

**Centre Domination and Party Competition:
Christian Democratic Party Strategy in Italy, 1943-89**

by Mark Donovan

**A Thesis Submitted in Fulfilment
of the Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy**

at

**The London School of Economics
and Political Science
University of London**

July, 1990

UMI Number: U048297

All rights reserved

INFORMATION TO ALL USERS

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.



UMI U048297

Published by ProQuest LLC 2014. Copyright in the Dissertation held by the Author.
Microform Edition © ProQuest LLC.

All rights reserved. This work is protected against
unauthorized copying under Title 17, United States Code.



ProQuest LLC
789 East Eisenhower Parkway
P.O. Box 1346
Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346

THESES

F

6842

x211407207

Abstract

The powerful hold of the Italian Christian Democratic Party on post-war government entitles it to recognition as, in many ways, the most successful party in Western Europe. At the same time, the party is unique in having mass support whilst being identified with the political 'centre'. This study focuses on the relationship between these two aspects of Italian politics.

The thesis starts by examining the importance of spatial terminology in analyses of Italian politics and proposes that 'the centre' has two distinct, if not unrelated, meanings. Drawing on this idea the thesis seeks to show that the evolution of the Italian party system can be understood through an analysis of two strategies which have dominated the Christian Democratic Party: the centre political strategy and the centre party strategy, each rooted in a different understanding of the centre.

In studying these strategies, party competition is emphasised as the means by which Italian multi-partism has been bound into a unified, if internally contradictory system; whilst a study of economic policy-making exemplifies the complex inter-relationship which has seen this 'contradictory unity' contribute to the nation-building process. The thesis contributes to the debate about the nature of Christian Democracy and party competition in Italy, and to the debate within comparative politics about the nature of party system structure.

Acknowledgements

The award from the Economic and Social Research Council was decisive in allowing me to start a PhD and I am grateful to all those who made the award possible.

My warmest thanks go to Professor Gordon Smith. During the MSc course in West European Politics with which I preceded this thesis he forced me to at least rethink some of my prejudices, and his supervision of my PhD was challenging and stimulating. Howard Machin too provided invaluable help both as joint supervisor and in providing more general support, particularly with regard to finding part-time jobs whilst completing my thesis.

I was also encouraged by, and would like in particular to thank, Professor Jean Blondel of the European University Institute where I spent several months in 1988, and Professor Angelo Panebianco of Bologna University who read a draft of the thesis whilst at the LSE's International Relations Centre.

Finally, I must thank my wife, Patrizia. She has put up with my thesis and kept me in the style to which I had grown accustomed before returning to live on a 'grant', but most of all she has continued to be a priceless companion.



ITALY

(C) George Philip & Son Limited

CONTENTS

Title Page	i
Abstract	ii
Acknowledgments	iii
Map	iv
Contents Summary	v
Summary of Figures and Tables	x
Abbreviations/Glossary	xi

CHAPTER TITLES

PREFACE	1
INTRODUCTION: ITALIAN CHRISTIAN DEMOCRACY: THE NATURE OF ITS SUCCESS	12
CHAPTER 1: APPROACHES TO UNDERSTANDING THE ITALIAN PARTY SYSTEM	24
CHAPTER 2: THE CONSTRUCTION OF CENTRISM, 1943-47	69
CHAPTER 3: TRANSFORMATION & CRISIS OF CENTRISM, 1947-53 .	133
CHAPTER 4: IMPERFECT CONSOLIDATION, CENTRISM, 1953-64	165
CHAPTER 5: A CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC POLITICAL ECONOMY?	201
CHAPTER 6: THE DC REJECTION OF BIPOLARITY: THE DEFEAT OF THE HISTORIC COMPROMISE	263
CHAPTER 7: 'BIPOLAR GOVERNMENT': THE TRANSFORMATION OF CENTRE DOMINATION IN THE 1980s	310
CHAPTER 8: CONCLUSION	370
APPENDICES:	386
BIBLIOGRAPHY:	426

BREAKDOWN OF INDIVIDUAL CHAPTERS

INTRODUCTION: <u>ITALIAN CHRISTIAN DEMOCRACY: THE NATURE OF ITS SUCCESS</u>	12
I POLITICAL SUCCESS, PARTY SUCCESS & THE PARTY SYSTEM	12
II STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS	18
ENDNOTES	22
CHAPTER 1: <u>APPROACHES TO UNDERSTANDING THE ITALIAN PARTY SYSTEM</u>	24
I LEFT, CENTRE AND RIGHT IN ITALIAN POLITICS	24
II POWER AND POLITICAL BLOCKS	29
A. Two Concepts of Power	29
B. Blocks and 'Polarisation'	30
C. Block Interaction & Block Structure	31
D. Block Differentiation: Ideology as Policy or Image?	33
E. Government/Opposition Relations	34
III EXISTING THEORIES OF THE DC AND THE ITALIAN PARTY SYSTEM	35
A. Sartori: the Mechanics of Centre Placement	36
B. Galli and the Dualist Model of Politics	39
C. Farneti's Synthesis and 'Democraticity'	41

	D. Pizzorno's Critique: the catch-all party system .	45
	E. Summary	47
IV	THE PROBLEMS OF THE EXISTING MODELS	48
	A. Sartori: legitimacy and electoral volatility	48
	B. Galli: Left/Right Conflict, 'Normal' & Difficult	50
	C. Farneti: Consensus & the Inexistent Party System	52
	D. Pizzorno: Unity and Dissensus	53
V	THE PARTY SYSTEM AS CONTRADICTIONARY UNITY:	
	TWO MEANINGS OF THE CENTRE	54
	A. The Centre block	54
	B. The Relational Centre	56
	C. Contradictory Unity	61
	D. Centre Domination and nation-Building	61
	ENDNOTES	64

CHAPTER 2: THE CONSTRUCTION OF CENTRISM, 1943-47 69

I	THE POLITICO-CULTURAL FOUNDATIONS OF DC CENTRISM ...	70
	A. Sub-Cultures and Block Structure	70
	1. Conservatism in Italy	71
	2. A Catholic block?	72
	3. The lay/liberal tradition	72
	4. The socialist sub-culture.....	73
	5. Summary	73
	B. The Catholic 'Third Way'	74
	1. The vacuum on the right	74
	2. The Catholic World	79
	a. Two strands of Catholic mobilisation ..	80
	b. Papal power and its limits	82
	c. Catholic-Communism: A common enemy	85
	d. Catholic unity: Montini and the DC	86
	e. Tardini's political scepticism	87
	f. The 'Roman' party	88
	g. Catholic trade unionism	89
	h. The 'Third Way' & catholic integralism	90
	i. Catholicism and heteronomy	93
	C. Political Opportunity	95
	1. The DC and political mediation	95
	2. Party system structure: the 'blueprint'	99
	D. Summary	100
II	THE POLITICAL CONSTRUCTION OF CENTRISM	101
	A. Building a Political Class: Anti-Fascism, 1943-8	103
	1. The CLN: the self-assertion of a new	
	political elite	103
	2. The consolidation of a political class	107
	B. Political Responsibility and Leadership	113
	1. Leadership autonomy	113
	2. The exclusion crisis and centrism	116
	C. Organising a Party Democracy	118
	1. The extension of political control	
	into society	119
	2. Elections: establishing party control	121
III	CONCLUSION	125
	ENDNOTES	126

CHAPTER 3:	<u>THE TRANSFORMATION AND CRISIS OF</u>	
	<u>CENTRISM, 1947-53</u>	133
I	CRISIS AND TRANSFORMATION: EXCLUSIONARY CENTRISM	135
	A. The Exclusion of the Left?	137
	B. Exclusion and the DC	141
II	CENTRIST GOVERNMENT	144
	A. Social Reform: The limits of Voluntarism	144
	B. The Threat of the Clerical Right	148
	C. Reformist Government: A minimalist strategy	152
III	THE TRANSFORMATION OF CENTRISM	154
	A. Centrism: Ideal Types, and Reality	154
	1. Democratically ambiguous centrism	154
	2. Two democratic ideal types	155
	3. Resume	157
	B. Decisive Government, Weak Political Formula	158
	1. Centrist government, left political culture	158
	2. The strength of weakness	159
IV	CONCLUSION	160
	ENDNOTES	161
CHAPTER 4:	<u>IMPERFECT CONSOLIDATION, CENTRISM 1953-68</u>	165
I	THE MODERN STATE AND PARTIES IN ITALY	167
	A. The Climax and Collapse of Clericalism	168
	1. The Church abandons partisan politics	169
	2. Consolidation of a secular state culture	170
	3. The end of 'closed Catholicism'	172
	B. The Institutional Development of A Pluralist State	174
	C. Fanfani's Ambivalent Christian State Socialism	176
	1. Low politics and the opposition	177
	2. Fanfani's challenge to the left	180
II	THE 'OPENING TO THE LEFT'	185
	A. Transformism Under Duress: From Tambroni	
	to De Lorenzo	186
	B. The 'Centre-Left': An Interim Political Solution	190
III	THE 'THIRD PHASE'?	193
	ENDNOTES	197
CHAPTER 5:	<u>A CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC POLITICAL ECONOMY?</u>	201
I	CLEAVAGE & UNITY: A PREVIEW (Mastropaolo & Slater)	202
II	RECONSTRUCTION	206
	A. The Inheritance	207
	B. The Ideological Debate	209
	C. The Primacy of Politics, 1945-53	211
	1. Economic policy-making, 1945-47	212
	2. The baseline of economic boom, 1947/48	215
	3. European integration	218
	4. De Gasperi: the political economy of	
	a statesman	224
	D. Reconstruction - a Conclusion	229
III	MODERNISATION AND POLITICAL AMBIVALENCE:	
	Fanfani and the Strong State	230
	A. The DC and the Economy Under Fanfani	232

1. Territorial management	232
2. Governing the oligopoly sector	234
3. Governing the micro-sector	238
B. The Assault on the DC's Policy-Making Primacy ..	243
1. The Centre-Left	243
2. The private sector asserts itself	246
3. The unions assert themselves	251
IV CENTRISM AND CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC POLITICAL ECONOMY	253
ENDNOTES	256

CHAPTER 6: THE DC REJECTION OF BIPOLARITY: THE DEFEAT OF THE HISTORIC COMPROMISE 263

I THE REVITALISATION OF THE BIPOLAR DYNAMIC AND THE COMMUNIST PARTY'S RESPONSE	264
A. Italy was not Germany	265
B. The PCI and 'Centrifugation'	266
II THE DC AT THE CENTRE OF THE STORM	270
A. Ferment in the Catholic World	271
B. Moro's 'switch to the left'	272
C. Fanfani's Ambitions	275
D. Andreotti: Conservative Centrism	278
E. Fanfani's Final Fling	281
F. The Problem of DC Legitimacy	285
III POLITICAL CONFRONTATION AND POLITICAL LEGITIMATION	287
A. Moro's Strategic Aims	288
B. Refoundation and Confrontation	291
C. The Relegitimation of Party Government	298
IV A WATERSHED: THE HISTORIC COMPROMISE IN RETROSPECT	301
A. A Culmination	301
B. A Watershed	303
ENDNOTES	306

CHAPTER 7: 'BIPOLAR GOVERNMENT' AND ITS LIMITS: THE TRANSFORMATION OF CENTRE DOMINATION IN THE 1980s .. 310

I BIPOLAR GOVERNMENT: THE PSI CHALLENGE TO THE DC ...	312
A. Craxi and Structural Opportunity	313
B. Challenging DC/PCI Bipolarity	314
C. Challenging DC Centrality	319
1. The Catholic World	319
2. Economic management	323
3. Foreign policy	326
4. Law and order	327
II THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC RESPONSE	328
A. Reasserting 'Centre-Left' Centrism	329
1. The <u>Preambolo</u>	329
2. The New Right in Italy?	331
3. The resurgence of the DC-left	334
B. The Emergency Anti-Craxi Coalition	335
1. De Mita's party-wide support	335
2. De Mita and bipolarity	337
C. De Mita: Ambiguities and Downfall	340
III BETWEEN BIPOLARITY AND DIFFUSION	347

A.	Unity of the Left - the key to bipolarity	348
B.	Catholic Populism - a Strategy for the 1990s? ..	354
1.	The DC's new courting of the PCI	355
2.	Catholic populism: universal and catch-all	357
3.	The inevitability of defeat?	360
IV	CONFLICT IN THE 1990s	362
	ENDNOTES	363

CHAPTER 8: CONCLUSION 370

I	THREE FORMS OF CENTRE DOMINATION	371
II	TWO VIEWS OF PARTY SYSTEM STRUCTURE	373
III	THE CENTRE AS DYNAMIC CONFLICT-HANDLING	375
IV	THE EVOLUTION OF THE ITALIAN PARTY SYSTEM	379
V	THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE PARTY SYSTEM TO NATION- AND STATE-BUILDING	382
	Notes	385

Appendix 1:	Post-Fascist Civilian Governments	386
Appendix 2:	Christian Democrat Party Secretaries	388
Appendix 3:	Election Results (1946-87)	389
Appendix 4:	Party System Structure and Dynamics	390

BIBLIOGRAPHY	426
--------------------	-----

SUMMARY OF FIGURES AND TABLES

Seating Arrangements, 1983 Chamber of Deputies	25
Coalition `Formulae': Classic Rendering	26
Amended Postwar Coalition Formulae	28
Mastropaolo & Slater: Distinction and convergence ..	58
Mastropaolo & Slater: DC/PCI Overlap, 1	59
Mastropaolo & Slater: DC/PCI Overlap, 2	60
Results of the 1946 Constituent Assembly Election ...	99
The Parliamentary Balance (PSI/PCI)	344
A Schematic History of the Italian party System ...	380

Abbreviations/Glossary

A. Party names

Democrazia Cristiana, or DC:	Christian Democratic Party
Democrazia Proletaria, or DP:	Proletarian Democracy
(Fronte) Uomo Qualunque:	Party of the Common Man
Movimento Sociale Italiano, or MSI:	Italian Social Movement (Neo-Fascist Party)
Partito Comunista Italiano, or PCI:	Italian Communist Party
Partito di Unità Proletaria, or PdUP:	Proletarian Unity Party
Partito Liberale Italiano, or PLI:	Italian Liberal Party
Partito Radicale:	Radical Party
Partito Repubblicano It ^o , or PRI:	Italian Republican Party
Partito Socialista Democratico Italiano, or PSDI:	Italian Social Democratic Party
Partito Socialista Italiano, or PSI:	Italian Socialist Party
Partito Socialista Italiano di Unità Proletaria, or PSIUP:	Italian Socialist Party of Proletarian Unity
Partito Socialista Unificato, or PSU:	United Socialist Party

B. Other

Azione cattolica italiana, or ACI:	Catholic Action
Associazione cattolica dei lavoratori italiani, or ACLI:	ACLI, the Catholic association for workers
ciellini	Members of Comunione e Liberazione
CGIL	The communist trade union confederation
CISL	The 'catholic' trade union confederation
Comitato di Liberazione Nazionale, or CLN:	Committee of National Liberation
Comunione e Liberazione, or CI:	Communion & Liberation
Missini	Members of the MSI
monocolore	a 'one-colour' (DC) government party rule (a prejudicial term describing the five party coalition of the 1980s)
partitocrazia	
pentapartito	P-2 (secret anti-democratic masonic lodge)
P-2, Propaganda-2	
quadripartito	term describing the four party coalition of Centrism
Qualunquisti	Members of Uomo Qualunque
UIL	The 'lay' trade union confederation

Preface

This thesis intends to build on Sartori's notion of polarised pluralism and its application to the Italian party system. In particular, the intention is to build on Sartori's notion of mass ideological polarisation. If it is the case that the Italian electorate has been (and perhaps even remains) ideologically polarised, then how has the system survived? Why has it not broken down, as did other cases, such as the Weimar Republic? My answer, and this is the major goal of the thesis, is that the Italian system has survived because of the behaviour of the elites, and of the Christian Democratic elites in particular, and their efforts to counter the impact of polarisation.

Though Italy is not a consociational democracy, the way in which profound cleavages at the mass level have been counteracted by elite cooperation is not entirely dissimilar to the process described in Lijphart's model of consociational democracy.¹ My thesis is about how elite cooperation has worked in post-war Italy and aims to tell the side of the story neglected by dwelling on ideological polarisation at the mass level. I intend to outline and analyse the counteracting strategies of the Christian Democratic elites and to discuss the constraints under which they operated, as well as how these have changed over time. Whilst it might seem that the elite strategies could be termed 'consensual', as per Lijphart's development of his consociational theory,² I prefer to use the notion of a 'centre strategy' (which I define below). There are two reasons for this.

The first reason for eschewing the expression consensu-

al strategy is that whilst the aim of the centre strategy has been the promotion of stability, conflict and the denial of consensus have been intrinsic components of that strategy. Secondly, the term consensus/consensual is a problematic one. Consensus is sometimes contrasted to situations of conflict, confrontation and polarisation as though consensus means stability, and conflict etc. means instability. Yet the relationship between stability and conflict is more complex than this juxtaposition warrants. Lijphart's consensual type of democracy, for example, is contrasted to a 'majoritarian' type, yet cases closest to that type are themselves widely regarded as either dependent for their functioning on the existence of a particularly high degree of consensus, or as promoting consensus - or both. In fact, the existence of consensus in modern democracies, often presented as a necessary condition for their survival, is a matter of controversy. I myself prefer the notion of stable dissensus to describe the political culture of these societies, since it is their stability (which is not the same as stasis), and not the question of agreement on 'fundamentals', or lack of it, which is the essential point.

Over the course of this study I will use a number of specific concepts in order to develop my argument. In particular, the centre strategy is identified as having two aspects, the 'centre party strategy' and the 'centre political strategy'. These, and a number of related concepts, namely those of 'block', 'block structure', 'pole' and 'centre' are now defined. The first definition is that of the centre party strategy.

The **centre party strategy** is that strategy pursued by Christian Democratic elites with the aim of establishing and maintaining the DC as the predominant party of a centre political block. An essential part of this strategy consists in preventing the development of a two-block party system. That is to say, seeking to maintain a structure in which coalition-building is focused on a centre block because opposition parties are unable to cooperate sufficiently to ground an alternative government, defines the centre party strategy.

The term **block** is used with reference to the organisation of the elite structure of the party system. As established by Sartori, interaction is a defining feature of any party system qua system. However, it is argued, party interactions have two dimensions: an intra-elite dimension concerned with government, and hence with coalition-building and maintenance to sustain the system of parliamentary-based party government; and a societal dimension which is oriented to the mass public as an 'electorate', and which is, in varying degrees, competitive and ideologically-based. The extent to which the elite, or governmental, dimension can be distinguished from the electoral and more broadly societal dimension is a matter of debate,³ but it is in this distinction that the concepts of block and block structure are rooted.

Block and block structure are terms relating specifically to the intra-elite, governmental and coalitional dimension of party system interaction. At this level of the party and political system aggregation is essential to

system survival since governments require the support, active or passive (as in abstention) of at least fifty per cent of the assembly from which they originate. This requirement alone, independently of considerations of ideological orientation (whose significance is not denied) encourages the aggregation of parliamentarians into parties, and of parties into blocks. The majority requirement also creates a situation where the number of ways of building government-sustaining blocks is severely limited: in effect, as the following paragraphs establish, only three alternative modes of block-structuring exist. (In reality the situation is somewhat more complex, for a degree of 'fluidity' may exist given that in concrete cases a certain tension may exist as to which of the alternative modes of block structuration is effective).

The most obvious block structure is the two-block structure. In it party elites have essentially inflexible coalition or single-party government arrangements and the societal dimension of party interaction is allowed more directly to determine government formation, though remaining mediated by elite-determined rules, particularly those relating to the electoral system. Where the interplay of the electoral system and the mobilisational capacities of the two blocks allows it, alternation will be a prominent feature of the party system. Where alternation takes place the two-block system can be regarded as more-or-less 'balanced', in contrast to the unbalanced two-block system (such as that pertaining in the Northern Ireland Assembly before

its dissolution), where alternation is precluded.^A

Alternative to the two-block system is the three-block system. It also has two major sub-types distinguished by the absence or presence of alternation. The centre-dominated variant sees the centre of the three-blocks able to command the support of fifty per cent plus of parliament, thus precluding alternation. Where the centre block is not thus dominant, there will be an element of alternation (if there were not, an unbalanced two-block system would be created).

Those three-block systems which do see some element of alternation can be regarded as having two sub-types: 'parity' and 'flank-dominant'. In the former, the three blocks are roughly equal in size (the Dutch party system approximates this ideal type); in the latter, the left and right blocks dominate (the West German party system has approximated this type). The flank-dominant three-block party system may appear to be very similar to the two-block system, given the prominence of 'left' and 'right', but it rightly belongs to the three-block type given the extent to which the elite dimension of interaction, rather than the electoral dimension, determines government formation.

Two of the three types of block structure have been discussed, the third type is the one-block structure. In a model based on interaction there would seem to be no possibility of there being a one-block structure. As Sartori correctly demonstrated, there is no such thing as a one-

A. Degrees of 'balance' can be measured in terms of 'proportional tenure'.

party party system. However, the block argument is based on just one dimension of interaction, the intra-elite dimension. A brief exploration of the meaning of the one-block structure allows some consideration of the relationship between the two dimensions of party system interaction. It is easy to begin by citing a concrete case. Thus, one-block interaction would describe the Austrian Grand Coalition of the period 1945-66. What is evident is that the one-block structure must contain more than one party if it is not to equate to the one-party state. The one-block party system, then, must contain at least two parties, thus permitting the electoral/societal dimension of interaction to take place. The existence of this dimension of interaction maintains the possibility that a different mode of intra-elite (ie block) interaction will emerge, and indeed in the Austrian case a two-block structure did emerge after 1966.

A second variant of the one-block structure would be that of Allgemeinkoalitionsefähigkeit, where major parties were now excluded from the government, now included, without either a two- or three-block structure becoming apparent. It is not felt that this ideal type could be found in the real world. It assumes the irrelevance of the left-right dimension, and this is not considered to be realistic. In particular, this dimension is considered to be particularly significant for the electoral-societal dimension of party system interaction, and as such to act as a constraint on, and opportunity for, intra-elite (block) interaction.

It has been established that even the one-block system must contain more than one party, for otherwise there is no

longer any party systemic interaction. But clearly all blocks may be composed of more than one party, not just that of the one-block system. We must distinguish between blocks and parties. In so far as Sartori refers to coalitional groupings of parties as 'poles', Sartori elides the two. In fact, individual parties are poles, that is poles of attraction for different electorates, so that all blocks are, or are potentially, multipolar. The block-based model of party system interaction significantly modifies Sartori's pole-based approach by making explicit the distinction between parties and blocks, and by challenging the reductionist fusion of the mass and elite levels of party system interaction which that model entails.

A brief examination of the British case clearly reveals the significance of distinguishing between blocks and poles. At the intra-elite, governmental level, the British party system is clearly a two-block system. But it is a distorting simplification to label this system a two-party system. Nor does it greatly further our understanding, useful though it is, to distinguish between a two-party system at the parliamentary level and a multi-party (more than two) system at the electoral level. The British party system is a rigidly structured two-block system which is not only a multi-party system (ie democratic), but pluri-party ie a system with more than two relevant parties. The point is that one, at least, of the blocks is multipolar, though the predominance of the two leading parties in parliament has obscured this. In recent years it has become apparent that only one party has been truly predominant, and that the so-

called two-party system is markedly unbalanced from a diachronic point of view. In other words, the Liberal (Democratic) Party has been consistently 'relevant', and this relevance could, in the future, force the definitive abandonment of the erroneous two-party label. The multipolarity of blocks, then, is extremely significant for understanding the evolution of block structure and the relationships between parties within and between blocks. This brings us, finally, to the definition of 'the centre political strategy'.

The **centre political strategy** can be defined as a strategy which has sought to promote party interaction within and across blocks. Such interaction need not be 'consensual' in the sense of co-operative. Indeed, highly aggressive electoral confrontation, self-evidently and intentionally antagonistic, may be politically 'centrist' in that it promotes party interaction to the detriment of non-party, extraparliamentary (or armed 'party') interaction.

Having defined block structure, distinguished blocks from poles, and defined, and distinguished between, the centre political strategy and the centre party strategy, it remains to define **the centre**. In this thesis the term is used in two explicitly distinct ways, to a degree reflecting the two dimensions of party system interaction. The first use of the term refers to the existence, in a three-block system, of a centre-block. Clearly, not all party systems have such a centre. Distinct from, but not unrelated to, this centre is the 'relational centre'. The relational centre exists in all successfully established party systems

and its definition is best approached by way of example.

According to Franz-Urban Pappi, the West German party system based on the CDU-CSU, the FDP and the SPD was best understood as based on their being a triangular relationship between the parties (or blocks, as per this analysis), not a linear one.⁴ This being the case, 'the centre' becomes a point in the middle of the triangle, its precise location being determined by the relationship pertaining between the blocks. Such a centre is existent even in two-block systems.

The relational centre, then, is distinct from the centre block (where it exists), though the block centre and the relational centres are clearly not unrelated. As can be seen from Pappi's model, determining the nature of the relational centre clearly depends on defining the spatial locations of the blocks, hence the nature of the relationship between them, and the distance between the blocks.

The nature of the party system blocks in Italy, and of the relationship between them, is the subject matter of **Chapter One**. Most of the concepts which I have outlined above are found there as part and parcel of the review of existing interpretations of the Italian party system and its functioning. **Chapters Two and Three** argue that a relational centre was established in the decade 1943-53, thus proposing that a major political continuity underlies the first post-war decade, despite the dramatic events of 1947-48. The distinction between the relational centre and the centre block is crucial to this proposition, since it is argued that despite the atmosphere of ideological polarisation

between the three blocks, they nevertheless remained bound together as an interactive unity.

Chapter Four takes this contrast as the basis of an argument that post-war Italy has seen an imperfect consolidation of its party system, indeed, of its democracy. In particular, that domination of the centre which the centre-dominant three-block party system witnesses is shown to promote an intense political competitiveness, and hence potential for change, which the system's managers, ie the political elites, find extremely difficult to cope with. In **Chapter Five**, unions and business organisations are thus shown to have moved into the political limelight in the late 1960s, challenging the failure of the party system to respond to demands for political innovation. This development is shown to counter the hitherto prevailing situation of their relative subordination to the political elites.

The profundity of these socio-economic challenges is shown, in **Chapters Six and Seven**, to switch attention back to the political system and to the structure of the party system. Now, however, attention shifts from examining the relationship between the relational centre and the construction and maintenance of the block centre, towards the significance of the asymmetry of the three-block system. Thus the trend towards the establishment of a two-block system is examined. The peculiar difficulty of coping with change in a centre dominant three-block system is, however, shown to remain critical, so that at the start of the 1990s block structural organisation is highly fluid. A degree of three-block structuring remains, encouraged by the DC and PSI,

Both of whom wish to marginalise the PCI (and MSI), and to benefit from the national and international collapse of Communism. At the same time, the two-block option is seen to remain an attractive possibility for certain elites in the DC and other parties. Finally, however, the general decomposition of block differentiation is also shown to be significant, and this is examined in terms of the relevance of the multipolar one-block model of party system structuring.

The conclusion reviews the main themes examined in the thesis itself and sketches the historical evolution of party system structuring. In so far as post-war Italian political development can be 'read off' as the evolution of the relational centre, Italy is argued to have a national identity created by party system interaction, and therefore to be comparable to other multi-party democracies. At the same time, the particular articulation of political forces, ie the centre-dominant three-block party system, is shown to have hindered the development of national unity and in particular the construction of a strongly legitimised constitutional state, rendering the Italian case 'peculiar'.

(1) A.Lijphart, Democracy in Plural Societies, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977.

(2) A.Lijphart, Democracies. Patterns of Majoritarian and Consensus Government in Twenty-One Countries, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1984.

(3) See P.Mair, 'The Problem of Party System Change', pp.251-276, and G.Smith, 'The System Perspective on Party System Change', pp.349-363, in Journal of Theoretical Politics, 1:3, 1989, esp. pp.259-260.

(4) F.U.Pappi, 'The West German Party System', in West European Politics, 1984, pp.7-26.

I POLITICAL SUCCESS, PARTY SUCCESS AND THE PARTY SYSTEM

Success and disillusion are the fruits which Christian Democracy has brought Catholic democrats in Italy. This thesis explores the reasons for this paradox, taking as its starting point what is arguably the main characteristic of Democrazia cristiana (the DC) - its identification as a **mass centre party**. This identification is open to question but, as we shall see, this is just one of many aspects of what is argued to be the inherently self-contradictory nature of the mass centre party.

Before laying out the bases for explaining the contrast between success and disillusion it is necessary to indicate the very real extent of the DC's success. The Christian Democrats have been highly successful as a vote-maximising party and as a government-orientated party. Throughout the post-war period the DC has been the largest party in parliament thanks to its ability to gain some two-fifths of the vote, and the party has always dominated coalition formation. Even when, between 1981 and 1987, it finally ceded the premiership, the party continued to dominate the cabinet, fielding as many ministers in its own right as its coalition partners in total. By the end of the 1980s the party was seen to be reasserting its power.¹ Up to 1990, then, post-war Italy had seen no full-fledged government alternation, no *Machtwechsel*, or change of power, as the evocative German expression puts it. In Western Europe, only the Swedish

Social Democrats have achieved such success, for they governed for forty four uninterrupted years (1932-76). Yet even there the new electoral volatility of the 1970s² enabled the parties of the so-called 'bourgeois block' to turn the Social Democrats out of office in 1976, and to win a further election in 1979, thus reinforcing this reverse.

Christian Democrat success in Italy, moreover, witnessed the transformation of Italy from a largely peasant society into an industrial and post-industrial society which by the late 1980s, it was claimed, had overtaken Great Britain in terms of standard of living and in terms of its international standing as the world's fifth industrial power. Despite the persisting disparity between north and south, the whole country had undergone a profound metamorphosis and, contrary to the orthodoxy of an earlier period, it was now argued that Italy's political elites could be thought not only to have been peculiarly responsive to Italy's social transformation, but to have been innovative and effective in providing the state with constructive leadership³ in a sustained fashion - perhaps for the first time in its history. Thus, Italy's dramatic and successful development in the 1950s and '60s, which had been presented as a model for developing countries,⁴ was followed by signs of the country's economic resilience in the 1980s which led it to again be presented as a model - this time to the advanced economies.⁵ Such success was thrown into even starker relief by the events of 1989/90, when even the Communist regimes of Eastern Europe proved more vulnerable than the so-called 'DC regime'.

Against this success, however, the many criticisms

levelled at Italian government have called into question the qualitative nature of the Christian Democratic record. This criticism was not only of sufficient strength to force the DC to accept the formation of governments led by the party's smaller coalition allies in the 1980s, but resulted in the party being led through most of that decade by a secretary, Ciriaco De Mita, whose disillusion with his own party was repeatedly displayed. Yet it is difficult to measure the qualitative achievements of government. How, for example, does one answer the question of whether the government provided by the DC was not the best possible in the circumstances? The difficulty of finding an answer to this question allowed Christian Democratic Party leaders, despite the party's setbacks, to continue to assert their pride in the accomplishments of their party.

It is argued here that an answer to the problem of how to assess DC success lies in consideration of what it means to be a mass centre party. The thesis argues that the fact that the DC has been just one party in a competitive multi-party system has forced the Christian Democrats to pursue success both for themselves as a party, and for the Italian people as a nation. It is with regard to this dual focus on party and nation that the 'centrism' of the DC is particularly significant, a point we shall pursue after first considering an objection to this line of reasoning. It can be argued that political parties pursue their own self-interest, and that of their backers, entirely without regard for any supposed 'national interest'. This objection to the thesis can be carried further by claiming that evidence exists to the

effect that political parties pursue sectional or partial interests on such a sustained basis as to indicate the irrelevance of, and hence non-existence of, such a thing as a 'national interest'. This thesis explicitly counters that argument by analysing the DC both as an autonomous actor and as a part of an interactive system of parties in which the whole is different to the mere sum of the parts.⁶ It is on the basis of the analysis of the DC as a part of a system that the thesis reaches conclusions about the contribution of the DC to nation- and state-building in Italy.

The thesis examines the problem of the nature of the DC's 'success' by distinguishing between a **centrist party strategy** and a **centrist political strategy**. These concepts mirror the distinction made above between the party as an autonomous actor and the party as part of a system. In the first case the party pursues its sectional, or organisational, self-interest; in the second, the party champions the national interest, seeking to provide leadership to the state. Of course, the two strategies are intimately inter-related.

The **centrist political strategy** can be defined as one which seeks to encourage the consolidation of democracy by promoting interaction between the relevant parties of a party system in the interests of democratic government. This strategy is particularly important in the installation and consolidation of democracy. Exponents of this strategy seek to limit the exclusion of major political parties (their own no less than that of other parties) from the political processes of the multi-party democratic state since such exclu-

sion is seen as undemocratic and as harmful to political stability. By contrast, the **centrist party strategy** aims to exclude opposition parties, on both left and right, from government, with the aim of monopolising or dominating government. The effect of this strategy is to create a party system structured into **three blocks**.^A

There is an inherent tension between a strategy centred on exclusion, and one centred on minimising exclusion. It is the initial coincidence and, subsequently, the increasing difficulty of combining the two strategies which the major part of this thesis examines. The difficulty of maintaining this combination has meant that the three-block system has been consistently threatened with being replaced by either a **two-block** or by a **one-block** system, ie, in effect, by a system based on alternation between 'left' and 'right' which would at some point cast the DC into the opposition, or by a grand coalition which would bring all the relevant parties into the government. The existence of these **alternative modes of structuring the party system** is considered to be a major source of dynamism in the party system, independent of ideology and sociological 'cleavage' structure, even if both these factors are important in themselves.

The combination of the inherent disharmony between the centrist party strategy and the centrist political strategy, and the existence of alternative modes of structuring the

A. The block structure of party systems is a theme of considerable importance in the thesis. For reasons which will be made clear, this terminology is preferred to one based on the number of 'poles' present in the system.

party system are argued to have provided the Italian party system with great dynamism. As a consequence, the apparent stability of the electorate has, it is argued, been based on the dynamism of the political elites, not their immobilism.

The difficulty of combining a centrist party strategy with a centrist political strategy in a single mass party grows over time because its very achievement renders the contradiction between them apparent. The establishment of a three-block party system as a result of the successful union of the two strategies by a mass party is a significant phase in the process of installing democracy, and this success casts doubt on the democratic legitimacy of excluding opposition parties which have collaborated in founding that democracy. The consolidation of democracy renders the exclusionary effect of the three-block structure increasingly unjustifiable. As a consequence, the centrist party strategy becomes increasingly inimical to a centrist political strategy and the qualitative failings of the government are readily blamed on government itself, rather than on the difficult situation in which successive governments find themselves. Thus the stage is set for a restructuring of the party system as a one- or two-block system in which the mass centre party loses its defining feature by becoming identified with either the right or the left, or else by becoming just one of several centre parties, whether or not there is an actual decline in its relative size.

The 'success' of the mass centre party will be judged differently by those who favour its political strategy and who those who value its party strategy. For the former, the

eventual restructuring of the party system to allow stable alternation will be seen as the party's (and the strategy's) crowning success, as well as the means by which the quality of government is maintained. For the latter, the quality of government depends more simply on who wields it, and a one-block structure in which the traditional government party is able to continue to dominate will be preferred to the creation of a two-block structure.

The contradictions of the mass centre party derive not, pace Duverger, from the fact that the centre does not exist in politics. On the contrary, the first two chapters of the thesis argue that the centre necessarily dominates multi-party systems, even when it is not occupied. However, where the centre is apparently occupied, such a 'centre' party cannot indefinitely maintain a monopoly of that centre.

II

THESIS STRUCTURE

Chapter One examines the theoretical materials concerning the nature of 'the centre' in Italy. First, it simply illustrates the importance of the terms left, centre and right in Italian politics. It then outlines four major theories concerning the nature and functioning of the Italian party system, the first three by political scientists, the fourth by a sociologist. This last is shown to criticise the former for so emphasising political division and fragmentation that all sense of there being a social 'whole' is lost. Finally, my own understanding of the centre as having a double significance is elaborated and related to an under-

standing of the party system as a 'contradictory unity'⁷. This concept, allied to the two meanings of the centre, provides a basis for synthesising the contrasting pictures of the Italian polity presented by political scientists and sociologists, so gaining an improved understanding of the Christian Democrats and the nature of party competition in Italy.

The subsequent chapters explore the changing meaning of the centre in Italian politics and the evolving strategy of the Christian Democratic Party. Chapter Two is devoted to the crucial initial post-war period of Italian politics. It first outlines the organisational and ideological heterogeneity of the DC in order to establish the complexity of the party and of 'sociological' cleavages. Then, using the insights into party system mechanics and strategies formulated in Chapter One, it focuses on the strategy of encouraging 'synchronic centrism', or grand coalition, in the period 1943-47. The importance of this period, often overlooked in accounts which focus on the 1948 election as the Republic's founding moment, is stressed, yet the entire period 1943-53 is presented as one of important continuities. This is an unusual approach which stems from the logic of the argument outlined in the concluding section of Chapter One; the utility and validity of this logic is scrutinised in Chapter Three, where, continuing the argument, centre domination established between 1943 and 1947/48 is shown to have been maintained through its transformation in the period 1947-53.

Chapter Four analyses the strains put on the DC and the party and political systems from 1953 to 1968. By distin-

guishing between the centrist party strategy, aimed at the success of the party as an organisation, and the centrist political strategy, understood as a strategy of state leadership, the evolution of the party system and Italian society is shown to have changed the significance of the by-now well-established centrist strategy of the DC. Whereas the unity of the two strategies originally reflected a genuinely democratic dialectic within the party itself and within the party system, this unity is argued to have come increasingly to represent the un- and anti-democratic manipulation of the party system by unrepresentative special interests.

In Chapter Five, the essentially chronological ordering of the thesis is put to one side in order to examine the politics of economic policy-making. The shift in analytical approach at this stage is appropriate, for whilst focusing on what is accepted as being the prime determinant of left and right (attitudes and approaches to economic policy-making) it underlines the importance of the political centre and of treating the party system as a 'contradictory unity', yet directs attention to non-party actors, and towards the political system more generally. In fact, 1969 may be considered as a watershed between an earlier period when the parties could be considered to dominate, both as collective political actors and as policy-makers, and the subsequent period when the very principle of party government was challenged. Chapter Five thus relates the DC's centrist economics both to its inter-relationship with the other parties in the party system, and to the changing relationship between the parties and society at large.

Chapter Six focuses on the trend towards the development of a two-block party system, based on the DC and PCI, between 1968 and 1979. This development reasserted the importance of the political parties and the structure of the party system since a 'normalised' two-block structure leading to alternation would also have brought wide-ranging social changes in its wake. In the event, what is shown to have survived is the peculiar hybrid structure of the Italian party system, resulting from its suspension between a not-quite realised two-block structure and an increasingly out-of-equilibrium three block system.

The inability of the PCI successfully to play the role required to bring about a two-block structuration of the party system is shown, in Chapter Seven, to have provided the grounds for Craxi's protagonism, rooted in the position and strength of the PSI. The 1980s are shown as a decade in which the declining relevance of left and right, as hitherto understood and organised, affected Italy no less than the rest of Europe, so that a tendency to unipolarism, or the presence of a single block was present, in which parties were apparently willing to 'play the field' in seeking electoral advantage. At the same time, given that in a multi-party system government-formation is almost by definition about excluding the opposition(s), the ideological positions behind block definitions were still emphasised by both the DC and the PSI. Both parties sought to exert maximum damage on their common rival, the PCI, despite the fact that circumstances, and the PCI itself, had fundamentally changed. In 1990, the division and weakness of the left was Democrazia

cristiana's winning card, enabling it to continue to be the party of government, the party of the centre, in a situation in which both left and right seemed to have been successfully marginalised.

Chapter Eight concludes the thesis by restating the major themes drawn out in the body of the thesis: the limited number of patterns of block structuring available in a party system, and the role of party strategy in determining which structure of interaction dominates; the distinction between the centre block and the party system core, and the rejection of polar terminology; the role of the party system as a 'contradictory unity' and its bearing on the 'consociational democracy theme'. Finally, the evolution of the Italian party system is reviewed, and its impact on nation- and state-building assessed.

(1) J.Chubb, 'The Christian Democratic party: reviving or surviving?', R.Leonardi & R.Nanetti (eds), Italian Politics: A Review, Vol.1, 1986, pp.69-86; J.Besson & G.Bibes, 'The Resurgence of Christian Democracy', in ibid. Volume 3, 1988, pp.92-105.

(2) See H.Daalder & P.Mair (eds), Western European Party Systems. Continuity and Change, London: Sage, 1983, esp. M.P.Pedersen, 'Changing Patterns of Electoral Volatility in European Party Systems, 1948-77: Explorations in Explanation', pp.29-66; and M.McGuire, 'Is There Still Persistence? Electoral Change in Western Europe, 1948-79', pp.67-94. Also P.Mair and G.Smith (eds), Understanding Party System Change in Western Europe, London: Frank Cass, 1990, esp. P.Mair, 'Continuity, Change and the Vulnerability of Party', pp.169-187.

(3) The most forthright work of re-evaluation to appear is J.LaPalombara's Democracy Italian Style, London: Yale, 1987, but see also P.Lange & S.Tarrow (eds), Italy in Transition. Conflict and Consensus, London: Frank Cass, 1980.

(4) M.F.Neufeld, Italy: school for awakening countries, the Italian labour movement in its political, economic and social setting, 1800-1960, New York: Ithaca, 1961.

(5) eg M.Porter, The Competitive Advantage of Nations, London: Macmillan, 1989, "Surging Italy" in Chapter 8; and F.Giavazza & L.Spaventa, 'Italy: the Real Effect of Inflation' in Economic Policy, April, 1989.

(6) The point is stressed by Sartori, see G.Sartori, Parties and Party Systems: A Framework for Analysis, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976, 43-4.

(7) A related expression, 'unity in diversity', is used by W.H.Greenleaf in his multi-volume recounting of modern British political history: The British Political Tradition, London: Methuen, 1983 on, where it refers both to individual ideological nexuses, such as socialism or liberalism, and to the overall relationship between them. See in particular, pp.9-12 and 12-14 of Volume 1, The Rise of Collectivism. Interestingly, Greenleaf is concerned to avoid the reductionism involved in the usage of the terms 'left' and 'right'.

