that had been founded in 1900 by trade unions, the Independent Labour Party, the Fabian Society, and other socialist societies. Two Labour MPs were elected in 1900 and 30 in 1906. By 1922 Labour was the second-largest party. In 1924 and 1929–31, minority Labour governments held office with the support, but not the participation, of the Liberal Party. Since World War II, Labour governments have held office in 1945–51, 1964–70, 1974–79, and 1997–present. Following Ramsey MacDonald, who led the party twice (1911–24 and 1922–31), the principal Labour leaders were Clement Attlee (1935–55), Hugh Gaitskell (1955–63), and Harold Wilson (1963–76). The party had traditionally been committed to social democracy and had been pragmatic and moderate in its policies, but in 1980 the party's left wing won control and elected Michael Foot as leader. Foot led the party to a disastrous defeat in 1983, when it barely finished ahead of an alliance between the Liberal Party and the newly formed Social Democratic Party. After the election, the party elected Neil Kinnock as leader, and it began to purge itself of more radical policies and elements within the party. Though Kinnock was successful at modernizing the party, he failed to win power for the Labour Party in either 1987 or 1992. Kinnock's successor, John Smith, enjoyed national popularity but died suddenly in May 1994 and was replaced by Tony Blair. Blair carried out a drastic reorientation of the party. He reduced trade union influence, expunged Socialism from the party statutes and manifesto, committed it firmly to free-market economics, gave it a fresh, modern, managerial face, and more than doubled its membership. In 1997 Blair led the party to its greatest electoral triumph, when it won 419 seats, and in 2001 the Labour Party won the largest-ever second-term majority in British history. In 2005 the party faltered somewhat but still won 356 out of 646 seats in the House of Commons. Blair retained the prime ministership.

ORGANIZATION

The Labour Party's structure is unusually complex. It includes two types of membership: individual and collective. Most collective members are trade unions, but a few are cooperative or socialist societies. Members of young socialist groups and women's societies are affiliated individually. Collective members may join at the local, constituency, regional, or national levels. For instance, local trade unions may affiliate with local Labour branches while the national federations, of which they are part, join the national party.

The structure rises from local branches through constituency associations to several regional councils and the national party. The main elements in the national party are the annual conference, national executive committee (NEC), national policy forum (NPF), head office, and the parliamentary Labour Party (PLP). When in opposition, the PLP elects an

executive committee whose members are assigned by the leader to represent the party in various policy areas, becoming its shadow cabinet.

The annual conference, the highest policy-making body in the party, is composed of delegates from the constituency associations, the cooperative and socialist societies, and the national trade unions. The conference votes of the organizations are weighted to reflect the number of their members for whom they have paid dues or affiliation fees. The labor unions, which at one time held 90 percent of the votes cast, now cast 50 percent of the votes, and a few of the largest unions have generally dominated the conferences. However, under 1997 reforms a "rolling policy program" prepared by a 175-member national policy forum (NPF) and approved by the NEC is the basis of conference policy deliberations. Motions from other party organizations are not in order on matters covered by the NPF.

The NPF consists of about 180 members, two-fifths of whom must be women. Members of the NPF include several members of the government or shadow cabinet, Labour members of Parliament and the European Parliament, as well as representatives from the National Executive Committee, constituency Labour parties, Scottish and Welsh Labour parties, trade unions, affiliated socialist societies, the Co-operative Party, the Black Socialist Society, and local Labour councillors. A joint policy committee, chaired by the party leader and composed of equal numbers of members of the government or shadow cabinet and nongovernment members of the NEC, is "the steering group" for the NPF. A joint campaigns and elections committee, similarly composed, manages election campaigns.

Candidates for party leader must have the support of 12.5 percent of the MPs (or 20 percent for those challenging an incumbent). Delegates to the annual conferences (or if a vacancy occurs between them, a special conference) report the votes of the members of their organizations through an electoral college that gives one-third of the votes each to the trade unions, the Labour members of the British and European Parliaments, and the constituency associations. Balloting continues until a candidate wins an absolute majority. A similar, separate election is held for deputy leader.

The national executive committee, which manages the party between conferences, is elected at the conference. Its composition reflects the party's federated character, with its members drawn from all the key groups within the party. The leader, deputy leader, treasurer, European Parliament group leader, and leader of young Labour serve ex officio. The NEC appoints and supervises the general secretary, who manages the day-to-day affairs of the party and oversees the headquarters staff. All members of the NEC also serve on the NPF.

Labour has a long history of factionalism, partly a result of the federated structure of the party. The officially recognized components tend to foster divergent viewpoints within the party. The main dividing line has lain between the leftist ideological socialists and the moderate pragmatic social democrats. The Trotskyite militant tendency was banned in 1985 as a party-within-the-party, and most of its leaders and members expelled.

POLICY

For most of the period since World War II, the Labour Party has pursued moderate reformist policies. From 1945 to 1951 it nationalized key industries and expanded the social welfare system. It implemented a more limited additional nationalization program from 1964 to 1970. During the earlier period it joined the NATO alliance and began to dismantle the British colonial empire. More equivocally, it favored European integration and reform of the House of Lords (though its manifesto of 1983 called for withdrawal from the European Community and abolition of the House of Lords). It promoted public housing, unemployment relief, social welfare programs, reflationary economic policies, protection for immigrants and other minorities, the interests of organized labor, and equality of educational opportunity.

Under Blair, the party abandoned its commitment to nationalize or renationalize substantial parts of the economy and advocates a dynamic free-market economy cushioned by government regulation of key industries and a modest social welfare system that retains the National Health Service intact. After returning to office in 1997, it undertook to strengthen educational and training programs and to make important constitutional reforms: a broadened bill of rights, a reformed upper chamber, a Welsh Assembly and Scottish Parliament, and a Freedom of Information Act. Finally, its policies no longer reflect unwavering support for the trade union movement.

MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY

The Labour Party claims about 4 million members. However, nearly 95 percent of them are indirectly affiliated through their trade unions and cooperative and Socialist societies. About 250,000 belong directly, less than half that of its peak membership in the 1950s. Membership gradually declined in the second half of the 20th century until the mid-1990s, when it grew to

about 350,000 members. Party membership has subsequently declined since.

In member and supporter demographics, the Labour Party is a close mirror image of the Conservatives. Its strength lies disproportionately in the lower economic categories, among minority ethnic and racial groups, among public-housing dwellers, and in the younger age groups. The party is weak in most rural areas and strong in major cities and where Roman Catholics are concentrated. Geographically, the party is strongest in northern England, Yorkshire, the North West, inner London, Scotland, and Wales. Its weakest area is England south of the Midlands. The main interest group supporting the party is the trade unions, though reforms aimed at reducing trade union power has somewhat altered this relationship. Another major interest group associated closely with Labour is the nationalized sector of the economy.

FINANCING

The annual dues for individual membership in the Labour Party are about £225. About one-fourth of that is kept by the constituency parties, amounting to 10–15 percent of their income. Most of the rest of their income comes from direct appeals to their members and entrance fees to social events. Much of the constituency campaign money is contributed by local trade union branches. The national party receives the other three-fourths of the dues; about half the Labour Party's income is derived from trade unions.

PROSPECTS

Labour has enjoyed great success under the moderate, modernizing, dynamic leadership of Tony Blair. He managed to rid the party of its outdated ideological baggage and to reduce trade union influence that had formerly alienated large segments of the population. The party's landslide victories in 1997 and 2001 represented a dramatic turnaround for a party that had lost a record four successive elections between 1979 and 1992 and was out of power for 18 years, longer than any major party since the rise of the modern political parties in Great Britain. Moreover, it had suffered from chronic instability of leadership. From 1975 to 1995 Labour had six leaders to only two for the Conservatives. Yet the party was able to dissipate the "looney left" image that had plagued it in the early 1980s. The 1997 election indicated that the party had overcome the fears of many centrist Britons that they could not be trusted to manage the national economy. Meanwhile, the internal discord among the Conservatives, particularly over Europe, helped Labour to displace them in the minds of many voters as the "natural" party of government leadership. Nevertheless, Blair's image began to suffer, particularly in 2003–04 over whether the country should go to war in Iraq. Many Labour members, as well as the bulk of the country, opposed the war effort. In addition, the party was split over whether to join the euro, the European Union's single currency, an issue that divided the public strongly. These issues negatively affected its performance in the 2005 elections, as the party saw its total seats drop from 412 to 354. Nonetheless, it still retained a clear majority, and Blair remained prime minister.

LIBERAL DEMOCRATS

HISTORY

The Liberal Party formed in 1859 as successor to the Whigs and dominated British politics for much of the next 60 years. However, internecine squabbles, especially over the Irish question, weakened the party and caused it to lose its place in Britain's two-party system to Labour in the 1920s. After 1945 it survived as a minor party, with its share of the vote ranging between 2.5. and 19.3 percent and its parliamentary delegation between 6 and 20. In 1981 four top Labour Party leaders and several thousand supporters, disaffected because of their organization's leftward slide, quit and formed the Social Democratic Party. The Liberals and Social Democrats joined in a formal alliance for the 1983 and 1987 elections and won 25.4 percent and 22.6 percent of the vote, nearly outpolling Labour in 1983. In 1988 they merged.

In 1992 the new party won 17.8 percent and 20 seats. In 1997 it slipped to 17.2 percent but, due to the peculiarities of the British electoral system, won 46 seats, the largest number of any minor party since before World War II. In 2001 it raised its vote share slightly and its seats in the House of Commons to 52, and in 2005 it saw another increase in vote share and seats, up to 62 seats. Neither the Liberal Democrats nor their predecessor parties have held government office since the National Coalition of World War II, but the Liberals supported the minority Labour government in 1977–78. They tend to fare better in local elections and in elections that use proportional representation (e.g., elections to the Scottish Parliament, the Welsh Assembly, and the European Parliament).

ORGANIZATION

The Liberal Democrat Party is a complex and loosely joined federation. It maintains separate English, Scottish, and Welsh parties. The federal party coordi-

nates activities among the state parties and prepares U.K.-wide policy and national parliamentary election campaigns and fund-raising. The semiannual federal conference is composed of representatives of every local party or combination of local parties that has at least 30 members. It is the sovereign decision-making body of the federal party and elects a majority of the members of the three principal federal party committees (Executive, Policy, and Conference), whose other members represent the parliamentary party, local councillors, and Scottish and Welsh parties. At least one-third of the directly elected members of each committee must be women. The federal party leader must be an MP nominated and seconded by other MPs and supported by at least 200 members of at least 20 local parties and is elected, usually for the term of a Parliament, by a ballot of all party members.

The party president is elected for two years by a ballot of all party members and chairs the federal executive, which directs the work of the federal party. The conference committee organizes and sets the agendas for the federal conference. The federal policy committee consists of the party leader; one MP each from England, Scotland, Wales, the parliamentary party as a whole, and the House of Lords; the party president; three local authority members elected by their peers; two representatives each from the Scottish and Welsh parties; and fifteen persons elected annually by the federal conference. The FPC prepares policy papers for the conferences and writes the national election manifestos in collaboration with the parliamentary party and based on conference resolutions.

The state parties oversee the local organizations and the selection of parliamentary candidates and define (in Scotland and Wales) party policy on state issues. The English party is divided into 12 regions. Delegates from the regions form the English council, which is the sovereign body of the English party and elects its executive. The Scottish party has a conference, executive, and policy committee. The Welsh party has a council, national executive, and policy subcommittee.

The basic units of the party are the local parties, based on one or more parliamentary constituencies. Parliamentary candidates are selected by vote of the members of the constituency associations. Party candidate selection shortlists must be at least one-third women. The Liberal Democrats are affiliated internationally with the Liberal International and the European Liberal Democrat and Reform Party of the European Union.

Their main auxiliary organizations are the youth and student Liberal Democrats, the women Liberal Democrats, the association of Liberal Democrat trade unionists, and the association of Liberal Democrat councillors.

POLICY

Traditional Liberal policies occupied a middle ground between Labour and the Conservatives and firmly resisted social and political polarization between big trade unions and big business. The Liberal Democrats seem to be following largely in that tradition. The party officially adopted a position of policy equidistance from the Conservative and Labour parties, a principle abandoned in 1995, and after the Labour Party reforms implemented by Tony Blair in the 1990s, some policy analysts have suggested that the Liberal Democrats are the most left-wing of the country's main parties. They elevate "three enduring principles above all others: liberty, equality, and community." Longtime policy positions of the party have been the introduction of a proportional representation electoral system, governmental decentralization, an elected Scottish assembly, greater power sharing with the European Union, conversion of the House of Lords into an elected body, fixed dates for parliamentary elections, an end to official secrecy, a written constitution and bill of rights, a supreme court, additional protection for women and minorities, reform of the taxation and social welfare systems, and stringent environmental protection.

MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY

Total membership is about 100,000, down from about 160,000 at the time of the merger. Party members are disproportionately middle-class and well-educated. Support for the party among voters is highest among the middle class, the religiously nonconformist or atheist, and in southwestern England and in parts of Scotland. Voting for the party, however, is highly volatile in comparison to the Labour and Conservative parties, as a significant share of votes for the Liberal Democrats are cast by electors who wish to protest against one of the two main parties. They tend to be workers upset at the Labour Party or middle-class voters who register similar dissatisfaction with the Conservative Party.

FINANCING

The Liberal Democrats financial position is quite poor in comparison to that of the Labour and Conservative parties. Without traditional ties to the trade unions or to business and industry, the party relies heavily on income raised through individual memberships and

private donations. It also raises money through lotteries, bazaars, and other functions. The parliamentary party receives a small government subsidy.

PROSPECTS

The Liberal Democrats are stronger than any third party has been since before World War II. They do well consistently in public opinion polls, parliamentary by-elections, and local elections and held a record number of seats in Parliament in 1997, 2001, and 2005. However, unless the electoral system is reformed radically, it is unlikely that they will emerge from their minor-party status. This leaves a "hung parliament" as their best bet to share power. If neither major party were to win a parliamentary majority, the Liberal Democrats would be well placed for coalition membership. They could then use that position to secure governmental adoption of some of their key policies.

Minor Political Parties

SCOTTISH NATIONAL PARTY (SNP)

The SNP was founded in 1934 and won parliamentary seats in by-elections in 1945, 1967, and 1973. Except for one seat in 1970, it won no representation in general elections before February 1974. In that election it captured 7 of Scotland's 71 seats with 21.9 percent of the vote. It peaked in October 1974, with 11 seats and 30.4 percent. From 1979 through 1992, however, it won only two or three seats in each election, though in 1992 it won more than one-fifth of the Scottish vote. The party was able to capitalize on dissatisfaction with the governing Conservative Party in 1997, winning six seats in the House of Commons. In 2001 it won one-fifth of the votes in Scotland and five seats; in 2005 it won six seats.

The SNP supported the minority Labour government until the failure of the devolution referendum of March 1979. The great weakness of the SNP since 1974 has been its inability to concentrate its electorate sufficiently to convert its substantial support into parliamentary seats. The SNP does much better in local council elections. It also does well in elections to the Scottish Parliament. In 1999 it won 27 percent of the regional vote and 35 seats in the Scottish Parliament, finishing second to the Labour Party. In 2003, however, its seat total dropped to 27. The SNP is a social democratic party whose distinctive appeal is its advocacy of independence for Scotland. Its membership is around 50,000 people.

PLAID CYRMU–THE PARTY OF WALES

The Plaid Cyrmu–The Party of Wales is a Welsh counterpart of the SNP. It was founded in 1925 but neither contested parliamentary elections until 1945 nor won a seat (in a by-election) until July 1966. Its first general election successes were in February 1974, when it won 2 of the 36 Welsh seats and 10.8 percent of its vote. From 1979 to 2005 it generally won about 7 to 10 percent of the Welsh vote and between two and four seats in the House of Commons. In the first elections to the Welsh Assembly in 1999, the party won 30 percent of the vote and 17 seats (28 percent). Like the SNP, in the second regional assembly elections its support decline; in 2003 it won only 12 seats in the assembly. It consistently polls a much smaller percentage of its country's vote than does the SNP but wins a larger share of the seats because its electorate is much more heavily concentrated in the Welsh-speaking West and North. Its program advocates self-government for Wales, promotion of Welsh language and culture, and a sharply progressive taxation system.

See separate article on NORTHERN IRELAND for descriptions of its parties.

BRITISH NATIONAL PARTY (BNP)

The BNP was founded in 1982 by John Tyndall and other defectors from the National Front, an extremist fascist party that formed in 1967. The BNP generally nominates candidates in about 5 percent to 10 percent of all seats. Though it has never won a seat in the House of Commons (in 2005 its candidates combined to win 174,000 votes), it has elected several local councillors, particularly in areas with a large proportion of ethnic minorities. In the elections to the European Parliament in 2004, the BNP had its best performance, winning more than 800,000 votes—nearly 5 percent of the total votes cast. The party opposes immigration and racial integration. It also endorses the "voluntary" resettlement of nonwhites to "their lands of ethnic origin." Its membership is less than 1,000.

GREEN PARTY

The Ecology Party was founded in 1973 and changed its name in 1985. Its main goal is to protect the environment, but it also takes traditional leftist positions on such questions as disarmament, aid to developing countries, and redistributive economic and financial policies. It has never won more than 1 percent of the vote in parliamentary elections but reached 14.9 per-

cent for the 1989 European Parliament. In the early 21st century, it scored several electoral successes. In 2003 it won 7 percent of the party preference vote and seven seats in the Scottish Parliament. The following year it won more than 1 million votes and two seats in elections to the European Parliament. In 2005 it increased its vote share by four-tenths of 1 percent. The party also maintains representation on several local councils. "Electoralists," who want more attention given to winning elections, vie for party control with "decentralists," who emphasize extraparliamentary forms of action.

OTHER MINOR PARTIES

In addition, there are more than 150 other parties. The most successful has been the United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP), which opposes the country's membership in the European Union. In the European Parliament election of 2004, the UKIP finished third, winning 16.1 percent of the vote and 12 seats. Most minor candidates win only a handful of votes, though in recent years well-known independents, such as the popular BBC correspondent Martin Bell in 1997, have won election as independents either to the regional parliaments or to the House of Commons. Bell was the first nonparty candidate to win a seat since university seats were abolished in 1950.

Other Political Forces

Given the open democratic system within the United Kingdom, there are several institutions that exert an influence over the political process. Since the United Kingdom joined the European Economic Community (now the European Union) in the 1970s, the European issue has been central to political debate. The issue cuts across party lines and has not been a pivotal issue in general elections. It has, however, been important in European elections, in which opponents of Britain's membership in the European Union (such as the United Kingdom Independence Party) have sometimes been able to siphon votes from the major parties. Millionaires disenchanted with the position of the Conservative Party have often funded such parties. The media, particularly the BBC and the tabloid press, also have a great impact on the political process. Free from political controls, the commercial press is far from neutral (newspapers and magazines are often associated with a particularly political party or ideology) and regularly uses its position to support or oppose a particular point of view and political party.

Interests, particularly economic interests, are well organized. Corporate interests are represented through a wide variety of organizations, including the Confederation of British Industry, which has traditionally backed the Conservative Party but also lobbies Labour governments for policies beneficial to business. The Labour Party, which developed from the trade union movement in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, generally has garnered the support of most trade unionists, but in the 1980s large numbers of unionists backed the Conservative Party under Margaret Thatcher, and Labour Party reforms and policies adopted in the 1990s and the early 21st century undercut the influence of the trade unions within the party and reduced the level of support for the party from the movement. Nevertheless, the major unions, such as the General, Municipal, and Boilermakers' Union (GMB), Unison (a public sector union), and the Transport and General Workers' Union, continue to form a base of support for the Labour Party. Other interests, including (at various times) antiwar and antinuclear groups, environmental organizations, and supporters and opponents of fox hunting, are also well organized and have held demonstrations and utilized lobbying efforts to influence the government of the day.

National Prospects

Great Britain's decline in relative economic strength, international importance, social cohesion, and political and governmental efficiency seems to have been slowed and perhaps halted since the early 1980s. The excessively high inflation rate that dogged the economy for years has slackened appreciably, and the unemployment rate is consistently well below the European average. During the 1990s and the early 21st century, the country played a leading role in international crises, such as the Persian Gulf Wars in 1991 and 2003. It has also been a central player in the global war against terrorism. However, Britain has no realistic aspiration of recovering great-power status, and its ambivalent attitude toward the European Union costs it much influence there. Violence in Northern Ireland that sometimes spread to English cities was a blot on Britain's social harmony for many years but may have ended with the recent agreements.

The devolution measures of the late 1990s may have ended the persistent grumbling of the Scots and Welsh over English rule. They may also signal an end

to the rising party fragmentation and more ideological tone in political discourse that began in the late 1970s. On the other hand, there is a very pervasive public attitude of cynicism and distrust toward politics. In the past, political conflict was sometimes attenuated by the almost universal respect and affection shown toward the royal family, but even that has been badly undermined. In 2005 the UK was shocked by terrorist bombings carried out in London by Islamic militants born and raised in the UK.

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NORTHERN IRELAND

(Ulster)

By William G. Andrews, Ph.D.
Revised by Paolo Morisi



Northern Ireland is a political division of the United Kingdom consisting of the six northeastern counties (population over 1.7 million as of 2001) of the island of Ireland, most of the traditional Irish province of Ulster. Great Britain and Northern Ireland have been linked closely since the 12th century, when Henry II of England conquered large parts of Ireland. After 1537 the indigenous Irish remained Catholic, while most settlers from England and Scotland turned Protestant. During the 17th century, especially in Ulster, Catholic Irish were driven off the land, which was turned over to Protestant settlers. The 1800 British Act of Union gave Ireland representation in the British Parliament and abolished the Irish Parliament. In the 19th and early 20th centuries agitation against British rule grew throughout the island, supported mainly by Catholics. Protestants had formed the Orange Order in 1795 to advocate union with Great Britain. By 1905 the various unionist (supporters of union with Great Britain) groups united in the Ulster Unionist Council. In 1921 they blocked inclusion of Ulster in the Irish Free State. Instead, the Government of Ireland Act established a separate Northern Ireland that was governed until 1972 by a locally elected Parliament and government located at Stormont responsible to the central government in London.

Protestants dominate the six northeastern counties, but many Catholics, who are a majority in the island as a whole, have never accepted the division of Ireland. Tension between the two communities generated a militant Catholic civil rights movement in the late 1960s that erupted in widespread violence in 1969. The governments responded by strengthening the security forces and suspending certain civil liberties and procedural rights. Violence escalated to a peak of 10,628 shootings, 468 deaths, and 4,876 injuries in 1972. As a result, the British government assumed direct authority over internal security in March 1972. This precipitated the resignation of the Stormont government, dissolution of its Parliament, and assumption by London of direct control over all governmental functions. The disorder diminished under direct British rule, although by 2003 it had cost some 3,349 lives.

Successive British governments after 1972 initiated projects designed to return home rule to the province. The projects included an element of power-sharing between the two national groups in the form of a grand coalition government between nationalists and unionists and the adoption of special majorities in the local assembly. The most important of them led to the Sunningdale agreement of 1973, the Anglo-Irish agreement of 1985, and the Good Friday agreement of 1998. The first two collapsed quickly as a result of widespread opposition in the Protestant community. The last-named followed a three-year complicated process. The prime ministers of the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland agreed in 1995 on a "Framework Document" that set forth basic principles for a settlement. This led to a May 1996 election of a Northern Ireland "Forum" that, in turn, chose the representatives who negotiated the April 1998 accord. That agreement had

five major constitutional provisions. First, Northern Ireland's future constitutional status and its relationship to the Republic of Ireland were to be based on the will of its citizens. Second, a united Ireland was a legitimate political goal provided it was pursued by peaceful means. Third, Northern Ireland's current constitutional status would remain within the United Kingdom because the majority of Northern Ireland citizens favored such an arrangement. Fourth, the Irish Republic would drop its territorial claim on Northern Ireland. Fifth, the citizens of Northern Ireland would have the right to define themselves as Irish, British, or both.

In addition, three new sets of institutions were created. Relations between unionists and nationalists in Northern Ireland would be managed by a power-sharing assembly that would operate on reinforced majorities and be inclusive of representatives from all major political parties. This guaranteed that key decisions would be taken on a cross-community rather than a majority rule basis, ensuring a minority veto for major legislation. Relations between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland were to be dealt with through the creation of a North-South Ministerial Council, which would facilitate cooperation between the Northern Ireland Assembly and the Irish Parliament on a number of policy areas. As a safeguard and to guarantee continued collaboration between the two political entities, the Northern Ireland Assembly could operate only if the North-South Ministerial Council was also functioning. Relations between the United Kingdom, the Republic of Ireland, and Northern Ireland were to be based upon a British-Irish Council. This organ would include members from the British and Irish governments, as well as the devolved Parliament in Scotland and assemblies in Wales and Northern Ireland.

The Good Friday agreement also required that paramilitary groups and their party affiliates renounce political violence and embrace democratic values. In addition, an amnesty was approved for prisoners belonging to paramilitary groups. The agreement also called for the reform of Northern Ireland institutions such as the police service and the civil administration.

An all-Ireland referendum was held on May 22, 1998, to ratify the agreement. The agreement was supported by a majority of 71 percent of Northern Ireland's voters and 94 percent of Republic of Ireland voters. In Ulster the overwhelming majority of the nationalist electorate supported the agreement, while the unionist community was split in the middle between supporters and opponents of the agreement. Despite not getting full support from the Protestant community, both governments moved ahead with the implementation of the agreement.

The Northern Ireland Assembly elections were held on June 25, 1998. There were a total of 108 seats with six candidates elected by proportional representation in each of the 18 Westminster constituencies. Nationalists won 42 seats, of which 18 went to Sinn Fein (SF) and 24 went to the Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP). On the unionist side, the pro-agreement unionists won 30 seats with 28 for the Ulster Unionist Party (UUP) and 2 for the Progressive Unionist Party (PUP), while anti-agreement unionists took 28 seats, with the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) taking the majority of the opposition vote (20 seats).

The electoral result allowed for moving the process along even with a very limited two vote pro-agreement majority on the unionist side. The first meeting of the assembly was held on July 1, 1998, when David Trimble, the leader of the UUP, was elected first minister and Seamus Mallon of the SDLP was elected deputy minister.

This was followed by an agreement between the UUP and the SDLP that there would be 10 departments in the Northern Ireland Assembly and six north-south implementation bodies. Both the UUP and the SDLP were entitled to lead three executive departments, while the DUP and SF were entitled to lead two.

Following the creation of the power-sharing executive, there were two major outstanding issues that had not yet been dealt with, namely, reform of the police force and decommissioning of all paramilitary organizations. Nationalists wanted complete reform of the police force, which up to that point had very few Catholic recruits. The unionists were very dissatisfied with the IRA's refusal to fully decommission and by the fact that SF held government responsibility in the absence of IRA decommissioning.

The issue of decommissioning fractured the UUP, with a sizeable minority of that party being opposed to the continuation of the power-sharing executive and to further concessions to nationalists. The UUP pro-agreement camp was also under pressure from the opposition, the DUP, which not only rejected the agreement but also began to make electoral inroads at the expense of the UUP. In 2002 the Executive and the Assembly were suspended for the third time by the British government to stave off the resignation of David Trimble and the UUP. Since then the British government has resumed direct rule of the province. In 2003 the IRA announced that it had decommissioned some of its military equipment, but this action did not stem unionist discontent with the agreement. In addition, in the November 2003 Northern Ireland Assem-

bly elections the DUP overtook the UUP, becoming the biggest unionist party. Following the elections the British government restarted negotiations to establish a new power-sharing executive, but the DUP has so far refused to govern in a coalition with nationalists until the IRA fully decommissions and disbands (something that it promised to do in July 2005). If a new power-sharing agreement does materialize, it will have to be supported by the two extreme wings (SF and DUP) of the Northern Irish party system.

The System of Government

EXECUTIVE

The executive authority for the policy areas under the jurisdiction of the Northern Ireland Office (NIO) of the British government remains with that agency until devolution is reinstated. That ministry is headed by a cabinet member, a secretary of state who is assisted by five junior ministers. When the devolution process is reinstated, the NIO or some other ministry in the British government will administer the "excepted matters" that are to remain under direct Westminster control indefinitely and will approve or disallow Northern Ireland Assembly (NIA) legislation with respect to "reserved matters."

The Northern Ireland government, called the "Executive Committee of the Assembly," consists of a first minister, deputy first minister, and 10 departmental ministers. The two leaders are elected jointly by the Assembly on a cross-community basis that ensures, in effect, that a mainstream Protestant becomes first minister, a mainstream Catholic is deputy first minister, and both are acceptable to both communities. The rest of the government is composed so that it reflects the partisan makeup of the Assembly. The departments established in December 1998 were agriculture, culture, education and learning, enterprise, trade and development, environment, finance, health and social services, regional development, and social development. Each minister is responsible for administering a department. The members of the government are responsible collectively to the Assembly and individually to their party caucuses.

In addition, the Good Friday agreement created three executive consultation councils, two commissions, and a corporatist "Civic Forum." A North-South Ministerial Council brings together members of the Irish and Northern Irish governments to facilitate cooperation in policy areas including agriculture, education, health, environment, social security, welfare, tourism, European Union programs, fisheries, urban and rural development, and transport. A British-Irish Council is a consultative organ for representatives of the British and Irish governments and "devolved institutions in Northern Ireland, Scotland, and Wales" and the Isle of Man and the Channel Islands "to promote the harmonious and mutually beneficial development of the totality of relationships among the peoples of these islands." The British-Irish Intergovernmental Conference is composed of representatives of the U.K. and Irish Republic governments as a venue to consult on matters of mutual interest, especially with respect to Northern Ireland. An Equality Commission is responsible for promoting greater political, social, and economic equality for the Catholic community, and a Human Rights Commission has the role of advancing the protection of civil rights and liberties. The Civic Forum is a consultative body of representatives of business, trade unions, churches, and voluntary organizations concerned with social, economic, and cultural issues.

In 1998 there were delays in implementing the Good Friday agreement as unionists refused to establish the institutions of devolved government until there was progress on the issue of IRA decommissioning. Eventually the UUP was persuaded to enter into an executive with SF and the SDLP, and devolution of powers from Westminster in London to Stormont in Belfast occurred on December 2, 1999.

At the beginning of February 2000 the UUP protested against the lack of progress on decommissioning and indicated that it would resign from the executive. On February 11, 2000, the British government suspended the executive and the institutions of government in Northern Ireland and reintroduced direct rule from Westminster.

The British government restored devolution to the Northern Ireland Assembly and the power-sharing executive in May 2000 following an IRA initiative that opened up its arms dumps to international mediators. The IRA began to formally decommission in October 2001 but the UUP remained vulnerable to attack from the DUP. In 2002 the executive and Assembly were suspended again to stave off the resignation of the UUP, and direct rule was resumed.

LEGISLATURE

Of the 646 members of the British House of Commons, 18 are elected by a simple plurality from single-member constituencies in Ulster. The 2005 parliamentary election

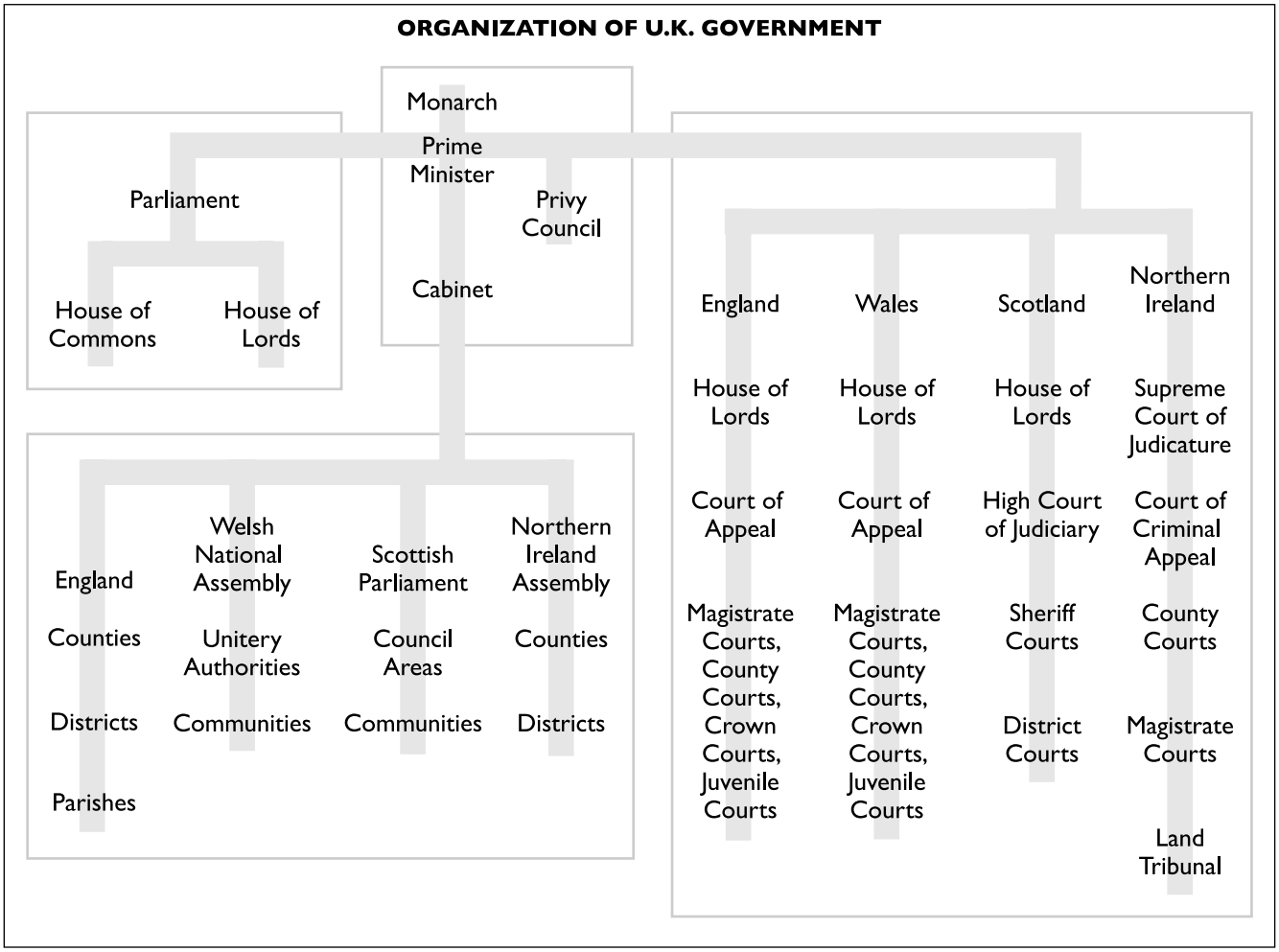
results, in percentage of the Ulster vote and seats were: DUP, 9 seats; SF, 5 seats; SDLP, 3 seats; UUP, 1 seat; and APNI, no seats.

A Northern Ireland Assembly was set up by the Northern Ireland Constitution Act of 1973 and reconstituted by the Northern Ireland Act of 1982 as a scrutinizing, consultative, and deliberative body to which executive and legislative authority would be transferred when the rival communities could agree on its form. This was assumed to mean support by 70 percent of the reconstituted Assembly membership. The first elections to the reconstituted Assembly were held in October 1982, but the body failed to produce satisfactory results and was suspended permanently in 1986. The Northern Ireland Forum was set up under the 1995 Framework Document as a popularly elective consultative assembly to oversee the negotiations that led to the Good Friday agreement.

The Assembly is a limited parliamentary body with 108 members. It exercises legislative authority in Northern Ireland for the policy areas transferred from the NIO. Also, when authorized by the NIO, it may do so for a long list of "reserved matters," including law enforcement, international trade, most forms of communication and transportation, and financial institutions. The "excepted matters" that remain permanently under the jurisdiction of Westminster include defense, the judiciary, United Kingdom and preexisting NI taxes, elections, immigration and naturalization, and the monetary system. The Good Friday agreement included provisions on the internal procedures of the Assembly to ensure that minority interests are protected. For instance, the allocation of committee chairs and memberships and ministerial portfolios must reflect party strengths. Also, all key decisions require a majority of both unionist and nationalist MPs or 60 percent of those present and voting, including at least 40 percent of each of those groups.

JUDICIARY

The three-tiered court system of Northern Ireland consists of the Supreme Court (comprising the High



Court, the Court of Appeals, and the Crown Court), the county courts, and the magistrates' courts. The Belfast agreement leaves the Northern Ireland judicial system under the direct control of the British government indefinitely.

Twenty-five petty sessions districts form eight county court divisions and four county court circuits. The lord chancellor, appointed by London, is responsible for administering all courts in Northern Ireland through the Northern Ireland Court Service and is responsible for the appointment of judges and resident magistrates. Appeals from the Court of Appeals go directly to the British House of Lords only in those matters the House or the Court think to be of overriding importance. In criminal cases, the Court must certify that a point of law of general public importance is involved. These restrictions effectively minimize the number of cases going to the House of Lords.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The local governmental system consists of six counties and 26 municipalities. Each county is governed by a lord lieutenant and a high sheriff. Each municipality has a district or borough council, ranging from 16 to 51 members. The 582 councillors are elected for four-year terms by proportional representation. Since most government power is concentrated in London without an effective intermediate regional government, any residual powers go directly to the district councils. The councils are responsible for provision of recreational, social, community, and cultural facilities and refuse collection. They nominate representatives to various bodies that administer regional functions such as library services, fire protection, and electricity supply.

They also present the views of the population on regional affairs to the appropriate section of the Secretary of State's office. The latter is meant to assure that no district suffers discrimination.

RESULTS OF 2003 NI ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS

Party	% of Vote	Number of Seats
DUP	25.71	30
SF	23.52	24
UUP	22.68	27
SDLP	16.99	18
APNI	3.67	6
INDEPENDENT	2.78	1
PUP	1.16	1
UKUP	0.82	1

Turnout 63.05%

RESULTS OF RECENT COUNCIL ELECTIONS (% OF VOTE)

	1993	1997	2001	2005
Ulster Unionist Party	29	28	23	18
Democratic Unionist Party	17	16	21	30
Social Democratic and Labour Party	22	21	19	17
Sinn Féin	13	17	21	24
Alliance Party	8	7	5	5
Others	11	11	16	6

The Electoral System

Under the Good Friday agreement, elections to the Northern Ireland Assembly use a proportional representation system with single transferable vote within the constituencies drawn for elections to the British House of Commons. Six members are chosen from each of the 18 districts. This system tends to protect the rights of minority parties, especially those representing Catholic voters. Elections to the British House of Commons use the same single-member plurality system as does the United Kingdom.

Local district elections absorb much of the energies of the political parties. Even though the powers of the district councils are not significant, these elections indicate the sentiments of the people at the grassroots level. Also, they serve as the pivot of the Irish tradition of political localism in which municipal politicians intercede with government for their constituents in return for their votes. This localism, in turn, forms the basis of provincial political organization.

Eligible voters in local elections are British subjects at least 18 years old, who were born in Northern Ireland (or have resided continuously in the United Kingdom for seven years) and have resided in the constituency or elsewhere in Northern Ireland for three months. At the polling station, each qualified voter receives an officially stamped paper ballot that lists candidates in alphabetical order. The polling officer marks the register at the voter's name to indicate that a ballot was issued. Voting is secret. The single-transferable-vote electoral system has been used since 1977. The voter may rank all candidates on the ballot. Votes not needed to elect a voter's first choice go to the voter's second choice.

To get on the ballot, a candidate must make a deposit of about $240. The populations and council sizes of the districts vary greatly. For instance, in one recent election Belfast had about 318,000 voters and 51 councillors, while Moyle had only some 15,000 voters and 16 councillors. Overall, small towns and rural areas are overrepresented in the councils. Protestant and Catholic populations, though generally concentrated in specific areas, are nearly evenly distributed along the urban-rural spectrum.

The Party System

ORIGINS OF THE PARTIES

The political parties of Northern Ireland originated in and relate to the sectarian strife of the province. The basic political cleavage of the party system is the constitutional position of Northern Ireland within the United Kingdom.

The unionist parties (Ulster Unionists, Democratic Unionists, and their spin-offs) are based in the Protestant community and favor close governmental ties with Great Britain. The nationalist parties (Social Democratic and Labor Party and Sinn Féin) are Roman Catholic and advocate the incorporation of Ulster into the Republic of Ireland. Also, the unionist parties are staunchly conservative socially and economically, while the nationalists have a pronounced leftist bent. Only the Alliance Party and the Women's Coalition appeal to members of both sectarian communities and urge a constitutional solution acceptable to both. Their social and economic policies are centrist. Party competition takes place primarily within the nationalist and unionist blocs and this fragmentation of political representation of the two main political traditions has hindered considerably the attempt to stabilize the region through power sharing. Every time that moderate unionists and nationalists seek to compromise, they find themselves outflanked by more radical parties within their bloc that mobilize voters against reconciliation. This centrifugal direction of party competition, witnessed by the rise between 2001 and 2005 of the DUP at the expense of the more moderate UUP, undermined the stability of the devolved government, causing its collapse in 2002.

There are also militant groups such as the IRA and the UDA whose actions on the ground (killings, protests, parades) have at different times increased the ideological polarization between the two communities.

THE PARTIES IN LAW

Parties are very important in Northern Ireland. The weighting of their representation in the NI Assembly is carefully regulated by the international agreement to ensure that the views of all parts of the fragmented Ulster community are fairly represented and that no plurality can impose its will at the expense of other important groups. Partisanship is the basis of all political activity and much of the social and economic organization as well. This is especially true at the local level and in the allocation of jobs, housing, street cleaning, and general public services. Local and national party structures are tightly integrated. The national leaders have great influence over candidate selection for local elections. However, they must keep in tune with the members at the local level or lose votes to another party. Ian Paisley's Democratic Unionist Party gained support after 1973 at the expense of the Official (now Ulster) Unionist Party, because many traditional OUP supporters did not perceive the party as being aggressive enough in denouncing terrorism and cooperation with the Republic. Also, the PSF (now SF) emerged as a major party in the early 1980s largely because it built an elaborate grassroots organization and appealed to the sense of injustice of the more radical members of the Catholic community. In the major parties, the party leader is selected from the elected representatives to the local councils. In minor parties, the procedure varies. Parties linked to paramilitary groups choose their leaders through "unofficial" channels, while other small parties elect leaders by vote of all dues-paying members.

CAMPAIGNING

Campaigning varies depending upon the importance of the party. They all use mass mailings, posters, rallies, attendance of candidates at local functions, television

and radio talk shows, and house-to-house canvassing. In the larger parties, the provincial leaders have nominal control over expenditures. However, since campaign funds are raised locally, the local committees have a good deal to say about how the money is spent. Splinter groups tend to exert tighter control.

Major Political Parties

ALLIANCE PARTY OF NORTHERN IRELAND (APNI OR AP)

HISTORY

The APNI was formed in 1970 by a defecting faction from the Official Unionist Party, led by Captain Terence O'Neill, some Liberals, and some members of the New Ulster Movement in reaction to the strife of the late 1960s. It has never elected an MP to Westminster, but in 1996 its then leader, John Alderdice, became a life peer with a voice in the House of Lords. It has had more success in local and provincial politics, especially in Greater Belfast. Its main purpose is to bridge the sectarian communities and promote agreement on a compromise constitutional settlement. Its peak support was 14.4 percent of the vote in 1977 council elections, but more recently it has hovered in the 3–6 percent range (5 percent in 2005). The AP was involved in the talks that led to the agreement in April 1998 and subsequently supported the "Yes" campaign in the referendum campaign in May 1998. In the Northern Ireland Assembly elections in June 1998, the party gained 6.5 percent of the vote and five seats, but it failed to gain a seat in the executive. Throughout the first term of the Assembly (1998–2003), AP remained committed to the agreement. This was illustrated in November 2001 when three of the party's assembly members were re-designated as unionists to allow for the reelection of David Trimble as first minister. In the delayed Assembly elections in November 2003 it managed to retain its six seats but its share of the vote fell to 3.68 percent.

ORGANIZATION

The AP is the least homogeneous of the four major parties. Being "nondoctrinaire," it has attracted members from both sides of the sectarian divide. The party is based on 33 geographically based associations that send six delegates each to the party council, the governing body that meets quarterly. The council appoints the party executive committee that meets frequently; there is an annual conference. Because of the sectarian nature of Ulster politics, the AP is always in danger of having the middle ground cut out from under it. Its organization tends to be strongest where the two religious communities are fairly evenly balanced in population, especially the more affluent and intellectual neighborhoods. A prime example is the integrated quarters around Queen's University, Belfast. The AP has little organization in such areas as Fermanagh and Armagh, where Republican sentiment is strong, and it is not strongly supported in heavily Loyalist areas. Its official publication is the *Alliance Newspaper* (circulation 7,000).

POLICY

The party policy is to be nondoctrinaire. The AP is a nonsectarian moderate unionist group, committed to maintaining ties with Britain. It advocates reform of Ulster's political system, but only with the consent of the people. It believes in "respect for all sections of our community" and "the widest possible participation in government and decision making." This has led it to endorse the Anglo-Irish and Good Friday agreements. It favors retaining the present social welfare program but wants the government to discourage sectarianism to improve the business climate, get people off welfare, and reduce government expenditure. The party has avoided internally divisive issues such as divorce laws.

MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY

In 2002 the APNI had approximately 4,500 members. Membership was down from 10,000 in 1981. Some of its Protestant members moved to unionist parties, while some Catholics were lost to the SDLP. The most loyal supporters of the APNI tend to be of moderate religious persuasion and from the commercial and industrial interests of Belfast or other large towns in the more prosperous northern areas. A large proportion of the members are students and faculty from Queen's University. The Alliance is the only party with a fairly even religious balance among its supporters. A 1983 survey found them to be 54 percent Protestant and 45 percent Catholic. Also, it was the only party to draw a majority of its support from the middle class, having 54 percent in that category and 46 percent from the working class.

FINANCING

Members are encouraged to contribute as much as they can afford. No fixed scale has been set. Contributions are solicited from businesses, individuals, and associations.