THE ITALIAN PARTY SYSTEM

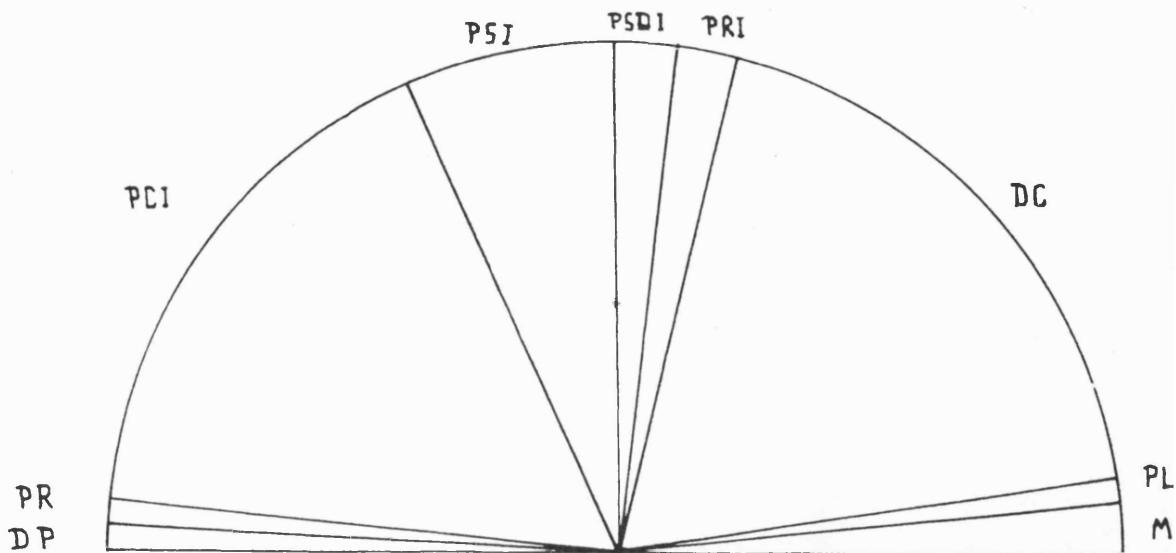
De Gasperi, the key founding figure of the Italian Christian Democrats, defined his party in 1946 as a 'centre party, moving to the left'. In Chapter Two we shall look at the precise circumstances in which De Gasperi coined this expression. Here, the importance of left/centre/right imagery in post-war Italian politics is quickly established, and some questions raised about the significance of such imagery in shaping both the organisation of government and politics, and different understandings of the nature of power. The remainder of the Chapter surveys existing theories of the DC and the party system, considers their weaknesses, and concludes by outlining a new basis for analysing the Italian party and the DC's place in it.

I LEFT, CENTRE AND RIGHT IN ITALIAN POLITICS

Writing on the Italian constitution towards the end of the 1980s, David Hine, an experienced commentator on Italian government and politics, observed that government in Italy had never been of the right/centre-right, since it had always had to co-opt the left in some way, indeed including the PCI specifically. Governments have thus been Centrist, Centre-Left or a grand coalition.¹ Writing elsewhere in the same period, Hine confirmed that this centrality of government reflected, or reinforced, the DC's own centrism, stating that the Christian Democratic Party's long-term success derived from its centre position in the party spectrum, rather than

because of any putative stability of a 'captured' electorate.² The stability of the Italian electorate is a matter of controversy, and the received orthodoxy, established in the 1960s, has been subjected to recent revision, but we shall deal with this topic later. Here we remain with the question of the DC's centrism. What is remarkable about Hine's judgments is the fact that they can be made ten to fifteen years after the clear-cut parties of the right have had any but marginal significance. The DC somehow remains a centre party, even the centre party, in a centre dominated system, when all but half the electorate, and virtually every political party is located more or less to its left. How is this kind of alignment possible?

Schematic representation of seating arrangements:
1983 Chamber of Deputies



In order to begin to answer this question it is necessary to understand the so-called coalition 'formulae' which have sustained post-war governments. These themselves need much explaining, but for the moment they will be described rather than analysed and taken as a useful starting point. These different 'government formulae' have been used to divide post-war political history into specific periods, and conventionally three periods are identified, covering the years 1947/48-1980. The period subsequent to 1980 is rather 'difficult' to classify in the same terms, for reasons which we shall explore below.

Coalition 'formulae': classic rendering

'Centrism' 1948-63)	Government parties: PLI, DC, PRI PSDI
	>	Excluded - right: MSI & Monarchists (circa 12%)
)	- left : PSI & PCI (circa 36%)
'Centre-Left' 1968-72)	Government parties: DC, PRI, PSDI, PSI
	>	Excluded - right: MSI, Mon. & PLI (circa 13%)
)	- left : PCI, PSIUP (circa 32%)
'Historic Compromise' 1976)	Government parties: DC, PRI, PSDI, PSI, PLI, PCI
	>	Excluded - right: MSI (circa 6%)
)	- left: Radicals, DP (circa 3%)

Notes: Dates are approximate and refer to election data used to indicate electoral support for the excluded left and right. The term Government parties is rather loose, referring, for the Historic Compromise formula, at least, to the legislative coalition rather than inclusion in the cabinet.

The terminology of these so-called government formulae, ie Centre and Centre-Left pervades Italian popular culture, and this periodisation of post-war Italian political history is quite standard. Its starting-point is the break of the post-war grand coalition, based on the three mass parties,

the DC, PCI and PSI, and the formation of a series of governments based on the Christian Democratic Party, and the three minor parties: the Liberals, Social Democrats and Republicans. This so-called Centrist formula excluded the Monarchists and neo-Fascist MSI on the right, and the Socialists and Communists on the left. In the early 1960s, the Liberals were swapped for the Socialists, giving rise to the Centre-Left. On the basis of this periodisation, Aldo Moro, Italy's leading political figure in the 1960s and '70s, dubbed the period that began in, or around, 1976 as the 'third phase'. The exact significance this term had for Moro can never be known, for he was assassinated in 1978, but it clearly indicated that for him the old coalition formulae were no longer adequate.

Clearly too, the expression coincided with the so-called Historic Compromise when the PCI all but entered the government, and from 1976 the key political question was whether a grand coalition would be formed, and whether this would be but a stepping stone (as it had been in West Germany between 1966-69) to a new coalition formula based on the exclusion of the DC. In fact, talk of a grand coalition invoked memories of the pre-1947/48 period, suggesting that the post-Centre-Left phase was not a third phase at all, but a fourth. With Moro's death and the end of the Historic Compromise a new period can be considered to have started, thus giving us five basic governmental formulae with which to sum up post-war Italian political history (see over).

The pentapartito (five party [government]) formula contained the four parties of the Centre-Left and the Liber-

Amended Post-War Coalition Formulae

1. Grand Coalition: based on the CLN^A, 1943-47/48
2. Centrism: exclusion of 'extremes', 1947/8-63
3. Centre-Left: PSI replaces PLI, 1964-76
4. Historic Compromise: unstable stop-gap, 1976-79
5. Pentapartito: Govt. from PSI to PLI, 1979-?

als. As the PLI had shifted its image, in the late 1970s, away from being a tough right-of-centre party, there was a tendency for the new coalition to be seen as a revamped Centre-Left. Both because both the MSI and the PCI remain excluded from government and because those parties remain identified with the Fascist 'Right' and the Leninist/Stalinist 'Left', the DC continues to claim to be a centre party, or even, in tune with the coalition formula, a party of the centre-left, as opportune. Naturally, the DC's opponents deny that it is either centre-left or centre, but this argument has been around for as long as the party system, and is the central feature of this inquiry.

What has been established here is simply the pervasiveness of left/centre/right terminology in Italian political culture and the linkage with coalition formulae. If we are to avoid going around in circles, however, it is essential to delve more deeply into the relationship between the nature of

A. Committee for National Liberation. This was the umbrella organisation which brought together the anti-Fascist parties. It included the three mass parties and brought together the three major political traditions: socialist, catholic and liberal. Its importance is much stressed in Chapter Two.

the DC itself and its success in maintaining the structure of the party system, ie its vestigial three-block division.

II POWER AND POLITICAL BLOCKS

A key to better understanding the nature of the relationship between the DC and the party system lies in questioning the significance of the absence of government alternation. Elsewhere, such alternation is a visible indicator of change in the balance of political power, even where, as in the Netherlands, a significant centre block is always in government. Does the absence of alternation in Italy mean there has been no change in the balance of political power for nearly half a century? The changing coalition formulae indicate some movement, yet overall, it is continuity, rather than change, which is striking. The DC has always been in government, and always been dominant. If a 'balance of power' has obtained, what has been the nature of DC power, of Christian Democratic Party government? Let us first ask what the expression balance of power means.

A. Two Concepts of Power

There are two ways of understanding what constitutes a balance of power, each with different implications for the way we think about government and political competition, for each of the two approaches involves a different understanding of the meaning of left, right and centre. Most importantly, they form the bases for different renderings of the concept of 'polarisation', of the nature of differentiation between

blocks, and of government/opposition relations.

In the first approach, the balance of power in a three-block situation is a 'balance of exclusion' where each block is sovereign and autonomous, distinguished from the others by irreconcilable antagonisms. The blocks are locked in combat and it is essentially fortuitous that the relative sizes of the blocks creates a situation where the strength of the centre block allows it to exclude the other two from power.

The alternative approach concedes that government/opposition relations are a battle for power, but sees the battle as one in which a mutually beneficent (positive-sum) game is played by the blocks. In this version the blocks cannot be rigidly separated from one another, nor assumed to interact solely according to a zero-sum logic. Thus, the balance of power means that the centre block executes policies which left and/or right will find preferable to possible alternatives. In some sense, there is common ground between the blocks, with left and right involved in determining what the centre block actually does. Block interaction is not a naked power struggle, a zero-sum game which risks becoming a negative-sum game in which everyone loses. Such a situation would approach the 'anti-politics'³ of civil war. The question of how close post-war Italy has been to civil war or to military involvement in politics is one we shall address in considering the creation and maintenance of Italy's multi-party system.

B. Blocks and 'Polarisation'

In raising the topic of the collapse of constitutional

politics we must address the concept of 'polarisation', that is the problem of extreme political attitudes and their effect on political behaviour. As we shall see in discussing Catholic integralism in Chapter Two, all three blocks in Italy have been accused of being quasi-totalitarian, and the first model of power reflects such judgments. It is this model on which Sartori relies when using his key concept, 'polarisation'. Combined with a unilinear model of political space, where left, centre and right are distinct 'poles' strung out in a line, the concept gives rise to two problems.

First, in such a model only the wing 'poles' of the spectrum can be extreme. This prevents consideration of the effect of all three blocks regarding the others as quasi-totalitarian, given the presence in all of elements bent on the defeat, domination and exclusion of the other blocks. Secondly, and contrarily to the first point, the linear tripolar scheme prevents consideration of the possibility that the three blocks have much that is positive in common. These rather difficult ideas are explained in much greater depth in Section V of this chapter where different ways of theorising the centre are discussed.

C. Block Interaction and Block Structure

The importance of distinguishing the two approaches to understanding power for our understanding of the nature of conflict and cooperation can be seen if we make some preliminary points about block interaction and block structure in Italy, particularly regarding the DC/PCI relationship. It is extremely doubtful that the DC was an anti-worker party which

totally rejected the left, just as it is highly dubious to see the left as an uncompromising opposition block. For all the antagonism, the evidence is surely such that a more complex picture is needed in which cooperation is able to fully enter the relationship, even whilst acknowledging a degree of truth in the argument that such cooperation may be intended for ends which are ultimately non- or anti-democratic. The significance of cross-block cooperation goes beyond this consideration. For one thing, the fact that the Communist leadership was a remarkably conservative force in the 1940s, compared with the Socialists (and Actionists), cannot be written off with such a limited explanation. On the other, the Christian Democratic Party's struggle to promote its identification with the left, in preference to the right, has been sustained: from anti-Fascist solidarity in the period 1944-47, through the 'opening to the left' in 1963, to competition with the Socialist Party in the 1980s as a 'popular', anti-conservative and even 'social democratic' party. Even the rejection of the left during the one phase, centrism (1947-63), allowed the DC to defeat and isolate the right too, as was clear from 1953.

Given these complexities, we need to know why three blocks were formed in the period 1946-53 instead of two, and how the block 'managers', the political elites, understood this development. Contrary to Sartori's stress on ideological polarisation, the simple fact of the number of blocks in the Italian party system is the fundamental starting point of this analysis. Usually we think in terms of there being a left/right dualism, ie two blocks representing left and

right, so why did three develop in Italy? To avoid a circular argument, we must avoid taking the post 1947/48 situation, especially 'polarisation', as its own cause, for then neither the successful establishment of a parliamentary democracy nor the long-term tendency towards the development of a one-block party system can be grasped - as Sartori's own difficulty in seeing this development makes clear.

D. Block Differentiation: Ideology as Policy and/or Image

It can be argued that, constrained by the 'realities of power', democratic parties differ little from each other once in power.⁴ As against this argument, much ink has been spilt in the political sciences in the attempt to show that 'parties matter' in the Lipsetian sense of translating the class struggle into democratic politics.⁵ By the end of the 1980s, and starkly contrasting Sartori's emphasis on polarisation, the tendency towards the development of a single political block in Italy was so advanced that even there the policy versus politics debate was well under way,⁶ the question asked, whether parties did influence policy-making in a consistently ideological, or class-based way.

Were it applicable to Italy, the extreme form of this argument would reverse the view that three sovereign and distinct political blocks have sought to gain power in post-war Italy in order to put totally opposed policies into practice. It would argue, instead, that three vociferous teams of politicians have competed to be allowed the right of exclusively managing the same state with substantially the same policies. In its extreme form this argument is obvious-

ly unsustainable, but it is a useful to bear it in mind as an antidote to dwelling on a class-ideological view of the motivation of political elites. As 'ideal types', the two models can be taken as indicating the need to distinguish between: one, the extent to which political parties in Italy have been ideologically distinct in terms of elite policy-intentions, and two, the extent to which parties have been ideologically distinct in order to maintain electoral/mobilisational images.

An important question here is how flexible the DC's democratic ideology has been, given the party's ability to permit seemingly non-feasible, if limited, forms of cooperation with other parties whilst simultaneously maintaining rigidly distinct from them. Typically, ideological incompatibility has been punctiliously delineated precisely at times when policy convergence has been pursued. The drawing of a sharp distinction between party elites (or at least their dominant elements),⁷ and their militant bases and different electorates, traditional and potential, is a matter of great importance in examining block interaction.

E. The Government/Opposition Relationship and Political Leadership

In addressing the issue of inter-block relations, it should not be forgotten that what is at stake is access to governmental power and exclusion from it. Nevertheless, the question has to be asked, as to what extent oppositions are involved in governmental policy-making, not only in direct decision-making processes, but also indirectly. Indirect participation can be seen as operating in two forms. On the

one hand, there is the government's desire to avoid provoking or exacerbating tensions; on the other, there is the opposition's tendency to give some sort of support to measures which are seen to favour the interests of its own supporters, or the collective interest of the polity.

If government/opposition interaction is at all significant where government is provided by the operation of a multi-party system, a question is raised about the nature of political domination, or leadership in such systems. In a situation of interactive, multi-party competition, leadership is provided by the elites yet arises from horizontal interaction between the elites and vertical interaction between elites and society. What, then, is the position of the PCI elite? Its relationship with its mass base is one of leadership, but the relationship is one which the other party elites may influence. At the same time, the PCI's position within the elite level is clearly inferior to that of the governing block, yet it is not without influence. This complex situation suggests that there is neither DC 'hegemony' nor, surely, the equal leadership of a consensual and unified cross-party political class.

It is time to consider some of the existing interpretations of the Italian party system.

II EXISTING THEORIES OF THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY AND THE ITALIAN PARTY SYSTEM

Some of the best-known theories of Italian politics have focused on the structure of the party system and the nature of the parties in it. Thus, Giovanni Sartori developed

a model of 'polarised pluralism' in which he characterised the DC as a centre party in a tripolar system. In this system, the centre furnishes the country with its government, and that government is confronted by 'bipolar opposition', ie opposition on both left and right. By contrast, Giorgio Galli presented a model in which the DC is essentially a party of the centre-right, not so different from the West German Christian Democratic Union or the British Conservative Party. Galli stuck closer to the more traditional two-block model of party system structuring, based on the simple countering of left and right to each other as two blocks. Competition between the two major parties, the PCI and the DC, dominated the system, but the domination of the left block by the Communists, and the consequent inability to establish a 'normal' process of political alternation between left and right meant that the system was 'blocked'. The system was described as one of 'imperfect bipartism'.

Both Sartori's and Galli's models date from the 1960s, but in the late 1970s Paolo Farneti gave them new currency. In a comprehensive work he produced a synthesis of the two theories and updated them historically to produce a model of 'centripetal pluralism'. These models are examined in some detail in this section, along with the critique of party system based approaches by Alessandro Pizzorno. Evaluation is suspended until Section IV, whilst Section V suggests a way of combining the best of all these theories.

A. Sartori: the Mechanics of Centre Placement

Sartori's theory supports the DC's own evaluation of

itself.⁸ The Christian Democratic Party is a centre party, but Sartori ties this evaluation not to the party's ideology and/or practice, so much as to the structure of the party system itself. The party system is 'tripolar', left, right and centre each being a 'pole' of attraction for votes, and the centre pole is dominated by the DC. Since the centre governs, there is a situation of 'bilateral opposition', and since the parties of the left and right poles will not cooperate to form an alternative government, the centre (essentially the DC) is 'doomed' to govern.

This situation might be thought of as intrinsically unstable since the centre block needs fifty per cent of parliamentary seats, plus one, to survive, and it is outnumbered two to one by the opposition blocks whose ability to gain deputies is not hindered by a remarkably proportional electoral system. The government coalition thus competes without special constitutional favour in a situation where the oppositions are, as Sartori's polar imagery has it, (magnetically) attractive. The growth of just one oppositional pole, let alone of both, is likely to have catastrophic consequences for the party system. Moreover, because the oppositional 'wing' poles are extremes, the collapse of the tripolar system will plunge the entire democratic political system into chaos. The potential for distinction between catastrophic change of the party system and of the political system is lost in Sartori's model for the poles are not merely competitive, but virulently so, and this virulence is a self-maintaining feature of the system, qua system. The 'occupation of the centre' by the DC renders moderate

centre-left and centre-right stances unattractive, for these positions can and will be outbid by more extreme parties. Voters and activists in these positions will be forced to choose between the centre or the extreme oppositions. Evidence of this development in Italy was the long-term growth of the PCI, at the expense of the PSI, on the left, and on the other flank, instances like the surge of votes for the right in 1953, and the collapse of the Monarchists into the arms of the MSI in the early 1970s. Sartori insisted that so long as the 'tripolar' structure was maintained the imbalance between the size of the left and of the right was unimportant. The existence of even a small right, as surely it was from 1976, signalled the maintenance of ideological polarisation and, consequently, tripolar competition.

A major criticism of Sartori's model has been that it emphasised 'centrifugal' tendencies, the emptying of the centre as voters were attracted to radical alternatives, implying system collapse. As the original model was applied to Weimar Germany, the Fourth French Republic and Chile, as well as Italy, the model encouraged such extrapolation. However, confronted by the survival of the Italian system, Sartori insisted that there was no reason why the powerful centrifugal drives undoubtedly present should necessarily triumph over centripetal ones. Ultimately, no system, whatever the strength of its structural drives, could determine political behaviour. Which political drive dominated any polity was open-ended, a matter more for historical determination than the application of pseudo-scientific political laws. Nevertheless, far from stressing the time-bound nature

of his model, Sartori suggested that in Italy the mechanics of the system had resulted in a tripolar structuring of the electorate which was self-stabilising, severely limiting the power of initiative of the political elites. In this situation of 'stabilised polarised pluralism'⁹ the centre pole is maintained through desperation, with the alternatives remaining unacceptable because the electorates of the extreme poles discourage centripetal behaviour by their elites. The abandonment of the Historic Compromise by the Communists in 1979 was cited by Sartori as strong evidence that long after it had been developed his model continued to explain the reality.

Sartori's work as a political scientist has been strongly tied to a methodological emphasis on the autonomy of the political and a rejection of the 'sociologisation of politics'.¹⁰ In drawing attention to the importance of party interactions and the expressly political sphere Sartori made a major contribution to restating the importance of political phenomena as causes, not mere effects, of social phenomena. The idea that the structure of the party system can shape the 'underlying' contours of the electorate is extremely significant, as is his stress on the autonomy of the political elite(s), and the limitations on that autonomy. In Section IV, however, we shall draw attention to the limitations, prefigured in the discussion of 'polarisation', of Sartori's model.

B. Galli and the Dualist Model of Politics

Sartori's model, so congenial to the Christian Demo-

crats, particularly in its portrayal of the Communist Party (like the MSI) as an 'anti-system party', was directly confronted by Galli's model of 'imperfect bipartism'.¹¹ In Galli's model, the DC and the PCI were the two parties that mattered, the true core of the system. Each one a mass party with deep cultural roots penetrating and organising the electorate, they confronted each other in an essentially bipolar system, just as the CDU-CSU and SPD confronted each other in Germany. Party conflict in Italy, as elsewhere in Western Europe, was essentially a battle between left and right. In saying this, Galli made Italy less of a 'special case', for though centre parties, and even blocks, existed in other countries, left/right competition, and alternation, were taken as 'normal'. Galli's model thus tended to confirm Duverger's dictum that 'the centre does not exist in politics', that 'dualism' is natural, and that a tendency towards the 'two-party system' is equally natural.¹² Although Duverger's dualism has been criticised, the enduring pervasiveness of left/right structuring has been amply confirmed, for Western Europe at least,¹³ and similarly the relevance of the two-block structure.¹⁴

In Galli's model, the imbalance between what Sartori called the left and right poles was of fundamental importance. Sartori's (extreme) right pole was insignificant. The Monarchists and the nostalgic neo-Fascist Missini were both doomed to fade away, and the PLI, to the extent that it belonged on the right rather than the centre, was of marginal also importance. It would certainly not prevent the DC's centre-right, catch-all nature from becoming progressively

more obvious, just as the centre-left catch-all nature of the Communist Party would become manifest.

Galli's model has clear merits. It stressed the conflict between the DC and the PCI to be fundamental, and on this basis correctly indicated the long-term decline of the so-called right block. It also offered an opportunity for a more subtle, more realistic appraisal of the Communist Party as a party whose dominant elites were firmly 'in-system', even if many of its militants and much of its electorate were not, so that a potential electorate (for a reformist social democratic party) was alienated. Today, we can suggest that the Communist Party in Italy bears comparison less with the post-war Communist Parties of Eastern Europe than with the Fianna Fail of 1920s Ireland. In the latter situation, Fianna Fail, after a brief but bitter civil war - something which the collaboration of the PCI with the other parties helped to avoid in Italy - had first refused to enter the parliament, then entered it with its leaders declaring the oath of allegiance to be but an 'empty formality'. This stance made the party, as those same leaders themselves admitted, only a 'slightly constitutional' party.¹⁵

C. Farneti's Synthesis and 'Democraticity'

The two models presented by Sartori and Galli offered radically different pictures of the Christian Democratic and Communist Parties, and their contemporary political significance should not be forgotten. Neither model operated in a vacuum. The concepts associated with each were part of an intensely political debate which operated between the parties

and within the parties. They were 'operative concepts'¹⁶ which affected political development and which contributed to the evolution of the parties and the party system. It is this material rootedness of the two models which makes them complementary, despite their polemical academic and political relationship with one another.¹⁷ This antagonistic complementarity was explored in a major work of synthesis by Paolo Farneti.

Farneti argued that both Sartori's and Galli's models captured an essential part of the reality of Italian politics. The Christian Democratic Party was both a centre party and the core party of a centre-right block. Sometimes the one identity was more important, sometimes the other, but which, at any specific moment, was a matter of political contingency.¹⁸

Thus a right/centre-right alignment could be identified which ran from the MSI through the Monarchists (so long as they existed) to the PLI, the DC, the PRI, and possibly the PSDI. This confronted a left/centre-left alignment comprising the PCI, PSI and perhaps the PSDI. This dualistic ordering of alignments never succeeded in establishing its dominance, a fact which constituted a major failure of strategy on the part of the left. Rather, the DC had succeeded in maintaining the tripolar division, or organisation, of the party system, defeating successive attempts to establish a bipolar structure. Nevertheless, the repeated assaults of the left, and the identification of the DC substantially with the right, meant that in the long run the decisive establishment of a bipolar system became more likely as the extreme

right block faded into insignificance. Witnessing the failure of the PCI to achieve this bipolar structure at the end of the 1970s and the PSI's new aggressiveness, with Bettino Craxi the Socialist leader seeking to establish himself as the champion of the so-called 'lay-socialist area' (the Socialists, plus the PSDI, PRI and newly transformed PLI), Farneti argued that the tripolar structure could survive, but with a radically different content at the level of individual parties. A 'reshuffling' of the multi-party pack could see the Socialists displacing the DC as the dominant centre party, taking votes from left and right and perhaps expelling the DC to the right.

Farneti's emphasis on the importance of the political centre was such that he even spoke of **unipolarism**, or a drift towards a single central pole, in contrast to his synthesis of Sartori and Galli which focused on the battle between tripolarism and bipolarism. Farneti thus argued that whilst the centrifugal dynamic had dominated up until 1961, validating Sartori's model of 'polarised pluralism' for that early period, the subsequent domination of the centripetal dynamic meant that 'polarised pluralism' had given way to 'centripetal pluralism'. Here, Farneti's work was at one with the 'end of ideology' thesis of the late 1950s, early 1960s; so Farneti, like Galli, was chipping away at the idiosyncrasy of the 'Italian case'. More specifically, Farneti's analysis confirmed that the Italian electorate, Communist included, was subject to the same forces which produced what Otto Kirchheimer had called the 'waning of opposition',¹⁹ meaning its deradicalisation, rather than its quantitative decline.

The PCI's difficulties in regaining governmental status in the 1970s could thus be seen as stemming less from the nature of the PCI itself, and more from the self-interest and attitudes of the Christian Democratic Party. What Farneti says about centripetalism and unipolarism is clearly of importance for the debate about 'depolarisation' in Italy, but as we shall see, in Sections IV and V, terms such as polarisation and delegitimisation, both used and popularised by Sartori, are misleading, and best avoided.

Farneti made an additional general argument about the 'democraticity' of Italy's post-war coalitional/governmental history, that is to say, the responsiveness of government to the electorate. He argued that two sets of dynamic interactions, that between the party elites and their militants and electorates, and that between party elites, were responsible for the general orientation of government policies, and for the evolution of those policies over time. Thus, the centrist orientation of governmental coalitions, and the gentle oscillation about that centre coincided with the desires of the electorate considered as a whole. There was in some sense, then, democratic control over government. Farneti does not dwell on this point, but the ability of extreme multi-party systems to provide responsible party government has been argued in other studies, reversing an earlier orthodoxy according to which two-party systems were superior, and even a precondition for such responsiveness.²⁰ An appraisal of the achievements of party government in Italy specifically, by Gianfranco Pasquino, supports this argument, whilst remaining highly critical of the dysfunctions also present in

the operation of the party system.²¹ This indication of the party system as capable of establishing some sort of national interest is very important. The question is, was it only 'centripetal' pluralism which generated this possibility, for if not, the distinction between the two may be less important than Farneti implies. Farneti describes 'centripetal pluralism', operative from 1965, as having provided the 'functional alternative of that agreement of fundamentals that a well-developed process of state and nation-building has engendered in much of Western Europe and elsewhere'.²² Section V of this chapter asks whether party system interaction prior to 1965 did not also lay the bases for such state and nation-building.

D. Pizzorno's Critique and the Catch-All Party System

Unlike the three previous authors, who are political scientists, Alessandro Pizzorno is a social theorist, and Pizzorno challenged the prioritising of the political sphere, arguing that this led to the over-emphasis of cleavage and fragmentation to the detriment of an appreciation of the dimension of state/national unity.²³ The stress on cleavage, and above all ideological cleavage, has justifiably been argued to be common to all models of interpretation devoted to the party system,²⁴ and Pizzorno's counter-argument is highly germane to the intention of the thesis to examine the party system as a contradictory unity.

Pizzorno stresses the unity of the social whole at both the elite and the mass level, with the elites playing a crucial integrative role. At the elite level he stresses the

existence of political exchange between the parties, a phenomenon which counters the domination of cleavage and antagonistic confrontation. This is a controversial area, but it coincides with Hine's discussion of the nature of the Italian constitution which pointed to the absence of right/centre-right government, and with Farneti's opinion that the shifting coalition formulae reflected developments in the expression of the national interest. A sort of political 'cogestion' has been confirmed in a number of other ways, the most significant of which is perhaps Sidney Tarrow's examination of centre-periphery relations which, contrary to expectation, tentatively concludes that that government largess commonly associated with clientelism and the corrupt nature of the DC's relationship with large parts of its electorate may have flowed more strongly to 'Red' areas than 'White'.²⁵

Pizzorno also stresses the integrative role of the elites, both as a governmental, and as a politico-electoral, force. As regards the governmental contribution, Pizzorno emphasises both the importance of national-strategic government decisions, particularly those relating to Italy's insertion in the post-war international economy, and the expansion of the public sector of the economy. The government acquired legitimacy on an individualistic basis by supporting small-scale enterprise in industry, commerce and agriculture and through the encouragement of individual consumption based on economic growth, and though Pizzorno descried the atomisation of society and the destruction of collective organisation and mobilisation according to coherent politico-economic strategies (since this created problems by virtue of the consequent

disorganisation of the political sphere) he recognised the efficacy of these actions for engendering regime consensus in difficult circumstances. As for the politico-electoral aspect of elite-led integration, the role of the parties in providing political leadership and organising the population on a political/electoral basis in an apparently stable and disciplined fashion, is seen by Pizzorno as integrative of the population, notwithstanding the acknowledged and lamented tendency to political disorganisation and fragmentation. Indeed, rather as Kirchheimer lamented the apparent waning of principled opposition associated with the rise of the more or less 'deideologised' catch-all parties, Pizzorno can be paraphrased, as objecting to the development of a 'catch-all party system' in which political dissent was smothered by the partitocrazia, the 'rule of parties'.²⁶ In fact, the key works by Pizzorno relating to this theme were written in the late 1960s and early 1970s when this suffocating leadership was being dramatically challenged.²⁷

E. Summary

The pervasiveness of an awareness of the terms left, right and centre and the importance of the organisation of society into political blocks has been indicated. The different way block interactions, and hence government/opposition interaction can be understood has been briefly examined, raising a question about the nature of leadership in multi-party states, prior to a consideration of how the key ideas of left and right have been used by social scientists analysing Italian politics. A contrast has been drawn between

the approach of the political scientist and that of the social theorist, with the difference lying in the relative weighting of cleavage and of unity within each.

The problem identified by this thesis is the difficulty of adequately theorising the relationship between conflict and cooperation in the Italian party system. If the Italian polity is to be understood as a 'contradictory unity' it has to be conceded that as a 'unity' it has indeed been highly 'contradictory'. What has to be done is to establish how the insights of Sartori, Galli and Farneti on the one hand, and Pizzorno on the other, can be appreciated as complementary. In order to do this I intend, rather briefly, reexamine critically the work of these four theorists, laying the basis for a new synthesis to be presented in Section V.

IV THE PROBLEMS OF THE EXISTING MODELS

A. Sartori: Problems of Legitimacy and Electoral Volatility

Sartori's model is starkly drawn. Its beauty is its simplicity: the identification of three ideologically and constitutionally incompatible blocs where the centre governs by excluding the 'anti-system' extremes. The equilibrium state (stabilised polarised pluralism) is a 'balance of exclusion' in which three forces confront each other as autonomous sovereigns (modern princes?) in a game of zero-sum politics.

This model certainly captures the ability of the DC elite to avoid the party being transformed into a 'normal' centre-right party despite significant and repeated pressures

in this direction. These were particularly strong in the early 1950s and in the late 1950s and early 1960s - the two crises of Centrism; in the late 1960s early 1970s crisis of the Centre-Left; and in the late 1970s/1980s generalised crisis of the partitocrazia. Sartori's model does not satisfactorily explain the behaviour of the left elites, and its depiction of electoral behaviour is over-simplified as a result of its lack of even-handedness: it identifies the 'extremes' as 'delegitimising', and little else, and the extremes alone as delegitimising. It is unable to grasp either the constructive role played by the Communist Party (and in particular the fact that it played a centrist, as opposed to extremist, role at critical moments when the PSI, largely 'rehabilitated' as a 'legitimate' party in Sartori's model, habitually did just the opposite), or the delegitimising role of the main party of government. One only has to look at the regime parties of Eastern Europe to see how governing parties can delegitimise themselves quite adequately, without an opposition to accomplish it for them.²⁸

Consequently, in looking at the electoral level, one must ask to what extent it is true that the DC and PCI do not, as is commonly held, compete. The model of immobile electorates locked into sub-cultural voting patterns as portrayed by Galli & Prandi²⁹ and by Barnes³⁰ has been under challenge since the 1980s (though it remains a strong element of the conventional wisdom).³¹ Summarising these recent developments in psephological analysis, Percy Allum and Renato Mannheimer³² wrote that the stable parliamentary representation of the post-war period 'was based on electoral

fluidity and not stability ..'. They also pointed to the element of hitherto ignored cross-block volatility which modern reinterpretation of the evidence now suggest might have been particularly high in the 1950s - precisely when, given the Cold War polarisation of the period, the very opposite would be consistent with the model of rigid ideological division. Such volatility seriously undermines Sartori's argument. Apparently the DC has absorbed much of a rightist electoral block, transforming it, to an extent, into a component of a centrist block, whilst simultaneously competing on the left in order to prevent its more progressive electorate 'jumping ship' to the left block to which it was attracted. So much for rigid demarcations between blocks.

B. Galli. Left/Right Conflict: normal but difficult

Galli's model is correct in emphasising the normality of politics in Italy in the sense that left/right competition is as dominant in Italy as elsewhere in liberal democracies. Nevertheless, the abstract two-block model is difficult to apply successfully, largely because a significant part of the Italian political elite was consciously seeking to reject such a dichotomisation of Italian politics.

The question of the relationship between the elites and the electoral masses is the key to understanding this problem. The dominant party elites have been concerned to moderate the behaviour of their less tolerant followers. Thus, Farneti has described the DC and PCI as NOT merely having been transformed, by a process of 'parliamentarisation' from parties founded on anti-democratic catholic and Leninist

bases³³ to democratically-based parties, but as parties in which core elites actively pursued the 'parliamentarisation' of the political extremes. Thus, political struggle in post-war Italy should be seen as taking place not only in a horizontal, left/right frame, but also in a vertical elite/mass frame. It is neglect of this second dimension, which leads Galli to overemphasise the 'normality', in comparative perspective, of the Christian Democratic Party as a centre-right party. Its strenuous opposition to becoming such a party can be traced back not only to ideological features such as an anti-capitalism which distinguishes it from the West German CDU or British Conservative Party), but also to its desire to secure the dominance of the reformist catholic, liberal and socialist traditions in order to prevent the polarisation of the electorate into juxtaposed political blocks. Nor was the PCI entirely external to the development of reformist perspectives, either in fact or in the strategic considerations of key Christian Democratic elites.

Looking at the Italian polity as a whole, we can see the DC as standing at the centre of two sets of conflicting sociopolitical dynamics, each set of which is itself embattled. On the one hand, the Christian Democratic Party has been concerned to promote the horizontal integration of the political class in order to prevent that disintegration towards which Sartori's model of 'polarised pluralism' points, yet such integration has threatened both its commanding political position and the rigidly 'tripolar' structure of the party system, and with it, coalitional and governmen-

tal norms; on the other, it has been concerned to consolidate vertical integration. Clearly, for the DC itself, electoral support and a solid rooting of the party in society was essential to its survival, but the party sought more than this. The vertical integration of society through the party system as a whole, and the PCI in particular, was seen as crucial, for the leadership and social discipline which the Communists were able to exercise was invaluable.

C. Farneti: Consensus and the Non-Existent Party System

Farneti's argument that the DC pursued a strategy aimed at establishing and then maintaining a tripolar dynamic whilst the left sought to establish a bipolar dynamic, yet repeatedly surrendered to the dominant strategy, is a brilliant validation of the central arguments of both Sartori and Galli. He is, however, mistaken to argue that a party system in the proper sense of the word only began to form with the emergence of 'centripetal pluralism' and approached realisation with the Historic Compromise. Certainly important changes took place both in the early 1960s and in the late '70s, but a party system was operative from 1948, and in its elite components from 1943/44.

Subsequent to Farneti's death in 1980, the argument of the 'non-existent' party system was taken up by Mauro Calise. He extended it by indicating the dramatic break-up of the Historic Compromise as signalling the failure of the tendency towards establishing a national party system and a national political culture.³⁴ Behind Farneti's concern with the building of a national party system lies a concern with the

absence of consensus in Italy. We have seen that he saw 'centripetal pluralism' as a functional alternative for consensus in Italy, but we must ask if consensus really is necessary for the operation of a party system and/or of political leadership. The reason for looking at Pizzorno's critique of the party system approach was precisely his emphasis on unity as a missing dimension in it, and it is interesting to note that even Farneti essentially ignored the period of political unity prior to 1947/48. That Sartori pays little attention to this period is not surprising, for he is keen to write off any co-operation as no more than a combination of insincere political cunning and enforced (and therefore irrelevant) necessity. But Farneti's attitude to the Communist Party is far less polemical, and his interest in the unity of an interactive system is emphasised by his concluding sketch of a tendency to 'unipolarism'.

D. Pizzorno: Unity and Dissensus

Pizzorno stressed unity against division and fragmentation, but he hardly thought that Italy was marked by political consensus. The concept of the 'catch-all party system', with its stress on elite collusion is an important corrective, particularly to Sartori's model, but it grossly underestimates the extent to which the party system elites, or political class, are and have been competitive, indeed, antagonistic. The sort of attack that was made on the PCI by the Radicals in the 1970s, accusing it of being a conservative component of a conservative structure (the *partitocrazia*) fits this thesis well, but on other counts is clearly

Sartori's pole-based terminology.

Sartori refers to party systems as bipolar or tripolar, but this is misleading on three accounts. First, individual parties are 'poles of attraction', so that it is better to consider left and right (and centre where it exists) as multi-polar blocks, rather than simply as poles. Secondly, block multipolarity indicates the existence of differentiation within blocks whereby the DC could be described as centre-right compared to, say, Nenni's Socialists who joined the centre block in the 1960s. This is significant both because it is suggestive of the fact that the DC could become the major party of the right block were a two-block system to develop, and because it indicates that blocks may cohere through their juxtaposition to other blocks, rather than for reasons intrinsic to the block. This point can apply even when only two blocks exist, as with the Swedish 'bourgeois block'. Thirdly, the polar imagery evokes a vision of linearity. This is intentional on Sartori's part, but the relationship between three blocks in a party system need not be linear.³⁵ The relationship might be triangular, though in Italy two of the points of the triangle will have nothing to do with each other. More radically, Hans Daalder suggests that spatial terminology may be 'meaningless' under certain conditions,³⁶ and it is certainly extraneous to a 'pure mechanical' model of the centre, ie one which does not mix spatial and mechanical approaches.^A This brings us to the second definition of the centre.

A. For further elaboration of the ideas expressed in this section see Appendix 4.

B. The Relational Centre

The idea that the relationship between the blocks need not be conceived of as linear suggests that the centre can be understood as the outcome of the relationship which parties establish between themselves. This second definition of the centre can be called the relational centre, and in principle this centre cannot be occupied. Any attempt by a party to occupy it means that that party moves, thus displacing the centre. Of course, one or more parties may be very close to the centre, particularly if there is a condition of political consensus.

This centre exists in all working party systems, whether there is a centre block or not. It is, thus, present in the two-block system, even where the two blocks are based on a segmented society, not a homogeneous one. In other words, this centre is an outcome of the interaction between party elites rather than a preexistent point represented by a median voter. As a point, or 'nexus', of overlaps its nature and content is elite-determined.

The possibility that parties can both overlap substantially and be distinctly separated is well illustrated by the 'salience theory' of party competition. According to this theory, parties compete by championing different issues which together offer distinct and discrete political alternatives. In stressing different issues, parties compete past each other, rather than confronting each other along a single (linear) dimension.³⁷ In their application of this approach to Italy, Mastropaolo and Slater find both that the Italian

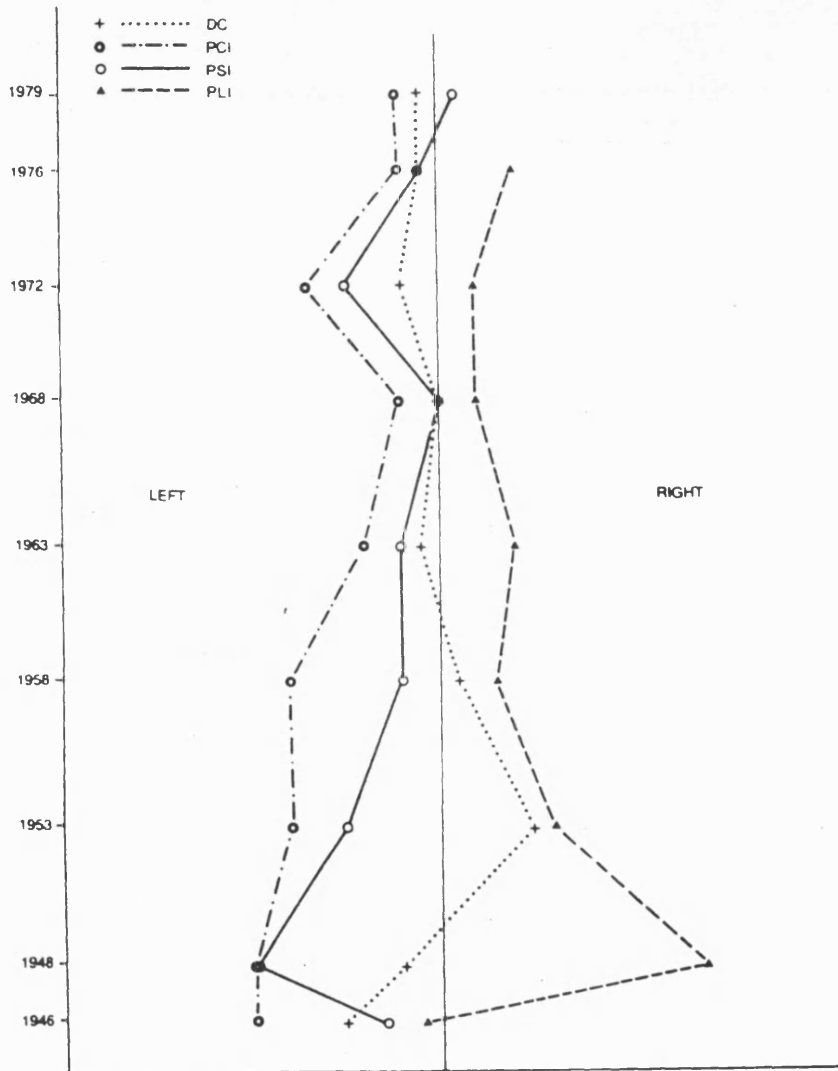
parties have been distinctive in traditional left/ right terms, and that there has been significant overlap between the DC and the PCI.^A This result leads the authors to conclude that their work has produced:³⁸

'a finding which has quite revolutionary implications for the major interpretations of the Italian party system discussed above [Sartori and Galli].'

Certainly, the discovery of common ground between parties which for Sartori are literally 'poles apart', and for Galli represent juxtaposed sub-cultures confirms the value of NOT reducing the centre to the centre block. The relational centre is the outcome of the interaction of all relevant parties in a system, and the parties of the left and right blocks have certainly been relevant. Relevant parties, can be defined as though able to participate in a political block which influences the centre. Such parties are 'core parties'. Lest this term be considered rather all-embracing, let it be said that not all parties are core parties. For example, the FPO in Austria is not a core party because it has been unable (so far) to constitute a block in its own right, or to accede to the right block with the OVP, whilst in Italy the collapse of the right block in the 1970s raises questions about the MSI's continuing status as a core party (but see the Appendix).