LEADERSHIP

Party leadership is concentrated in the 40-to-60-year-old age bracket. Party leaders since O'Neill have included Oliver John Napier (born 1935), leader 1973–84, member NT Forum 1995; John Cushnahan (born 1948), leader 1984–87, general secretary 1974–82; John Lord Alderdice of Knock (born 1955), psychiatrist, leader 1987–98, interim speaker NIA 1998–99; Sean Neeson, leader 1998–2001, NIA 1998– ; Seamus Close, deputy leader, NIA 1998– ; David Ford, leader 2001– , general secretary 1990–2001, member NIA 1998– ; and Eileen Bell, deputy leader 2001– , member NIA 1998– .

PROSPECTS

The conflict in Northern Ireland appears too deeply rooted to permit a nonsectarian party like the Alliance to flourish. It faces a virtually insoluble dilemma. When conflict and violence are rife, the communities are polarized and conciliation is extremely difficult. On the other hand, when the larger parties moderate their stands and move toward a resolution of their differences, they become more attractive to moderate voters because they wield more power and influence. Its appeal seems doomed to be restricted to a largely intellectual, middle-to-upper-class urban clientele, a small minority.

DEMOCRATIC UNIONIST PARTY (DUP)

HISTORY

The DUP was founded as the Protestant Unionist Associations in 1969 by Reverend Ian Paisley and the then MP for Shankill, Desmond Boal, who had been expelled from the unionist parliamentary party.

It was formed specifically to oppose the politics of the government of Terence O'Neill of the Ulster Unionists, whose attitude toward the Republic was viewed by Paisley and Boal as too conciliatory. In an April 1970 by-election Paisley defeated O'Neill for a seat in the Stormont Parliament. Although Boal was the first party chairman (1971–74), Paisley was the real leader from the beginning. The DUP increased in strength rapidly from its founding to win 27 percent of the vote in the 1981 local elections. In the November 2003 Northern Ireland Assembly elections the DUP pulled ahead of the UUP gaining 25.71 percent of the vote and 30 seats in becoming the biggest unionist party. With subsequent defections from its main political rival, the DUP gained three additional seats in January 2004. In addition, the DUP has nine members in Parliament at Westminster as of 2005.

The DUP has traditionally led the opposition to power sharing between unionists and nationalists and has called for a ban of SF from the political process. During the first term of the Northern Ireland Assembly (1998–2003) the DUP opposed the pro-agreement unionist camp and obstructed the implementation of the agreement.

Since the 2003 elections the British and Irish governments have worked to recompose the power-sharing executive, but the DUP has so far been opposed to an agreement with nationalists.

ORGANIZATION

The party structure is based on local branches for each of the 18 Westminster constituencies. They elect delegates to a central delegates' assembly, which is dominated by Paisley. The DUP party structure also relies on the support of Dr. Paisley's Free Presbyterian Church, a Protestant congregation present throughout Northern Ireland that has often been strongly anti–Roman Catholic.

POLICY

The main plank in the DUP program is militant and adamant opposition to any moves toward integrating Ulster into the Republic of Ireland or involving the Republic, overtly or covertly, in the affairs of Northern Ireland. According to Paisley, "If the Crown in Parliament decreed to put Ulster into a United Ireland, we would be disloyal to Her Majesty if we did not resist such a surrender to our enemies." The party strategy to avoid that capitulation is support for expeditious devolution with power sharing with the moderate nationalists of the SDLP but wants to exclude SF until the IRA has fully decommissioned and disbanded. The DUP supports welfare spending, especially when Protestants are the beneficiaries. It recognizes that the depressed Ulster economy needs government support but blames the weak economy on the Catholics. (Proportionately more Catholics are on welfare, but this is because tradition has barred them from many areas of employment.) Many DUP platform points are similarly anti-Catholic.

MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY

In 1979 the DUP had approximately 40,000 members. By 1981 membership had increased to 44,000. In 2003 it was estimated that the DUP had over 55,000 members. The DUP has been winning support because many

voters are losing faith with the UUP, believing that the latter is too compromised with nationalists.

The DUP was originally the most homogeneous of the four major parties and appealed primarily to rural-based, traditional Protestants. Originally the DUP's bedrock of support was the congregation of the fundamentalist Free Presbyterian Church headed by Dr. Paisley. Currently, the party has managed to retain the fundamentalist Protestant element while also drawing support among more secular working-class and middle-class urban voters. The DUP's electoral growth can largely be attributed to Peter Robinson, the deputy leader, who has worked very hard at strengthening the party organization especially in urban constituencies such as East Belfast. A 1993 survey gave it a composition of 70 percent working class and 30 percent middle class. Also its supporters were 95 percent Protestants, 2 percent Catholic, and 3 percent other. More recently, the DUP composition is approximately 60 percent working class and 40 percent middle class.

FINANCING

No exact information is available. However, the general mechanism for soliciting funds is similar to that of the UUP, and member contributions are close to 100 percent of operating revenue.

LEADERSHIP

It leaders are Ian Paisley (born 1926), moderator of the Martyr's Memorial Free Presbyterian Church, MP 1970– , member, European Parliament 1979–2004, NIA 1973–75, 1982–86, 1998– ; Peter David Robinson (born 1948), deputy leader, former general secretary, MP 1979– , member NIA 1982–86, 1998– ; and Nigel Dodds, secretary, member NIA 1998– .

PROSPECTS

For more than three decades the DUP aimed to become the leading unionist party by competing fiercely with the UUP to gain the support of the majority of the Protestant population. The DUP has frequently played the "No Surrender" card and discouraged any form of cooperation with nationalists and the Irish Republic. It has also tried to outflank the UUP by embracing more extreme anti-Catholic policies. This approach brought further electoral success for the DUP when at the elections to the Northern Ireland Assembly in November 2003 it pulled ahead of the UUP.

The DUP refuses to speak directly to SF, but reviving the Good Friday agreement will require a deal between the two biggest parties (SF and the DUP). Ian Paisley has vowed to resist compromise, while elements within the DUP, led by deputy leader Peter Robinson, are believed to be more favorable to some kind of compromise with nationalists and to get back to devolution. This group represents a more secularized and well-educated, middle-class faction of the DUP. Paisley is old and will probably retire at some point, opening up a leadership contest in the DUP. The party is strong in Ulster, but has little influence over the British government. Paisley's relationships with successive British prime ministers have been dismal, and this has contributed to the DUP's lack of political clout. Successive British governments have seen Paisley as a local firebrand always ready to stoke the sectarian fires rather than a party leader that could be dealt with.

Its electoral strength combined with its ability to attract the vote of disgruntled UUP party members makes the DUP the pivotal party in Northern Ireland. Without DUP support Northern Ireland is unlikely to see a return to devolved government. Recently the DUP has made itself more appealing to UUP voters by adopting a more moderate stance. The party has also tried to improve its relationship with the British government by toning down its anti-Catholicism and by presenting, in May 2004, its blueprint for moving the stalled peace process forward. Its goal is to serve as the key broker of the interests of Northern Protestants.

SINN FÉIN (SF)

HISTORY

The Sinn Féin (Gaelic for "we ourselves") is the legal, political arm of the Irish Republican Army (see below). Until 1981 the IRA abstained from political, especially electoral, action on the grounds that only military force could "drive the British from Ireland" and that participation in the politics or governments of Ireland (north or south) was inconsistent with its position that those governments were illegitimate. In April 1981 IRA militant Bobby Sands won a parliamentary by-election while on a hunger strike in a British prison. He died of starvation less than a month later, and his election agent won the consequent by-election. Nine other prisoners died before the strike was called off in October.

Buoyed by their success in the by-elections, by the wave of sympathy that the deaths evoked in some parts of the Catholic community of Northern Ireland, and, perhaps, by the realization that the hunger strike had failed to achieve political objectives, young and aggressive leaders of the Ulster wing of the IRA gained control of the organization at its annual conference in November and pushed through a basic policy change.

The SF would now participate in elections in both parts of Ireland, but its successful candidates would abstain from assuming office. Later that ban was relaxed to permit full involvement in the work of local councils in Catholic municipalities of Northern Ireland, the European Parliament, and, finally, at Westminster. During the round of negotiations that led to the Good Friday agreement, SF was fully engaged and, following that major event, it was also able to get the IRA to decommission some of its weapons, a measure that only a decade ago seemed highly improbable. This policy shift toward compromise and moderation has allowed SF to broaden its appeal. In recent years SF's electoral support has grown markedly. The party overtook the SDLP as the leading representative of northern nationalism in the 2001 Westminster general elections and made further gains at the expense of the SDLP in the 2003 Northern Ireland Assembly elections.

The party is still committed to a united Ireland, but it has embraced constitutional means to achieve its goal.

ORGANIZATION

The policy-making body in SF is the annual conference composed of delegates from its constituent branches and the regional councils in Northern Ireland and in the Republic of Ireland. At the conference all major decisions are taken including the election of the party president, the national officers, and the national executive. The national executive is a 10-member body responsible for the SF's administrative affairs and policy making.

The SF has made strenuous efforts since 1981 to organize an elaborate grassroots structure in Northern Ireland. For instance, it is said to have the best political machine in Belfast. In particular, it has established "advice centers" in Catholic areas to assist residents in dealing with the government. It endeavors with considerable success to show concern and ability to solve such everyday problems as housing, pensions, and welfare aid. On the other hand, it does nothing political in Protestant neighborhoods and very little in integrated communities.

POLICY

The overriding goal of the SF is to establish a unified, democratic, neutral, Irish republic. Historically, it argued that this required armed revolution to drive out the British and overthrow the constitutional government of the Republic of Ireland. However, in recent decades it has evolved into a somewhat less radical and violent organization. Initially, this change was designed to "broaden and popularize" support for its armed struggle. In one famous formulation, "With a ballot in one hand and an Armalite [rifle] in the other, we can take power in Ireland." This led, first, to concentration of its violence on British and Ulster security forces rather than on individuals and, then, to a cease-fire in 1994 and participation in the process that led to the Good Friday agreement and its implementation. Cease-fire did not, however, mean disarmament, and the policy of the SF and IRA was to refuse to give up arms until that agreement was fully implemented and the two-year deadline it specified was met. In 2005 the IRA finally agreed to give up its arms.

Along with the softening of its military stance has come some moderation of its political agenda. It began as a Socialist party. Before 1981 it pursued openly a practice of "immiserization," deliberately sabotaging the economic and social programs of the government to sap the British treasury and discourage capitalists. Since then its position has been more constructive, advocating positive measures and criticizing specific shortcomings of the government. Now its professed goals include the achievement of Irish unity and the establishment of a left-of-center political coalition in the Irish Republic that will adopt a more progressive taxation system. Also, unlike the other major Ulster parties, it abjures a religious commitment, although its leaders are all practicing Catholics.

MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY

Membership is a cloudy concept for a semiclandestine organization such as the IRA/SF, especially as it has close affinity to Lenin's "professional revolutionary" cadre structure. Its supporters are the most radical and disaffected elements in the Catholic community, especially in those areas where Catholics are concentrated most heavily and are poorest, such as West Belfast. One survey showed them to be 98 percent Catholic and 2 percent "other," with none at all professing Protestantism. Also, it is one of the most solidly working class of the Ulster parties, 60 percent in that category and 40 percent middle class. Another striking characteristic of the SF voters is their background of political abstention. The initial SF rise did not erode SDLP support appreciably, contrary to early expectations, and coincided with an increase in turnout. This suggests that it originally appealed mainly to Catholic electors who had found none of the older parties sufficiently attractive to warrant a vote. After 1994 SF began to compete for moderate voters that typically supported the SDLP. In the 2003 Northern Ireland Assembly elections, SF for the first time received more votes than the SDLP,

becoming the dominant nationalist party. Currently, SF's support is more diversified than in the past. It is still supported by a majority of young people and workers, but it also appeals to older middle-class voters. It has also made considerable progress in the Republic of Ireland, winning five seats to the Irish Parliament in 2003. The aim of the party is to grow the mass base in both the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland.

FINANCES

SF finances are shrouded by even more mystery than its membership rolls. It appears to be the most affluent of the Ulster parties, despite its working-class character. For instance, it outspent all the other parties in the 1982 NIA elections, despite fielding fewer than half as many candidates as some of them. Also, its local organizations seem well funded, to the point of staffing about a dozen "advice centers" within two years of their founding. Probably, the SF relies much less than its rivals on such traditional sources of party funds as dues and donations. It does not have formal trade union subsidies. On the other hand, its unconventional sources seem abundant. Its foreign affiliates send money. Although SF has broken ties with one of its historical major sources of funding, the Irish Northern Aid Committee, which now backs the Continuity IRA, the party has forged new ties to wealthy Irish-American organizations. In addition, as a result of the IRA cease-fire, SF is now allowed by the U.S. State Department to raise money in the United States through corporate-sponsored functions and other fund-raising events.

LEADERSHIP

Sinn Féin leaders include Gerry Adams (born 1948), president 1983– , joint vice president 1978–83, member NIA 1982–86, 1998– , MP 1983–92, 1997– , allegedly IRA chief of staff 1976–78; Ruairi O'Bradaigh, president 1969–83, "old guard" leader; Martin McGuinness, chief of staff 1978– , member NIA 1982–86, 1998– , MP 1997– , "young Turk"; Danny Morrison, publicity director, member NIA 1982–86, "young Turk"; and David O'Connell, joint vice president, former chief of staff, "old guard."

PROSPECTS

The SF seems well established as a major force on the Northern Ireland political scene. Its initial radicalism was a source of ideological polarization, but in recent years its efforts toward demilitarizing the conflict have facilitated Anglo-Irish efforts to bring peace to the province.

SF's recent electoral successes, both in Northern Ireland, where it is now the leading nationalist party, and in the Republic of Ireland, make a return to violence by the IRA very unlikely. Its shift toward constitutional politics is perhaps one of the key factors making SF appealing to Northern Ireland voters. Its ability to provide voters access to many social services through the party's advice centers and its mass membership base are two other key success factors for SF. As the leading agent for the nationalist community, SF provides an essential building bloc for the foundation of a permanent solution to the "Northern Ireland problem."

SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC AND LABOUR PARTY (SDLP)

HISTORY

The SDLP was founded in 1970 as a moderate Catholic movement, absorbing most of the members and supporters of the Nationalist, Republican Labour, and National Democratic parties. The party was started by seven members of the Northern Ireland government: Gerald Fitt of the Republican Labour Party; three independent MPs—John Hume, Ivan Cooper, and Paddy O'Hanlon; a Nationalist MP; a Northern Ireland Labour Party MP; and Paddy Wilson. Fitt was leader, Hume deputy leader, and Paddy Fox chair of the executive.

It shares with Sinn Féin the ultimate goal of unifying Ireland but favors a more conciliatory and gradual approach than does the SF. For three decades the SDLP has been the principal representative of the Catholic population. It has avoided major schisms, but there have been numerous minor arguments and splits over tactics. For example, the controversy over whether to accept Britain's 1979 call for a constitutional conference on Northern Ireland led to the resignation of Gerald Fitt as party leader and his replacement by John Hume. The change had no noticeable effect on the party's general direction, although Fitt quit the party and held onto his Westminster seat.

The party's popularity declined after 1977, especially after the SF began to take electoral politics seriously in 1981. This was due largely to the increasing polarization of the political scene. In the 1990s the SDLP and specifically its leader John Hume sought to develop an agreement with SF in an attempt to establish a common strategy for peace. The Hume-Adams proposals were delivered to the two governments in 1993 and were extremely important in forming the

peace process agenda on which the Good Friday agreement of April 1998 was based.

For his efforts to bring peace, John Hume received the 1998 Martin Luther King Jr. Peace Prize and shared the Nobel Peace Prize with David Trimble. In 2001 Hume retired as leader of the SDLP and was replaced by Mark Durkan. The new leadership had to deal with SF's electoral resurgence. In 2003 the SDLP polled very badly in the Northern Ireland Assembly elections, winning only 17 percent of the vote and 18 seats, and lost its leadership position as the main representative of Northern Irish nationalism.

ORGANIZATION

The organizational basis of the SDLP is the local branch. In the 1970s the SDLP had a vibrant party organization that boasted more than 65 local branches. In the 1990s the elected representatives took a more prominent role within the party while the branch level organization began to decay. It is estimated that as of the early 2000s the SDLP has less than 20 party branches. The leadership of the party now maintains that in order to reverse electoral decline the SDLP needs to strengthen its branch organization and increase the party membership.

In urban areas such as West Belfast the SDLP canvassing efforts pale in comparison to those of SF both in terms of the number of available campaign workers and advertising expenditures.

The Executive Committee is the supreme decision-making organ of the SDLP responsible for policy development and for financial and organizational matters. The committee is composed of the leader, the deputy leader, the youth and women representatives, six party officers, and 10 delegates elected at the annual conference.

The SDLP belongs to the Socialist International and the Confederation of Socialist Parties of the European Union. It cooperates with the Irish Congress of Trade Unions and belongs to the Council of Labour, an all-Ireland association of labor parties and trade unions.

POLICY

The SDLP favors power sharing between Protestants and Catholics and between Ulster and the Irish Republic. Its stated goal is "reunification by consent" and it calls its program "constitutional nationalism." This presupposes that the party will someday build a strong base among the Protestant electorate, but the party is divided on the issue of appealing to Protestants. It is committed to socioeconomic reform, that is, improving the lot of both Catholic and Protestant workers. It supports constitutional reform strongly. Its primary political objective is to devise a power-sharing coalition between nationalists and unionists that governs in an equitable way and respects both cultural traditions. The SDLP also calls for a strong institutional link between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland to oversee the gradual political integration of the island.

Since devolved government collapsed in 2002, the SDLP has been the strongest advocate of the return to devolution. It has made several proposals to the British government in order to reinstate the power-sharing coalition.

SF's electoral progression has forced the SDLP to adopt tough nationalist positions to defend its support in the Catholic community. Thus, it has abandoned a mere internal solution within the British framework and has insisted that the active participation of the Republic of Ireland in Ulster's affairs is essential. The SDLP has also been strongly opposed to political violence and has spoken very firmly against IRA violence.

MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY

In 1976 the SDLP had 6,000 members, the smallest membership of the major parties. More recent figures are not available, but reliable estimates put the figure at about the same. SDLP leaders blame this low figure on the increased polarization of the political scene.

The SDLP supporters are predominantly middle class (more than 55 percent), and Catholic intellectuals are its most loyal supporters. The blue-collar membership has tended to remain steady, but it is the most likely group to bolt the party as polarization intensifies.

The party has appealed for labor union support, but since the unions are overwhelmingly Protestant and Loyalist, these appeals fall on deaf ears. Its strongest areas of support are Londonderry, South Down, and Newry Armagh, all areas with large Catholic populations. Its supporters are 96 percent Catholic and only 4 percent Protestant.

FINANCING

The financial structure of the SDLP is very different from that of the other main parties. Annual membership fees for individuals are about $2.40. Because of the small membership, this provides only a minuscule portion of operating expenses. The "troubles" have dampened personal canvassing and necessitated appeals for donations through expensive advertisements in daily newspapers. The largest source of funds comes from donations from a small group of executive and professional expatriate Ulstermen living in

Dublin. Other individuals in the Irish Republic also contribute. Because so much of its money comes from the Republic, the party is restricted in commenting on matters in the Republic and arouses suspicion among Protestants that it may only be a "front organization" for Southern interests.

LEADERSHIP

SDLP leaders include Gerald Fitt (born 1926), founding leader 1970–79, deputy chief minister, NI Executive 1974, MP Republican Labour 1966–70, SDLP 1970–79, Socialist 1979–83, Independent MP candidate 1983; John Hume (born 1937), deputy leader 1970–79, leader 1979–2001, MP 1983–2001, member NIA 1969–72, 1982–86, and 1998–2003, European Parliament 1979–2004; Seamus Mallon (born 1939), deputy party leader 1979–2001, member NIA 1973–86 and 1998–2003, NIA deputy first minister 1998–2001, MP 1986–2001; Mark Durkan (born 1960), party leader 2001– , member NIA 1998– , NIA deputy first minister 2001–2002; and Alasdair McDonnell, deputy leader 2004– , member NIA 1998– .

PROSPECTS

The SDLP seeks radical change through moderate means and can find support only within the Catholic community. This was difficult enough before the SF began to compete electorally. Now, the SDLP must also show that its approach promises greater success than the extremism of the SF. So far, it has fared well. However, the SDLP's commitment to a peaceful nationalist solution makes it heavily dependent on forces beyond its control, especially the ability of the British and Irish governments to work expeditiously toward an accommodative resolution acceptable to most Ulster Catholics. Ironically, the party's leadership in the successful effort to negotiate the Good Friday agreement did not redound to its electoral benefit. However, it remains one of the principal Catholic parties and, thus, an essential element in every important political move and solution.

ULSTER UNIONIST PARTY (UUP)

HISTORY

This party (ex-Official Unionist Party) dominated Ulster from 1921 until the defection of Ian Paisley and his DUP followers in 1970. Since then, the split in the unionist forces has reduced it to being the largest of four parties that are fairly similar in size. The party originated in pre-partition times and was the strongest element in the unionist movement. From 1921 until the introduction of direct rule from London, it provided all the governments of Northern Ireland and always held a majority of the 52 seats in the old NI Parliament.

It usually held 10 of Ulster's 12 seats in the British House of Commons. From pre-"state" times until 1985 it was formally affiliated with the British Conservative Party, entitled to send full voting representatives to party conferences. It relied on the Conservative Party to support Ulster's link with Great Britain. Since 1985 the relationship between the UUP and the Conservatives has been very strained. Unionists have always expected to be consulted on Northern Ireland policy by the British government in return for UUP support for Conservative Party policies in the House of Commons. When in 1985 the British government signed the Anglo-Irish agreement without consulting the UUP, James Molyneaux, the then UUP leader, withdrew his party from the National Union of Conservative and Unionist Associations. Relationships between the two parties have not improved since. The WP remained closely united until the rise of alternative forms of unionism from 1970 to 1973 (e.g., Democratic Unionist Party, Alliance Party, Vanguard Movement). When power was devolved to the Northern Ireland Assembly in 1998, David Trimble, the UUP party leader, became first minister of the Northern Ireland Executive. He remained committed to the implementation of the agreement despite strong internal dissent. Trimble's decision to take government responsibility prior to complete decommissioning by the IRA gave rise to an intense fight for control of UUP party policy between pro- and anti-agreement unionists. Trimble managed to survive as party leader until 2005, despite leading the UUP to several electoral defeats. In January 2004 Jeffrey Donaldson, an UUP MP, and his followers resigned from the UUP and joined the DUP. Currently, for the first time in its history, the UUP is no longer the primary representative of Ulster unionism, losing the 2003 Northern Ireland Assembly elections to the DUP.

ORGANIZATION

Traditionally, the UUP has been highly homogeneous (Protestant pro-partition) with strict control exerted by the party leadership. The leadership has always placed very high importance on unity: anyone suspected of opposition was expelled. During its 50 years in office, it acquired influence over the more important industries (shipbuilding and engineering), and members suspected of disloyalty could lose their jobs as well as their party affiliation.

The UUP is governed by the 900-member Ulster Unionist Council, which meets at least annually and includes representatives from 17 constituency associations; women's, youth, student, and local councillor organizations; and the Orange Order. The council elects the leader and other officers (president, four vice presidents, four honorary secretaries, and treasurer). An executive committee, with representatives from the same units, oversees management of the party between councils. Its chairman and vice chairman are ex officio members of the "officer group." An annual conference is open to all members of the party.

POLICY

Currently the UUP tends to have within its ranks two main policy factions. Some within the party argue for full integration of Northern Ireland with the United Kingdom. This faction, which in the 1980s was represented by the British politician Enoch Powell, is now a minority group within the UUP. Others, such as former party leader David Trimble, support devolved government and power sharing with nationalists. The Trimble faction stands for three basic policies:

1. There cannot be any change to Northern Ireland's constitutional status without the consent of its people.
2. A devolved government should be reestablished with joint unionist and nationalist participation.
3. Former paramilitary groups should fully decommission their weapons if they wish to participate in devolved government.

In 1998 the UUP and the SDLP were the motors that drove the negotiations to their successful conclusion and the formation of the Northern Ireland Executive. This represents a reversal of its traditional opposition to "power sharing" with the nationalists and to any involvement of the Republic of Ireland in Ulster's affairs. It remains fiercely committed to the strict imposition of law and order and to the decommissioning of the militias on both sides. It is lukewarm toward the European Union. It trumpets its commitments to mainline Protestant principles and takes a moderate stand on economic and social policies. As the people of Ulster have become increasingly weary of the civil strife, the UUP has overcome its longtime reluctance to participate in the Anglo-Irish peace initiatives.

MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY

According to the most recent available information, the UUP has approximately 75,000 members. UUP officials claim to stand for the solid Protestant middle-class artisans and shopkeepers and factory workers. The party's 1983 composition was 57 percent working class to 43 percent middle class. Yet, the DUP is proportionately more working class and the UUP is widely seen as a vehicle for the interests of the Protestant upper class. Its critics say that it has rallied the Protestant workers in support of upper-class interests by using the party's power to improve their lot compared with that of the Catholics. Its supporters are 98 percent Protestant and 2 percent Catholic.

The most loyal supporters are likely to be Protestants who own sizable businesses and have direct family ties to other sections of Great Britain. The party has its greatest support in Protestant counties such as Antrim and its least in such Catholic counties as Fermanagh. Many blue-collar and some self-employed members are "floaters"; that is, if they perceive the UUP to be doing anything that might damage their immediate economic interests, they switch to another unionist group. Among organized interest groups, the Orange Order has very close ties with the UUP. All but three ministers in the last 50 years of NI governments were Orange Order members.

This staunchly unionist organization has had a very strong hold over the UUP. If a UUP member started to moderate his position, he was expelled from the Orange Order and thus rendered ineffective in the party. Mainline Presbyterians and Free Masons are two other major UUP constituencies. In recent years the close relationship between the UUP and the Orange Order has weakened a bit due to the latter's uneasiness about the Good Friday agreement. As a consequence, the UUP has been losing electoral support. Some members of the Orange Order now support the DUP, while working-class voters are also flocking to the DUP and other loyalist groups. The UUP has been able to retain support from middle-class unionists in the more traditional and deferential Protestant rural constituencies, but it has been unsuccessful in gaining upper-middle-class support in Belfast and Londonderry. This group has traditionally supported the moderate AP.

FINANCING

All members are expected to donate a fixed proportion of their income to the party. Before the suspension of provincial government, almost all employed people were expected to donate to the party.

Contributions to the party have always amounted to nearly 60 percent of operating revenue, with membership dues covering the remainder. Before 1972 it

was hard to discern where voluntary contributions ended and unofficial government support began.

LEADERSHIP

The Unionist Party leadership is roughly in the 40-to-60 age bracket (40-to-49, about 31 percent; 50-to-59, about 29 percent). The party leadership comes from the "squireocracy," that is, traditional landowners or wealthy industrialists. The party leader controls the formulation of policy.

Recent former leaders include Captain Terence O'Neill 1963–69; James Chichester-Clark 1969–71; Arthur Brian Faulkner 1971–74; Henry William West 1974–79; James Henry Molyneaux 1979–95; and David Trimble, 1995–2005.

Its present leaders are Sir Reg Empey, leader 2005– , member NIA 1998– ; Ken Maginnis, deputy leader 1995–2001, member NIA 1998–2003, MP 1983–2001; Josias Cunningham, president.

PROSPECTS

The UUP is torn between the intransigence required to keep a large part of its natural constituency from defecting to the DUP and its need to respond positively to the widespread desire in Britain and in sections of the Protestant community for a conciliatory settlement with Catholics and an end to communal violence.

The British government has relied upon the UUP to represent the moderate voice of unionism as opposed to the DUP's refusal to settle with Catholics. In 1998 the UUP leadership had understood that too much recalcitrance by Protestants against an agreement with Catholics could drive British patience to the breaking point and had therefore assumed government responsibility. This moderate shift in political strategy damaged the UUP and undermined its support among hard-line unionists. The UUP, whose current slogan is "Simply British," faces huge hurdles. It needs to win back the support of disgruntled unionists. It also needs to appeal to hard-line and moderate unionists by showing that the DUP's unwillingness to compromise is damaging to the long-term prospects of the union between Northern Ireland and the United Kingdom.

Minor Political Parties

PROGRESSIVE UNIONIST PARTY (PUP)

A small loyalist party with links to the paramilitary Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF), the PUP was formed in 1979 from the ashes of the Independent Unionist Group. Hugh Smyth was one of its founding members.

The PUP was instrumental in getting the UVF to call a cease-fire in 1994. It contested the elections to the Northern Ireland Forum in 1996 and won two seats. PUP representatives were involved in the negotiations that led to the Good Friday agreement in April 1998 and subsequently supported the "Yes" campaign in the referendum to endorse the agreement.

In the elections to the Northern Ireland Assembly in 1998, the PUP won two seats and during the first term of the Assembly between 1998 and 2003 the party remained strongly committed to the agreement. It supported the power-sharing executive providing two key votes to the beleaguered pro-agreement unionist camp.

Although the PUP strongly supports the union between Ulster and Great Britain, it has also been strongly critical of the DUP for its opposition to share power with nationalists. The PUP appeals primarily to working-class Protestants and favors left-of-center policies. Its core support is found primarily in Belfast and especially in the Protestant Shankill Road area.

In April 2002 David Ervine was chosen to replace Hugh Smyth as leader of the PUP and led the party into the November 2003 Northern Ireland Assembly elections, where it managed to win one seat and 1.2 percent of the vote. The PUP is managed by a four-member executive committee and has a membership of 1,500 primarily young, male, working-class activists.

UNITED KINGDOM UNIONIST PARTY (UKUP)

The party was formed in 1995 by Robert McCartney, a former member of the UUP, who won a by-election in June 1995 to become a Member of Parliament for the constituency of North Down. The main political objective of the UKUP is to maintain the union between Northern Ireland and Great Britain in addition to campaigning for Northern Ireland to become more closely integrated with the rest of the United Kingdom. The UKUP was opposed to the Good Friday agreement of 1998 and actively campaigned for a "No" vote in the referendum campaign. At the elections to the Northern Ireland Assembly in June 1998 it won five seats. Then in December 1998 disagreements over future party strategy between the party leader, McCartney, and his colleagues led to a split developing within the ranks of the UKUP. As a result, four of the party's Assembly members left to form the Northern Ireland Unionist Party (NIUP) accusing McCartney of being too conciliatory with nationalists. In the Westminster

general elections of June 2001 McCartney failed to be reelected as an MP but did succeed in being returned to the Northern Ireland Assembly in November 2003.

OTHER MINOR PARTIES

The Northern Ireland Women's Coalition was founded in 1996 as a nonsectarian conciliatory movement to mobilize Northern Irish women to support the peace process. Its founders, Pearl Sagar and Monica McWilliams, were elected to the NI Forum and McWilliams and Jane Morice to the NIA with 1.6 percent of the vote. In the November 2003 Northern Ireland Assembly elections the coalition polled very badly, losing its two seats. It won 0.47 percent in 1997. Tiny Labour, Green, and Conservative parties exist but almost never win seats in elections across the province.

Other Political Forces

ORANGE ORDER

The Orange Order was founded in 1795 and is the largest Protestant organization in Northern Ireland. When the Unionist Party formed in 1886, the seven founders were all Orangemen. Many members of the British Conservative Party are also Orangemen, and this made for strong ties between the Conservative Party and the Unionist Party; there is a lodge in the British House of Commons. The Order strongly opposes power sharing and anything else they think may lessen Protestant control of the state machinery. Although the Order remains close to the UUP, the rise of the DUP in the 1970s forced it to adopt a neutral stance between the parties. Some of the Order's members are supporters of the DUP. The Order is primarily committed to unionism, not to any particular party. The position of the Orange Order was summed up by James Craig, a former North Ireland prime minister, in 1932: "I am an Orangeman first and prime minister and a member of the Northern Ireland Parliament second." The Orange Order is one of the main organizers of a very important, unique Ulster activity: political parades. Various sectarian societies sponsor as many as 3,300 parades of their members a year, often marching through hostile neighborhoods, to demonstrate their political clout. Most parades sponsored by the Orange Order are peaceful but a few parades through Catholic areas (especially in Drumcree) have sparked intense conflict in recent years. The Orange Order, determined to march through Catholic areas, has engaged in violent conflict with the security forces, an indication of the deterioration of the relationships between Ulster Protestants and the British state since the 1998 Good Friday agreement. The Orange Order currently has between 80,000 to 100,000 members and is led by the Grand Master Robert Saulters. The majority of Orange Order members have campaigned vigorously against power sharing between unionists and nationalists. The opposition of the Order to the Good Friday agreement has had a very negative impact upon the relationship between the Protestant lodge and the UUP. Both organizations were strongly intertwined for many decades but in the last three years more and more Orange Order members have abandoned the UUP in favor of the DUP.

IRISH REPUBLICAN ARMY (IRA)

The IRA has played an active role in opposing partition since the 1920s. In 1970 it split into two sections over the issue of how to achieve reunification. The Official Irish Republican Army (OIRA) stresses reformist policies with the ultimate goal of a Marxist state. It works through neighborhood committees to improve housing, schooling, and so on. The OIRA believes in uniting Ireland but rejects violence as a means to that end, working legally. After the split in 1970, most of the IRA membership went with the Irish Republican Army (IRA). The members of IRA are purists whose only goal is the establishment of a united Ireland. They have been responsible for most of the violence committed against the security forces. Discipline in the IRA is strict. Kneecap smashing and assassination are the ultimate sanctions.

Even while the IRA abstained from participation in the political process before 1981, it had a great deal of influence over that process. Catholic politicians who appear overly moderate fear for their lives. In addition, the IRA murders Protestants in retaliation for murders of Catholics. It is difficult to gauge IRA support. It is estimated that at the height of violence in the early 1970s the IRA reached a peak of 1,500 members and it is believed that at the time of the 1994 cease-fire membership was approximately 500.

The reduced membership was the result of profound changes to the organization introduced in 1979 in order to develop a "cell structure" that was more difficult to infiltrate by the security forces. In the 1990s the IRA relied on a tight group of volunteers as opposed to a large and less controllable and disciplined organization. Presently, it is believed that the IRA has 40 members. Since 1981 the IRA has sponsored the SF as its legal, political arm (see above). IRA support was

critical to the success of the Good Friday agreement. The IRA called a cease-fire on August 31, 1994, to allow SF to join the peace negotiations. The cease-fire was broken by the IRA in 1996 because the organization believed that there had been a lack of political progress in Northern Ireland. The IRA blamed the recalcitrant Conservative Party government of John Major because its very slim parliamentary majority made it dependent on UUP votes in the House of Commons to approve major legislation. When the Labour Party of Tony Blair won an overwhelming majority in 1997, the IRA called a second cease-fire. This enabled SF to join the negotiations that led to the Good Friday agreement in 1998. In 2001 the IRA made its first of three announcements concerning the decommissioning of some of its weaponry. However, some of the more militant members defected from the IRA and continued with sporadic acts of violence such as the August 1998 bombing that killed 28 civilians in Omagh. They adopted such names as Real IRA and Continuity IRA. In July 2005 the IRA finally announced a formal end to its use of violence to achieve its political goals.

ULSTER DEFENSE ASSOCIATION (UDA)

The UDA is the largest Protestant paramilitary organization. Founded in 1971, it had approximately 30,000 members at its peak in 1972. By 1980 membership had dropped to about 10,000. The UDA is an umbrella organization for the many local defense associations that had been formed in Belfast and Londonderry to fight the IRA. These defense associations are tightly controlled, and local intragroup power struggles wasted much of the groups' energy. Membership in the UDA is drawn largely from blue-collar workers in the 32-to-39 age bracket. It created a political arm in the New Ulster Political Research Group (NUPRG), which advocates independence from Great Britain and the establishment of a separate state in Northern Ireland. The political group had a very small following and disbanded in 1981. Its current strength is probably under 1,000 members with a few dozen actives in the Ulster Freedom Fighters (UFF), a cover name used by the UDA. The UDA is a fairly decentralized organization and decisions are made by the executive council, which is composed of six commanders. The commanders have far- reaching powers in their respective constituencies.

The UDA and the UFF called a cease-fire in October 1994 and, as a result, the UDP, its political representative, earned a place at the multiparty talks. In 2000 an element with the UDA (Company C in West Belfast led by Johnny Adair) engaged in a violent feud with other loyalist groups and subsequently with other UDA leaders. As a result, the British government proscribed the UDA, accusing it of having breached the cease-fire.

The feud intensified between 2002 and 2003 and led to killings and widespread violence. Johnny Adair was sent to prison in 2003, and his family and associates were forced to flee to England under pressure from other UDA units in Belfast. On February 22, 2003, the UDA declared another cease-fire.

IRISH NATIONAL LIBERATION ARMY

An extreme Republican paramilitary group that arose after the split in the IRA, it combines the Marxist rhetoric of the OIRA with the terrorist tactics of the IRA. Its most noted action was the assassination of Airey Neave, the Conservative spokesman for Northern Ireland in March 1979. Another noted action was the 1997 killing of Billy Wright, then leader of the Ulster Volunteer Force, inside the Maze prison. Its political wing is the Irish Republican Socialist Party (IRSP), which probably has no more than 500 members while the INLA has no more than 200. The INLA called a cease-fire on August 22, 1998, but has so far refused to decommission its weapons.

POLICE FORCES

BRITISH ARMY

In 1994, before the cease-fire, the British had 19,000 troops in Northern Ireland, the most important element in the province's security system. With the suspension of the Northern Ireland Parliament in 1972, London assumed direct responsibility for security. Army headquarters is in Belfast, and the commanding general reports directly to London. The policy of the army is to keep a low profile. The ultimate goal of the British government is to remove the army, or reduce the contingent to as low a number as possible, and turn over primary peacekeeping responsibilities to the police. The army coordinates its activities with the police. In signing the Good Friday agreement, the British government committed itself to reduce its armed forces in Northern Ireland as quickly as possible "to levels compatible with a normal peaceful society."

But six years after the signing of the Good Friday agreement there were 15,000 military personnel in Northern Ireland. Approximately around half the number that served at the height of the "troubles" in the 1970s, but still a very large amount for an unpre-

dictable security situation where the paramilitaries have not fully decommissioned their weapons.

POLICE SERVICE OF NORTHERN IRELAND

The Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) is the new name given to the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC), the local police force. The name change along with attempts to improve relations with the nationalist community are some of the major innovations introduced as a result of the Patten Commission in 1999, a body put in place by the British government to reform the police.

The RUC was the name of the local police force between 1922 and 2001. During that period the RUC was almost entirely composed of officers drawn from the Protestant community. Its main functions were to deal with regular crime as well as with terrorist activities. The RUC, through its Special Branch, was responsible for counterintelligence activities especially geared toward thwarting the IRA.

The force has frequently been under intense criticism from the nationalist community, which claimed that the police force was less than objective in enforcing the law. In some cases, there were alleged connections between Protestant paramilitaries and the RUC. In 2001 the PSNI had approximately 8,500 full-time officers and 4,500 part- time officers.

A key problem that still needs to be addressed by the PSNI is the under- representation of Catholics in its ranks, estimated at 8 percent. A more balanced police force is one of the keys to resolving the Northern Ireland problem ensuring that the force is more accepted in Catholic neighborhoods.

AUXILIARY POLICE

In 1921, at the height of the "troubles" between Irish nationalists and the British, the Ulster Special Constabulary (USC) was established to supplement the regular police forces. The USC was entirely Protestant and many of its members belonged to the Orange Order. Of its three branches—A, B, and C—the "B Specials" were regarded as particularly obnoxious by Catholics; their mere appearance in Catholic neighborhoods sparked many riots. The USC was disbanded in 1970 and replaced with the Ulster Defense Regiment (UDR), whose function was to assist the RUC and the British army in controlling IRA terrorism. In the 1980s and 1990s nationalists made allegations of links between the UDR and loyalist paramilitaries. Following British government-sponsored investigations a number of UDR soldiers were convicted of the murder of Catholics and other crimes. The Stevens Inquiry revealed that there had been collusion between the UDR and Loyalist paramilitary groups. As a result, the UDR was disbanded and its members were transferred in the Royal Irish Rangers in July 1992.

National Prospects

Northern Ireland faces a dilemma in that a majority of its voters wish to remain part of Great Britain and strongly resist incorporation into the Irish Republic. Yet a hard core of this majority adamantly refuses to concede equal political and economic rights to the Catholic minority. A portion of that Catholic minority is determined to fight as long as necessary to undermine the state and achieve a "united" Ireland. The Anglo-Irish agreement, the Framework Document, and the Good Friday agreement, signaling, as they did, a greater resolve on the part of the British and Irish governments to twist the arms of their recalcitrant protagonists, began the process toward a peaceful resolution of the conflict.

For four years (1999–2002), despite several hurdles, nationalist and unionist politicians shared government responsibility in the Northern Ireland Executive. They introduced elements of normal governance such as when the Executive announced its "2000 Agenda for Government" in which the outlines of a legislative program were laid out, or when in December 2000 the Northern Ireland Assembly approved a £6 billion budget. These achievements have been unprecedented, and the peace process has delivered changes almost unimaginable in the early 1990s.

But despite the enormous progress achieved, Northern Ireland still has to resolve many troubling issues. On the unionist side there is a leadership deficit that has continuously undermined stable government. Both in 1974 and in 2002 the power-sharing coalition government, the key to political stability, was brought down because unionists lacked strong leaders and a hegemonic party with the ability to carry voters forcing them to accept compromise with nationalists.

On the nationalist side, SF has continued to make inroads into the SDLP vote and is currently the main representative of northern nationalism. Should the SF ensure the complete decommissioning of the IRA, which it announced in 2005, it would fully embrace constitutional politics and provide a major boost to the peace prospects.

Some sort of joint authority of Northern Ireland between the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland appears to be the most viable solution to end the

conflict and give parity of esteem to both communities. The Good Friday agreement is the best assurance so far that the conflict is on the way to a peaceful solution. Despite the fact that the underlying sectarian suspicions and fears are still strong in Northern Ireland, for more than five years the main paramilitary groups have ceased their violent activities. In addition, the main political parties, under the auspices of the British government, began in 2004 to talk to each other again to try to resurrect the power-sharing coalition.

The fact that constitutional politics has displaced violence and centrifugal politics is perhaps the most important indication that Northern Ireland is on its way toward resolving the centuries-old division between Protestants and Catholics.

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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

By Robert O. Schneider, Ph.D.
Revised by Michael Levy, Ph.D.



The System of Government

The United States of America, comprising 50 states, is a federal republic with a democratic system. The United States federal system divides power between the national government and state governments. The national government wields significant power, but so too does each of its 50 states. A written constitution, adopted in 1789 after the earlier Articles of Confederation proved to have given inadequate authority to the federal government, delineates the powers and responsibilities of the different levels and branches of government. Certain powers, conducting foreign policy and coining money, for example, are granted exclusively to the national government. Other powers are reserved for the states. Still others, taxation, for example, overlap and can be exercised by both the national government and the state governments.

The written constitution, along with the constitutional convention as a means for devising constitutions, is an American invention. The 1787 Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia drafted a document that enshrined the principle of checks and balances. The framers, fearful of excessive governmental power, sought to prevent tyranny by vesting overlapping responsibilities in three separate branches of government. The president is both head of state and chief executive, but the agencies of the executive branch depend on the two houses of the Congress to appropriate funds and pass enabling legislation. The president conducts foreign policy, but the upper house, the Senate, must ratify treaties and confirm ambassadorial appointments, and, along with the lower body, the House of Representatives, must provide the funds necessary to conduct foreign policy. The president has the power to veto legislation, but a veto may be overridden by a two-thirds vote in both the House and the Senate. The third branch, the judiciary, exercising its power through judicial review, by which it can invalidate laws or presidential actions that conflict with the constitution. Thus the constitution establishes shared powers among the three branches of government: no area of public policy is the exclusive responsibility of just one branch.

As originally written, the constitution limited political participation. The president and members of the Senate were indirectly elected: an electoral college voted for the president, and state legislatures for their national senators. Only the House of Representatives was chosen directly by the people. But this electorate was also generally restricted to people who were white, male, and could meet property qualifications set by each state. Formal amendments have subsequently made the constitution more democratic by expanding political participation. In 1870, through the Fifteenth Amendment to the Constitution, African-American males were granted the right to vote, though his right was not fully ensured until the 1960s. In 1920 the Nineteenth Amendment was adopted, empowering women to vote. Election to the U.S. Senate and to the presidency has

also been democratized. The Seventeenth Amendment (1913) provided for the direct election of U.S. senators, and though the electoral college still functions and electors directly elect the president, popular voting was introduced in the 19th century, enabling the public to select those electors.

Constitutional amendments are proposed by a two-thirds vote in both chambers of the Congress and then ratified by the legislatures of three-fourths of the states. But in theory, amendments could be proposed by a national constitutional convention called at the request of two-thirds of the state legislatures and ratified by constitutional conventions in three-fourths of the states.

EXECUTIVE

The president of the United States is the country's chief executive. The powers of the president under the constitution are extensive but imprecisely defined.