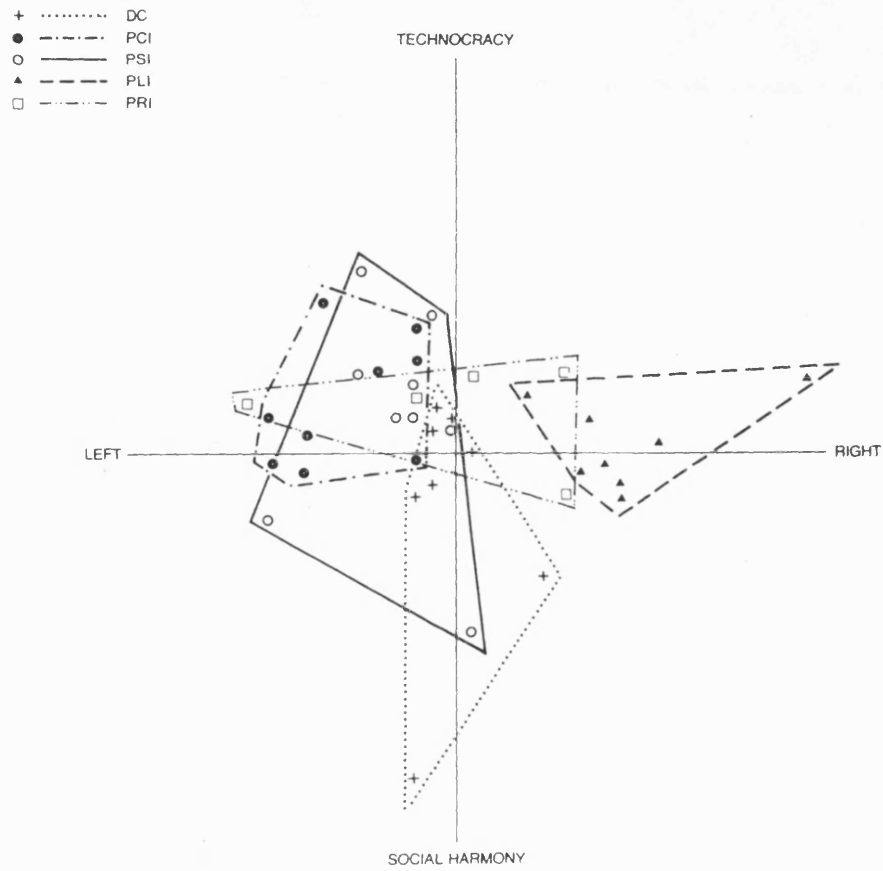
A. See pp.58-60 for reproductions of the spatial representation of their findings.

Mastropaolo & Slater: Economic Left and Right
 Distinction and Convergence



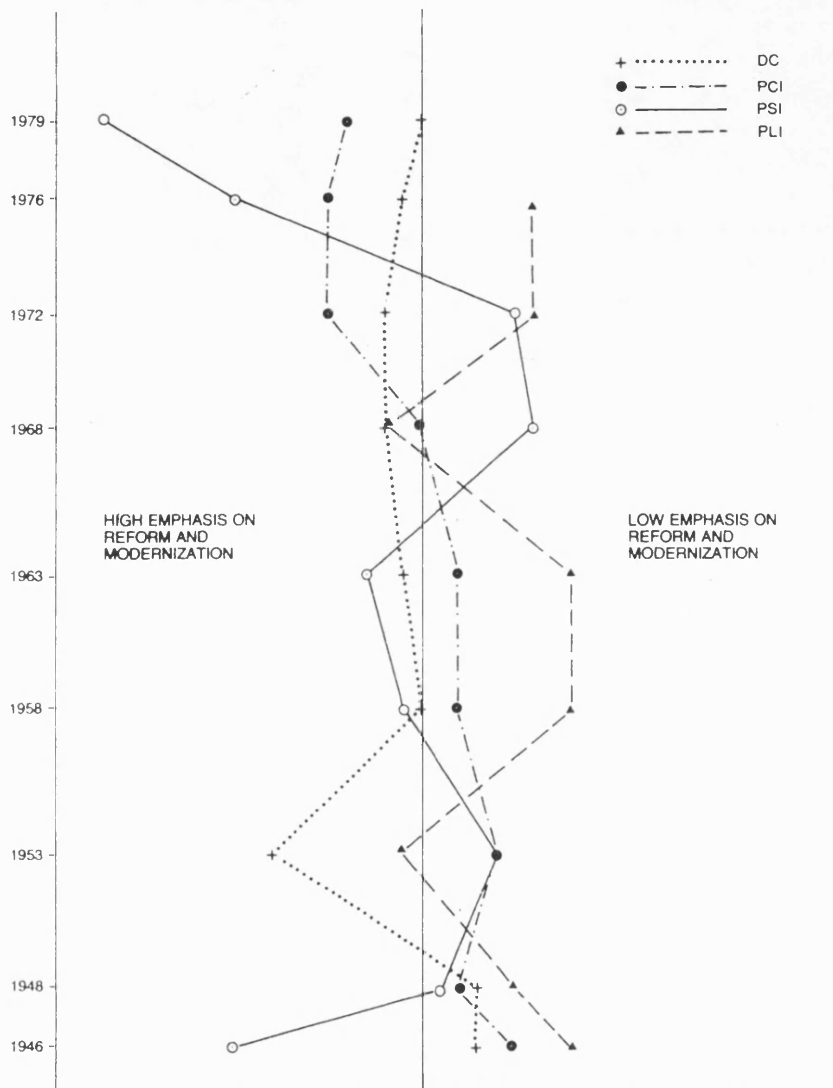
From: A.Mastropaolo and M.Slater, 'Italy, 1946-79: Ideological Distances and Party Movements' in I.Budge, D.Robertson and D.Hearl (eds), Ideology, Strategy and Party Change: Spatial Analyses of Post-war Election Programmes in 19 Democracies, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987, p.364.

Mastropaolo & Slater: DC/PCI Overlap, 1



From: *ibid.*: p.366

Mastropaolo & Slater: DC/PCI Overlap, 2



From *ibid.* p.367

C. Contradictory Unity

The relational centre and the block centre are certainly related. The party or parties of a centre block may be very near the relational centre, or simply nearer than the flank blocks, but the two concepts are conceptually distinct. Whilst the relational centre indicates what a party system has in common (and the assumption is that without this core of agreement the party system will collapse), the existence of a centre block is rooted in differentiation, and hence in conflict. The two-block system is equally clearly based on differentiation and conflict whilst the relational centre remains to confirm a degree of cooperation and consensus. Thus, party systems are contradictory unities based on cooperation and antagonism.

Even where a party system is distinguished by a high degree of depoliticisation, or consensus, so that all the parties crowd the relational centre, parties and blocks will still distinguish themselves from each other. Given Sartori's point that left and right are 'empty boxes' whose content is determined by changing circumstances it is possible that in some periods it will be rather unclear on what basis parties and blocks differentiate themselves, but in so far as left and right (and perhaps centre) maintain their identities, distinction and conflict continues.

D. Centre Domination and Nation-Building

The opposite situation to consensus would see such intense conflict that the party system would disintegrate,

and the (relational) centre^A disappear as party interaction ceased. Yet party systems can survive with a high degree of conflict, a situation that can be visualised as having the parties distant from the centre and/or as having a centre that is minimal in content.³⁹ Nevertheless, to the extent that the centre still exists, the centre can be regarded as ever-present in working party systems, and to that extent to 'dominate' where a party system is operative, or 'working'. This returns us to the question of political leadership and/or political domination in interactive multi-party systems. What dominates in such a system is no one part, or party, nor even block, but the relationship arising from the interaction of the whole.

Of course, the question of access to government means that some parts are more powerful than others in determining the location of the centre. In a perfectly balanced two-block system there will be equality if the parties alternate at regular, equal, intervals, but this is unlikely.⁴⁰ In the centre-dominant three-block system, such as exists in Italy, access to government is dominated by just one block, so that the centre is pulled strongly towards the location of the centre block. They remain distinct however, for the linkages connecting this large and diverse centre-block with the other blocks still create a centre divergent from that of the centre coalition itself.

That the centre-block and the centre are distinct, but closely related, especially where there is a tendency to

A. For the remainder of the chapter the term centre will refer to the relational centre.

consensus, can be linked to Farneti's concept of 'unipolarism' according to which the Italian parties are converging. What they are converging on is both the centre and, in the cases of the parties of the left and right blocks, the centre-block. But it is unlikely that the parties of the left and right blocks will end up as identikit copies of the centre block parties, or that all the parties will end so similar to each other as to be consonant with the centre, negating the distinction between the centre and the centre block. Despite convergence differentiation remains. Indeed, there is reason to believe that consensus gives way to new, or renewed, conflicts.

What remains to be asked is whether the convergence of the Italian parties on a centre point, or nexus, does not indicate some success on the part of Italy's political elite in a process of nation-building. Farneti suggested that the final establishment of a fully competitive party system amounted to a functional alternative to the agreement on fundamentals achieved elsewhere through state and nation-building. But is it not the case that the construction of a party system under difficult circumstances, and the laborious management of its structure and dynamics until a position is reached where agreement has moved beyond the minimal to the considerable, itself constructs an agreement on fundamentals, and is itself a contributor to the process of state and nation-building?

In Chapters Two and Three, it is argued that the building of the CLN, or Committee for National Liberation, amounted to the construction of a grand coalition at the

elite level. This, coalition, it is further argued, established the existence of a relational centre, the result of party interaction in an imperfect one-block party system. The inability to maintain this coalition threatened the centre with destruction but, it is argued, the centre was maintained, though its mode of definition transformed, through the construction of the three-block system during the first legislature (1948-53). Since the 1940s, it is thus argued, a 'political class' has existed, defined by its antagonistically cooperative management of the structure and dynamics of the party system. The 'function' of this class has been 'polity management' and its success and failure, and that of the DC, it is argued, can be judged in the light of its achievements as a state and nation-builder. The greatest demonstration of its success would be the construction, in the near future, of a successfully alternating two-block party system.

(1) D.Hine, 'Italy: Condemned by its Constitution?' in V.Bogdanor (ed), Constitutions and Democratic Politics, Aldershot: Gower, 1988, pp.206-228, pp.207-8.

(2) D.Hine, 'Italy: Parties and Party Government under Pressure', in A.Ware (ed), Political Parties. Electoral Change and Structural Response, Oxford: Blackwell, 1987, pp.72-95, p.76.

(3) See eg B.Crick, In Defence of Politics, Penguin: Harmondsworth, 1964, pp.18-21; more recently M.Laver, Invitation to Politics, Oxford: Robinson, 1983, follows Crick. A.Ball, Modern Politics and Government, London: Macmillan, 1988, pp.19-20, criticises this approach.

(4) See eg R.Rose, Do Parties Make a Difference?, London: Macmillan, 1984, especially Chapters Two and Eight.

(5) See eg F.G.Castles (ed), The Impact of Parties: Politics and Policies in Democratic Capitalist States, London: Sage, 1982; also his 'note', the reply by M.G.Schmidt, and Castles' response in European Journal of Political Research, 14:5/6, 1986, pp.669-683.

(6) See eg P.Lange and M.Regini (eds), Stato e regolazione sociale. Nuove prospettive sul caso italiano, Bologna: Il Mulino, 1987.

(7) See A.Panebianco, Modelli di partito, Bologna: Il Mulino, 1982, for an examination of the internal complexity of political parties, based on a thorough-going organisational approach.

(8) G.Sartori, 'European Political Parties: the Case of Polarised Pluralism', in G.LaPalombara & M.Weiner (eds), Political Parties and Political Development, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966, pp.137-176; Parties and Party Systems: A Framework for Analysis, Vol.1, Cambridge University Press, esp. Chapter 6.1 and 10.

(9) G.Sartori, Teoria dei Partiti e Caso Italiano, Milan: SugarCo, 1982, Chapter 11.

(10) G.Sartori, 'From the Sociology of Politics to Political Sociology', S.M.Lipset (ed), Politics and the Social Sciences, London: Oxford University Press, 1969, pp.65-100.

(11) G.Galli, Il bipartismo imperfetto, Bologna: Il Mulino, 1966.

(12) M.Duverger, Political Parties: Their Organisation and Activity in the Modern State, London: Methuen, 1964, pp.214-216, 229, 386-7.

(13) P.Mair, 'Continuity, Change and the Vulnerability of Party', in West European Politics, 12: 4, October, 1989, pp.169-187.

(14) G.Smith, Politics in Western Europe. A Comparative Analysis, 5th.edition, Aldershot: Gower, 1989, esp. pp.83-106.

(15) See P.Mair, The Changing Irish Party System. Organisation, ideology and electoral competition, London: Pinter, 1987, pp.12-21.

(16) See L.Tivey, Interpretations of British Politics. The image and the system, London: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1988, p.1.

(17) See eg R.Zariski, 'Italy' in W.Merkel (ed), West European Party Systems: Trends and Prospects, New York: Free Press, 1980, pp.122-152; I.Daalder, 'The Italian party System in Transition: The End of Polarised Pluralism?', in West European Politics, July, 1983, pp.²¹⁶⁻³⁶; J.Hanning, 'Twenty Years of Polarised Pluralism', in European Journal of Political Research, December 1984, pp.⁴³³⁻⁴³

(18) P.Farneti, The Italian Party System (1945-80), London: Frances Pinter, 1985.

(19) O.Kirchheimer, 'The Waning of Opposition in Parliamentary Regimes', F.S.Burin & K.L.Shell (eds), Politics, Law and Social Change: Selected Essays of Otto Kirchheimer, New York: Columbia University Press, 1969; originally appearing in 1957.

(20) See A.Ware, Citizens, Parties and the State: A Reappraisal, Cambridge: Polity Press, 1987, esp. pp.187, 213.

(21) G.Pasquino, 'Party Government in Italy: Achievements and Prospects', in F.Castles & R.Wildenmann (eds), Visions and Realities of Party Government, Berlin: De Gruyter, 1987, pp.202-242.

(22) P.Farneti, op.cit. p.183.

(23) A.Pizzorno, I soggetti del pluralismo. Classi, partiti, sindacati, Bologna: Il Mulino, 1980, esp. 'I due poteri dei partiti' (originally published in 1971), pp.51-65, and 'Per un'analisi teorica dei partiti politici in Italia', (originally published 1969), pp.11-49. See also S.Belligni, 'Sul sistema partitico dell'Italia contemporanea. Elementi per una rassegna della letteratura sociopolitologica', Stato e Mercato, No.8, August 1983, pp.317-341.

(24) See R.Leonardi and D.Wertman, Italian Christian Democracy: The Politics of Dominance, London: Macmillan, 1989, p.8.

(25) S.Tarrow, Between Centre and Periphery. Grassroots Politicians in Italy and France, Yale University Press, 1977, esp. pp.104-6, 174-82, 253-5; see also S.Tosi, 'Italy: Anti-system Opposition Within the System', Government and Opposition, 1966, pp.49-61.

(26) See S.Belligni op.cit.

(27) See L.Morlino 'The Changing Relationship Between Parties and Society in Italy', West European Politics, October 1984, pp.46-65, for a review of these changes over the decade 1972-83.

(28) On the effects of government incumbency in democratic systems, see R.Rose and T.Mackie, 'Incumbency in Government: Asset or Liability?', in H.Daalder and P.Mair (eds), West European Party Systems: Continuity and Change, London: Sage, 1985, pp.115-137.

(29) G.Galli and A.Prandi, Patterns of Political Participation in Italy, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1970.

(30) S.H.Barnes, Representation in Italy. Institutionalised Tradition and Electoral Choice, London: University of Chicago Press, 1977.

(31) See R.Mannheimer and G.Sani, Il Mercato Elettorale. Identikit dell'elettore italiano, Bologna: Il Mulino, 1987.

(32) P.Allum & R.Mannheimer, 'Italy' in I.Crewe and D.Denver (eds), Electoral Change in Western Democracies, London: Croom Helm, 1985, pp.287-318. See too Zariski's judgment in 'Italy', 1980, op.cit.(17).

(33) P.Farneti, 'Patterns of Changing Support for Christian Democracy in Italy: 1946-76', B.Denitch (ed), Legitimation of Regimes: international framework for analysis, London: Sage, 1979, pp.250-251.

(34) M.Calise, 'Lo stato dei partiti in Italia: un tentativo di inquadramento', Laboratorio Politico, March-June, 1983, pp.31-49.

(35) See eg F.Urban-Pappi, 'The West German Party System', in West European Politics, October, 1984, pp.7-26.

(36) See H.Daalder, 'In Search of the Centre of European Party Systems', American Political Science Review, Vol.78, 1984, pp.92-109, p.101.

(37) See I.Budge and D.Farlie, 'Party Competition - Selective Emphasis or Direct Confrontation? An Alternative View with Data', in H.Daalder and P.Mair (eds), Western European Party Systems. Continuity and Change, London: Sage, 1983, pp.267-305; and I.Budge, D.Robertson and D.Hearl (eds), Ideology, Strategy and Party Change: A Spatial Analysis of Post-

war Electoral Programmes in Nineteen Countries, Cambridge University Press, 1987.

(38) A.Mastropaolo and M.Slater, 'Italy 1946-79: Party Platforms and Electoral Programmes Under the Republic', in I.Budge, D.Robertson and D.Hearl (eds), Ideology, Strategy and Party Change: A Spatial Analysis of Post-War Electoral Programmes in Nineteen Democracies, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987, pp.345-368, p.368.

(39) In a related vein, G.Di Palma has confirmed that the achievement of democratic stability requires that only minimal requirements be met: 'Parliaments, consolidation, institutionalisation: a minimalist view', in U.Lievert and M.Cotta (eds), Parliaments and Democratic Consolidation in Souther Europe: Greece, Italy, Portugal, Spain and Turkey, London and New York: Pinter, 1990, pp.31-51.

(40) P.J.Taylor and A.Lijphart, 'Proportional Tenure v. Proportional Representation: Introducing a New Debate', European Journal of Political Research, Vo.13 , 1985, pp.341-354.

The aim of this chapter is two-fold. In the first Section it aims to demonstrate the internal complexity of the catholic world and to explore the Christian Democratic Party's relationship with that world and with the other political forces active in post-war Italy. In the second, it aims to show that it is meaningful to describe the period 1943-47 as having witnessed the political construction of centrism.

The first Section concentrates on the Christian Democratic Party. It first looks briefly at the conflict of political cultures within Italy, and then concentrates on the internal complexities of the catholic world and the nature of the DC's relationship with it. This review serves to indicate the resources De Gasperi had available to him in establishing the party's centrist credentials. Section One concludes by briefly stressing the DC's role as mediator between different political traditions and the importance of this role in a situation of tension and uncertainty. At its simplest, the argument is that the collapse of Fascism presented a new political elite with the opportunity to establish a new political system. De Gasperi used the internal diversity of the catholic world, combined with the solidity of Catholicism in the face of adversity, to transform a mass movement into a basis for stable political evolution, and Togliatti did much the same with the Communist Party and socialist tradition. Cooperation between the two leaders provoked such opposition that the 1946 Constituent Assembly election revealed a three-block structure in the making, with

the DC being outflanked on the right.

Section Two, however, demonstrates that the actual formation of a three-block system was dependent on the prior formation of a one-block system. This system, though unsustainable, demonstrated the willingness of key political elites to cooperate, thus establishing a relational centre. The one-block system based on the CLN thus amounted, it will be argued, to the establishment of a period of centrism prior to that of the classic centrist phase of 1948-53/63. The establishment of the three-block system was a response to the fear that the collapse of the one-block system would otherwise lead to a confrontation between two blocks which would trigger a general degeneration of the political process.

I THE POLITICO-CULTURAL FOUNDATIONS OF DC CENTRISM

A. Sub-cultures and Block Structure

Post-war Italy is conventionally described as having three political sub-cultures: catholic, socialist and lay-liberal, and these are seen as having had a major influence on the structure and evolution of the party system. Thus, the dominant Christian Democratic Party has been rooted in the catholic sub-culture, and the second largest party, the PCI, has tended to encapsulate the socialist sub-culture.

The existence of the socialist and lay/liberal cultures could suggest that the DC is a centre party because it is flanked by them on left and right, like the catholic parties/alliance in the Netherlands. However, in Italy the lay/liberal parties are weak and the right block has been

based on an ultra-conservative sub-culture whose relevance more or less collapsed in the 1970s. Nevertheless, the DC's identification with the centre cannot simply be attributed to the encapsulation of political cultures by parties leading to a block structure rooted in socio-cultural cleavages.

Despite the importance of historically deeply-rooted sub-cultures to the structuring of party systems in Western Europe, they are difficult to use as an explanation of party system structure since they are also created and destroyed via the party system itself.¹ In post-war Italy, sub-cultures and parties have not coincided, and the divergence between them has been as important as the prominence and distinctiveness of the sub-cultures. Samuel Barnes, who in the 1970s made a major contribution to the orthodox thesis of electoral stability in Italy through an account of 'institutionalised tradition' himself emphasised this disjuncture in an earlier work, contrasting Italy to the Netherlands where socio-cultural and political pillars (the zuilen) do coincide.² The disjuncture is more important than his later work would suggest.

1. Conservatism in Italy

The disjuncture between party and sub-culture is most evident in the fact that a large part of the DC is widely considered to be conservative, yet a conservative sub-culture as such does not exist. The right block of the party system has been dominated by the ultra-conservative Monarchists and the MSI, but this tradition, and the block with it, declined into insignificance in the 1970s. The Liberal Party, which has stood consistently on the right of the centre block, or

to its right, has nourished and been nourished by, economic conservatism in particular, and the party has been an important ally of the conservative forces in the DC, but it has failed to create a respectable conservative political block to match the political tradition which it represents.

2. A Catholic block?

In the absence of a respectable conservative political block, broad-brush comparativists and 'progressives' have identified the catholic sub-culture, or the Christian Democratic Party more specifically, as conservative. The distinction between the party and its cultural hinterland is significant for the two are not the same thing. Equally, however, it is difficult to label either as consistently conservative, neither being politically homogeneous or politically consistent over time.

The most glaring case of non-coincidence between the sub-culture and the party is that of the catholic communists, or 'catto-communists'. These are practising Catholics who vote communist, but it is equally as important both that the so-called 'catholic party' is an amalgam of catholic liberals, conservatives and socialists and that this party has gained non-catholic support.

3. The lay/liberal tradition

The lay/liberal tradition, unlike the situation in the Netherlands, is hardly associated with the right at all. Both the Liberal and Republican parties gain their strength from the tradition, yet they by no means encapsulate it, and the tradition is widely regarded as having been diffused throughout the party system. Although the extent to which it

has done so is the subject of intense controversy, lay-liberalism in Italy is more a dispersed political tradition than it is a party encapsulated political culture.

The divergence between the rightist tendency of the Liberals and the centrist, centre-left tendency of the Republican Party (not to mention the Radicals) gives some indication of liberalism's well-recognised political ambiguity,³ but the liberal tradition also found expression within Catholicism and communism. Often expressed within Catholicism as the 'democratic' tradition, it embraced De Gasperi and subsequently found particular expression within factions on the DC's left; whilst some of the Communist Party's major leaders, such as Giorgio Amendola, have identified and been identified with it.⁴

4. The socialist sub-culture

The socialist sub-culture has been fragmented since its nineteenth century origins, but in the post-war period it has seen permanent division between Social Democrats, Socialists, Communists and the New Left. These divisions have prevented the formation of a single political block, with the Social Democrats owing their origins to the decision to oppose the formation of a single left block, and the Socialists subsequently preferring to join the centre block rather than promote the formation of a two-block, left/right system. Beyond this, the socialist sub-culture is of course a lay sub-culture, and it should not be forgotten that the catholic world has its own Christian socialist tradition.

5. Summary

This brief survey of politico-cultural overlap and

divergences suggests that ideological and/or cultural definitions of left/centre/right distinction will be too rigid to understand the complexity of the DC and the Italian party system. In contrast to the undeniably intense ideological divisions between the political blocks there are also overlaps and interpenetrations. As a start to analysing the Christian Democratic Party and its strategies we will look in more detail at the catholic world and its relations with that party, focusing on the 1940s and '50s when the foundations of the new republic were laid.

B. The Catholic Third Way

Judgment as to whether the Christian Democratic Party offered a progressive, if 'merely' centrist way forward, or a conservative reaction, depends on two things: whether one sees the DC and/or Catholicism as filling the so-called 'vacuum on the right' left by the collapse of Fascism, and whether one sees the desire to build a 'third way', neither socialist nor liberal, as meaningful. Our examination of the catholic world and the Christian Democratic Party proceeds by looking at these questions.

1. The vacuum on the right

The authority of the Fascist regime began to disintegrate long before the Allied invasion of Sicily in July 1943 prompted the regime's collapse, and in the absence of effective political leadership the relationship between the Vatican and the Italian people was immensely fortified. The war came to be seen as having been foisted on the country by a bankrupt and isolated government, whilst the identification

of the Church with Fascism all but disappeared.⁵

As a clear alternative focus of loyalty the Vatican's influence grew to be greater, both domestically and internationally, than at any other period in modern history.⁶ The leadership capacity of the Church became all that more significant as it became apparent that whilst a host of leftist forces were waiting the opportunity to lead political developments, there was little in the way of leadership available to the non- or anti-socialist population. There was a vacuum on the right which in a significant sense was filled by the DC⁷ and by the catholic world, or more precisely by the DC and the Vatican and episcopal elites who, until the 1960s,⁸ dominated that world.

The Church initially found little opposition to its mobilisational and organisational role in the mid-1940s since by 1942/3 it had become a circumspect but clear opposition to Fascism.⁹ Moreover, the traditionally anti-clerical descendants of Liberalism were now significantly less powerful than they had been before Fascism, the reverse of the Church's position, whilst key figures within it, such as Meuccio Ruini, himself a mason, urged believers and non-believers alike to recognise the value of having Roman Catholicism as a state religion.¹⁰ Hostility to Marxism, but also to fascism, welded formerly antagonistic elites together. But for the left too the anti-Fascist victory brought rapprochement with the Church. When crowds flocked to the Pope to show their gratitude on the morrow of Rome's liberation, Socialist and Communist banners were noticeably present. By 1944, anti-clericalism was yesterday's battle.¹¹

Nevertheless, the post-war period is one where, from 1948, a conservative 'confessional state came into being'¹² which some identified as a clerico-fascist regime.¹³ If one accepts Simone de Beauvoir's dictum that 'the church is not on the right - it is the right', then the translation of the Church's authority into such a regime will not surprise, and the thesis of the coalescence of a cohesively conservative bourgeoisie with a monolithic conservative church is common to the left and radical lay traditions. Giorgio Galli has identified the DC as the beneficiary of a conservative 'catholic bourgeois electoral block'¹⁴, whilst further left the DC is accused of effecting a 'reactionary unification of the bourgeoisie' with clerico-conservatism.¹⁵ Allowing for various more and less subtle variations which stress, for example, subservience to USA, the role of the DC as a substitute for the state, or the autonomous self-interest of the DC elite in realising and perpetuating its rule, the thesis of a simple catholic/bourgeois conservative fusion dominates the lay history of the Christian Democratic Party.¹⁶

This simplification of the historical reality makes it impossible to grasp the vast changes which have taken place within Catholicism in the twentieth century. John Whyte's study of the post-war transformation of West European political Catholicism offers a more detailed picture which can increase our understanding of Italy's political evolution. According to Whyte, the rise of European Christian Democracy was a novel and dramatic change within Catholicism which by its very progressiveness provoked an internal reaction to it. Thus the period up to 1960 can be described as one of 'closed

Catholicism'.¹⁷

Armed with this account of the evolution and internal tensions within Catholicism, we can reconsider the nature of the cultural and political conservatism of the 1950s. The triumph of Christian Democracy within Catholicism coincided with the exclusion of the left from government in Italy and elsewhere so that the substantial defeat of conservative Catholicism was obscured. This opacity was reinforced by the conservative back-lash which put considerable pressure on the DC and did not peak until the early years of the reign of John XXIII, just as the Second Vatican Council was about to confirm the defeat of conservative Catholicism and the realisation of a 'paradigm shift' within Catholicism.¹⁸

To argue that the Church filled the vacuum on the right risks ignoring the transformation of Catholicism and reducing non-socialist forces to an undifferentiated phenomenon. Distinctions within the non-socialist world matter, otherwise everything from clerico-fascism to Christian socialism is conservative. Carrying the argument a stage further, it is also invalid to assume a dialectic between two blocks, one conservative and negative, the other progressive and positive. Many within the socialist tradition abandoned the left block for alliance with the DC, uniting with progressive figures already there.

Interesting historical evidence points to the importance of these arguments in early post-war Italy. In early 1946 a newly founded right-wing journal, L'Ida, attacked the DC for leading a conservative mass base onto leftist positions, foreclosing the possibility of creating a liberal-

conservative party. At the same time, and echoing the Jesuit journal Civiltà cattolica which sought to orientate the DC in the same direction, the journal identified PSI leadership as having captured a reformist (centre-left) electorate to lead it from the far left. These inconsistencies, the journal warned, would prevent the emergence of Anglo-Saxon style bipartism. The DC should move to the centre-right, where it properly belonged.¹⁹

This analysis-cum-prognosis is revealing of the important distinctions within both left and right in post-war Italy and of the fact that these were related to differences between elites and electorates. It will be shown that it is not proper to write off the PSI or the Communist Party as extremist parties since to do so ignores this distinction.

A final word can be said about the conservatism of Catholicism in post-war Italy. Martin Clark sees the strength of the Catholic Church as giving rise both to a 'conservative regime' and the 'rule of the clericals', yet he also stresses that it 'unexpectedly provided mass backing for democracy' in 1948 and subsequently 'helped make democracy respectable'. This development contrasted strongly with the hitherto prevailing catholic doctrine of 'indifference' to the political form of modern states, a doctrine which had made the Church vulnerable to the charge of actually favouring authoritarian regimes.²⁰ Since the DC was both the vehicle for this transformation and the subject of intense Vatican hostility to its assertion of political autonomy, the party could be characterised as more progressive than the Church from which it sprang.

This argument can be furthered if one accepts that neither the conservatism nor the confessionalisation of catholic society in the 1950s were simply the result of DC rule. Any government, including a Communist one, would have had to recognise the enormous de facto power of the Church in the 1950s, and a period of catholic preponderance was probably inevitable.²¹ Arturo Jemolo, a noted historian of church-state relations in Italy, who is highly critical of his country's political evolution, wrote in the late 1950s that 'confessionalism in the body politic is largely due to the pressure of public opinion', and that 'it would be wrong to see an expression of government policy' in this.²²

Confessionalisation was a deeply rooted phenomenon, and what mattered was its long-term development, the nature and speed of its evolution and decay. What determined this was the way a new political class, by way of the creation of a party system, handled the challenge of clericalism to its governance of Italian society. This is a major theme of Chapters Two to Four of the thesis. What has been established so far is firstly the need to differentiate between filling the vacuum on the right from the right, and filling it from the left, and secondly the clash between the DC and conservative sections of the Vatican which meant that backing the DC led to important unintended consequences as far as the Vatican was concerned.

2. The Catholic World

In the immediate post-war period much of Europe was not only physically disorganised and impoverished but also in a state of intellectual and cultural shock,²³ yet the opportunity for

renewal was equally unprecedented. In Italy, the removal of Fascism released two major forces aspiring to renovate and transform Italian and European society. One of these was catholic.

a. Two strands of Catholic mobilisation

Through the 1929 Lateran Pacts the Vatican had gained a position of political and territorial security which allowed it to act, more or less as an equal, in the twentieth century environment of nation-states. This was a major step towards reintegrating Catholicism with the modern world, for it ended the rejection of the Italian state and its withdrawal from participation in modern, and in the event democratic, politics.²⁴ Participation was not to be passive. The Church's mission was to rechristianise Italy, Europe and the world. The collapse of Fascism coincided with the mobilisation of the Church to this end.

This mobilisation was all the more real the nearer to Rome one got, but throughout Italy it worked to unite an increasingly politically heterogeneous catholic world.²⁵ Nevertheless, the transformation of the Church into a mobilising machine was simply too diverse in its origins, too universal in its intentions, too religious in its self-understanding to be readily tied to, and reduced to, the fortunes of any 'mere political' party. Political and religious mobilisation were distinct, even if indissolubly intertwined.

The reversal of the pre-Fascist policy of non-involvement in politics was absolute, a matter for the whole of Catholicism. Despite a new emphasis on the lay organisations, this totality of mobilisation meant that above all it

was a matter for the Pope, his bishops and his priests. Least of all could it be simply a political movement. Yet beyond the traditional Church hierarchy, there were other organisations, above all Catholic Action, an instrument which was tried and tested and reliably under ecclesiastic control, and beyond that a vast diaspora of associations: of school teachers, doctors, engineers, housewives and so on. The Church had embarked on a new type of crusade in a new type of society. But whilst the Church rapidly and skillfully exploited these organisations and the new technological instruments such as radio and cinema available to it,²⁶ the role which political parties (and the DC specifically) would play was largely underestimated and misconstrued. The total mobilisation threatened to be anti-political,^A totally unpromising.

The DC, as it turned out, played a major role in ensuring that this did not happen, yet the assertion of catholic unity as partisan political unity, which was critical to the DC's success, initially encouraged the precise opposite. Although the construction of the DC was well under way at the elite level in 1942 it lacked the resources, organisational structure and social penetration required to become a modern mass-based party able to rely upon a supportive electorate. When it came to electoral mobilisation in 1946 and 1948 it was utterly dependent on the capacities of the Church. The DC had to ensure that it was the political beneficiary of what was a supra-political and potentially anti-political

A. In the sense used by B.Crick (discussed p.30 of thesis).

mobilisation.

Catholic mobilisation was essentially naive of the nature of modern politics and apolitical in intention, if political de facto.²⁷ Though a variety of political strands ranging from catto-communism to clerico-reactionary were present in this mobilisation, the problems of mass psychology and of organisational institutionalisation in effecting a stable and progressive social order were little understood.²⁸ In the event, this political naivete gave the DC's political-ly aware elite, and De Gasperi in particular, the opportunity to turn catholic mobilisation to its own ends. Having experienced the Vatican's abandonment of the short-lived Partito Popolare Italiano, founded by the priest Don Luigi Sturzo in 1919, the DC was determined not to risk its own destruction through dependency on a fickle Vatican.

b. Papal power and its limits

Despite the DC's desire not to be dependent on the Vatican, it had to rely on catholic mobilisation to gain electoral support. The fact that Pius XII came to identify the Church's welfare with the success of the Christian Democratic Party was decisive, because within the catholic world the Pope's position is such that no-one can openly defy him. Yet the Pope's backing had to be fought for, and Pius XII can fairly be described as having had a very hostile attitude to De Gasperi. The Pope's eventual decision to support the principle of catholic political unity was, moreover, a development certainly not initiated, and only begrudgingly seconded by the Vatican hierarchy whilst, as we shall see, much of the rank-and-file priesthood came to see the DC as inadequate

and unacceptable. Given this convoluted situation, the modern understanding of the relationship between the Church and the party stresses the party's independence and leadership despite its electoral reliance on the Church. Sassoon, in keeping with recent Italian scholarship, thus writes that far from being the long-arm of the Church the DC 'was always able to maintain an effective autonomy', and that 'In general political matters ... the Church could do little else than follow the lead of the DC'.²⁹ Papal power was heavily contextual, and in political matters acted as a veto on alternatives to De Gasperi rather than as the prime mover.³⁰

Whilst Pius XII has come to be recognised, even by critics, as a very capable moderniser, adapting the Church by reinforcing its laicisation, its penetration of society and its internationalisation,³¹ a value consensus about his reign does not exist.³² It is, however, clear that even a belated and purely instrumental shift towards accepting and then 'consecrating' liberal democracy, as in his radio message of 1944,³³ will have had major political and politico-cultural consequences. Nevertheless, if his understanding of democracy was as instrumental as is now widely accepted,³⁴ De Gasperi's prestige in resisting the Pope's attempts to dominate him grows in importance.

Yet De Gasperi was not the only force which Pius was unable to subordinate. Despite the severe repression of dissent throughout the 1950s³⁵ neither Pius nor the Vatican Curia were ever fully in control of Italian catholic society. Catholic intellectuals and activists, especially from Catholic Action and the graduate movement FUCI, had learnt from

fascism that a strong and free society required the construction of a powerful system of self-articulation, a lesson that tallied with traditional catholic ideas of local autonomy, subsidiarity and corporatism. These were ideas consistent more with Tocquevillian pluralism than the Pope's hierarchical vision of society, and this vision of a highly articulated associationalism, a 'third way' between liberalism and socialism,³⁶ came to be trapped not only by the bounds of papal authority, but also within the logic of political competition based on the need to maintain catholic unity and discipline in the face of Christian Democracy's political vulnerability.

Dissent in the face of papal authority and the grip of the DC was of both short and long-term significance, even though the mass 'contestations', as it came to be known, appeared only in the mid-1960s.³⁷ Those Catholics who maintained their radical social vision played a significant role in contributing to the preparation of the opening to the left in the 1950s. They did this both by maintaining a resolutely critical stance towards a party from which they felt unable to definitively break yet hated for its corruption and inadequacy, thus undermining it electorally, and by maintaining catholic links with the left. This situation meant that polarisation in the electoral-mobilisational arena was not mirrored by a closure of either the DC or the catholic world to the other sub-cultures. Both liberal and Christian-socialist elements within the party and the catholic world rejected the strong conservative elements likewise present in each. Already in the late 1950s Italian society could be

described as less polarised in reality than the crisis-laden atmosphere of the party system and elections made it appear.³⁸ This factor may be a major element which explains the unexpectedly high electoral volatility of the 1950s.

To recapitulate, papal authority was decisive when it acted with the grain of political development. It supported unity behind De Gasperi, as sought by De Gasperi himself, despite the Pope's powerful misgivings. In the following sub-sections we shall see that the Pope's support for catholic unity was as significant in curbing attempts to push the party to the right as it was in maintaining left-leaning critics within the catholic/DC nexus. We shall also see that the papal injunction in favour of catholic unity, combined with the self-interest of the DC elite in prolonging its rule, nevertheless resulted in the fear that a totalitarian theocracy was being established.

c. Catholic Communism: A common enemy

The nascent party and the bulk of ecclesiastic elites regarded catholic communism with hostility, even if cattocommunists were tolerated at an early stage and subsequently attracted support from unlikely quarters. The movement's organisational origins dated to 1937 in Rome, and in 1942 it had set itself up as an underground party in Umbria, Emilia-Romagna, the Marches and the Abruzzi regions. Originally, it was not suppressed because any potential basis for catholic mobilisation and penetration of society was welcome in a period of looming crisis, but as De Gasperi came to establish himself as the major political actor from the catholic universe, latent papal hostility to the movement became decisive

in marginalising it. In the face of the Socio-Communist challenge it was easy to see that Catholic Communism undermined Catholic unity and challenged the very grounds of **catholic** mobilisation.

There is evidence that this hostility to the movement was seconded by Togliatti on behalf of the Communist Party, and one can see the common link.³⁹ The two parties had the same interest in maintaining their uncertain domination of the CLN, and especially of excluding a party which by attempting to bridge the differences between them undermined both their political and electoral positions. In party form, a left-wing Catholicism was still-born, but as a voting practice it remained relevant, no doubt making some contribution to electoral volatility.

d. Catholic unity: Montini and the DC

By contrast to the Pope's begrudging and even hostile backing for De Gasperi, Monsignor Giovanbattista Montini, the Assistant Secretary for Ordinary Affairs in the Secretary of State's Office, forcefully backed the idea of catholic unity, and support for the DC. From 1944 there was no Secretary of State, and the two Assistant Secretaries, Montini, and Tardini (for Extraordinary Affairs) played a major political role, for the Office was responsible for the Vatican's diplomatic relations, including those with Italy.

Montini was instrumental in bringing the pope to concede decisional autonomy for political matters to De Gasperi, not least by acting as go-between at a time when De Gasperi was avoiding contact with the Pope in order to avoid the embarrassment of open disagreement.⁴⁰ One particular occa-

sion in which Montini acted in this capacity was most significant, though its secrecy shrouded it in mystery for a considerable period. In November 1946, Montini conveyed to De Gasperi the Pope's displeasure at De Gasperi's continuation of the link with the Marxist parties via the CLN. De Gasperi was able to reply that to break the link would seriously contradict the Church's own interests, principally because the Constituent Assembly had still not agreed on the basis of Church/state relations in the future Republic. This, in effect, demonstrated De Gasperi's superior mastery of political matters, and it may have been this that Montini sought.

Montini was also the most convinced opponent of the party organisation of left Catholicism, a position which contrasted with support for such 'pluralism' from conservative elements in the Vatican. Such pluralism threatened to transform the DC into a more conservative party which the Vatican conservatives then hoped would respond to, or live up to, their understanding of what the party should be.⁴¹

In this complex situation of intrigue, the Christian Democratic Party was both of the catholic world and separate from it. Montini used his official position and his reputation in progressive circles within Catholicism to encourage those interested in political and social reform not to reject the DC.⁴² His unequivocal partisan stance was a difficult one in a world suspicious of political involvement, and it was not shared by his colleague in the State Office, monsignor Domenico Tardini.

e. Tardini's political scepticism

Tardini has been widely regarded as one of the Vati-

can's conservatives, but it is helpful to see his position as being apolitical in the sense of opposing partisan politics. Of course, his position and behaviour had political effects, but Tardini truly believed Catholicism to be greater than, and above politics. Openly engaged stances, such as Montini's, seemed far from obviously in the Church's best interests. The same held true of the politicking for the so-called 'Roman party' which we shall look at next.

Tardini opposed the identification of the Church with a political party. It contradicted the Church's universal mission in principle, and risked dragging the Vatican down either through the party's direct defeat, or through the degradation of the Church's image through over-close association with the practices of Realpolitik.⁴³ The unity of Catholicism was one thing, whilst its reduction to identification with a single party was another. For these reasons, Tardini could be found to give some support to conservative positions which opposed unity behind the Christian Democratic Party.

f. The 'Roman party'

The hard-line conservative position within the catholic world has been described by its leading historian as the 'Roman party'. Of some consequence in the 1940s and '50s, it was a clerico-conservative Vatican-based lobby rather than a party. Its leading figures were Cardinal Alfredo Ottaviani at the Holy Office, father Giacomo Martegani, director of the influential Jesuit organ Civiltà cattolica, and Cardinal Roberto Ronca who acted as a link-man between the religious and the political right.⁴⁴

Although this group never succeeded in breaking the dominance of the idea of catholic unity to form a second catholic party to the right of the DC, they were a powerful group. Their ideas expressed those of a great many bishops and priests, especially those of southern Italy. Although the group took an interest in the Christian Democratic Party's policies and selection of parliamentary candidate's, its main aim was to break the party's links with the Marxist and lay parties. This involved bitter hostility first to De Gasperi's maintenance of the CLN, and subsequently to De Gasperi's insistence on 'centrism', the coalition with the Liberal, Republican and Social Democrat parties. Coalition with the catholic Monarchist and/or neo-Fascist MSI was infinitely preferable.

g. Catholic trade-unionism

Catholic trade-unionists were numerous and prominent in both the industrial and agricultural spheres and had been an important component of the DC's pre-Fascist forerunner, the Popular Party. They were essential to the intention to create a mass party because of their ability to contend the socialist penetration of the working classes. The importance of this ability can be seen in the fact that post-war Italy has seen the second highest union density in Western Europe, and by the fact that in the mid-1960s, when the 'catholic' union was at its most powerful, its membership was little short of that of the Communist CGIL (2.4 compared to 2.5 million).