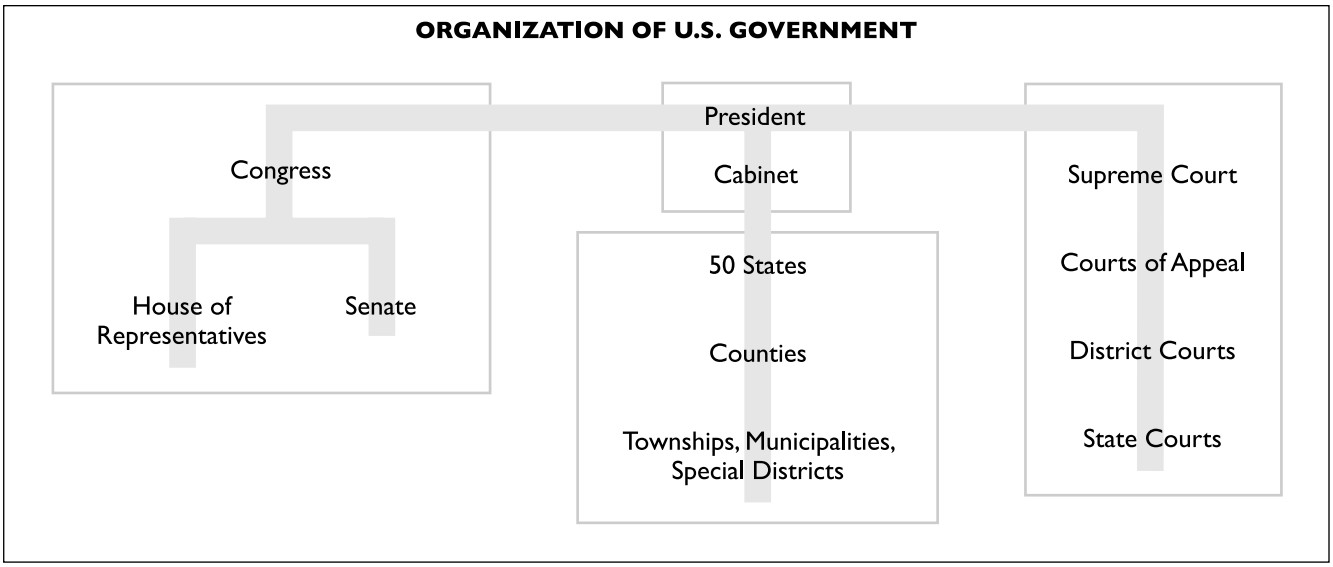
The president nominates the heads of the major executive branch agencies and departments. These include several thousand political appointees, all of whom may be removed when the presidency changes hands. In addition, the president appoints all federal judges (including Supreme Court justices). The Senate must confirm or reject the president's nominees. Traditionally, the Senate has approved most presidential appointees, though it sometimes has rejected nominees it considers unqualified or ideologically too extreme, particularly for nominations to the cabinet or to the Supreme Court. Political appointees (other than federal judges) serve at the pleasure of the president and may be dismissed without the approval of Congress.

The president is advised by a cabinet, consisting of the heads of the major executive departments. The size of the cabinet is fixed by law. With the establishment of the Department of Homeland Security in 2001, the cabinet now consists of 15 members, the attorney general and the heads of 14 departments: State, Treasury, Interior, Agriculture, Commerce, Labor, Defense, Health and Human Services, Housing and Urban Development, Transportation, Energy, Education, Veterans Affairs, and Homeland Security. The members of the cabinet are appointed by the president and may be dismissed by him at any time. The number of members of the cabinet may be changed through legislative action as new departments are created or existing departments are eliminated.

In addition to the cabinet, the president presides over the Executive Office of the President (EOP). The EOP includes several advisory and policy-making agencies responsible to the president. While not formally a part of the cabinet, many heads or directors of EOP offices are given cabinet rank and, as such, attend cabinet meetings. The executive branch includes a number of independent regulatory and executive agencies and government corporations, such as the General Services Administration, the Securities and Exchange Commission, Amtrak, and the U.S. Postal Service.

Perhaps the most important presidential attribute is the political skill to direct the vast machinery of the federal bureaucracy. Agencies and departments often experience political pressures that may detach them from presidential policy. Funds and legislation must be obtained from Congress, and both Congress and the executive departments are subject to pressure from the interest groups representing the constituents of various governmental programs. To secure passage of legislation, departments may try to appease these interest groups. In this process, both the permanent civil service and the political appointees in a department may develop policies at variance with those of the president. Thus a president must use the powers of his office skillfully to maintain control and promote his agenda coherently.

The president's power to appoint and dismiss the senior officials of the executive branch is an important basis for presidential control of the executive branch. This power is limited by the major extension of the merit-based civil service. Federal employees under this system—the overwhelming majority of all public servants—can be removed only for narrowly proscribed offenses, not including presidential displeasure. Still, by appointing or removing department heads, the president exerts considerable influence. This does not guarantee that each of the several million federal bureaucrats in the various divisions, branches, offices, and other subunits of the executive branch will loyally and effectively implement presidential policy. But it does place persons in posts of control who share the agenda and enjoy the confidence of the president. To the degree that these appointees remain responsible to the president and avoid political pressures from within and without, they can at least keep the president's priorities foremost and thus influence a department's range of activity. On the other hand, political pressures may restrict both the president and his appointees. President Ronald Reagan, for example, entered office in 1981 with the intent of abolishing the Department of Education. Pressure from educators and from Congress coupled with a perceived crisis in American education rendered this objective politically unattainable.



There are several groups or agencies within the Executive Office of the President that are particularly important as instruments of presidential control over the executive branch. Two of the most important are the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and the National Security Council (NSC). The OMB has two major powers over executive branch agencies and departments: first, the OMB examines their budgets and recommends spending cuts or increases to the president; second, the OMB examines all legislation that an agency or department intends to submit to Congress to determine whether it conforms to the president's program. The OMB, is staffed primarily by civil servants. This fact has sometimes led presidents to distrust the OMB. Moreover, the OMB is more useful to presidents who wish to contain or reduce the scale of government; it is of less use to presidents who wish to promulgate new programs.

The National Security Council, created by the National Security Act of 1947, is the chief source of foreign policy advice within the White House. The head of the NSC, the National Security Advisor, is sometimes relied upon heavily by presidents, even more so than the secretaries of state or defense. During the First Persian Gulf War in 1990–91, for example, NSC Advisor Brent Scowcroft played a leading role in advising President George H. W. Bush. The NSC Advisor briefs the president daily, often shapes a president's conceptual thinking on foreign policy, and has the further advantage of being independent of the State Department bureaucracy. For these reasons, the NSC Advisor is often perceived as a rival to the secretary of state, who reigns over the department that is supposed to conduct foreign affairs. Also established under the National Security Act was the Central Intelligence Agency, whose director also briefs the president on intelligence matters, which reports to the National Security Council.

Other agencies within the Executive Office of the President include the Office of Policy Development, the Office of National Drug Control Policy, the Council of Economic Advisers, the Office of Science and Technology Policy, the Council on Environmental Quality, the Office of Administration, and the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative.

The White House staff is another important group whose numbers and powers have increased dramatically in the last 50 years. The White House staff refers to the several hundred people who work directly for the president in the White House and in the adjoining Executive Office Building. This group includes close confidants of the president, often people who have worked with him throughout his political career, who are assumed to be personally loyal, and have no power base beyond him. They are appointed by the president without congressional confirmation and can be removed by the president at his pleasure. The White House staff controls the flow of people and paper to the president's Oval Office, considers problems from the president's (not an agency's) perspective, ensures that the widest range of options is developed, and keeps the president in touch with all major developments, including political considerations. In practice, White House staffs have been criticized for acting as a

buffer between the president and reality. President Lyndon Johnson's staff was said to have shielded him from news or opinions damaging to his Vietnam policy. They have also been criticized for overzealousness in serving the president's interests. President Richard Nixon's staff was involved in the planning and, after the fact, conspiring to cover up the illegal activities associated with the Watergate scandal. Finally, White House staffs have sometimes been accused of controlling presidents. This is to suggest that staff members, who technically are not supposed to make policy, use their positions and influence to shape a president's thinking and thereby shape policy. Having close proximity to the president and a personal relationship, the White House chief of staff and senior advisers are often considered more influential than cabinet secretaries and among the most powerful unelected officials in the United States.

LEGISLATURE

The bicameral U.S. Congress consists of 535 members—100 in the Senate and 435 in the House of Representatives. House members are elected every two years and represent districts that are roughly equal in population (at least within each state). States are represented in the House of Representatives based on population; following the census every 10 years, seats are apportioned in the House, with states gaining or losing seats depending upon population shifts. Senators are elected every six years, with one-third of the Senate seats being subject to election every two years. Senators are elected on a statewide basis, and each of the 50 states elects two senators.

Members of Congress typically come from high-status occupations. The Senate is sometimes called the "millionaire's club." Though members of the House of Representatives typically have less wealth than senators, they are significantly more affluent than the general populace. Most members of both bodies have college degrees, and many come from the legal or business professions. Women and racial minorities made gains in the late 20th century in both bodies. Whereas there was a lone woman in the 65th Congress (1917–19) and less than 20 as late as the 96th Congress (1979–81), that number rose significantly in the 1980s and 1990s; in 1992, for example, women candidates won 48 seats in the House of Representatives and 7 in the Senate, and after the congressional elections a decade later, women held 62 seats (14 percent) in the House and 14 seats (14 percent) in the Senate. Representation by African Americans has also increased, though few have served in the Senate. Nevertheless, before World War II African Americans generally had none or a lone seat in the House of Representatives, but their representation grew in the second half of the 20th century, particularly after the 1970s. In the 90th Congress (1967–69), African Americans held 5 seats (1 percent) in the House of Representatives; this number grew to 17 (4 percent) in the 95th Congress (1977–79), to 22 (5 percent) in the 100th Congress (1987–89), and to 39 (9 percent) in the 105th Congress (1997–99). Most members of Congress who seek reelection usually win easily. In fact, in elections in the late 20th and early 21st centuries, House members seeking reelection won more than 95 percent of the time, though this figure was slightly lower for senators.

There are two major structures that engage the time and attention of representatives and senators. First, nearly all members of Congress are aligned with the two major parties. Though party blocs in Congress do not exercise tight discipline over their members, they do influence their votes to a significant degree. The party may help or hinder legislators in many ways, including providing the legislator a better set of offices or a seat on an important congressional committee.

The bulk of the work of Congress is done in committee. The most important congressional committees, called standing committees, are permanent, meaning that they exist from Congress to Congress. Each committee specializes in one or a few closely related policy areas. Committees handle most of the legislative, appropriations, and investigative work of Congress. The hearings, deliberations, and votes of committees are likely to settle the majority of issues. The number of committees differs from chamber to chamber (the House generally has about one-fifth more committees than the Senate), but the precise number in each chamber may vary depending upon how the majority party wants to organize the chamber's work. Important House committees include the Appropriations, Rules, and Ways and Means. Prestigious Senate committees include Appropriations, Finance, and Foreign Relations. Almost all standing committees have subcommittees, which exercise jurisdiction over specific aspects of a full committee's work. Very few issues, usually the most controversial, are decided in debate on the floor of the House and Senate. On many issues, floor debate is perfunctory and committee recommendations are endorsed as presented.

Every senator and representative has one major—that is, powerful—committee assignment. Senators,

because they are fewer, sit on several major committees. The work of a committee is much influenced by the chair, who is a member of the majority party and is usually selected on the principle of seniority. In the late 20th century, however, the seniority system was weakened. Democrats and Republicans, in each house, adopted reforms that allowed members to vote on committee chair and ranking minority member selections. While making the institution's procedures more democratic, these reforms have not often resulted in selections that depart from the norm of seniority.

Theoretically, Congress is the equal of the president and the executive branch. In practice, the Congress is at its strongest when reacting to proposals, including the president's. In fact, most legislative proposals come from the president. Since Congress is insufficiently coordinated to launch its own program, the president usually sets the agenda. Much of the president's legislative leadership stems from the role of the executive branch in the budget process. Since 1921 the responsibility for preparing the federal budget has resided in the executive branch. Though much of the president's legislation will not be enacted, the president's proposals are generally the starting point for legislative action, and because the president can threaten a veto of legislative bills, he wields significant authority over the legislative process. When presidents and Congress are of the same party, the president rarely vetoes bills, but even in such cases legislation rarely reflects wholly the president's agenda.

Legislating is only one of the functions Congress performs. Overseeing the executive branch is a function of equal importance. Oversight is exercised in a variety of ways. The power of the Senate to deny confirmation of key presidential appointees is used sparingly, but committee meetings with the nominees give Congress a chance to review and criticize executive policy. However, the "power of the purse" through authorizations to spend and appropriation of actual monies is more important. Different congressional committees first authorize agencies to spend money and then approve legislation providing the money. This process provides Congress with important opportunities to influence agencies. Agencies may be called to account by Congress in committee and, through legislation, directed to change policy.

Another particularly powerful oversight tool Congress wields is the special investigative committee. These special or select committees, which may be established by either house, examine a particular problem to determine if new legislation is needed. Often such committees are set up to investigate and expose corruption or scandal. The 1973 Senate Committee on Watergate, which revealed to public view the corrupt and illegal activities that eventually brought about President Nixon's resignation from office, is a prime example of a special committee.

From the 1930s to the mid-1990s the Democrats generally dominated Congress. Until the 1994 election the Republicans held a majority in Congress only briefly, winning control of both houses at the 1946 and 1952 elections. From the election of 1954 until 1994, the Republicans never controlled the House of Representatives.

During their tenure in power, the Democrats gained important privileges, as all the leadership positions in the Congress (speaker, committee chairs, subcommittee chairs) are held by members of the majority party. However, this apparent dominance by the Democrats was often misleading. Party discipline (i.e., the tendency of party members to vote uniformly with their party) is weak in the United States in comparison to other countries. On many votes, some Democrats and some Republicans vote with the opposing side. Southern Democrats, for example, are generally more conservative than other Democrats and join with Republicans on issues such as economic and social policy and civil rights. Likewise, moderate Republicans, particularly in the northeast, sometimes buck their party to vote with the Democrats. For example, in the 1980s President Reagan benefited from a conservative majority in the House as he secured deep cuts in taxes and in federal government funding of welfare, education, and health care. By contrast, President Bill Clinton, who had earlier been the governor of the southern state of Arkansas, found it difficult to pass much of his agenda during his first two years despite a strong Democratic majority in both houses of Congress. President Clinton also relied on the support of Republicans to secure passage of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), which many Democrats regarded as favoring conservative business interests over organized labor—a core Democratic constituency. With the Republican takeover over Congress in 1995, Clinton and the Republicans were forced to compromise on key issues to enact legislation—something that was sometimes difficult. Republican George W. Bush, Clinton's successor, enjoyed a majority in both houses of Congress during much of his term but sometimes found it difficult to get his judicial appointments confirmed by the Senate.

PARTY STRENGTH IN CONGRESS, 1976–2004 ELECTIONS

Year	House Dem.	Rep.	Other	Senate Dem.	Rep.	Other
1976	292	143	0	61	38	1
1978	277	158	0	58	41	1
1980	242	192	1	46	53	1
1982	269	166	0	46	54	0
1984	253	182	0	47	53	0
1986	258	177	0	55	45	0
1988	260	175	0	55	45	0
1990	267	167	1	56	44	0
1992	258	176	1	57	43	0
1994	204	230	1	48	52	0
1996	206	228	1	45	55	0
1998	211	223	1	45	55	0
2000	212	221	2	50	50	0
2002	204	229	1	48	51	1
2004	202	232	1	44	55	1

JUDICIARY

The judiciary in the United States is headed by a Supreme Court. The American judiciary wields power to a degree uncommon in most Western democracies. American judges not only interpret the laws (as judges everywhere do), but they also may declare laws invalid if they conflict with the constitution. The power to invalidate laws, known as judicial review, is not spelled out explicitly in the constitution but is a right that has been asserted by the Supreme Court since the early 19th century. In *Marbury* v. *Madison* (1803), the Supreme Court, under the leadership of Chief Justice John Marshall, declared unconstitutional a section of the Federal Judiciary Act of 1789—claiming for the first time its authority to rule on the constitutionality of laws. Thus, with the power of judicial review, American courts not only enforce the norms of American society (they mete out punishments, award damages, issue orders, and so on) but are also involved in policymaking or lawmaking. Courts and judges not only enforce, they actually create or establish norms. For example, it was not a legislative act or executive order that decided that U.S. House districts should be approximately equal in population; a Supreme Court decision *Baker* v. *Carr* in 1962 established this rule. Some critics contend that federal judges, because they are not elected, should not make policy, a power reserved for the president and Congress, elected by the people. The fact remains, however, that judges and courts do make policy and policymaking is one of their legitimate functions.

There are two major types of courts in the United States: state and federal. The state courts, acting under state constitutions and the laws enacted by state legislatures, hear most of the criminal and civil cases. (Every state has its own constitution.) State judges are usually elected by the public. Federal courts have jurisdiction over matters pertaining to the U.S. constitution and federal law. Some criminal offenses may be tried both in state courts, under state law, and in federal court, under federal law. For example, a person charged with possession of heroin could be tried in both a state court and a federal court. Given the two separate jurisdictions involved, such an instance does not constitute double jeopardy, which is prohibited by the Bill of Rights. At the lowest level of the federal judicial system are district courts. There are nearly 100 district courts located throughout the United States, Washington, D.C., and Puerto Rico. Each state has at least one judicial district. Above the district courts are 13 midlevel courts of appeal (12 that are geographically based and one whose jurisdiction is national), which review cases brought on appeal from the district courts. The Supreme Court of the United States is the court of last appeal in the federal system. The Supreme Court may also review the rulings of the highest state courts in cases where federal constitutional issues are in dispute. All federal judges are nominated by the president and must be confirmed by a majority vote of the U.S. Senate. Political factors are often important in these appointments. Senators from the president's party are often allowed to screen the federal district judges for their states. The president, in return, may expect a favor, perhaps in the form of a senator's vote on a crucial piece of legislation. Presidents generally choose nominees to the Supreme Court on the basis of ideological criteria, attempting to select someone who is in broad agreement with his views on judicial and social policy. Sometimes, however, other factors, such as region, religion, race, and gender, have also influenced a president's nomination.

As the court of last appeal, the U.S. Supreme Court is the chief judicial policymaker. The problems that have concerned the Supreme Court have varied greatly over the years. From the 1860s to 1937 the Supreme Court emphasized defending property rights, including the freedom of business from government regulation. Since 1937 the Court has been more innovative on the issues of democratic fairness and individual freedom. It has also been less concerned about defending laissez-faire economics. Indeed, it has supported government regulation of business in which the use of private property may have a public consequence. The Court's policymaking was perhaps most assertive under Chief Justice Earl Warren (1953–67). During this period of Supreme Court activism, racial segregation was declared unconstitutional, the rights of the criminally accused were substantially expanded, the "one man, one vote" principle (equal population for congressional and legislative electoral districts) was articulated, and the protections of the First Amendment regarding free speech were greatly enhanced. The Warren Court also built on the process of incorporation, which had begun in the 1920s, whereby the Bill of Rights, through the due process clause of the Fourteenth Amendment, became applicable not only to the federal government but also to the states. When the Bill of Rights was adopted, it was solely a check on the federal power, meaning that its provisions (such as the freedom of speech or prohibitions on the establishment of religion) applied only to federal levers of power. Thus, through incorporation, the same standards became applicable at all levels of government. Any departure from federal standards in a state court would generally justify an appeal to the federal courts to reverse the state court's decision.

The period of the Warren Court was considered by its critics as one of liberal judicial activism, in which the court interjected itself in the policy process too heavily. Through the appointment of conservative justices, Republican Richard M. Nixon attempted to restrain Supreme Court policymaking and, thus, reverse many of the Warren Court decisions. The trend was continued by subsequent Republican presidents. The appointments of conservative justices have somewhat altered the decisions of the Supreme Court. The court has issued many decisions favorable to conservatives in the United States, particularly on civil rights, the power of the federal government, and the rights of the criminally accused, but it has also upheld (or only slightly weakened) many of the decisions of its predecessors.

INDEPENDENT REGULATORY AGENCIES

Independent regulatory agencies, established by acts of Congress, have such unusual power that they might be termed a fourth branch of government. The agencies are supposed to operate without political interference, and their executive boards contain nearly equal numbers of Republicans and Democrats. In the case of most of the major agencies, this political parity is set by law. These agencies are designed to protect the general public interest, but because their executives and staffs are often drawn from among the experts of the industries they are supposed to regulate, they are often seen as more receptive to the narrow interests of the regulated.

Chief among the independent agencies in terms of power is the Federal Reserve System (essentially the U.S. central bank), which, through its control of the credit market, exercises direct and enormous influence on the American economy. Other major agencies include the Federal Trade Commission (FTC), which oversees the competitiveness and fairness of business practices; the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), charged with the supervision of investment markets; the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), which assigns broadcasting channels and grants licenses to private broadcasters; the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC—formerly the Atomic Energy Commission), responsible for the licensing and safety of all civilian nuclear operations, including power plants; several agencies charged with a variety of labor matters from union certification to fair employment practices to occupational health and safety; and a host of others regulating everything from such vital matters as truck and airline traffic to the care of battle monuments.

Most of the agencies are run by commissions consisting of five to seven people appointed by the president with the consent of the Senate. The commissioners' terms of office are fixed, generally ranging from five years in the case of the SEC to 14 years for governors on the Federal Reserve Board. Once confirmed, they cannot be removed from office except for personal delinquency. The chairmen of the commissions are named by the president from among the commissioners; the president can demote a chairman, but the political price in congressional and public outcry is usually so great that few presidents attempt it. While the general responsibilities of an agency are set by law, an activist chairman can usually stretch his or her legal mandate to include additional related areas or

contract the mandate to avoid interfering with some area of industry concern. In general, the agencies have tended to expand their mandates. Congress can set new guidelines whenever it deems them necessary.

Among the more powerful but less noticed independent agencies is the General Accounting Office (GAO), which functions as an arm of Congress. The GAO is directed by the comptroller general of the United States, who is appointed to a 15-year term by the president with the consent of the Senate. Among many other duties and powers, the GAO is entitled to examine the accounts and operations of any government body (except most intelligence agencies), including those state and local governments that receive money from the federal government, namely, all but a handful of small municipalities. It monitors many federal government operations on a regular basis but may look into any area at the request of a congressional committee or an individual member of Congress. Because of these formidable powers, the GAO has been well insulated from partisan manipulation and is generally regarded as dispassionate, fair, and rigorous.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

State governors and legislatures are elected by direct popular vote in each state. State legislatures, with the exception of Nebraska's unicameral body, each have an upper and lower house patterned closely after the federal House and Senate.

The 50 states retain the power to make and enforce any law without permission of the federal authorities provided only that the law does not breach the federal constitution or attempt to legislate on a topic already covered ("preempted") by federal laws. State governors have to share control of the state executive branch with other directly elected officials, who not infrequently are from the opposite party, because in many states leading executive officials (such as the lieutenant governor and secretary of state) are directly elected separately from the governor.

State legislatures traditionally were amateurish and poorly staffed, met briefly, and were influenced by pressure groups and, sometimes, by bribes. States lacked the will to raise revenues both for fear of driving corporate and individual taxpayers out of the state and for fear of the political consequences of imposing efficient taxes (such as the income tax). The systematic overrepresentation of rural, conservative areas in state legislatures, the fact that some states virtually disenfranchised poor whites and African Americans, and some notable scandals involving governors of states in corruption convinced many Americans that only the federal authorities could provide effective government.

Since the early 1960s there has been a resurgence in state government. Nearly all states now have a more modern and adequate tax structure. The malapportionment of seats in state legislatures has ended (though only at the behest of federal courts). The executive branches of state governments have been reformed and their structure simplified. The reemergence of governors as presidential candidates (a role they had lost in the 1960s, among other things) marked the resurgence of state governments.

In the 1980s and 1990s the role of state governments expanded greatly. The combined impact of federal budget cuts, the devolutionary domestic policies adopted during the presidencies of Ronald Reagan and George H. W. Bush, the increasing demand for state services, Supreme Court decisions favoring state power, and fluctuations in the national economy led to an expanding role for state governments. The important contribution of state policy leadership was demonstrated in economic development, education, welfare, and environmental protection policies. Governors, legislators, and other state leaders have been innovative in handling a wide range of problems, from homelessness and AIDS to fostering more competitive industries and reducing pollution.

Beneath the states are city and county governments operating under charters or laws passed by the state legislatures. Some of the biggest cities, such as New York, are larger in population than many states, but cities are legally inferior to states and enjoy only those powers entrusted to them by states.

Cities generally employ one of three basic types of government. Many utilize the mayor-council system, which consists of a directly elected mayor and city council. A second form is the council-manager form, in which the citizens elect council members who select a city manager to oversee city governments. The mayor is not directly elected but is selected by the council members and is a member of the council. Finally, there is the commission form of government, under which voters elect commissioners responsible for presiding over particular departments of city government. The head of the commission is typically called the mayor.

In addition to city governments, the United States also has numerous other local governments, the largest of which is the county. There are also thousands of villages, towns, and other special districts. Altogether,

there are about 85,000 local government units in the United States.

The Electoral System

Voting is a basic right in the United States. But that right has been selective over the years. Today, however, legal barriers to voting based upon race, gender, age, property, literacy, and ability to pay poll taxes have been removed by law. The federal constitution, as amended, provides that the right to vote is guaranteed to all citizens age 18 or over. (Prior to an amendment in 1971, the voting age was 21.) The 1965 Voting Rights Act allows the Justice Department to appoint inspectors to conduct all voter registration where there is clear evidence of attempts to prevent voters from registering. Otherwise, the mechanics of registering are controlled by the states. Some states require voters to register at frequent intervals, just before elections. Some states have a permanent registration system under which citizens continue to be registered. Some states, such as Wisconsin and Minnesota, register voters on election day on the production of evidence of identity and residence. Voting is secret and is usually done by machine. Voters select the individual candidates of their choice rather than voting for a political party.

All general elections in the United States are decided by simple plurality. The exception is the presidential election. Voters only indirectly elect the president. They actually select delegates, known as electors who, in turn, elect the president. Each state has a number of electors equal to its number of U.S. senators and members in the House of Representatives. (The Twenty-third Amendment, ratified in 1961, provides for three electoral votes for the District of Columbia.) All the electors on a slate are pledged to vote for the candidate of their party, though a few faithless electors have sometimes voted for an individual to whom he or she was not pledged or abstained. All states (except Maine and Nebraska) award their electoral votes based on the unit rule, meaning that the candidate winning the most votes is awarded all the state's electoral votes. To win the election, a candidate must receive a majority (270) of the total number of electoral votes (538). If no candidate wins a majority, the president is determined by the House of Representatives.

Because the electoral college system is based on states rather than on the accumulated votes of all voters, it is possible for a candidate to win the popular vote while losing the electoral vote, as happened in both 1888 and 2000, when Benjamin Harrison and George W. Bush, respectively, narrowly lost the popular vote but were elected president by the electoral college. Usually, however, the electoral college vote magnifies the victor's margin.

In 1984, for example, Ronald Reagan won 59 percent of the popular vote and 98 percent (525) of the electoral vote. Walter Mondale's 41 percent popular vote total was not at all reflected in his 2 percent (13) electoral vote. The electoral college originated at the Constitutional Convention as a compromise between those favoring direct election by the people and those favoring selection by Congress. Opponents of this institution have periodically sought to win support for abolishment or reform of the electoral college, though abolition would require a constitutional amendment and is thus difficult, particularly because many small states—which are overrepresented in the electoral college—would have to agree to give up this advantage.

Federal elections are held every two years (in even-numbered years) in early November. Presidential elections are held every four years. The elections in the middle of a presidential term are called midterm elections and are often interpreted as a barometer of public opinion about the president's effectiveness. Presidential elections begin with a long nominating process. The two major parties, the Democrats and the Republicans, hold a series of primary elections and/or caucuses in each of the 50 states. After the primary and caucus season, which generally runs from January to June, the parties hold national conventions to confirm the results and formally nominate candidates for president and vice president. From the 1830s, when the first conventions were held, to the 1960s, the national conventions wielded significant power, generally choosing the party's candidates with little or no direct input from the voters. With reforms implemented in the 1960s and 1970s, however, the nominees of both parties are generally now known long before the convention meets.

THE VOTERS

People who register to vote are, in many states, required to declare themselves Democrats, Republicans, independents, or members of another party. In some states independents may vote in either the Democratic or the Republican primary; in others they are excluded from primaries. Declared Democrats and Republicans usually must vote in the primaries of their respective parties. There are a few states where crossover voting has been permitted (i.e., Democrats may choose to vote in the Republican primary, and vice versa).

Though Americans are committed to the ideal of political participation, the voter turnout rate in the United States is extremely low, particularly in comparison to other major democracies. Whereas voter turnout in Western Europe is generally 70 percent or 80 percent (and exceeding 90 percent in some countries), voter participation in presidential elections in the United States is considerably lower. Though it hovered at about 50 percent in 1996 and 2000, participation increased dramatically in 2004, when nearly 60 percent of eligible voters (about 120 million citizens) cast ballots. Voter turnout in midterm elections is often about 40 percent, and it is even lower for state and local elections.

Several reasons have been advanced to explain lower voter turnout in the United States. First, in many countries it is the responsibility of the government to register citizens to vote, but in the United States it is the responsibility of individuals. Second, voting is not compulsory. Third, because of the winner-take-all voting system, many citizens believe that their vote does not make a difference, particularly for presidential and congressional elections, where few states and seats are competitive. To combat low voter turnout and to encourage greater participation, in the 1990s and early 21st century laws were enacted to make voting easier. For example, citizens may now register to vote when they receive or renew their driver's licenses, Oregon enacted mail-in voting, and some states have opened polling stations on multiple days.

The leading indicator of whether a citizen will vote is his or her level of education. Those with a college degree are significantly more likely to vote than those without a high school diploma. Likewise, the more affluent are more likely to vote than those in poverty. There is a large disparity in voting based on age, with younger citizens less likely to be registered to vote and vote than older citizens.

The Party System

Political parties emerged in the early republic. The Federalists and the anti-Federalists, factions that supported and opposed the adoption of the constitution, were not organized as actual political parties. They did not run candidates for office under party labels, but they were divided on many issues. Most of the framers of the U.S. constitution opposed the formation of political parties, but they found them to be necessary almost as soon as the new government became operational.

In the first Congress, the Federalist faction grew stronger and more like a political party. Led by Alexander Hamilton, secretary of the treasury under President George Washington, the Federalists favored a strong national government to promote the financial interests of merchants and manufacturers. Thomas Jefferson formed an opposition party, called the Democratic-Republicans, and with his election to the presidency in 1800, it controlled the presidency for 28 years. During this period, the Federalists eventually disappeared, and for much of the period the United States had in fact a one-party state. By the 1820s, however, the Democratic-Republican Party was splintered into factions. Two of these factions, Democrats and Whigs, grew into parties. Led by Andrew Jackson, the Democrats reached out and attempted to involve ordinary citizens in their affairs through national campaigns and conventions. (The first presidential nominating conventions were held in 1832.) In 1854 a coalition of Whigs and anti-slavery Democrats joined to form the Republican Party. The Republican nominee for president in 1860, a dark horse named Abraham Lincoln, was the party's first successful candidate. The Whigs soon disappeared, and the Democratic and Republican Parties have dominated American politics ever since.

The Republican Party during the 19th century became the party of the North, with the exception of recent immigrants (such as the Irish) in central cities. The Republicans, who had favored confining slavery to the South and keeping other agricultural areas for the family farmer, acquired a strong grip on the Midwest. Since it dominated national politics during the Civil War and Reconstruction periods (1861–77), which coincided with the initial emergence of the United States as the world's foremost industrial power, the Republican Party also became the party of business. The modern image of the Republican Party as the party favoring business was fixed in the 1920s and early 1930s by a series of presidents—Warren Harding, Calvin Coolidge, and Herbert Hoover—who favored laissez-faire economic policies.

The Democrats gradually emerged as one of the most amazing coalitions ever to form a political party. After the Civil War, the southern states were solidly Democratic, largely because the Union government during and after the war was Republican. Southern politics tended to be dominated by rich elites and their clients. In the North, the Democratic Party appealed to recent immigrants—such as the Irish—who associated the Republicans with the native-born Protestant elites. The loyalty of the immigrants was often reinforced by political machines—organizations that

gave voters help in finding jobs, housing, and even food—in return for their votes. In the 20th century the Democrats attracted groups who were ever harder to reconcile. The New Deal social reforms of Franklin Roosevelt helped the poor and the unemployed, and administration policies aided the labor unions, which grew dramatically in this period. For the first time in American politics, social class, rather than ethnicity or region, played an important part in shaping political allegiance. Finally, the social and civil rights policies of Democratic presidents from Roosevelt onward won the Democrats the overwhelming support of African Americans. On paper, the Democrats had an enormous advantage. But their coalition of city, ethnic, union, poor, African Americans, and southern white voters—sometimes referred to as the New Deal coalition—proved hard to keep together. Indeed, the party's association with civil rights eventually alienated many of its white supporters in the South, which by the last decades of the 20th century had become solidly Republican (particularly in presidential elections). The party also splintered over its identification with stronger national government and on social issues, particularly its stand on controversial social issues such as abortion, gay rights, and affirmative action. At the same time, the Republican Party became associated with strongly conservative social views, which alienated some of its more moderate supporters, particularly in the Northeast. Thus, in the late 20th century there began to be a weakening of the party coalitions that had existed since the Civil War and the New Deal, resulting in a weakening of partisan identification among the voters.

THE PARTIES IN LAW

Political parties exist, and are legally protected, under the "freedom of association" clause of the U.S. constitution's First Amendment. Beyond this general guarantee, the legal position of U.S. parties is set forth in state law, court decisions, and laws relating to campaign financing.

State laws regarding political parties concentrate on several issues. State laws govern access to the ballot. Each state has a set of requirements that candidates must meet to be included on the ballot. Each state also has laws pertaining to primary elections, and many have laws on campaign financing.

Variations among the states are immense, and many of the laws are complex. The laws on primaries and candidate inclusion are also frequently changed as parties and factions jockey for advantage in each state. Generally, the laws on candidate inclusion do not set up serious barriers—several thousand signatures on formal petitions for candidacy and the payment of a small fee are usually all that is required. Yet a candidate of a third or minor party can often be kept off the ballot by representatives of one or both of the two major parties who raise legal objections to the validity of signatures on petitions or take other legal actions in courts presided over by politically partisan judges.

Court decisions have concentrated on the question of which takes precedence— state law or party rules—in the selection of delegates to the parties' national conventions. The courts have determined that the parties have virtually unlimited freedom to make their own rules and that those rules take precedence over state law in cases of conflict.

Campaign finance has been a major issue in the United States. Until the 1970s candidates for office raised money primarily from a small number of wealthy contributors. These contributors were often acting on behalf of corporations or special interests that employed them. Although campaign contributions were generous under this system, it seemed to many that special interests were buying influence. This system also served as an open door for bribery and corruption. It enabled politicians to extort campaign contributions by threatening to initiate policies or legal suits unfavorable to a corporation if it did not make a satisfactory contribution. The Nixon campaign organization engaged in such practices on a massive scale in raising funds for the 1972 election.

In 1974 Congress passed the Campaign Finance Reform Act in an effort to reform the system. Candidates for a party's presidential nomination now receive federal grants to match their privately obtained contributions, so long as these contributions are obtained in at least 20 states in the form of small contributions from individuals. After winning the party's nomination, a candidate qualifies for a federal grant to cover campaign expenses. In accepting this grant, the candidate must agree not to accept any private funds. Much smaller payments are made available to minor party candidates who receive at least 5 percent of the popular vote—a rare occurrence.

Congressional campaigns are not publicly financed. Congressional candidates are thus free to accept private contributions. The size of these private contributions is, however, limited by law.

Despite the reforms of the 1970s, the amount of money in political campaigns dramatically increased. The original legislation placed a $1,000 limit on contributions to a candidate for federal office and a

limit on the expenditure of personal or family funds of $50,000. In 1976, in *Buckley* v. *Valeo*, the Supreme Court weakened the legislation, ruling that the limitation on personal expenses constituted a violation of political free speech. In the time since, wealthy candidates have spent large sums of money running for political office. For example, billionaire Ross Perot spent more than $60 million on his independent presidential campaign in 1992, and numerous candidates have spent tens of millions of dollars of their personal wealth on bids for the White House, the U.S. Senate, and the House of Representatives (though the latter are generally less costly).

The Court also allowed independent groups to act on behalf of candidates in ways that would be illegal if undertaken by a candidate's own organization. In effect, an independent group is able to spend whatever it wishes as long as its activity is not directly linked to a specific candidate's campaign organization. This has led to the creation of political action committees (PACs) by corporations, special interests, and ideological groups. Since they were not limited by the laws that restrain candidates and their campaign organizations, PACs were able to spend millions of dollars to influence election results.

In 1996 the Supreme Court further weakened campaign spending restrictions in a ruling that removed the ceiling on the amounts that political parties could spend on federal campaigns. It gave the parties the same right to make unlimited independent expenditures as PACs enjoy. Party organizations could thus buy unlimited amounts of advertising in congressional elections so long as their efforts were independent of a candidate's campaign. Both parties responded by focusing on "soft money" (i.e., contributions raised from businesses, interest groups, and individuals not subject to campaign finance restrictions), which they could raise and spend in unlimited amounts so long as it was used for party-building activities not associated with a specific candidate or campaign organization. Both parties raised large amounts of soft money, most of it from corporations and in donations of $100,000 or more.

During the 1980s and 1990s support for enacting stricter campaign finance laws grew, though it faced opposition from those who argued that campaign spending was protected speech and, thus, could not be limited. Following allegations of improper fundraising activities—as well as the skyrocketing rise in spending on campaigns (in 2000 more than $1 billion was spent by the parties and candidates for office)—legislation was passed that prohibited political parties from raising soft money. The McCain-Feingold law (formally the Bipartisan Campaign Finance Reform Act of 2002) raised the amount an individual could contribute to a candidate from $1,000 to $2,000 (and subsequently indexed the figure for inflation). The legislation did not place limits on personal expenditures, though it did contain a provision that increased the contribution ceilings for those candidates facing wealthy opponents (the so-called millionaire's amendment). Despite these efforts, however, money continues to play a pivotal role in U.S. elections.

PARTY ORGANIZATION

Decentralization and fragmentation describe the organization of political parties in the United States. Just as federalism means shared sovereignty between the states and the federal government, it extends in practice to the Democratic Party and the Republican Party having national organizations and separate state and local organizations. No formalized relationship exists between a Democratic governor, for example, and a Democratic president. A political party does not have a single position on all issues that all of its officials, national or state, must embrace. There is no official membership or leadership and no clear policy. Parties do play a crucial role as organizations in the electoral process. No president and only a handful of congressmen have been elected without party backing. Political parties in the United States are perhaps best understood as vehicles for the recruitment and selection of candidates. The fragmentation of power within the American political system makes it very difficult for political parties to be united on all policy questions.

It is sometimes said that national parties exist only every four years when they meet to nominate their presidential candidates. Candidates for nomination compete in primaries and caucuses for delegates to these conventions. The vast majority of delegates to national conventions are selected in primaries.

Until 1972 the caucus system of selecting delegates was common; the importance of presidential primaries is relatively recent. The expansion in the number of primaries was prompted by the feeling of many—particularly rank-and-file Democratic voters in the late 1960s—that party leaders were not responsive to the public in the nominating process. Primaries have weakened party control of the nominating process and given the ordinary party voter more opportunity to participate in the selection process. Under the old system, party leaders (primarily state and local) determined who could serve as delegates and the party conventions were deliberative

bodies, which chose party nominees in an atmosphere of power brokering and deal making. With the expansion of primaries and the democratic selection of convention delegates, conventions today do little more than ratify the outcome of the primaries and caucuses.

Conventions have functions other than to nominate presidential candidates. They also adopt party platforms. The platform, a manifesto of party beliefs and issue positions, is not binding on the candidates, but the platform commitments of the party do enable all factions to exert some influence on the nominee. In addition, research has shown that a significant portion of the party platform does find its way into a president's program once he is elected.

CAMPAIGNING

Candidates for office at all levels, from the presidency down, have to raise the majority of their campaign funds themselves, hire their own experts, and attract their own supporters to run campaigns. The parties as organizations have few activists and little money to share among the candidates. Wages for the campaign staffs of nonincumbents rarely cover more than expenses and subsistence. The full-time members of a candidate's staff hope to gain influential positions on congressional staffs or in the White House if their candidate is elected.

Campaigns are long, especially those for president. A presidential aspirant will begin informal campaigning soon after the midterm elections (and sometimes even earlier). Formal announcements of candidacy may be made at any time but usually are made well before January of the election year. This is to enable a candidate to organize, raise funds, and prepare to compete in the early caucuses and primaries. Indeed, even before the first votes have been cast, some prospective candidates may have already dropped out of the race, and shortly after the first primaries and caucuses several others may exit the campaign.

Campaigning takes the form of parades, speeches, paid advertising, and media events intended to reach a wide audience with symbolic messages. A visit to a plant of a bankrupt corporation, dutifully recorded by television news crews, is an excellent opportunity to express concern for the unemployed or the plight of industry. Speeches are carefully scripted and usually have segments designed more for use as excerpts ("sound bites") on television news programs than with the immediate audience in mind. Campaigns often disappoint those who wish to see issues debated. Even though presidential campaigns—most extensively visible in newspapers and on television—are covered in great detail, the views of the candidates sometimes do not emerge clearly. Most reports of an election campaign treat it as a sporting event, concentrating on who appears to be winning and what tactics are being used. Issues are rarely highlighted. Candidates often obscure the issues in the interest of winning.

INDEPENDENT VOTERS

Over one-fourth of American voters regularly identify themselves as independents and tend to believe that parties have little relevance or meaning. They are not actually hostile or negative toward parties so much as neutral. The number of independents has increased since the 1970s as, according to some experts, party ties have been loosening. Interestingly, the percentage of independents is higher among people under 30 years of age. Generally speaking, it has always been true that partisan identification is weakest among younger voters. Independents tend to vote more for attractive personalities or specific policies than for the candidates or the policy trend of one party. Some Democrats and Republicans, a small proportion, will do the same.

Major Political Parties

DEMOCRATIC PARTY

HISTORY

The Democratic Party traces its roots to the 1790s and Thomas Jefferson's Democratic-Republican Party. It existed under several names before the Democratic Party name was adopted during the administration of Andrew Jackson (1829–37). Its candidates held the presidency for several terms before the Civil War, but after the Civil War it became associated primarily with the South. It was a minor player in national politics, though it was quite strong in many states, particularly in the South. From 1861 to 1933, only two Democrats captured the White House—Grover Cleveland (1884 and 1892) and Woodrow Wilson (1912 and 1916).

The modern Democratic Party emerged with the presidential victory of Franklin Delano Roosevelt in 1932. Roosevelt's New Deal, an economic and social policy of federal support for the poor, aged, and unemployed combined with increased regulation of business and agriculture, became the policy benchmark for all subsequent Democratic administrations. The Roosevelt coalition of Northern and Southern poor, labor, ethnic groups, the white Southern elite, and many small

farmers gave the Democrats control of the presidency for 32 of the next 50 years and control of both House and Senate for 44 of those years. Since the mid-1960s, however, the coalition began to splinter as its various elements objected to civil rights legislation, rising welfare and social security costs, and extensive government involvement in health care, job safety, or environmental protection. This breakup seemed complete with the Reagan-Bush Republican dominance of the 1980s that led to federal budget cuts and a reaction against "liberal" big government. The Democratic Party, which had held a lock on the South from the period after Reconstruction, had seen its support in the South dramatically decline. After three successive presidential defeats by the Democrats, many within the party (often calling themselves "New Democrats"), particularly southern Democrats, sought to cast the party agenda in more moderate terms in appealing to moderate and conservative voters—the so-called Reagan Democrats—who had abandoned the party in favor of the Republicans. Under the leadership of Bill Clinton, who was a member of the centrist Democratic Leadership Council, the Democratic Party captured the White House and continued control of both houses of Congress. Yet in 1994, as the Democrats lost control of both houses in Congress in an effective Republican campaign against the perceived excesses of liberal Democratic governance, the Roosevelt Democratic coalition indeed seemed to be a thing of the past. Though Clinton won a second term, the Democrats failed to win back either house of Congress during his presidency. In 2000 and 2004 the party lost the presidential elections and remained the lesser party in Congress.

ORGANIZATION

In theory, the party has a pyramidal structure, starting at the ward or precinct level and progressing upward through county and state committees to the national committee. But this structure exists only on paper. Since the demise of the machine in nearly every city, precinct organizations have virtually disappeared and county and state committees are little more than loose coalitions of officeholders and their supporters whose primary task is the negotiation of patronage assignments if the party is in power at the state level.

The Democratic National Committee with representatives from each state is essentially powerless. Its primary function is to make the rules for the national conventions and serve as a coordinator for fund-raising activities. The committee does not make policy, let alone issue instructions to Democratic officeholders. The chairmanship of the committee is a personal appointee of the president if the Democrats hold the White House; otherwise, he or she represents a compromise choice of the party leaders, who expect their choice to show no favoritism to any faction of the party or a particular potential presidential candidate. The chairman's role is purely administrative, though a strong chairman may occasionally serve as a negotiator between party factions.

In the 1970s the Democratic Party reformed its rules for delegate selection to the national convention in an attempt to ensure representation for ordinary party activists and to decrease the control of party "bosses." This brought increased representation of minorities and women. All delegate seats were to be proportionately allocated to the candidates according to the outcomes of the state primaries, and all delegates were to be committed to a candidate. The consequence of these rules was an increase in the amount of citizen participation in the nominating process. From the point of view of party regulars, this led to candidate-based campaigns that weakened the formal role of the party organization.

POLICY

Though the Democratic Party is an amalgam of diverse groups and not all Democrats share the same stances on all issues, certain tendencies may be discerned. By and large, Democrats are more likely than Republicans to favor government management of and intervention in the economy and greater use of federal (as opposed to state) power to address economic and social problems. Democrats have been more receptive to movements concerned with women's rights, gay rights, the environment, and civil liberties and rights. Most modern liberal reform movements have found their natural home in the Democratic Party. The civil rights movement and the feminist movement found it natural to direct their energies there. The Democratic Party, with some internal friction, accommodated such movements.

Southern Democrats—one-third of the party's strength in Congress—are generally more conservative on these issues than northern Democrats. Indeed southern Democrats on many issues constitute the swing group whose support can be gained by either northern Democrats or Republicans to provide the margin of victory in Congress. Southern Democrats have been fairly reluctant to support more liberal economic and social programs. Often they have combined forces with Republicans to support more conservative alternatives.