Politically, catholic unionism was highly ambiguous. On the one hand, many of its prewar leaders supported the

single union formed in 1944 in the name of anti-Fascist unity to the extent of favouring long-term collaboration with the Communists, both industrially and politically. Moreover, 'white' unionism gave organisational back-bone to the traditional catholic concern with social welfare, reinforcing the Christian socialist wing of the DC. However, when the catholic and socialist worlds divided in 1947/48, catholic unionists found themselves in a state of extreme competition for working class support, so that the DC's trade-union left often came to be a most vigorously anti-communist faction. This anti-communism resulted in the organisational division of the working class, weakening it considerably, and this weakness was compounded by CISL's crypto-corporatist collaboration with the political and industrial elites in the context of a low-wage regime and overwhelming entrepreneurial/managerial domination.

The CISL was also an important component in establishing the DC's lay orientation and, with it, the party's pro-Western position. Although conventionally understood as the 'catholic' union, and giving clear support to the DC throughout the 1950s, the union specifically and deliberately avoided joining the Christian international of trade unions when it established itself in the aftermath of the break-up of trade-union unity in 1948. Its preference for links with the American AFL-CIO also contributed to overcoming intense anti-Americanism within Catholic Action and ACLI the catholic workers' association.⁴⁵

h. The 'Third Way' and catholic 'integralism'

Opposition to the idea that the DC represented the

catholic sub-culture was unwelcome for two reasons which were diametrically opposed to one another. On the one hand, ending the centre-orientated political unity sought by De Gasperi meant ending anti-Fascist unity which was held together, as we shall see, in Part II of this Chapter, by the claim to representational monopoly of the country's two dominant political cultures, catholic and socialist, by the DC and the PCI. This could have threatened the development of political toleration within the CLN, the existence of which precluded any attempt at the exclusion of one or the other sociopolitical forces through force of arms. Here, catholic unity was a means to an end - the stable evolution of a pluralist democracy.

On the other hand, catholic unity could be understood as part of the universalist and totalising philosophy of catholic mobilisation which aimed at re-christianising Italian society. Here, catholic unity was an end in itself, virtuous per se. This idea was closely associated with the idea of there being a catholic 'third way', neither liberal-capitalist, nor marxist-socialist, an idea in its turn associated with that of 'integralism'.

The idea of the third way was articulated in both intellectual and activist catholic movements, thus giving it mass resonance, even if one more deeply felt in northern than southern Italy. Its core belief was the demonstrable superiority of Catholicism, given that both its adversaries, collectivist Marxism and individualist liberalism had shown themselves to be inherently flawed: the crash of 1929 and its outcome, above all in Germany, like the revolution of 1917

and its bloody aftermath, had led to totalitarianism and world catastrophe. Now catholic activists were keen to take the lead in reorganising society.

Comprising both political and cultural leaders, as well as engineers and technocrats, a broad movement of Catholics fed into the DC and various state organisations, not least IRI (the Industrial Reorganisation Institute, set up in the 1930s), furnishing organic links between the party, the economic world and the Catholic Church. Sharing a belief in the need to revitalise a physically and morally devastated society through their active participation in the country's post-Fascist renaissance, these cadres, according to their catholic historian, came to constitute the core of a post-war catholic ruling class which was pluralist, technocratic and democratic.⁴⁶

Much of this movement had a deep concern with social issues and this, together with their interest in organising the state orientation of the economy allows them to be identified in some sense with the 'left', if in an arch-reformist and 'top-down' way, not unlike Fabianism in Britain. However, in stressing the theoretical self-sufficiency and moral superiority of Catholicism, the ideology of the third way did more than back up the idea of catholic unity and thereby confirm the possibility of an autonomous political mobilisation of Catholicism. It also courted the danger of integralism - the promotion of a catholic state predominating over a catholic society.

A wide-ranging debate exists as to the precise meaning of integralism, and who the term covers,⁴⁷ but the belief

held by opponents of the DC and the Vatican that a significant component (perhaps the most significant) of the catholic world fostered the idea of a catholic state re-catholicising Italian society meant that even, and perhaps especially, 'social democratic' elements of catholic thought and action gained an authoritarian aura.⁴⁸ This belief came to be of major political significance in the 1950s for precisely this ambiguity enveloped Amintore Fanfani, the Christian Democrat who took over from De Gasperi following the latter's death in 1954. Intellectual polarisation in the 1950s was exacerbated by the fact that it was not just the communist, but also the catholic (and the lay/liberal) tradition which was shot through with quasi-totalitarian attitudes.⁴⁹

i. Catholicism and political heteronomy

De Gasperi's opposition to the Pope and to the clerico-conservative minded Roman party, together with the lay and social orientation of the trade-union movement confronted a situation of Christian Democratic political dominance streaked with authoritarianism and quasi-totalitarian attitudes harboured in the catholic world. How the DC developed, particularly in relation to other political forces was in the balance. As Fascism collapsed, the catholic world found itself in a state of confused resurgence, charged with idealistic social voluntarism and plain desperation, a potentially dangerous combination of both intense optimism and profound pessimism. The pressures on Catholicism, above all the perceived threat of global communism, interacted in favour of catholic unity, and De Gasperi was able to capture this, yet De Gasperi, for all his deep devotion to the catholic faith

was also a democrat and a pluralist, opposed to integralism. He created and used the autonomy which his political position gave him to promote a political dialogue which went against the tendency to a clash between opposing totalities.

This strategy was necessary not only to promote stability between the political blocks, but even to secure catholic unity itself, for this could only be achieved on as wide a base as possible. The catholic movement was, as we have seen, politically quite heterogeneous, and whilst the DC clearly had to be anti-Communist it also had to be open to the deeply felt urge for social reform. Interaction with the left was necessary both as a political strategy of democratic stabilisation and as a party strategy of 'catch-all' aggregation.

In fact, catholic political thought had not developed in a vacuum. Whilst it was distinctive from liberalism and socialism in important respects, it was not totally alien to them. The dominant leaders of the catholic party did not, whatever the rhetoric to the contrary, reject the lay or the socialist parties in principle, nor those parties the DC. Indeed, they participated in each others' development, with the DC playing a key role as a site of mediation which allowed it, in a sense, to replace the CLN when it was no longer tenable. It was not a series of political and cultural autonomies that shaped party system development, for the core players recognised that their activity was in part ruled by others in a system of mutual and partial heteronomy. The abolition of the monarchy coincided with a radical end to the existence of a single political sovereign. The fount and

symbol of this new, interactive, system was the Committee for National Liberation (CLN) in which liberals, marxists and catholics cooperated to determine the evolution of Italian society. The CLN was the womb of the Italian party system and of modern Italy as a democratically organised society, or nation-state.

C. Political Opportunity

The collapse of Fascism and the political vacuum which followed provided a clear opportunity for Catholicism to take the political stage. We have demonstrated that the politico-cultural and organisational background of Christian Democracy was heterogeneous, yet tending to unity, and this was undoubtedly important in the development of the party's spatial image. Nevertheless, it was only in relation to other political forces that it could establish itself as a centre party in the way that it did. We can understand the nature of this developing relationship by considering the functions the party took upon itself in relation to those other parties, and the structure that emerged in the process.

1. The DC and political mediation

The hostility of catholicism to liberalism and socialism was sufficient to permit the independent development of an autonomous political movement. However, catholic political culture was far from isolated from the evolution of modern European social and political thought and the more politically minded elements of Italian catholicism understood themselves as related to the modern development of the democratic idea. This was most evident in the collaborative

elaboration of the constitution by catholics, socialists and liberals.⁵⁰

Nevertheless, the tendency towards quasi-totalitarian mutual exclusion of the leading political forces was a real danger until the electoral crises of 1952-3, and in the crucial period immediately following the collapse of Fascism the DC assumed a key role in preventing this. Disagreement between the hostile politico-cultural blocks was kept within bounds where cooperation could continue by the autonomy which the party elites exerted vis a vis their respective hinterlands. This collaboration was, as has already been indicated for the DC, contested within the catholic world, and the same was true of the communist world, but the memory of the failure of catholic and socialist political elites to cooperate in the aftermath of World War One, and its consequences, inspired the political elites of this new post-war era to start afresh. Political cooperation, the joint management of social conflict, was seen as the fundamental basis of political development.

The arguments of Baget Bozzo and Pietro Scoppola, leading historians of the Christian Democratic Party, are of interest in this context. Baget Bozzo has argued that the DC has to be understood as a party defined by its aims rather than by its social bases, by what its elites sought to do, rather than by what its electoral and interest group linkages made it. There is a danger here of voluntarism, a problem which affected the DC itself, but we can stress the importance of the purposive aspects of the party without neglecting material constraints. According to Baget Bozzo, what the

elites did was mediate between the predominantly backward-looking catholic world and the political and economic realities of modernity.⁵¹

This argument stresses the role of parties as actors, indeed as leaders, particularly in a situation of acute tension, but the DC's relationship with its own world is only half the story. Pietro Scoppola has argued for a wider appreciation of the insight and modernity of the DC's dominant elites, in particular De Gasperi, in recognising the generic mediating and brokerage role of political parties. Scoppola stresses the idea that De Gasperi's key intuition (and it was not one generally appreciated within the catholic, liberal or socialist worlds) was to perceive the necessity of stabilising the tremendous multiple tensions of Italian society through the establishment of modern mass-based political parties⁵², thus creating a competitive multi-party system.

Scoppola further argues that De Gasperi's grasp of the importance of institutionalising sociopolitical conflict in organised and self-disciplined mass parties was more or less shared by Togliatti, if from a different theoretical and strategic perspective, and that in effect these two leaders collaborated to assert the dominance of their nascent mass parties in the political sphere, and their joint, if conflictual, exercise of leadership over Italian society. This relationship was, in part, one between a confessional and a non- or anti-confessional block, but it was also much more, for contrary to Baget Bozzo, the DC was not originally a 'Christian party' which subsequently lost its inspiration.

It was, from the beginning, an essentially lay party which aimed at modernising and 'desacralising' the catholic world, whilst managing a systematic process of mutual compromise between capitalism and democracy.⁵³

Although De Gasperi's attitude to Communism hardened considerably in the early 1950s and the DC went on to evade parliament itself in developing its power, the establishment of competition and cooperation between political parties as the bases for handling conflict were founded in the 1940s, principally via the relationship between the DC and the PCI. This was a significant political innovation. Even confronted by the Fascist regime, political cooperation between its enemies in exile had proved difficult⁵⁴ and as late as 1946 De Gasperi viewed with concern the return of leaders such as Don Sturzo, the founder of the PPI and Carlo Sforza, the Republican, from exile. Within Italy, by contrast, liberal, communist, socialist and catholic political elites had organised the Committee of National Liberation as early as 1944 and claimed the right to govern jointly as an anti-Fascist coalition. The CLN was an institution of decisive importance in determining the DC's relations with the catholic world and with the other parties and it is the focus of Part II of this Chapter. Through it, the DC established its role as mediator between Catholicism and modernity and between the different political forces within the modern world.

The CLN established the principle of the existence of a 'centre' in the relational sense outlined in Chapter One, on the basis of a core comprising principally the DC and PCI. However, the centrism of the DC also contains a significant

`linear' component which can be shown to be rooted in the outcome of the 1946 election of the Constituent Assembly. Thanks to this election, catholic political autonomy and the belief in Catholicism as a `third way' came to be structurally inserted into the nascent party system.

2. Party system structure: the blueprint

When the electorate turned out to vote in June 1946, the de facto government was the CLN, six parties led by De Gasperi comprising Catholics, liberals and socialists/communists. The election had been preceded by a series of local elections which had seen the left making major gains, and De Gasperi was keen to distinguish his party from the those of the right/centre-right, with which his party was frequently associated, without identifying it with the left. He thus used the appearance of the small `conservative' parties to distinguish his party as a centre party, confirming its pivotal mediating role.

Results of the 1946 Constituent Assembly Election

Blocks	Parties	Results (% of vote cast)	Sub-totals
Right	Homo qualunque	5.3)	15
	BNL (monarchists)	2.8 >	
	UDN (liberals)	6.8)	
Centre	Democrazia cristiana	35.1	35
Left	Republican	4.4)	44
	PSIUP (socialist)	20.7 >	
	PCI (communist)	18.9)	

A number of minor parties are not included.⁵⁵

By defining the party system in this way, De Gasperi was well on the way to creating the linear three-block system, creating the centre as a location, and one which the DC all but monopolised. The 1948 election almost put paid to this strategy, given the collapse of the right, but the right's reemergence in 1953 meant that from 1946 to 1972 a block of 10 - 15% of the vote lay to the right of the DC. Only from 1976 was that block halved in size and rendered all but irrelevant, signalling, as we shall see, a fundamental change in the nature of the party system. The DC's vote settled at some thirty-eight per cent of the vote for thirty odd years, whilst that of the left consistently fell several points short of 50 per cent.

The 1946 election presented a rough blue-print for the future structure of the party system even though in the key 1948 election this structure almost collapsed. The right block obtained under nine per cent of the vote, and the Liberals, who accounted for nearly half of that, were in coalition with the DC. Why did the DC, rather than form a two-block system based on anti-socialism, consistently seek to 'move left', preventing the development of a dualism a la Duverger? The answer has much to do with the nature of the centrism constructed in the 1943-47 period.

D. Summary

We have seen that the DC was dependent on the catholic world for the mobilisation of its electorate and for the sense of cultural autonomy that gave it an identity. We have also seen, however, that the catholic world was a complex

structure in evolution in which the Christian Democratic Party was both part of that world and yet distinct from it. We have seen, furthermore, that this distinction was accentuated internally, and rendered unclear externally, by the fact that the DC played a key role in promoting that evolution, in particular through its relationship with the Marxist and lay parties. Dwelling at length on the catholic world has allowed us to place the DC in relationship to its 'internal' politico-cultural world, but in order fully to understand that relationship it is necessary to examine the party's relationship with those lay and Marxist parties which constituted its external politico-cultural world. This is the subject of Part II of this Chapter.

II THE POLITICAL CONSTRUCTION OF CENTRISM

When the wavering Fascist regime collapsed in July 1943, supreme political authority formally lay with the king, Vittorio Emanuele III, but neither he nor Marshal Pietro Badoglio, the former Chief of the General Staff whom he appointed as his Prime Minister, were able to assert control over a disinterested army, let alone over Italian society. The titular holders of Italian sovereign power found themselves marginalised, and German invasion forced them to flee south, behind the Allied lines.

Over the winter 1943-44, government power lay with the two occupation armies which cut Italy in two, but the real threat to the future reassertion of royal authority came from the overwhelming republicanism of the emergent political

elites - the newly invigorated liberal, catholic, socialist and communist parties, collectively organised as the CLN. Within a year a civilian government, comprising the CLN parties, had replaced the royalist government via a coup de main which the Americans backed. Based in Rome the CLN maintained links with the German-occupied North and established itself as the focus of political development despite the country's remaining a theatre of war, cut in two by contending armies. At the end of 1945, Allied restrictions on the CLN's authority were removed, and Italy's new political elite gained complete responsibility for the government of Italy. Though the continuing Allied military presence was a decisive factor in shaping the new political regime, the central and most important point was the rapidity of the reestablishment of independent statehood.

Formally, the rapid resumption of power and responsibility by a new Italian political elite did not coincide with the establishment of a new political regime. In this sense, the period 1943-48 was something of an interregnum. Only in 1948, as a result of constitutional agreement between the anti-Fascist parties of the CLN sitting in the Constituent Assembly of 1946-47, did a new polity, the Italian Republic, come into existence. Nevertheless, the 1943-48 period was crucial since the foundations of the Republic were laid during it. In particular, the creation of an interactive party system in this period as the locus of political legitimacy changed the nature of 'sovereignty' from something locatable and able to be possessed, to something ever-created, ever-contested, the contingent outcome of democratic

competition.⁵⁶ This, it will now be shown, is the significance of the creation of the **relational** centre in the CLN period; and this is what the transformation of the centre into a **location**, and its appropriation by the DC after 1948, threatened to undermine.

This analysis will not focus on an examination of 'interests', nor accentuate the significance of political 'cleavages' based on these. Policy-making, and its impact on different groups and classes is therefore not a major issue in this chapter. Indeed, it will be argued that political differentiation in terms of posing alternative policy orientations linked to class and/or 'interest' based perceptions of politics was generally suppressed by party elites. These elites, in fact, established themselves as a state-managerial class which saw policy choices as ultimately determined by the interdependent requirements of managing political and economic development.

A. Building a 'Political Class': Anti-Fascism, 1943-48

This Section will demonstrate first the self-assertion of a new political class through the CLN, then the solidification of that class in the face of adversity. The two subsequent Sections (B and C) will demonstrate the unity of that class in dealing with the country's problems and the subsequent division of that class. The significance of this division is considered in Chapter Three.

1. The CLN: the self-assertion of a new political elite

The Republican successors to the Fascist regime had nothing to do with that regime's collapse in 1943 but they

rapidly organised themselves to take advantage of it. As early as April 1943, Ivanoe Bonomi, a pre-Fascist Prime Minister, brought the leading figures of the main anti-Fascist groups together in the United Freedom Front. This established an arena within which liberals, communists and Catholics worked together and it was, as noted before, strongly influenced by memories of the responsibility of parties for the collapse of the liberal regime.

From the time of the king's flight in September 1943, the United Freedom Front (UFF) identified itself as the CLN, and disputed the legitimacy of the royal government. The relevance of the CLN at this time was, however, far from established. The Committee lacked international recognition and the cooperative propensities of its members were unproven. Moreover, none of the 'parties' in the CLN had a territorially and hierarchically integrated structure of proven loyalty to their leadership, and it was highly dubious that their supporters wanted them to collaborate with political forces traditionally regarded as enemies. In fact, the CLN itself, by establishing a justification for differentiated positions between the elites and their followers, became the basis on which the all-but self-appointed new leaders consolidated their leadership over their parties and their socio-cultural hinterlands.

The driving forces of the CLN were the radical-liberal Actionists and the Socialists, and their hostility to the royal government initially created a situation of political dualism which could have wrecked elite unity. In January 1944 the First Congress of the CLN parties called for the

king's immediate abdication and the establishment of a Constituent Assembly to determine the country's future. Given continuing Allied support for the monarchy and the military division of Italy as late as the spring of 1945, this confrontation could have split Italy north/south, with a radical, republican, socialist and anti-clerical north confronting a conservative, catholic and monarchist south. Such a potentially disastrous superimposition of cleavages did not take place thanks to the mediation of the catholic and communist parties and the survival of the CLN.

The catholic leadership knew its movement to be divided on the question of the monarchy and back-pedalled whilst trying to maintain the pattern of elite collaboration. Its position was difficult. Its support for the CLN was decisive in ensuring its survival, yet much of the Vatican was hostile to such apparently unnecessary collaboration with traditionally anti-clerical liberal and Marxist parties. The DC attacked the Socialists for their willingness to see the CLN collapse, accusing them of dangerously forcing the pace out of a mixture of intellectual adventurism, encouraged by the Actionists, and competitive out-bidding vis a vis the PCI. It found support for this position from the PCI, even before Togliatti's return from exile in Russia,⁵⁷ but Togliatti's return was decisive.

It was Josef Stalin and Palmiro Togliatti who resolved the situation by recognising the royalist government, internationally and domestically, forcing the CLN to revise its stance.⁵⁸ This decisive stand against revolutionary confrontation and in favour of continuing CLN cooperation was known

as the volta di Salerno (Salerno U-turn) and it helped De Gasperi maintain his support for the CLN against its opponents within Catholicism. This decisive stance in favour of mutual toleration by the communist and catholic party leaders prevented political degeneration, or the militarisation of politics.⁵⁹ The transfer of political initiative from the Actionists and Socialists to the DC and PCI in the spring of 1944 proved permanent, and it determined the success of the CLN, though the Actionists and Socialists attempted several times to upset it.

De Gasperi's attitude towards the Communist Party at this time was not one of mere collaboration forced by necessity. De Gasperi considered collaboration to be of value in itself, and he respected Togliatti's reciprocation of this belief, though his attitude to Togliatti later hardened considerably. This respect was eased by the sharp distinction made between communism and communists, a principle established by Maritain, the French catholic philosopher who deeply influenced many Christian Democrats, and later made a part of papal doctrine.

As the CLN entered the royalist government in April, the king was persuaded to abdicate, for only thus could he hope to save the institution, but already in June Rome was liberated, and this saw Bonomi effect his bloodless coup, declaring the CLN to be the new government. US backing ensured the success of this move. A new political elite had asserted itself, but before it could be confirmed as a new political class, the party system core of a new 'stable dissensus', it had to prove itself able to withstand the

centrifugal pressures that would be put on it by its integration with Italian society.

2. The consolidation of a political class

Between June 1944 and April 1948 when the first Republican legislature was elected, three civilian Prime Ministers presided over seven government coalitions, thus anticipating political behaviour over the next forty years and more. In this period the CLN thus functioned like the elite component of a multi-party system. However, the consolidation of this system, and of the political class which practised it, required electoral confirmation.

Of the CLN's six components, the Christian Democrats, Communists, Socialists and Liberals maintained their organisational and political continuity in the long term. The Democratic Labour Party was little more than a vehicle for Bonomi himself and soon fell apart, some of its left-liberal notables in the south joining the Socio-Communist Popular Front. The sixth party, the Action Party, though politically of great significance, also disappeared. In many ways this party spearheaded a widespread determination on the part of intellectuals to modernise and democratise Italian society, but significantly it lacked a mass base. The composition of the delegates at the First CLN Congress is indicative of the CLN's initial intellectual voluntarism and the weakness of its societal rootedness: the Communists and Socialists had twenty two delegates each, the Christian Democrats and Liberals twenty and twenty one respectively, and the Labour Democrats nine. The Actionists had twenty six, more than any other party, yet two years later dissolved themselves for

lack of electoral support.⁶⁰

Formally, the CLN was not able to claim to be sovereign. The April 1944 compromise made a future Constituent Assembly the focus of political legitimacy, rather than the CLN or the monarchy, despite some determined efforts to maintain a legal chain of succession.⁶¹ The writ of the CLN was also limited by the Allied military presence and the geo-military division of the country. Nevertheless, the CLN had links with the north, both via the individual parties and as a collective institution, and its claim to represent the entire nation-state was fundamental to its survival in a situation of near anarchy.

Political tensions were high, and the CLN was divided by major issues. Foremost amongst these were the implementation of 'anti-Fascist sanctions' (purges) and the nature of the powers and responsibilities of the CLN, and of the local CLNs which had sprung up throughout liberated central Italy. The local CLNs leaned strongly to the left and not only put an end to Fascist injustices, exacting their own justice and revenge, but often challenged property rights and the local power structure. A grass-roots revolution threatened to take place and the Liberals in particular fought to establish the provisional nature of the local Committees, and to install government appointed prefects and police chiefs. Tensions reached a climax in November 1944, provoking Bonomi's resignation and the formation of a second government which the Actionists and Socialists refused to join.

The Communist decision to join the new government maintained CLN unity whilst establishing the Actionists and

Socialists as a sort of 'loyal opposition' which went on to participate in subsequent CLN governments. The DC and the PCI were now locked together in a firm embrace. From this collaboration Togliatti hoped to gain permanent Communist participation in government, encouraged by the fact that Roosevelt still guided the American administration and looked favourably on the idea of a moderate-left government being established in Italy to encourage Vatican/Soviet detente. De Gasperi, for his part, sought to maintain the unity of the emergent political class for the autonomy it gave its constituent parts. The antagonistic cooperation of the DC and PCI guaranteed that the political initiative stayed in the CLN by giving each party leverage against its own more extremist and destabilising backers.

The danger that the power of political initiative would be displaced elsewhere was real. Hitherto the experience of the modern politics of mass enfranchisement in Italy had been one of disorder and authoritarianism. The importance of mass political parties in securing popular consent was still largely ignored or underestimated by the old Liberal elites and even by the radical Actionists, not to mention powerful figures in the Vatican or Bolshevik-minded Communists. If the ferment of a politically disorganised society was to be constructively channelled, it had to be mass parties that would do that channelling, and the political will of the embryonic political class to assert itself on this basis in a crucial phase of mobilisation was decisive.

Both De Gasperi and Togliatti understood that their ability constructively to guide the vast political upheaval

taking place, to whatever end, was dependent on their ability to maintain the unity of the CLN, or at least its core - the DC/PCI coalition. At some stage too, the premiership had to pass to one of the mass parties. In the summer of 1945, the liberation of northern Italy brought about a radicalisation of the political scene which severely tested the two leaders' ability to maintain the coalition, but the conclusion to this radical phase was marked by the passage of the premiership to De Gasperi, a development which Togliatti supported.

During the winter of 1944-45 some Actionists had proposed that an insurrection should follow the end of the war, leading to a revolutionary government. These maximalists had looked to the PCI for leadership, but the Communist elite in Rome had no desire to see the intransigent and confrontational attitudes of many Actionists, Socialists, and northern political elites establish their dominance, a stance which the outbreak of civil war in Greece had reinforced. Thus the Communists avoided preparing for an insurrection and crushed the very idea when the moment came for carrying an insurrection out. Togliatti recognised that his strategy could be completely upset by revolutionary haste, acknowledging in 1946 that even an early national election could have been disastrous.⁶² This behaviour led the Socialists and Actionists to call on the CLN parties to distinguish their respective policy positions and to pursue a more confrontational politics. But the summer 1945 'wind from the north' managed no more than to install Ferruccio Parri as an ineffective Prime Minister.

Parri's appointment broke the dead-lock created by the

counter-candidacy of De Gasperi to the candidacy of Pietro Nenni, the Socialist leader. Parri was the leader of the Actionist partisans and he enjoyed tremendous prestige thanks to his personal integrity and courage and to the Actionists' contribution to the Resistance, the Resistance being the only area in which the Actionists achieved any degree of mass organisation. But Parri was a political outsider. Opposed by conservatives he lacked a political machine to back him, and neither the Socialists nor the Communists gave any help.⁶³ By December 1945 the empty radicalism of the Action Party had been thoroughly discredited. Parri resigned.

Parri's government was important because of its failures. The CLN continued to dominate, whilst radical, party-less, tendencies blew themselves out. The radical historian Guido Quazza condemned this development as signalling the conservative nature of the parties, PCI included, in contrast to their radical bases. But as pointed out by Scoppola, Quazza underestimates the degree of conservatism and reaction latent in society.⁶⁴ The CLN sought a stable political evolution which would unite the country and avoid civil war.

On Parri's resignation, the PCI backed the nomination of De Gasperi as Prime Minister. Ironically enough, De Gasperi's success was interpreted as a victory for the reaction, even within Catholic Action,⁶⁵ though not many realised the historic significance of the move. It was largely in retrospect that it came to be widely seen as the moment of 'Thermidor', of counter-revolution. This interpretation, however, fails to note the significance of the passage of national political leadership to the 'political secretary' of

an embryonic mass party. Political leadership by a democratic mass-based figure relying on party self-discipline and party competition had never been seen before in Italy. The governing tradition was of leadership by a narrow elite based on forcibly imposed social discipline. The deployment of the army and the carabinieri on a garrison basis and the institution of repeated states of siege had been so normal under the liberal regime⁶⁶ that many had scarcely been aware of the rise of Fascism, and its attendant violence, as something qualitatively new. De Gasperi was the third CLN premier and he remained Prime Minister for three national elections and through eight coalitions, by the end of which time the bases for government by consent, rather than force, had successfully been laid.

But that is to go beyond immediate concerns. De Gasperi's first government was the fourth CLN government, but it was the first of a united Italy, and it is on this basis that Andreotti's 1989 cabinet was counted as the country's forty-ninth (see Appendix 1). It was because a CLN government led by De Gasperi and backed by Togliatti could demonstrate its authority at local level - something Parri's had singularly failed to do - that the Allies relinquished control of northern Italy at the end of 1945. A new political class had consolidated itself by asserting its will to govern. The possibility of government based on consent, of the existence of a centre, had been established. Now the political class had to make sure that its existence was not rendered ephemeral. The paese legale had to establish its identity with the paese reale. This required both coming to grips with the

country's problems, and gaining popular backing. These two requirements were potentially irreconcilable.

B. Political Responsibility and Leadership

From the beginning of 1946, the CLN bore full responsibility for getting Italy to work. This was a massive problem: war damage to the means of production and communication was immense, unemployment was a long-standing structural problem and the state was bankrupt. Mobilisation for war, the war itself, partisan warfare, deportation and the destruction of homes had wrought social havoc. The provisioning of major cities was a crisis surmounted on a day to day basis, dependent in the latter half of 1945 on surplus military supplies and from 1946 on aid from the Allies.

1. Leadership autonomy

The key to surmounting these problems was political. Class cleavage brought anarchy and apathy and threatened to paralyse reconstruction. Nobody knew who they were working for - the state? themselves? the old bosses? the anarchists? The rapid assumption of responsibility for the daily running of the country gave the new political class an extremely realistic and unadventurous approach to politics. Here, for De Gasperi, lay the second reason for wanting the Socialist and Communists in government: give them responsibility and they would behave responsibly. They had to. The immensity of the problems required it, and the dangers of failing to cope had been signalled as early as December 1944 when a newspaper called Uomo qualunque made its appearance. Attacking the new political class as inferior to the country's

requirements, and as better at providing radical slogans than government, it appealed to the 'common man' of its title on a populist-reactionary basis. Coining a slogan of its own which met with great success, it pronounced 'things were better when they were worse', and in 1945 the paper's editor founded his own political party.⁶⁷

De Gasperi's leadership was decisive. Government initiatives aimed at promoting reconstruction and seeking international support advanced rapidly. Fundamental and bitter political issues were fought out and decided within the ambit of the government and the Consulta, the advisory council of 400 CLN nominees which had been established under Parri. Local administration was handed back to state officials, the CLN figures being ejected, and it was decided to hold the local elections before the national one, which would elect not a parliament but a Constituent Assembly. On all these issues, and others, De Gasperi was presented as the personification of reaction, but whilst De Gasperi became the focus of the defeated voluntaristic left's attacks, Nenni and Togliatti continued to back him on important decisions whilst seeking to win the left electorate to their positions.

All the while the Socialists and Communists were in government they, like the DC, were busy extending their ability to organise and penetrate Italian society. The basis of their cooperation was ultra-competitive, both forces hoping to benefit electorally from the resumption of production which their truce had enabled. The success of the Socialist, Communist and Christian Democrats in replacing the Liberals and conservatives as the new political force in

society was demonstrated in the local elections held in the spring of 1946, and confirmed in the national election of June, but by late 1946 the ability of these elites to maintain their autonomy of their backers was under severe strain.

The DC suffered major losses to the right, whilst Togliatti had already been forced to abandon government in order to concentrate on maintaining order within the party. Togliatti's departure coincided with the reshuffle which followed the June 1946 Constituent Assembly election, the results of which De Gasperi used to exclude the Liberals and crisis-wracked Actionists from the cabinet. Many of the key political issues - the purges, the question of the monarchy, of local government, the purpose of the national election and the powers of the Constituent Assembly had all been decided. The crucial issue now was the economy. This subject is handled at length in Chapter Five.

It can be said here that major decisions which it was feared would have been politically destabilising were avoided throughout 1946 and early 1947. For the dominant elites of the major parties, the inevitability of a continuing role for private enterprise and the state was never seriously in doubt, and the removal first of the Liberal Party, and then of the Finance Minister Epicarmo Corbino in the autumn of 1946, reinforced this pragmatic, policy-avoiding orientation to economic management in the CLN. An ideology of 'productivism', common ground to both Communists and self-interested businessmen, if not to laissez faire ideologues, was allowed to dominate.⁶⁸ This was an ideology well-suited to a strategy of simply coping, whilst building party organisations and

preparing for a future electoral confrontation. Subsequently, policies could be put into effect on the basis of the tremendous flow of detailed information about the material condition and the different predispositions of various economic actors now becoming available to the government thanks to the investigative commissions of the Constituent Assembly.

The survival of the CLN into the spring of 1947 enabled the acceptance of the major territorial and institutional decisions still outstanding on a consensual basis. Thus the Trentino-Alto Adige Accord and the subsequent Paris Peace Treaty of 1947, the special arrangements for the regions, including Sicily, and the settlement of Article seven of the constitution dealing with Church/state relations were all settled by the broad coalition.

By the late spring of 1947 the management of both the economy and the polity required that the political class abandoned its provisional autonomy vis a vis its various hinterlands. The conflictual element within the embryonic party system had to be given full reign if the autonomy of the elites was not to see them pushed aside. The moment of the political class' greatest challenge had come. Would it be able to close the gap with civil society and yet maintain a stable, democratic political system?

2. The exclusion crisis and centrism

In May 1947 De Gasperi resigned, going on to form a government composed entirely of Christian Democrats - the country's first monocolore (one colour) government. His erstwhile coalition partners, the Socialists and Communists were excluded. The exclusion crisis, as it came to be known,

dramatically increased already high political tensions. The period of grand coalition was over, 'synchronic unity' had been ruptured. What would follow was unknown.

A radical change of government orientation was indicated. The government gained the backing not only of the Liberals, absent from the two previous governments, but also of the monarchists and qualunquisti. Decisive economic policies were at last implemented, causing great hardship. Not even De Gasperi's own party was convinced of the wisdom of the move, and for months the Liberals, Republicans and the newly formed Social Democrats waited to see if the left would be able to force themselves back into government.

In conventional radical and socialist historiography 1947 is the moment of conservative restoration, even if under the flag of Centrism. Conventionally dated from 1947,⁶⁹ here Centrism is regarded as having entered its long crisis in 1947. The CLN governments were centrist in the relational sense outlined in the introduction, but unlike in the classic consociational regime the party elites were not able to maintain their autonomy, but were forced to politically manifest the socio-cultural conflicts between their followings. Centrism originated in 1944, its crisis began in 1947, not 1953.

The crisis was severe. It threatened to reduce centrism to an exclusionary rump which would end the transition to democracy. Unwilling to back either a new dictatorship or a clerical regime, the small centre parties hung back from joining De Gasperi's monocolore. They expected to see the forcible reestablishment of synchronic centrism, or to be

more ironic, 'coerced consociationalism'.

We shall look at this paradoxical idea, and at the significance of the minor parties in Chapter Three, which covers the transformation of Centrism in detail. What this section has stressed is the horizontal linkages between the parties and their autonomy as a political class. This we have seen, was limited by political mobilisation, the need to consolidate intra-party, vertical linkages. It is to this theme we now turn.

C. Organising a Party Democracy

De Gasperi and Togliatti used their understanding of the importance of mass parties and of political manoeuvre to establish the CLN as the supreme political organ in the land. Its authority rested on these two figures cooperating as the leaders of the two mass movements in Italian society, but this was something of a bluff. The political predominance of the PCI and DC was not obviously secure in the early post-war period, and both leaders faced internal challenges, not least on account of their alliance. Yet it was the collaboration of the two leaders which guaranteed the dominance of these two parties. It destroyed any possibility of the emergence of a Christian left, subordinated the PSI and smashed the Actionists. There was a huge tension here. The political force of the nascent political class derived from the control the party leaders were able to exercise over their cultural hinterlands, yet precisely this was electorally untested and unlikely to survive such a test if elite collaboration continued.

1. The extension of party control into society

In 1944, Italy had existed as a state for only some seventy years, but it had failed to integrate state and society, or paese legale and paese reale. Thus, according to Martin Clark, Liberal Italy failed to create a nation-state.⁷⁰ This was the task that confronted the parties of the CLN.

The backing of the Church was decisive in mobilising the electorate behind the DC, but the Christian Democratic Party was not totally inexistent as an organisation. A meeting of Roman and Milanese catholic leaders in 1943 agreed on a single political organisation, preventing a north-south and conservative-progressive split, and Giuseppe Spataro, an ex-Populist deeply involved in organisational matters was able to report that virtually every province in the country had a representative of the party in it. He arranged the circulation of letters on a national basis in the summer of 1943, and though this organisation was extremely skeletal it was critical in becoming the recipient of a grass-roots desire for collective action.⁷¹ This process marginalised weaker movements such as Gerardo Bruni's Christian Socialists, and the DC/PCI link in the CLN reinforced the tendency to duopolistic concentration.

A most important contribution to this duopolistic tendency was made by the DC's appreciation of the importance of trade union organisation and cooperation with the Communists, Actionists and Socialists. In August 1943 the three major parties were already jointly agreed on the importance of anti-Fascist commissioners taking up appointments through

the Badoglio government, even though political collaboration with the royalist government was otherwise shunned.⁷² The adoption of such responsibilities in public life meant the penetration of society and the opportunity to gain leadership over it. The assertion of DC domination over Christian trade unionism involved De Gasperi in a great deal of intrigue in the Vatican, the party and trade union circles, and again involved Togliatti.⁷³

The grip of the mass parties was extended in June 1944 through the pact establishing trade union unity, and this coincided with the seizure of the political initiative by the CLN in Rome. The political coup thus went hand-in-hand with the establishment of political control over industrial mobilisation. Here we have the tight hierarchical control of trade unions by a 'peak organisation' of the type discussed in the literature on neo-corporatism⁷⁴ coinciding with the establishment of a grand coalition which has, similarly, been seen as a mechanism for stabilising the elite/mass relationship. The attempt to unify state and society, to achieve a democratic inter-penetration of the two is clear. Trade union unity outlived CLN governmental cooperation by over a year and the continuing constitutional cooperation, which ended in December 1947 when its task was completed, by six months-.

The DC's recognition of the need to penetrate and organise society in competition with other political forces, and its unwillingness to depend solely on the Church can be confirmed by the party's activity in the agricultural world. Here the DC stole a march on the PCI which, despite signifi-

cant reform attempts by its Minister for Agriculture,⁷⁵ Fausto Gullo, was slow to realise the agricultural world's significance.⁷⁶ The forerunner of Coldiretti, the association of 'farmers' which was to play such a significant role in the DC was founded in October 1944.

By late 1944, then, the DC's penetration of society was well advanced. A skeletal party organisation existed and the tremendous commitment of Catholic Action worked almost exclusively to its benefit. At the same time, industrial and agricultural union organisation was advancing. In the industrial world this involved cooperation with the left, but De Gasperi was careful to ensure that the catholic contribution was not swamped. The 'cultural' catholic workers' association ACLI was maintained independently, and if any party lost out in this period, it was the Socialists who completely lost the initiative in the face of the duopolistic relationship between the DC and PCI. The party organisation of society was intensely competitive. The critical determinant for crystallising the competitive penetration of society by the parties was the electoral process. This was why the timing of elections, and the sequence in which they took place was so important.

2. Elections: establishing party control

The radical left sought early elections, with the national election to precede local ones and to have the purpose of electing a sovereign power. This stance threatened to break up the CLN from which both De Gasperi and Togliatti, and their respective organisations, they hoped, gained. Consequently, the national election was delayed

until June 1946, and elected only a Constituent Assembly, not a parliament, allowing the CLN to continue governing.

The 1946 campaign was a heated affair and placed great strains on the CLN, but from without, rather than within. Togliatti was committed to avoiding insurrectionism and though the result was a great blow, revealing his failure to penetrate the middle classes in a catch-all strategy, he abandoned his government post in the subsequent reshuffle in order to reassert his strategy within his party. This was a necessary move, for by the autumn of 1946, elements of the party's elite and especially the Emilia-Romagna region, the party's stronghold, were in an insurrectionary mood.⁷⁷

Nor was the right happy. The election placed the left within sight of a majority, and the Christian Democratic Party was seen as too weak to resist the pressure. At the very moment that the DC demonstrated its indispensability, opposition to the party's weakness reached a high point. In the autumn elections, which included those at Rome, the party lost heavily to anti-CLN forces, in particular to Uomo qualunque. It was at this moment, as the pressures of the 'Roman party' to create a second catholic party reached a climax, that Montini brought the tension between the Pope and De Gasperi to a head, establishing the latter's political supremacy.

The new weakness of the DC helped Togliatti contain his adventurist supporters, for it now seemed that the left would be able to dominate the weaker centre party. De Gasperi's position was serious. Continuing collaboration with the left threatened to lose him the initiative to the right, but as he

had made clear to the Pope, collaboration remained necessary. Over the winter of 1946-47, however, the party elites came to accept that social and political tensions now focused on the maintenance of the CLN, and that to ignore this reality indefinitely courted disaster. Electoral confrontation in the run up to the first parliamentary election, due at the end of 1947, would allow the party elites to reassert their leadership and make clear the national balance of power, providing a new political basis to work from. For this strategy to work, vigorous electoral campaigning was necessary, incompatible with continued governmental cooperation.

The PCI, then, expected to go into the opposition before the election, but it did not anticipate the manner in which it occurred, and certainly did not expect the exclusion to be permanent. Togliatti was still orientated towards governing, not towards being a party of permanent opposition. Only the dramatic and unexpected initiation of the Marshall Plan on the basis of 'Cold War' confrontation, developments which events in Italy helped precipitate, thrust the PCI into a situation which the 1948 election confirmed to be one of all but guaranteed exclusion.⁷⁸

Nevertheless, throughout 1947 the CLN parties continued to collaborate in the Constituent Assembly, establishing a precedent for the PCI's elites to work with the government in the obscurity of state institutions whilst opposing it vigorously in public debate. The summer and autumn of 1947, moreover, saw massive socioeconomic turmoil as the government at last undertook to govern, implementing tough economic policies, and this turmoil led to the postponement of the

election until the summer of 1948. It is not surprising that electoral campaigning was incandescent. For the left it became the last opportunity to retain political influence following their political isolation in the autumn of 1947. At first, the minor parties had refused to back the conservative turn of the government, but in the late autumn, forced to choose between backing the government and bringing it down, Liberals, Republicans and the new Social Democrats (some half of the Socialist Party central committee having broken away in January 1947) had formally entered the cabinet.

Instead of a clash between parties, little more than a battle between alternative teams of leaders, the Republic's first election became part of a cosmic struggle between civilisations, the kingdom of God on one side and the Soviet Socialist utopia on the other. Italian society was corralled into massively confrontational politico-ideological blocks in an 'aligning election'. In the new political climate the leadership of the PCI found itself mobilising its electorate on the most extreme basis possible, yet wanting to moderate that force into a bargainable tool able to secure reentry to the cabinet, whilst the DC found itself pushed ever more deeply into being both a catholic and a conservative party, orientations which went deeply against the grain of many of its leading components. In effect, electoral mobilisation secured not simply the party control of society, but society's perverse control of the state as the intense ideological patterning of the party system became a series of cages in which party elites were trapped.⁷⁹

This Chapter has shown that between 1943 and 1947 a new type of polity was established in Italy in which political authority based itself on the leadership of political parties claiming to organise all of Italian society. It has argued that this type of sociopolitical organisation, common to modern states, was essentially new and untested in Italy, though limited previous experience had convinced the new political elites of its necessity. Much was made of the distinction between the party elites and the mass of society, to the point of establishing the existence of a 'political class' distinct from 'civil society'.