The Democratic Party considers itself the defender of the public interest against what it considers excessive budget cuts by the Republican Party. Many Democrats have also endorsed the introduction of universal health care, an idea dismissed by Republicans as "socialized medicine," even though the United States is alone among Western democracies in not ensuring universal health care coverage to its citizens. Though they sometimes favor reform of government programs (as Bill Clinton endorsed welfare reform in the mid-1990s and to "mend it, don't end it" on affirmative action), Democrats generally support a more extensive social welfare state and have aimed to protect programs such as Social Security and Medicare.

In foreign affairs, the Democratic Party has traditionally favored a more multilateral approach than Republicans, though Democratic presidents sometimes have engaged in unilateral military action. The Democratic Party has also generally favored less government spending on the military, believing instead that the savings should be spent on domestic programs. In comparison to the Republicans, the Democratic Party also emphasizes human rights as a foundation for foreign policy and that the country has a vital interest in providing humanitarian support and other assistance to the developing world to foster democracy and help increase living standards. Many groups within the Democratic Party, particularly labor and environmental groups, have opposed free-trade agreements, such as the North American Free Trade Agreement and the World Trade Organization, though other, more pro-business-oriented Democrats have endorsed such pacts.

MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY

Membership in an American party is a very informal thing. An American may say, "I am a Democrat," even though he or she has never attended a meeting, paid any party dues, or participated in a political campaign. Membership is purely a matter of self-identification. Anybody may register as a Democrat and vote in the party primaries. American parties, as such, have no control over membership. This is not to suggest that membership is unimportant. Analysts of voting behavior consider voter identification with one or the other party to be the single most reliable way to predict how an American will vote.

Altogether, about one-third to two-fifths of American voters identify themselves as Democrats. Traditional Democratic identifiers have included African Americans (some 85 to 90 percent of black voters have supported Democratic presidential candidates in recent elections), Catholics, Jews, people of lower socioeconomic status, union members, and northeastern urban dwellers. While these groups tend to vote Democratic, few (with the exception of African Americans) can be counted on to vote predictably.

FINANCING

Financial support for Democratic candidates comes from many economic groups, particularly labor unions, interest groups (such as those supporting the environment and women's and civil rights), and many individual contributors. The Democratic Party was once the best financed of the two main political parties, but it lagged behind the Republicans from the 1970s. In the 1980s, for example, the Democratic National Committee had a budget less than one-fourth of its Republican counterpart. In general, the Democrats were slower and less successful in organizing direct-mail fund-raising campaigns and in forming political action committees to put these funds to effective, focused use. The ideological incoherence of the party also impeded fund-raising, and as the Democrats lost control of Congress vested interest groups began shifting their money to the Republicans. Also, a majority of PACS are conservative—sponsored by business and industrial corporations, trade associations, and ideological groups. During the 1990s the Democrats made great strides in competing with the Republicans, relying largely on soft money from wealthy individual contributors. The party also refined its fund-raising activities, and in the early 21st century several Democratic candidates began to harness the Internet as a new method of raising large sums of campaign dollars. Though the party was still not as well financed as the Republicans, it had become more financially competitive.

REPUBLICAN PARTY

HISTORY

The Republican Party was founded in 1854 as a party opposed to the spread of slavery into the frontier areas of the West. It immediately became the party of northern industrial interests and of those who stood to profit by uninhibited westward settlement. With only three brief intervals (Grover Cleveland, 1885–89, 1893–97, and Woodrow Wilson, 1913–21), the Republicans controlled the presidency from 1861 to 1933. During the same period of 64 years, the Republicans controlled the House for 50 years and the Senate for 54. After 1933 the party fell into sharp decline, and, after 1960, it appeared to be in such hapless disarray that some commentators doubted it would survive. Since 1969, however, the party has gained increasing

organizational strength, voter support, and financial well-being. By 1980 a middle-class backlash against government and taxes and a resurgence of conservative social values all contributed to Republican Party strength. It controlled the presidency for 20 of 24 years (1969–93) and in the elections of 1994 it won control of both houses of Congress for the first time since the 1950s. In the early 2000s it controlled both houses of Congress and the presidency, with the election of George W. Bush in 2000 and 2004.

ORGANIZATION

The Republican Party is no more organized than the Democrats, and most of what has been said about the latter applies equally to the Republicans. In the 1970s, however, the party made an effort to develop better machinery to recruit and help candidates and to raise money for them. The Republican National Committee provides candidates with highly sophisticated services such as campaign planning, opinion polling, and development of campaign materials.

The Republican National Committee serves much the same functions as its Democratic counterpart, but it has been far less busy with rule making for the national convention. The Republicans have maintained the winner-take-all system for the selection of most delegates to the convention, for example, the winner of the state primary wins all the state's delegates. In comparison to the proportional rules of the Democratic Party, this has generally meant that Republicans select a presidential nominee more quickly than the Democrats.

POLICY

In general, Republicans are more conservative than Democrats on economic and social issues. While a belief in the superiority of a free-market economy dominates both parties, Republicans are generally much less willing to accept government intervention in the economy and very likely to oppose government regulation. They are also more likely to stake out a conservative position on social issues (antiabortion, anti-gay rights, anti-gun control, pro-capital punishment, pro-family values, and so on.)

Republicans have been generally unsupportive of legislation favoring organized labor. The National Labor Relations Act, which made mass unionism possible in the United States, was passed by the Democrats during the New Deal. Republicans generally opposed the act, supported union reform amendments to it in 1947 and 1959, and resisted attempts to remove some restrictions on unions in the 1970s.

Historically, Republicans have been divided between moderates who have accepted the necessity of some social programs created by the Democrats and true conservatives who favor cutting or abolishing these programs. The moderate wing, loosely associated with the party's old base in the Northeast, was the party establishment (i.e., dominant group) until the middle 1960s. From that point on, beginning with Barry Goldwater's nomination in 1964, the conservative wing has become more dominant. As early as 1968, in the wake of the growing importance of the South and West to the Republican Party, moderates were vetoed off national tickets by southern delegates. With the 1980 election of President Reagan, the conservative wing had ascended. While some moderate Republicans remain (particularly in the Northeast), the party is generally considered to be conservative.

Republicans have been generally opposed to movements seeking change in American society. For example, the Republican Party is generally not supportive of the feminist movement. In the 1970s it supported the Equal Rights Amendment, though it has since opposed such a constitutional change. On the other hand, conservative reform movements have been quite welcome in the Republican Party. The Republican Party has become associated with such proposals as outlawing abortion and same-sex marriage, restoring prayer in public schools, and banning sex education. Conservative Christian groups and right-wing religious leaders have also found a home in the Republican Party.

In foreign policy, both political parties have their "hawks" and "doves." As a general rule, Republicans are inclined to favor larger military budgets and unilateral action when perceived U.S. interests are threatened.

MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY

As with the Democrats, about one-third to two-fifths of Americans identify themselves as Republicans. Traditionally, voters more likely to vote for the Republican Party are those of a higher socioeconomic status, the college educated, businessmen or professionals, and Protestants (particularly Evangelicals). Whereas the Republican Party did not exist as a competitive party in the South from the Civil War to the 1960s, it now dominates election in that region, and it is also very strong in the mountain West.

FINANCING

Republican funds, like Democratic, come from contributions by major economic interests, interest groups, and smaller individual contributions. With the exception of the Teamsters Union (a conglomerate in a variety

of industries but based on truck drivers and warehouse employees), the Republicans get little support from organized labor.

Republicans are better financed than the Democrats, and by a very wide margin. The Republican advantage stems in part from better-planned and more aggressive direct-mail campaigns. It also can be attributed to PAC contributions that exceed those made to the Democrats because a majority of PACs are conservative and represent business and corporate interests that are in tune with the Republican Party.

Minor Political Parties

Roughly speaking, minor parties in the United States are usually parties of ideology and issue. Electoral victory is not the first or most important objective of minor parties. Many are symbolic and wish to make a protest statement. Others focus on a single issue, hoping over time that they can influence either or both of the major parties to endorse their agenda. Still others, Marxist and some conservative parties, for example, wish to serve as a rallying point for the promotion of a particular ideology.

The term "third party" is also applied to groups or candidates who temporarily split off from one of the two major parties, frequently supporting a presidential candidate who failed to win the nomination of one of those parties. Thus, the candidacy of John Anderson in 1980 represented a split in the Republican moderate wing, while the candidacy of George Wallace in 1968 was based on the southern wing of the Democratic Party.

Ross Perot, a Texas billionaire, led a voter revolt of sorts in 1992. As an independent (third-party) candidate supported by an organization he essentially formed and funded, "United We Stand," Perot used his large personal fortune and the discontent of voters with the two major parties to garner 19 percent of the popular vote. His campaign, which focused primarily on the economy and the budget and captured the prevailing antigovernment sentiment, is a perfect example of how money and television exposure can be even more important than the label of a political party. Like other third-party candidates, Perot was largely a protest candidate who prospered in a year in which voters wanted to send a message. The very real voter discontent from which he benefited cannot be discounted as a future issue. But generally, the two major political parties manage to embrace and co-opt successful third-party or candidate movements.

In 2000 Green Party candidate Ralph Nader, a long-time consumer activist, also appealed to those disenchanted with political parties, arguing that there was little difference between the Democrats and Republicans and that they were both captured by corporate interests. Nader had little chance of winning the election but continued in the race, hoping to win at least 5 percent of the national vote, the minimum figure required for a party to be eligible for federal financing for the subsequent presidential election. In the end Nader won only 2.7 percent of the vote, though many experts believe that he siphoned off enough votes from Democratic candidate Al Gore to help Republican George W. Bush win the White House. Nader's candidacy, which appealed much more to liberal voters than conservative ones, highlighted the fact that minor party candidates can sometimes split the votes of a particular party's supporters to assist in the election of the other political party. In 1912, for example, former Republican president Theodore Roosevelt ran as a third-party candidate against Republican president William Howard Taft (Roosevelt's vice president) and Democrat Woodrow Wilson. Roosevelt, the most successful third-party candidate, won 27 percent of the national vote and 88 electoral votes, compared to Taft's 23 percent of the vote and 8 electoral votes. Though the Republican candidates combined for slightly more than half the total votes cast, Wilson was elected president with only 42 percent of the total vote (third-party candidate Eugene V. Debs won 6 percent of the vote in 1912).

Other Political Forces

Alexis de Tocqueville, as an observer of the American system, noted in 1835 that Americans tend to form associations for the purpose of pursuing and protecting their individual interests. The interest or pressure group is a type of association. Its members pursue a common interest by exerting pressure on the political process. Because interest groups are tightly organized to pursue specific objectives, they fill a void not filled by American political parties. American parties, being less well organized and less ideologically consistent, are not as able to express specific interests and positions.

Unlike political parties, interest groups do not compete for public office. Through the formation and funding of political action committees, however, they attempt to influence the outcome of elections. They also expend significant amounts of time and money

on lobbying efforts (i.e., applying pressure on decision makers) to win favorable policy outcomes.

ECONOMIC INTEREST GROUPS

Economic interest groups, which include business, professional, labor, and agricultural groups, are the largest and possibly most important type of interest group.

BUSINESS INTEREST GROUPS

Business interest groups, which include such well-known organizations as the Chamber of Commerce, the National Association of Manufacturers, and the National Small Business Association, have an interest in supporting policies that will enhance their profits. Larger and powerful corporations such as General Motors or Mobil often act as interest groups by themselves. Several thousand business groups and trade associations have offices in Washington, D.C., to lobby Congress and the president. The various business groups are not united on all issues, but they are fairly united on major issues such as lowering business taxes, reducing government regulation, weakening labor unions, and reducing federal spending.

PROFESSIONAL GROUPS

Professional groups such as the American Medical Association and the American Bar Association are also powerful groups in Washington. The American Bar Association, for example, regularly makes recommendations concerning presidential nominees for federal judicial positions. The American Medical Association has considerable influence on health care issues. It opposes, for example, adoption of a national health care program. Its PAC, like all other PACs, makes contributions to candidates who support it on this and other issues. The National Education Association, which represents schoolteachers, works for legislation designed to improve (i.e., generally spend more federal money on) the educational system.

Organized labor is perhaps the most influential type of liberal interest in the United States. The American Federation of Labor–Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL–CIO) contains unions that represent about four-fifths of the total union membership in the United States. The AFL–CIO runs one of the most respected lobbying organizations in Washington as well as the Committee on Political Education (COPE), which provides favored candidates with funds, volunteer help, and lists of potential supporters. Individual unions such as the National Education Association and the United Auto Workers also maintain extensive lobbying and campaigning units. The AFL–CIO and most individual unions have worked for a variety of liberal domestic causes. In addition to working for legislation directly benefiting their members or the unions as organizations, most unions have worked for more general liberal measures such as civil rights and antipoverty legislation. Unions in the United States are not nearly as strong as they were in the mid-20th century. Less than one in seven workers in the United States belongs to a union, and union membership is concentrated in certain regions, being particularly low in the South and Southwest.

AGRICULTURAL INTEREST GROUPS

Agricultural interest groups are a third type of interest group. Family farmers are not as numerous as they once were, and, as a result, groups representing them are less powerful. The largest farm group is the American Farm Bureau. It is a conservative organization, and its members own large farms and are aligned with agribusiness. It generally supports lower taxes (particularly opposing the inheritance tax), free trade, and less government regulation of farming, and it has lobbied the federal government to increase access to foreign markets (without restrictions) for U.S. farmers. The National Grange, the oldest farm group, lobbies for government price support. The National Farmers Organization, formed in 1956, seeks to provide collective bargaining for the sale of produce. The National Farmers Union favors price supports and generally takes liberal positions on social and economic issues. There are some militant farm groups, which favor government intervention to protect family farmers, and many other specialized organizations and/or cooperatives. Thus, unlike business groups, farm groups are sharply divided on objectives, making it unlikely that they will unite their lobbying efforts.

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

In addition to economic-interest groups, there are many so-called special-interest groups. Interest groups are formed on almost every issue. Some struggle for political, social, and economic equality. Some are concerned primarily with social and moral issues and seek, as such, governmental policies in accord with their morality. The groups advocating and protesting a woman's right to an abortion are one example. Women, African Americans, consumers, environmentalists, churches, right-wing religious fundamentalists, gun owners, and others have well-organized groups working on their behalf.

LOBBYING

Lobbying refers to the methods and tactics employed to pressure governmental decision makers. The 1946 Federal Lobbying Act requires groups to register with the clerk of the House and the secretary of the Senate if they wish to influence legislation. Interest groups maintain professional staffs, often including former members of Congress, in Washington.

There are two main types of lobbying activity. Direct lobbying refers to lobbying that takes place in congressional committees and executive agencies. Many groups provide experts to testify before the committees. They also work one-on-one to provide information to win support from individual members of Congress or heads of executive departments. Very often, group PACs will reward sympathetic representatives and senators with campaign contributions. Indirect lobbying usually involves massive letter-writing, phone, fax, or e-mail campaigns directed by lobbyists in Washington. Many lobbying efforts are more subtle and nonpolitical. Public relations campaigns, complete with television advertisements, are often used to raise public support or dampen public criticism of a group's interests and goals. Interest groups may also organize mass demonstrations to project their support and potential power.

PACS AND CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTIONS

Interest groups are very much involved in electoral politics. Through campaign contributions, they reward candidates for past support and encourage them to give support in the future. Another tactic is to work for the defeat of candidates they oppose. Through the formation of independent committees (not linked directly to a specific candidate's organization), some groups spend huge amounts of money to this end. A prime example is the Moral Majority's 1980 election campaign against what it called moral decay and its promotion of its own view of Christian values. Of the six liberal senators targeted for defeat, all but one lost. Neither the Moral Majority nor any other group has enjoyed this level of success since 1980, but the threat of an organized group running negative advertisements and campaigning against a candidate has more than a few members of Congress concerned. Interest groups also organize their members in get-out-the-vote drives. A part of this effort includes convincing members to vote for a specific candidate in a given election.

As noted earlier, in the discussion of campaign finance, PAC campaign contributions are very significant. In the l950s, organized labor established a political action committee, the Committee on Political Education, which has served as a model for others. Now almost all interest groups have such an organization. The largest contributors are corporate PACs, followed closely by trade, health, and labor PACs. Lesser contributors were ideological PACs, followed at some distance by agricultural PACs.

National Prospects

Bill Clinton was elected to the presidency in 1992 as a self-described agent of change. After 12 years of Republican rule, the voters had given the Democrats an opportunity to implement their agenda. Clinton's 1992 platform aimed to cut the country's enormous budget deficit, proposed a host of new programs (such as universal health care), and promised reforms of the welfare and campaign finance systems. His agenda faced intense opposition from Republicans, however, who disliked Clinton personally and ideologically. Though Clinton enjoyed a healthy majority in Congress, many of his programs died or were watered down. His health care proposal, shaped by his wife, Hillary Rodham Clinton, was a cornerstone of his legislative agenda and failed miserably in Congress. Despite this and other setbacks, Clinton had major successes, passing numerous major policy initiatives, such as strict handgun control laws, family and medical leave, and a budget deficit reduction package, and he oversaw a breakthrough in the Middle East peace process. Nevertheless, after Clinton's first two years in office, public disapproval of Clinton's polices was high, and the Republicans swept to power in both houses of Congress in 1994 for the first time since the 1950s.

Republicans quickly attempted to flex their muscle. They tried to force through many of their changes, and in late 1995 Clinton and the Republicans, led by House speaker Newt Gingrich, squared off. When Clinton refused to sign the budget put forward by the Republicans and the Republicans refused to pass a palatable continuing resolution that would keep the government funded until a budget agreement could be hammered out, the government was twice forced into a partial shutdown. Clinton won the showdown, and the public embraced his approach. Clinton rode a wave of support to easily win a second term in office.

During Clinton's second term the Republicans and Democrats compromised on a series of policies, such

as balancing the budget and welfare reform. Nevertheless, Clinton was a polarizing political and personal figure. An independent counsel appointed early in his term to investigate a land deal while Clinton was governor of Arkansas expanded his investigation and eventually uncovered evidence of an extramarital affair between Clinton and an intern. Though Clinton repeatedly denied the affair, he was forced to admit the allegations were true after irrefutable evidence was made public. As a result, the Republicans in Congress impeached Clinton for perjury and obstruction of justice. Clinton was, however, acquitted by the Senate, and he enjoyed generally favorable ratings during the remainder of his term—though the public expressed a distaste for Clinton's personal conduct.

In 2000 the Democrats nominated Clinton's vice president, Al Gore, and the Republicans selected Texas governor George W. Bush, the son of President George Bush. The campaign was quite bitter, a symbol of the polarizing of American politics. The subsequent general election was among the closest in American history, with Gore emerging slightly ahead in the popular vote. On election day, however, the result was unclear. The outcome eventually centered on the outcome in Florida, where Bush's brother Jeb was governor. Democrats alleged that a confusing (and, they charged, illegal) ballot design in Palm Beach County had led thousands of voters to cast votes erroneously for third-party candidate Pat Buchanan, and that many more votes failed to be counted in which the voter had clearly intended to vote for Gore. For more than a month after the election, the result was still undecided. Lawyers for both sides intervened, and the Florida Supreme Court eventually ordered a manual recount of tens of thousands of undervotes. The state Supreme Court decision reduced Bush's lead over Gore to less than 200 in the state, but the ruling was quickly appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court, which reversed by a 5 to 4 vote the Florida court's decision, effectively awarding the presidency to Bush.

Bush was inaugurated amid a divided electorate. Half of the public had voted against Bush, and many Gore voters considered Bush an illegitimate president. With the presidency, the Republicans controlled both the executive and legislative branches (though Bush's majority would later be lost after a defection by a Republican senator). Bush quickly passed many of his major policy initiatives, including a massive tax-cut bill. The terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, greatly changed his presidency, which had up to that point focused primarily on domestic policies. The public, shocked by the deadliest terrorist incident on U.S. soil, rallied behind the president and his global war on terrorism. Bush soon launched an invasion of Afghanistan, whose Taliban government harbored terrorist mastermind Osama bin Laden, and Bush prepared for an invasion of Iraq, whose government was suspected by the Bush administration of possessing weapons of mass destruction and coordinating with al-Qaeda, bin Laden's terrorist network. In March 2003 Bush began a war against Iraq that toppled Saddam Hussein's government. After declaring the cessation of major military operations and victory, Bush ordered U.S. forces to occupy Iraq and to help oversee a transition to democracy. Over the following year Bush faced criticism, as no weapons of mass destruction were uncovered and investigations into the links between al-Qaeda and Hussein found no proof of coordination. Bush's public approval ratings suffered amid growing public opposition to America's involvement in Iraq and dissatisfaction with his handling of the economy, which was sluggish for much of his term.

In 2004 Bush faced no Republican opposition and was easily renominated for a second term. After a spirited primary campaign, in which Howard Dean emerged as an antiestablishment and antiwar candidate, the Democrats nominated John Kerry, a three-term senator from Massachusetts who had served in the Vietnam War but who became a leading critic of the war after he returned from his tour of duty. The Bush-Kerry campaign was acrimonious, underscoring the reality that the country was as polarized in 2004 as it had been in 2000 and under the Clinton presidency. The 2004 election was nearly a replay of the 2000 contest; Kerry carried all but two of the states Gore won in 2000, and Bush won all but one of the states he captured in 2000. The war in Iraq, terrorism, the economy, and moral values (particularly the issue of same-sex marriage, which was outlawed by voters in 11 states on election day 2004) dominated the campaign, which ended with Bush capturing 51 percent of the vote and becoming the first president since his father in 1988 to win a majority of the votes cast, and a narrow victory in the electoral college.

Upcoming elections promise to be equally acrimonious, reflecting the essentially divided and polarized nature of the voting public. A skyrocketing budget deficit and the prospect of future terrorist attacks represent major challenges for the country in the coming years.

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ORIENTAL REPUBLIC OF URUGUAY

(República Oriental del Uruguay)

By Christine Ehrick, Ph.D.



Uruguay, a small nation of 3.4 million people (2005 est.), lies between Brazil and Argentina on the Atlantic coast of South America. Other than a small African-descent minority, most Uruguayans are of European descent, largely the result of substantial immigration from southern Europe starting in the mid-l9th century.

Uruguay has a complex political history. Although characterized among Latin American nations as possessing deeply rooted democratic institutions, postindependence civil wars endured in Uruguay into the 20th century. From that point until the 1960s the nation was characterized by an unusual degree of political stability, extensive social welfare programs, and even experiments with a plural executive, earning Uruguay the title "Switzerland of South America." Beginning in the 1950s, however, the economy began to decline, and the period of economic dislocation and stagnation that followed gave rise to increased political unrest and violence. In the 1960s an urban guerrilla organization known as the Tupamaros undertook a number of daring and violent actions such as kidnapping, town seizures, and bank robberies. Escalating violence and political polarization culminated in an active military intervention in politics for the first time in the century. This led to the eventual seizure of power by the armed forces in 1973, when the legislature was dissolved, leftist political parties were outlawed, and opposition newspapers were shut down. By 1975 all remaining parties were outlawed, and in 1976 the president was deposed. During this period of military rule, repression was severe, thousands were imprisoned, and torture was common.

In 1980 the military government called an election to seek a popular mandate for its continued political presence. The defeat of the military in this plebiscite was the first step in the Uruguayan transition to democracy and civilian rule. In 1982 the military lifted the ban on the Colorado, National, and other more traditional parties; in 1984 the Broad Front—a coalition of leftist parties—was allowed to reconstitute itself, although other parties on the left remained banned. In 1984 partially free elections were held (two leading opposition politicians were prevented from running for office by the military), and Colorado Julio Maria Sanguinetti was elected president.

In 1989 the first completely open presidential elections since 1971 were held, and the National Party candidate, Luis Alberto Lacalle, was elected to the presidency, only the third National Party presidency in the country's history. In those elections the reconstituted Broad Front won a plurality of votes in the capital city of Montevideo and since that point has maintained political control over the *intendencia,* or departmental governorship. The Broad Front continued to gain electoral support in 1994, when it nearly tied with both the Colorado Party and the National Party, winning almost one-third of the seats in both houses of the legislature. In January 1997 new constitutional reforms (passed by referendum in 1996) went into effect, significantly altering the country's electoral laws. Among other things, the reforms largely

dismantled the country's complicated system of the double simultaneous vote, establishing primary elections, a presidential runoff, and separate elections for national and municipal government. These changes helped to prevent a victory of the left/progressive Broad Front in the 1999 elections and shaped a new level of cooperation between the center-right National (Blanco) Party and Colorado Party. A severe economic downturn and the perceived ineptitude of the Colorado-Blanco government helped strengthen the left/progressive coalition, which succeeded in winning the national elections in 2004. Thus, Uruguay joined neighboring Brazil and Argentina as countries with left/progressive governments, elected on platforms that were critical of neoliberal economic reform.

The System of Government

Uruguay has a presidential system with a strong bicameral legislature.

EXECUTIVE

Underneath the president is a vice president, who presides over both legislative houses and a Council of Ministers, whose members are appointed by the president and whose posts have traditionally been shared with the minority (usually the National) party. A 1986 constitutional amendment returned the power to command the armed forces to the president.

Although the presidency has been the most common arrangement, Uruguay has twice this century experimented with plural executives (1919–33 and 1951–66). The 1952 constitution created a nine-member National Council of Government, with six members from the majority party and three from the minority party (the post of president rotated annually). The constitution of 1966 returned the country to a single presidency and a stronger executive, although a process of coparticipation in the presidential cabinet still remained. The 1997 constitutional reform requires for the first time that the president be elected by an absolute majority, providing for runoff elections between the two candidates with the most votes if no one candidate receives more than 50 percent. It also provides the president with greater control over the heads of state agencies than ever before. These changes are likely to strengthen the hand of the executive vis-à-vis the legislative branch and political parties.

LEGISLATURE

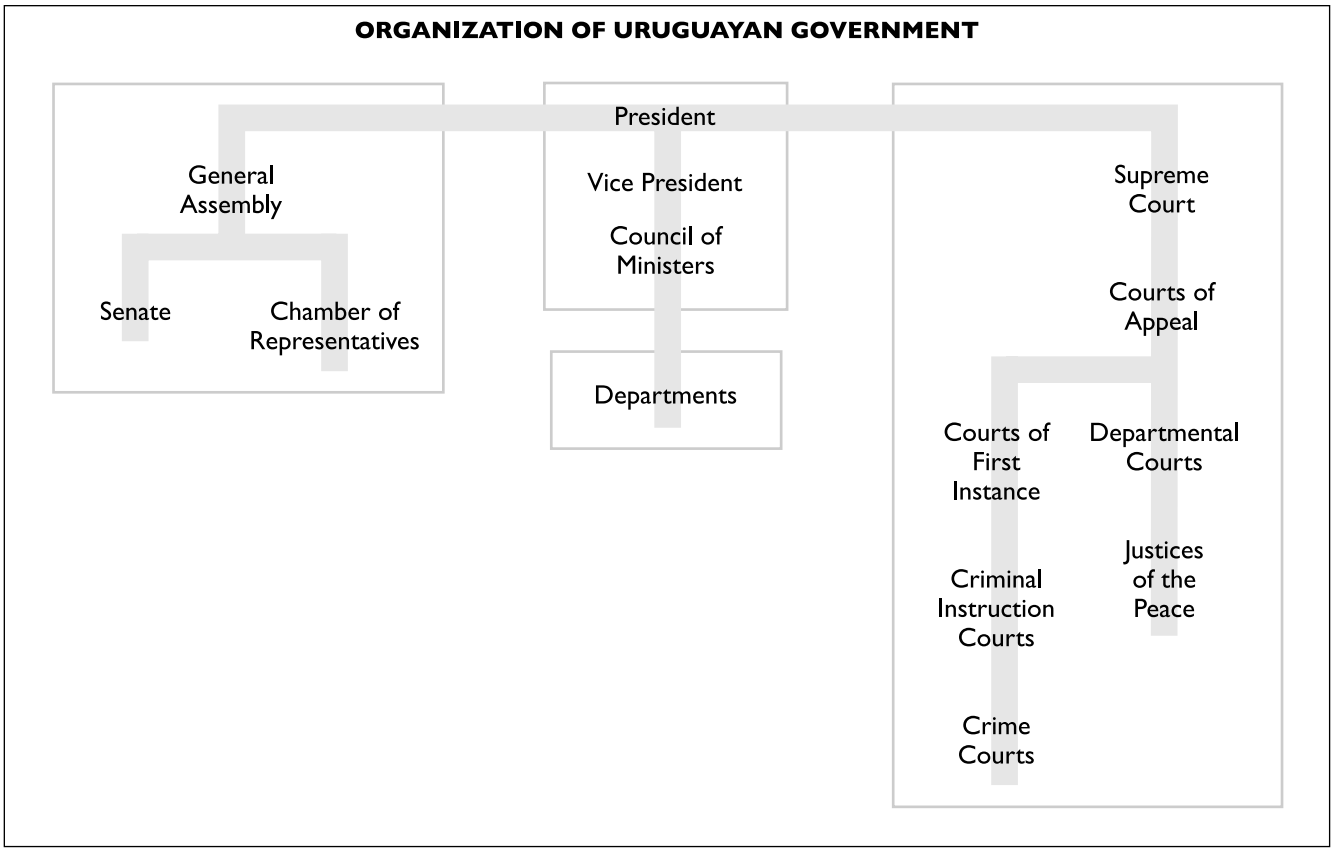
Uruguay has a bicameral legislative branch, consisting of a 30-member Senate and a 99-member Chamber of Representatives. By a system of proportional representation, senators are elected by the country as a whole, while representatives are elected from each of the 19 departments, with each department having at least two representatives. Among other duties, the legislature oversees the election of members of the Supreme Court of Justice and the Electoral Court, which oversees and regulates the electoral process. Legislative powers are extensive, and historically Uruguay has possessed one of the strongest legislative branches in Latin America, although the constitutional reforms may change that somewhat. Within the legislative bodies, factionalism within the parties is most visible, as alliances are frequently formed across party lines.

JUDICIARY

The constitution establishes the judicial branch as an independent body. During military rule, the courts were largely under the control of the military and military officers were appointed to the highest courts. The judiciary regained its autonomy in 1985, however, largely reestablishing previous constitutional provisions. At the top of the Uruguayan court system is the Supreme Court, which oversees both civilian and military courts. Elected by the legislative branch, it appoints judges to the appellate courts and nominates those for other lower courts. It has the power to modify the judgments of the appellate courts, and it is the only judicial body that can rule unconstitutional a law passed by the legislative branch. Most of the high courts—including the Supreme Court and the appellate courts—are located in Montevideo. Outside of the capital, municipal judges rule on most minor cases in the departments.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The nation is divided into 19 local divisions, known as departments. Executive power resides in a governor (or *intendente*) and below that in a 31-member departmental board. Under the old system, local government (especially outside of Montevideo) had little autonomy and scarce economic resources. The constitutional reform aims to decentralize political authority by requiring separate elections for local government and by allocating a share of the national budget to municipal governments. The constitutional



reform also allows voters to split tickets for the first time, voting for a president of one party and an *intendente* of another, for example. Traditionally the strongest party outside the capital and littoral departments, the National Party has been helped by the reform at the departmental level. The reforms are likely to result in some moderate decentralization of power toward the departmental level, and, as such, the constitutional reform was heavily supported among voters in the interior.

The Electoral System

In 1916 universal male suffrage was enacted in Uruguay, and in 1932 the vote was extended to women. Voting in most national elections is mandatory, beginning at the legal voting age of 18. Prior to the 1997 reforms the Uruguayan electoral system was noteworthy for its complexity. In 1925 the system known as the "double simultaneous vote" was established, which allows for various intraparty factions—known as *sublemas*—to run rival slates of candidates. The winner of the presidential race, in turn, was the candidate who received the most votes in the winning party; thus, the president was not necessarily the single candidate who secured the most votes (this was the case in 1994). Elections to the legislature were even more complicated, resulting in citizen complaints that they never knew who their votes were actually going to.

The reformed constitution, in contrast, allows only one presidential candidate per political party and provides for direct primary elections prior to the general election. The law also provides for direct citizen selection of the presidential candidate for their party under certain conditions. These are: if one primary candidate receives at least 50 percent of the vote; or if the leading candidate receives at least 40 percent of the vote and the second-place candidate receives at least 10 percent fewer votes. Lacking either of those conditions, the selection of presidential candidate will be made by the party convention, whose members are directly elected by party-affiliated voters. Voting in primary elections is voluntary, whereas voting in the national elections remains mandatory. For the election of members of the legislature, the new constitution establishes a more streamlined proportional representation system.

The Party System

ORIGINS OF THE PARTIES

Uruguay's traditional parties are as old as the country itself, originating in 19th-century divisions between liberals and conservatives. Armed conflict characterized relations between the parties for much of the 19th century, reaching a high point during the so-called Great War of 1843–52, itself a decisive moment in party consolidation. Armed confrontation largely came to an end in the early 20th century as the Colorado Party consolidated control under a system of power sharing—or coparticipation—with the rival National Party. While the National Party (or Blancos) became a perpetual opposition party, they were a large minority and received significant votes and elective offices. Blancos and Colorados between them won about 90 percent of the vote until the mid-1960s, when one starts to see the expansion of leftist parties from their previously marginal electoral role. In 1971 the first serious challenge to the bipartisan system was mounted, when the Frente Amplio (or Broad Front) was formed as a coalition of many of the social democratic and left-wing parties. It has steadily increased its share of the vote since the return to civilian rule.

THE PARTIES IN LAW

Party activities and elections are supervised by a National Electoral Court. A party that wishes to participate in national elections is required to register with the court, a relatively easy process. The General Assembly allocates campaign funds for the Electoral Court to distribute among the parties in proportion to the number of votes they received during the previous election.

PARTY ORGANIZATION

Uruguayan political parties are highly factionalized. In general, the parties are made up of a series of *lemas* and *sublemas*, more often based around a particular leader than around any consistent or coherent set of ideals. Within the traditional parties, certain families have served in party leadership roles for generations. At election time especially, the traditional parties organize and/or revive neighborhood political clubs, which serve to strengthen alliances and to rally support in a particular neighborhood or town. Unlike traditional parties, the Broad Front maintains party offices and base committees on a permanent basis, especially in Montevideo. Political election campaigning is vigorous, using handbills, sound trucks, and radio and television to publicize particular candidates or party groupings. The Broad Front especially takes advantage of its highly mobilized constituency to stage mass political rallies on the streets of the capital. It is difficult to say what changes the new constitutional regime will bring to internal party organization, but it is likely to result in new coalitions and splinterings as the three main parties jockey for political control. The center-right Blanco-Colorado alliance to prevent a victory by the left in 1999 is one such example of these new political groupings in the wake of the constitutional reform. What this means for the two traditional parties over the long run remains to be seen.

Major Political Parties

COLORADO PARTY

(Partido Colorado)

HISTORY

Like the rival National Party, the Colorado Party is organized around the image of several of its heroic leaders, the most important being Fructuoso Rivera, the hero of the "defense" of Montevideo during the protracted struggle against the Blancos during the Great War (1843–52). During this century, the most important leader was José Batlle y Ordóñez, who headed the party for the first three decades of this century and oversaw the construction of much of the nation's extensive welfare state policies. During the period of military rule, parts of the Colorado Party were close to the military leadership, and this has tarnished the party's reputation among certain sectors of Uruguayan society. With the Jorge Batlle presidency (grandnephew of José Batlle y Ordóñez) of 2000–2005, perceived by many Uruguayans as corrupt and inept in the face of a severe economic crisis, the Colorados reached a new nadir of support. The party will have to work hard in coming years to rebuild its standing with important sectors of the population.

ORGANIZATION

Historically, the Colorado Party has had its strongest support in Montevideo and within the ranks of organized labor, although support in both these arenas has waned somewhat in recent years. The armed forces have been and continue to be a strong base of Colorado support. Patronage politics has played an important role, particularly within the public sector, and it has traditionally served to cement loyalties between this

group and the Colorado Party. Newspapers in Uruguay are highly partisan. The Colorado Party perspective is disseminated in newspapers such as *El Diario* and *La Mañana*.

POLICY

The Colorado Party has traditionally supported and promoted pro-labor legislation and was the main political force behind the welfare state legislation enacted earlier in the century. In recent years, the dominant *lemas* in the party have become increasingly neoliberal in outlook, promoting open markets and privatization of previously government-run agencies and enterprises. Unlike his predecessor, Batlle maintained a strongly neoliberal stance, advocating privatizations and free trade pacts and enjoying a close relationship with the George W. Bush administration in the United States. These positions were largely unpopular and cost Batlle politically. The party continues to maintain its anticlerical stance, historically a key part of its political philosophy. Some earlier Colorado leaders were outspoken defenders of equal civic and political rights for women, and the Colorados continue to define themselves as the champions of women's rights in Uruguay.

MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY

Although party membership cuts across regional, class, and ethnic lines, members of the Colorado Party have traditionally been more urban, more working class, and more immigrant (and within that more Italian) than the population as a whole. Starting in the 1960s, however, many young well-educated members of the urban middle class began to be disillusioned with the traditional parties and gravitated toward the left. Outside of the capital, the Colorados strongest base is in the departments of the littoral, most notably Canelones.

FINANCING

The largest single source of party revenues is the funds provided by the government to help finance campaigns. Membership dues and contributions from business and labor groups are also important.

LEADERSHIP

Jorge Batlle was among the few Colorado Party veterans who were not totally discredited by association with military rule, but his presidency has seriously damaged his political reputation. Guillermo Stirling was an interior minister under Batlle and one of the only Batlle cabinet members to maintain a respectable reputation with the public. In June 2004 Stirling was confirmed as the Colorado presidential nominee in a primary election whose outcome was a foregone conclusion; he eventually lost the general election to Tabaré Vázquez. Former two-time president Julio María Sanguinetti and his Batllista Forum *sublema* remain a dominant faction within the party. In 2004 Sanguinetti was reconfirmed as the party's secretary-general, a post he has held for over 20 years. Both Batlle and Sanguinetti endorsed Stirling's unsuccessful candidacy, despite internal party divisions.

PROSPECTS

It is perhaps too early to say whether Colorado hegemony over Uruguayan politics has come to an end. Although the party won the elections in 1999, it was only after entering into coalition with its historical rival, the National Party. The Batlle government was so unpopular that it may take some time for the Colorados to repair their image with the Uruguayan public. Yet the party has always demonstrated extraordinary flexibility, and its capacity for political survival should not be underestimated.

NATIONAL PARTY

(Partido Nacional; Blancos)

HISTORY

The National or Blanco Party emerged among those favoring a federalist, rather than a centralist, system of government in the era following independence. One of the party's earliest leaders was General Manuel Oribe, who led the siege of Montevideo in the Great War of the mid-19th century. His followers wore white hatbands and were hence known as Blancos, differentiating themselves from their red hatband-wearing adversaries, the Colorados (Reds). The last armed Blanco uprisings were under the leadership of Aparicio Saravia, who led a series of rebellions against the Colorados at the turn of the 20th century. The 1920s saw the aggressive entry of the landed elite into electoral politics, personified in the figure of Luis Alberto de Herrera, who remained one of the principal leaders of the National Party until his death in 1959. That same year marked the beginning of eight years of National Party control over the executive (1959–67), the first National Party governments of the century. During the military dictatorship, certain more moderate factions of the party became outspoken critics of the military regime. In part as a result of the National Party opposition role, Luis Alberto Lacalle was elected president in 1989. In 1999 the Blancos crossed an extraordinary political line, entering into coalition with their historic

rivals, the Colorados, to prevent a victory by the left in the second round of voting.

ORGANIZATION

While the party's greatest strength is in the rural areas, Blancos are found in all parts of the country. Intraparty differences and factionalization have been less than in the Colorado Party, organizational discipline tighter, and internal democracy more limited than among the Colorados. *El Pais* is the most important pro–National Party newspaper in the country.

POLICY

The National Party has generally supported more conservative economic policies than the Colorados and has been more openly supportive of free-market policies, especially those seen as beneficial to the large landed elites and the agroexport sector. Historically, the party has been more supportive of the Catholic Church and more anti-Communist than its main political rivals. During and after military rule, certain sectors of the National Party were very critical of the armed forces and defended the restoration of political and civil rights to the citizenry.

MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY

The National Party has long had its roots in the Uruguayan countryside and among rural elites. Wealthy ranchers, owners of large farms, people involved in the export trade, rural workers, and inhabitants of small towns have been the party's strongest backers. Support for the National Party in rural areas often crosses class lines in part because of the traditional association of the Colorado Party with Montevideo. They temporarily gained in electoral strength following the return to democracy as a result of association of the Colorados with the military and with corruption. The constitutional reform has helped the party to consolidate its control over politics in the interior at the departmental and municipal level. The National Party captured 13 of 19 governorships in the 1999 elections.

FINANCING

Like the Colorados, the National Party's major source of revenues has been government subsidies, supplemented by contributions from ranchers, big business, and farmers.

LEADERSHIP

In the June 2004 primary elections the Blancos were the only party in which there was any contest, as conservative longtime party leader Luis Alberto Lacalle faced the more moderate former mayor of the interior city of Paysandú, Jorge Larrañaga. Lacalle is the head of the *sublema* known as *herrerismo*, named for the important National Party leader (and Lacalle's grandfather), Luis Alberto de Herrera. The *herreristas* represent the most conservative and Catholic wing of the party. In the primaries, Larrañaga defeated Lacalle by a margin of two to one. Larrañaga's claim to be a political outsider and his support for more progressive measures allows the Blancos to compete more directly with the left for moderate voters.

PROSPECTS

For much of this century, the National Party has acted as the (mostly conservative) opposition to the Colorados. As the traditional two-party system has broken down, the Colorados and Blancos have worked together, acting as a center-right coalition to defeat the left. Most recently, the National Party has sought to challenge the left on its own territory, supporting moderate progressive reforms. If the party can succeed in this, while building on its already strong base in the interior, it may be able to emerge as the principal center-right party, eclipsing the long-dominant Colorados.

BROAD FRONT

(Frente Amplio)

HISTORY

The Broad Front was founded in 1971 by Colorados dissidents Zelmar Michelini and Hugo Batalla. The party consists of a coalition of left and center-left parties, including the Socialist Party and Communist Party. In the elections of 1971, the Broad Front won 20 percent of the vote, the first time in the history of the nation that a third political force had captured so large a percentage of the electorate. The party was outlawed during military rule and not allowed to fully participate in the 1984 elections, but in 1989 the party won the municipal elections in Montevideo (home to nearly half the country's population), and the Socialist Tabaré Vázquez was elected mayor of the capital city. In 1994 the Front entered into a new coalition with more moderate left parties, forming the Broad Front–Progressive Encounter (FA–EP). In that same year the party received over 30 percent of the vote, marking a definitive end to the two-party system that had characterized Uruguayan politics since independence. In the 1999 presidential elections the Broad Front won the first round with over 38 percent of the vote, but

it was defeated in the second round by a Colorado-National coalition. In 2004 the party won 52 percent of the vote in the first round, thus preventing a second round of voting and a repeat of 1999. Vázquez became the country's new president.

ORGANIZATION

The Broad Front is a diverse coalition of groups of varying ideological orientation. Despite factionalism, it has so far maintained a single presidential candidate, unlike the other major parties. The party has suffered from a series of splits over the years, however, over this and other issues, mostly the result of divisions between center-left and radical left-wing groups. In 1989 the Christian Democrats and the center-left Party for Popular Government abandoned the Broad Front and formed the New Space. Later that year the former guerrilla organization the National Liberation Movement (MLN, or Tupamaros) was allowed to join the Front along with other groups of the radical left. It remains to be seen what the constitutional reform will mean for the Broad Front, but it is almost sure to weaken the position of the smaller parties within the coalition. The newspapers *Brecha* and *La Repüblica* represent a Broad Front perspective and are aimed at their constituency.

POLICY

Over the years the Broad Front has been critical of the military dictatorship and has become the main opposition to neoliberal economic reform. It strongly supported the repeal of the law granting amnesty to military officers accused of human rights abuses and has opposed many of the government's privatization plans. The party strongly supported the 2003 referendum to overturn a 2001 law calling for the privatization of Uruguay's national oil company and has called for a constitutional amendment to prohibit privatization of the nation's public utilities. Although the party strongly supported the repeal of the law granting amnesty to military officers accused of human rights abuses, Tabaré Vázquez promised there would be no witch hunt against military leaders when he won the presidential elections in 2004. Many of its parties are Marxist in orientation, and some support more radical political and economic policies, but moderates have for the most part dominated in the formulation of Broad Front policy.

MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY

Unlike the Colorado Party and Blanco Party, the Broad Front has formal membership. Leadership is much more centralized, but party members elect party leadership. Support for the party is strong among labor unions and increasingly among public-sector employees, who see the neoliberal policies of the traditional parties as a threat. The Broad Front is also strong among Uruguayan youth, particularly university students, and among thousands of Uruguayans returning from political exile since the return to democracy.

FINANCING

In addition to government funds, the Broad Front also receives funds from party members and labor unions.

LEADERSHIP

Internal power struggles between moderate and radical sectors have plagued the party since its formation. The party's most important leader, General Líber Seregni (d. 2004), one of its founders, resigned as party head in 1996 as a result of disputes over the constitutional reform. Moderates have gained in recent years due to the fact that these groups have received the most votes in national elections. Oncologist and former mayor of Montevideo Tabaré Vázquez was the party's longstanding presidential candidate and most visible leader; he finally won the presidency in 2004. One of the party's most important factions is the Uruguayan Assembly, a moderate left group centered around the leader Danilo Astori. Longtime mayor of Montevideo Mariano Arana has distinguished himself for his approachability and personal style of leadership and remains very popular in the capital. Within the party one also finds one of the most important women in Uruguayan politics, Marina Arismendi, leader of the Communist Party.

PROSPECTS

The Broad Front's victory in the presidential elections in 2004 marked a watershed for the party and for Uruguayan politics generally. The party's continued growth and success will depend on its ability to govern effectively in both the capital and the interior. In any case, the Broad Front has clearly established itself on the nation's political landscape and will remain an important factor for many years to come.