This distinction was stressed in looking at the Christian Democratic Party which was described as both of, and distinct from, the 'catholic world'. The leadership function of political parties in post-war Italy was such that the DC has to be grasped as both a party of interests, in particular catholic and economic interests, and as a purposive organisation whose aims apparently often conflicted with the interests it represented. However, the heterogeneity of the catholic world, the matrix from which the party sprang, was emphasised in order to indicate the room for manoeuvre which the party elite could obtain by playing interests and factions off against each other. Above all else, the autonomy which the party elite acquired, it acquired through its special responsibility for political affairs, that is for handling relations with the other political forces.

One of the prime objectives of this elite autonomy, it was argued, was to create a centrist political system, that is, a parliamentary and democratic system based simultaneously on party conflict and cooperation. In particular, it was argued that the political class constituted itself by establishing itself as the core of an electorally unproven party system, establishing a relational centre in the period 1944-47 through the quasi-grand coalition of the CLN. The events of 1947-48 threw this centrism into a profound crisis, but it will be argued in Chapter Three that whilst the existence of a relational centre was challenged, the survival of a working party system means that centrism was transformed rather than destroyed.

(1) P.Mair, 'Adaptation and Control: Towards an Understanding of Party System Change' in H.Daalder and P.Mair (eds), Western European Party Systems. Continuity and Change, London: Sage, 1983, pp.405-429; S.M.Lipset and S.Rokkan, 'Cleavage Structures, Party Systems and Voter Alignments: An Introduction' in S.M.Lipset and S.Rokkan (eds), Party Systems and Voter Alignments, New York: Free Press, 1967, pp.1-64.

(2) S.H.Barnes, 'Italy: Oppositions on Left, Right and Centre', in R.Dahl (ed), Political Oppositions in Western Democracies, London: Yale University Press, 1966, pp.303-331, esp.p.321; Representation in Italy: Institutionalised Tradition and Electoral Choice, London: University of Chicago Press, 1977.

(3) See E.J.Kirchner and G.Smith (eds), Liberal Parties in Western Europe, Cambridge University Press, 1988, and especially G.Pridham, 'Two Roads of Italian Liberalism: the Partito Repubblicano Italiano (PRI) and the Partito Liberale (PLI)', pp.29-61.

(4) G.Amendola, Scelta di una Vita, Milan: Giuffre, 1976; E.Scalfari, 'La

cosa che nasce', La Repubblica, 8/3/90. It is not of little interest that in the internal struggle within the PCI which followed Togliatti's death, it was Amendola who favoured maintaining the much criticised disciplinary practices of the party in order to consolidate a 'socialdemocratic' policy programme.

(5) A.C.Jemolo, Church and State in Italy, Oxford: Blackwell, 1960, pp.278-9.

(6) J.Lukacs, The Last European War, London, 1976, quoted in M.Clark, Modern Italy, 1871-1982, London: Longman, 1984, p.295.

(7) G.Poggi, 'The Church in Italian Politics, 1945-50', in S.J.Woolf (ed), The Rebirth of Italy, 1945-50, London: Longman 1972, pp.135-155.

(8) G.Miccoli, 'Chiesa, partito cattolico e societa civile' in V.Castronovo (ed), L'Italia contemporanea, 1945-75, Turin: Einaudi, 1976, pp.191-252, esp.pp.191-2.

(9) *ibid*, pp.194-5.

(10) A.Riccardi, Il 'partito romano' nel secondo dopoguerra, 1945-54, Brescia: Morcelliana, 1983.

(11) A.Jemolo, *op.cit.* p.280

(12) A.Jemolo, *ibid*, p.309.

(13) E.Galli della Loggia, 'Ideologie, classi e costumi' in V.Castronovo *op.cit.*1976, pp.379-434, esp.pp.385-90.

(14) G.Galli, I partiti politici, Turin: UTET, 1975, p.367.

(15) C.Moreno, 'Trenta anni di regime DC: il cammino della reazione', Monthly Review, edizione italiana, October, 1976, pp.19-29 and Jan.1977, pp.25-34.

(16) See G.Campanini, 'Genesi e sviluppo della DC' in Dizionario Storico del Mondo Cattolico in Italia, Vol.1, tome 1, pp.102-112.

(17) J.H.Whyte, Catholics in Western Democracies, Dublin: Gill and Macmil-

lan, 1981.

(18) J.Seidler, 'Contested Accommodation: The Catholic Church as a Special Case of Social Change', in Social Forces, June, 1986, pp.847-75.

(19) A.Riccardi, op.cit. 1983, pp.92-4.

(20) M.Clark, op.cit.1984, pp.346 and 327; on 'regime indifference' see P.E.Sigmund, 'The Catholic Tradition and Modern Democracy', The Review of Politics, University of Notre Dame, Fall, 1987, pp.530-548.

(21) P.Allum, Italy - Republic without Government?, London: W.W.Norton, 1973, p.61.

(22) A.Jemolo, op.cit. p.320.

(23) W.Laqueur, Europe Since Hitler: The Rebirth of Europe, London: Penguin, 1982, pp.20-22.

(24) A.Riccardi, Il potere del Papa: da Pio XII a Paolo VI, Rome: Laterza, 1988, pp.4-5.

(25) A.Giovagnoli, 'Sulla formazione della classe dirigente democristiana', Il Mulino, Jan-Feb., 1980, pp.102-129.

(26) R.Sani, Da De Gasperi a Fanfani: "La civiltà cattolica" e il mondo cattolico italiano nel secondo dopoguerra (1945-62), Brescia: Morcelliana, 1986, pp.40 ff.

(27) M.Casella, L'Azione Cattolica alla caduta del Fascismo. Attività e progetti per il dopoguerra, (1942-45), Rome: Studium, 1984.

(28) A.Riccardi, Roma 'città sacra'? Dalla Conciliazione all'operazione Sturzo, Milan: Vita e pensiero, 1979, Chapter 9.

(29) D.Sassoon, Contemporary Italy, London: Longman, 1986, pp.143-4 ff.

(30) A.Riccardi, op.cit. 1988.

(31) G.Verucci, La chiesa nella società contemporanea, Rome: Laterza, 1988, Chapter 5.

(32) F.Traniello, 'Pio XII dal mito alla storia' in A.Riccardi (ed), Pio XII, Bari: Laterza, 1984, pp.5-29.

(33) G.Verucci, op.cit. pp.187 ff.

(34) The assessment of A.Acerbi, La chiesa nel tempo: Sguardi sui progetti di relazioni tra Chiesa e società civile negli ultimi cento anni, Milan: Vita e pensiero, 2nd edition, 1984, pp.142 ff. has been widely quoted.

(35) G.Martina, La chiesa in Italia negli ultimi trent'anni, Rome: Studium, 1977, p.47.

(36) R.Rufilli, 'Formazione del progetto democristiano, dopo il Fascismo' in Democrazia cristiana e Costituente nel dopoguerra, Rome: Cinque Lune, 1980, Vol.1, 31-114, pp.59 ff.

(37) S.Ristuccia (ed), Intelletuali cattolici tra riformismo e dissenso, Milan: Edizioni di Comunità, 1975.

(38) A.Jemolo, op.cit. pp.328-9.

(39) P.Scoppola, La proposta politica di De Gasperi, Bologna: Il Mulino, 1977, pp.126 ff.

(40) P.Scoppola, ibid. pp.42 ff.

(41) S.Magister, la politica Vaticana e l'Italia, 1943-78, Rome; Riuniti, 1979, pp.47 ff.

(42) A.Riccardi, op.cit. 1988, especially pp.51-58.

(43) A.Riccardi, ibid. pp.44-51; A.Riccardi, op.cit. 1983, Chapter 2.

(44) A.Riccardi, op.cit. 1983; R.Sani, op.cit. 1986.

(45) S.Magister, op.cit. Chapter 4.

(46) R.Moro, La formazione della classe dirigente cattolica, 1929-37, Bologna: Il Mulino, 1979. See also, A.Giovagnoli, Le premesse della ricostruzione. Tradizione e modernità nella classe dirigente cattolica

del dopoguerra, Milan: Nuovo Istituto Editoriale Italian, 1982.

(47) G.Baget-Bozzo, Il partito cristiano al potere. La DC di Fanfani e di Moro, Florence: Vallecchi, 1977, Vol. 2, p.359.

(48) R.Moro, 'I movimenti intellettuali cattolici', in R.Ruffilli (ed), Cultura politica e partiti nell'eta della Costituente, Vol. 2, tome 1, pp.159-261, pp.178-183.

(49) R.Ruffilli, op.cit., 1980, p.66.

(50) A.Rigobello, 'Cultura europea e il progetto democristiano' in G.Rossini (ed), Democrazia cristiana e Costituente. Bilancio storiografico e prospettive di ricerca, Rome: Cinque lune, 1980, pp.115-137.

(51) G.Baget Bozzo, Il partito cristiano al potere, Vols. 1 & 2, Florence: Vallecchi, 1974, 1977.

(52) P. Scoppola, op.cit. 1977.

(53) A.Ardigo, 'Laicità e partecipazione politica', in V.Castronovo (ed), op.cit. 1976, pp.322-64.

(54) S.M.Di Scala, Renewing Italian Socialism; Nenni to Craxi, Oxford University Press, 1988, Chapter one.

(55) P.Farneti, The Italian party System, 1945-1980, London: Pinter, 1985, pp.2-4.

(56) See I.Benn, 'The uses of sovereignty', Politica Studies, Vol.3, 1955, pp.109-122; Preston King, 'Sovereignty' in D.Miller (ed), The Blackwell Encyclopaedia of Political Thought, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1987, pp.492-495.

(57) G.F.Marcucci, Alle origini della DC, 1929-44, Brescia: Morcelliana, 1982, Chapter 4.

(58) M.Clark, op.cit. 1984, p.306

(59) G. Baget Bozzo, op.cit. 1974, pp.93-94.

(60) G.Galli, Storia della Democrazia cristiana, Bari: Laterza, 1978, pp.45-46.

(61) F.Margiotta-Broglio, V.Onida, M.Reineri and E.Rotelli, La successione. Cattolici, stato e potere negli anni della ricostruzione, Rome: Edizioni Lavoro, 1980, esp. V.Onida, 'I cattolici e la continuita dello stato: profili costituzionali', pp.29-94.

(62) P.Scoppola, Gli anni della Costituente, fra politica e storia, Bologna: Il Mulino, 1980, p.71; also op.cit. 1977, p.274.

(63) G.Mammarella, L'Italia dalla caduta del fascismo ad oggi, Bologna: Il Mulino, 1978, p.127; G.Bocca, Storia della Repubblica italiana, Milano: Rizzoli, 1982, pp.11-12.

(64) G.Quazza, 'Storia della storiografia, storia del potere, storia sociale', in Rivista di storia contemporanea, April, 1979; P.Scoppola, op.cit. 1980, Chapter 1, part 5.

(65) P.Scoppola, op.cit. 1980, pp.77 ff.

(66) M.Clark op.cit. pp.48-53, 233-4.

(67) G.Mammarell, L'Italia contemporanea, 1943-85, Bologna: Il Mulino, 1987, pp.64-5.

(68) P.Barucci, 'Il dibattito sulla costituzione economica', in G.Rossini (ed), op.cit. 1980, Vol.2, pp.673-718; P.Ginsborg, Storia d'Italia dal dopoguerra a oggi, Turin: Einaudi, 1989, Vol.1, p.257 on the contining effects of this on the PCI/CGIL in the 1950s.

(69) P.Scoppola, 'Per una storia del Centrisimo' in G. Rossini (ed), De Gasperi e l'eta del Centrisimo, 1947-53, Rome: Cinque Lune, 1984, pp.23-51, pp.28-9.

(70) M.Clark, op.cit. 1984. p.177.

(71) G.F.Marcucci, op.cit. pp.76 ff.

(72) Ibid. pp.109 ff.

(73) P.Scoppola, op.cit. 1977, pp.86 ff. including reference to G.Bocca's biography Palmiro Togliatti, Bari: Laterza, 1977.

(74) See eg M.O.Heisler, 'Corporate Pluralism Revisited. Where is the Theory?', Scandinavian Political Studies, 2:3, 1979; G.Lehmbruch & P.Schmitter (eds), Patterns of Corporatist Policy-making, London: Sage, 1982.

(75) P.Ginsborg, op.cit. pp.77-81, 116.

(76) G.Amendola, op.cit. 1976, p.347.

(77) P.Scoppola, op.cit. 1980, pp.100 ff.

(78) J.L.Harper, America and the Reconstruction of Italy, 1945-48, Cambridge University Press, 1986.

(79) P.Scoppola, op.cit. 1980, Part 2, sections 3 & 4.

Analysed in the terms of this thesis, the collapse of the grand coalition in 1947 was a particularly dramatic crisis because it was a collapse of synchronic centrism which threatened to lead to a collapse of centrism, of the existence of a relational centre, itself. The exclusion of the left was followed by the electoral fusion of the centre and right in 1948, and this appeared to make permanent the radical exclusion of some one third of the electorate, all on the left. Such exclusion violated the centrist principle of balanced all-party participation in the management of the polity. This Chapter considers the significance of the fact that this situation proved to be transient.

The governing coalition identified itself as centrist, and from 1950-51 its alienation of the right-wing electorate which it had briefly attracted in 1948 grew apace. A definite three-block tendency developed in which both the right and the left were excluded. The 1953 election was critical in fixing this sub-structural organisation of the party system. The period 1947-53 is thus seen as a period of the crisis of centrism. In it, the centrism established by the CLN was first overthrown and then recreated, in a transformed and ambiguous way, in order to avoid a two-block confrontation which threatened to put an end to the very principle of centrism. The advantages and disadvantages of the three-block version of centrism are given particular attention.

One highly influential model of the nature and organi-

sation of politics in this period, that is, the onset of the Cold War, high-lighted the necessity and benefits of the three-block structuring of the Italian party system. It identified 'left' and 'right' globally as communist and fascist respectively, hence as destructive, anti-democratic forces bent on dictatorial rule, by contrast to the 'vital centre' of 'democracy' which had to exclude them from government were it to survive.¹ This model is echoed by Sartori in his model of polarised pluralism.

The purpose of this chapter is to examine the extent to which such a model was realised in Italy between 1947/8 and 1953. In the first Section, the positive aspect of the three-block system are considered, but in a way which stresses continuing interaction, not radical separation. It does this by considering the PCI's understanding of the situation and the DC's intentions. The second Section examines the significance of the government's reformist will and its actions in reestablishing the right block, creating the three-block structure of the party system, again questioning the rigidity of the analytical model of rigid vertical division.

The Chapter concludes that the tendency towards the creation of a three-block system was positive in its confirmation of centrism as a principle of interaction within a unitary whole, but negative in decisively turning the centre into a location identified with a single party. In consequence, it is argued that the failure of the election of 1953 to give the centrist coalition the bonus of seats provided for in the 1952 electoral reform (the so-called 'swindle

law') was significant because it guaranteed the survival of centrism whilst exposing the danger that the new centrism would be a self-contradictory and self-destructive, exclusionary' one.

I CRISIS & TRANSFORMATION: EXCLUSIONARY CENTRISM

The exclusion of the Communists and Socialists from the cabinet in 1947 was not the result of American pressure. De Gasperi's precipitation of the crisis provoked concern in the US administration for the Americans feared political confrontation. Their fears were fuelled by the dramatic economic action which De Gasperi promptly initiated.² De Gasperi, by contrast, deliberately sought confrontation, deliberately tied political and economic crises together in a dramatic and decisive fashion, and deliberately provoked the Americans to respond to the political explosion of the Italian party system.

De Gasperi seized the political initiative in order to reap the maximum electoral benefit possible from a direct confrontation with 'Communism'. Such a confrontation enabled the DC to acquire the support of both conservatives and the bulk of practising Catholics, conservative or not, by condemning intransigent left Catholicism to apparent irrelevance now that it was part of the PCI rather than a separate party organisation.³

The Christian Democrat leader tied the anti-Communist electoral manoeuvre to the economic one in order to generate the maximum support for the Italian government from the 'capitalist' world, meaning the business world in Italy, and

the USA. De Gasperi wanted to force Italian business to give its wholehearted support to the new political system, and to provoke the USA in to giving Italy increased aid. Already Italian business had begun to implement its own foreign policy, outflanking governments distinguished by their policy immobilism, and US attitudes to Europe were unsure and contradictory. De Gasperi achieved a success that probably went beyond his wildest dreams. Not only did the DC gain the support of the Italian business community through the so-called De Gasperi/Costa alliance, it also contributed to the launch of the Marshall Plan.⁴

The exclusion of the left meant that De Gasperi could implement policies to stabilise the economy which had hitherto been delayed, and take responsibility for them. In this way, social antagonism was decisively focused on a politically aggregating dialectic between a government and an opposition at the parliamentary level, and the PCI's insistence on focusing on the political struggle fitted in with this schema. `Economic' confrontation within civil society was discouraged by the Communist elite itself, and business and state repression ensured that maximalist opposition to the `bourgeois regime' were marginalised through the loss of their jobs and so on. In this way, political and economic stabilisation and reconstruction were combined, and their conjunction helped the success of both. The question is, did the defeat of the left, in the work-place and in parliament, amount to an exclusion which signalled the end of the fragile centrist regime?

A. The Exclusion of the Left?

The first elected parliament was the only one which gave the Christian Democrats a majority in the Chamber of Deputies, yet it presented a real blow to a part of De Gasperi's strategy. The weakness of the Social Democrats in the face of PCI/PSI unity hardly made it a convincing partner with which to affirm the continuation of broad-based centrist government. The electoral campaign had been dominated by the confrontation between the Popular Front and the DC which marginalised the other parties, and a pretty clear division between a right government and an excluded left opposition seemed self-evident.

Such a division did not per se signal the end of centrism since 'diachronic centrism', ie centrism via governmental alternation, is based on the exclusion of the opposition, as was the case ab initio in post-war West Germany. However, the permanent exclusion of the opposition, as in Italy's 'blocked' system, is another matter. The policy confrontation in the Cold War atmosphere of the first legislature was, moreover, particularly intense, with an apparently unbridgeable divide over the strategic issues such as economic and military integration in the West.

Nevertheless, as we have seen, pressures from the grass-roots had made it organisationally and electorally imperative that the PCI be outside the government in the run-up to the 1948 election, and although Togliatti had been sure of the party's return to power, the events of 1947-48 rendered this all but impossible. Attitudes towards the Marshall Plan, and hence to the USA and the USSR, crystal-

lised the difference between the Popular Front and the other parties making the resumption of governmental cooperation impossible. Because this strategic incompatibility mirrored a social confrontation between workers and entrepreneurs, a division of roles within the political class now took place. This saw the quality of government soar as the cabinet ended the previous policy immobilism and decisively took responsibility for promoting economic and political reconstruction. The opposition, for its part, acted both as a lightning conductor for the intense stresses which this caused, and as a stimulus to the government to minimise these stresses.

The confrontational division between the government and the left was thus beneficial to the polity as a whole. At the same time, moreover, the division was not as rigid as it appeared. Not even the electoral reform, which would have made the government's parliamentary majority secure, was solely an anti-left measure. It was introduced only in 1952 after it was clear that the centrist policies which the government pursued risked being destroyed by the collapse of the coalition's electoral support, principally to the right. The government was to the left of much of its 1948 electorate, and the electoral reform sought to reconfirm the three-block pattern revealed in 1946, not merely to exclude and dominate the left.

As for strategic policy matters, seemingly black- and-white questions such as Italy's military posture and economic orientation were not issues for the left's elites in quite the way that a dichotomous left/centre/right model would suggest. Italy's geo-military and geopolitical location,

and the consequences, were acknowledged. The true debate was not about whether integration with the West should take place, but about the detail of it, and whether the left should have a say in the decision.

The early 1950s was the period of Mccarthyism in the USA, and the transformation of the 'Cold War' into a hot one in Korea, and in these circumstances the most important strategic decision made by the government was the decision not to outlaw the PCI. This would certainly have ended centrism, for the increase in police repression would have created a qualitatively new regime based on the repression, isolation and atomisation of entire strata of the industrial working class and peasantry. It would have been a repeat of the 1860s. Then, another new, and would-be constitutional and modernising, regime had implemented a policy of despotic repression throughout southern Italy, with major long-term historical consequences. As the CLN had indicated the new political class' intention not to repeat the mistakes of the post World War One period, so did the handling of the crisis of centrism reveal the intention of the new Republican political class not to repeat the mistakes of the post-unification state. Thus, national integration by means of political party organisation and party competition survived, and the left remained politically potent, uniting north and south, industrial and agricultural demands for reform and modernisation. The PCI's survival and the electoral attraction of the Popular Front affected the behaviour of the DC, its coalition allies and parties on the right. In the long run, PCI legitimacy, however successfully contested in ideological and

electoral rhetoric, was ultimately underpinned by that party's legal status.

But interaction between the left and the centre arose not only the basis of the electoral competition of the two blocks, but also from the overlap of policy positions between Left elites and subordinate (as it turned out) Centre elites. The policy defeats of the excluded left were matched by defeats for the powerful left opposition within the centrist coalition. As we shall see in the following sub-section and Section B, tensions within the DC and the other government parties were strong, and only surmounted by a call to discipline in the face of the spectre of Communism and the threat of turmoil which the collapse of the government would bring. The internal difficulties De Gasperi faced allowed the Communists to continue to regard the DC as a centrist party, an amalgam of conservative and popular and democratic forces. This meant that the PCI could continue to pursue its strategy of seeking alliances with, or within, the parties of the centre, and unlike its French counterpart, the Communist Party in Italy never became estranged from 'bourgeois democracy' and its theorists.⁵

The PCI had, nevertheless, a different view of the nature of government and of power, based on Gramsci. Togliatti's handling of the Gramscian inheritance was undoubtedly influenced by the organisational need to make a virtue out of necessity, but the emphasis on the importance of building a massively organised 'presence' in society as a strategy for eventually obtaining governmental power can be seen to have some correspondence with theories of government which began

to dominate political science from the 1960s. These, too, played down the authoritative capabilities of government, unless backed by, and further enabling, deeper politico-cultural changes.⁶ As held by the PCI, this view allowed the Left to believe that though it was excluded from the cabinet, it was not excluded from governance, or the wider political process. Exclusion was thus reversible and relative, rather than permanent and total, and the validity of this approach was apparently confirmed by the failure of the Centre block to gain a secure parliamentary majority in the 1950s.

B. Exclusion and the DC

It was certainly not the desire of the whole of the DC permanently to exclude the Left from government. A majority may have expected the permanent exclusion of Marxists, but in 1947 a large grouping within the party, known after its leader Giuseppe Dossetti as the Dossettiani, did not accept even this. They wanted tripartite cooperation to continue, and when it did not, expressed the hope that a single party government would be able more coherently to implement a social democratic programme similar to that of the British Labour Party.⁷

Even where the Left was rejected, a distinction has to be made between those who rejected both parties and electorate, and those, such as Gronchi and Fanfani, who made a point of distinguishing between party and electorate with the intention of appealing to the left electorate whilst asserting their anti-socialism. Large sections of the DC, ideologically and programmatically hostile to integration in, and

subordination to, the liberal and capitalist West, to liberal financial and employment policies, and to NATO, had reason to believe that little separated them from leftist voters in policy terms. Perhaps they were right. What hindered electoral mobility was party identification based on supra-rational, ideological motivation which the established party elites pursued so vigorously precisely in order to overcome such structurally destabilising alternatives as left Catholicism.⁸

Both the left and the centre of the DC hoped that the success of the government's social and economic strategies would reinforce their own mass appeal and that of the newly founded Social Democrats, weakening the opposition whilst providing the DC with a safe centre-left ally. For the DC left this tended to mean that two centre-left parties, one catholic, one lay, would govern, flanked by left and right extremes. For De Gasperi, the DC could not be identified as a centre-left party, but had to remain a centrist one. Its conservative electorate and its anti-communism permitted only a defensive progressivism, and the radicalism of the DC left threatened to make even that unrealisable by pushing the party's electorate to the right.

The ambitions of the DC left were also destabilising because identifying the DC as centre-left, like the PSDI (and later the PSI), required some means of distinguishing them for electoral purposes, otherwise, again, electoral mobility would bring political turmoil. The obvious distinction lay in the DC's catholic identity, and this reinforced the grounds for the opposition and the lay centre parties alike

to fear the DC's 'integralism'. Not that identifying the party with the centre-right was an alternative, for this confirmed the clerico-conservative nature of the party.

The perception of the DC as a catholic integralist party pursuing a 'third way', by its allies and foes alike, was hard to avoid. The roots of an important distinction can be seen here between what can be called on the one hand a **centrist political strategy**, and on the other a **centrist party strategy**. The former pursued a programmatic centrism seeking to distance the DC from the right (including the Vatican) and to encourage the growth of a moderate socialist coalition ally. In the long run, the electoral reinforcement of the centre would lead to its bifurcation and government alternation between a progressive centre-right and a centre-left. In the 1980s, Ciriaco De Mita was consciously to pursue this path, though by this time the core of the centre-left included the PCI. The problem with the strategy is that it implies the DC going into the opposition at some stage which would be both 'disloyal' and potentially disastrous for the party itself. The centrist party strategy, by contrast, aims to maintain the centrality of the DC, to prevent its identification with the right/centre-right and the development of a two-block system.

In Section II, we shall now see that the 1948-53 government was not that of a clerico-capitalist power block excluding the left. If anything, the genuinely centrist economic and lay policy orientations of the PSDI and PRI were those most nearly realised.⁹ Centrist government in this period vindicates the strategy of the PCI elite. The danger

was that the transformation of centrism into an occupied location would see, if the 'swindle law' seats bonus was triggered in 1953, too complete a victory. That is, the expropriation of the centre by the DC, leading to the domination in that party of a centrist party strategy which would, out of catholic conviction and organisational self-interest, marginalise the opposition, contradicting the centrist political strategy.

II CENTRIST GOVERNMENT

Despite the many challenges to De Gasperi, government policy in the period 1948-53 was largely shaped by him, or in accordance with his aims. These were not simply to occupy power, but to govern, and to govern according to a reformist programme stressing social justice based on growth and the development of a lay democracy. The difficulty was in realising this aim in the complex political circumstances of the time.¹⁰

A. Social Reform: The Limits of Voluntarism

After a year of government, the new parliament had implemented little more than a watered-down housing scheme from its ambitious programme of social reform. The ability of the conservative majority in the party to block reform had been revealed, and the upshot of this was a complex battle inside the party. The 3rd Congress of 1949 took the form of a confrontation between the Dossettiani and De Gasperi, with the latter seeking to defeat the left but to keep it in the

party and use its mobilisation against the right. The left was internally divided over issues and strategies, as well as being divided by conflicting personal interests, and De Gasperi was able to convince Dossetti that it was adventurous and self-defeating to stride forward along the road of reform as the Left wished. De Gasperi offered a cautious 'two shuffles forward, one shuffle backwards' approach which won because it bound the party together, uniting centrist political and party strategies.

Events outside the party helped enforce upon the right of the party the need for accommodation with the left. By late 1949 social disturbances arising out of the land question in southern Italy were a serious problem, and when land occupations led to confrontations with the police and a series of fatal shootings, the PSDI used the opportunity to withdraw from the government. The Social Democrats, like the DC left, were pushing for greater reform, and hoped to achieve it by attracting defectors from within the highly troubled PSI. The PRI too had difficulty in justifying its support of the government. Before joining the monocolore in late 1947 the PRI and PSDI had backed a parliamentary vote of no-confidence moved by the PCI and PSI against the DC. Now they were supporting that party, and their bases were not happy that the provision, with the PLI, of a lay counterweight to the DC was sufficient justification.¹¹

Under the impact of external and internal pressure the DC right was forced make concessions, and the Dossettiani gained prominent positions in the party and in government. Thus, 1950 became a year of reform. Most significant were

the series of agricultural reforms, the establishment of the Cassa per il Mezzogiorno (Fund for the South), tax reform and the laying of the legislative bases for the foundation of ENI, the National Hydrocarbons Institute which later made a major contribution to the decisive defeat of conservative economic interests.¹²

The reforms of 1950 were radical enough to provoke a major electoral swing to the right in the local and regional elections of 1950-52, especially in the south. In Sicily and Sardinia the regional governments became dependent on the MSI, whilst the monarchist PNM became important on the mainland. With the connivance of the 'Roman party' both these parties sought to become respectable conservative parties in this period, able to increase their electoral pressure on the DC.¹³ The centrist government was then being heavily pressured from both left and right, and it was this that prompted De Gasperi to move towards the idea of a 'protected democracy' and electoral reform to reinforce a centre block which would establish the three-block structure adumbrated in 1946. The alternative, it was feared, was to accept division into two blocks, splitting the DC and creating a destabilising left/right confrontation which centrism was designed to avoid.

However, the requirements of the electoral reform were not reached in 1953, nor did a two-block system emerge. The reforms of 1950 were far from radical and the years 1951-52 saw not only the electoral rise of the right but also massive discontent within the catholic world at De Gasperi's moderation.¹⁴ De Gasperi's manipulation of papal support¹⁵ never-

theless ensured the marginalisation of this Dossetti-inspired discontent in the name of catholic unity. In consequence, renewed radical mobilisation ended up boosting support for De Gasperi's DC, often, paradoxically, interweaving itself with the attempt of the clerico-conservatives to force De Gasperi into alliance with the right ('operation Sturzo' see below). Where this mobilisation did turn against the party, it was brutally marginalised as a disloyal fringe of the catholic world which supported the fragments which split from the lay centre parties in 1952/33 to back the opposition against the new electoral law. The mobilisational vigour of Catholicism, left and right, thus contributed to the survival of centrism based on a three-block structure, though the centre block was far weaker than De Gasperi had intended.

To frustrated Christian leftists, the rise of Fanfani, following De Gasperi's death in 1954, seemed to offer the possibility of a more progressive Christian Democratic government. The view that the DC could, through regeneration, be its own alternative, was to become a consistently reappearing party theme.¹⁶ The problem with the thesis was its excessive voluntarism. So long as the party's left was unable to effect an alliance with the forces of the left block, the right and centre was bound to continually frustrate them. Nevertheless, whilst the left attacked De Gasperi, it was actually De Gasperi's pursuit of political stabilisation and economic regeneration through maximum integration with the 'West', and his use of left-Catholicism, that lay the bases for Italy's subsequent economic successes.¹⁷

B. The Threat of the Clerical Right

The expulsion of the left from the cabinet in the spring of 1947 removed the last elements of restraint on the situation of spiralling catholic/socialist confrontation. From the autumn, as the political, economic and international dimensions of crisis climaxed, De Gasperi availed himself of the intransigent confessionalist rhetoric whilst Togliatti moved to embrace the revolutionary equivalent.¹⁸ In the wake of the DC's electoral victory in 1948, given the party's majority in the Chamber of Deputies, the strength of the idea of an integralist catholic state grew.¹⁹ For the next decade the development of a confessional state under Vatican/DC direction was a major political issue, and by 1947 the radical democrat Gaetano Salvemini was decrying their joint transformation of Italy into a 'totalitarian state'.²⁰

De Gasperi strove to counter this development by continuing the coalition with the minor centrist parties, now equally as valuable as anti-clerical parties as they were as anti-communist parties. This, of course, served only to infuriate the clerico-conservative reaction to the new phenomenon of Christian Democracy, and in 1949 'closed Catholicism', as John Whyte called it,²¹ achieved a major, but in retrospect, pyrrhic, victory: the papal declaration of the excommunication of practising Communists. This excommunication was subsequently clarified as covering Socialists and trade unionists in CGIL, as well as members of the PCI.

This action has since been judged an action of dubious merit, political or religious,²² and to have been a reflec-

tion of the Church's essentially defensive posture in the face of events in Eastern Europe,²³ but it also reflected the power struggle going on in the catholic world and within the Vatican.²⁴ Certainly, however, it was used by conservative politicians to push for catholic exclusiveness, just as Aldo Moro, a little over a decade later, used John XXIII's new conciliatory message to justify the DC's 'opening to the left'. At this stage, the clerico-conservatives hoped to force the DC to the right, both through internal manoeuvre and by external pressure.

De Gasperi was able to retain the upper hand. Though he needed the Pope's support in order to defeat the challenge presented by Dossetti without breaking catholic unity, his skill in achieving this made him indispensable to the right. Dossetti's challenge was a major one, enduring until 1951, and to attack De Gasperi would have been self-destructive at a moment when the right felt the catto-communist/progressive tendency to be ascendant in the catholic world.²⁵ In fact, De Gasperi's political ascendancy within Catholicism was so prominent that, in championing Italy's integration in the West against the pacifist tendency in his party, he so involved the Vatican as to force it to more or less it abandon its own supra-political posture of hostility to East and West.²⁶

De Gasperi used the Pope and the right to defeat Dossetti, but then promptly turned around to dramatically assert his party's independence of the Vatican, and the Pope specifically, above all when these were being used to promote the right. Between 1952-54, the right sought repeatedly to force

the DC to form an alliance with the monarchists and/or MSI. The so-called 'operation Sturzo' was launched in 1952 in an attempt to get De Gasperi to accept the hitherto excluded parties of the right as coalition partners in the 1952 local elections in Rome and the south. With the national election in less than a year, and with the backing of the Pope for the prospective coalitions, the significance of operation Sturzo was not merely local, and De Gasperi refused the alliance. The centrist coalition won through in Rome, but on a minority of the vote, and it was De Gasperi's concern about the ability of centrism to survive at the national level that led him to favour electoral reform, and to speak seriously of the need for a 'protected democracy'.

In fact, centrism based on a three-block system survived without the new electoral provisions being triggered, indeed because the 'swindle law' was defeated, and the ascendancy of both the political and the economic worlds over the religious was reinforced between 1952-54. The ambitions of the monarchist party, the PNM, were blocked largely by the industrial elites of the north, who ensured that it did not expand there; whilst De Gasperi and his Interior Minister, Scelba, dispatched the MSI into a limbo of electoral illegitimacy by the lingering threat to ban it under the 1952 legislation regarding parties hostile to the constitution.²⁷

Massive defections from the governing coalition to the right in the 1953 election turned the centrist government into a centre block in a three-block party system. The defeat for the clerico-conservatives was a double one. Not only was the political right now excluded, but catholic

coalition partners had been rejected in favour of lay ones. The Christian Democratic Party was leading Italian society towards a more tolerant and pluralist society.

This outcome was far from immediately apparent. The 1950s witnessed a triumphalist mood in the Church in which Catholic evangelism militated against political pluralism. A series of crusades, such as the declaration of 1950 a 'Holy Year' and the crusade to turn Rome back into a 'sacred city', made Italian public life a continuous round of religious exhortation and celebration the organising of which frequently involved the use and abuse of privileges against which the state and its representatives made no determined stand.²⁸ The 1950s were, as Martin Clark puts it, 'the Marian years' when 'the clergy were politically powerful, or thought to be'.²⁹

Pietro Scoppola goes beyond Martin Clark's emphasis on the semblance of clerical power to identify a continuous decline in the presence and power of the Church in Italian society from 1948. This he links to the development of a secular, consumer-orientated society championed by the DC as the basis for its power.³⁰ The indifference of the DC to the Church's interests, and the negative effects of supporting that party were, moreover, recognised at the time. The Inter-Regional Bishops' Conference of January 1952, the first of its kind in Italy, identified support for the DC as one of the reasons for problems of clerical recruitment and morale, so that Church support for the DC was seen as a contingent necessity rather than a virtue in itself.

One strategy for coping with what was seen as the DC's

fundamental unpopularity and disinterest in the aims of the Church was that of keeping the Church as distant from the party as possible. But this was a piece of wishful thinking which a more realistic second strategy contradicted: that of promoting the popularity and effectiveness of the DC by 'renewing' it internally.³¹ This is a theme we have just met in the response of the party left to De Gasperi's 'unholy' Realpolitik practices. These political and religious ideas were, of course, closely related.

The Church's hyper-activism of the 1950s, especially of the first years, was born of an at times hysterical spiritual desperation in the face of modernism and especially Communism. It was not matched by a real power which, if anywhere, now lay with the governing parties and with economic interests, and even, as we saw when considering the nature of left exclusion, with the opposition. The 1952 Bishop's Conference recognised this, and was in part a response to this fact. That it was the first conference of its kind in Italy reflected the fact that the Pope needed allies in his battle against the DC's autonomy.³²

C. Reformist Government - a minimalist strategy

In matters both of socioeconomic and religious management, the DC showed itself to be a reformist party. However, much of the party's electoral and interest group bases of support came from the same areas as the party's modernisers wished to reform, ie from the agricultural and entrepreneurial worlds, and this situation placed a major constraint on the party's ability to enact its programme. Consistently,

the right of the party left the written word, the programme, to the party left, but blocked its realisation, something which was easy to do since the DC left could not force matters by seeking the support of the lay left.

The centre of the party, and in this period this largely meant De Gasperi, tried to mediate this constructively. Often, it accepted the left's views on the need for reform and modernisation, but rejected the means. It also accepted that the right's conservatism prevented the party losing its electorate by presenting too radical an image. The centre also recognised the need to keep the left from abandoning the party, for this would end catholic unity and establish the DC as a straight-forward conservative party, leading either to political turmoil as the left threatened to come to power, or to a crushing political, social and economic conservatism which would hinder the country's modernisation.

The result was that the reformism of the party came to be realised through intrigue and through fear of the alternative. This was not 'crisis-avoidance', that preempting of crisis through elite cooptation which Middlemass identified in post-World War One Britain,³³ for crisis itself became the means both of enforcing change and of denying that it had happened. The normal mode of government and politics became management through crisis, for this arrangement allowed a series of small, or apparently small, changes to be made in the name of preventing a worse evil. Open and direct political confrontation, clear victories and defeats, were avoided in favour of deals, achieved under pressure. Where the government had to confront and over-ride interests, as with

agricultural reform, it 'sweetened' its intervention by compromise and by pointing out its own reasonableness given the intensity of the tensions, and the alternative - the 'threat' of the left parties. The DC's ability to act autonomously thus derived from its assertion of its centrist location in a three-block structure and from the alleged vulnerability of this structure. The paradox was that making the vulnerability of the system a major issue enlisted the support of right and left in maintaining it, both fearing a worse alternative.³⁴

III THE TRANSFORMATION OF CENTRISM

Mammarella's History of the Republic describes the quadripartite political formula of 1948-53 as a transitional one, unable to maintain itself.³⁵ This is correct, for the centrism of the post-'exclusion crisis' coalition was vastly different from that established by the CLN and inherently self-contradictory. Yet Centrism was not finally superseded until 1963, and even the Centre-Left maintained the three-block structure of the party system.

A. Centrism: Ideal Types and Reality

Three ideal types of centrism can be identified. A democratically ambiguous type and two democratic types. All have played a role in post-war Italy.

1. Democratically ambiguous centrism

Whilst a 'militant democracy' might be justified in excluding anti-democratic parties from the government arena,

it is dangerous to make a principle of such necessity since if a democracy is effective there should be no anti-democratic parties, whilst democracy at its most simple means the participation of all. The danger is that anti-democratic elements within the excluded parties will assert their dominance over those elites more inclined to compromise, so that 'exclusionary centrism' becomes a self-fulfilling and self-defeating process.

Perhaps the major failing of Sartori's approach is that he fails to see this problem. From it, for example, stems his judgment that it is uniquely the parties of left and right which are de-legitimising, whereas the exclusion of those parties was equally delegitimising.

In so far as a tendency towards such an 'exclusionary centrism' was created in Italy between 1947-53, and continued thereafter, the crisis of centrism continued beyond 1953. Ultimately, centrist government could only survive only if the party system continued to function interactively, not through exclusion. The assertion of the three-block system both guaranteed the survival of centrism and threatened to end it by confirming its exclusionary nature.

2. Two democratic ideal types

'Centrism', understood as the party political management of the polity by a party system acting as a contradictory unity could, in principle, survive the introduction of a government/opposition dialectic such as in 1947-48. Unambiguously democratic centrism can exist in two ideal forms. That is, not merely synchronic, where all major parties are simultaneously in government, but also diachronic, where the

major parties alternate in government. This is a major basis for the distinction between two types of democratic government, 'majoritarian' and 'consensual', propounded by Arend Lijphart.³⁶ For either to work in an ideal centrist fashion certain conditions would have to be met. As a first approximation, in the former the coalition would have to be all-embracing, and party organisation of the electorate equally efficient, in the latter there should be 'proportional tenure'.³⁷

Clearly, these conditions are not usually met, indeed it is the stuff of political competition to see that they are met only imperfectly. But there are limits to the degree of imperfection sustainable in democracy. In Italy, the exclusion of the left in 1947-48 rapidly gave way to a three-block system which weakened this exclusion. This system developed because the government chose to respond in a primarily non-military way to the social and political forces on its left, causing it to alienate its right electorate, but to maintain its own coalitional cohesion more or less intact. It also developed because of the fact that the exclusion of the Left alone, after 1948, appeared to be an unstated principle of the 'real' constitution, and this provoked opposition to electoral reform which it was feared would render this permanent. Many who opposed the development of such a right-leaning centrism were, primarily, government party supporters. Some thought that they could ensure that such a development did not take place by staying in the DC or by remaining in coalition with it, others broke away to challenge the centre block electorally. The upshot of this was that whilst

it was largely the defection of the right which created the three-block structure, prestigious centrist support was added to the left's mobilisation against the 'swindle law', reinforcing the left's belief that it was neither isolated nor politically irrelevant.

The failure of the block of centre parties to trigger the electoral bonus did not, however, lead to either of the ideal types of centrism outlined here, ie neither to a renewal of grand coalition nor to diachronic centrism. Rather, the gyrations of the party system over the next forty years reflected attempts to realise both. Indeed, until 1963, the party system was an evolving hybrid which contained elements not only of the two democratic models of centrism, but also of the third, democratically ambiguous type, that is exclusionary centrism.

3. Resume

The effect of the tendency to 'exclusionary centrism' in the social and political context of the 1948-53 legislature was, paradoxically, to reconfirm centrism as a relational construct by establishing a three-block structure. Where, as in the Netherlands, this structure also sees alternation, the participation of all parties in defining the centre is rather clear, but where this is not the case, it will still tend to be a balanced and embracing one, so long as a highly proportional system of representation makes it electorally sensitive. In fact the electoral reform of 1952 which would have countered this tendency was rapidly abandoned.

On the other hand, the identification of the centre as a block opposed to left and right extremes did make inter-

block dialogue difficult, as emphasised by Sartori. Nevertheless, the significance of the maintenance of 'Centrism' throughout the 1950s was precisely that it prevented the exclusion that a two-block, Anglo-Saxon style government/opposition relationship would have signified. The three-block system could not be maintained on a basis of exclusion, even if the temptation, and its effects, were clearly present. Certainly, the maintenance of this structure at the electoral level required rigid distinctions to be drawn between the blocks, but at the elite level cross-block alliances, facilitated by the tradition of trasformismo, took on great significance. We shall look at this tendency more closely in Chapter Five.

B. 1947-53: Decisive Government, Weak Political Formula

In retrospect the 1948-53 legislature has come to be recognised as one of decisive governmental action, laying the basis for Italy's 'economic miracle'. In this sense, the government of the period was clearly 'strong', whereas the centrist government of the CLN had been notoriously weak. However, government coalition instability was marked and even the majority party revealed itself to be markedly disunited. De Gasperi was not even able to secure the nomination of the President of the Republic that he sought. The new centrism was also politically weak.

1. Centrist government and left political culture

On the basis of the centre block's internal non-cohesion and the Gramscian theoretical inheritance, however manipulated, the PCI believed that it remained politically

and even governmentally relevant, even if its outlook was fundamentally defensive. The 1953 election result and the subsequent abolition of the new electoral law confirmed this. In the 1950s, the PCI promoted itself, with the left-DC and PSI, as the defender of the constitution against DC clerico-authoritarianism whilst simultaneously defending the DC as an anti-Fascist party guiding a centrist coalition.

In effect, as Galli emphasised, it was to be to the left and with the left that the DC had to compete, for the three-block system was never symmetrical, and to make more than minimal moves to the right always risked creating a bipolar situation in which the DC would suffer. Zunino has written that Centrism was unable to establish its own political culture, so unable to claim a hegemony, and was weak on this account.³⁸ The reason for this is that the incipient two-block structure based on the DC and PCI established a political culture to the left of the governing block, a feature of post-war Italy which Sartori himself lamented. Extrapolating into the future, one can argue that the Centre-Left failed to overcome this disjuncture, resulting in the dramatic rise of support for the PCI in 1975-76, shortly after which the whole basis of party system organisation changed, as we shall see.

2. The strength of weakness

Centrism, as we have pointed out, did survive until 1963 and beyond. Its weakness was its strength. The PCI's elites sought not only to force themselves back into the cabinet, but also to compromise with it to avoid worsening the situation. The party right too could always be out-

manoeuvred on the same basis, though it was more difficult to out-manoeuvre its special interests, when this was desired. It was, nevertheless, achieved, both in the first legislature, and subsequently, in response to the drift of the party system to the left.

The whole system has, thus, been highly interactive and even hyper-competitive, contrary to the view that the stability of the system indicated electoral immobility and inflexible, non-responsive and non-innovative attitudes on the part of the political class. Rather than the stability of the system resulting from the immobility of the electorate, it has resulted from the responsiveness of the elites to electoral change, a process which resulted not in stasis, but in gradual change indicated by the drift to the left as the DC developed alliances first with the PSDI, then the PSI, and finally the PCI. The latter alliance was the end of the road and proved abortive, but once the dramatic crisis of the late 1970s had been overcome, no one could doubt the strength of the Italian party system or the attraction of the centre.

IV

CONCLUSION

This Chapter has shown that centrism, understood as the existence of a relational centre constructed through multi-party interaction, was thrown into a profound crisis in 1947-48. It has also shown that centrism survived the crisis thanks to the rapid transformation of the exclusion of the left into a bipolar exclusion of left and right, thus establishing a new basis on which multi-party interaction could

continue. The survival of centrism, however, also coincided with its transformation.

Whereas in the CLN centrism was imperfectly synchronic and openly relational, after 1947, and especially after 1953, the relational aspect of centrism was obscured. The centre came to be defined by a block, so that it appeared to be a location and the property of a party, rather than the outcome of either a synchronic or a diachronic relationship. The fact that the survival of the new three-block structure assumed the domination of the centre-block, together with the DC's ideological propensity to see itself as having a duty to govern, even threatened to deny the existence of a relational centre linking the three blocks. As we shall now see, this problem came to the fore with the rise of Amintore Fanfani to the leadership of the party after De Gasperi's death.

Building on the theory contained in Chapter One, this chapter has also specified three ideal types of centrism: exclusionary, synchronic and diachronic, only the latter two of which are unambiguously democratic. It has also further illustrated the argument that centrism, as a system of polity management, is constructive rather than merely a matter of compromise, inducing innovation among political elites and promoting stable change.

(1) A.M.Schlesinger, The Vital Centre, New York, 1949.

(2) J.L.Harper, America and the Reconstruction of Italy, 1945-8, Cambridge University Press, 1986; J.E.Miller, The United States and Italy, 1945-50, University of North Carolina Press: Chapel Hill, 1986.

(3) S. Tramontin, 'La Democrazia cristiana dalla Resistenza alla Repubblica', in F. Malgeri (ed), Storia della Democrazia cristiana, Rome: Cinque Lune, Vol.1, 1987, pp.13-176, 29-35.

(4) J.L. Harper, op.cit. Chapters 7-8.

(5) R. Bellamy, 'Modern Italian Social Theory', Cambridge: Polity Press, 1988, Chapter 8, esp. p.142.

(6) Above all, theories stressing the role of interest groups and of bureaucracies, a seminal work being C. Lindblom, 'The Science of Muddling Through', Public Administration Review, 19:2, 1959, pp.79-88; and subsequent work on the role of the social sciences as contributing to the collective conceptions and definitions of reality which establish the operating rules - R.A.W. Rhodes, 'Interorganisational Networks and the "Problem" of Control in the Policy process: A Critique of the "New Institutionalism"', West European Politics, 11:2. 1988, pp.119-130.

(7) G. Miccoli, 'Chiesa, partito cattolico e società civile' in V. Castrovano (ed), 1975, pp.191-252, esp. pp.221-222.

(8) See L. Bedeschi, Cattolici e comunisti. Dal socialismo cristiano ai cristiani marxisti, Milan: Feltrinelli, 1974; F. Traniello, 'Discorrendo di cattolici e comunisti' in Rivista di Storia e Letterature Religiose, 1975, pp.246-255 and L. Gruppi and A. Tato (eds), Comunisti e mondo cattolico oggi, Rome: Riuniti, 1977, cited in L. Bedeschi, 'Movimento cattolico e comunismo' in Dizionario Storico del Mondo Cattolico in Italia, Vol.1, tome 2, pp.29-43, p.31, on the continuing threat of left catholicism to the DC and the correspondent attention of the left for catholicism.

(9) P. Scoppola has also pointed out that it is the lay parties and their culture which has been most positive in its assessment of the 1948-53 government: P. Scoppola, 'per una storia del Centrisimo' in G. Rossini (ed), De Gasperi e l'eta del Centrisimo (1947-53), Rome: Cinque Lune, 1984, pp.23-51, pp.26-27.

(10) P. Barucci, 'La linea economico-sociale', in G. Rossini (ed), De Gasperi e l'eta del Centrisimo (1947-53), Rome: Cinque Lune, 1984, pp.143-161.

(11) G. Mammarella, L'Italia contemporanea (1943-85), Bologna: Il Mulino, 1987, pp.151-4

(12) P.Ginsborg, Storia d'Italia dal dopoguerra a oggi, Turin: Einaudi, 1989, pp.219-224.

(13) A.Riccardi, Il 'partito romano' nel secondo dopoguerra, 1945-54, Brescia: Morcelliana, 1983, pp.148-158.

(14) S.Magister, La politica Vaticana e l'Italia, 1945-78, Rome: Riuniti, 1979, pp.14. ff.

(15) G.Miccoli, op.cit. 1975, pp.226-8.

(16) There is a certain truth in the thesis. See A.Arian and S.H.Barnes, 'The Dominant Party-System - A neglected model of democratic stability', Journal of Politics, August, 1974, pp.592-614.

(17) M.Grindrod, Italy, London: Benn, 1968, pp.115 ff.

(18) P.Scoppola, Gli anni della Costituente fra politica e storia, Bologna: Il Mulino, 1980, pp.124-34.

(19) G.Poggi, 'The Church in Italian Politics' in S.J.Woolf (ed), The Rebirth of Italy, 1943-50, London: Longman, 1982, pp.135-155, p.140.

(20) F.Spotts and T.Wieser, Italy a Difficult Democracy. A Survey of Italian Politics, Cambridge University Press, 1986, p.245.

(21) J.Whyte, Catholics in Western Democracies, Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1974.

(22) G.Martina, La Chiesa in Italia negli ultimi trent'anni, Rome: Studium, 1979.

(23) G.Verucci, La Chiesa nella societa contemporanea. Dal primo dopoguerra al Concilio Vaticano II, Rome: Laterza, 1988, pp.194; A.Riccardi, op.cit. 1988, pp.80-100.

(24) S.Magister, op.cit. 1979, pp.135 ff. A.Riccardi, op.cit. 1983, pp.132-142.

(25) A.Riccardi, op.cit. 1983, pp.105, 137.

- (26) G.Verucci, op.cit. 1988, pp.199-202; S.Magister, op.cit. 1979, Chaper 5 passim.
- (27) A.Riccardi, op.cit. 1983, pp.159-160 and 147-8.
- (28) A.C.Jemolo, Church and State in Italy, Oxford: Blackwell, 1960, pp.309-319.
- (29) M.Clark, MOdern Italy, 1871-1982, London: Longman, 1984, p.370.
- (30) P.Scoppola, La 'nuova cristianita' perduta, Rome: Studium, p.20 and passim.
- (31) A.Riccardi, op.cit. 1983, pp.177-184.
- (32) A.Riccardi, 'Chiesa di Pio XII o chiese Italiane', in A.Riccardi (ed), Le chiese di Pio XII, Bari: Laterza, 1986, pp.21-52, pp.23-33.
- (33) K.Middlemas, Politics in Industrial Society: The Experience of the British System Since 1911, London: Andre Deutsch, 1980, esp. pp.18, 22.
- (34) A.Marradi, 'Italy: From "Centrism" to the crisis of the Centre-left coalitions', in E.Browne and J.Dreijmanis (eds), Government Coalitions in Western Democracies, London: Longman, 1982, pp.33-70.
- (35) G.Mammarella, op.cit. pp.149-151.
- (36) A.Lijphart, Democracies. Patterns of Majoritarian and Consensus Government in Twenty-One Countries, London: Yale Univeristy Press, 1984.
- (37) P.Taylor and A.Lijphart, 'Proportional Tenure vs. Proportional Representation: Introducing a New Debate', European Journal of political research, Vol.13, 1985, pp.341-454.
- (38) P.Zunino (ed), Scritti politici di Alcide De Gasperi, Milan: Feltrinelli, 1979, introduction, pp.77-78.

The ambiguities inherent in 'centrism' were confirmed by the delicate position in which the so-called centre parties found themselves in the second legislature. As a block coalition formula, Centrism emerged from the election of 1953 as numerically valid, but as an exclusionary political formula it was not viable. The PSDI's inclination to look left to the PSI was reinforced by its electoral losses and the left block's complementary and significant gains, whilst both the Republicans and Liberals found themselves facing out from, as well as into, the governmental coalition. The DC was thus compelled to follow the different propensities of its own components: to look left and right.

To seek support decisively in either direction was, however, impracticable if the DC was not to split. The right was implacably hostile to the Socialists for economic and/or religious reasons, whilst the left would not accept the backing of an anti-constitutional and reactionary right. In the aftermath of the 1953 election no political formula seemed tenable. Not even De Gasperi could find a satisfactory way of uniting the centrist party and centrist political strategies, and President Einaudi was forced to intervene, more or less imposing Giuseppe Pella, his successor at the Treasury, as a care-taker premier.¹

In the long term, the desire within the centre to expand to left and right provided the grounds for the centre's expansion and the confirmation of its relational na-

ture, but the established dominant images of the party system - of a group of democratic parties under totalitarian siege, and of a totalitarian clerico-capitalist reaction - made the continuation of cross-block political interaction other than through harsh electoral confrontation exceedingly difficult. Neither the government nor the opposition parties could allow themselves to be seen adopting similar policies, for that would undermine the cultural/institutional edifice on which the parties and the party system rested: the three-block party system. Open compromise would be destabilising both electorally, by encouraging electoral volatility, and within individual party organisations which had in any case been torn by an unusually high degree of internal trauma over the past decade. It would also provoke those alienated margins of the population least likely to accept the parliamentarisation of politics. Already in the early 1950s the militant Fascist fringe had reemerged in the universities,^A trade unions^B and other activist organisations, leading to arrests and trials,² whilst the PCI had had to suppress militants in Rome and the north during the CLN period and was losing electoral support from its militant northern working class base through the 1950s.³

In this Chapter we examine the survival of transformed centrism, ie the domination of the three-block structure, in the period 1953-68. Thus understood, centrism knew two phases, that of 'exclusionary centrism' in the 1953-63 peri-

A. FUAN: University Front of the National Advanced Guard.

B. CISNAL, the neo-Fascist trade union confederation was founded in 1950.

od, and that of the Centre-Left from 1963-68. Whereas the period 1944-53 saw the creation of a political pact based on the survival of an interactive multi-party system, such that those years were the 'founding' phase of post-war Italian democracy, the subsequent fifteen years were those of its consolidation. The subsequent phase, that we look at in Chapter Six, was one of challenge to the form that the party system and democracy had taken. As we saw in Chapter Three, the establishment of the three-block structure of the party system both saved and transformed centrism, threatening to make it an exclusionary and self-contradictory phenomenon. In the first part of this Chapter we examine how this was avoided by considering: first, the development of the state and the confirmation of party rule, or partitocrazia as it came to be known at this time;⁴ second, the maintenance of centrism as a three-block structure through the realisation of the Centre-Left, an outcome seen as confirming the domination of politics by a political class ultimately wedded to the values of party competition and cross-block interaction, and shy of the destabilising effects of a two-block structuration of the party system.

I THE MODERN STATE AND POLITICAL PARTIES IN ITALY

The 1950s was a decade of considerable political uncertainty and ambiguity. A seemingly incompatible mix of principles and institutions coexisted with considerable friction: a liberal/social constitutional state, powerful private business interests asserting the priority of capital over

labour, a strong working class organised behind a powerful, if defensive, Communist Party, itself linked to a Socialist Party not without influence in government party circles, and finally a dominating 'catholic party' apparently tempted to institute a catholic state. In this section, the mutually hostile toleration of the political parties is shown to have allowed an ambitious political class to continue to assert the priority of its leadership as against the dominance of A) religion, B) class conflict and C) unmediated profit-making. It did this through the (unequal) hold exercised by the parties over both material and symbolic resources. Control of these promoted, respectively, the continuing mutual toleration of the political class and its hold over the electorate through the redistribution of resources (so-called 'low politics') and the maintenance of the established politico-electoral cleavages.

A. The Climax and Collapse of Clericalism

Establishing the dominance of the political over the religious was a long process. That it could be coupled with the survival of both Catholicism and of the DC only became generally evident with the launch of the alliance with the Socialists, and the new impetus given to Catholicism by John XXIII, in the early 1960s. As a specifically political phenomenon, the clerico-conservative tendency had already been hijacked by De Gasperi's centrist and lay political project in the 1940s, as confirmed by his rejection of operation Sturzo in 1952. The following sub-sections chronicle the virtual abandonment in 1954 of the attempt by a sectional

interest - the Church - to reduce the political sphere to a mere instrument of its global project; the blows to the continuing presumption of Catholicism's cultural predominance in 1957-58; and finally, the outflanking of the Vatican's usurpative and anachronistic administrative core in the early 1960s.

1. The Church abandons partisan politics

Operation Sturzo had been accompanied by turmoil in the catholic world, and youth revolts in ACLI and ACI in 1953-4 focused on the desire of the 'Roman party' to establish a right/centre-right government now that the centrist formula seemed dead. The resignations of Carlo Carretto in 1952 and Mario Rossi in 1954 from the presidency of the youth wings of ACI were symptomatic of this dissent.⁵

In January 1954, Amintore Fanfani, aware of the internal divisions within the catholic world, sought to form a new government gaining support from both the right and from the PSI.⁶ Fanfani's move was blocked by his rivals, not least by Pella, whose own premiership had won support for its competent ministerial team and decisive resistance to Tito's attempt to regain Trieste. Cardinal Ronca, the political brain of the 'Roman party', in the meanwhile promoted and then established an Italian National Union, favouring a right-wing government. A series of figures on the right of the DC, including Pella and Andreotti, supported this idea, and the weakness of the centrist formula clearly meant that 1954 could have been a political turning point, seeing the establishment of a two-block party system. At the DC's 7th Congress in June, the centrist line, backed by Fanfani,

prevailed. Now it was Fanfani's turn to dominate the DC by uniting the centrist party and the centrist political strategy.

The defeat of the rightist option signalled the determination of the party as a whole to maintain not only the distinction between the political and the religious, but also the supremacy of the former over the latter. The Vatican was powerful, but its political power was indirect and negative. It operated inside the DC primarily through the right, but even the latter sought to use Vatican support for its own ends. Otherwise, the Vatican could only prevent the DC-left from breaking away as an independent body. This it did by denying it vital clergy/parish support and by subordinating its most rebellious elements in ACI and ACLI by forced resignations and the threat to withdraw episcopal support. The Vatican choked off catholic reformism, but the DC was no transmission belt for the Vatican. The Bishop's Conference, as we have seen, had already indicated its awareness of the real situation in 1952 and now, in 1954, the two overtly partisan ecclesiastic figures, Ronca and Montini, were removed from their positions of influence, Montini by promotion to the archbishopric of Milan, Ronca by an extraordinary forced resignation.⁷ The Church was now back on a course emphasising its leadership of the catholic world and its pastoral, as opposed to partisan role, hence, its moral and indirect domination of the DC and of government.⁸

2. Confirmation of the state's secular culture

The blow to the cultural clericalism and residual triumphalism followed three to four years later. In 1957 the

Bishop of Prato, a newly created appointment in the heart of the Red Belt, accused two of his parishioners of concubinage for, married in the eyes of the law, they were not married in the eyes of the Church, having foregone a religious ceremony. At this time, only two per cent of couples in all of Italy avoided Church blessing, but the couple sued the Bishop for defamation. The Florence Court found in favour of the couple, and the whole affair became a national cause celebre, featuring prominently in the 1958 election. At that election the DC's vote rose, but this gain largely reflected the party's ousting of the monarchists and MSI in southern Italy through the clientelistic use of the state. In fact, contrary to the coding schema employed by Budge and Farlie (1983),⁹ the accentuation of the religious issue in the 1958 election probably did not benefit a 'bourgeois' to the discomfort of a 'socialist' block, because concern at DC domination of the bourgeois/centre block was high (in 1956 the PLI split over the issue of Vatican political interference, giving birth to the Radicals) and because the catholic world itself was undergoing a profound crisis of secularisation which encouraged recognition of its affinities with the left. One can more or less reverse Budge and Farlie's generalisation: the clergy had to avoid blunders like that of the Bishop of Prato in order not to see the DC punished and the growth of the left undermining the Church.

By 1959 the journal of the Milanese Jesuits, Agiornamenti sociali, was intervening within the Church in favour of the left DC's project of an 'opening to the left' ie to the PSI, and in the same year the newly operational Constitution-

al Court found against the Church which had sought to get the election of an ex-priest (as a Socialist Deputy) declared unconstitutional. Elected offices, the court decided, were not public appointments.¹⁰

3. The end of 'closed Catholicism'

The Milanese Jesuits were at the heart of the industrial north, where the opening to the left was first urged and experimented. The modernisation of Catholicism generally went faster in the north than the south, but slowest of all in understanding the post-war transformation of the Church into a pluralistically articulated and laicised movement was the administrative core of the Church, the Roman Curia. It was from this bastion of the Church that the last outpouring of opposition to the left came, parallel to the DC's move in this direction.

This opposition reached a climax in the last year of Pius's reign and first years of John's, as the Curia asserted its near autonomy from the Pope.¹¹ Paradoxically, this hostility towards the PSI was not entirely unwelcome even to those like Fanfani whose allegedly Socialistic intriguing it opposed. For Fanfani, and for all those interested in maintaining the strength of the DC, it was a guarantee that the left catholic electorate would not 'jump ship' to a Socialist Party legitimated by its inclusion in the government.¹² Curial opposition was defeated by the victory of the centrist orientation within the DC which indicated the need for alliance with the PSI, and by internal reform within the Church brought about by the institutional revolution of Vatican II. Unable simply to replace major tranches of the administrative

elite or to order a change of mentalities, John XXIII mobilised the roots of the catholic world, its diverse national episcopates, to challenge outdated and Romano-centric dogmas.

The profound transformation brought about by the Second Vatican Council has already been referred to, with the claim that it achieved a 'paradigm shift' in the catholic world.¹³ In the Italian context of the early 1960s it helped bring the Church's base and its elite into line with one another, though in no easy or straight-forward fashion. The reason for this was that it encouraged a tremendous flowing together of the reformist catholic and socialist cultures, threatening for a long period to end catholic unity. In the event, the continued presence and 'threat' of the PCI, especially in the 1970s, allowed this danger to be at least provisionally surmounted.

By the late 1960s, the catholic world and the DC had largely learnt to appreciate their different aims and means, so that although a privileged relationship continued to exist between them, they increasingly recognised their mutual autonomy in a pluralist and internally differentiated society. This development was initially obscured when the rise to prominence of the divorce issue in the early 1970s, coupled with the challenge of the PCI to establish a two-block party system on its own terms (or at least a return to grand coalition), led Fanfani to attempt to rally the Church behind the DC, and the DC behind him, on a markedly conservative platform. As it turned out, Fanfani united neither the catholic world nor the DC. By 1975 he was an anachronism.

B. The Institutional Development of a Pluralist State

The relative autonomy of the party system from the catholic world was asserted in the foundation phase of building Italian democracy, but not widely recognised until the 1960s. The autonomy of the state from class conflict and the party system remains incomplete, perhaps necessarily so. Modern democracies are party democracies, though the prominence of party varies. In Switzerland, Britain and France the formal institutions of the liberal state (and the government executive in particular) such as parliament, government, cabinet, and the president, are prominent. Elsewhere the parties subordinate or even substitute the formal institutional structure, giving rise to the West German Parteienstaat,¹⁴ Belgium's particratie¹⁵ and the Italian partitocrazia. In Italy, the chronic historical lack of popular identification with the state and the nature of post-Fascist political reconstruction saw the new political parties substituting themselves for allegiance to the state which came to be identified in large measure as anti-working class given the asymmetry of political exclusion. The domination of the cabinet/government and the state's agencies by the DC reinforced the identification of capitalism, the state and the DC and became a major brake on the PCI's ability to achieve 'alternation'.

The necessity for the state's institutions to acquire a greater degree of autonomy from the party system has been a prominent theme in post-war Italy, especially as a criticism of the DC and its alleged incomprehension of this need because of its integralism. During the 1950s the establishment

of key state institutions provided for in the constitution as a way of enhancing institutional autonomy was a major political issue. From 1955, President Gronchi championed his own institutional role as a guarantee against the *partitocrazia*. He backed this claim by seeking to effect the *de facto* establishment of other state institutions delayed by the DC out of fear of the PCI's manipulation of them, and he did so with Communist and Socialist backing.¹⁶ Gronchi had himself been elected by a cross-block parliamentary coalition which included the Socialists and Communists, so the question of the institutional autonomy of the state was an important one in promoting cross-block intercourse.

Three main institutions were brought to life by Gronchi with cross-block support between 1955 and 1959: the Supreme Court, the Supreme Council of the Judiciary, and the Social and Economic Council. Gronchi's forceful championing of these institutions led the DC-right to try and hobble them, just as his attempts to move the country towards accepting the PSI in government resulted, as we shall see, in the appointment of prime ministers ever more to the right as he sought to placate resistance inside the party. Nevertheless, Gronchi's encouragement of constitutional development, backed by the Communist and Socialist Parties which presented themselves as champions of the constitution, contributed to the development of the modern principle of the impersonal state, and hence to the rejection of views which see the state as merely the emanation of a social class.

Gronchi's cooperation with the left allowed these parties to present themselves as guarantors of the constitu-

tion combating Christian Democratic arrogance, and this promoted the centrist political strategy of the party. However, it contradicted Fanfani's more purely party centrist strategy which sought to move the DC left in order to capture the left electorate, without losing its right electorate, a strategy which required the left parties to remain essentially illegitimate. It is to this we now turn. In the event, as we shall also see, both Fanfani and Gronchi became embroiled in a situation where the hegemonic party centrist strategy seemed to prevail at the expense of the centrist political strategy so that both lost the trust of the left which they sought to secure.

C. Fanfani's Ambivalent Christian State 'Socialism'

Fanfani was elected political secretary at the party's 7th Congress in June 1954, and with De Gasperi's death in August became the party's leading figure. He remained a key figure in the party until 1975,^A but he was never able to totally dominate the party. Through the 1950s he and Gronchi competed for power, and in 1959 he was dethroned in a move which definitively established the collective and oligarchic nature of the party's top elite.

Fanfani was associated with the Dossettiani, but unlike Dossetti, Fanfani was driven more by ambition than idealism. He had accepted De Gasperi's critique of the DC-left as over-zealous and, if not patient, self-defeating, and in 1954

A. He was still prominent in the 1980s when he was twice prime minister.

he assumed De Gasperi's mantle, asserting that centrism remained a valid political formula, defeating the alternative line that pointed towards the creation of two-block confrontation. The defeat of the clerically supported conservative option implied the strengthening of links with the left, but this was clearly not going to be quickly achieved. Besides, a move to the left could be accomplished in two ways, either by shifting the party's image to the left to capture the left electorate, or part of it, preferably without losing any support on the right, or through coalition with the PSI leaving the party's centre/centre-right identification alone. Fanfani favoured the former strategy.

1. 'Low politics' and the opposition

Whilst the party manoeuvred to achieve whichever of the two 'left' options proved feasible, itself a game of intrigue accentuating personal ambition and rivalry within the DC elite, the government, and the political class more generally, bought time by promoting economic growth and expanding the sphere of state activities, the two being combined to a considerable degree. This involved a huge expansion of both the redistribution of 'treasures' and the allocation of 'tokens of authority' (such as building permits, job recommendations etc.).¹⁷ These are traditional governmental means of acquiring legitimacy, but they tended to be aimed at the individual and at special groups, rather than large collectivities, leading to the alleged collapse of collective political organisation and mobilisation in Italy,¹⁸ whilst the domination of the state by the DC naturally meant that it gained most from these practices. With Fanfani increasingly

identified as attempting to set up an exclusionary centrism, a catholic socialistic state in which 'integralism' was based on the DC rather than the Church, this use of the state was widely condemned as a new corporatism, as mass/bureaucratic clientelism.¹⁹

Nevertheless, the significance of the involvement of the excluded left parties in these practices should not be undervalued. Firstly, whilst it is true that the left's participation in the policy/legislative process has been restricted to matters of 'low politics' it is not clear how the party could have contributed to strategic decisions given the aggressive ambition to autonomous rule of the major contending parties. Secondly, given that the basic international and politico-economic parameters were more or less determined by the international situation and intense internal political pressures operating on the political class, the role of that class was to make the new system work. It is at this point that the distinction between high and low politics actually blurs. The strategy of competitive Western integration placed enormous strains on Italian society and the management of material and symbolic resources by the political class allowed the potentially vicious circle of Italy's under-development to be broken by the early 1960s^A, providing a new material basis on which politics could develop. Of course, there was a price to pay for the subordinate integration of the Left elites.

A. M.Salvati, Economia e politica in Italia dal dopoguerra a oggi, Milan: Garzanti, 1986. This is dealt with at more length in Chapter 6.

We have already seen that the PCI lost votes amongst its militant northern working class core in the 1950s, but by the mid-to-late 1950s it was also being rejected by revolutionary intellectuals. In the early 1960s these began to organise themselves, and by the 1970s they provided the inspiration and even the recruits for much of the left terrorism of that decade. This terrorist movement developed Leninist and workerist revolutionism in response to the contradictory conservatism of the PCI which neither opted for 'more democracy' as the cure for the ills of socialism, as did Nenni and the PSI, nor took its own Marxism-Leninism as seriously as these dissidents thought proper.²⁰ Their hostility to the PCI was perhaps also related to a third reason for not underestimating the PCI's involvement in the development of Italian society.

The Communists dominated the red belt of central-north Italy, including major cities like Bologna. Their participation in the parliamentary game allowed them to consolidate their presence in this culturally and economically important area, an area which in the late 1970s was discovered as the core of a 'third Italy' (neither the traditional industrial north nor the under-developed south) and championed as a key contributor to Italy's second economic miracle.²¹ Sidney Tarrow has even argued that localities dominated by the socialist sub-culture may even have received disproportionately more of the state's resources than 'white' areas,²² going on to stress the importance of the fact that the national political elites have strong local roots, and that at

the local level an entrepreneurial 'political class'^A has formed which uses partisan loyalties in an instrumental, and non-ideological way as multiple routes of access to state resources.

The contribution of the PCI in Italian social and economic development has, then, been significant through its influence at the regional level and consequently in the important development of micro- and small industry, as well as in its national political role of aggregating opposition to the DC to gain compensation for the social costs involved in the chosen model of economic modernisation. The participation of the Left opposition in socioeconomic management, as in constitutional development, predated the major regional and parliamentary reforms of the 1970s and it, and even more so the extension of DC power, can be taken as a feature linked to the territorial extension/diffusion of the post-war interventionist state.²³ The generosity of the Italian state consolidated the new centrism, underlining the role of the parties as promoters of economic growth and social welfare. Although in doing this the DC sought to advance its own party interests and catholic values, and to thwart those of the rival Left, the way that the party domination of society worked to ameliorate socioeconomic tensions worked against Fanfani's attempt to maintain the exclusion of the Left.

2. Fanfani's challenge to the left

The secession of Saragat in 1947 and the formation of the PSDI left many in the PSI concerned that the party had no

A. Tarrow's use of the term differs from mine in stressing its locally-operative nature.

clear identity, being neither the reformist socialist nor the revolutionary socialist party. The weakness of the PSDI and its subordination to the DC robbed it, however, of much of its attraction. Nevertheless, the structural and ideological position of the PSI was awkward, and Fanfani believed he could rob it of its electorate. A number of developments inside the DC encouraged Fanfani to think in this fashion, and the fact that it might gain the support of left and right by simultaneously moving the party to the left and attacking the PSI made it an ideal leadership strategy.

In 1952 the trade unionists in the party had formed their own faction and through the 1950s this faction campaigned to get Fanfani to withdraw the public sector companies of IRI from Confindustria control and to establish a progressive corporatist model of industrial relations which would exclude the increasingly marginalised CGIL. A natural link developed between the anti-Communist unionists and the public sector based interests and economic strategists all of whom sought to reduce the power of conservative private business interests. Given the ideologically polarised electoral and intellectual atmosphere, it also seemed to indicate the desire to create a catholic inspired corporatist state in which worker and business interests would be mediated by the DC-dominated party state. The fact that Ezio Vanoni, the leading catholic advocate of planning, was able in 1954 to present a long-term economic programme to parliament distinctly promoted the DC's left image, though in fact the plan was emasculated in parliament and made irrelevant by the economic miracle.

The appearance of the la base^A faction in 1953, and the rapid development of its emphasis on the need to bring the PSI into the government coalition, further promoted the DC's socialistic image, though la base's insistence on distinguishing the PSI from the PCI and drawing it into the centre was a different strategy to Fanfani's. By the latter half of the 1950s la base was actively promoting local centre-left experiments in northern Italy, to the alarm of conservative economic and Vatican circles. At the 1956 Congress, with the Left lacerated by events in Hungary and by Khrushchev's 'secret' speech, the chances of stealing the left's electorate seemed good. Moreover, Fanfani's organisational activism, aimed at reducing party dependence on the Church, was alleged to have brought membership gains in both the industrial and agricultural working classes.

Whereas la Base's strategy was primarily a political-centrist strategy, Fanfani favoured the party centrist strategy, though he sought to maintain the unity of the two by pursuing a programme of centrist policies to be executed by the party. As far as Fanfani was concerned, other parties were welcome to support the government block's programme, but coalition was to be avoided. This position contrasted with that of Gronchi and la base.

Gronchi's position was heavily influenced by his 'Gaullist'^B tendencies and his hopes of gaining cross-

A. More or less meaning 'rank-and-file', and as such a response to Vatican suppression of reformist catholicism.

B. The Gaullist vth Republic was not set up until 1958 of course.

spectrum support for a second seven year term in 1962, but his awareness of the voluntarist nature of the Dossettiani's ambitions had been expressed early in the 1950s, and the strength of conservative opposition to his activities as president could only reinforce his appreciation of the need for the support of the PSI to realise a leftist programme. His first action as President was to dismiss the prime minister Mario Scelba who was sticking rigidly to the narrow and exclusionary formula of centrism - 'iron centrism'. However, his successor Segni proved unable to gain PSI support.

La base were insistent that it was the coalition partner, not the programme, that should have priority. In effect, maintaining a centrist political strategy now meant abandoning the centrist party strategy, or at least expanding the centrist coalition so that the party no longer dominated the centre, but shared it. This position meant not only loosening the party's grip on society by sharing power with another mass party, dropping its dominant leadership role - and this was a period when the party's position seemed so powerful that it and the Vatican were being accused of seeking to set up a catholic state - but also pointed towards the eventual passage of the party into the opposition! The expansion of the centre would create a legitimate social democratic/socialist pole of attraction within the centre block, leading to its bifurcation.

Whilst la Base's position was intrinsically unappealing to the right, both Fanfani's position and even Gronchi's had some appeal. As the maintenance of centrism got more and more difficult, and as the opposition of the Vatican flared,

both Gronchi and Fanfani found themselves seeking to gain support from the right to cover their leftist moves. Both thus backed the nomination of Adone Zoli as prime minister in 1957, a monocolore government backed by monarchist and MSI votes. This ended the centrist political formula and was the government with which the DC appealed to the electorate in 1958. Yet the programme was a leftist christian-socialist one. The party was trying to have it both ways, offering social reform and an authoritarian guarantee of stability.

The DC fared well in the election, and Fanfani, after five years as an ultra-dynamic secretary, expected to take the credit. He now formed a government himself, defined, with just the PSDI for a coalition partner and a markedly Christian socialist programme,²⁴ as centre-left. This was to be the new centrism - an aggressive attack on the PSI electorate. But the Vatican and economic right were appalled, and this coupled with opposition to Fanfani's personal ambition - he was now party secretary, Prime Minister and Foreign Minister - led to his overthrow.

The party was now thrown back on to seeking support from the right, which much of the party would not, however, accept, and a series of unstable governments followed. As a coalition formula, centrism had now reached a point of no return. The party had to choose. Fanfani's use of state resources and Gronchi's encouragement of the left might have been elements in a good depolarising strategy, but it was not to be. Internal hostility to the Left had not diminished, whilst to the Left Fanfani's combination of DC party and political centrism looked like a strategy for consolidating

an exclusionary centrism. The PCI's own polemical behaviour, spurred by genuine suspicion of the DC and an awareness of the need to maintain its radical image, ensured that political tensions grew rather than declined, whilst the willingness of even the PSI to actually take on the responsibility of governing in a crisis-ridden capitalist and bourgeois democracy was far from clear.

Such was the background to the Tambroni riots of 1960, provoked by fears of the DC moving towards the MSI. Both Gronchi and Fanfani were discredited by these developments, and neither was able to get the backing of the Left to be elected as president in 1962. Centrism had survived, and democracy been consolidated, through the confirmation of the parties' control in and over society, that is of partitocrazia and the parties mutual responsiveness. A presidentialist development of Italian democracy threatened to reinforce the contradictions of exclusionary centrism, to undermine party interaction and to preempt the only political basis on which the three-block structure could be maintained - the inclusion of the PSI in government.

II THE OPENING TO THE LEFT

The opening to the left, like so much of Italian politics, was an ambiguous development. It did bring the Socialists into the cabinet, but it also squeezed the party electorally and marginalised its traditional ally, the PCI. To that extent, it was an aggressive party strategy ideal for DC

partisans. However, it did also shift the DC to the left, and the limits to this shift were uncertain. The inclusion of the Socialists in the government on a semi-permanent basis was a dramatic novelty in Italian, let alone Republican, history. The opening to the left thus bore all the ambiguities typical of *trasformismo*.

In the post-war period, *trasformismo* was more easily practised in parliamentary commissions and in the administrative channels of the expanding state machine, particularly, as we have seen, in centre-periphery relations, than at the cabinet level since, unlike in the Liberal period, parliament was now dominated by disciplined parties. Nevertheless, the centrist coalition formula itself was a form of *trasformismo*, based largely on the creation of the PSDI, and as we saw in Chapter Three, attitudes to trasformsimo had changed in the circumstances of its comparison with Fascism and Communism.²⁵ Now, however, in the late 1950s and early 1960s, the negative aspects of transformism were again stressed: its propping up the DC-regime, blocking of reform, and related effects. Vertical political cleavages had been deeply embedded as the basis of the three-block system, and the constraints on the PSI and DC party elites from their electorates, party militants, flanking interest groups and the excluded parties on the left and right were considerable. Nevertheless, precisely the atmosphere of crisis was what guaranteed the establishment of the new political formula, the 'Centre-Left'.

A. Transformism under Duress: From Tambroni to De Lorenzo

The growing parliamentary crisis of centrism in the late 1950s, unable to secure a stable majority, led a succes-

sion of DC prime ministers to gain a vote of confidence with votes from the right, whether sought or not. The DC left was no more willing to accept these governments than the DC right to accept the tentative moves made to the left, but the left itself became convinced that the DC was moving towards an authoritarian solution to the problem. The crisis came to a head in the summer of 1960 when it appeared that President Gronchi, and the prime minister, Ferdinando Tambroni, were promoting the legitimation of the MSI. It was not clear whether the aim was to promote its credibility as a potential government partner, or to encourage extremism of both the right and the left, permitting an authoritarian imposition of centrism.

Serious nation-wide public disorders did follow the attempt by the MSI to hold a triumphal party Congress in Genoa, a traditional strong-hold of the left, but the DC turned its back on authoritarian solutions, including that of a Centrist crack-down on both left and right. Tambroni was abandoned and another monocolore led by Fanfani was formed. This had the external backing of the three traditional centrist allies, but it also had the abstention, in the vote of confidence, of the monarchists and PSI. The significance of this was clear. The exclusion of the PCI and of the newly boosted MSI allowed the claim to be made that the unacceptable extremes remained excluded, ie that a three-block system based on the defence of democracy continued to operate. At the same time, cross-block interaction was moving towards intra-block interaction as the principle of enlarging the centre was established.

Aldo Moro, the creator of the arrangement, defined it as a 'parallel convergence' - both moderate left and moderate right were converging on the democratic centre. From this point on, Moro was established as the DC's leading political thinker and manager. His authority rested largely on the ability to gain the confidence of his own party and mediate between it and the others, but the bulk of the DC never ceased to be suspicious of his ability to negotiate with the left.

The Tambroni crisis had demonstrated that some sort of acceptance of the PSI was indispensable, and it can be argued that this was the true aim of Gronchi and Tambroni.²⁶ Such considerations may have been in their minds, but their personal motivations and intentions were probably multiple and volatile. The important point is that in this party-dominated polity the maintenance of the relational centre outweighed more narrowly defined party and individual interests. To this extent, the hunt for the 'true intentions' of leading figures is unimportant. The same, we shall see, is true of the debate over Moro's intentions in negotiating the governments of national solidarity with Enrico Berlinguer, the Communist leader, in the mid 1970s.

Fanfani's government of 'parallel convergence', backed by Moro, paved the way for the Centre-Left, but not until December 1963 was it realised, and only with the De Lorenzo crypto-coup of 1964 was it solidly established. Its development was aided by the arrival of the Kennedy administration in America and by the assertion of papal control over the Curia by John XXIII, via the Vatican Council, and by the

interpretation given to John's works by the DC elite. Particularly significant was the 1961 encyclical Mater et Magistra which Moro emphasised as sanctioning the opening to the left. The VIIth Congress of the DC in January 1962 was a watershed, with Moro gaining official party sanction to conclude the opening to the left. Immediately thereafter, Fanfani formed a new government with the PRI and PSDI, excluding the PLI, and accepting the abstention of the PSI whilst ignoring the monarchists.

As ever there was a quid pro quo to be paid to the party's conservatives for their acceptance of these developments. In 1962 Antonio Segni was elected as President, and only on that basis was Moro able to seek to form a coalition with the PSI itself. Moreover, the party's fear of the PSI had only been calmed by Moro's argument that the DC's control of the para-state guaranteed the party's ability to withstand the challenge the PSI would mount. In fact, the party was now dominated by the Dorotei, the party oligarchs who had brought Fanfani down in 1959 and whose power lay in their domination of entire regions of Italy on the basis of clientelist networks which fused government, para-state agencies and electorate together.

Nevertheless, the PSI's entry into the cabinet was a major challenge to the DC and was only accepted when Nenni acquiesced to the extra-democratic pressure exerted on him in the summer of 1964 via the so-called De Lorenzo coup plot. Again, there is a wealth of controversy as to the degree of involvement of key actors in the plot, and their intentions, but there can be no doubt that the threat of rebellion by the

commander of the carabinieri, General De Lorenzo, and the existence of plans for a coup d'etat cemented the Centre-Left. Pietro Nenni, the Socialist leader, accepted the need to continue the coalition on a minimalist basis of defending democracy, and took the bulk of the party with him. The alternative, it was feared, was a government based on 'experts' and perhaps a Gaullist reorientation of the presidency, the significance of which would have been precisely that it ended the dialogue between party elites and across the blocks. Nenni accepted the maintenance of centrism on the three-block basis, and there could be no going back.

In 1968 most of the PSI's electorate followed Nenni, but far from all, and the Centre-Left was far from a sweeping success for the left. Indeed, as we shall now see, the Centre-Left came to be widely judged a political failure, so that as a political formula it was only an interim solution to the problem of finding a stable arrangement of the basic centrist political agreement. Whilst the 1968 election confirmed the PSI's hold on most of its electorate, it also sustained the asymmetry of the three-block system and the continuing tendency of the government block to be forced to compete primarily on its left - now composed exclusively of the PCI.

B. The Centre-Left: An interim political solution

The Centre-Left brought policy innovation and, above all, cultural regeneration, through the flowing together of catholic, socialist and reformist liberal positions. For this reason, and for the fact that the elites' manoeuvring induced the bulk of the electorate to follow them, the Cen-

tre-Left can be regarded a success for the centrist political strategy pursued by sections of the DC. The historic gulf between the Catholics and socialists had been soundly breached, and though the PCI was now isolated, its defeat was political, not 'anti-political'. Indeed, the PCI was far from excluded even in the new situation, and in so far as the PSI retained a natural affinity with that party, the PCI's access to government increased,²⁷ whilst electoral growth guaranteed its continuing relevance.

The centrist party strategy had also prospered. The DC maintained its domination of the centrist coalition block, now differently composed. It remained the country's predominant political party without which no government could be formed. There was no question of the expanded centre splitting to produce a centre-based two-block system. The fusion of the PSI and PSDI in 1966 was a disaster and fell apart in 1969 after the election showed the combined vote of the two parties to be one third less than the total of their separate votes in 1963.^A

The short-lived Unified Socialist Party was unable to establish the predominance of a political cleavage running through the governing coalition. This would have required the subordination of the excluded left to the centre-left equal to the subordination of the right to the centre-right already achieved. This element of subordination and the focus on government control and alternation means that the model that failed to materialise is best described as a two-

A. From 19.9% (13.8% and 6.1%) down to 14.5%.

block one, though Duverger refers to essentially the same situation as a four-party one.²⁸

The failure of the PSU to provide the basis for a two-block system and government alternation does not, however, mean that the tendency to diachronic centrism between the DC and the left was extinguished. On the contrary, now even more clearly it came to be focused on the DC and the PCI. However, by 1968/69 far more than the structuring of the party system was open to question.