Minor Political Parties

The most important of the smaller parties is the Nuevo Espacio (or New Space) Party. The New Space was formed after Christian Democrats and other center-left groups broke away from the Broad Front

in 1989, protesting the party's decision to allow radical left groups to join the coalition. Since the 1999 elections the party seems to be near extinction, even if its leader Rafael Michelini retains a certain popularity and visibility. In August 2004 the New Space announced it had entered into a new coalition with the Broad Front, under the New Majority banner. This seems to confirm that, with the growing strength of the moderate factions within the Broad Front, the New Space finds its political niche disappearing. In 2002 a new Liberal Party was founded in Uruguay. Calling for massive reductions in taxes and in the size of government, the party supports traditional principles of economic liberalism and is strongly opposed to the anti-privatization platform of the left. The party presented a candidate in the 2004 presidential elections, but it is unlikely to have much of an impact in the short run.

Other Political Forces

MILITARY

A 1986 amnesty law prevents the prosecution of military officers on human rights abuse charges. Sectors on the left organized a plebiscite to repeal the law, but after a protracted struggle, voters in 1989 chose by a slim margin to retain the provisions of the law. Despite restored executive control over the armed forces, the military continues to exercise influence and is unlikely to return to its previously depoliticized role anytime in the near future.

ORGANIZED LABOR

The single largest labor organization in Uruguay is the PIT–CNT (the Interunion Workers' Assembly–National Workers Convention), which claims to represent about one-fourth of Uruguayan workers. Its origins date back to the mid-1960s, when the National Workers Convention unified many of the nation's labor unions under a single body. Labor unions were largely outlawed during military rule, with legal status and the right to strike restored in 1985. The current PIT–CNT vocally opposed many of the economic prescriptions of the administrations of the 1990s and early 2000s. Politically, it has supported the Broad Front and has actively mobilized support in its favor. Starting in the late 1960s one has also seen the rise of white-collar radicalism, especially among bankers and public-sector employees.

INTEREST GROUPS

As one of the oldest and strongest welfare states in Latin America, Uruguay has strongly resisted many aspects of neoliberal reform. The Uruguayan National Organization of Retirees' and Pensioners' Associations (ONAJPU), an umbrella organization of some 120 groups, has been an important voice in the debate surrounding social security reform and other related issues. The Federation of Uruguayan University Students (FEUU), often acting in alliance with labor unions and other groups, has campaigned for increased state support for education and in defense of teachers and university employees. Among the more conservative interest groups is the Rural Federation, representing large landowners, which continues to exercise an important influence on the traditional parties. Although the nation is nominally Catholic, it is highly secular, and the church has rarely played a substantial role in politics.

National Prospects

Uruguay has stood out among Latin American nations in popular opposition to neoliberal economic reforms. The Blanco/Colorado united front was unable to prevent a left victory in the elections of 2004. By winning 52 percent of the votes in the first round in October 2004, the Broad Front, led by Tabaré Vázquez, was able to avoid a runoff election in November. Uruguay's political future will depend on the evolution of the regional economic crisis, and whether the timid recovery witnessed in 2003 continues. More economic hardship and turmoil could certainly shake Uruguay's notable political stability.

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REPUBLIC OF UZBEKISTAN

(Ozbekiston Respublikasy)

By Roger D. Kangas, Ph.D.



Uzbekistan is one of the five Central Asian successor states of the former Soviet Union. The government declared independence in September 1991. The country's estimated population is 26.8 million (2005 est.), in an area of 447,500 square kilometers. As nearly 42 percent of the country is covered with desert terrain, population density is a problem in parts of Uzbekistan.

The System of Government

Uzbekistan is presidential republic with a bicameral legislature.

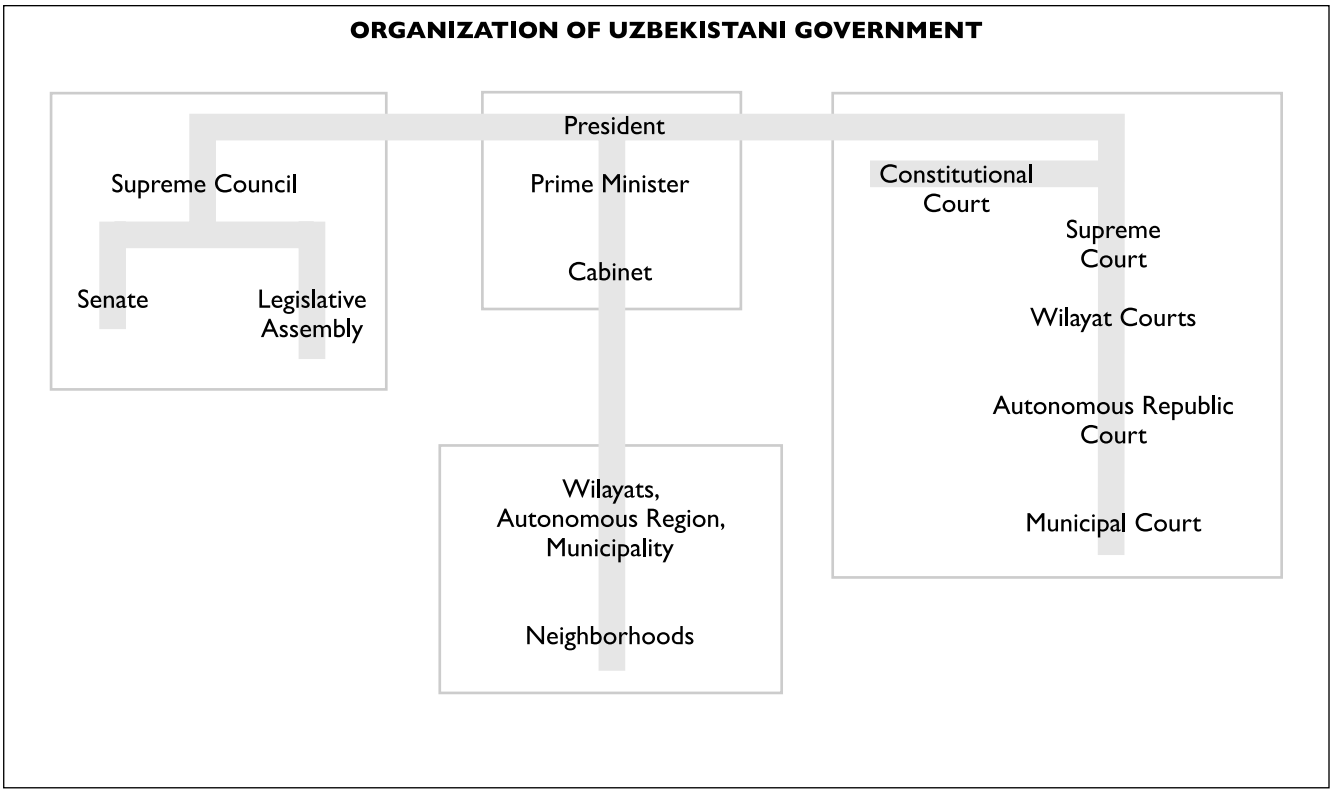
EXECUTIVE

On March 24, 1990, the first secretary of the Uzbek Communist Party, Islam Karimov, was elected president of the Uzbekistan Soviet Socialist Republic while it was still part of the Soviet Union. He easily won the postindependence presidential election of December 29, 1991, with 86 percent of the vote. A referendum on March 26, 1995, extended Karimov's term to the year 2000. On January 9, 2000, Karimov decisively won reelection with 91.9 percent of the vote (his opponent, Abdulkhafiz Jalalov garnered 4.2 percent of the vote). In 2002 the constitution was revised to extend presidential terms to seven years. Starting with the 2002 election Uzbekistan's presidents are limited to two consecutive terms in office. Karimov has successfully maintained a strong grip on power and has had no real challengers to his authority. This is partially because the opposition is divided but also because Karimov has been able to assume control of the organs of power (internal police and the military) in Uzbekistan.

Constitutionally, the president is afforded a wide range of powers, including the right of initiation and approval of legislation, the right to determine government policy, and the right to appoint a number of top national and regional officials. Karimov has been more than willing to exercise these powers and has successfully created an environment wherein the cabinet is constantly reshuffled and potential rivals or successors are rotated out of high office before they become too popular. This was the case with former vice president Shukhrulla Mirsiadov, whose position was actually abolished in January 1992. The cabinet, which is the highest executive council, is headed by an appointed prime minister. Prime ministers have included Utkir Sultanov and Shavkat Mirziyayev. The latter has held the position since December 11, 2003.

LEGISLATURE

The Oliy Majlis (Supreme Council or Soviet) is a direct carryover from the Soviet period, with some changes. According to the constitution, the Oliy Majlis is the highest political body in Uzbekistan. It is charged with initiating and passing legislation, as well as executing



policies through committee work. It meets on a regular basis—two times a year plus any special sessions—and has both public and closed sessions. To date it has not acted in line with its constitutional importance and instead takes the lead from the president. Since independence the Oliy Majlis has voted only once against President Karimov—and that was to consider the extension of his presidential term as constituting part of his first, not second, term against his "objections" (thus affording him the right to run again in the 2000 election).

Originally comprised of 500 members, the Oliy Majlis was reduced to 250 with the election on December 25, 1994. The December 26, 2004, election saw a further change in the Oliy Majlis, as it is now a bicameral legislature. Proposed and approved of in early 2002, the new structure has a lower house (Legislative Assembly) with 120 seats and an upper house (Senate) with 100. The Assembly members are elected from single-member districts and serve five-year terms. The Senate members are chosen in two manners. Eighty-four (84) are elected by the 14 regional legislatures: six for each of the *wilayats*, six for the Autonomous Republic of Karakalpakistan, and six for the city of Tashkent. The president appoints the remaining 16 senators. These 100 also serve five-year terms.

JUDICIARY

The Uzbek civil and criminal code is based largely on the former Soviet system, with modest additions included since 1991. The judicial branch is a hierarchical system with regional courts and a Supreme Court in place. According to the constitution, the Supreme Court is to oversee challenges to existing laws and ensure adherence to the constitution on the part of the president and the legislature. No such challenges have taken place, and the court remains fairly passive in its activity. The justices are all appointed by the president and can be removed by the president as well. Officially, the Oliy Majlis confirms the presidential appointees. To date all have been unanimously confirmed.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Uzbekistan is divided into 12 *wilayats* (regions), one autonomous region, and one city (Tashkent). Each possesses a *hokim* (governor) and *majlis* (council). The president selects the former, and the latter are elected in regional races. The terms of office tend to be four years, although the *hokims* are dismissed at will. Powers for regional officials tend to be limited, as their ability

to raise revenues is restricted to what is provided by the central government. The power to appoint and remove officials as well as set goals for regional production and financing is a strong indicator that the central government still maintains a firm control over the regional governments.

There is also a local level of government called the *mahalla*, or "neighborhood." These regional organizations are often selected among more traditional leaders (village elders, or *aksakals*). In recent years Karimov has put greater emphasis on this level of government to address issues of "immediate social need." Public opinion polls also suggest that the *mahalla* is fast becoming an important organ of government, ranking second behind the presidency as the most influential and respected level of government in the country.

The Electoral System

In both the presidential and the parliamentary elections, the system is a winner-take-all, with a 50 percent plus 1 vote take required. If no one receives the required percentage, a runoff between the top two vote getters takes place within a month. Electoral laws of December 1993 (for national elections) and May 1994 (for regional and local elections) clarify the procedural rules. Elections for the lower house of the Majlis and the president still abide by these requirements.

Traditionally, official voter turnout figures are in the 90-plus percentile. For example, the 1994 Oliy Majlis election had a reported 93.6 percent voter turnout, and the 1995 presidential referendum had an astounding 99.9 percent voter participation level. The December 2004 election turnout was projected at the more realistic level of 85 percent, which itself was deemed unlikely by international experts. That said, new legislation requires only a 33 percent voter turnout for any contest to be declared official.

The Party System

ORIGINS OF THE PARTIES

The political parties of Uzbekistan, just as those of the other former Soviet states, are either direct successors to the Communist Party of Uzbekistan (the republic-level version of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union) or reactions to it. The current Uzbek constitution allows for a multiparty system, and people are legally free to form political parties as long as they are properly registered. However, the legacy of the single-party Soviet era is evident today in that true opposition parties are discouraged and, in the instances noted below, prohibited outright.

THE PARTIES IN LAW

Chapter VIII of Uzbekistan's constitution outlines the political rights of Uzbekistani citizens. Chapter XIII focuses on the rules regulating the formation and activities of political parties ("political associations"). Separate laws on political associations and organizations have also been passed and amended since the mid-1990s. The key requirements are that parties do not represent particular ethnic or religious groups or challenge the legitimacy of the state. Furthermore, the registration process is detailed and cumbersome to the point that it creates conditions for not allowing opposition parties to become legal. These are further explained in Chapter XVIII of the constitution.

PARTY ORGANIZATION

Political parties in Uzbekistan follow the classic "Soviet model" of party organization—even opposition parties are prone to this. In that sense, there are two "parties" in each, namely, the leadership structure, which is very hierarchical, and the mass component. In the Soviet era, the former was represented in the republic-level apparatus, culminating in the first secretary position. The latter was represented in the primary party organizations, which could be found in factories, collective farms, and other communal organizations. The current parties also maintain this type of structure, with the People's Democratic Party (HDP) being the most prolific. It is not uncommon for parties to still use the nomenclature of the old system, such as general secretary, secretariat, and bureau, in describing their offices.

CAMPAIGNING

Given the brevity of the electoral period, campaigning has been kept to a minimum in Uzbekistan. In each, the time frame from announcement to election was less than 90 days. Candidates are limited in the amounts of time allowed for television and press campaigning, and one does not see the attempt to maximize campaign techniques that one sees in other post-Soviet states, such as Russia.

INDEPENDENT VOTERS

Party identification, as evident in polls conducted by both Western and Uzbek groups, is very weak. Indeed,

most voters tend to vote for the individual running, as opposed to a particular party affiliation. The transfer of power by Karimov from the Communist Party of Uzbekistan to the presidential apparatus has also resulted in a weakening of party politics in general. Karimov himself, in a move to present himself as being "above politics," technically left the People's Democratic Party in place, although he still retains its support. The lack of party identification is evident in both the high number of nonparty members in the Olij Majlis as well as the fact that, in polls, most support the idea of a one- or a no-party system.

Major Political Parties

PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC PARTY

(Halq Demokratik Partilasi; HDP)

HISTORY

The Communist Party of Uzbekistan (CPUz) was quickly renamed the People's Democratic Party (Halq Demokratik Partliasi; HDP) in August 1991, following the failed Moscow coup. Islam Karimov, then the president of the Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic (SSR), quit the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) and officially took over the leadership of the HDP. Conveniently, it was able to take over the office space, publications, and organizational and financial network of its predecessor, making it easy to maintain its prominent status in the country.

ORGANIZATION

The HDP is modeled after the former CPSU, with a political bureau and a secretariat in charge of strategic and tactical issues, respectively, and a central committee that meets on a regular basis. There are also 12,000 primary party organizations throughout the country.

MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY

There are a reported 580,000 members in the HDP. Membership is still based on the traditional notion of recruitment by existing members followed by a probationary period of up to one year The constituency is diverse, although there tends to be a high percentage of white-collar workers and professionals, especially in the higher ranks.

POLICY

The guidelines of the HDP are outlined in the 1991 handbook, which is slightly revised in content from the former CPUz handbook. The biggest change is that the party now supports a free-market economy and political liberalization, as long as it takes place in a "gradual and efficient" manner.

FINANCING

HDP members must pay dues fees, which, in theory, support the operations of the party. It receives no monies from the government, although the HDP does own land and various recently privatized enterprises. That said, the amount of financial support the party receives today is significantly less than it was during the Soviet era.

LEADERSHIP

Islam Karimov was the leader of the HDP until 1996, when he stepped down to become politically independent. Asliddin Rustamov is the first secretary of the HDP, a position that has become more ceremonial in recent years.

PROSPECTS

Ironically, while the HDP retains a strong presence in the legislature and is easily the single most important party in the country, its prospects are somewhat shaky. Karimov has decided to move away from party polities and concentrate his attention on the presidential cabinet. It is from that entity that future leaders will most likely emerge, regardless of their role in the HDP.

Minor Political Parties

Given the history of the HDP as well as the strict rules on party registration (the 1992 law "On Associations"), it is no surprise that all other political parties in Uzbekistan are, at best, "minor parties." These fall into two categories: registered and unregistered parties.

SELF-SACRIFICE NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY

(Fidokorlar Milliy Demokratik Partiyasi)

Founded on December 28, 1998, Fidokorlar presented itself as a party for the younger voters of Uzbekistan. It is said that many of the 61,000 members are owners of small and medium-sized businesses, artists, intellectuals, and younger people. In the 2000 presidential election Islam Karimov signaled his support for this party by accepting their call for his nomination to run for president. Technically, his opponent represented the

HDP. In April 2000 this party merged with the Progress of the Fatherland Party (Watan Tarakiati Partiiasi; WTP), which had been a "loyal opposition party" since 1993. The chairman of the party is currently Akhtam Tursunov.

JUSTICE SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY

(Adolat Sotsial Demokratik Partiyasi)

Formed in the summer of 1995 by 47 independent legislators in the Oliy Majlis, Adolat is ostensibly a party devoted to a limited economic reform program that will ensure a safety net of benefits for all citizens of Uzbekistan. Its leadership, however, constantly supports the programs of Karimov and is considered a "loyal opposition" by its own membership. Trade unions are a major part of this organization's estimated 50,000-member constituency. The chairman of the party is currently Turgunpulat Daminov.

NATIONAL REVIVAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY

(Milli Tiklanish Demokratik Partiiasi; MTDP)

Formed in the spring of 1995, the MTDP is an association of writers and professionals. There is no clear agenda, nor does it even consider itself an "opposition" force in Uzbek politics.

LIBERAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY

(Liberal Demokratik Partiyasi)

This party was founded on November 15, 2003, and quickly became a party often mentioned in the media and in President Karimov's statements. Membership estimates range from 40,000 to 135,000. If the latter is true, then it is the second-largest party in the country after the HDP. The chairman is Kabiljon Toshmatov. Ostensibly, the LDP supports business and economic reform.

MILLI TIKLANISH

(National Renaissance)

Current reports suggest that this party has a membership of 50,000. National Renaissance is under the guidance of Ibrahim Gafurov. This party appears to stress the country's cultural heritage and focuses on the educated population as its base.

UNITY

(Birlik)

Founded in 1988 as a social movement advocating greater Uzbek cultural and linguistic rights, Birlik soon became the primary opposition group to the Karimov administration. Under the leadership of Adburahim Pulatov, Birlik claimed a membership roster of over 500,000 members, although actual estimates of active members were undoubtedly less. Prohibited from fielding a candidate in the 1991 presidential election, Birlik was soon a victim of a series of crackdowns. It was unable to register as a political party and was banned in 1993. Today, while some of the leadership is still in Uzbekistan, key figures, including Pulatov, are in exile.

ERK "WILL" DEMOCRATIC PARTY

(Erk Demokratik Partiiasi; EDP)

Formed on April 30, 1990, with Karimov's approval, Erk was a key opposition party in the early period of Uzbek independence. Its leader, Mohammed Solih, for example, was able to challenge Karimov in the December 1991 election, albeit with limitations on his campaigning. Nevertheless, he received over 14 percent of the vote, and Erk members were also elected in to the Oliy Majlis at that time. Conflicts over the right to free speech, as well as the constant harassment of its leadership, pushed Erk to be more open in its opposition to the Karimov administration. In 1993 the party was denied the right to "reregister," and it has since been an underground party. Solih now lives in Norway with other Erk members in Russia, Sweden, Turkey, and the United States.

After the attacks in the United States on September 11, 2001, and the ensuing "Global War on Terrorism," Uzbek officials have branded Solih part of a larger terrorist network. While there have been attempts to reregister Erk in recent years, they have been unsuccessful.

ISLAMIC RENAISSANCE PARTY (IRP)

(Partiia Islamskogo Vozrezhdeniya)

Under the leadership of Abulla Utaev, the IRP presented itself as a "Muslim alternative" to the HDP. Never allowed to formally register, the IRP was subjected to a constant campaign of harassment in 1992. Utaev himself disappeared in December 1992, with supporters

claiming that he was taken into government custody, a charge the government denies to this day. Membership figures are unknown.

Other Political Forces

ISLAM

With the population overwhelmingly Sunni Muslim, the administration still portrays Shia Islam from Iran as a possible threat. With the breakup of the Soviet Union, Muslims in Uzbekistan were permitted to freely practice their faith. However, the government insists on keeping a close swatch on various Islamic groups to prohibit them from acting contrary to the state's wishes. Thus, groups like the Islamic Renaissance Party were quickly banned. In addition, outspoken clerics like Abdulla Mirzoev of the Jami Mosque in Andijan are currently in police custody (whereabouts unknown). President Karimov declared his opposition to what he considered radical Islamic groups, labeling them "Wahabbis." In 1998 several accused "Wahabbis" were convicted of several crimes, including the murder of a key official in Namangan. In May 2005 in the city of Andijan, government troops massacred perhaps several hundred people who were protesting a crackdown on suspected Islamic militants.

ISLAMIC MOVEMENT OF UZBEKISTAN (IMU)

Under the leadership of Tohir Yuldashev and Juma Namangani, the IMU became a critical militant force in the late 1990s. In 1999 and 2000 this organization conducted raids and attacks within the territories of Uzbekistan, as well as Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. Its aim was, and remains, the forceful removal of the current government in Uzbekistan and the establishment of a religious order in the country. During the 2001 campaign in Afghanistan the IMU fought with the Taliban and al-Qaeda units at Kunduz, the result of which was the near elimination of the organization's senior leadership (Namangani was reportedly killed in this November 2001 battle). At present the IMU is significantly weakened but remains a concern to the Uzbek government.

HIZB UT-TAHRIR (HT)

This organization has been present in Uzbekistan since the mid-1990s and has drawn the attention and ire of the government for its view that an Islamic state should be created in the region. HT itself has been active in other countries since the 1950s and continues to publicly advocate a peaceful transition to an Islamic state. In spite of this rhetoric, however, the Uzbek government considers it a terrorist organization and has jailed numerous HT members in recent years.

ETHNIC MINORITIES

Uzbekistan is relatively homogeneous, compared with other Soviet successor states, with over 80 percent of its population ethnic Uzbek. The percentage breakdown of the minority population is as follows: 5 percent Russian, 5 percent Tajik, 3 percent Kazakh, and almost 7 percent other groups, including the Karakalpaks, who have their own autonomous region. While the Russian minority does not pose a direct threat to the regime, their very presence means that Russia will continue to feel that it must play a role in the region. Indeed, Russian-Uzbek relations center on the status of the Russian minority and the freedom of the Orthodox Church in the country. If, as ultraright politicians in Russia insist, the minority is unfairly persecuted, Russia could step up pressure on Uzbekistan.

A more immediate concern is the Tajik minority, who are centered in the Bukhara-Samarkand region, the "historic epicenter" of Uzbekistan. Tajiks have long claimed these cities to be culturally Tajik, and organizations like Samarkand emerged shortly after independence to promote the rights of this minority. Deemed a threat to state stability by the Karimov administration, Samarkand was denied the right to register and its leaders were briefly imprisoned. The situation is further complicated by the fact that ethnic Uzbeks living in northern Tajikistan are frustrated with that country's policies, leading to a unique situation in which irredentist sentiments exist in both directions across the same border.

National Prospects

Karimov's complete control of the political system means that, at least in the short run, political parties and open competition for elected offices will remain modest, at best. Developments in three areas could dramatically affect the future prospects of Uzbekistan. First, whether Uzbekistan can successfully transform its economy into a viable regional power remains to be seen. The administration has solicited vast amounts of foreign aid to develop the Uzbek industrial and agricultural base as well as to initiate projects in the

areas of transportation, tourism, and communication. The strict monetary policy of the country, along with the bureaucratic nightmare that exists for foreign investors, may prevent the full development of these projects.

Second, the focus on international terrorism continues to provide a rationale for the Karimov administration's policy of strict authoritarianism and to afford a genuine cause for concern by the leadership about an outbreak of violence in the country. With U.S. security assistance, in addition to the attention paid by countries such as Russia and China, Uzbekistan feels that it can remain a strong state in the region. In turn, opposition figures can easily be cast as "terrorists" or individuals intend on destabilizing the country, thus rendering them marginal in the political process. However, the 2005 massacre at Andijan brought significant international criticism of the Karimov regime.

Finally, and most importantly, the prospects for a "post-Karimov" Uzbekistan are murky at best. However, when he does leave office, there are many questions as to who might succeed him. Given Karimov's policy of rotating officeholders and cutting down potential "number two" individuals, there are no clear-cut successors or heirs apparent in Uzbekistan. This was evident in the sacking of Deputy Prime Minister Ismail Jurabekoy at the end of 1998. An important figure in the Karimov administration for much of the 1990s, Jurabekov was removed under dubious circumstances with outside observers noting that he most likely had acquired too much power for Karimov's taste.

Other names such as Prime Minister Mirziyayev, National Security Service chairman Rustam Inoyatov, and Interior Minister Zakir Almatov have all been raised as potential successors. The reality is that it will be difficult to truly predict political successors in Uzbekistan as long as the system remains incredibly opaque.

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REPUBLIC OF VANUATU

(Ripablik blong Vanuatu)

(République du Vanuatu)

By Eugene Ogan, Ph.D.



When this South Pacific archipelago gained its independence in 1980, it changed its name to the Republic of Vanuatu. Previously it had been known as the New Hebrides. Vanuatu consists of some 80 islands, with a land area totaling 14,783 square kilometers. Population was estimated in mid-2005 at 205,000; 70 percent live on the four largest islands. Almost all of the people are ethnically Melanesian, known as *ni-Vanuatu*. Because of the many vernacular languages traditionally spoken, an English-based pidgin is the most widely understood tongue.

Vanuatu's colonial history is unique among Pacific Island nations. For 74 years before independence was declared, the islands were ruled as a "condominium," controlled jointly by Britain and France. This meant that each colonial power maintained a separate administration. Though the administrations were equal in theory, the actual amount of British or French influence, including language and educational systems, varied greatly on different islands. This unusual history, together with the linguistic and geographic diversity within the nation, has important political consequences today.

The System of Government

Vanuatu is a parliamentary republic with a unicameral legislature.

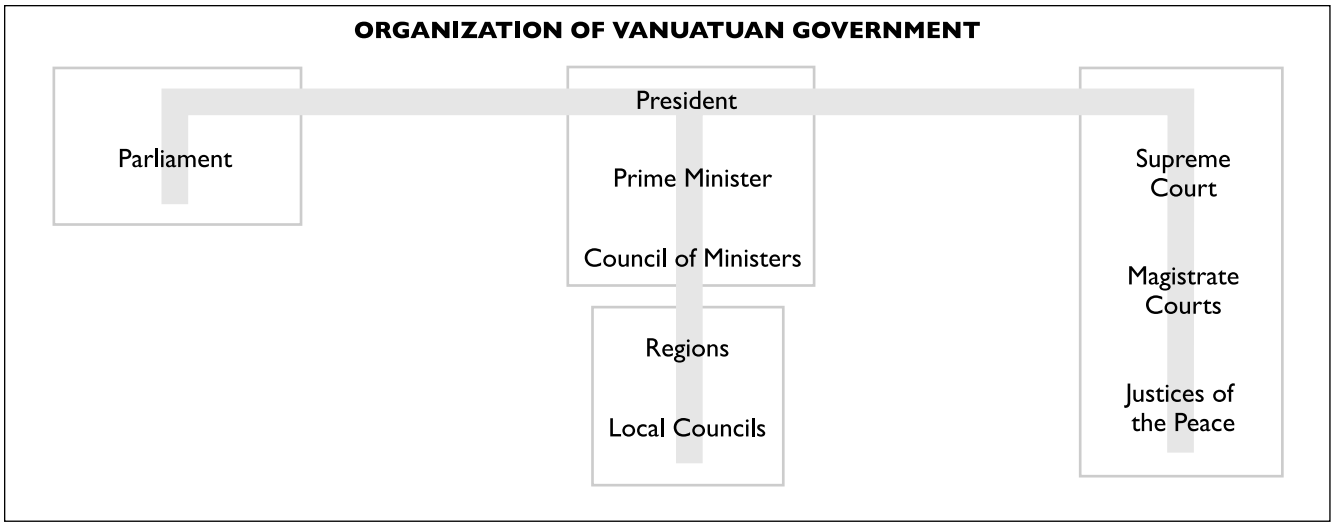
EXECUTIVE

A president is Vanuatu's official head of state. He or she must be an indigenous *ni-Vanuatu* qualified to be elected to Parliament. The president is elected in a secret ballot by an electoral college comprising the members of Parliament and the chairs of local government councils, for a term of five years. Except for the power to make certain relatively minor appointments, the president's function is largely symbolic.

Genuine executive authority is vested in the prime minister and a Council of Ministers. The prime minister is elected by an absolute majority of the members of Parliament voting by secret ballot. He in turn may appoint from members of Parliament a Cabinet not to exceed a quarter of their number. Ministers remain members of Parliament. The prime minister assigns particular responsibilities to his ministers, and may remove them from office. Parliament may by an absolute majority pass a motion of no confidence in the prime minister, causing him and other ministers to lose office, though they may continue to act until a new prime minister is elected.

LEGISLATURE

Parliament is unicameral and has 52 members. Parliament normally serves a term of four years but may be dissolved earlier by the president, acting on the advice of the Council of Ministers. It may also dissolve itself by an absolute majority at a special sitting when at least three-quarters of the members are present. The most recent



election was held in July 2004. No party established a majority. Serge Vohor was elected prime minister to preside over a makeshift coalition of parties.

A National Council of Chiefs is institutionalized in the constitution. It is composed of traditional chiefs elected by their peers sitting in district councils of chiefs. The Council has no legislative authority but is to meet at least once a year to discuss matters that will help promote and preserve *ni-Vanuatu* culture and language. A concern with such matters, called *kastom* in pidgin, is not merely prominent in political rhetoric but is embodied in various constitutional and legal provisions.

JUDICIARY

Judicial authority begins with a Supreme Court that has unlimited jurisdiction in civil and criminal proceedings. The chief justice is appointed by the president in consultation with the prime minister and the leader of the opposition. Other Supreme Court judges receive presidential appointments on the advice of the Judicial Service Commission. There is a Court of Appeals made up of two or more Supreme Court judges sitting together; its decisions are final. A system of magistrates' courts and village or island courts has been established. The latter have jurisdiction over customary and other matters, and chiefs have a role in the deliberations.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The country is divided into six administrative regions known as island councils, which have a fair degree of autonomy.

The Electoral System

Suffrage is universal for citizens age 18 and older. In addition, citizens must be at least 25 years old to stand for election to Parliament.

The Party System

Initially parties divided along the lines created by British and French administrations. The Vanua'aku Party was regarded as Anglophone and led the country to independence. It ruled for 11 years thereafter but began to splinter in 1991. Since the July 2004 election this party seems to be doomed. The mid-2004 elections saw the return to power of former prime minister Serge Vohor, who presided over a coalition of parties. But he was ousted in a vote of no confidence in December 2004, and a new coalition led by Ham Lini came to power.

Major Political Parties

Although the Vanua'aku Party (Our Land Party) was once the dominant party in the country, its power had receded drastically by 2004. Other important parties include the Union of Moderate Parties, led by Serge Vohor, and the National United Party, led by Ham Lini.

Minor Political Parties

Minor parties include the Vanuatu Republican Party, led by Maxime Carlot Korman; the Jon Frum Move-

ment, led by Song Kesapai; the Melanesian Progressive Party, led by Barak Sope; and the Green Party.

Other Political Forces

Australia, which is Vanuatu's main source of foreign aid, has been extremely influential in pressing for governmental accountability and economic reform.

National Prospects

Vanuatu politics has been extraordinarily volatile since 1987, a condition that has its roots in the old condominium government but is aggravated by the instability of the country's political parties trying to operate in a parliamentary system. A former prime minister, Serge Vohor, returned to power in 2004 but presided over an uneasy coalition. Three party leaders in this coalition were themselves past prime ministers and created further instability for Vohor. Following controversy over Vohor's attempt to extend diplomatic relations to Taiwan, he was ousted in a no-confidence vote in December 2004 and replaced by Ham Lini of the National United Party. Lini led a coalition of 10 parties in forming the new government.

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STATE OF VATICAN CITY

(Status Civitatis Vaticanae)

By Jeffrey K. Hass, Ph.D.

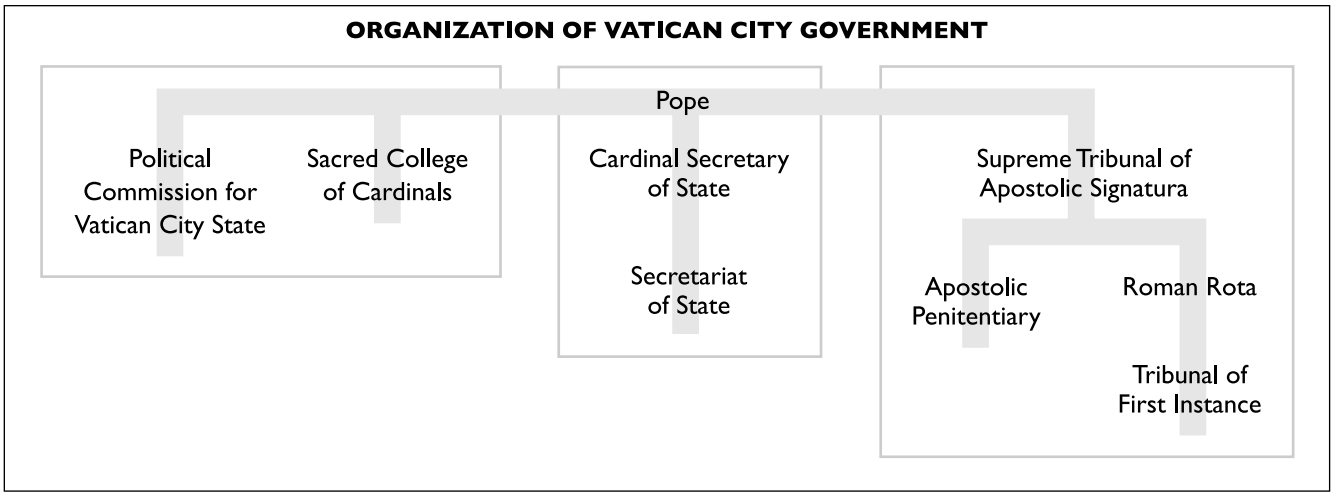


Vatican City is home to the Roman Catholic Church and the seat of Catholic ecclesiastical power, the Holy See (the office of the pope). The Vatican is a sovereign state created to administer the property of the Holy See; this is a particular result of politics and history, when various popes signed agreements with surrounding political leaders to maintain the security and integrity of the seat of Roman Catholicism. Hence the Vatican is not like most other countries, with their complex political systems (especially if democratic) and political contestation.

The temporal authority of the pope was established by Pepin the Short (the Frankish monarch) in the eighth century, but the Vatican did not become the permanent home to that authority until 1377, when papal authority extended beyond the Vatican palace to central Italy. In the 19th century, during the process of Italian state building, secular authorities absorbed the Papal States (1859) and proclaimed Rome, the home of Catholicism and the authority of the pope, to be the capital of the secular Italian state (1870). In retribution, popes from 1870 to 1929, calling themselves "prisoners," refused to leave the premises of the Vatican. However, this tension between the church and Italy subsided in 1929, when Pope Pius XI and Benito Mussolini signed the Lateran Treaties. According to these treaties, the State of Vatican City was created as an autonomous sovereign state, free from Italian control; the Italian state paid compensatory damages to the Holy See for the loss of authority beyond the Vatican; the Holy See and church authorities recognized Rome as the capital of Italy; and the Italian government admitted and proclaimed Roman Catholicism to be the official state religion. The Holy See maintained its political neutrality, even during World War II, when Pope Pius XII remained silent about Nazi atrocities such as the Holocaust (even though after the war he vociferously condemned Catholic cooperation with various populist Communist movements). In 1948 Italy's constitution confirmed the Vatican's special status. In 1984 a revised concord with Italy was signed, and, as a result, some Vatican privileges were lost: Roman Catholicism ceased being the Italian national religion, and state financial support was reduced.

After 1958 the Holy See abandoned its political neutrality and began taking part in international affairs and issues. (Note that officially the Vatican itself does not have diplomatic representatives; representatives come from the Holy See, the Pope's office.) This step was pushed even further by Pope John Paul II, who made an unprecedented number of journeys to various countries, including Eastern Europe and Cuba. The Vatican has played an important role in international organizations and has taken controversial stands, for example, successfully mobilizing votes against including language on abortion rights in the UN documents on population and development concluded at Cairo in 1994.

All ultimate political authority within the Holy See, and within the Vatican, belongs to the pope: the pope both sits atop Vatican's executive, legislative, and judicial institutions and holds spiritual authority



within the Holy See. However, recent popes have delegated administrative power within the Vatican to the Pontifical Commission for the State of Vatican City, a body of seven cardinals, appointed by the pope for a five-year period, that deals with day-to-day operations; this leaves the pope to concern himself with church or spiritual issues. Administrative duties include banking and finance, transportation, maintaining the (mostly ceremonial) Swiss Guard, publishing, and other services. For maintaining order and dealing with civil and criminal cases, the Vatican turns to the Italian police and courts.

Within the Holy See, the pope is helped by the Roman Curia and the Papal Civil Service. The Roman Curia, which is dominated by Italians, includes the Secretariat of State and six congregations, three tribunals, 12 pontifical councils, and numerous offices within the church bureaucracy. (The most important administrative figure under the pope—the equivalent of a prime minister—is the secretary of state, currently Angelo Sodano, appointed in 1991.) The congregations deal with theological and spiritual matters. For example, the Congregation for Bishops deals with the appointment of bishops throughout the world; the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith deals with universal church doctrine; and the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples deals with missionary work. The tribunals handle judicial issues within the Holy See: the Apostolic Penitentiary handles matters of conscience; the Roman Rota handles appeals and marriage annulments; and the Apostolic Signature acts as an ultimate court of church appeal. In addition to these positions the Holy See employs around 3,000 clerical staff. While in theory the pontiff exerts supreme authority over the Curia, in reality the Holy See is not immune to politics. Patronage does exist within the Holy See, guiding many appointments and promotions. Curia power diminished somewhat after the Second Vatican Council of 1962–65, which gave bishops some authority in governing church matters. As a result, there have been some tensions between the pope and his Curia and bishops outside the Holy See who disagree over theological interpretations (for example, homosexuality).

The Vatican does not have formal political parties and thus no open, democratic system of elections. The only moment of deliberation and voting is the process of choosing a new pope 18 days after the death of the previous pope. The Sacred College of Cardinals, numbering around 130 cardinals, convenes in a special room or "conclave" to debate and decide on the papal succession. The politics of this deliberation are well hidden; there is very little hard data on the politics of choosing the new pope, but enough to know that it exists. Rules state that the Sacred College may not leave the room until a new pope is chosen. There are three means to select the pope: agreement among two-thirds of the Sacred College (the preferred method today), a unanimous agreement, or appointment by an elected committee in the case of a split in the College and the need for a compromise candidate. Traditionally, the College signals to the world that it has reached a decision when white smoke is sent out a special chimney on the premises.

Cardinal Karol Wojtyla was elected in 1978 and took the name John Paul II. He was the first non-Italian pope for nearly 500 years, and some speculate this was to placate non-Italian Catholics. Under John Paul II, Vatican and Catholic policies took a conservative turn, including more active resistance to

abortion and birth control policies and to female priests. This created tension within the Catholic Church, but John Paul's active missions throughout the world also helped the Vatican's image and Catholic strength.

In theory, a sitting pope can choose to "retire," although in practice this is considered illegitimate, and there are no formal procedures for removing a sitting pope from his position. According to some Vatican observers, this created a potential problem with the papacy and Vatican during John Paul II's long reign. John Paul II was 84 years old and not in the best of health on his death in May 2005. He survived an assassination attempt in 1981, but Parkinson's disease had visibly weakened the pope. John Paul II tried to maintain as active an agenda as possible, but the threat that he would be fully incapacitated and unable to continue his duties remained a worry within the Vatican. Upon his death he was succeeded by Pope Benedict XVI.

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BOLIVARIAN REPUBLIC OF VENEZUELA

(República Bolivariana de Venezuela)

By Orlando J. Perez, Ph.D.



Since 1958 Venezuela's history of free and open elections and its prohibition of military involvement in national politics earned it a reputation as one of the more stable democracies in Latin America. The post-1958 political system was based on political pacts and petroleum wealth. The system of "pacted" democracy derived its legitimacy from the capacity of the state to distribute resources and patronage among power contenders, particularly industry and organized labor. The pacts were financed through petroleum wealth that boomed until the economic crisis of the early 1980s.

By the 1980s economic and political problems threatened to undermine the stability of the political system. In 1989 Venezuela experienced riots in which more than 200 people were killed—the so-called *Caracazo*—in response to an economic austerity program launched by then-president Carlos Andrés Pérez. Subsequently, in February 1992, a group of army lieutenant colonels led by future president Hugo Chávez mounted an unsuccessful coup attempt, claiming that the events of 1989 showed that the political system no longer served the interests of the people. A second, equally unsuccessful coup attempt by other officers followed in November 1992. A year later Congress impeached Pérez on corruption charges.

Deep popular dissatisfaction with the traditional political parties, income disparities, and economic difficulties were some of the major frustrations expressed by Venezuelans following Pérez's impeachment. In December 1998 Hugo Chávez Frias won the presidency after campaigning for broad reform, constitutional change, and a crackdown on corruption. One of Chávez's first political moves was to propose a rewriting of Venezuela's constitution. On April 25, 1999, a referendum was held to ratify the public's approval of Chávez's proposal. The referendum results were in favor of such changes, showing popular support for his administration as a whole. On July 25, 1999, elections were held to elect the members of the National Constituent Assembly. Candidates of the Patriotic Pole (Chávez's political coalition) won 119 of the 131 seats, so that 90 percent of the constituent assembly was made up of supporters of the president. A referendum was held on December 15, 1999, to determine whether the proposed new constitution written by the ANC would be implemented. The constitution was approved by over 70 percent of voters, and it was put into force on December 30, 1999.

The new Venezuelan constitution is composed of nine chapters and 350 articles. Major innovations include the change of the name of the Republic of Venezuela to the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, the elimination of the Senate and its replacement by a single-chambered National Assembly, and the creation of the position of vice president. Additionally, the constitution fuses the military into a single force under a unified command, gives soldiers the right to vote, and calls for their "active participation in national development," as opposed to their former, "apolitical, obedient and non-deliberative" role. The constitution extends the presidential term from five to six years and grants the

president the possibility of immediate reelection. Citizen participation is expanded by the creation of the Citizen's Power, a body that consists of the general attorney office, the general comptroller office, and the new figure, defender of the people. The constitution institutionalizes the referendum as an instrument for matters of special national transcendence, and the president is allotted the power to dissolve Congress in situations of crisis, or when congressmen reject the candidates appointed to the vice presidency more than twice.

The System of Government

Venezuela is a federal, presidential republic with a unicameral legislature.

EXECUTIVE

Executive power is vested in the president of the republic and his government. The president is directly elected in one ballot by a plurality of votes for a term of six years and may be reelected once. The president assumes office on January 15 of the year following the elections. The term of office of the current president ends in January 2007. During the second half of his term of office he can be recalled by referendum. The president appoints and dismisses the executive vice president and the cabinet ministers.

The new Venezuelan constitution increased executive authority substantially; it increases executive control over the central bank, the military, and the legislature. The executive branch initiates most legislation, which the single-chambered congress, called the National Assembly, debates and approves, alters, or rejects. Members of the National Assembly are elected to five-year terms. The National Assembly has the authority to override a presidential veto, but the president can also ask the congress to reconsider the portions of bills found objectionable. The president is allotted the power to dissolve the National Assembly in situations of crisis, or when members of the Assembly reject the candidates appointed to the vice presidency more than twice.

President Chávez's rise to power has been based on his appeal to the urban and rural poor and the downwardly mobile middle class. The elections of 1998, 1999, and 2000 demonstrated a profound realignment in institutional politics in Venezuela: old establishment parties rapidly lost favor with the electorate and fell further into infighting, while the new populist front reshaped governing institutions to their favor. The new opposition has not been able to mount an effective challenge to the Chávez government or its policies. The most serious challenges to the regime have come in the form of labor strikes, as oil workers, teachers, and steel workers all mounted mass strikes and demonstrations against government policies in 2000 and 2001. Chávez's brand of populism has especially affected relations with the United States, as Chávez continues to cavort with the leaders of regimes such as Cuba, Iran, Libya, and China. Additionally, Chávez has been very critical of U.S. policy after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. The opposition has charged that the government has intimidated the media; self-censorship was reportedly widespread; and the Supreme Court passed a ruling that could limit the legal rights of some associations. Tensions in Venezuela triggered a crisis in April 2002 when a general strike was called and mass protests resulted in a violent confrontation and the deaths of 13 antigovernment protesters. On April 12, 2002, a group of senior military officers announced that President Chávez had resigned and had been taken into custody. The leaders of the coup installed Pedro Carmon as provisional president. When Carmon attempted to dissolve the legislature and the courts and suspend the constitution, he lost crucial support among military leaders. In an attempt to regain support by convening the National Assembly, the lawmakers unseated Carmon and replaced him with Diosdado Cabello, who had been Chávez's vice president. Cabello immediately returned the office of president to Chávez, who had been rescued by loyalists, in a public ceremony. As a result of the failed coup, political forces in Venezuela have become increasingly fractionalized.

Continued dissatisfaction with the Chávez administration led to a national work stoppage on December 2, 2002. On December 4, 2002, the petroleum sector joined the strike. Other sectors of the economy also joined the work stoppage and effectively shut down all economic activity for a month. In January 2003 the Organization of American States (OAS) established the Group of Friends of the OAS Secretary General's Mission for Venezuela group. The Friends, coordinated by Brazil, include Chile, Spain, Portugal, Mexico, and the United States. The Friends met in January 2003 and visited Caracas to facilitate a peaceful resolution to the political crisis. Despite increased tensions during the national strike, dialogue facilitated by the Tripartite Group resulted in a nonviolence pledge by all parties in February 2003 as the strike was drawing to a close. After months of negotiations facilitated by OAS secre-

tary-general César Gaviria, the Venezuelan government and the opposition's Democratic Coordinating Committee signed an agreement on May 29, 2003, which set the framework for a possible recall referendum on President Chávez's continued tenure in office.