The Hot Autumn of 1969 and the tensions within the catholic and socialist sub-cultures indicated a fundamental challenge to party government itself. The lack of hold of the parties coincided with competing anti-party mobilisations which led briefly, in the period 1970-72, to a lurch of the political system to the right, reflecting the desire for more authoritative government rather than the left's proposal that pan-syndicalism should replace the moribund system of party non- or mis-government. Soon, however, the deeper, continuing dynamism of party interaction and the attractive power of the left block displayed itself.

One of the consequences of the 'failure' of the Centre-Left was that the country's political culture continued to lie essentially to the left of the government coalition. Turmoil in the dominant political sub-cultures challenged both parties to a more active pursuit of major reform and led to the clear emergence in the mid 1970s of the PCI as the system's second hegemonic party, the core of an alternative government coalition, pulling the PSI and the left DC towards it. This firmly refocussed attention on the party system, as

did the failure of the unions to realise their aims and the rise of terrorism.

With the Socialists in the government, an exclusionary centrism was no longer possible, though the generalised acceptance of state involvement in the old rightist 'strategy of tension' indicates that non-democratic pressures remained highly relevant to political development, but what would replace the failed Centre-Left was unclear. Out of sheer necessity two unlikely alternatives presented themselves: either some sort of renewed grand coalition or the long-delayed establishment of a two-block system. This uncertain future came to be dubbed by Aldo Moro as the 'third phase'.

III

THE THIRD PHASE

No one, not even Moro, was sure what the 'third phase' would bring, but the certainty that things could not continue as they were grew from the late 1960s, and was general by the early 1970s. Within the DC, Moro himself turned against the Dorotei in late 1968 after Donat-Cattin, historic leader of the trade union left, spoke of the need for a second catholic party, a 'credible' reformist party.²⁹

It has been indicated that the Hot Autumn and related events raised the question of what would follow the Centre-Left in such a way that what was at issue was not merely the relationships between different party elites, ie coalition formulae, but the very role of political parties. Chapter Six deals with these developments in detail, analysing the Historic Compromise and the governments of national solidari-

ty as well as the challenge of new parties, trade unions and terrorism to the established system of party government. Here I wish to reconsider the assumption that the 'third phase' was to see the assertion of one of the two ideal models of centrism - synchronic/grand coalition, or diachronic/alternation.

Chapter Two demonstrated the importance of the self-assertion of a political class based on a 'negative agreement' (not to disagree militarily) and on the establishment of a functioning party system, at first operative only at the elite level. Centrism, it was argued, had its roots in the formation of this political class in the 1942-43 period and the consolidation of that class in the CLN and the elections which ended the CLN experience. The unity of that class was recognised to be highly competitive, antagonistic in its own right and, furthermore, goaded by social pressures which made it necessary to vent the conflictual aspect of the 'contradictory unity' which the party system comprised. Nevertheless, the argument went, the extremity of confrontation in 1947-48 was functional to securing the political class's leading role in regulating the political pact whose existence the CLN and the foundation of the Republic both signalled and helped to create.

Chapter Three showed that the crisis of the CLN and the transformation of centrism threatened that pact but also allowed a relatively peaceful solution to the post-war socio-political crisis. This solution was the establishment of the three-block structure, first hinted at in 1946, and made possible by the defeat of the 'swindle law'. The 1950s saw

the consolidation of this structure and indirectly the consolidation of party democracy, guaranteeing the survival of a relational centre and, with it, highly competitive party interaction. It was also shown, however, that the new 'centrism' tended to be an exclusionary one, so that the 1950s saw a mixture of dynamic tendencies: to reinstate synchronic centrism, to establish diachronic centrism, and to enforce exclusionary centrism. Thus, the democratic consolidation of the 1950s was imperfect because the structure of the party system was one which rendered the existence, and significance, of the relational centre obscure.³⁰

Since the establishment of the three-block system had evolved as a way of maintaining a democratically-based system when the one-block system proved untenable but a two-block confrontation appeared unwise, it is not surprising that the three-block structure lasted as well as it did, nor that it was extended by the birth of the Centre-Left. The Centre-Left maintained the three-block system and moved the centre block left, keeping it in step with the evolving relational centre, but the innovativeness of the move was smothered by the degree of continuity involved. Thus the Centre-Left was built on sand. The renewed three-block structure failed to generate a tendency towards a moderate two-block system and it certainly did not tend towards a new grand coalition. The asymmetry of the structure remained, and the political culture of the country quickly reestablished itself as lying to the left of the coalition formula. Within ten years, one of the excluded 'extremes' was itself a clear candidate for government.

In fact, by the end of the 1960s the three-block structure was facing quite a different situation to that prevailing ten or twenty years previously. On the right the monarchists had declined to irrelevance so that this excluded block now consisted of the PLI, a clearly constitutional party, and the MSI, now more of a protest party than a programmatic and governmentally orientated anti-system threat. The centre too was transformed. The welfarist and state/national aspect of the ruling coalition, as against its class dictatorship nature, was more identifiable, and the fear of catholic totalitarianism was a thing of the past, even if the Vatican's influence still outraged many. On the left, the PCI was increasingly integrated into the political and economic system, even if this too was far from universally accepted.

The Centre-Left was an adjustment of, and advance on, the three-block centrism established in the early '50s. It both put off the moment of the party system's transformation into a moderate two-block system, or grand coalition, and eased the way towards these outcomes. The tendency towards what Farneti called 'unipolarism', and which in comparative West European terms had been identified as the 'waning of opposition' was having effect. But as well as making the demise of the three-block system possible, the tendency to unipolarism stimulated the rising generation's contemptuous rejection of the caution of the established political class.

In Chapter Six, then, the PCI-based challenge to the three-block structure and the DC's response will be examined in terms of the difficulties confronting a political class

still concerned with the dangers of a two-block confrontation, yet also relentlessly attacked for its increasingly open cooperation. Chapter Seven will show that the growth of the unipolar drive, encouraged by the national solidarity governments, took place in such a way that the 1980s was a decade in which neither grand coalition nor the formation of a two-block structure was realised.

By the 1980s, the collapse of ideologies, at least of Communism and exclusionary Catholicism were so advanced that the three-block organisation of the party system seemed anachronistic and even haphazard. Only the manipulation of residual ideological divides out of party self-interest prevented a two-block structure from being formed, even whilst parties declared themselves willing to 'play the field', that is, not to restrict themselves to their accepted positions in the left/right spectrum.

Before turning to these developments, which clearly signal a radical transformation of the nature of the Italian party system, Chapter Five looks at the class/economic cleavage which Chapter One indicated to be the most important in twentieth century Western Europe, including Italy. In looking at this cleavage we shall be stressing the vertical cleavage between left and right in contrast to the emphasis placed in Chapters Two to Four on the horizontal linkages within the political class and generalised through the competitive interaction of the party system.

- (1) S.Magister, La politica Vaticana e l'Italia, 1945-78, Rome: Riuniti, 1979, p.184.
- (2) R.Drake, The Revolutionary Mystique. Terrorism in Contemporary Italy, Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indianapolis Press, 1989, pp.121-2.
- (3) M.Dogan, 'Political Cleavage and Social Stratification in France and Italy' in S.M.Lipset and S.Rokkan (eds), Party Systems and Voter Alignments: Cross National Perspectives, New York: Free Press, 1967, pp.129-195, pp.186, 190-191.
- (4) P.Farneti, 'I partiti politici e il sistema di potere' in V.Castronovo (ed), L'Italia contemporanea, Turin: Einaudi, 1975, pp.61-104, p.75.
- (5) G.Martina, La chiesa in Italia negli ultimi trentS'anni, Rome: Studium, 1977, pp.54-5.
- (6) S.Magister, op.cit. 1979, pp.187 ff.
- (7) A.Riccardi, Il 'partito romano' nella seconda dopoguerra, 1945-54, Brescia: Morcelliana, 1983, pp.196-7.
- (8) A.Riccardi, Il potere del Papa: da Pio XII a Paolo VI, Rome: Laterza, 1988, pp.68-78.
- (9) I.Budge and D.Farlie, Explaining and Predicting Elections: Issue Effects and Party Strategies in Twenty-Three Democracies, London: Allen and Unwin, 1983, esp. pp.27-47, 197.
- (10) J.Adams and P.Barile, The Government of Republican Italy, Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1966.
- (11) A.Riccardi, op.cit. esp.pp.199 ff.
- (12) S.Magister, op.cit. 1979, pp.268-9.
- (13) J.Seidler, 'Contested Accommodation: The Catholic Church as a Special Case of Social Change', Social Forces, June, 1986, pp.847-875.
- (14) See K.Dyson, 'Party Government and party State' in H.Doring and

G.Smith (eds), Party Government and Political Culture in Western Germany, London: Macmillan, 1982, pp.77-100.

(15) W.Dewachter, 'Changes in a Particratie: the Belgian party System from 1944 to 1986', in H.Daalder (ed), Party Systems in Denmark, Austria, Switzerland, the Netherlands and Belgium, London: Frances Pinter, 1987, pp.285-363.

(16) S.Tosi, 'Italy: anti-system opposition within the system', Government and Opposition, 1966, pp.49-61.

(17) The concepts are from C.Hood, The Tools of Government, London: Macmillan, 1983.

(18) A.Pizzorno, I soggetti del pluralismo. Classi, partiti, sindacati, Bologna: Il Mulino, 1980.

(19) eg M.Calise, Il sistema DC. Mediazione e conflitto nelle campagne democristiane, Bari: De Donato, 1978.

(20) R.Drake, op.cit. 1989, Ch.3.

(21) A.Bagnasco, Tre Italie: la problematica territoriale dello sviluppo italiano, Bologna: Il Mulino, 1977; D.Keble and E.Weaver 'Introduction' in D.Keble and E.Weaver (eds), New Firms and Regional Development in Europe, London: Croom Helm, 1986, pp.1-34; S.Brusco, 'Small Firms and industrial Districts: The Experience of Italy' in ibid. pp.184-202; Agenzia Industriale Italiana, 'Italy' in P.Burns and J.Dewhurst (eds), Small Business in Europe, London: Macmillan, 1986, pp.99-130.

(22) S.Tarrow, Between Centre and Periphery. Grassroots politicians in Italy and France, Yale University Press, 1977, pp.104-6; and on the 'political class': pp.7-8, 70, 174-211 passim.

(23) Y.Meny and V.Wright (eds), Centre-Periphery Relations in Western Europe, London: Allen and Unwin, 1985; R.A.W.Rhodes and V.Wright (eds), Tensions in the Territorial Politics of Western Europe, London: Frank Cass, 1987. On Italy, apart from S.Tarrow op.cit.1977, see R.Nanetti, Growth and territorial Politics: the Italian Model of Social Capitalism, London: Frances Pinter, 1988.

(24) E.Wiskemann, Italy Since 1945, London: Macmillan, 1971, p.36.

(25) See: A.W.Salomone (ed), Italy: from Risorgimento to Fascism, Newton Abbott: David and Charles, 1971.

(26) G.Merli, 'Gronchi' in Vol.2 'I protagonisti' of Dizionario storico-grafico del Mondo Cattolico in Italia, , pp.268-273.

(27) S.Tosi, 'Anti-system Opposition Within the System', Government and Opposition, 1966, pp.49-61; D.Hine, 'Italy: Condemned by its Constitution?', in V.Bogdanor (ed), Constitutions and Democratic Politics, Aldershot: Gower, 1988, pp.206-228.

(28) M.Duverger, Political Parties: Their Organisation and Activity in the Modrn State, London: Methuen, 1964, pp.229-237.

(29) S, Magister, op.cit. pp. 353, 363.

(30) Compare L.Morlino, 'The Changing Relationship between Parties and Society in Italy', West European Politcs, October, 1984, pp.46-66 with the view that democratic consolidation in Italy has been a more contracted process: D.Hine, 'The consolidation of democracy in post-war Italy', in G.Pridham (ed), Securing Democracy: political parties and democratic consolidation in southern Europe, London and New York: Routledge, 1990, pp.62-83.

Programmatic economic policy differences are often taken as being the primary determinant of left and right in twentieth century Western Europe and, hence, of party system structuring. We have seen in Chapter One that Italy has an economically defined 'left/right' dimension predominant even in a multi-dimensional approach to political space based on saliency theory. In fact, that theory shows a bourgeois versus socialist/reformist divide is common to most party systems.¹ It is the significance of this which we wish to address in this Chapter, in particular asking which is more important, the distinction or the agreement to manage it? This is another way of looking at the concept of contradictory unity. However, this time social forces and classes are more to the fore than they have been hitherto where the stress has been on the examination of party system management.

The significance of the division is significantly reduced by the other findings in Mastropaolo and Slaters' work. In particular, the DC is identified as a centre party on this key dimension, it is the PLI which is the clearly 'bourgeois' party. Three other dimensions of competition are particularly salient. Two of which can be considered to be more or less inversely related, ie stress tends to be placed on 'technocracy' or 'social harmony'. The third is a common theme, ie 'modernisation and reform'.^A This Chapter opens

A. See reproductions pp.58-60, Chapter 1.

with a suggested interpretation of these findings, based on the prioritisation of polity management over the management of the economy which has been emphasised in Chapters Two to Four. It then looks in greater detail at the evolution of economic policy-making in order to confirm the validity of this approach. It looks first at the reconstruction, a critical period, and one surrounded by controversy; then at the period of Fanfani's ascendancy and his attempt to dominate the economy and development; and finally at the rejection of Fanfani's statism by the private sector and the unions alike.

CLEAVAGE AND UNITY: A PREVIEW
(Mastropaolo & Slater)

This preliminary interpretation of the findings of Mastropaolo and Slater covers the period to the 1970s, as does the material on which it is based, but it shows that the '70s are a natural break-off point for the subsequent detailed analysis. By the 1970s, Italy's economic problems were typical of those of the Western European states. It had achieved industrial take-off. The immediately subsequent period, that of managing the crisis of the 1970s, was one which the subsequent chapters show also to be a watershed in polity management.

Whilst the central dimension emphasised by Mastropaolo and Slater is one of cleavage, of position-taking for and against two alternative ways of managing the economy, it is striking that the DC occupies a centre position on this dimension, particularly when this is related, as it must be,

to the other two important dimensions. In this Chapter it will be argued that both the salience of the left/right dimension and the distance between the parties on it should be understood as belonging largely to the realm of symbolic politics. That is, this dimension is predominant because of its symbolic mobilisational force for the socialist left and, by reaction, for the anti-socialist forces. This dimension is largely used by the party elites, in particular the PCI, to corral the electorate in to standing behind it, accepting its leadership. Position-taking in terms of policy-making will be shown to be largely consequential to this motivation, so that the division into hostile blocks preceded policy intentions rather than vice versa.

An indication of the symbolic nature of this appeal, and the tendency for the parties in fact to interact positively, is the very weakness of the economic right. Certainly, reconstruction was 'capitalist', but only once was the DC's programme significantly on the right, and then, as we shall see, the programme was at odds with both the policies and with other key statements of the party's leadership. Conversely, there is the centripetal tendency of the PCI on the left/right economic dimension. This can be seen as not so much the result of the parliamentarisation of communism through the cooptation of its elites, as the declining relevance of this dimension in electoral mobilisation thanks to the way the political class, PCI elite included, handled political and economic confrontation. The early leftism identified by Mastropaolo & Slater was subsequent to a prior moderation, as was argued briefly in Chapters Two and Three,

and will be examined more closely below, and was itself the response to the demands placed on it by electoral confrontation in conditions of extreme economic hardship. Further evidence supportive of this argument can be found by interpreting the relationship between the various programmatic emphases highlighted by Mastropaolo and Slater.

That the 'technocratic' angle was pushed by the doctrinaire Liberals in 1946/48, against the 'social harmony' emphasis of all three mass parties can be seen as confirming the view of this thesis of the importance of the construction of centrism by the mass parties, especially the DC and PCI, in this period. The prioritisation of politics by these parties, as led by De Gasperi and Togliatti, was stressed in Chapters Two and Three, and was particularly significant for its relegation of economic policy to second place.² 'Social harmony' was clearly prioritised by the elites of the mass parties as the essential precondition for establishing a way of constructively disagreeing and thus permitting successful economic management. This stands in stark contrast to the PLI's doctrinaire ignorance of the political bases of economic policy-making. In the DC's case, the party's popular catholic heritage was used by the leadership to ameliorate sociopolitical tensions throughout the 1950s. The PCI too continued to stress social harmony even whilst its economic leftism remained high, whereas, from 1953 the technocratic critique was taken up by the PSI. The PCI's behaviour reflects the fact that whilst it was striving to maintain its militant membership and electoral following, predicated on its identity as the principle socialist opposition and alter-

native to the DC, it was simultaneously seeking to confirm that it remained loyal to the constitution by stressing that its politics remained orientated to broad alliances and cooperation. By contrast, the PSI's technocratic critique was based on moderating its intransigent leftism to adopt a critical and alternative position to both the DC and the PCI. When the PCI's weakening leftism had reached a similar point in the 1960s and '70s, it too took over the championing of the technocratic critique. The advantages of the critique for the socialist parties is that it conjoins a critique of government performance more appealing to a centrist electorate with a partisan alternative which maintains the party's differentness. Of course, such reformism is open to criticism, so tends to be unstable, and both parties can be seen trying to resolve this dilemma by tying the technocratic critique to a progressive perspective which simultaneously champions 'reform and modernisation'. For the PSI this becomes important in the late 1950s (1958-63), for the PCI from 1968.

The logic of this interpretation is that the excluded left elites, albeit in the face of strong internal opposition, accepted the general direction of economic development as pursued by the DC and its allies to the extent that they were content with forcing adjustments to it whilst awaiting electoral victory. This is not to argue that the left did not seek to modify the government's behaviour, it clearly did, and with intense vigour, nor is it to argue that there was no alternative, there was, but it is to argue that the alternative pursued was less total, less one of principle,

than it often appeared.

Implicit in this sketch is the reason why this chapter does not look beyond the 1970s. By that time the PSI had been fully incorporated in the running of a capitalist democracy, and the PCI was clearly 'bailing the system out', both politically and economically, just like other Social Democratic parties. By the mid-1980s it was clear not only that the Italian economy was like other West European economies, but also that the economic strategies of its parties operated within similarly tight parameters to those of other government-orientated parties. It was no coincidence then that the party system underwent the profound change that it did in the late 1970s and early 1980s - the subject of the two following Chapters.

II RECONSTRUCTION

The reconstruction period was one of great political fluidity in which fundamental decisions about the future orientation of the economy had to be taken. Subsequently, stimulated by the dramatic exclusion of the left from the cabinet and the tremendous costs of the vast socioeconomic revolution which transformed Italy from an agricultural to an industrial and post-industrial nation in only thirty years, the nature of Italy's economic reconstruction became a subject of intense controversy. This Section starts by outlining the basic situation at the end of the war and then looks at the outlines of the debate before going on to look at the

detail of policy-making in the 1945-53 period. It stresses the primacy of politics, in particular the importance of De Gasperi's actions in the given international context in establishing a social and political coalition able to launch Italy on a modernising, industrialising path. It concludes by considering whether De Gasperi pursued a general interest or merely aggregated a winning coalition of individual interests.

A. The Inheritance

In 1945 the Italian economy suffered from both war damage and deeper historical problems. The immediate inheritance was of immense losses of plant and machinery, shipping and livestock and of shattered roads, railways, bridges and ports. The flow of raw material supplies on which the economy depended had been disrupted. Structurally, the economy was backward and under-developed. A more than semi-agricultural society, Italy risked being locked into a cycle of under-development.³

The effects of the Fascist regime on the country's economic development, both industrially and agriculturally were ambiguous.⁴ The policy of autarchy, for example, had reinforced the strength of many large powerful sectors which the state had traditionally backed, and these provided a basis for expansion, but many were very wary of market competition.⁵ Contrariwise, the liberal conviction that autarchy had hindered economic growth was also reinforced, and in the post-war, post-Fascist period came to the fore in the academic and political worlds.

The industrial structure of the country was one of domination by industrial giants like FIAT (motor vehicles), Edison (electrical engineering) and Montecatini (chemicals) on the one hand, and a vast array of small, often family-based industries on the other. An intermediate level of middle-sized firms more attuned to wide-scale competition was largely absent. The tendency to oligopolistic and/or monopolistic concentration had been reinforced by the effects of the world recession of 1929-32, and this had also forced the state to step in and rescue the country's leading banks and, consequently, the industries dependent on them.

The state's rescue operation was nothing to do with the Fascist espousal of corporatism, indeed the operation was kept separate from Fascist ideologues by the creation of IRI, the Industrial Reconstruction Agency, in 1933. The state was forced to become a permanent actor by the absence of a strong bourgeoisie able and willing to buy back what the state had been left holding. By the late '30s IRI's vast holdings were grouped sectorally: STET (telephones), Finmare (shipping), Finsider (iron and steel), AGIP (oil and gas) and so on, and by 1939 besides controlling virtually the entire banking sector IRI was responsible for 70% of ship-building, 45% of iron and steel production, 39% of electromechanical engineering and 23% of mechanical engineering.⁶ This was the largest degree of public intervention in the economy in the Western world. What happened to it in 1945 was of decisive importance. It could have provided the base for major 'socialist' intervention, and indeed IRI became a major source of inspiration for the British Labour party in the 1960s and '70s.

The Italian Communists, however, seeking not to emulate the soviet model but to develop a progressive alliance with business interests, were initially diffident towards what they regarded as a Fascist instrument.⁷ But let us enter directly into the realm of politics and ideological debate.

B. The Ideological Debate

Much of the historiography of post World War II Italian political economy has revolved around the assertion, and refutation, of a 'reconstruction' which saw the triumph of economic liberalism, and analyses have tended to assume, and assert the inevitability of a left/right split over this issue.⁸ Thus, in the early literature, a straight-forward victory of the right over the left, of liberalism over interventionism, was argued to have taken place. What made this plausible, indeed determined the contours of the analysis, was the coincidence of the expulsion of the left in 1947 and the drastic deflation which immediately followed.

Pursued by Luigi Einaudi as Treasury Minister, and then overseen by him as President, the financial stabilisation of 1947-48 was not merely coincidental with the left's expulsion from the cabinet, but intimately bound up with it. Nevertheless, greater acknowledgement subsequently came to be given to the liberalisation of international trade from March 1946 when the left was still in the cabinet, and to the great importance which the state and its special agencies played in the post-war boom. IRI in particular played a major role, and from this was backed by ENI the National Hydrocarbon Agency established to promote energy exploration and produc-

tion. Thus an essentially dirigiste framework came to be stresses, within which there had been two liberal 'inter-ludes', in early 1946 and again in 1947. The role of the state/DC was still seen largely as either deliberately promoting the interests of monopoly capital, or as myopically mediating between different dominant interests. Interventionism, like liberalism, was now identified as 'right-wing'.

Labelling the government's dirigiste/liberal mix as right-wing because of its domination by particular interests, and because of political Catholicism's alleged economic ignorance given its peasant roots and theoretical background rooted in medieval conceptions broke the simple reductionism of liberalism as right-wing and interventionism as left. The political nature of intervention now depended on who was implementing it and who for, ie on the balance of social and political forces. Nevertheless, 'liberalism' remained essentially right-wing per se.

We shall pick this argument up when we look at the policies and politics of economic policy-making in detail. For the moment, to stick with the abstract level, it can be argued that for social democrats the political impact of liberal policies are also seen to depend on the balance of political forces. Thus whilst no policy is ever neutral, policies can be more (or less) democratically structured and implemented. In a democratic political system, some notion of the national interest will be relevant.⁹

In post-war Italy, the absence of a strong social democratic tradition, or more specifically of a strong, independent, avowedly reformist party allowed the DC to adopt

a range of policies, some of which were reformist or 'centre-left', whilst remaining on the centre or centre-right of the party system. The left critique of the government was undermined by its confusion as to the nature of post-war capitalism, and given that the left position appeared to reject capitalism per se, a wide range of criticisms of government economic policy were nevertheless more assimilable to government positions than to those of the left. This applied whether the critique was essentially 'technical' eg for a more reflationary/Keynesian approach, or 'moral' ie attacking the corruption and irrationality of the patronage and clientelism involved in the political direction of, and co-optation by, economic interests. The DC exploited this situation, as we shall now see, to establish an economic strategy which defined the national interest as requiring DC leadership and the subordinate participation of the left.

C. The Primacy of Politics, 1945-53

It has been argued that the primacy of politics was a fundamental consideration for both De Gasperi and Togliatti, and earlier in this chapter this was contrasted to the Liberals' insistence on putting the economy first during the CLN period. This will now be looked at in some detail. The first sub-section deals specifically with the CLN period, the second with the break up of the CLN and the significance of Einaudi's reforms. A third section then stresses the importance of the international context, considered not only as one of military confrontation between alternative economic systems, but also as one in which the reorganisation of

economic development on a new, European and international, scale had its own independent dynamic. The final section moves from this context to consideration of De Gasperi's role as a statesman representing Italian national interests, not simply sectional interests.

1. Economic policy-making, 1945-47

The CLN had two fundamental tasks, one political, the other economic. On the one hand it sought to maintain political stability, not in any static sense, but in the sense of preventing political degeneration so as to permit the evolution of a democratic and just new social order. On the other hand, it had to get the country working again. To a certain extent, business elites did this independently of government so that, for example, the strategy of promoting exports to overcome the yawning trade deficit was largely pre-given, already operational when the CLN came to power.¹⁰

The independent power of the business elites was a tacitly acknowledged fact which found reflection in the CLN's common stress on working class restraint and the united CGIL's repeated demonstration of its 'willingness to accommodate business interests'.¹¹ The very independence of the business class, reinforced by their growing political and commercial links with the USA, allowed the political class to avoid taking fundamental decisions in the 1944-47 period and to concentrate on the battle for political power, for the parties' economic agnosticism allowed both the DC and the PCI to 'seek broad social and political alliances' in a catch-all strategy which sought to avoid alienating either the working or the middle classes to which both parties appealed.¹²

Vague programmes and contradictory stances internal to the parties reflected their intensely competitive electoral strategies as they sought to maximise their appeal not only in their obvious catholic or industrial working class reservoirs, but amongst broad strata outside them. Electoral competitiveness thus blocked important initiatives identified with the left in the 1945-46 period. On the one hand Togliatti refrained from supporting his more decisive Ministers lest their struggle to force measures through the CLN gave the impression of being aggressive Bolsheviks restrained only by the Allied military presence, a strategy which failed electorally, but was instrumental in forming the political class; on the other hand, the opposition parties opposed the left's initiatives for similarly indirect, electoral reasons. There was some self-interest, some rejection out of principle, but the real danger was that their implementation would be successful, boosting the left's image and leading to their political victory. Opposed in itself, such a development might also have decisively reinforced the right-wing reaction which was seeking to outflank the DC. Electoral considerations thus drastically restricted policy options in two quite different ways.

The antagonistic cooperation of the political parties thus led to a public policy vacuum and increasing political uncertainty. From 1946 this was fuelled by the escalating international rhetoric which preceded the Cold War. In these circumstances, industrial stagnation increasingly came to be the effect of the absence of established political and economic 'rules of the game'. Mariuccia Salvati, who sees the

period as a lost opportunity for a more positive socialist state-led solution to the problems of industrialisation and accumulation, describes De Gasperi's tripartite administration as 'preoccupied with the public interest and faced with the disinterest of the industrial classes', and she quotes President Truman's advisor on Italy on the 'diffidence' of the industrial world 'towards the general interest, towards the state, towards politics'.¹³ By early 1947, Confindustria was mounting a massive attack on the tripartite government, and as the pre-Fascist elites started to reassert themselves it became clear that the political class would have to consolidate its hold through electoral confrontation.

Workers too were putting pressure on the PCI to adopt a position more decisively in their favour, and we have seen that Togliatti withdrew from the government in the summer of 1946 in order to concentrate on reasserting his authority in, and over, the PCI. Nevertheless, it would be a mistake to assume that working class living conditions declined, even as an immediate consequence of the 1947 exclusion crisis. Industrial wages rose from only 30% of the 1938 level in 1944 to 100% in 1948, whereas industrial production picked up only to 80% for the same period.¹⁴ The key problem was unemployment.

As we have seen, the PCI expected to adopt an oppositional position in 1947, but as a party of government, in principle.¹⁵ By withdrawing to a position of critical, but loyal, opposition, the party would, on the face of it, be doing no more than the PSI and PLI had already done. What changed things was De Gasperi's exploitation of the interna-

tional environment to align the entrepreneurial classes decisively behind the DC in flagrant confrontation with its ex-partners.

The baseline of economic boom, 1947-48

De Gasperi signalled his concern that the new democracy had to gain the support of the business classes in a major speech at the start of the spring 1947 cabinet crisis. The three mass parties, he argued, were not enough to secure the democracy. It also had to be economically sound, and the 'party' that could guarantee this, the 'fourth party' of business interests, was absent. De Gasperi's speech has been vilified by the left, but it was an astute assessment of the situation. Rather than seeking to maintain some sort of broadly socialist coalition which would be able to garnish enough support to force the entrepreneurs into accepting a new political leadership, an exceptionally difficult and perhaps impossible undertaking¹⁶, De Gasperi persuaded Confindustria to back the DC and to back a modernising strategy to which it was in large part opposed. He simultaneously persuaded a dithering and divided United States to supply massive funding to ensure that the 'anti-Communist' enterprise worked.¹⁷

Unable to bring about a reconciliation between an aggressively defensive business/industrial elite on the one hand, and a combative working class suffering 20% unemployment and convinced that socialism was around the corner, the division of the political class permitted it to confirm its overall societal leadership even as it became a prisoner of an electoral confrontation which fused the socioeconomic and

political clash with a 'clash of civilisations'. The exclusion of the left permitted the newly consolidating political class to confirm itself at the mass level, through elections, and enabled one of the new mass parties to at last give some decisive direction to economic policy-making. That a rational, consensus basis for policy-making was rendered impossible was probably unavoidable, but the economic policies, foreign and domestic, which were the basis of Italy's future boom were made possible precisely by this politicisation.

As the resurgent economic liberalism of the post-Fascist period coincided with visceral anti-Communism, liberalism inevitably became the butt of the excluded left's confrontation with the new government, which in turn became increasingly anti-Communist, but the DC neither ruptured the electoral and intra-elite dialectic by banning the PCI nor wholeheartedly adopted liberal positions. To the contrary, the DC's use of the state to promote economic development was marked. What it was not, and could not be, was open and solicitous of 'external' political support. It had to be more or less under-hand, pursued by agreements based on the party and the state, rather than parliament and the state. In this sense, economic policy remained 'centrist' rather than either laissez faire or 'socialist'.

A dirigiste approach to economic management had brought increasing agreement between the DC-left (Dossetti, Fanfani and Taviani) and the PCI in the Constituent Assembly's Economic Sub-Commission in the latter half of 1946, marginalising the PLI, and this had been a major reason behind that winter's attack by the business classes on the tripartite

government.¹⁸ However, leading industrialists in both the private and the state sector had shown an interest in state intervention, so long as it took place within an overall capitalist framework. At the forefront of this interest were Vittorio Valletta of FIAT and Oscar Sinigaglia of Finsider, IRI's iron and steel sector. They shared ambitious plans for national economic modernisation and were convinced that the structural problems of the economy were such that successful industrialisation required the state's active, cooperative, participation.

The ousting of the doctrinaire Liberal, Epicarmo Corbino, from the cabinet in the autumn of 1946 was a victory for this approach, but the policy split within the business world was not between those favouring an interventionist approach and those opposing it. It was between those favouring an activist state aiming to modernise the economy to make it internationally competitive, and those seeking a regulated, still rather autarchic economy.¹⁹ The latter approach appealed to leading figures like Giorgio Falck (steel), actually an important founder of the DC, and Gaetano Marzotto (textiles), but would have condemned the country to relative stagnation. Crucial to defeating these interests was the alliance which De Gasperi reached with Angelo Costa, the President of Confindustria, which although hammered by the left as an anti-worker alliance, secured Confindustria's acceptance of a modernising strategy.²⁰ In an interview given in 1988, Bruno Visentini an Action party supporter in the 1940s and subsequently vice-President of both IRI and Confindustria, described De Gasperi's role and the vision of

Italian entrepreneurs in this period in the following terms:

`Confindustria was extraordinarily politically myopic. All the large industrialists were extremely protectionist and opposed to the liberalisation of exchange. Inside the government they were supported by Pella who fought ferociously against La Malfa and Vanoni, accused of wanting to expose the Italian economy to a massacre. The latter won out because they had De Gasperi on their side ... a man already thinking of the construction of Europe and who had launched the European Coal and Steel Community with Schumann and Konrad Adenauer.'²¹

The price to be paid for gaining the support of the business classes for a new style of polity management based on competition between mass-based parties, and for a modernising, internationally orientated economic policy programme, as well as for massive US support of the latter policy, was the exclusion of the left from the cabinet.

3. European integration

According to the historian James Joll, De Gasperi and Robert Schumann were 'the leading politicians who took decisive steps towards the creation of a united Western Europe'.²² It was this which guaranteed the success of Italy's economic modernisation and it was De Gasperi's political entrepreneurship which provided the strategic framework within which the schemes of the modernisers could be realised, and the conservative opposition induced to follow. It was an inextricably interpenetrating mix of economic and political management which truly deserves the label of 'political economy' and the means which enabled De Gasperi to realise it was the DC and the party system created by the new political class.

As we saw, the 1946 election disappointed Togliatti's hopes of creating a catch-all party, leaving De Gasperi to exploit the situation by maximising its appeal as an anti-Communist party. This stance secured not only the policy support of the USA and domestic business classes, but massive electoral support which De Gasperi used to realise his economic strategy. Muriel Grindrod has described the 1948-53 legislature as seeing the implementation of policies which determined the success of Italy's post-war economic policy.²³ The European Coal and Steel Community, inaugurated in 1952, proved to be such an outstanding success that the way for the European Economic Community was opened, and Italy continued to play a leading role, hosting the international conferences in Messina and Rome (in 1955 and '57) which paved the way to its creation.

For European integration to be of benefit to the Italian economy, both financial and industrial competitiveness were urgently required. To achieve these in all haste, an active mix of both liberalism and interventionism needed to be decisively pursued. The DC was an ideal party for this. Rather than being fettered by either ideological dogma, liberal or socialist, the party was predisposed to a pragmatism which was in tune with the realities of economic management in a neo-capitalist mixed economy, yet predisposed to a rather voluntaristic activism thanks to its 'Christian social solidarism'.²⁴ This mixture joined a high regard for individual private property ownership with an opposition to parasitic and monopolistic capitalism and a concern for the social welfare of the nation which counteracted the conserva-

tism of many powerful Catholics and lay behind Fanfani's radical drive to make the DC independent of Church and business interests later in the 1950s. Einaudian liberalism was thus one strand of De Gasperi's commitment to economic modernisation.

The reality of Christian Democrat domination in this period should be contrasted to the theory of the domination of 'liberalism', or of the unimportance of the DC compared to independents such as Einaudi and Carlo Sforza whom De Gasperi included in his cabinets. It was De Gasperi and the DC which held everything together. The liberal domination thesis has been argued at length by Vicarelli²⁵ who establishes that Italian economists were overwhelmingly neoclassicists in the tradition of Walras and Pareto, a judgment that has been echoed in a comparative study of the impact of Keynesianism.²⁶ 'traditional ideas', it seems, were much more traditional in Italy (and Germany) than elsewhere. Bleaney, nevertheless, notes that 'one gets the impression that Keynesian ideas were sufficiently influential to induce counter-cyclical action if a recession began to look serious', citing the reaction to the 1958 down-turn as evidence. Bleaney's example comes from a later date than is being dealt with here, but the point is that there was a crucial disjuncture between theory and practice in economic management. In fact, as Vicarelli himself establishes, Einaudi made a crucial distinction between 'competitive capitalism' which was an ideal to be sought after, and 'historical capitalism', the imperfect beast present in Italy, and this distinction was well known to other key 'Einaudian liberals' such as D.Meni-

chella and R.Mattioli who directed the Bank of Italy and Banca commerciale in the 1950s, and who consequently supported IRI's role in stimulating competition and industrial modernisation and even supported the commitment to full employment pursued by the catholic planner, Ezio Vanoni.

Bleaney's specific thesis is that neither government stimulation of demand^A nor economists' ideas were particularly important to the post-war boom, compared to the 'investment euphoria' of the 1950s and '60s. The post-war political culture was one committed to growth, and governments and economists simply operated within it. Bleaney's picture is useful in pointing to the narrowness of Vicarelli's approach, but it invokes political culture at the expense of politics itself. As far as Italy, at least, is concerned, political elites, with De Gasperi in the van, created the post-war growth culture.

It has come to be increasingly recognised, moreover, that a less rigorous deflation, a more Keynesian approach, may have been inappropriate to Italy's requirements, as well as being administratively impracticable.²⁷ The overwhelming need to internationalise Italy's economy and the inadequacy of capital to effect a sustained boom and absorb the labour surplus, not weak demand, were Italy's deeply historically rooted problems. What was necessary above all was to mobilise capital, to force growth. This was a strategy that was harder on labour than it was on capital, for mobilising capital meant providing opportunity for profit (and stimulat-

A. Not relevant in Italy in any case.

ing it through competition), whereas labour mobilisation required a physical uprooting as the booming industries of the north were provided with a plentiful supply of low-cost labour. The immediate cost to labour in 1948 was unemployment and deprivation, and the monetary and material crises of 1947-48 were real, in Italy at least.²⁸ The response of the political class, including the intense pressure that Togliatti put on De Gasperi, in gaining emergency aid from the USA was the action of a national political class securing its survival by exploiting the concerns of another power.²⁹

The monetary policy of the 1946-50 period has been judged to have restabilised Italy's monetary base without impairing reconstruction.³⁰ An alternative strategy based on idealistic social concern and muddled Keynesianism might have produced an alliance between the political left (catholic and lay) and the economic right which would have encouraged industrial growth based on securing employment rather than competitiveness and rendered Italy unable to benefit from European integration.

Running parallel with Einaudi's deflation, the DC and technocrats who allied themselves with it such as Enrico Mattei (of AGIP and then ENI), made increasing use of the state and its directive capacities. Although not technically adequate to administer a planned or even Keynesian managed economy, largely because of its political hostility to such new ideas, the state machinery was by no means weak, as Mariuccia Salvati in particular has emphasised³¹. With rational planning impossible for reasons of political tension and bureaucratic deficiency the DC all but substituted it-

self, and the new agencies which it set up and dominated, for the traditional state in order to carry out its voluntaristic and self-interested concern with social and economic engineering. The exclusion of the left had avoided a tendentially negative-sum-game situation, but it also prevented the creation of a rational and visibly positive-sum-game. Rather a zero-sum game came to predominate in which the DC's interventionist predilections were bent not only to economic growth but to self-preservation. However, the DC should not be entirely blamed for this situation which was virtually forced on it by a situation where the question was not whether the state had a role to play in industrialisation, but who the state was.

Catholic economists had been prominent in IRI and had acquired a vast amount of real-life experience in economic management during the previous decade. They were a major component of the technocratic and socially-minded elite which Roberto Moro described as becoming the post-war catholic ruling class. From 1943, these economists began elaborating a series of studies intended to lay the basis for determining the shape of the post-Fascist economy. De Gasperi himself had presented their work as an example to other catholic intellectuals. The requirement was to prepare to grapple with concrete economic and political problems.³² The groups conclusions were strikingly opposed to laissez faire liberalism and were published as the Camaldoli Code in 1945. Although this failed to have the intended practical impact over the course of the next two years, so that the role of its leading theoreticians in the sub-commissions of the Constitu-

ent Assembly has been accused of being no more than a displaying of catholic idealism, whilst the government got on with brutal reality, these same leading figures outlined the operational format which IRI eventually, and so successfully adopted, and implemented its role as an economic 'locomotive' from 1947.³³ It has thus been argued, reversing the prevailing anti-catholicism of the economic world, that these catholic economists showed a far greater understanding than the left not only of IRI but of modern economics in general.³⁴ This accusation was asserted at the time by Franco Rodano, a leading catholic communist, excommunicated by the pope, who benefited personally from links with Pasquale Saraceno another outstanding catholic economist who in the early 1960s, as the champion of the catholic planning movement, prepared the government's experiment in indicative planning.

European integration was thus an encompassing strategy within which financial rigour (and, increasingly, financial profligacy) were combined with the state promotion of industrial entrepreneurship. The state acted as a supply-side catalyst to growth in a non-Keynesian but decidedly post-classical fashion.³⁵

4. De Gasperi: the political economy of a statesman

De Gasperi's political-economic strategy made him the key figure able to bind together the disparate concerns of the business classes behind an effective governmental force and still maintain a degree of goodwill from the excluded left party elites. By firmly allying himself with Angelo Costa, the President of Confindustria, he united the business community, weaving it together to support an internationalist

orientation of the economy based on US support for a relaunch of the European economy. At the same time, and even whilst the left was denouncing the De Gasperi/Costa alliance as the face of clerico-capitalist reaction, the PCI, via CGIL, was still seeking compromise in order to influence the government's economic policy-making. By now, CGIL was a Socio-Communist union, with the separate CISL and UIL unions just established, but its leader, Vittorio Valletti, was a centrist-orientated and highly respected Communist.³⁶

The PCI's fundamental acceptance of the government's economic leadership was part and parcel of its understanding that 'centrism' had been maintained, if transformed, in 1947-48, rather than being replaced by an anti-working class hegemony. As the Communist philosopher and party theoretician Giuseppe Vacca recently put it, the DC in this period synthesised a national interest' it did not realise a merely sectional interest, nor even a mere agglomeration of particular interests.³⁷ The political economy of reconstruction sought political and economic development of the whole nation-state in a progressive internationalist and democratic, albeit capitalist, framework. It was anti-Communist, but not anti-working class, and directed its anti-communism against radical individual militants, not the movement/party per se.

To argue this is to argue that De Gasperi was a statesman in the sense that he developed a political economy for the state as a whole, but it is not to deny the existence of inter-block interaction and the importance of the PCI. This contrasts to the position of Antonio Lombardo, a political scientist close to the DC, who described the period 1947/48-

63 as one of 'nation-building' in which the DC and its lay allies played the role of a modernising super-party, dominating the country politically and culturally.³⁸ Lombardo's proposition overlooks the commonality of the desire for both oppositional and key governmental elites to promote, on the one hand, a lay orientation for political development, and on the other, a more socially just social order. Contrary to Lombardo's thesis of the creation of a new dominant culture which was 'national-religious' in the period 1948 to the early 1960s, the political culture of this period was one of radical modernisation which stood (as per Chapter Three) to the left of the governing coalition, which was predominantly a conservative moderniser. Lombardo's analysis is typically integralist in its devaluation of the role of the left opposition in the process of nation-building, reflecting the way in which the country's modernising political economy came to be all but hegemonised by the DC as it substituted itself for the state.