In February 2003 opposition supporters coordinated a nationwide effort in collecting 3.2 million signatures for possible recall referenda, including constitutional issues and a presidential recall. The newly appointed National Electoral Council (CNE) ruled in September 2003 that the signatures were collected prematurely (before the president's mid-term in office in accordance with the constitution) and that a new signature collection effort would be necessary for possible recall referenda. The opposition was successful in validating enough signatures to trigger a national referendum on the mandate of Chávez. Venezuela's presidential recall referendum was held August 15, 2004. Following two months of extensive campaigning efforts, President Chávez won 59 percent of the vote. His opponents immediately claimed the results of the referendum were marked by electoral fraud. However, international electoral observation missions carried out by the OAS and the Carter Center found no indication of systemic fraud.

LEGISLATURE

Legislative power is exercised by the unicameral National Assembly composed of 165 members, whose deputies are elected for a maximum of two five-year terms. Three seats are reserved for the indigenous peoples of Venezuela. Members of the National Assembly are elected by a mixed system with 60 percent being elected by simple majority vote in single-member constituencies and 40 percent elected by closed party lists with proportional representation in multimember constituencies, using the D'Hondt system. Deputies must be Venezuelan citizens by birth, or naturalized Venezuelans with a period of residency in excess of 15 years; older than 21 years of age on the day of the election; and have lived in the state for which they seek election during the previous four years.

PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION (1998 AND 2000)

Candidates	Votes	Percent
1998 Elections		
Hugo Chávez Frias (MVR-MAS-PPT-PCV)	3,673,685	56.2
Henrique Salas Romer (Proyecto Venezuela/AD/COPEI)	2,613,161	40.0
Irene Saez (IRENE)	184,568	3.0
Others	65,890	1.0
2000 Elections		
Hugo Chávez Frias (MVR/MAS/PCV)	3,757,773	60.3
Francisco Arias Cardenas	2,359,459	37.5
Claudio Fermin	171,346	2.7

The National Assembly can override presidential vetoes with an absolute majority of members present. The Assembly can alter budget items but cannot authorize measures that lead to the reduction of public revenues or to expenditures that exceed the revenue estimates of the budget proposal. Additionally, the Assembly can exercise its oversight functions through the following: investigations, questions, authorizations, and parliamentary approvals. The Assembly or its commissions can carry out investigations deemed relevant to matters of their competence. Public officials are obligated to appear before the commission if summoned and provide the requested information. The Assembly can vote by special majorities to censure the vice president (three-fifths) and government ministers (three-fifths).

A shift occurred in the partisan representation within Congress beginning with the elections of 1993. The two traditional parties, Democratic Action (AD) and COPEI had shared over 70 percent of the vote from the 1973 to the 1988 elections. Because of the economic and political crises of the late 1980s and early 1990s, after the 1993 elections the two parties held just over 50 percent of the seats in the Chamber of Deputies and by 1998 they held just under 40 percent. The collapse of the traditional parties was even more dramatic after the elections in 2000, the first to be held under the new constitution.

One of the significant changes in the Venezuelan political system has been the decline in voter turnout. For example, in parliamentary elections voter participation declined from 72.7 percent in 1988 to 49.9 percent, 42.7 percent, and 46.5 percent in 1993, 1998, and 2000, respectively.

JUDICIARY

The judicial system is composed of the Supreme Court and various lower tribunals, including administrative, agrarian, finance, juvenile, and military courts, which

ELECTIONS FOR NATIONAL ASSEMBLY (2000)

Registered voters:	11,623,547
Total votes cast:	6,573,663 (56.5)
Blank and invalid votes:	2,096,243 (31.9)
Valid votes:	4,477,420 (68.1)

Party	Votes	% Change	Seats
Accion Democrática (AD)	719,575 16.1	(–8.8)	32 (–29)
Convergencia National	47,724 1.1	(–1.3)	4 (–1)
La Causa Radical	197,207 4.4	(+1.4)	3 (–3)
Movimiento al Socialismo (MAS)	37,766 5.3	(–4.0)	18 (–6)
Movimiento V República (MVR)	1,981,265 44.2	(+24.3)	80 (+45)
COPEI	227,725 5.1	(–7.4)	5 (–21)
Patria Para Todos (PPT)	101,520 2.3	(–1.3)	3 (–8)
Proyecto Venezuela	309,310 6.9	(–3.2)	8 (–12)
Others	655,328	14.6	12
Total	4,477,420		165

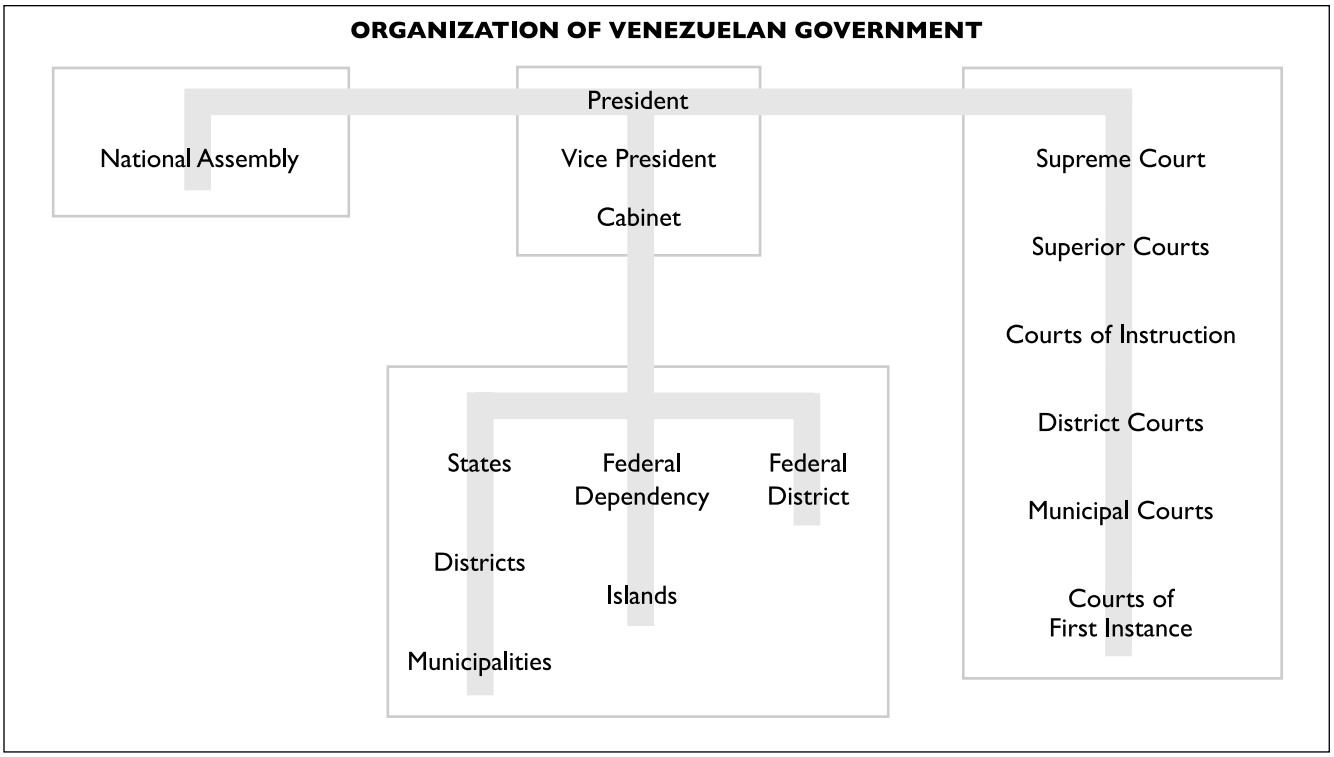
The number of seats in the Assembly was reduced from 203 to 165.

Votes and seats are compared with those won at the 1998 elections.

together exercise judicial power. The Supreme Court is the final court of appeals and has the power to declare null and void any laws, regulations, or other acts of the executive or legislative branches that it deems to be in conflict with the constitution. The Judicial Council oversees the selection of judges to the lower civilian courts, which include district courts, municipal courts, and courts of first instance.

When President Chávez became president in 1999, he inherited a judiciary that had been plagued for years by influence-peddling, political interference, and, above all, corruption. In terms of public credibility, the system was bankrupt. A 1998 survey by the United Nations Development Program found that only 0.8 percent of the population had confidence in the judiciary. Significant reforms were initiated through the 1999 constitution. However, the consensus around judicial reforms has largely disappeared as the country has grown increasingly polarized in response to President Chávez's policies and style of governance. The polarization, which pervades Venezuelan society, has found its way into the Supreme Court as well. All 20 sitting justices were selected by the National Constituent Assembly in March 2000 through a two-thirds majority vote, which would suggest they had support from people across the political spectrum. As of 2005, however, it is common wisdom within the legal community that the Court is deeply divided between opponents and allies of President Chávez. It is an even, ten-ten split, with each camp controlling some of the Court's six chambers.

The National Assembly passed a law in May 2004 that severely undermines the independence of the country's judicial branch. The new Organic Law of the Supreme Court (Ley Orgánica del Tribunal Supremo de Justicia) changes the composition of the country's



highest court, as well as its relationship to the other branches of government. The new court-packing law increases the Supreme Court from 20 to 32 justices, adding two justices to each of the Court's six chambers. The new justices can be designated with a simple majority vote of the National Assembly: a nominee who fails to receive a two-thirds majority in the first three votes can be designated by a simple majority on the fourth vote. In addition, the new law makes it easier to impeach and remove judges from the Court.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Venezuela is divided into 23 states, one federal dependency, consisting of 11 federally controlled island groups with a total of 72 individual islands, and one federal district consisting of the national capital, the city of Caracas. The executive of each state is headed by a governor. The governors must be Venezuelan over the age of 25 and not a member of the clergy. Governors are elected for a term of four years by a plurality of votes. Governors can be reelected to one additional term. Legislative authority is exercised in each state by a Legislative Council, consisting of no more than 15 and at least seven members, who are to represent proportionally the population of the state and municipalities. Each municipality is headed by a mayor, elected every four years by a plurality of the votes. Legislative power at the municipal level is exercised by a Municipal Council, whose members and numbers are established by law. The states have only limited financial authority. Since the abolition of the Senate by the constitution of 1999, they have been practically excluded from the legislative process. The Consejo Federal de Gobierno (Federal Council), intended to manage the process of decentralization of powers between the national and regional governments, has done very little in strengthening the autonomy of the states or municipal governments.

The Electoral System

Suffrage in Venezuela is universal once citizens reach 18 years of age; the 1999 constitution gave the right to vote to active members of the armed forces. The National Electoral Council (Consejo Nacional Electoral, CNE) directs and supervises all elections in Venezuela. The CNE operates polling places, tabulates votes, settles controversies between parties, and listens to appeals from regional and local electoral boards. The CNE manages the work of the National Electoral Board, the Voter Registration Commission, and the

Commission on Political Participation and Financing. The National Electoral Council consists of five members; three of these shall be nominated by civil society organizations, one by the schools of law and political science of the national universities, and one by the "Citizen Power" (i.e., the Comptroller General, Attorney General, and Ombudsman's Office; the heads of each of them together form the Republican Ethics Council "Consejo Republicano de Etica"). The members are then ratified by the National Assembly by a two-thirds vote.

As stated earlier, the president is elected to a six-year term by a plurality of votes. The members of the National Assembly are elected every five years through a mixed system in which 60 percent are elected in single-member districts by a plurality of votes and 40 percent are elected using the D'Hondt system of proportional distribution with closed and blocked lists.

The Party System

The traditional party system has been in a state of profound change since the early 1990s. The importance of the two parties that had dominated Venezuelan politics since 1958, Democratic Action (Acción Democrática) and COPEI, has been drastically diminished. Together with several newer parties and civil society organizations, they now belong to an opposition alliance called the Democratic Coordination (Coordinadora Democrática). The young Justice First (Primero Justicia) Party is playing an ever greater role. The government coalition is led by the Fifth Republic Movement (Movimiento Quinta República) founded by Hugo Chávez. The left-wing populist We Can (Podemos) Party, a breakaway party from the old-left Movement toward Socialism (Movimiento al Socialismo), is the junior coalition partner. In general, the period since the 1998 elections has seen a fragmentation of the political party system, with weakened links between parties and the population, and the consolidation of power in the person of the president.

Major Political Parties

FIFTH REPUBLIC MOVEMENT

(Movimiento Quinta Republica; MVR)

The ruling MVR is a young and fragile organization. It was formed in 1994 as the electoral arm of the Movimiento Bolivariano Revolucionaria 200 (MBR-200), a military movement established in the early 1980s by a group of junior army officers including President Chávez, who was then a lieutenant colonel. The MBR-200 was committed to overthrowing the established political system, which it regarded as corrupt and unrepresentative. A decade of covert activity by MBR-200 culminated in a failed coup attempt in February 1992. Although the MBR-200 was conceived as a military movement, Chávez sought alliances with parties from the left through contacts fostered by his brother, Adan Chávez, a veteran left-wing activist. Sections of the left participated in the 1992 coup attempt, but their failure to convene a general strike in support of the uprising reinforced Chávez's skeptical view of civilian politicians.

The MVR was created by Hugo Chávez following his release from prison in 1994. In 1998 an alliance organization, the Patriotic Pole (Polo Patriotico; PP), was formed, that brought together the MVR with two smaller but politically experienced left-wing organizations, Patria Para Todos (PPT) and the Movimiento al Socialismo (MAS). The PP capitalized on mounting discontent with the established parties, winning eight of 23 state governorships and 70 seats in Congress.

Organizationally, however, the MVR is weak. Its representatives in elective office owe their positions to President Chávez's personal popularity. The MVR has failed to build links with the grass roots of Venezuelan society, where the party has been effectively displaced by Bolivarian Circles, independently organized groups of Chávez's supporters. Ideological differences between moderates and radicals have caused several splits, including the departure of MAS from the governing coalition in 2001.

DEMOCRATIC ACTION

(Acción Democrática; AD)

Democratic Action is the largest and most important of the traditional parties. The party was founded in 1941 by Romulo Bentancourt and quickly positioned itself as the center-left alternative to the Venezuelan Communist Party in the labor and democracy movements. The party won over 70 percent of the vote in elections during the late 1940s. However, in 1948 the military overthrew the AD government. After the overthrow of General Pérez Jimenez in 1958, AD dominated politics until 1993. The party held five of the seven presidencies elected from 1958 to 1993. The party was responsible for the development of Venezuela's rentier state, which relied heavily on the distribution of oil revenues

for the maintenance of political support. This system was characterized by a top down form of democracy based on the alternation in power between AD and COPEI, the other traditional party, and the cooptation of labor and business groups through the use of government largess.

By the 1980s the system was unsustainable. AD presidents Jamie Lusinchi and Carlos Andrés Pérez attempted to stall the decline by implementing limited reforms to no avail. When President Andrés Pérez was forced to institute an austerity program in 1989, Caracas, the national capital, erupted in protests. Three years later, in February and November 1992, elements of the military attempted to overthrow the president. President Andrés Pérez, although he survived the coup attempts, was impeached in 1993, following a scandal on the mishandling of US$17 million, used to help Violeta Chamorro's government in Nicaragua.

AD's fortunes have continued to decline as it has failed to promote new and effective leaders or popular policy alternatives to the Chávez administration. To a great extent, AD is still viewed as part of a traditional and corrupt political system that failed to use the oil wealth of Venezuela to help the poor or the middle class. Today, the party is part of a broad coalition of opposition forces called Democratic Coordination, which promoted a failed referendum to revoke President Chávez's mandate. The future of AD and the Democratic Coordination is uncertain now that they have failed to oust the president. In addition, they were trounced by government supporters during the October 31, 2004, regional and local elections.

CHRISTIAN SOCIAL PARTY

(Partido Social Cristiano; COPEI)

COPEI was founded under the leadership of Rafael Caldera and the Student Federation of Venezuela as an opponent to Democratic Action's (AD) government during 1945–48. The party took the name of Comité de Organización Política Electoral Independiente (COPEI) (Committee for the Independent Political Electoral Organization). While the party first supported the military coup in 1948 that ousted AD from government, it soon allied itself to AD to oppose the military dictatorship. In 1958 COPEI and AD were instrumental in negotiating the end of the military regime and founding the political system that prevailed in Venezuela until the late 1990s. COPEI occupied the presidency twice, in 1968–73 and 1978–83. Rafael Caldera dominated the party until he left to form another political organization, known as Convergence, in 1993.

COPEI's association with the ancien régime together with internal party divisions in the 1990s have led to a precipitous decline in its popular support. Traditionally, the party drew support from the urban middle classes, business sectors, and the more traditional and conservative Catholic elements. In 1993 many of its members left the party to support the candidacy of Rafael Caldera. For the 1998 elections the party opened its primaries to nonmembers favoring the candidacy of independent Irene Saez, a former Miss Universe. Two weeks prior to the elections the party leadership switched their support to Henrique Salas Romer, the candidate of a new party known as Proyecto Venezuela (Project Venezuela). The divisions caused by the electoral maneuverings in 1998 and their inability to recover lost supporters have placed COPEI in a very precarious position. The party now stands at the precipice of disappearing as an organized political force.

MOVEMENT TOWARD SOCIALISM

(Movimiento al Socialismo; MAS)

MAS was founded in 1969 by former Communist guerrillas who fought in an eight-year-long failed insurgency against the Venezuelan state in the 1960s. It did not become a significant political force until the early 1990s, when its shift to the political center enabled it to capitalize on the opportunities created by decentralization to win power at the regional level. MAS figures were appointed to cabinet positions by Rafael Caldera (1994–98) but internal party divisions emerged over the Caldera government's adoption of an International Monetary Fund program in 1996. Disaffected sections began working with Chávez and, amid deep internal disagreement, the party decided to support his 1998 election campaign. But MAS was not awarded any cabinet positions by President Chávez and tensions quickly surfaced, as MAS became increasingly critical of the government's refusal to negotiate with its opponents. President Chávez expelled MAS from the Patriotic Pole in May 2001. In 2002 the MAS formally split, with one section of the party (MAS Oficial or Official MAS) opting to support the MVR in the legislature and another forming part of the opposition. The party draws heavily from intellectuals, students, and unionized voters in large urban areas.

RADICAL CAUSE

(La Causa R; LCR)

La Causa R was created in 1971 from a group of disaffected Communist Party militants who rejected the rightward evolution of both the MAS and the PCV

(Venezuelan Communist Party). The party founder, Alfredo Maneiro, designed the party more as a movement than a traditional party: ideology was to be in constant reconstruction, and organization was to be horizontal with leadership rising directly from the party base. The roots of the party lie in the labor movement in the state of Bolívar in the 1970s and 1980s. In the 1980s the party organized around opposition to the social and economic crisis caused by the exhaustion of Venezuela's traditional economic model. In the 1983 and 1988 elections the party managed to win several seats in the Chamber of Deputies.

La Causa R was the party closest to Chávez at the time of the military coup attempt of February 4, 1992. In 1997, La Causa R split, giving birth to the PPT (Patria Para Todos), which supports Chávez. La Causa R is currently a member of the Democratic Coordination and calls for the organization of a new constituent assembly.

Minor Political Parties

FATHERLAND FOR EVERYONE

(Patria Para Todos; PPT)

The PPT was formed in 1998 as a breakaway group of La Causa R, which split in advance of the 1998 elections owing to disagreement over whether or not to support Chávez's presidential candidacy. PPT, the pro-Chávez faction of Causa R, entered the Polo Patriotico alliance with MVR and MAS. In contrast to MAS, PPT politicians have been awarded high-ranking cabinet positions by Chávez, including the Ministry of Energy, the presidency of PdVSA (the state oil company), and a number of diplomatic postings. Of the three parties in power, it is the best structured. An annual congress defines its political orientation and its national leadership with a significant level of participation by the activist rank and file. At its fifth congress, it defined itself as a party of the left, revolutionary, and humanist.

PROJECT VENEZUELA

(Proyecto Venezuela)

Proyecto Venezuela is a center-right party founded by the former governor of the State of Carabobo, Henrique Salas Romer. Salas Romer ran for the presidency in 1998 and came in second to Hugo Chávez. The party held the fourth largest delegation (with 20 seats) in the Chamber of Deputies after the 1998 elections. However, its support collapsed for the 2000 elections, held after the adoption of the new 1999 constitution, to only eight seats. Since the 1998 elections the party has had little success outside of Carabobo. In the October 31, 2004, elections the party lost the governorship of that state held since 2000 by Salas Romer's son. The party has not developed national leaders other than Salas Romer and his son, and it is hard to imagine that it will have much political influence in the near future. The party has joined the Democratic Coordination to support the revocatory referendum against President Chávez.

FIRST JUSTICE

(Primero Justicia; PJ)

Primero Justicia was founded in 1992 as a civic organization organized by young legal professionals led by Alirio Abreu Burelli, a member of the Supreme Court, to advocate for reform of the judicial system. The organization was active during the constitutional reform efforts in 1999. In 2000 the organization was legalized as a political party and participated for the first time in that year's elections. The party obtained five seats in the National Assembly from the state of Miranda. The party has joined the Democratic Coordination in opposition to the Chávez administration and in support of the recall referendum. Many observers point to Primero Justicia as an up-and-coming political force capable of bringing together the disparate sectors that oppose the Chávez government, and particularly to attract young voters. However, after the defeat of the recall effort and the opposition's dismal showing in the regional and local elections of October 2004, it is doubtful that Primero Justicia or any other opposition party can successfully challenge the government.

VENEZUELAN COMMUNIST PARTY

(Partido Communista Venezolano; PCV)

The PCV was founded in 1931 and first legalized in 1941. The PCV was the primary opposition to the AD governments of the 1940s, although the latter was able to co-opt the PCV labor supporters. The PCV was excluded from the agreements in 1958 that brought an end to the military dictatorship and set the basis for the Venezuelan political system for the next 40 years. The party was outlawed in the 1960s and then legalized again in the 1970s. The PCV has won seats in the Chamber of Deputies since the 1973 elections, and it is one of the main supporters of the Chávez presidency.

OTHER MINOR PARTIES

There are a number of political parties represented in the National Assembly, although few of them hold more than a handful of seats and all of them have failed to garner significant popular support. These political parties include PODEMOS, an ally of the president; PUAMA, a regional party from the Amazonian region; CONIVE, grouping the three indigenous representatives mandated by the constitution; Convergence, the party that was formed by Rafael Caldera to run for president in 1993, and now has only three representatives; and at least five other parliamentary groups with very small regional-based representation.

Other Political Forces

MILITARY

The military played a significant role in Venezuelan politics prior to 1958. From 1958 to the early 1990s the military was supportive of the political system. The traditional political parties obtained the military's support through a combination of lavish expenditures and co-optation of high-ranking military officers into the two traditional political parties, AD and COPEI. By the end of the 1980s and the emergence of the economic and social crisis, however, many in the military began to question the viability and usefulness of the political system. In February and November of 1992 different elements of the military launched coup attempts against the government. The first coup attempt on February 4, 1992, was led by a paratrooper, Lt. Colonel Hugo Chávez Frias. The coup failed and Chávez was imprisoned. However, he was soon released and began to organize his political supporters into a force that would win political power through elections in 1998.

The Chávez government has sought to use the military for domestic development projects and as a source of political support. Soon after coming to power, Chávez initiated a program called Plan Bolívar 2000, which called for the armed forces to be engaged in a widespread effort to build schools, provide health care to rural and poor communities, build roads, and so on. Chávez also appointed many military officers to important political posts in his administration. The increasing use and politicization of the military rankled many officers and opposition political leaders. After a series of strikes by workers and opponents of the regime, elements of the military staged a coup in April 2002 that temporarily ousted Chávez from power. Restored two days after the coup, Chávez has sought to purge the military of any opposition and has prosecuted those officers involved or alleged to have been involved with the attempted coup. At the moment, it appears that Chávez has managed to establish control over the armed forces. However, the high level of politicization has undermined the neutrality of the institution and may erode civilian supremacy in the future.

DEMOCRATIC COORDINATION

(Coordinadora Democrática)

The Democratic Coordination was formed in 2003 to bring together all the forces opposed to President Chávez. The group spearheaded the drive to collect signatures so that a recall referendum could be held. The Democratic Coordination is made up of the largest labor union, the Confederation of Venezuelan Workers (CTV) and the largest business organization, the FEDECAMARAS (Federation of Chambers of Commerce), along with over 20 political parties. The organization managed to collect over 3 million signatures, enough to call for the recall election. The recall referendum was held on August 15, 2004, and won with nearly 60 percent of the vote by President Chávez. The loss has demoralized the opposition, and its future as a viable political force is now in doubt.

CONFEDERATION OF VENEZUELAN WORKERS

(Confederación de Trabajadores de Venezuela; CTV)

The Confederation of Venezuelan Workers (Confederación de Trabajadores de Venezuela; CTV) is the most important labor organization in Venezuela. Although recently under fire for its support of the opposition to the government, it serves as an umbrella organization for most of Venezuela's trade unions. It has been dominated by Acción Democrática (AD). There are some rival trade union associations, but this has been the most important (founded in 1936) and the largest. It is now challenged by the newly formed Bolivarian Force of Workers, controlled by the government.

FEDECAMAS

(Federation of Chambers of Commerce)

As far as business organizations are concerned, the most important is FEDECAMARAS (Federation of Chambers of Commerce). This organization has

consistently opposed the Chávez government, and its president, Pedro Carmona, was installed as interim president during the failed April 2002 coup.

National Prospects

President Hugo Chávez Frias has radically altered the Venezuelan political system. Since coming to power in 1998, he has dismantled the political system that had prevailed in Venezuela since 1958. That system was considered a bulwark of stability and democracy in the region. It was built on the distribution of political and economic benefits made possible by oil revenues and the alternation of power between two traditional parties. The system began to collapse once oil prices fell and it could no longer distribute goods to its supporters. Amid the economic and social upheaval of the early 1990s, Chávez emerged as a populist reformer aimed at ending the corrupt and undemocratic practices of the old political system.

Many in the country see Chávez as a demagogue and populist authoritarian who has sought to consolidate power in his hands by politicizing the military and polarizing society between the rich, the middle classes, and the poor. In addition, many see his foreign policy, particularly his support for Cuba, as an indication of his dangerous leftist and even Communist tendencies. For his supporters, however, Chávez is a populist hero who has transformed a corrupt and unjust political system into one that favors the poor over the rich and that uses the power and resources of the country to benefit the majority of Venezuelans. Additionally, they point to the many elections held during this period and to the text of the new constitution as evidence that Chávez has introduced significant elements of participatory democracy into the political system.

Having survived a coup in 2002, having weathered economic and political turmoil, and now winning a recall referendum and presiding over overwhelming victories by his supporters in regional and local elections, Chávez again has shown his political strength. For the foreseeable future there are no political forces strong enough to challenge his authority. The question is whether, now that he has consolidated power and the opposition is severely weakened, he will continue to support democratic institutions or turn toward greater authoritarianism. Some of his supporters have hinted at changing the constitution to allow for more than one reelection, thus allowing Chávez the possibility of ruling until 2018.

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SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM

(Cộng Hoà Xã Hội Chù Nghĩa Việt-Nam)

By William S. Turley, Ph.D.
Revised by Jason Tower

The Socialist Republic of Vietnam (SRV), with a population of over 83.5 million (2005 est.), is the second largest country in the world still ruled by a Communist party. From the Geneva Conference in 1954 to the victory of Communist forces in the south in 1975, Vietnam had been divided into the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV) north of the 17th parallel and the Republic of Vietnam south of it. The Communist victory paved the way for nationwide elections to the National Assembly and formal reunification under the country's current name in June 1976.

The System of Government

Vietnam is a one-party Communist state. The constitution adopted in April 1992 succeeds those adopted in 1980 and 1959. Jettisoning references to proletarian dictatorship, the new constitution describes state power as "based on the worker-peasant-intellectual alliance." It vests supreme constitutional and legislative authority in a popularly elected National Assembly, which selects from among its own members a president to serve as head of state. A prime minister chosen by the Assembly and cabinet ministers appointed by the prime minister constitute the government, or "highest administrative body." At regional and local levels, popularly elected people's councils perform representative functions and choose people's committees to perform executive functions. The Vietnam Communist Party (VCP) remains, in the words of the 1992 constitution, the "leading force of the state and society," but in slightly diminished status: the article omits the word "only" before "leading force" and, in theory, requires the party to operate within bounds set by the constitution and law.

EXECUTIVE

By comparison with the chairman of the Council of Ministers or premier under earlier constitutions, the prime minister has greater control over administration. The prime minister has the power, subject to National Assembly approval, to appoint all deputy prime ministers and ministers, to dismiss chairmen and deputy chairmen of people's committees, and to repeal decisions of ministers and the committees. These enhancements of prime ministerial power reflect an effort to improve the central government's ability to implement national plans against the wishes of an entrenched local officialdom. As of 2005 the government had three deputy prime ministers and 498 members.

From 1955 to 1987 the premiership derived much of its authority from the prestige of its sole occupant, Pham Van Dong, a founding member of the party. The office changed hands twice in the year following Dong's retirement, and unprecedented lobbying for rival candidates took place in 1988. Vo Van Kiet replaced Do Muoi as premier in 1991 and was confirmed as prime minister under the new constitution in 1992. Both men were members of the political

bureau, and Muoi became general secretary of the party. Phan Van Khai succeeded Kiet in 1997, and he has held this position since.

The position of state president, which replaced the council of state, combines ceremonial functions with the authority to delay ministerial appointments, to make certain judicial appointments, and to attend meetings of the cabinet and the National Assembly Standing Committee. On paper at least the president also appoints the prime minister from among the members of the Assembly. The president thus has some power to play a mediating role in Assembly and government affairs. It is unlikely that the first occupant of the office, General Le Duc Anh, a former defense minister and member of the political bureau, would have accepted the post in September 1992 had it provided no opportunity to participate actively in politics. Unlike the prime minister, the president is elected from among the deputies of the National Assembly. The current chief of state is Tran Duc Luong, who has also held office since September 1997.

LEGISLATURE

As the "people's highest representative agency and the highest organ of state power," the unicameral National Assembly is the highest legislative authority, with the power to supervise the government and to amend the constitution. In practice, the Assembly mostly endorses framework legislation prepared for it by the party, cabinet, or ministries and lets the government draw up the implementing regulations. In two sessions of about two weeks' duration each year, the Assembly can do little more than engage in brief debate and ratify the proposals before it. Between sessions, its authority is exercised by a Standing Committee composed of the Assembly chair and vice chairs, a Council of Nationalities, and seven working committees elected from among Assembly delegates.

The Assembly is elected to a five-year term. Following elections for the Eighth Assembly in 1987, when 829 candidates vied for 496 seats, or 1.67 candidates per seat, the ratio of candidates per seat has held at around 1.5 (in 2002, 759 candidates vied for 498 seats). The election law permits "self-nominated candidates"; however, the number of these has risen to only 13 in the elections held in 2002 (there were 2 in 1992). In both 1997 and 2002 a total of three self-nominated candidates won seats. The overwhelming majority of the candidates are members of the Communist Party, with nonmembers making up only 5 percent of the total.

The nominating process screens candidates to assure symbolic representation of key sections of the population as well as to select deputies who will support the party. From the 9th to the 11th Assembly, the proportion of seats held by women rose to 26 percent and of ethnic minorities to 30 percent. Reflecting a shift from political (i.e., class) to educational qualifications, the proportion of deputies holding university degrees increased from 56.2 percent to 93 percent; and 25 seats went to business leaders. Of deputies elected in 2002 less than 40 percent were reelected incumbents. Eleven percent of the members of the Assembly are under the age of 40.

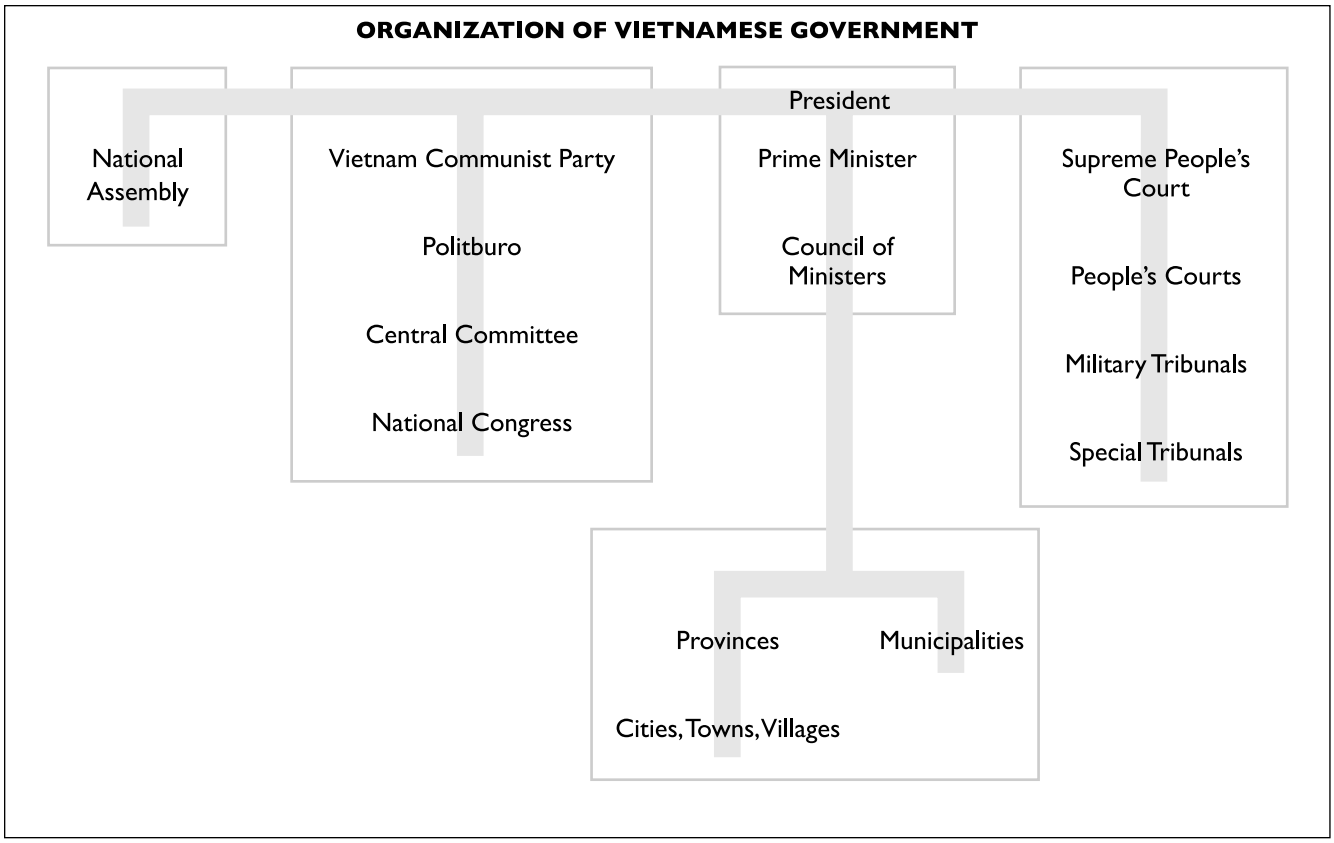
Despite the Assembly's rubber-stamp character, deputies have grown more assertive and independent. Deputies have amended legislation from the floor, excoriated officials for corruption, and passed government proposals in split votes. In December 1998 the Assembly voted down changes in the land law that had been proposed by the party's top organ, the political bureau. This trend gives evidence of the Assembly's growing effectiveness since 1987 and of spillover from debate within the party on political and economic reforms.

JUDICIARY

The highest juridical body of the SRV is the Supreme People's Court, whose presiding judge is elected by and accountable to the National Assembly. The Court supervises the work of local people's courts consisting of judges and "people's jurors" who adjudicate criminal and civil cases. It also supervises military tribunals. An entirely separate structure called the Supreme People's Procuracy has powers of public prosecution to use against the state administration. The procurator-general is chosen by the National Assembly and administers Procuracy offices parallel to the state structure. The terms of office for the presiding judge of the Supreme People's Court and the chief procurator of the People's Procuracy correspond to that of the National Assembly.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The SRV is a unitary state consisting, in 2004, of 58 provinces and 3 municipalities directly accountable to the central government. Other subnational units include 13 cities, 63 towns, 461 rural districts, and 19 urban districts. Below district level, there are 8,739 villages, 805 wards, and 431 townships.



The formal organs of state authority and popular participation at province, municipal, district, city, village, ward, and town levels are people's councils. The councils are popularly elected bodies, which in turn elect people's committees from among council members. Councils may have from 7 to 17 members depending on the level and size of the electoral unit. In principle, the councils represent the "will, aspiration, and right to mastery of the local people," whereas the committees act on behalf of the councils to oversee the implementation of council resolutions, the constitution, and state regulations.

The constitution requires the entire structure of councils and committees to operate according to the principle of "democratic centralism," or vertical accountability, but subordinate levels of government often act quite independently. Local party officials, particularly those who rose to leadership positions during the years of war and revolution, have tended to dominate the councils and committees and place personal or communal interests ahead of national ones, to the chagrin of leaders at the center. The 1992 constitution authorizes the prime ministers to ratify the election and dismissal of committee chairs and override the decisions of committees at province and municipal levels, but this check falls short of the centralization that reformers had sought. The authority, composition, and accountability of the councils and committees remain points of contention.

The Electoral System

The 498 deputies of the National Assembly are directly elected, at large, in 175 multimember electoral units, with seats distributed among the units in proportion to population. Election is by secret ballot on the basis of universal suffrage for all citizens age 18 or over. Citizens can stand for election to the Assembly at age 21. The elections are supervised at the national level by an Electoral Council that oversees the work of electoral committees at subordinate levels. This structure provides electoral administration, from posting voter name lists and setting up polling booths to counting the ballots. The electoral committees also mobilize people to vote, assist voters to get to the polls, and take ballot boxes to the homes of invalids, which accounts for voter turnouts approaching 100 percent. In 2002 over 99 percent of Vietnam's 50 million registered voters cast ballots.

The term of people's councils is five years, and elections are direct. In the past, elections were often postponed on the grounds of extenuating national emergency. Screening of candidates assures the election of council members who are not only politically reliable but who also comprise a cross section of the population, so that the councils can claim to exercise the people's "mastership" over the state. Elections for people's councils at province, district, village, and equivalent municipal levels in April 2004 saw 484,189 candidates run for 311,930 seats, a ratio of 1.55 candidates per seat (this represents a rise from the 1989 elections, which had a ratio of 1.25 candidates per seat).

The Party System

The Vietnam Communist Party (VCP) dominates what is essentially a one-party system. Two political parties, the Vietnam Democratic Party and the Vietnam Socialist Party, that claimed to represent the interests of the bourgeois elements and nonparty intellectuals, were disbanded in October 1988.

Major Political Parties

VIETNAM COMMUNIST PARTY (VCP)

(Dang Cong San Viet-Nam)

HISTORY

The Vietnam Communist Party was founded on February 3, 1930, following Comintern instructions that three nominally Communist groups then laying competitive claim to Comintern recognition should form a single party. In October 1930, again in response to Comintern instructions, the party changed its name to Indochinese Communist Party (ICP) to reflect the Comintern assignment of responsibility for all of colonial French Indochina. The ICP received the Comintern's grant of national section status the following year.

The party at its founding had 211 members and perhaps up to 2,000 active collaborators in front groups and in the trade union movement. The principal leader was Ho Chi Minh, who had been present at the founding of the French Communist Party in 1920, studied in Moscow in 1923, and worked in the Comintern's East Asia bureau at the time of the ICP's founding. Other founders tended to be relatively youthful middle-class individuals with above-average educations and nationalist inclinations. Prominent among the founders were descendants of mandarins who had led a violent resistance to French rule in the 19th century. For the founding generation, the primary appeal of Marxism-Leninism was its critique of colonialism and status as the official ideology of a powerful ally against colonial rule.

The party led a furtive existence in its early years. A peasant uprising and creation of isolated village soviets (councils) in Nghe An and Ha Tinh provinces during 1930 and 1931 provoked harsh repression. But the party was able to reconstruct itself with help from the 30 to 50 Vietnamese who attended the so-called Stalin School in Moscow from 1928 to 1934, and it held its first national congress in 1935. At the decade's close, with an estimated 2,000 members and 40,000 followers, the party was the most effective and perhaps the largest organization in Vietnam opposing French rule.

In 1941 the party shifted to a strategy of armed struggle. While the Japanese army occupied Indochina, the party built a front organization called the League for the Independence of Vietnam (Viet nam doc lap dong minh, known as Viet Minh) and gradually assembled a small guerrilla force. In August 1945 this force spearheaded a popular uprising that culminated in the declaration of independence of the Democratic Republic on September 2, 1945. The attempt by France to reverse this outcome precipitated eight years of war. The party's second national congress in 1951 adopted the name Lao Dong (Workers') Party and separated the Laotian and Cambodian sections into nominally independent parties. After defeating French forces at Dien Bien Phu in May 1954, DRV leaders signed an armistice with France to end the fighting. A separate declaration provided for the regrouping of forces north and south of the 17th parallel and elections on the question of reunification two years later.

The party left a small core of activists behind in the south, but chose to concentrate on building the north. In the north, land reform provoked such opposition that in 1956 the party secretary-general, Truong Chinh, had to resign, while in the south, the party dwindled by the late 1950s to about 5,000 members. After sharp debate, the central committee decided in early 1959 to strengthen support for the party's southern branch and seek reunification by armed struggle if necessary. The party's third national congress in September 1960 ratified this decision and elected Le Duan, a proponent of forcible reunification, as first secretary. The party attempted to continue development in the north while

supporting the revolution in the south, but the intensity of the war with South Vietnam, and the United States after 1965, forced "socialist construction" into suspension.

At war's end in 1975 party leaders laid plans for the rapid integration of north and south within a single Socialist framework. The fourth national congress in December 1976 ratified this objective and resurrected the name the party had taken at its founding in 1930. Reform and disintegration in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union in the late 1980s, however, left the VCP without a military ally, economic support, or viable model. The isolation was disillusioning to an already war-fatigued rank and file and, for a while, frightening to party leaders.

ORGANIZATION

The VCP is an ideologically uniform cadre party organized on the Leninist model. The party rules place ultimate authority in the party's national congress. Delegates are chosen by indirect election through a pyramid of congresses every five years, conditions permitting. In fact, the gaps of 16, 9, and 16 years between the congresses up to 1976 had few parallels in the Communist world. Since then congresses have been held in 1982, 1986, 1991, 1996, and 2001. Under revised rules adopted in 1991, a special conference of delegates may be convened between congresses.

The national congress ratifies broad policy guidelines and elects the central committee, the executive authority of the party between congresses. The committee in turn elects a political bureau, which nominates a secretary-general for approval by the committee. A secretariat comprising a few members of the political bureau plus others chosen by the central committee oversees routine administration of the party. However, while the central committee seldom meets more than two times a year (usually just before National Assembly sessions to endorse resolutions for the Assembly to enact), the political bureau is frequently in session and normally turns to the committee only for broad policy guidelines or approval of decisions it already has made. The eighth national congress held at the end of June 1996 authorized the creation of a five-member standing board within the political bureau but declined to define the board's powers.

The party officially embraced the principle of collective leadership in the 1950s, and the political bureau has practiced consensus decision making ever since. When leaders have held strong opposing views, they have compromised or postponed making clear and complete decisions. During the 1980s protracted disagreements over what scope to give private commerce and market pricing caused fitful implementation and temporary reversals of reform. While some political analysts once claimed to discern stable factions in the leadership, the evidence of shifting alliances depending on the issue is more compelling. Deadlock in the political bureau could be broken by a vote in the central committee, but such a situation has never arisen.

The fourth national congress in December 1976 rejuvenated a central committee whose composition had changed little in the 16 preceding years of war. Of the 101 full members and 32 alternates elected (raising the total membership from 77 to 133), 65 percent were new to the committee. Many of the new people had worked their way up through the southern party organization during the war or had education that qualified them for leadership in peacetime development. The number of military officers on the committee declined from 30 percent to 22 percent. That central committee in turn elected a political bureau of 14 full and three alternate members.

Rejuvenation continued at the fifth congress in March 1982, as 49 members of the fourth central committee failed to win reappointment and 68 new members were elected, giving the committee 116 full members and 36 alternates for a total of 152. Among senior leaders, six (including the renowned General Vo Nguyen Giap) were dropped from the political bureau, and four new ones were appointed. The number of full bureau members declined to 13, and that of alternates fell to two, for a total of 15. A dropped reformist, Nguyen Van Linh, was reinstated in June 1985 (raising the membership to 16). New members of the political bureau included two military officers in charge of operations in Kampuchea and of communication and transportation. But the inner circle of five septuagenarians who held the highest posts remained unchanged.

The sixth congress in December 1986 elected 173 central committee members including alternates, of whom about half were new, and marked the end of dominance by the party's first generation of leadership. The secretary-general, Le Duan, had died six months before, whereas the party elders Truong Chinh, Pham Van Dong, and Le Duc Tho gave up their seats to become "advisers" to the central committee. Confirmation of Nguyen Van Linh as secretary-general signaled the ascendancy of reform elements within the party and the inauguration of "Renovation" *(Doi Moi)*, a comprehensive program of market-oriented reforms similar to those in China. Military representation in the central committee dropped to just 7 percent.

In June 1991 the seventh congress reduced the central committee to 146 full members and the political

bureau to 13, ceasing to elect alternates for either body. The most striking changes in the committee's composition were the reduced proportion of members with posts in the state bureaucracy, the reduced representation of the party's own central-level officialdom, and an increase in both the proportion and the number of province and other secondary-level party leaders. The redistribution of seats reflected a general devolution and fragmentation of power, consequences of decentralizing reforms. Linh's replacement as secretary-general, Premier Do Muoi, was a reputed conservative who turned out to be a reform moderate. A special midterm party conference in January 1994 elected 15 additional members to the central committee for a total committee membership of 161.

The pace of change slowed at the eighth congress, which met in late June 1996. In the new central committee of 170 members, 57 percent were incumbents. Central party and state officials increased their representation while province- and secondary-level ones lost ground. Military representation increased slightly, to 10 percent of the members. Membership of the political bureau increased to 19 (of whom one died before taking his seat) and included a woman for the first time, but the absence of turnover in the top posts and the addition of a member from the military suggested a heightened preoccupation with stability, continuity, and control. The three most-senior members of the political bureau (Do Muoi, Le Duc Anh, Vo Van Kiet) plus one representative each from the military and security forces composed the new bureau standing board. In December 1997 these senior figures finally stepped aside and four new members were added.

At the ninth congress held in April 2001, a reformist, Nong Duc Manh, was appointed secretary-general. In addition, the Politiburo was trimmed back down to 15, with seven members going into retirement. The congress adopted a 10-year economic plan endorsed by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and it appeared to be trending toward an acceleration of economic reforms.

Below the center there are party committees for each province, municipality, district, and city. These committees are chosen every five years in local congresses and in turn elect their own secretaries, subject to approval by the next higher echelon. At lower levels—villages, wards, towns, industrial enterprises, state agencies, cooperatives, and military units—the party is further articulated into "basic level committees" or "chapters," depending on whether there are more or fewer than 30 members present. Through overlapping membership between party committees and the leaderships of the state and mass associations, the party ensures that its policies are carried out.

All mass organizations are at least indirectly subject to the party's guidance, but one qualifies unambiguously as an auxiliary: the Ho Chi Minh Communist Youth Union. Described as a "school of Communism for youth," the union has its own vertical structure of committees extending down into schools, military units, or wherever people under 30 are concentrated. Participation in union activities is designed to instruct youth in Marxism-Leninism and Ho Chi Minh Thought, to elicit support for party policies, and to determine eligibility for admission to the party.

The most important publications dealing with party affairs are the daily newspaper published under the auspices of the central committee, *Nhan dan* (The People), and the monthly political and theoretical journal, *Tap chi Cong san* (The Communist). The youth union has its own organ, *Tuoi Tre* (Youth), with different versions published in Ho Chi Minh City and Hanoi.

POLICY

The VCP's goal from 1954 to the late 1980s was to transform Vietnam into an industrialized Socialist society along Soviet–Eastern European lines. It pursued this goal after reunification by collectivizing agriculture in the south, abolishing private trade, and resuming five-year central planning. However, these policies caused declines in productivity and per capita income. Aid cutoffs and an embargo in retaliation for Vietnam's intervention in Cambodia deepened the economic crisis. Necessity induced the sixth plenum of the central committee in September 1979 to introduce output contracting in agriculture and other innovations, which produced favorable results.

Since formally embracing *Doi Moi* in 1986, Vietnam has liberalized its foreign investment code, dismantled agricultural cooperatives, freed prices, pegged its currency to market rates, liberalized both domestic and foreign trade, reduced subsidies and budget deficits, granted farmers landholding rights for 20- to 50-year periods, introduced "land user" and income taxes, constructed export-processing zones, passed a bankruptcy law, and more, matching the scope of reforms in China.

Political liberalization paralleled economic reforms until the overthrow of Eastern European Communist regimes and demonstrations in Beijing's Tiananmen Square in 1989. Particularly noteworthy were the partial relaxation of controls on the press and public debate, reduced interference by the party in routine administration, bureaucratic streamlining, enhanced

powers for the National Assembly, and allowance for front groups to represent corporate interests. Although the party tightened some controls after 1989 and declared its opposition to pluralism and multiparty democracy, it did not repeal many changes already made. Leaders conceded that economic growth eventually would generate pressure for political reform, but few of them had clear ideas about what form the latter should take. By late 2004 Vietnam had already created an environment characterized by a relatively free flow of economic information and ideas, but which left issues of political activity carefully hidden from public view.

In foreign affairs, Vietnam was from 1960 to 1975, in the party's view, the focal point of global conflict between Communist and capitalist "camps." However, it was mainly their own rivalry that motivated China and the Soviet Union to support the VCP's struggle for reunification. The VCP found it expedient to take a neutral position in the Sino-Soviet dispute until China turned to the United States in the early 1970s for a strategic counter to the Soviet Union. Vietnamese distrust of China and Soviet willingness to contribute to Vietnam's development persuaded the VCP to accept Soviet offers of a closer relationship. The Soviet Union provided $2.5 billion for the RSV's 1976–80 state plan; in June 1977 the RSV acquired full membership in the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA, or Comecon); and in November 1978 it joined the Soviet Union in signing a Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation. This agreement provided a legal framework for Soviet air and naval installations at Danang and Cam Ranh Bay, the first for the USSR in Southeast Asia, which Vietnam's neighbors regarded as provocative.

Vietnam's alignment with the USSR, domestic policies that stimulated an exodus of ethnic Chinese "boat people," and a Vietnamese drive to construct "special relationships" with Laos and Cambodia seriously aggravated relations between Vietnam and China. The VCP's decision to attack Cambodia in December 1978 and to install an alternative government to the Khmer Rouge grew out of a perception that China was supporting the Khmer Rouge to apply pressure on Vietnam. Primarily concerned with excluding hostile influences from the weak countries on its borders, Vietnam gradually withdrew its troops between 1985 and September 1989, allowing the war to continue among Cambodian factional armies. Vietnam subsequently supported the UN-brokered cease-fire and peacekeeping operation in May 1991 because these arrangements seemed likely to sideline the Khmer Rouge and because Vietnam desperately needed a peaceful international environment and an end to economic embargo so that it could concentrate on development.

The contrast between Vietnam's economic stagnation and its neighbors' dynamic growth had a profound effect on both domestic and foreign policy. The non-Communist members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) that VCP leaders once regarded with disdain appeared to Vietnamese in the 1980s as potential partners and models. But only by withdrawing from Cambodia and abandoning inward-looking, autarkic economic policies could Vietnam participate in the region's growth. In 1990 Vietnam officially stated its wish to join ASEAN, and in July 1995, the same month that it established diplomatic relations with the United States, it became a full member of the organization.

In 2000 Vietnam went a step further, signing an import trade deal with the United States, paving the way for entry to the World Trade Organization (WTO). As of 2005 Vietnam was in advanced talks to become a member of the WTO.

MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY

The VCP in 1976 had 1,553,500 members, or 3.13 percent of the population, almost double the membership a decade earlier. The party's rapid growth in that period was due to wartime requirements and lax admission standards. Of the total, 273,000 were enrolled in the party's southern organs, a figure that represented enormous growth despite the loss of many thousands to death, defection, and fatigue.

Since that time the party has constantly endeavored to weed out infirm, incompetent, and corrupt members, while seeking to attract educated applicants between the ages of 18 and 30. Just over 90 percent of all new members were from this age group between 1976 and 1982, bringing the average age down to 39. Total membership then was 1.7 million and rose to 1.8 million in 1986. *Doi Moi,* which increased opportunities for employment outside the party and state, has tended to weaken interest in acquiring membership. Only a concerted drive raised membership at the time of the seventh congress in 1991 to 2,155,000. By the eighth congress in 1996, membership was 2.2 million, or 3 percent of the population, and in late 2004 membership stood at 2.4 million.

Owing to the agrarian character of Vietnamese society, the party historically relied on the rural population for most of its members and on persons of middle-class background for educated leadership, making the membership largely "middle peasant" and "petit bourgeois intellectual" in origin. This state of affairs

seemed inappropriate when priorities shifted from national reunification to socialist reform in 1976, and the party intensified efforts to enlarge the proportion of workers in its ranks. The small size of the industrial proletariat, however, severely limited this effort, and, in 1982, individuals classified as workers accounted for only 9 percent of the membership. In 1991 barely 10 percent of the delegates to the seventh congress were workers, and much more attention was given to the fact that nearly two-thirds of all delegates held university degrees. With the continued commitment to *Doi Moi* and economic liberalization this trend is expected to continue into the mid-2000s.

All members pay a percentage of their income in party dues. The central committee fixes this percentage, imposes special levies, and administers party finances. The party also receives income from factories and businesses that it owns. The percentage of income members must pay and the amounts collected from other sources are unknown.

LEADERSHIP

The average age of the 15 members of the political bureau elected at the ninth congress in 2001 was around 64, slightly older than the average age of the outgoing bureau. It should be noted, however, that of the seven members of the political bureau for which this information is not available, at least three appear to be considerably younger than the general secretary.

The current top post of the political bureau is held by Nong Duc Manh, who, unlike his predecessor Le Kha Phieu, holds no military positions. Le, who was general secretary from 1997 until 2002, was a general who had risen from the ranks of the armed forces.

SATELLITE ORGANIZATIONS

The VCP guides the work of several organizations whose purpose is to mobilize mass support for party policies. These are the Vietnam Fatherland Front, the Vietnam Confederation of Trade Unions, the Vietnam Association of Collective Peasants, and the Vietnam Women's Union. The Fatherland Front succeeded the Viet Minh in 1955 as the principal institutional expression of a united front. It is responsible for securing popular participation in public affairs and building the alliance of workers, peasants, and intelligentsia, which is the supposed social base of the regime. In 1976 the front absorbed two organizations that had performed similar functions during the war in the south—the National Front for the Liberation of South Vietnam (1960–76) and the Alliance of National Democratic and Peace Forces (1968–76)—to form a National Unity Front. The name reverted to Vietnam Fatherland Front following a congress in February 1977 at which the front dedicated itself to uniting "all the people in the name of building a peaceful, independent, united, and socialist Vietnam."

The Confederation of Trade Unions, the Association of Collective Peasants, and the Women's Union fulfill much the same purpose as the Fatherland Front for their respective groups. These organizations also sponsor campaigns in support of policies or projects of concern to their memberships and occasionally have served as sounding boards for the interests and grievances of their constituencies. But the party strictly limits group autonomy and initiatives from within its own mass associations. A Veterans' Association was established in 1990 partly to absorb a "Club of Resistance Fighters," based in Ho Chi Minh City, that was beginning to behave like a pressure group. Two political affiliates of the Fatherland Front that claimed to represent the interests of bourgeois elements and nonparty intellectuals were disbanded in October 1988.

Minor Political Parties

There are no minor parties in Vietnam.

Other Political Forces

MILITARY

The People's Army of Vietnam (PAVN) emerged from war in 1975 a conventional armed forces commanded by professional officers, many of them trained in the Soviet Union. By comparison with the party leaders who had built the PAVN from a guerrilla army in the war against France, these officers were more concerned with the institutional interests of the military, and they resisted the decision of state planners to assign military units and resources to economic reconstruction. The military also protested budget restrictions required by reform and necessitated by declining Soviet assistance after 1989, citing supply shortages, low morale, and inadequate programs for veterans. Some officers and units turned to smuggling and black marketeering, while others opened legitimate businesses and produced such items as clothing and electric fans for both military and civilian consumption. Party leaders were sufficiently concerned about the army's dependability following the collapse of European Communist gov-

ernments in 1989 that they launched a campaign of political indoctrination for all military personnel.

The return of economic growth in the 1990s permitted the government to improve conditions for the troops and even to purchase small quantities of advanced arms, but policies have continued to encourage military involvement in the economy. In 1995 the Ministry of Defense controlled 200 businesses, including four major corporations, and had signed joint venture agreements with 49 foreign firms. This pattern seems to have continued over the past eight years; however, precise information regarding the nature of the army's business operations is not available. After the ninth congress the military and security forces accounted for two members of the political bureau (Pham Van Tra and Le Ming Huong), a drop of three compared with the outgoing leadership group. Military membership of both the central committee and the National Assembly remained around 10 percent.

ETHNIC GROUPS

The regime recognizes over 50 ethnic minorities constituting 13 percent of the population. Most of the minority population is scattered throughout the mountain chain that stretches from the Chinese border to the edge of the Mekong Delta. Ethnic Khmer inhabit the Mekong Delta, while Chinese, or *Hoa,* live in urban areas of the south. Ethnic groups vary in size from tiny bands on the brink of extinction to populations totaling 1 million. One member of the political bureau, Nong Duc Manh, belongs to the Tay minority.

Some highland minorities traditionally had accepted outside assistance to resist intrusion by the lowland Vietnamese. Several groups sided with the French in the First Indochina War, and China had some success stimulating minority dissidence in border areas after its 1979 punitive attack on Vietnam. In the south, an alliance of minorities called the United Front for the Struggle of Oppressed Races (FULRO) revolted against the Saigon government in 1964 and later accepted help from U.S. Army Green Berets to fight the Communists. The last band of FULRO guerrillas and their dependents turned themselves in to UN troops near the Vietnam-Cambodia border in September 1992.

Grievances by minorities in the highlands focus on schemes that force lowland Vietnamese to move to mountainous areas and open the highlands to economic exploitation. However, these minorities are too diverse and dispersed ever to form a unified bloc against these policies. In contrast, the ethnic Chinese have been quick to take advantage of *Doi Moi* to assume their accustomed roles in the economy. Although they have been reduced by emigration to about 1 million, amounting to about half their pre-1978 percentage of the total population, their critical role in facilitating foreign trade and investment affords the *Hoa* some influence.

RELIGIOUS GROUPS

The single largest religion in Vietnam is Buddhism, claiming a majority of the population as adherents. Buddhism traditionally has lacked unifying structures and only rarely provided a basis for organized political action. But it is entwined with national identity, and the involvement of monks in demonstrations against a succession of Saigon governments in the mid-1960s culminated in the establishment of a politicized Unified Buddhist Church (UBC).

After 1975 the government "reeducated" some of the more activist clerics and closed their pagodas in the south. In 1981 it brought together the country's nine Buddhist organizations and sects to form a single Vietnam Buddhist Church (VBC) affiliated with the Vietnam Fatherland Front. In return for acceptance of the VBC as sole representative of Vietnamese Buddhism, the government offered freedom of religious observance. But many UBC members refused to recognize the VBC's authority, and police arrested monks who demanded reconstitution of the UBC in several southern cities during 1993.

Constituting 8 to 10 percent of the population, Roman Catholics enjoyed a privileged position under the colonial administration. This fact and the service of so many Catholic refugees from the north in Saigon's anticommunist regimes after 1954 hardly endeared them to compatriots who had supported the revolution. Following reunification, some church leaders cooperated with the government so long as basic religious freedoms were preserved, but the regime closed many church-related institutions and placed a number of clergy in reeducation camps. The clergy itself was divided over how to adapt, and the government asserted a veto over appointments and other church affairs. These issues have remained points of contention between Hanoi and the Vatican.

Two other religious groups that played important political roles in the past are the Hoa Hao and Cao Dai. The Hoa Hao, a reform Buddhist movement, had an estimated following of 1.5 million and the Cao Dai, a syncretic sect, about 2 million in the mid-1980s. Both groups originated in the south, had millenarian tendencies, maintained their own armed

forces in the 1950s, and flirted with the Communists but then sided with the Saigon government during the war with the United States. The Cao Dai acquiesced to Communist administration after the war, but the Hoa Hao, or elements of it, resisted. The Communists dismantled the national leaderships of both sects, purged the sects' local organizations of anti-Communists, and limited the organizations to strictly spiritual activities.

National Prospects

Vietnam emerged from decades of war and revolution just in time to witness the extinction or failure of just about every doctrine, institution, and principle that the VCP stood for. Economic crisis at home, isolation from other countries in the region, sweeping transformation of the Communist world after 1985, and the contrasting performances of market and centrally planned economies confronted VCP leaders with two related dilemmas. One was how to reconcile security requirements with development needs; the other was how to achieve the needed changes without eroding the bases of the party's rule.

Prospects for resolving these dilemmas while maintaining political stability have seemed mixed. On the one hand, public confidence in the party's leadership plummeted during the 1970s and 1980s due to administrative incompetence and widespread corruption. Leadership succession brought individuals to power who were better educated than their predecessors but who lacked broad popularity. People generally, including many party members, have been apathetic or careerist in orientation toward the party and its ideology. And international pressure for democratization has intensified since the cold war's end.

On the other hand, the VCP still enjoys some nationalist legitimacy based on its successful leadership in wars for national independence and unity. Moreover, Vietnam remains a predominantly agrarian society with a still-weak middle stratum of tradesmen, professionals, technocrats, and entrepreneurs who might constitute the kind of "civil society" that, as it grew, could become antagonistic to European-type Communist parties. But even if the government did not suppress or co-opt them, there would be no party, group, or movement capable of organizing a plausible alternative to the present government or the VCP's leadership of it. The party also benefits from a neo-Confucian political culture that values hierarchy, authority, and order. And last, the party can take credit for rapidly improving the material conditions of life and laying the bases for Vietnam to become Asia's next newly industrializing country.

Indeed, Vietnam's combination of market-oriented reform and single-party rule broadly resembles the formula that has produced rapid economic growth with political stability under a strong state in many Asian countries. Provided the economy continues to deliver steady gains in welfare, the VCP emphasizes meritocratic over political criteria in recruitment, and the government succeeds in co-opting groups willing to collaborate, the party has a good chance of preserving a paramount role for itself for a long time to come.

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REPUBLIC OF YEMEN

(Al-Jumhuriya al-Yarnaniyah)

By Deborah A. Kaple, Ph.D., and Jon E. Mandaville, Ph.D.
Revised by Rima Habasch, Ph.D.



The Republic of Yemen, with 1,906 kilometers of coastline on the Arabian Sea, the Gulf of Aden, and the Red Sea, lies between Oman and Saudi Arabia. Yemen is one of the oldest centers of civilization in the Near East. Between the 12th century B.C.E. and the sixth century C.E. it was part of the Minaean, Sabaean, and Himyarite kingdoms; in the latter part of that period it came under Ethiopian and Persian rule. It is a country of 20.7 million people (2005 est.) whose main language is Arabic. Its population is mostly Arab, with some concentrations of Afro-Arabs in the coastal regions, south Asians in the south, and small European communities in the major cities. Most Yemeni are Muslims, including both Sha'fi (Sunni) and Zaydi (Shi'a).

After many years of war and hostilities between the Yemen Arab Republic (YAR) in the north and the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (PDRY) in the south, the two countries united and formed the Republic of Yemen in May 1990. Since unification, however, there have been many incidents of tribal warfare and political troubles. Much of the unrest stems from the forced repatriation of more than 700,000 Yemeni workers from Saudi Arabia, a result of Yemen's neutral position in the Gulf War in 1991; few of these were able to find jobs readily at home. A civil war in 1994 between north and south further tested the new nation. Though the war lasted for only a few months and amendments have been added to the constitution to strengthen the central government, Yemen's political landscape remains unstable.

BACKGROUND: FORMER NORTH YEMEN

The former North Yemen was part of the Ottoman empire by the 16th century and again in the 19th century. In 1919 the Turks retreated from Yemen and left the country in the hands of Imam Yahya, who became the country's king. In 1948 Yahya died during an unsuccessful coup attempt, and his son Ahmad succeeded him. Ahmad ruled until his death in September 1962. Ahmad's reign was repressive and marked by renewed problems with Britain over that country's domination in the south and calls to support the Arab nationalist objectives of the Egyptian president, Gamal Abdel Nasser.

Revolutionary forces (with the help of Egypt) deposed Ahmad's son Badr in 1962 and created the Yemen Arab Republic (YAR). Saudi Arabia and Jordan countered with support for Badr. The war was further complicated by entanglement with the concurrent liberation conflict in neighboring South Yemen and by its identification as a test of strength between cold war superpowers, the USSR and the United States. The Soviets provided military supplies and advisers to the revolutionaries via Egypt, whereas the United States provided the same to the Royalists by way of Saudi Arabia. The civil war was waged until 1967, when Egypt withdrew its troops. By 1968 most of the opposing leaders reached a settlement, and Saudi Arabia recognized the YAR in 1970.

BACKGROUND: FORMER SOUTH YEMEN

In 1839 Britain conquered the port of Aden in southern Yemen and signed a series of bilateral treaties with a number of tribal states of southern Yemen in the following years. Britain ruled the port as part of British India until 1937, when Aden was made a crown colony. By 1963 most of the tribal states within southern Yemen with which Britain had made agreements and the Aden colony were joined to form the British-sponsored Federation of South Arabia. In 1965 two rival nationalist groups—the Front for the Liberation of Occupied South Yemen (FLOSY) and the National Liberation Front (NLF)—fought the British vehemently for control over South Yemen. The struggle was violent, and by 1967, British troops withdrew, the federation of south Arabia fell, and the Marxist NLF eliminated its FLOSY rivals. The NLF declared the area independent on November 30, 1967, and renamed it the People's Republic of South Yemen. In June 1969 a radical sector of the NLF took power and changed the country's name on December 1, 1970, to the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (PDRY). In the PDRY, all political parties were folded into the Yemeni Socialist Party (YSP), which became the country's only legal party.

UNIFICATION

The 1970s were characterized by continuing hostilities between the two Yemens, resulting in border wars in 1972, 1978, and 1979. Both governments avowedly supported unification of Yemen. Each, however, was backed by a different cold war power, and neither the United States nor the USSR was willing to support a unification that might compromise their cold war strategic position. At the same time, Yemen's monarchist neighbor, Saudi Arabia, feared a potentially powerful republican state on its border and worked to keep the two governments separate.

By 1980 a nearly bankrupt USSR informed its South Yemen ally that no more aid would be forthcoming. Unification talks became more serious, and a draft constitution was drawn up for the proposed merger. The discovery of significant quantities of oil and natural gas in the north in 1986 hastened unification discussions, and, despite persistent political differences, union was declared in May 1990. The new country was named the Republic of Yemen.

The two countries agreed on a 30-month transitional period for completing the unification of the two political and economic systems. The 26-member YAR advisory council and the 17-member PDRY presidium elected a presidential council, which appointed a prime minister, who then formed a cabinet. The new agreement also established a 301-seat provisional unified parliament, which consisted of 159 members from the north, 111 members from the south, and 31 independent "at-large" members appointed by the chairman of the council.

In May 1991 people of the newly unified Republic of Yemen voted in a referendum on a new constitution. Some groups boycotted the vote, claiming irregularities, but the document went into effect. In the later part of 1991 deteriorating economic conditions and tribal disagreements led to disturbances, rioting, and a general strike. In 1993 allegations about northerners attacking southerners surfaced as leaders of the two Yemens vied politically for power in the new government. Even though other countries tried to mediate the difficulties, civil war broke out in 1994.

A UN special envoy and other outside organizations tried unsuccessfully to stop the war. On May 21, 1994, the south declared that it was seceding and establishing a new country, the Democratic Republic of Yemen (DRY). It was unofficially provided with aid by Saudi Arabia to do so. However, the international community did not support the south, and once Aden was captured on July 7, resistance collapsed and thousands of southern leaders and military fled to neighboring Arab countries.

When the war ended, President Saleh immediately announced a general amnesty that applied to nearly everyone, and most southerners returned to Yemen after a short exile. He also made party membership among members of the military illegal, and, in September, he announced new amendments to the constitution. The constitution was amended again in 1994. Changes included the extension of the term limits of the House of Representatives from four to six years as well as the term of the president to seven years.

The System of Government

Yemen is a unitary republic with a bicameral legislature.

EXECUTIVE

The chief of state is the president, Lieutenant General Ali Abdallah Saleh, the former president of North Yemen (YAR), took office at the time of the merger in

May 1990. Ali Abdallah Saleh has been president since May 1990. According to the constitutional amendment of 2001, the president is elected by general suffrage for a period of seven years. Eligible candidates must secure the nomination of at least 10 percent of the legislature. The president chooses the vice president. Major General Abd ar-Rabbuh Mansur Hadi has been the vice president since October 1994. The president is also the commander in chief of the armed forces.

The president's duties are to represent the republic internally and externally; call the voters to elect the House of Representatives; call for national referenda; lay down the general policy of the state; name the members of the National Defense Council; promulgate the laws passed by the House of Representatives and to issue the decrees that execute them; appoint and dismiss senior government officials and military/police officers; establish military ranks; issue decrees endorsing treaties and conventions approved by the House of Representatives; ratify agreements that do not require the approval of the House of Representatives if approved by the cabinet; establish diplomatic delegations abroad and appoint and recall ambassadors; accredit diplomatic representatives of foreign countries and organizations in Yemen; grant political asylum; and proclaim states of emergency and general mobilization.

The head of government is the prime minister. He, together with his deputies and ministers, constitute the cabinet, the Council of Ministers. The president appoints the prime minister and deputy prime ministers. On April 29, 1998, following the resignation of the previous prime minister, Farraj bin Ghanim, Abd al-Karim al-Iryani was temporarily appointed prime minister. Two weeks later Iryani was asked to form a government, and the new cabinet was announced on May 16, 1998. Since April 2001 Abd al-Qadir Ba Jamal has been prime minister.

According to the constitution, the Council of Ministers has the following powers and duties. It prepares the guidelines for internal and external policy; prepares the state's proposed economic plan and its annual budget and supervises their implementation; prepares bills and draft decisions and submits them to the House of Representatives; approves treaties and agreements before submitting them; maintains the state's internal and external security; directs, coordinates, and reviews the work of ministries, administrative organs, and public institutions; appoints and removes leading officials in accordance with the law; and supervises the regulation and administration of money, credit, and insurance. The most recent presidential elections were held in September 1999. These were the first elections in which the president was chosen by popular vote. The president is chosen by a popular vote for a five-year term. This was extended to seven years in a constitutional amendment in 2001. Furthermore, the amendment stated that the president serve no more than two terms. In the 1999 elections Saleh received 96 percent of the votes. The next elections are due in 2006.

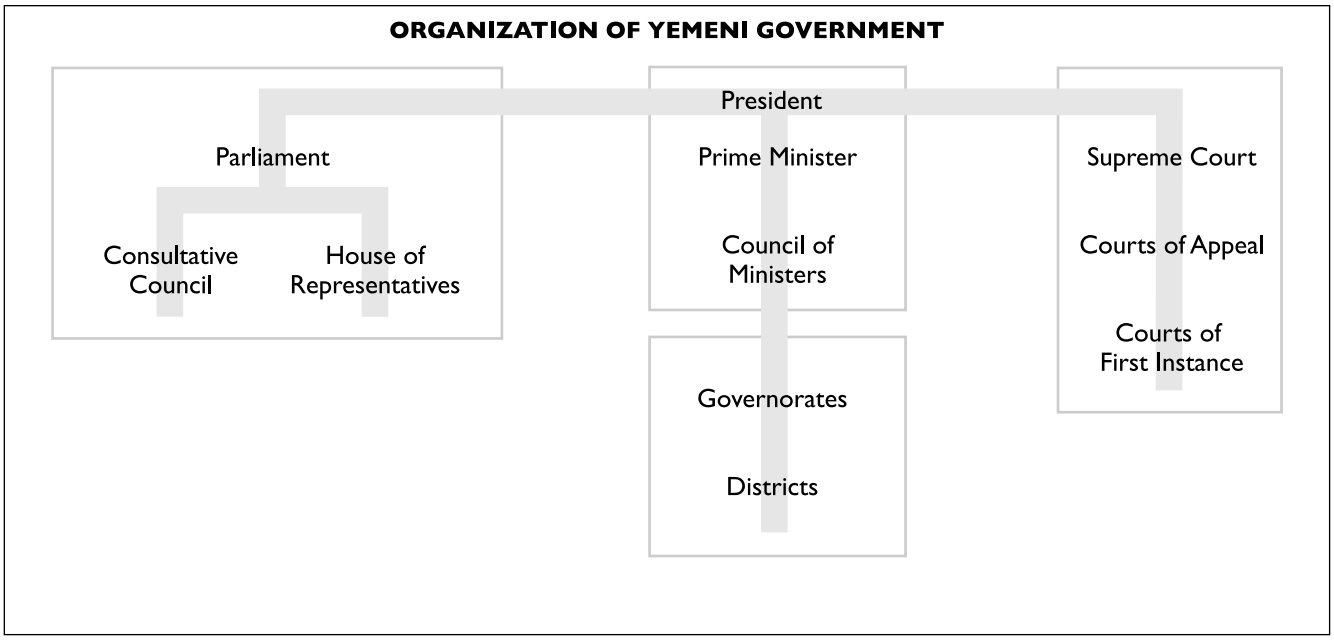
LEGISLATURE

According to the constitutional amendment of 2001, the legislature consists of the lower house—the House of Representatives (Majlis al-Nuwwab)—and the upper house—the Consultative Council (Shura Council). The House of Representatives has legislative powers, whereas the role of the Consultative Council is limited to an advisory role. The Consultative Council has 111 seats while the House of Representatives has 301 seats.

Members of the Consultative Council are appointed by the president from among leading experts. The constitutional amendment of 2001 also included a provision allowing the Council to vote on legislation when convened together with the lower house. Regarding issues related to national defense in particular both houses have to vote on legislation. The 301 members of the House of Representatives are popularly elected every six years. The House is empowered to enact laws and decide the general policy of the state, in addition to adopting the general plan for economic and social development and the public budget. The House of Representatives also approves and ratifies all international political and economic treaties and agreements. According to the 1994 amended constitution, the president may not dissolve the House of Representatives "except in urgent circumstances and only after a nationwide referendum on the reasons for the dissolution."

According to the 1994 amended constitution, Yemen is divided into constituencies equal in number of population with a variation of not more than 5 percent plus or minus. Each constituency elects a member to the House of Representatives.

In the elections of April 1997 the president's political party, the General People's Congress (GPC), took 189 of 301 seats. The most recent legislative elections were held in April 2003. The four major political parties competed in addition to a number of independent candidates for over 301 seats. The GPC won 228 seats, followed by the Yemeni Congregation for Reform (Islah) (47), Yemeni Socialist Party (7), the Nasserite Unionist People's Party (al-Tandhim al-Wahdawi al-Sha'bi al-Nasseri) (3), and the Arab Socialist Rebirth Party (Hizb



al-Baath al-Arabi al-Ishtiraki) (2). Independents won 14 seats. The next elections are due in April 2009.

JUDICIARY

Islamic (sharia) law is the basis of all Yemeni laws, according to the 1994 amended constitution, and it is autonomous and independent. The former northern and southern legal codes have been unified. The legal system includes separate commercial courts and a Supreme Court based in Sanaa.

The Supreme Court of the Republic is the highest judicial authority. It decides the constitutionality of laws, regulations, bylaws, and court decisions; judges disputes over conflicts of jurisdiction; investigates and gives opinions regarding appeals on House of Representatives' membership; rules on appeals of final judgments in civilian, commercial, criminal, personal, and administrative disputes and disciplinary cases; and tries the president, the vice president, the prime minister, his deputies, the ministers, and their deputies when called for by the law.

In addition, there are a number of courts with specialized jurisdiction, such as the courts for military, tax, customs, and labor issues. They follow the same procedures applied in the courts of first instance.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

According to the 1994 amended constitution, administrative districts "enjoy a nominal personality and shall have councils which must be freely and fairly elected, both at the local and governorate level, which shall exercise their functions within the borders of the administrative area." There are 19 governorates subdivided into districts.

The most recent municipal elections, which are stipulated for in the Local Authority Law of 1999, were held in February 2001 for 418 provincial municipal council seats. The Local Authority Law also restructured the distribution of financial resources between the local and central governments aiming at decentralizing the governmental structure.

The Electoral System

All Yemeni citizens at least 18 years old are eligible to vote. The first parliamentary elections took place in February 1993, before the outbreak of civil war in 1994 when the southern region strove to secede from the republic. After a few weeks the civil war ended, but the divisions between parties remained and appeared again in the elections of 1997. The southern-based Yemeni Socialist Party, which was the leading party of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen until May 1990, when the two Yemens merged, boycotted the election. The ruling General People's Congress (GPC) and its coalition partner, the Islamist Yemeni Congregation for Reform (Islah), were the main contenders for the 301 seats. The GPC took 189 seats, while Islah took 52. Outside observers were satisfied that this election was free and fair. The government party, the GPC, increased its number of seats from 189 to 228 in the 2003 elections.

The Party System

According to the 1994 amended constitution, the political system of Yemen is based on political and partisan pluralism with the requisite laws, rules, and procedures required for the formation of political organizations and parties. The constitution states that there will be a "supreme, independent and neutral committee" to administer, supervise, and monitor the general elections and general referenda.

Party licenses are issued by the Committee for the Affairs of Parties and Political Organizations. The Committee consists of the ministers for Parliamentary Affairs, Interior and Justice as well as of four independent members who are nominated among judges and lawyers of the Judicial Council. Yemen currently has approximately 40 registered parties.

Major Political Parties

GENERAL PEOPLE'S CONGRESS (GPC)

(al-Mu'tammar al-Sha'bi al-'Am)

The GPC is a broad coalition of supporters of President Saleh. When the two Yemens united in 1990, the former president of North Yemen, or YAR, became president of the newly formed Republic of Yemen. In the coalition government that was formed, his party, the GPC, had 20 members in the transitional Council of Ministers, while the opposition party, the Yemeni Socialist Party, had 19. In the 1993 House of Representatives elections, the GPC took 123 of the 301 seats. After the civil war, when President Saleh was reelected, he increased the number of GPC members on the newly formed Council of Ministers.

In the 1997 elections GPC emerged as the decisive winner, garnering 189 of the 301 seats available, thus emerging as the true ruling party of the Republic of Yemen. The GPC remains the ruling party with 228 seats in the 2003 elections.

YEMENI CONGREGATION FOR REFORM (ISLAH)

(al-Tajmu al-Yamani Ii al-Islah)

Islah is an Islamist political grouping that advocates constitutional reform based on Islamic law. In the 1991 referendum vote, for instance, members of Islah urged a boycott due to the perceived diminished role of Islam in the government. In the 1993 House of Representatives elections Islah took 62 of the 301 seats. After 1994 Islah and the GPC began to experience difficulties over economic issues. In the 1997 elections GPC emerged as the decisive winner, while Islah saw its share pared down to 52 seats (from 62 in 1993) and to 47 in the elections of 2003.

YEMENI SOCIALIST PARTY (YSP)

(Hizb al Ishtiraki al Yaman)

After unification in 1990 it was reported that more than 30 political parties had formed in the Republic of Yemen. YSP was considered one of the most influential political parties at that time. In the violent times leading up to the civil war, much political violence was directed at the YSP, and several of its members and leaders were assassinated in 1992. In the 1993 House of Representatives elections the YSP took 56 of the 301 seats. In August 1993 the leader of YSP, al-Baid, withdrew from politics and complained that President Saleh had done nothing about the numerous attacks and even assassinations of southerners by armed northerners. In 1994, in the midst of the civil war, al-Baid became the president of the short-lived breakaway south, the Democratic Republic of Yemen.

In 1994, when President Saleh was reelected, he did not appoint any YSP members to the new Council of Ministers. While still in existence, the YSP has lost its political standing since losing the civil war. With its original leadership either killed in that war or in exile, it boycotted the latest parliamentary elections in 1997 and therefore has no seats in parliament. In the elections of 2003 the YSP won seven seats.

Minor Political Parties

Minor parties include the left-wing Nasserite Unionist People's Organization (al-Tantheem al-Wahdawi al-Sha'bi al-Nasseri), formed by intellectuals and politicians from the former YAR and the PDRY; the Arab Socialist Rebirth Party (Hizb al Baath al'Arabi al Ishtiraki), which combines Arab Socialism, nationalism, and pan-Arabism; and the Islamic party, the al-Haq Party, which seeks to build a Yemeni state on the basis of the Shura principles.

Other Political Forces

Government policies, especially the government's inability to provide basic services to remote rural areas

and its war against terrorism, have contributed to rising opposition, mainly from Islamist and tribal forces.

Islamic forces, such as the Aden-Abyan Islamic Army and the Islamic Jihad Movement, have been involved in terrorist attacks and kidnappings, such as the attacks on the British Council in Sanaa and on the USS *Cole* in Aden in October 2000 and the attack on a French oil tanker in October 2002. Both groups were created in the 1990s following the return of the so-called Afghan Arabs, that is, Arabs who were involved in the Afghan war.

Clashes between the government and tribes have increased. While deprivation in these areas has been an important factor, tribal resistance was provoked by the government's attempt to assert its control over tribal areas and to curb the smuggling of arms across the border to Saudi Arabia. The government has used as a pretext its U.S.-backed war against terrorism to pursue members of both the Islamist and the tribal oppositions.

National Prospects

The Republic of Yemen, an amalgamation of North and South Yemen in 1990, is slowly making its way as a unified republic. The very different experiences of the northern and southern regions in decolonization and modernization during the 20th century ensure that gaining real unity will be a challenging task. Economic dependencies on cold war aid have been replaced since 1986 by industrialization and agricultural development funded in large part by oil and gas production income. Yemen is also encouraging tourism as a source of foreign currency; this produces its own kind of social tensions.

Recent regional and domestic political conflicts have complicated the picture. The years since unification have been marked by political violence, a civil war, and a deteriorating economy. The economic ramifications of the civil war were harsh, especially in the south. While the IMF and other international organizations have applauded the government's efforts at privatization and government budgetary reforms, the social and economic dislocation caused by the reforms continues to encourage the opposition, both within Yemen and elsewhere, to work toward sparking a popular revolution against the government. Thus far Yemen's experiment with multiparty democracy, a rarity in the region, has successfully undermined such destabilizing activity, whether from the left (YSP) or from the right (Islah), and seems likely to continue doing so in the coming decade.

Yemen's relations with its neighbors since the 1960s have been difficult. With an indigenous population nearly as large as the rest of the Arabian Peninsula combined, Yemen's determined pursuit of a republican form of pluralist democracy challenges and at times appears to threaten the absolutist monarchist states on its borders, notably Saudi Arabia. However, periodic border disputes with Saudi Arabia and Oman and, more recently, with Eritrea have been resolved without armed conflict. All parties in the region are well aware of the enormous costs of such conflict. Given relative domestic stability, negotiated resolution will continue to characterize Yemen's foreign relations.

The major challenge Yemen is currently facing is the increasing tendency toward authoritarian rule. This tendency had already become apparent in the presidential elections of September 1999, when the only opponent to Ali Salah came from Salah's own party, the GPC, after the YSP candidate was ruled ineligible.

Since the September 2001 attacks in the United States, the Yemeni government has been given a pretext to adopt more autocratic control over Islamic forces, including moderate ones. This trend may undermine the regime's commitment to democratic development.

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REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA

By Cheryl Hendricks
Revised by Florina Laura Neculai, M.A.



The Republic of Zambia is a landlocked country situated in southern Africa with an estimated population in 2005 of 11.2 million people. Zambia, formerly known as Northern Rhodesia, was a British Protectorate from 1924 to October 1964, when it gained its independence. The United National Independence Party (UNIP) became the ruling party and Dr. Kenneth D. Kaunda the president of the country. The First Republic of Zambia was based on a Westminster multiparty system of government and endured for the period 1964 to 1972. However, because of increasing inter- and intraparty factionalism, and in the context of the proliferation of one-party states in Africa, Zambia was declared a one-party state in December 1972. This form of governance ushered in the Second Republic: a one-party presidential system that characterized Zambia for the next two decades.

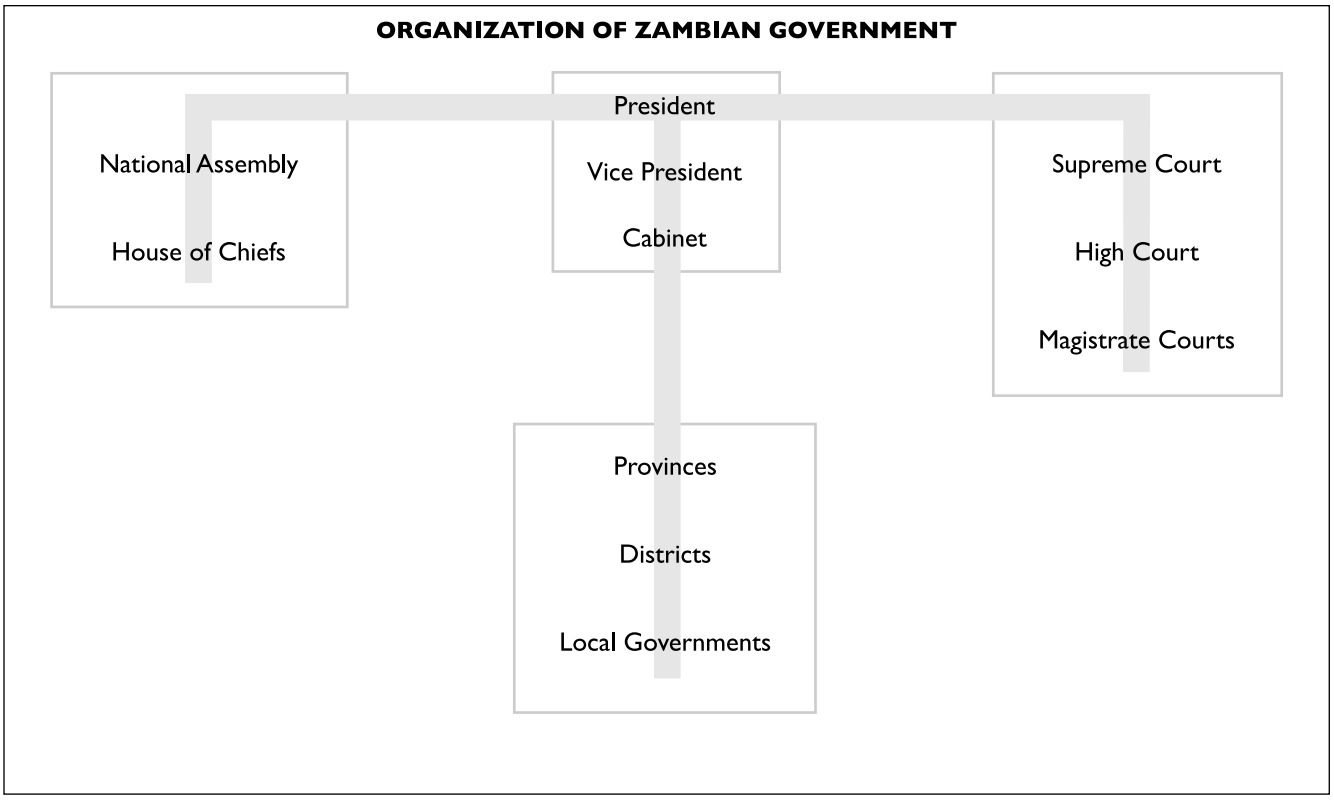
On August 2, 1991 the National Assembly adopted a new constitution that provided for multiparty elections. In October 1991 Zambia, with the assistance of outside observers, held a multiparty election, thereby becoming the first Anglophone country to undergo a democratic transition. The Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD) became the governing party and Frederick Chiluba replaced Dr. Kaunda as president. Kaunda was thus also the first nationalist founding father to be replaced by means of an election. With the adoption of a new constitution, Zambia entered its Third Republic.

The System of Government

Zambia's government is a republic with a unicameral legislature.

EXECUTIVE

Executive power resides with the president, the vice president, and the cabinet. The president is both the head of state and the head of government. He or she is elected for a five-year term by popular vote at the same time as elections for the National Assembly. The president has extensive powers, including the appointment and dismissal of the vice president, the secretary of the cabinet, ministers and deputy ministers, the chief justice, the auditor general, and permanent secretaries. The president also presides over the cabinet; signs and proclaims any promulgation that by law he or she is entitled to proclaim; initiates laws for submission and consideration by the National Assembly; accredits, receives, and recognizes ambassadors, plenipotentiaries, diplomatic representatives, and consuls; has the power to pardon or reprieve offenders; negotiates and signs international agreements or delegates the power to do so; establishes and dissolves government ministries and departments subject to the approval of the National Assembly; and confers honors on citizens and friends of Zambia. The president is immune from criminal prosecution in respect of any act committed or omitted during his or her tenure of office.



The president may occupy office for a period of no more than two terms of five years each. This is an important change in the Zambian constitution, for president Kaunda had remained in office from 1964 until 1991, thereby personalizing rule in Zambia. Another change was the replacement of the post of prime minister with the post of vice president.

The cabinet consists of the president, the vice president, the secretary of state, and 24 national ministers and is responsible for formulating policy and advising the president. The cabinet is accountable collectively to the National Assembly. Ministers of state and permanent secretaries are senior administrators of the ministries—the latter as the apex of the civil service and the former often as political appointees.

The appointment of a woman, Princess Nakatindi Wini, to a cabinet position in 1991 was a first for Zambia. However, she resigned as minister of community development and social affairs on January 9, 1994, following drug-related charges. Chiluba's cabinet had, up until 1996, been plagued with resignations, dismissals, and reshuffles. Certain cabinet members had been accused of corruption (drug trafficking, among other offenses), while others resigned and joined new parties. In the first two years of Chiluba's rule, 11 cabinet members resigned, including then vice president Levy Mwanawasa. Given the nature of the MMD-led government, building cohesion remains a formidable task. The MMD consists of a number of differing ideological, class, and ethnic groups who came together primarily to oust the UNIP government. The first cabinet formed under Chiluba reflected these differences and even included a number of people who served in the UNIP government. The years after have seen a lessening of these differences.

In the Second Republic, the central committee of UNIP had played a vital executive role. It was superior to the cabinet and acted as the primary policy-making body for the government. Such a close association between party and government has not been characteristic of the Third Republic.

The last elections were held on December 27, 2001, and were won by Mwanawasa, Chiluba's former vice president. The next elections will take place in December 2006.

LEGISLATURE

Legislative power is vested in parliament, which consists of a unicameral National Assembly. The National Assembly consists of 150 elected members, not more than eight nominated members, and the speaker of the National Assembly. The National Assembly has a term of five years and must meet at least once a year. It must approve any

amendments to the constitution. The National Assembly is responsible for formulating and passing bills. The president can halt a bill by withholding assent. If the president does so, the National Assembly must wait for a period of six months and muster a two-thirds majority support before presenting the bill to the president again. The president then has to assent within 21 days of its presentation, unless he or she decides to dissolve parliament. When a bill has been duly passed, it becomes law and the president then publishes it in the government gazette. No taxation can be imposed or altered if it has not been enacted through parliament.

Another group sometimes involved in the legislative process is the House of Chiefs. Established in the Second Republic, it is composed of 27 chiefs, four each from the Northern, Western, Southern, and Eastern Provinces, three each from the North Western, Luapula, and Central Provinces, and two from the Copperbelt Province. The House of Chiefs is an advisory body that may submit resolutions to be debated by the National Assembly. This body is a means of incorporating the views of traditional authorities who are otherwise bypassed in the modern system.

JUDICIARY

The legal system in Zambia derives primarily from the British colonial tradition. The Supreme Court is the highest court and is the final court of appeal for the republic. The judges of the Supreme Court are the chief justice, deputy chief justice, and three Supreme Court judges or such greater number as may be prescribed by an act of parliament. All the judges of this court are appointed by the president subject to the ratification of the National Assembly. The High Court is one step below the Supreme Court but is more active, having unlimited original jurisdiction and in most legal matters the final word. Here too the judges are appointed by the president, but these judges can be dismissed only after investigation by a tribunal.

The Judicial Service Commission oversees the behavior of the judiciary and consists of the chief justice, the attorney general, the chairman of the Public Service Commission, the secretary to the cabinet, and one other member appointed by the president.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Zambia is divided into nine provinces (Central, Copperbelt, Eastern, Luapula, Lusaka, Northern, North-Western, Southern, and Western) and 55 districts, each with its own hierarchy of officials. The smallest unit of government is the local government authority. Traditional authorities are still active, arbitrating most disputes over domestic and inheritance questions. In 1980 a new Local Administration Act (LAA) was passed by parliament. It included provisions for greater devolution of power and authority to the subnational levels of government. However, the vital local services such as education, welfare, police, and health are still controlled by the central ministries.

The Electoral System

Elections for national offices are held every five years. All citizens 18 years of age or over are eligible to vote. An Electoral Commission appointed by the president delimits the boundaries for constituencies. The number of constituencies increased in 1991 from 125 to 150, primarily to accommodate the increase in population. The voting in the October 1991 election was declared free and fair. Elections in Zambia have always been among the most free in Africa. In contrast, there have been severe doubts cast upon the 1996 and 2001 elections, which many of the opposition parties claimed were fraudulent. While independent reviews did uphold election results, they also noted that ballots were flawed.

The Party System

In December 1972 all political parties other than UNIP were declared illegal. This was reversed with the adoption of a new constitution in August 1991 when a multiparty system was instituted.

Major Political Parties

UNITED NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE PARTY (UNIP)

The UNIP was constituted in 1960 when the Zambian African National Congress (ZANC) changed its name to UNIP. ZANC was formed in 1959 when the more radical members of the African National Congress, led by Harry Nkumbula, broke away to form their own party. Dr. Kenneth Kaunda became the leader of UNIP. At independence, UNIP won a majority of National Assembly seats and became the ruling party, a status it held until 1991.

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTION, 1996

Party	%	MPs
Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD)	60.8	127
Zambia Democratic Congress	14.0	2
National Party	7.2	5
National Lima Party	6.6	—
Agenda for Zambia	1.5	2
Nonpartisans	—	11
Vacant	—	3

Note: United National Independence Party boycotted this election.

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTION, 2001

Party	%	MPs
Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD)	45.9	68
United Party for National Development (UPND)	32.4	48
United National Independent Party (UNIP)	8.8	13
Forum for Democracy and Development (FDD)	8.8	12
Heritage Party (HP)	2.7	4
Patriotic Front (PF)	0.7	1
Zambian Republican Party (ZRP)	0.7	1
Independents	0.7	1
Others	1.8	2

In the era of the one-party state, UNIP as a political party gained increased power over the state machinery. The party and the state became virtually inseparable, hence the often-used phrase "the Party and its government." The central committee of UNIP, through a constitutional amendment in 1975, was made superior to the cabinet and was assigned the overall direction of policy. It was also made responsible for supervising all central government ministries.

ORGANIZATION

UNIP's structure, like all other political party structures, is pyramidical. At the base of the party are the branches, directly above them are the constituency and ward committees, and above these are the regional committees from which national council members are drawn. The central committee is at the top of the pyramid, and it is this committee that is responsible for policy formulation. The women's brigade and the youth brigade are auxiliary bodies of the organization.

POLICY

UNIP's guiding philosophy was "humanism." This was a brand of African socialism/communalism that purported to be more "people centered" or "community oriented" than socialism and denied the existence of classes in Zambia. It placed emphasis on the nationalization of industries and the formation of cooperatives. The Zambian economy, in part because of the mismanagement of parastatals, went into a severe decline from the late 1970s. UNIP, primarily forced by the IMF, adopted a structural adjustment program in 1983. This included devaluation of the kwacha, removal of subsidies, and curtailment of government expenditure. In May 1987 it suspended this program and adopted its own New Economic Recovery Program (NERP). This was essentially a liberalization program, but it limited the debt-servicing payments to 10 percent of net export earnings and maintained price controls. However, none of these policies was sufficient to place Zambia on a sound economic footing.

UNIP, as governing party, also played an extensive role among southern Africa's Front Line States. As such, it adopted a policy of nonalignment and antiracism and became extensively involved in the liberation struggles in southern Africa—a situation that contributed to the declining economy of the country.

MEMBERSHIP

During its rule, UNIP's support was primarily drawn from the Copperbelt, Luapula, and Northern Provinces and it was often accused of being Bemba-dominated. There are no membership figures available for the organization, but its support has decreased tremendously over the years. By the 1991 elections its support was primarily confined to the Eastern Province, where it won 19 seats. It moved from an organization deemed to be the liberator of the country to one that was held responsible for the country's severe economic decline. By 1983 Zambia had a debt of US $3 billion, which was more than 100 percent

of the country's GDP. This was largely due to the fall in copper prices and the mismanagement of government parastatals. UNIP during this period was still able to maintain control through its patronage system. However, as the economy slipped into further decline and austerity measures were forced upon it, the government became increasingly unable to satisfy its populace. This led, in 1990, to a series of strikes and an unsuccessful military coup. These events marked the beginning of the rapid decline of UNIP and gave rise to the birth of the MMD. The landslide victory of the MMD in the 1991 elections illustrates the dissatisfaction of the populace with UNIP rule. UNIP also experienced a split in the party when, in June 1992, some party members broke away to form the United Democratic Party (UDP). Many of UNIP's members and officials joined the MMD.

The UNIP boycotted the 1996 elections. In 2001 it won 8.8 percent of the vote and 13 seats in parliament.

FINANCING

According to the UNIP constitution, the party can derive funds from entrance and annual subscriptions fees; membership card fees; grants, loans, and donations or levies permitted under the constitution; and a monthly contribution of 5 percent of salaries from top-level government and party officials.

LEADERSHIP

The party is led by Francis Nkhoma.

MOVEMENT FOR MULTIPARTY DEMOCRACY (MMD)

The MMD is the governing party of Zambia, and its leader, Levy Mwanawasa, is the president. The formation of the MMD can be traced to a conference held in July 1990 in which various constituencies came together and resolved to form a political party. The party held its first national convention on February 27, 1991. It was inaugurated into the governing position of Zambia by October 1991.

ORGANIZATION

This movement gained popularity by attracting intellectuals, businessmen, ex-politicians, trade union leaders, urban workers, and other urban-based social movements. It is thus primarily an urban-based front consisting of a number of diverse interest groups. Economic hardship in Zambia and the international climate of liberalization provided a fertile ground for the MMD to seize power from UNIP. The MMD also possessed the organizational capacity to effectively challenge UNIP. The businessmen supplied it with the necessary finance, the intellectuals with the theoretical justification and articulation, the politicians with the political skills, and the trade union movement with the necessary popular support. However, the diverse nature of the front has had implications for the cohesion of the movement as evidenced in the splits that have occurred within it.

POLICY

There appears to have been two major tendencies within the MMD. On the one hand, there were those who simply wanted to remove the Kaunda regime and replace it with a similar but more open and efficient government. These were largely the older politicians who had fallen out of Kaunda's favor in previous years (the marginal elites) and the politicians who believed that they could no longer benefit materially from the incumbent government. On the other hand, there was a younger group, primarily consisting of intellectuals, students, and workers who were concerned with transforming both the political and the economic system of the country. Paralleling this were class, gender, and ethnic cleavages. It therefore appears that a minimalist position, dislodging UNIP, held the various factions of the MMD together.

The MMD's manifesto has a twin agenda of democratization and development. It called for respect for basic human and civil rights, the institution of multiparty democracy, government accountability, greater consultation and transparency, and acknowledgment that the state would not be a central participant in the economy and that it would encourage a wider spectrum of entrepreneurship. In relation to agricultural policy, the MMD advocated both political and economic liberalism and, as governing party, adopted a structural adjustment program.

However, only months after the inauguration of MMD into government, the party began to face severe challenges. Its governance was accused of being corrupt and unaccountable, with charges of drug trafficking and money laundering consistently being leveled against high-profile MMD members. The international community threatened to withdraw aid from Zambia unless it increased measures of accountability, and many members resigned from the party.

By 2001 Mwanawasa himself had assumed leadership of the party, and he was elected president of Zambia in the 2001 elections.

LEADERSHIP

Frederick Chiluba's political maturity has been gained largely through the trade union movement. He became president of the Zambian Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU) in 1974. Throughout his trade union career he advocated the independence of the trade union movement and so found himself always in conflict with UNIP. In the 1980s he and five other labor leaders were detained for several weeks on charges of conspiring to overthrow the government. In February 1991 he was elected president of the MMD and became president of Zambia in October. Chiluba, however, was not able to gain the international stature that Kaunda had held.

UNITED PARTY FOR NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT (UPND)

The UPND was established in December 1998 as an opposition party. In the 2001 elections it captured 32.4 percent of the vote and 48 seats in parliament, thus establishing itself as a significant force in Zambian politics. It is led by Anderson K. Mazoka.

FORUM FOR DEMOCRACY AND DEVELOPMENT (FDD)

The FDD was established prior to the 2001 elections as an opposition party. It won 8.1 percent of the vote and 12 seats in the elections. It is led by Christian Tembo.

Minor Political Parties

Smaller parties that have representation in the National Assembly include the Heritage Party, led by Godfrey Miyanda; the Patriotic Front, led by Michael Sata; and the Zambian Republican Party, led by Benjamin Mwila. Other parties include Agenda for Zambia, the Liberal Progressive Front, the National Leadership for Development, and the National Party.

Other Political Forces

MILITARY AND POLICE

Generally, the military and police have stayed out of Zambian politics. By and large this is because the president and political leaders have been careful to give officers good salaries as well as various privileges of rank. The military in Zambia has a reputation for professionalism.

ORGANIZED LABOR

The African Mineworker's Union (AMU), a lineal ancestor of the Mine Workers Union of Zambia (MUZ), came into being in the same year as the first nationalist organization in the country, namely, the ANC in 1949. Workers in other industries also began to form their own unions and, in 1950, under the leadership of Katilungu, the Trade Union Congress (TUC) federation was formed. The Zambian unions have constantly stressed their independence and have adopted a role limited largely to economic issues. It is this stance that brought the unions into conflict with UNIP. In a bid to gain more control over the unions, the government, through an act of parliament passed in 1971, declared strikes illegal in strategic industries and granted the minister of labor considerable power over the unions: he could dismiss a union official and no trade union could accept aid from foreign agencies or affiliate with any organization outside Zambia without the minister's approval. The act also stressed the creation of one trade union per industry and stipulated that the Zambian Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU) be the only federation allowed to exist. The UNIP consistently attempted to place leaders loyal to it at the top level of ZCTU. Notwithstanding UNIP's dominant position within the industry, the unions, especially MUZ, have largely been able to preserve their organizational autonomy. The ZCTU is the most powerful social movement in the country, claiming a membership of 80 percent of Zambian workers. Its leadership, under Chiluba, had always been critical of the UNIP government. The movement as a whole had constituted the strength behind the demands for political change in the country. The MMD was built largely on the basis of support from local ZCTU branches, and the appointment of Frederick Chiluba as president was indicative of the social power and role of the trade union movement.

STUDENTS

Students have played a prominent role in Zambian politics. The University of Zambia (UNZA) was closed on a number of occasions because of protests by students. The issues that brought about the conflict between students and UNIP were a mixture of campus politics and student criticism of government policies. The students also played an active role in impelling the MMD to power. However, as early as 1992, they came into conflict with the MMD over increases in student fees. UNZA students have a tradition of critical analysis and thus they will continue to play an important role as civil activists within the new state.

ETHNIC GROUPS

There are 14 major ethnic groups in the country (Bemba, Bisa, Ila, Chewa, Kaonde, Lala, Lamba, Lenje, Lozi, Lunda, Luvale, Ngoni, Nsenga, and Tonga). Zambian politics has often been accused of ethnic domination. UNIP was considered to be a Bemba-dominated group, an accusation now leveled against the MMD. Kaunda had always exerted a nationalist stance in selecting his cabinet members, thereby ensuring representation of all groups. The MMD, however, does not regard ethnicity as the crucial factor of Zambian politics, and thus Chiluba did not adopt the same ethnic tension management strategy.

RELIGIOUS GROUPS

The largest churches are the Baptist, Anglican, Methodist, and various evangelical sects such as the Watch Tower movement. Two religious groups that came into conflict with the UNIP government are the Lumpa Church of Alice Lenshina and the Jehovah's Witnesses. Both sects believe in the sole authority of God and reject the temporal authority of the state. The church also played an active role in calling for multiparty democracy in Zambia.

National Prospects

The official language of the Republic of Zambia is English. It has a tropical climate and has natural resources of copper, cobalt, zinc, coal, gold, and silver. The country has a high rate of AIDS mortality with 920,000 people living with AIDS (2003 estimate) and with a life expectancy of 39.7 years (2005 estimate).

From the political point of view, the MMD government under Chiluba was plagued with constant turmoil. In the space of two years it lost 11 cabinet ministers, 13 MPs defected to opposition parties, and the groundswell support it once enjoyed was transformed into mass protests against government policies to such an extent that a state of emergency was declared. Mismanagement, corruption, patronage, and a disintegrated economy still characterize the state, and the MMD has often been too weak a government to overcome these constraints. To a large extent, the MMD created false expectations among the populace about its ability to resolve Zambia's economic crisis. Zambia is reliant upon the sale of copper for income. However, it has no control over the price of copper on the world market, a price that has decreased steadily since the late 1970s. Thus the MMD, or any other government, unless it is able to diversify the economy substantially, will remain economically constrained. The austerity measures adopted in the late 1990s curtailed Zambia's inflation rates, bringing it back to two-digit figures. However, these measures were introduced at enormous social welfare costs to the public. After winning the 2001 elections, Mwanawasa promised to pursue an anti-corruption campaign.

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REPUBLIC OF ZIMBABWE

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Revised by Sheila Elliott, Ph.D.



Zimbabwe, located in southern Africa, borders Zambia, Mozambique, South Africa, and Botswana. It is 98 percent African (82 percent Shona, 14 percent Ndebele, 2 percent other) and 1 percent mixed Asian and less than 1 percent white. In their religious beliefs, 50 percent of Zimbabweans are syncretic (part Christian, part indigenous beliefs), 25 percent consider themselves Christian, 24 percent hold indigenous beliefs, and less than 1 percent are Muslim.

Zimbabwe is a nation of 12.7 million people (2005 est.); its government of national unity is dominated by the majority party, Robert Mugabe's Zimbabwe African National Union–Popular Front (ZANTJ-PF). Although immediately following independence, the government also included representatives of other parties with both black and white support, this situation has changed as Mugabe has sought to develop a one-party state in Zimbabwe.

Zimbabwe is the former British colony of Southern Rhodesia, which, after 1923, was ruled by a virtually independent government of European settlers. While the British government granted independence to its other southern African colonies in the 1960s, it refused to do the same for Southern Rhodesia unless the government of Ian Smith's Rhodesian Front Party would agree to make provisions for an end to white-minority rule in the country.

Smith's reaction was a unilateral declaration of independence (UDI) in November 1965. Britain retaliated by declaring the Smith government illegal and arranging economic sanctions against Rhodesia through the United Nations. However, the Rhodesian Front government managed to survive for 15 years, principally because of help from its white-dominated neighbors in South Africa, Angola, and Mozambique. The fall of the Portuguese colonial governments in Angola and Mozambique in 1974–75 and the establishment of independent black governments there signaled the beginning of the end of white rule.

A guerrilla war began several years after UDI, with black armies aided by many of Rhodesia's neighbors seeking the overthrow of the white government. The main guerrilla groups were linked to Joshua Nkomo's Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU) and Robert Mugabe's Zimbabwe African Nationalist Union (ZANU). In spite of their differences, the two movements joined forces in the Patriotic Front (PF) in 1977. More peaceful opposition to the Smith regime came from Methodist bishop Abel Muzorewa's United African National Council (UANC).

It was only in 1977 that Smith declared his acceptance of the principles of universal suffrage and a rapid transition to black-majority rule and thus legal independence from Britain. However, the guerrilla forces still did not trust the Rhodesian Front government and refused to cooperate. In May 1978 Muzorewa's UANC and Smith joined forces with the two other black movements, Reverend Ndabaningi Sithole's faction of ZANU and Chief Chirau's Zimbabwe United Peoples Organization (ZUPO), to form an interim government to guide the country toward majority rule. In 1979 white voters approved a new constitution and Zimba-

bwe African Nationalist Union multiracial elections were held, with Muzorewa's UANC achieving a clear victory in renamed "Zimbabwe-Rhodesia." However, without the agreement and participation of the PF and its guerrilla forces, the new constitution stood little chance of domestic or international acceptance.

Real hope of a lasting solution came with negotiations arranged in London in September 1979. The PF agreed to accept special representation for the white minority; Smith and Muzorewa in turn consented to free multiracial elections under British government supervision. In November 1979 the parliament of Zimbabwe-Rhodesia voted to return the nation to its pre-1963 status as a British colony. This paved the way for a British-controlled voluntary disarming of the guerrillas and for elections in February 1980. Mugabe's ZANU-PF won an absolute majority of the seats in parliament.

The new prime minister, Robert Mugabe, then led Zimbabwe to full independence in April 1980 with a coalition government consisting not only of ZANU-PF ministers but also of four PF (formerly ZAPU) men (including Nkomo himself) and two white representatives. In its first two years the coalition was dominated by quarrels between Nkomo and Mugabe. These culminated in Mugabe's dismissal of Nkomo and other members of his cabinet after the discovery of caches of arms on property belonging to prominent PF supporters. However, at least two deputy ministers from the PF chose to stay in Mugabe's government, splitting Nkomo's party. The white Rhodesian Front Party has also split over the issue of support for the government. This dispute did not signal the end of Mugabe's efforts at unification of the two major parties. Ultimately, the two parties were unified in 1989 and Nkomo was introduced as one of two vice presidents of the altered executive structure of Zimbabwe.

The 1990s witnessed Mugabe's efforts to move Zimbabwe toward a one-party state. Although the constitution in theory supports a multiparty system, in reality ZANU-PF dominates the political process due to the amount of control that Mugabe and the party have over government coffers, the military, and the legislature. The Mugabe government has amended the constitution more than 13 times since independence in order to entrust more authority to the executive.

The domination of Zimbabwean politics by 79-year-old Robert Mugabe and ZANU-PF has been challenged by the persistent demands for democracy and good governance led by the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) and organizations such as the National Alliance for Good Governance and the Zimbabwe Democracy Trust. In addition, the austerity measures introduced by the IMF in the 1990s continue to challenge the Mugabe government, along with new economic challenges of food insecurity, debates surrounding land tenure, inflation, and the prevalence of AIDS.

The System of Government

Zimbabwe is governed by a parliamentary democracy with a bicameral legislature.

EXECUTIVE

The chief of state and head of government is an executive president who also serves as commander in chief of the military. In 1989 constitutional reform did away with the ceremonial character of the presidency and the head of state was replaced by an executive presidency incorporating the post of prime minister. The president appoints two vice presidents as well as cabinet ministers. The president's term of office is six years, and there are no constitutional limitations on presidential tenure. Candidates for the presidency must be nominated by at least 10 members of the legislature, and if there is only one candidate, there is no need to use the ballot within the Electoral College, consisting of the members of the House of Assembly.

The president's cabinet consists of two vice presidents, departmental ministers, and two ministers without portfolio. Most ministers are or have been members of the House of Assembly, and all have extensive experience and support in the major party. Increasingly, the role of the legislative branch has been minimized as Mugabe has moved toward a one-party state.

Although there was little doubt that Mugabe would win the March 19, 1996, presidential election, unlike in the previous two presidential elections, voter turnout was low. In the 1990 election, 2.5 million people voted, but in the 1996 election turnout was about 1.6 million, or 32 percent of the 4.9 million eligible voters.

LEGISLATURE

The legislature has undergone some significant changes since independence. As originally created, the legislature consisted of two houses, the House of Assembly and the senate. The house was directly elected and was planned to be the more important organ; the powers

of the senate enabled it to advise on and delay, but not reject, legislative proposals. As mentioned above, constitutional changes abolished the senate and expanded the House of Assembly from 100 members to 150. Of the 150 seats available, 30 are nominated seats, usually held by supporters of the government, and the other 120 are directly elected by the people. The distribution of the government-appointed seats is 8 seats for the provincial governors (Manicaland, Mashonaland Central, Mashonaland East, Mashonaland West, Masvingo, Matabeleland North, Matabeleland South, and Midlands); 10 seats allocated to traditional chiefs; and 12 presidential nominees. The constitutional reform also abolished the 20 seats in the assembly that had been reserved for whites as established at the time of independence.

Members of the assembly are elected for a term of five years and theoretically have the power to reject or amend legislation, but the assembly generally supports the government. In the June 1985 election, the Conservative Alliance of Zimbabwe (CAZ) won 15 of the guaranteed 20 European seats. The Independent Zimbabwe Group (IZG) won 4, and an independent won the final seat.

In April 1995 several opposition groups attempted to challenge the preeminence of ZANU-PF, but given the disorganized character of the reformist groups and the ruling party's control of the government coffers, media, police, and security, ZANU-PF dominance was not seriously threatened. In addition, many of the new parties boycotted the elections, and only the Zimbabwe African National Union–Ndongo (ZANU-N) won seats in the assembly.

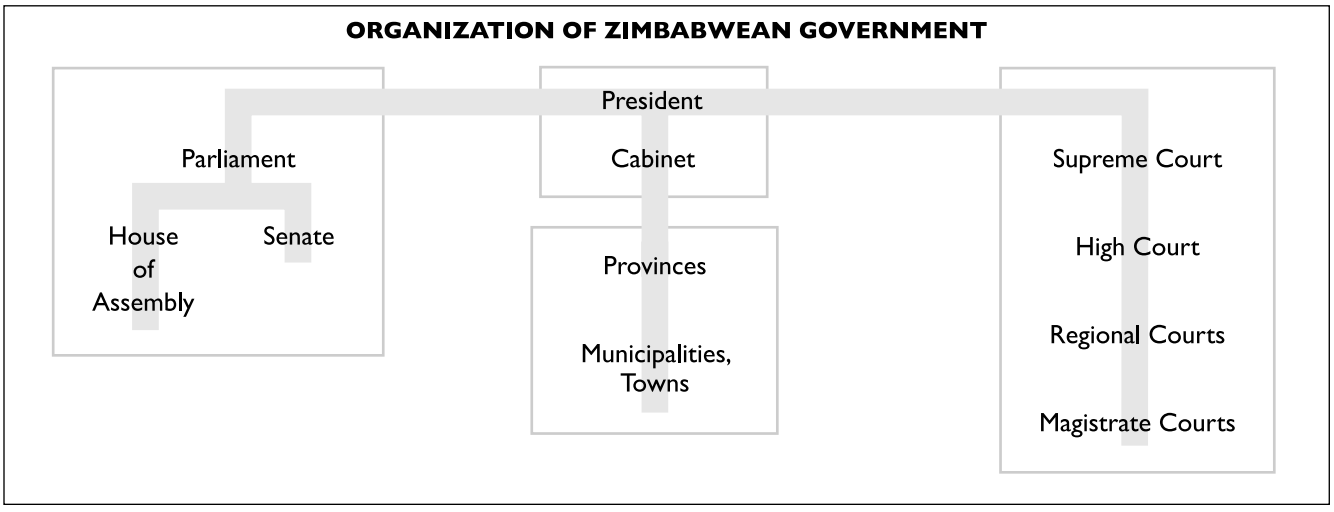
In the 1995 election ZANU-PF stood unopposed in 2 out of 120 available seats. It received 82 percent of the total votes cast and won 118 seats. ZANU-N received 6.5 percent of the total votes, which attained 2 seats. The Forum Party and United Parties did not come close to winning seats. Not only was their constituent base small, but, more importantly, they did not qualify for any financial support from the state because they did not have MPs in the old parliament in order to qualify for grants. Ultimately, ZANU-PF controlled 147 seats in the legislature, making Zimbabwe a de facto one-party state.

In the 2005 election the MDC made considerable gains but failed to upset the majority control of the ZANU-PF. The MDC earned 39.5 percent of the vote and 41 seats while the ZANU-PF took 59.6 percent of the vote and 78 seats. Only one seat was awarded to an independent party.

The ZANU-PF then used its majority to pass new amendments to the constitution, the most notable resulting in the re-creation of the senate. The rebuilt senate consists of 66 seats; 50 seats are filled by a general election (5 seats for each of the country's 10 districts), 10 seats are filled by appointed tribal chiefs, and the remaining 6 seats are filled by presidential appointment. Although the MDC claimed that the reformation of the senate took place in order to further secure Mugabe's power, elections were held in November 2005 and 43 of the 50 elected seats were awarded to the ZANU-PF. The seven remaining elected seats are held by the MDC. Turnout for the election was estimated at less than 15 percent.

JUDICIARY

Judicial authority in Zimbabwe is divided between the Supreme Court, which deals with defining and



addressing alleged violations of fundamental rights in Zimbabwe, and the High Court. For example, in February 1997, the Supreme Court ruled that the Private Voluntary Organizations Act, which permitted the Mugabe government to dismiss executives of private or charitable associations and assume control of those organizations if they were deemed badly managed or contrary to the "national interest," was unconstitutional. The High Court is divided into appellate and general divisions.

Below the High Court, regional and magistrate courts address civil as well as criminal cases. In addition, customary or traditional courts are presided over by chiefs and can hear only cases whose potential damages do not exceed a specified amount.

There is also an ombudsman advised by a Judicial Service Commission and appointed by the president to investigate complaints against employees of the government and local authorities. Neither form of judicial authority represents any real challenge to the government. In 1980 a cabinet minister, Edgar Tekere, was tried for the murder of a white farmer and acquitted by the courts on the grounds that as a minister he was entitled to take action against those committing unconstitutional acts. The decision was widely regarded as politically rather than judicially based. Tekere was, however, forced to resign his cabinet post, a sign that Mugabe himself did not approve of Tekere's actions.

More recently, the Supreme Court ruled that the "Fast Track Land Redistribution" scheme was illegal. The Mugabe government's response in December 2001 was to expand the court, which then legalized the redistribution program. Although the judicial system by all accounts appears to be compromised, the Supreme Court rejected the charge of treason against Morgan Tsvangairai in October 2004.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Zimbabwe is divided into eight provinces, which are further divided into municipalities and towns. Its local government is still organized along preindependence lines that are based on British structures. ZANU-PF's political dominance has been reflected in every election since independence.

The Electoral System

The House of Assembly is directly elected. The constituencies are divided according to regional and ethnic criteria, as was agreed in 1979. All Zimbabweans over the age of 18 are allowed to vote. Recently, changes to the constitution have limited the rights of "foreigners" married to Zimbabweans by no longer guaranteeing their right to reside in the country. Voter turnout has been as high as 93.7 percent, but is steadily declining.

Each party presents a ranked list of candidates for each electoral province, and voters choose a party list, not an individual. In each province, seats are distributed among all parties that receive more than 10 percent of the votes in proportion to the number of votes won. Most observers of Zimbabwe's electoral process in 1980, 1985, and 1995 commented that in general the elections were open and fair, although the ruling party had a distinct and tangible advantage. European, American, South African, and Commonwealth observers agreed that the 2000–02 election cycle was marred by electoral fraud, intimidation, and violence.

Opposition parties do not qualify for financial assistance to run their campaigns unless they held seats in the previous parliament, and they cannot obtain seats without considerable financial assistance.

The Party System

ORIGINS OF THE PARTIES

The history of Zimbabwe's black political parties over the 20 years preceding independence was one of continually shifting alliances and party splits over the degree of cooperation with or opposition to the ruling white minority. The first organization founded to oppose white rule was the African National Congress organized by Joshua Nkomo before World War II. Banned, it briefly reemerged as the National Democratic Party in 1960. Banned again, it reformed as the Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU) in 1961. Banned again, ZAPU split in 1963, when Reverend Ndabaningi Sithole's Zimbabwe African People's Union and others were expelled from the party for criticizing Nkomo's leadership and frequent absences from the country.

The expelled nationalists (including Mugabe) then formed ZANU under Sithole's leadership. It was banned in 1964. Both ZANU and ZAPU went underground, and, in the early 1970s, the Zimbabwe African National Union began to organize guerrilla armies. At the same time, several smaller parties seeking a peaceful solution to the black-white conflict appeared.

The parties or political reformist groups in the country are mostly minor, with the exception of the MDC.

THE PARTIES IN LAW

Political parties in Zimbabwe are recognized by the April 1980 constitution in that they have to register their party lists in order to participate in the elections.

PARTY ORGANIZATION

Zimbabwe's parties vary greatly in the degree and style of their organization, representing almost every conceivable variety. During the 1970s, the two main parties, ZANU and ZAPU, were the political wings of their guerrilla armies, ZIPRA and ZANLA, Zimbabwe People's Revolutionary Army and Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army, respectively. With the coming of black-majority rule in 1980, the two parties were faced with reorganizing for a peaceful political process. ZANU-PF is by far the most far-reaching of the parties as a result of Mugabe's efforts to unify the two insurgent armies.

CAMPAIGNING

The 1995 election campaign was opened to all parties, although administrative barriers did exist, affecting, for example, access to the media, but generally the system was open, fair, and free of political terrorism compared with other parts of the continent.

The 2000 general election and the 2002 presidential election significantly undermined the past electoral reputation of Zimbabwe. Even more than in the past the government was in control of the media, had restricted entry to or expelled foreign journalists, and there was an increase in kidnappings of and assaults on major figures in the opposition party.

HISTORY

As part of its tactics in contesting the 1980 elections, ZAPU adopted the name Patriotic Front. The party was founded in 1961 in Salisbury. It is the oldest black party in the country, tracing its roots directly to the African National Union and National Democratic Party. It was banned from 1962 to 1979. The primary aim of the PF following the end of the civil war had been to carve out a secure place for itself in the new political system. This meant, primarily, defending itself against the pressures of the more dominant party and relying on its major strength among the Ndebele ethnic group in Matabeleland. The PF was officially a Marxist party, but in the 1980 election it campaigned on a platform of national unity and moderate social reforms. It opposed Mugabe's attempts to turn the country into a one-party state on the communist model.

In the 1980 elections the PF won 23.6 percent of the vote and accepted a role in the Mugabe government. Nkomo and three other party members joined the cabinet. However, Nkomo's role was decreased in January 1981, and in February 1982 he and other PF cabinet members were ousted amid charges of plotting to overthrow the government, although some deputy ministers from the PF chose to stay in the government. In 1985 ZAPU's decline continued. It won 19 percent of the votes, translating into only 15 seats in the senate. Ultimately, Nkomo agreed to unification with ZANU-PF.

LEADERSHIP

Since its beginning, the party was led by Joshua Mqabuko Nyongolo Nkomo. He was born in Matabeleland. After working as a truck driver, he trained as a social worker in South Africa. From there he returned to Zimbabwe, where he became a social worker for Rhodesian railways and a leading trade unionist. He graduated by correspondence from the University of South Africa. He has been a leading figure in the black nationalist movement ever since its revival in 1960, but on June 13, 1996, he retired from politics due to ill health.

Major Political Parties

ZIMBABWE AFRICAN NATIONAL UNION-PATRIOTIC FRONT (ZANU-PF)

HISTORY

ZANU was a splinter group from ZAPU (Zimbabwe African People's Union). Initially led by Reverend Ndabaningi Sithole, it left ZAPU in 1963 because of its opposition to Joshua Nkomo's leadership. From 1964 to 1979 it was banned, as was its guerrilla wing, ZANLA, in the early 1970s. Mugabe, who was originally the leader of ZANLA, replaced Reverend Sithole as leader, with the latter forming his own more moderate party in 1977. Thereafter ZANU and ZAPU agreed to unite as the Patriotic Front to pool their efforts to overthrow the government. This alliance lasted until the 1980 settlement when

ZANU-PF fielded its candidates against ZAPU, which now began to call itself the PF. In the 1980 elections Mugabe's ZANU-PF won 57 of the 80 common-roll parliamentary seats. In the 1995 elections ZANU-PF received 118 of the 120 seats available and continues to be the dominant party in Zimbabwean politics.

ORGANIZATION

ZANU-PF has a cellular structure with rural and urban cells electing higher committees up to the level of the central committee along the lines of a communist-style politburo. ZANU-PF has a four man presidency with Mugabe as president, two vice presidents, and a national chairperson. Below this level of leadership the party has five organs: the Politburo, Central Committee, National Consultative Council, Provincial Council, and Women and Youth Leagues. While the precise relationship between party and government remains unclear, the central committee is less powerful now than it was before Mugabe's accession to the prime ministry, and even less so since Mugabe has amassed more authority as executive president.

POLICY

It is difficult to describe the political orientation of ZANU-PF. Before the first elections it controlled the largest guerrilla army and was the party most committed to overthrowing the white government by force. Its original adherence to a form of Marxism-Leninism was moderated in the 1980 elections and has changed in the 1990s to a variant of African socialism with the advent of the Economic Structural Adjustment Program. In 1980 Mugabe outlined only vague plans for state involvement in the economy and promised to preserve private enterprise. In the early 2000s Mugabe revived his anticolonial and anti-white rhetoric as his political challenges increased. Given the history of white settler domination as a central issue in Zimbabwe's struggle for independence, the redistribution of land has always been a significant issue for ZANU-PF. More than 20 years since the emergence of majority rule in Zimbabwe, a small minority continued to control 70 percent of the best farm land. Beginning in April 2000, Mugabe reignited the land redistribution as a political issue when his government began to institute the "Fast Track Program of Land Redistribution." Between 1980 and 1993, redistribution was taking place and more than 3.5 million hectares had been purchased for black peasants with the assistance of foreign donors. Financial support for redistribution began to close with allegations that government officials, not landless rural peasants, were receiving land. But even as late as 1998, the British government and the Commercial Farmers Union (CFU) agreed to exchange 5 million hectares. Once Mugabe refused to abide by the agreement, former soldiers were encouraged to acquire lands that were designated for acquisition. This radical land redistribution from commercial to small-scale holdings caused considerable reduction in agricultural output. Once a net exporter of the region's staple crop (maize), Zimbabwe by 2005 depended on food aid, and the World Food Programme estimated that 4 million citizens would need food that year.

Regionally, South Africa and Nigeria continue their policy of constructive engagement with Mugabe. With few exceptions, notably Kenya, other African nations are hesitant to challenge him openly regarding human rights abuses, economic failure, and the demise of democratic institutions. Some of the continent's leaders are worried that Mugabe's actions will undermine the goal of African economic and political development as outlined in NEPAD. Internationally, Zimbabwe has left the Commonwealth, although expulsion was assured. In addition, the European Union and the United States have imposed restrictions on Zimbabwe for its failure with regard to significant democratic indicators, namely, free press, political violence, free and fair elections, and land rights.

MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY

ZANU-PF has its main support among the Shona peoples, who form three-quarters of the black population of Zimbabwe. However, the Shona are a collection of smaller tribes rather than a cohesive ethnic group. Mugabe's support is based on his guerrilla record as much as on his movement's ethnic base. ZANU-PF continues to dominate the electoral landscape even in Ndebele provinces, although voter turnout, especially for presidential elections, has declined considerably. The electoral dominance of the ZANU-PF may be challenged by participation of younger voters who do not remember the armed struggle, who are disenchanted with the economic situation, and who demand more political openness. Mugabe is countering the new threat by cultivating his old base of war veterans, members of the military, and landless peasants with financial benefits of pension, land, and food.

FINANCING

ZANU-PF spent so many years underground that details of its financial arrangements have always been unclear. It is assumed that state funding is made available to the party.

LEADERSHIP

The leader of ZANU-PF since 1976 has been Robert Gabriel Mugabe, born in 1928 in Northern Mashonaland. He graduated from a South African college and taught in Zambia and Ghana before becoming a full-time politician in 1960. Subsequently, he was imprisoned several times until, in 1974, he went into exile and soon emerged as the leader of the ZANLA guerrillas and then of ZANU-PF itself.

PROSPECTS

There is no doubt that ZANU-PF will remain the dominant party in Zimbabwe. In fact, Mugabe's control over the government is still quite strong and the economic situation, although severe, may actually strengthen his control, even if temporarily. Mugabe has proven adept at political survival and the attention of significant global actors on trouble spots elsewhere works to his advantage. Challenges exist on many fronts. First, new organizations demanding electoral reform, human rights protection, and democracy are increasing in number and position in Zimbabwe. Second, the worsening economic situation will continue to foster a climate for domestic political mobilization and international intervention. Third, Mugabe will soon be 80 and he has not identified a successor. The potential internal conflict may threaten the cohesion of the party. Fourth, riots, strikes, protests, and external challenges against the government and its policies are increasingly threatening the security and economic recovery of the country.

MOVEMENT FOR DEMOCRATIC CHANGE (MDC)

CAMPAIGNING

MDC did surprisingly well in its first general election in 2000 obtaining 57 seats compared to 62 for ZANU-PF, although the president gets to appoint 30 members. Tsvangairai, who challenged Mugabe for president, was twice charged with treason, thereby challenging the organization's efforts to campaign since the 2002 presidential election period.

HISTORY

The MDC was officially formed on September 11, 1999, as an inclusive political party with a truly national base. It espouses the principle of social democracy and has its roots in the labor movement of Zimbabwe, although it claims broad support from civic, religious, and business organizations.

As reported by the MDC, the current party leadership derives from the National Constitutional Assembly and ZCTU. The NCA, although not a party, was formed to promote constitutional reform in Zimbabwe. The Zimbabwean Congress of Trade Unions, on the other hand, sought to engage and challenge the government to address the economic decline of the country and to lobby for political accountability. The founding of the MDC was a response to the need to challenge the government through nonviolent and democratic campaigns.

ORGANIZATION

The MDC is a well-organized party with a president, deputy president, national chairperson and secretary-general. It has six organs: the Congress, the National Conference, the National Council, the National Assembly of Women, the National Assembly of Youth, and Regional Administrative areas that consist of provincial, district, and ward levels.

POLICY

Although an opposition party that has yet to put any policy into practice, politically, the MDC advocates participation, accountability, and honesty in government. Economically it affirms sustainable and human development in recognizing the need for land reform, and input of skills, capital, and technology. The MDC seeks to offer an alternative to what it sees as the failed policies of the Mugabe government. Socially, the party believes in investing in people, especially in response to the AIDS crisis in the country, and equality for women.

MEMBERSHIP AND CONSTITUENCY

MDC membership is very strong among those communities who wish to unseat ZANU-PF, including labor, business, the youth, urban sectors, and the Ndebele. MDC also have membership units among the Zimbabwean diaspora in the United Kingdom and the United States. The President of the MDC is Morgan Tsvangairai, the former president of ZCTU. Gibson Sibanda, another former unionist, is the vice president.

FINANCING

Because the MDC has members in parliament, it can theoretically receive funds to operate, but generally it is assumed that it relies on membership dues and contributions especially from the diaspora and other international groups.

PROSPECTS

After failing to secure a majority in the 2005 parliamentary elections, the MDC lost further ground upon the re-creation of the senate. It holds only 14 percent of the elected senate seats.

Minor Political Parties

ZIMBABWE AFRICAN NATIONAL UNION-NDONGO (ZANU-N)

Of the smaller parties, only ZANU-N won two seats in the 1995 elections. Originally, Reverend Ndabaningi Sithole headed ZANU-S (1977) after years of serving as a leading figure in radical black parties. ZANU-S consisted mostly of his personal following. Sithole agreed to join Bishop Muzorewa's UANC in the multiracial transitional government of 1978, a move that owed something to personal ambition and lost Sithole much of his nationalist support. His party won only 36,000 votes in the 1985 election. Sithole returned to national politics through the vehicle of ZANU-N in order to challenge the move by Mugabe toward a one-party state. Currently the organization is led by Wilson Kumbula. Since its founding it has yet to pose a significant electoral challenge to ZANU-PF or the MDC.

DEMOCRATIC PARTY (DP)

The DP was established in 1991 and is led by Giles Mutsekwa and Davidson Gomo. This Democratic Party is a breakaway faction from the Zimbabwe Unity Movement and is different from the Democratic Party established in 1981 by Andre Holland, a former Rhodesian Front MP.

ZIMBABWE UNITY MOVEMENT (ZUM)

ZUM is yet another breakaway faction, but from the major party, ZANU-PF. ZUM was established in 1989, its leader, Edgar Tekere, having been expelled from the party in which he was once a significant player. Although ZUM under Tekere won two seats in the 1990 elections, he retired from politics in 1991.

ZIMBABWE FREEDOM MOVEMENT (ZFM)

The ZFM is a new organization on the political landscape and claims as its goal Chimurenga 4 (liberation struggle 4) to restore democracy and human rights to Zimbabwe. It is a clandestine group that announced its political arrival on November 13, 2003, and is said to be based throughout Zimbabwe. Its communiqués state that it is a small local underground organization with caches of arms, safe houses, and peasant support. ZFM claims that now is the time for the final liberation of Zimbabwe from the illegitimate presidency of Mugabe and his government by means of necessary and judicious violence. The leaders are Charles Black Mamba, who is the national commander, and Ktuhuko Fezela and Daniel Ingwe, who are deputy commanders. Both Mamba and Fezela are veterans of the liberation war against UDF and were once members of Nkomo's ZIPRA.

Other Political Forces

POLITICAL GROUPS

Other than established political parties, there are other organized groups, for example, human rights groups, student groups, trade union groups, and new media groups, that challenge the government and demand more openness and accountability. Notable among such groups are ZIMRIGHTS; ZCTU (Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions); United Parties, founded in 1994 by Able Muzorew; the Popular Democratic Front, led by Austin Chakadoza; Zimbabwe Democratic Trust; and ZNLWVA (Zimbabwe National Liberation War Veterans Association).

MILITARY

The former participants in the guerrilla war were closely linked to the major ethnic groups and political parties. The Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army (ZANLA) was the first ZAPU guerrilla organization. Once the splits within ZAPU occurred, the Zimbabwe African People's Union name was usually replaced by the Zimbabwe People's Army (ZPA) or the Zimbabwe Liberation Army (ZLA). At its peak the army probably had more than 20,000 men, led by Robert Mugabe; 16,000 of them surrendered at official assembly points in 1980. Most of these are now members of Zimbabwe's new army, 70 percent of whose members consist of former guerrillas.

The PF's guerrilla movement, the Zimbabwe People's Revolutionary Army (ZIPRA), was less than 10,000 strong, with 6,000 of these coming to assembly points before the elections. They operated in the northwest of the country while ZANLA was active in the northeast. The third element in the new army was

based on the former white-controlled Rhodesian Security Forces (RSF). In spite of their being on opposing sides in the civil war, these groups managed to integrate into Zimbabwe's new army with remarkably few problems. Most of the armed clashes since 1978 have been outside the army's Zimbabwe ranks, between guerrillas who did not surrender their arms before the 1980 elections. In the future, armed opposition is more likely to come from those elements that never surrendered weapons and who continue to be disenchanted with the political order, mostly former ZIPRA members.

ETHNIC GROUPS

The major ethnic groups in Zimbabwe are the Shona and Ndebele peoples, who together account for more than 98 percent of the population. The Shona tribes form 82 percent of the black population. There are seven major Shona tribes, the largest being the Karanga (22 percent of the population). These peoples have never formed a coherent political unit. They do not have a common religion and have begun to develop a common language (Chishona) only in the last century. The Ndebele and the associated Kalanga tribe together account for 14 percent of the black population. Their common identity is based on the old Ndebele kingdom. Prior to the foundation of that kingdom in the early 19th century, the Shona and Ndebele groups were much more intermixed. The Ndebele share a common culture and religion. The Shona-Ndebele rivalry is based more on Ndebele solidarity and fear of being swamped than on the cohesiveness of the Shona peoples. Successive white governments encouraged the rivalry.

The white minority that ruled Rhodesia for so many years used to be estimated at about 200,000, but many whites emigrated from the country to South Africa or returned to Europe.

National Prospects

After seven years of civil war, Zimbabwe's transition to black-majority rule in February 1980 was surprisingly peaceful. Mugabe's clear majority in the elections allowed no arguments over who should form the government, and his initial moves seemed calculated to reassure minority groups that their interests would be safeguarded in the now legally independent nation. But the movement toward a one-party state and the constant amending of the constitution have generated concern and have mobilized political, albeit fragmented, opposition. The challenges for Zimbabwe are ominous and numerous. The periodic droughts have always challenged the country, but now with the weight of food insecurity and a decline in farm production, increased hunger is a major threat to Zimbabwean society. Political corruption especially around the issue of land redistribution will not be easily resolved. The economy is in shambles. Zimbabwe has experienced negative growth in GDP, and inflation is estimated around 280 percent. The rate of unemployment is 70 percent. It is estimated that nearly 2 million are infected with AIDS, and life expectancy has fallen to 39. Although the challenges are many, there has been a developing culture of democracy in Zimbabwe that dates back to the struggle against white minority rule.

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