The tendency to political domination by the DC in the 1950s and '60 was, as we have seen, a problem in itself, and it was a problem for economic development too, as we shall see in the next section. Nevertheless, under De Gasperi a national interest was served by securing sectoral planning and a modernising role for the state alongside Einaudi's market orientated liberalism. A recent cross-national survey of post-war development has written of Italy:

As in France, planning was characteristic of the post-war Italian economy. There were plans for regional and infrastructural improvement, special ten-year plans for the development of the railroads, schools and universities, plans

for assistance to regions with special problems, plans for the construction of housing, and plans for the development of the iron and steel industry.'³⁹

Of course, much of this 'planning' was often not realised, and the various plans were not coordinated. Less than 'planning' what developed was politico-bureaucratic mediation of economic development. Already in the late 1940s the catholic planner Pasquale Saraceno was condemning the abstract and extreme confrontation between planners and liberals which ignored the reality of de facto planning which was taking place under their noses. This reality was one which was parasitic and chaotic because the state was not being allowed to act rationally. The view was echoed by Meuccio Ruini and Ernesto Rossi in Cronache sociali, the organ of the Dossettiani, but the reality was that this was the only sort of state role that was realisable - a more or less covert one where an intensely political 'institutional politics' predominated over the attempt to rationalise the process. Divisions within the political class, in and out of government, encouraged the development of a state simultaneously powerful because manned by activist political and economic entrepreneurs yet weak because fragmented.

As the dirigiste role of the state under the DC grew more pronounced, so the attack on the partitocrazia, and on the DC, mounted. Under Fanfani, the DC's statist activism provoked recurrent waves of alarm so that for some the 'opening to the left' meant the ability to rationalise and correct the DC's deformation (of itself and the state), whilst for others it meant that socialistic interference was

bound to increase.

Despite the lack of overall coordination and the description of the political-economic process as 'politico-bureaucratic mediation' which avoided parliament, it would be wrong to say the De Gasperi had no economic vision. A 'plan' was not politically viable where the politics of the economic policy-making process was so fraught with tension and conflict, but as we have argued, De Gasperi's strategic vision embraced the economic and the political simultaneously. At the 1949 Congress he outlined his economic policy as having had three phases: overcoming paralysis in 1946, price stabilisation in 1947, and galvanising a strong export-orientated economy from 1948. Thanks to his partnership with Einaudi and the imminent arrival of the ERP funds this was substantially achieved in 1950, and De Gasperi felt able to give his whole-hearted support to the reforms of that year, the limitations to which he saw as political rather than economic. By the time of the 1954 Congress, a year after the DC's most right-wing campaign programme (Mastropaolo and Slater), De Gasperi defended his action since 1947 as part of an 'organic programme' which included not only exchange liberalisation but also sectoral planning, as in the creation of Finmeccanica, an engineering sub-sector within IRI, in 1947, which became a 'locomotive' of the economy, and the development of the iron and steel industry via Finsider. Other milestones were cited as Vanoni's fiscal reforms and the establishment of ENI, designed to make up for the inadequacies and passivity of the private energy sector. The same Congress sanctioned Vanoni's plan for full-employment, cap-

ping De Gasperi's claim, made in the preceding year, that the DC was a 'party of the left' - a challenging counterpoint to the party programme as well as being an advance on the claim of 1946.

D. Reconstruction: A Conclusion

De Gasperi used the complex nature of his party and the structure of political conflicts to develop a progressive, if not radical, political economy. This political economy was one synthesis which promoted the 'national interest', perhaps even the only one politically possible. The DC was admirably suited to be the central actor in achieving this. A centrist economic strategy which fused liberal and statist policies came to it easily, for it was not only not bound by liberal or socialist idees fixes, but in significant part, hostile to both.

The realisation of De Gasperi 's political economy was the realisation of a political and economic strategy, and in the hyper-competitive and volatile political situation prevailing it was a strategy intimately bound up with the strategies of the other party elites, and superior to them. Bound up with, yet superior, because it offered a decisive way out of the political impasse of 1947. The right economic opposition was essentially contained within the DC, whilst the left never developed an alternative because it never clarified the nature of its acceptance/rejection of the DC. To do this it would have had to have asserted itself as an acceptable national alternative to the DC, as a reformist centre-left which was the other side of the coin to a reform-

ist centre-right, not a different coin altogether. In fact both the DC and the PCI had electoral and ideological reasons for denying the idea that alternative, more or less progressive, broadly centrist policies did, theoretically, exist, and that that was all that was available in a democratic state. The consolidation of the three-block system in 1953 established the structural consolidation of this political economy. In its own particular way, the Italian political class had organised itself and its citizenry successfully in order to be able to benefit from immediate and decisive participation in the global economy.

MODERNISATION AND POLITICAL AMBIVALENCE:

FANFANI AND THE STRONG STATE

Fanfani, as we have seen, inherited De Gasperi's mantle in 1954, but he was never able to make permanent his authority, as was shown by his defeat in 1959, failure as a presidential candidate in 1964 and 1971, and finally by his defeat in 1975. The reason for this was that he came to be distrusted by the Communists and Socialists, on account of his aggressive politico-electoral ambitions, by the economic and clerical right in and outside his party, and by party colleagues who objected, whether as rivals or as critics of the consequences, of his urge to dominate. Increasingly, Fanfani's ambitions, and the ambitions of his party, were seen to require the subordination of all alternative positions of leadership in Italian society.

Fanfani's urge to dominate made him left-wing to the

right, right-wing to the left and, as we saw, encouraged the danger that 'centrism' would become an exclusivist, and therefore undemocratic formula. We have seen that despite Fanfani's unseating by the cautious Dorotei in 1959 he remained a major figure in it until 1975.^A This Section of the Chapter considers the DC's political economy as epitomised by Fanfani, and considers the question of the 'weakness of the Italian state'. It looks first at the period of Fanfani's ascendance, and then at the challenges, from the PSI, the unions and the private sector, to Christian Democracy's urge to dominate the economy.

It is usual to argue that the decisional and directive capacity of the Italian state, or more narrowly (and perhaps more accurately) Italian government is, and has been, rather low. Here it is argued that the reverse case has much to be said for it. The argument for its weakness has been well rehearsed, with books suggesting the absence of government in Italy, or arguing that governments have survived only thanks to their do-nothing nature.⁴⁰ Of course, the voluntarism and managerialism of all the DC's leading figures, pointed in the other direction, as did the attacks on clerical totalitarianism, partitocrazia and the harsh anti-workerism in the 1950s and the domination of the DC-state over the PSI in the 1960s. It has been argued that De Gasperi's governments, those of the early Centre-Left, and those of the historic Compromise, were particularly constructive, the implication being that

A. He and Aldo Moro were considered the party's two cavalli di razza ([race horse] thoroughbreds) throughout the 1960s and into the '70s.

something approaching government alternation produced the additional dynamic,⁴¹ but others have argued the more general case.⁴² The argument that Christian Democratic government was genuinely governmental can certainly be pursued in relation to the political economy conducted by Fanfani from the early 1950s. In Amintore Fanfani, Christian Democratic voluntarism found its greatest exponent.

A. The DC and the Economy under Fanfani

Fanfani entered De Gasperi's sixth government in 1950 as part of the Dossettiani left opposition to De Gasperi's initially conservative socioeconomic policies. This government was the 'reform government' whose main opposition came from the right, including that internal to the DC. Its formation won the backing of Di Vittorio, the CGIL leader, and almost gained PCI abstention in consequence.

1. Territorial management

Fanfani was a known opponent of laissez faire against which he opposed a neo-voluntarist doctrine stressing the importance of political will, but he also had a great respect for the sound budgetary economics of Einaudi and Pella. For Fanfani these provided a basis for De Gasperi's industrial policy but needed to be supplemented by a regional strategy. Neither the DC nor its modernisation strategy would survive if the southern popular classes were not won over to the party. The year 1950 thus brought land redistribution and the formation of the Cassa per il Mezzogiorno which, despite accusations of socio-cultural inadequacy and minimalism served to increase agricultural production in the interests

of the nation as a whole whilst 'deproletarianising' the countryside, bringing an end to class war there, thus stabilising southern Italy on a democratic basis.⁴³ The importance of this can only be appreciated from a deeper historical perspective. The unification of Italy less than a hundred years previously had, in the south, resulted in a quasi-civil war of repression so that far from drawing the popular masses into a mobilising and unifying nationalism the Risorgimento had led to the construction of a state which a vast part of its inhabitants regarded as just one more oppressor.⁴⁴ The post-war period saw the process of nation-building completed, with the integration of the southern masses playing a major role in this, but this integration took place through a process of competitive mobilisation in which the PCI played a major role - which is one of the reasons Lombardo's description of the post-war political culture as 'national religious' is inadequate.

The flow of funds to the south was enormous and in 1957 the objectives of the Cassa was modified in order to promote the industrialisation of southern Italy. Its already enormous budget of \$1.6 milliard for the decade 1950-60 was doubled to \$3.3 milliard for the period 1950-65 and the stipulation made that 60% of all new state investment would be located in the south so that eventually 40% of the total of state industry would be located there. Much of these huge sums of monies remained unspent, and much of what was spent was spent badly, as we shall see in the next section on governing the oligopoly economy. The use of these funds to promote party interests promoted corruption and maladminis-

tration and encouraged the massive destruction of the environment. By the 1980s it was routinely argued that Campania, Calabria and Sicily were beyond the rule of law, indicating the weakness of the state. Perhaps more accurately, reflecting the fragmentation of the state, it indicated the weakness of the judiciary and the failure of interested reformers to create the sort of strong state which liberal democratic theory demands.

Nevertheless, by the 1980s Sardinia, Apulia and the Abruzzi regions had substantially developed economies. Industrial production had increased seven-fold in the south between 1951-75, compared to its doubling in the north, and in the crisis ridden seventies employment had grown three times faster in the south than in the north. More importantly, perhaps, as the south stagnated economically in the aftermath of the 1970s world slump, social indicators such as housing, diet and medical provision continued to rise,⁴⁵ even though unemployment and other social inequalities remained concentrated there.

2. Governing the oligopoly economy

The 1950 reforms weakened hostility to state intervention for they did not affect labour mobility, Confindustria's key concern, whilst their success swelled the demand for industrial goods from the north. The Korean war also furthered acceptance of state dirigisme, for it showed both the potential for growth in the economy and the fact that this did not have to be inflationary. Increasingly, in the early 1950s, the DC's pragmatic mix of liberalism and interventionism won grudging acceptance. But political sensitivities

remained extraordinarily high. Inside the DC the successful promotion of the iron and steel industry by Finsider was particularly significant, stimulating an interest in planning. This interest became associated with the rise of Iniziativa democratica (Democratic initiative) the faction which backed Fanfani throughout the 1950s and whose name revealed the progressive intentions and voluntarism of its founders, Mariano Rumor and Paolo Emilio Taviani.

Iniziativa democratica was founded in 1951 and by 1954 dominated the party, especially its important youth wing, which for the decade 1955-65 was enthused by the promise of state planning.⁴⁶ In the years 1951-54 this faction formed a new political leadership in the DC. It was hostile to the Vatican (though this was hardly visible to the party's opponents), which was identified with MSI and monarchist sympathies, but profoundly catholic, with a powerful vision of a strong state led by the DC in its role as a catholic 'modern prince', a political party which would realise the anti-marxist and anti-liberal social values derived from catholic social doctrine.⁴⁷

This profoundly political voluntarist reinforcement of the DC was typical of the initial mobilisational phase of modern party systems⁴⁸ and coincided with, and promoted, the transformation of Italy into an industrial society. This new organisation of catholic voluntarism conjoined an emphasis on the public sector of the economy with the militant activism of the new catholic union, CISL, the twin enemies of which were the communist union CGIL and the unacceptable concentration of power in the hands of the monopolists of the

private economy, essentially identified with Confindustria.

The declaration of CISL in 1953 that the IRI should be independent of Confindustria coincided with the creation of ENI. De Gasperi's backing for both the formation of ENI and CISL's claim came as a tremendous shock to the business classes, causing them to label his stance as 'revolutionary' and indicative of the party's leftward move - to Fanfani and his backers.⁴⁹

There is little doubt that CISL and the new catholic public managers sought to remodel industrial relations, and the economy generally, in a socially progressive direction through its influence over the oligopoly sector of the economy. The exemplar of this was where the activism of the DC's trade union left and interventionist voluntarism of its planners coincided in the use of ENI, via the CISL to 'set standards in working conditions, managerial attitudes to trade unions, plant modernisation, worker education and sales practices', with ENI enterprises being 'self-consciously modern, self-consciously socially aware, and manifestly intent on introducing the structures and practices of modern industrial society'.⁵⁰

Nevertheless, the new leftism of Fanfani's DC and the interests associated with it posed more of a threat to the trade union and party left than to capitalism of even private monopoly interests. CISL's aggressive championing of plant-level bargaining purposively undermined the CGIL which still pursued a centralised, nationally-led system of industrial relations designed to promote class solidarity and to demonstrate the power and influence of the PCI/CGIL. Moreover,

the leftist element of the DC's union and public sector policy was always contained by the party's inability to act more decisively to reweight the scales against the business elites on the basis of a democratic mandate. Radical policies thus always ended compromised with the result that the socioeconomic politics of the middle to late 1950s were exceedingly ambiguous. The attempt by a technocratic generation to secure a socially progressive neo-capitalist development foundered on the monopolistic political beliefs of its practitioners. Not only did the catholic (union) left profoundly alienate the lay left, but relations between the DC and Confindustria also deteriorated dramatically, reinforcing the DC right as it strove to see this fundamental link strengthened.

The separation of the public sector from Confindustria by the creation of Intersind, together with the creation of the Ministry for State participation appeared to offer the planners the opportunity directing and rationalising production, and these developments coincided with the transformation of the objectives of the Cassa to the industrialisation of the south. It thus appeared that the state was about to acquire the ability to determine the general flow of capital investment through IRI, ENI, the Cassa and the state dominated banking and credit institutions. The cautious move towards the greater acceptance of state planning in the early 1950s thus failed to initiate a climate of tolerance and rational debate and the whole issue remained highly contentious throughout the decade. The looming rapprochement with the PSI naturally stimulated these tensions and consequently

the attempt to rationalise the planning process in the 1960s was still-born.

The process of setting up the Ministry for State Participation was a classic example of the inability of the DC left to achieve its modestly progressive aims. In practice the establishment of the Ministry established the clarification and stabilisation of the boundaries between the private and the public spheres in different sectors of the economy, preventing creeping nationalisation and reasserting both the independence of the private sector and the subordination of state policy to the logic and demands of the markets and their private oligopolistic interests.⁵¹ The attempt to move the party to the left grossly underestimated the intractability of sociopolitical divisions established by political culture and the structure of party competition. The Vanoni plan for full employment had fallen early into a political limbo, whilst the political wishful thinking of Fanfani's quasi-Centre-Left petered out in the face of the hostile atmosphere in which the 1959 wage rounds were carried out. These resubordinated the unions, leaving the political right ascendant. Soon, reinforced by the Tambroni affair, the catholic union would become convinced that the DC was a conservative political force and move towards solidarity with the other trade unions, though this was delayed by the victory of the non-union left (la base) in achieving coalition with the PSI.

3. Governing the micro-sector of the economy

Given the politically sensitive conditions in which Italy's political economy unfolded, the 'opening to the left'

could not be hailed in terms of the participation of the working class in the investment process, so that it was the supposed outcome, in terms of growth, which was stressed by reformists. But in fact Italy's greatest economic boom preceded the PSI joining the government, so that Italy had already been hailed as a paradigm case of successful economic development.⁵² The stress on the small scale sector of the economy, extremely important to the DC of Fanfani, was a major factor in this. By contrast, the change to stressing planning, mergers and economies of scale in the 1960s produced some of Italy's greatest economic disasters in the 1970s.

It was not only quantitative economic development which was already well advanced by 1960. The development of the modern interventionist 'social state' was remarkably precocious in post-war Italy, with social transfer payments in the mid-1950s significantly higher than those of the Scandinavian social democracies and double those of Great Britain.⁵³ Of course, both economic and welfare growth were determined by party self-interest as much as by welfare ideology, and the cut-throat political environment, combining with the inheritance of particularly brutalised peasant mentalities deriving from the most desperate social and economic conditions,⁵⁴ also meant that a public service ethos never came to be associated with the state's growing powers. Critics of DC intervention came to describe its social concern as essentially artificially induced - behind the genuine veneer provided by the DC-left there was merely a 'vicarious dynamism' founded on a permanent strategy of preempting the

appeal of the PSI and PCI.⁵⁵ However, the 'welfare' profligacy of the new state was also a supply-side economic measure which was peculiarly Christian Democratic.

Italy's new political class was well aware that twice in its brief existence, under Giolitti and under Mussolini, the Italian state had gropingly reached for mass legitimacy, each time seeing it undone in war and civil war. It was evident to the populist leaders of the mass parties that such legitimacy as the new Republican regime possessed was intimately connected with its ability to provide a combination of economic growth and/or at least minimum welfare conditions. The interventionist redistribution of economic wealth, ie the salience of so-called 'low politics', was important as a supply side economic measure in two ways, one negative, one positive. Negatively, it obtained the quiescence of what was, in economic terms, surplus labour, but it did so without interdicting the supply of cheap labour to the booming industries of northern Italy. The intertwining of social policy and industrial policy in Italy has always been apparent to its mass-based political leaders and the fact that this was brought rewards for party organisations, rather than the state, should probably be regarded as a matter of historical necessity as much as the outcome of deliberate manipulation by the DC.

On the positive side, the state used its resources to encourage the founding of new small firms and the expansion of old ones in order to speed reconstruction. The concern of Christian Democracy with small-scale property ownership meshed here with Einaudi's recognition of the inherited

structural weakness of the Italian economy, particularly the lack of a developed consumer goods industry. The Italian state did well not to neglect its small family firms. They were an important resource. Whilst their growth and survival undoubtedly helped fend off the Communist threat in southern Italy, their overall political effect was much more ambiguous, whereas economically their encouragement was a tailor-made strategy for maximal utilisation of Italy's resources, polarised as they were between the oligopoly sector and the small and micro-industrial sector. The electoral aspect may thus have been of lesser import than critics considered. Indeed, we have already seen that Sidney Tarrow suggested that the Red Belt may have received more resources than the White.

The economic miracle of 1953-63 was the result not only of monetary policy and activities of Finsider and Fiat, but also of the rapid growth of myriads of small firms⁵⁶. There is little doubt that the major impetus for the implementation of a strategy favouring the small scale sector was the DC. Even critics concede that its view of its social mission, its politico-economic voluntarism and the governmental position in which it found itself made it the motor force driving this sector of the economy.⁵⁷ The economic rationality of this strategy is often argued to have been fortuitous, proven only in retrospect, to be explained by the economy's semi-peripheral development, and this luck is contrasted to the DC's distortion and abuse of the oligopoly sector. Yet, as we have seen, the DC's dirigiste capacities and grasp of modern macro-economic management were at least the equal of any

alternative. The problems came later, and were induced by party competition in the first place, rather than cognitive or managerial inadequacy.

The DC's strategy of encouraging entrepreneurialism at the micro-level was a constant feature of its programmatic statements from the early 1940s. It sought a 'new social economy' and used its control of state resources in the 1950s not merely to prop up declining sectors where it was politically vulnerable, but to encourage artisan and small-scale businessmen for its own sake. A number of crucial interventions were championed by Fanfani's party in the 1950s. A whole series of tax concessions, loan schemes and so on, leading to the Artisan Statute of 1956, tremendously promoted this sector of the economy, encouraging its vital contribution to the first economic miracle and laying the basis for the second.⁵⁸

In fact, a probable major reason for the phenomenon noted by Tarrow, whereby the Red Belt did so well out of the redistribution of state resources, was that the DC's promotion of the small-scale industry sector provided resources less to prop up the backward economy of the south, where the bulk of the 'clientelist vote' for the DC is located, than for what came to be known as the 'Third Italy'. This is the central and north-eastern belt of Italy, neither northern industrial nor backward southern Italy, where both the Red and the White sub-cultures are rooted. The DC's economic voluntarism, so highly prized by Fanfani, correctly challenged the prevailing economic orthodoxies which assumed the decline of the small-scale sector as 'economies of scale' and

rationalisation (or 'Fordism') resulted in the domination of larger and larger industrial units. In the process, this strategy benefited not only the national economy but directly advantaged both major parties, promoting the legitimation of the new state and its political class - at least until the late 1960s and early 1970s.

B. The Assault on the DC's Policy-Making Primacy

Fanfani sought to transform his party into a mass-based vanguard party able to direct the country's economic and political development. Although he always sought broad alliances in order to achieve his ambitions, the DC's dominant position and the power of Fanfani himself, even when toppled from the leadership of the party, led him to be seen as something of a catholic Lenin. Checked by his own party in 1959, the possibility of his realising the dominant position which he sought passed away definitively in the 1960s and '70s as his party's leading role was challenged by competing parties, by unions and by business interests.

1. The Centre-Left

Fanfani's July 1960 government was confirmed the government of parallel convergence by Aldo Moro to stress its centrist continuity with the past, but the novelty of Socialist support triggered an avalanche of public debate on economic planning. In September 1961 an 'ideological convention' held by the DC at San Pellegrino outlined a new political and economic strategy for the party based on 'programming'. The word 'planning' was too sensitive to use, but mere word-play was not enough to dispel the totally unfavour-

able circumstances for a change which required innovative institutional reform and a dramatic change in political and institutional behaviour. Although Fiat was in favour of a more rationalised state role for economic and urban development, the bulk of Confindustria was horrified. Far from seeing the PSI being drawn into the management of a capitalist economy the DC's VIIth Congress, held in Naples in 1962, seemed to indicate the transformation of the DC into a party of the Centre-Left.⁵⁹

Immediately after the Congress, Fanfani formed a new government from which the PLI was excluded. Its programme foresaw the establishment of the regions, educational reform, the nationalisation of the electricity industry and the institutionalisation of economic programming. The basic ideas of the latter were outlined by Ugo La Malfa, now Minister of the Budget and Economic Programming, in an Additional Note which he attached to the annual budget report to parliament. In August, the National Committee for Economic Programming (CNPE) was established, with Pasquale Saraceno, the leading catholic advocate of planning as its acknowledged guiding force.

These plans would have established a new political economy, led by the DC and PSI, defining a new national interest. But it was not to be. It coincided with the first significant strike-wave since the aftermath of the war and the reaction of the business classes, appalled by political and industrial developments, was a massive capital strike.⁶⁰ The task of reassuring the business world clearly belonged to the DC, but this left the PSI free to reap the benefits from

the government's move to the left. The DC could expect only to lose - all across the board. In 1963 it lost to the PLI, but if the PSI was not clearly subordinated the DC could expect to lose to all the parties with which it stood in coalition, for the PCI was no threat to a strong coalition. The DC had to subordinate the PSI and to acquiesce in the forceful reassertion of management power. A new political economy based on a new relationship between business, unions and government could not be achieved which was not potentially ruinous for the DC.

The initiative passed back to the DC right and to a private business sector clearly bent on reasserting traditional, conservative industrial relations. The tendentially united trade unions and the increasingly militant working class now moved strongly towards identifying the DC as a conservative party, the PSI as weak and treacherous, and the PCI as irrelevant, contributing to the syndicalist explosion of 1969.⁶¹ The failure to establish a new basis for industrial relations and the failure to consolidate the coalition on a progressive basis meant that a new political economy was not effected. But neither was the old political economy reestablished.⁶² The business elites failed to regain their confidence and the growth of capital fixed investment slumped from 9.1% per annum, 1952-63, to 1% per annum, 1964-72.⁶³ The technocratic-managerial aspect of the DC, which in the 1950s and early '60s had sought, via the public sector in particular, to promote rational sectoral planning and union/business elite cooperation in a progressive neo-capitalist programme now became subordinated to a conservative

regime in which Emilio Colombo attempted to promote the national economic interest without the active consent of either the unions or much of the business world.⁶⁴

In the short term the DC had managed to defeat the challenge of the Centre-Left, but the PSI's strategic foothold in the cabinet remained. Worse, the government had failed to win the backing of the unions and could no longer rely on the consent of private enterprise. Only the state sector was reliable, and it was here that the party attempted to reassert itself.

2. The assertion of private sector independence

The DC's relationship with the private sector was close from the time of the De Gasperi/Costa alliance. However, the union left and those inspired by catholic social doctrine were hostile in principle to its vast concentration of power, whilst all those concerned to assert the party's own power were keen to see an end to its dependence on Confindustria. The challenge of the PSI and the difficulties the DC faced in running a genuinely national political economy in the 1960s reinforced the DC's relationship with the public sector and in the end provoked a major back-lash on the part of the private sector.

The expansion of the public sector in the 1960s thus continued apace, and according to one comparative survey of economic power in capitalist systems: "most long-term industrial finance by the 1970s was provided by state banks and credit agencies", which, together with the activities of the public sector bodies like IRI and ENI, meant that "state intervention [had] transformed a chronically disabled

system of bank hegemony into a state controlled holding system" where the state's activist role was comparable to Austria's in that both countries saw the public sector enterprises play a "strategic role" whereby "public corporations and state share-holdings reach into the banking systems and key industries, and so give public authorities power and influence over the commanding heights of the economy."⁶⁵ This degree of power and influence presented a growing threat to the private sector as can be confirmed by another comparative analysis of capitalist organisation in the liberal democracies. According to this analysis⁶⁶ Italy, uniquely, saw the control of its financial/industrial core divided between two sets of 'interlocks', one private, the other public, and the public, or state core, as we know, was largely controlled by the DC. It was precisely to assert the independent authority of the state from parties, as well as interests, that had led many to support the attempt to realise a rational programming of the economy via the government and parliament in the early '60s.⁶⁷

The DC's domination of the public sector was far from all negative, even in the '60s. Thus, 'state-owned enterprises in general were more advanced than private enterprises in work organisation and industrial relations. Coexisting with labour unions, particularly the catholic union (CISL), was important to the modernising strategy of the public sector. Job evaluations were introduced in Italsider, the steel firm, in the mid-60s ...'⁶⁸. These developments also helped bring management and workers together and reinforced the high level rapprochement which was required associated

with the planning experience through the coordination of Intersind, CISL and the Ministries of Labour and of State Participation. Other analysts have thus concluded that the state's economic role in the 1960s contributed to the institutional recognition of the trade unions and the long-run development of neo-corporatist and tripartite tendencies,⁶⁹ and just such long-term effects, as well as more direct challenges such as the control over access to investment funds and the determination of the general direction of investment, were surely what disturbed the private sector about the state's role.

It was at the end of the 1960s and in the early 1970s that the private sector decisively showed itself unwilling to accept the DC's pretensions to political domination, thus coinciding in a complex fashion with the upsurge of union unrest which itself challenged both the business classes and the DC-state. The crucial spark which set ablaze the business counter-offensive was the crypto-nationalisation of Montedison, the chemical giant, by IRI in 1968.⁷⁰ Although arguably 'functional' to the interests of the progressive business sector the manner of its realisation, without parliament's knowledge, and the general circumstances of rampant attacks on private sector companies by public ones in the stock exchange, rang massive alarm bells. The appointment of Eugenio Cefis, a leading Fanfani protege, to head Montedison in 1971 was widely understood as confirming the political significance of the Montedison affair.

At the most simple level Cefis' appointment increased Fanfani's political and economic influence, but for many it

was a key step in a strategy of providing a statist solution to the country's (and the DC's) politico-economic dilemma. By making the chemical industry the core of the Italian economy, both the organised working class and the private business sector would be weakened, for ousting Fiat from its preeminent position would deal a mighty blow to the entrepreneurs and promote national economic growth based on capital-intensive industry. Labour would be absorbed through the usual mechanisms of political and economic concessions and through the growth of the tertiary sector and of the small-scale industry sector where union power was negligible.

The private sector's self-assertion against Fanfani was overwhelmed by the Hot Autumn of 1969 and the domination of a weak government in the following years by the unions. Nevertheless, a massive counter-attack developed through the 1970s, and took four main approaches.⁷¹ Firstly, a massive ideological offensive against the state and its role in the economy was mounted, reawakening the somnambulant liberal discourse before Thatcherism was heard of. Secondly, the 'judicial destruction' of the so-called 'assisted capitalist', ie of those over-dependent on political support, was pursued, both at the personal and at the institutional level. Thirdly, the crisis of the 1970s was not allowed to lead to an extension of the public sector's grip. IRI collaborated in this process, for it did not want to be saddled with 'lame ducks', and the common interests of public and private business managers resulted in innovative policies such as the institution of GEPI a specialist industrial salvage body, distinct from the state-holding sector of the economy.

Finally, the business sector moved to outflank the DC, moving towards negotiation and accommodation with the other parties, including the PCI. This was backed by arrangements made with the trade unions for a 'productivist alliance' against the parasitic 'assisted' sector close to Fanfani. By the mid-70s, the DC was being widely condemned as an anti-capitalist force hindering Italy's modernisation.⁷²

The eruption, in 1974, of an enormous scandal alleging the DC's receipt of massive funds from the public sector industries, which it controlled, forced the DC to reconsider its role in economic management. It also helped seal Fanfani's fate. Already he had pushed the party's confrontation with Confindustria to the limit by trying to force the election of his nominee as president of that organisation. Agnelli, the head of Fiat himself, had had to intervene to prevent this, his own nomination being ungainsayable. Nevertheless, Fanfani's power in the party was still such that only his defeat in the divorce referendum and in the 1975 elections enabled the party to radically renew itself from 1975/76.

In 1975, parliament established the Chiarelli commission with the aim of restructuring Italy's system of state participations⁷³ and the DC moved increasingly towards accommodating business interests, covered both by trade union involvement in an economic environment increasingly marked by neo-corporatist tendencies, and the steady abandonment of anti-business attitudes by the PSI and PCI in the name of the 'national interest'. By this time Italy was confronting both a major economic and a major political crisis and the DC

shifted to asserting its authority through electoral confrontation and coalition bargaining, rather than the attempt to dominate the economy. Moro regained the upper hand in the party and Fanfani went into decline.

3. The unions throw off their subordination

The upsurge of labour unrest in 1969 was quite massive and had an impact far beyond the confines of the economic world. It was too powerful to be defeated by the business world or even by the government. Only time and the unions' inability to force governments to implement their programmes allowed government and business gradually to regain their initiative. The business class was itself divided, with those sectors which had supported the opening to the left blaming its opponents for what it saw as the consequences of the failure of the Centre-Left. The DC was divided, as we have seen, with the left fearing that it would lose its support in the union and catholic working world. The move of CISL and ACLI away from the DC, particularly the loss of the latter, was a personal blow to Fanfani, as was the youth movement's rejection of him,⁷⁴ and this encouraged his rejection of his leftist past for more straight-forward authoritarian positions.

Since a Gaullist solution meant abandoning the party's centrist tradition, Fanfani's alternative found little backing. The unions could hardly have chosen a better moment to strike. For almost four years the party vacillated, provoking left and right as it sought to maintain its centrist position. On the one hand Donat Cattin, left-DC scourge of the party's conservatism in the 1960s, was made Labour Minis-

ter and backed worker demands for wage increases, whilst supporting the passage of the Workers' Statute in 1970. On the other, the emergence of right-wing terrorism associated with the state, Fanfani's authoritarian posturing and the return to coalition with the PLI instead of the PSI all outraged the left.

Unlike the economic down-swing of 1964, that of 1970 could not be continued to the point of breaking the unions' resolve, for it would have destroyed the economy in the process. Rather, from 1969-73 a counter-cyclical easy credit policy was pursued, backed by the public and private oligopolies, which promoted investment in southern Italy, away from the union hot-spots, and a massive new industrialisation of the southern economy took place - virtually the only union demand that was realised, and even then in capital intensive forms which they had not sought.

As the unions became more involved in processes of political bargaining, trends towards neo-corporatist interest mediation developed, though these were rendered all but impossible by the high stakes for the DC and the PCI and by the opposition of the grass-roots to the accommodations of the elites. It was not until the later '70s that the argument of the unions' and left party elites about the need for collaboration in the national interest began to be appreciated. By then, the unions were already losing their initiative, and from 1980 the resurgence of business confidence was such that the unions were left seeking neo-corporatist 'political exchange' from a position of relative weakness.⁷⁵ Nevertheless, the unions were in no way as weak as they had

been in the 1950s, and in the 1980s the recognition of the interdependence of labour, business and government became widespread. Fanfani's attempt to achieve a 'corporatism within one party' were finally realised to be self-defeating, and as the 1990s opened the possibility of a grand coalition able to establish a new, genuinely national, political economy was being canvassed.

IV CENTRISM AND CHRISTIAN DEMOCRAT POLITICAL ECONOMY

From the late 1940s through the 1950s the Christian Democratic Party, with its coalition allies, combined a policy of innovative economic management with an astute handling of party political interaction to generate a political economy which was in the national interest. The policies of the centre block were a positive synthesis of contradictory political forces. By the late 1960s and 1970s, the economic policies of the centre-block were less a positive synthesis and more of a negative one: an immobilist attempt to preserve the structure of the party system and to block alternatives which sought to establish either a centre-left or a centre-right economic policy, with the politics to match.

The shift that took place was one between genuinely centrist government, and 'non-government' by the centrist block. The centre block was no longer able to synthesise a national political economy. But this non-government coincided with a state in many respects strong. It was strong economically, able to influence and directly control

massive industrial and infrastructural investment; it was strong politically, able to survive both terrorist challenge and profound economic crisis; and it was strong socio-culturally to the extent that consumer capitalism and welfare interventionism were dominant values, despite significant challenges.

At a high level of generalisation, the post-war 'social democratic' consensus common to Western Europe⁷⁶ can be seen as having prevailed in Italy too, thanks to the developments of the 1950s. Thus, a multi-party centrist regime based on a neo-social capitalism was built in Italy. But there are differences between national social democracies. By comparison to many West European countries the industrial working class in Italy was largely excluded from direct participation in policy-making, leading Miriam Golden to talk of Italy as having a regime of 'labour exclusion'.⁷⁷ Moreover, the importance of both the small-scale industrial sector and the state oligopoly sectors was unusual, so that given the prominence of the DC in all these areas Italy's post-war 'social democratic' regime should be considered as having clear distinguishing features.

Golden uses the expression 'labour exclusion' within a context of comparing policy-making in liberal democracies, and it is clear that the term 'exclusion' is relative. One leading Italian Socialist, Gino Giugni, the principle author of the 1970 Workers' Statute, has gone so far as to argue that the Republic has never had an anti-working class government.⁷⁸ This is surely somewhat of an exaggeration, though it meshes with David Hine's observation that a straight-

forward centre-right political formula has never been other than marginally operant in Italy.

Given differences in national approaches and the fact that centre-left and centre-right governments may be considered as providing slightly different political economic packages it is worth considering that several different, broadly centrist, political economies can and have existed in Western Europe. Italy has avoided political alternation and sharp changes in policy packages, often simultaneously running policies which might be considered contradictory,⁷⁹ but overall it has had a governing elite based on a regime of 'subordinate labour inclusion'. Logically, it should therefore be considered as having been 'centre-right'. However, under De Gasperi, and under Fanfani in the 1950s, this regime was politically and economically progressive. There is no reason why centre-right governments should not be progressive. From the 1960s, however, the centre-right political economy was increasingly conservative, for it blocked more progressive alternatives which had they developed might have been labelled centre-left or centre-right.

Of course, from the early 1970s, Italy was facing the same crisis of readjustment to new world economic conditions as everyone else, so that the peculiarities of the Italian economy, by comparison with other large advanced industrial economies seemed less marked. Moreover, by the end of the decade these conditions, combining with developments in the party system, brought about a mass recognition that Italian political parties, of whatever political 'block', had a common interest in working to secure the economic well-being

of the country. This did not mean they had to stop competing, far from it. By the 1970s it was clear that the negative aspects of the distinctive and constructive political economy of the late 1940s to early '60s were growing in their significance. The irrationality of the policy-making system and the difficulty of implementing any policy decisively no longer had any political justification. The failures were politico-cultural and politico-institutional, rather than economic. Rationalisation and reform of the economic policy-making system needed reform and rationalisation of the political system. The challenge of the PCI in the 1970s and of the PSI in the 1980s was a challenge to the DC to reform not only itself, but the political system and the policy-making apparatus of the state.

(1) I.Budge, D.Robertson and D.Hearl (eds), Ideology, Strategy and Party Change: A Spatial Analysis of Post-War Electoral Programmes in Nineteen Democracies, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987.

(2) J.L.Harper, America and the Reconstruction of Italy, 1945-48, Cambridge University Press, 1986, p.19 and especially footnote 40, p.172 brings attention to the left's critique of Togliatti whilst emphasising the considerable constraints on both Togliatti and De Gasperi.

(3) M.Salvati, Economia e politica in Italia dal dopoguerra ad oggi, Milan: Garzanti, 1984, pp.13-14.

(4) D.Forgacs, 'The Left and Fascism: Problems of Definition and Strategy', in D.Forgacs (ed), Rethinking Italian Fascism, Capitalism, Populism and Culture, London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1986, pp.21-51, p.35; P.Corner, 'Fascist Agrarian Policy and the Economy in the Inter-War Years' in J.A.Davis (ed), Italy and Gramsci's passive Revolution, London: Croom Helm, 1979, pp.239-274.

(5) S.Cassese, 'Stato e economia. Il problema storico', in P.Lnge and M.Regini (eds), Stato e regolazione sociale. Nuove prospettive sul caso italiano, Bologna: Il Mulino, 1987, pp.45-52.

(6) A.Martinelli, 'The Italian Experience: A Historical perspective' in R.Vernon and Y.Aharoni (eds), State-Owned Enterprises in Western Economies, London: Croom Helm, 1981, pp.85-98.

(7) G.La Bella, L'IRI nel dopoguerra, Rome: Studium, 1983, pp.71-88; D.Forgacs op.cit. 1986, pp.36-7; M.Clark, Modern Italy, 1872-1982, London: Longman, 1984, p.318.

(8) This and the subsequent paragraphs are largely based on B.Bottiglieri, La politica economic dell'Italia centrista (1948-58), Milan: Comunita, 1984.

(9) A.Nove, The Economics of Feasible Socialism, London: Allen & Unwin, 1983.

(10) R.Prodi, 'Il quadro economico' in G.Rossini (ed), Democrazia cristiana e Costituente, Rome: Cinque Lune, 1980, Vol.III, pp.995-1010.

(11) J.Barkan, Visions of Emancipation: The Italian Workers' Movement Since 1945, New York: Praeger, 1984, p.23.

(12) J.L.Harper, op.cit. pp.20, 37, 48-55.

(13) Mariuccia Salvati, Stato e industria nella ricostruzione: Alle origini del potere democristiano (1944-49), Milan: Feltrinelli, 1982, pp.16-20.

(14) V.Foa, 'Sindacati e classe operaia', in V.Castronovo (ed), L'Italia contemporanea, 1975, p.255.

(15) P.Barucci, 'Il dibattito sulla "costituzione economica"' in G.Rossini (ed), op.cit. (10), Vol.II, pp.673-718, p.679.

(16) Mi.Salvati, op.cit. 1984, pp.45-46.

(17) This is the main thrust of Harper's work op.cit. 1986.

- (18) P.Barucci, op.cit. pp.700-707.
- (19) R.Prodi, op.cit. p.1006.
- (20) G.Provasi, Borghesia industriale e DC: Sviluppo e mediazione dalla Ricostruzione agli anni '70, Bari: De Donato, 1976, pp.50 ff.
- (21) Interview, M.Riva, Panorama, 27/11/88, pp.72-83.
- (22) J.Joll, Europe Since 1870, London: Penguin, 1976, p.460.
- (23) M.Grindrod, Italy, London: Benn, 1968, pp.115 ff.
- (24) M.L.Paronetto-Valier, 'Il codice di Camaldoli' in G.Rossini (ed), op.cit. Vol.I, 239-262, p.259.
- (25) F.Vicarelli, 'Note in tema accumulazione di capitale in Italia, 1947-63', in G.Lunghini (ed), Scelte politiche e teorie economiche in Italia, 1945-78, Turin: Einaudi, 1981, pp.13-69.
- (26) M.Bleaney, The Rise and Fall of Keynesian Economics: An Analysis of its Contribution to Capitalist Development, London: Macmillan, 1985. Also A.Milward, 'Was the Marshall Plan Necessary?', Diplomatic History, 13:2, 1989, pp.231-253.
- (27) G.Provasi, op.cit. pp.97 ff. J.L.Harper op.cit. pp.137 ff. and p.165.
- (28) A.Milward has cast doubt on the extent to which this was true in the other West European countries: A.Milward, The Reconstruction of Western Europe, 1945-51, London: Macmillan, 1984, esp. p.466. See also, V.Zamagni, 'Betting on the Future: The Reconstruction of Italian Industry, 1946-52', in J.Becking and F.Knipper (eds), Power in Western Europe: Great Britain, France, Italy and Germany in a Post-War World, 1945-50, Berlin:, 1986, pp.283-300.
- (29) J.L.Harper op.cit. pp.149-151 and 164.
- (30) K.Allen and A.Stevenson, An Introduction to the Italian Economy, London: Martin Robertson, 1974.

- (31) Mar. Salvati, *op.cit. passim*.
- (32) R.Orfei, Andreotti. Milan: Feltrinelli, 1975, pp.16-17.
- (33) M.L.Paronetto-Valier, *op.cit.* pp.237 ff. and 258.
- (34) G.La Bella, *op.cit.* pp.11-127 and 160-185.
- (35) A similar argument is found in M.G.Rossi, 'Le radici del potere DC', Passato e Presente, 1984:6, pp.63-101, pp.83-7, though the new synthesis is subject to withering criticism for its conservative, non-anti-capitalist, orientation.
- (36) G.Pasquino, 'Capital and Labour in Italy', Government and Opposition, 1976, pp.273-293, p.277.
- (37) G.Vacca, Tra compromesso e solidarieta, Rome: Riuniti, 1987.
- (38) A.Lombardi, DC e questione nazionale, Milan: Sugarco, 1981.
- (39) G.Ambrosius and W.H.Howard, A Social and Economic History of Twentieth Century Europe, London: Cambridge University Press, 1989, p.302.
- (40) ie P.Allum, Republic Without Government, London: W.W.Norton, 1973; G.Di Palma, Surviving Without Governing: the Italian parties in parliament, University of California Press, 1977.
- (41) G.Pasquino, 'Party Government in Italy: Achievements and Prospects' in R.S.Katz (ed), Party Government: American and European Perspectives, Berlin: De Gruyter, 1987, 202-242, Vol. 2 of R.Wildenman, (general ed), The Future of Party Government.
- (42) M.Calise and R.Mannheimer, Governanti in Italia. Un trentennio repubblicano, 1946-76, Bologna: Il Mulino, 1981.
- (43) F.Cassano, Il teorema DC. La mediazione della DC nella societa e nel sistema politico italiano, Bari: De Donato, 1979, p.16.
- (44) J.A.Davies, Conflict and Control. Law and Order in Nineteenth Century Italy, London: Macmillan, 1988.

(45) R.King, Italy. Economic and Social Studies, London: Harper and Row, 1987, especially chapter 6.

(46) L.Menapace, La Democrazia cristiana, Milan: G.Mazzotta, 1974, pp.74-94.

(47) G.Galli, Storia della Democrazia cristiana, Bari: Laterza, 1987, Chapter 8, passim.

(48) Particularly influenced by Gramsci, it is a general phenomenon: See G.Burdeau, 'Il fallimento del volontarismo politico' in S.de Seta (ed), Societa e partiti politici: il dibattito sulla crisi, Milan: Franco Angeli, 1987, pp.55-66. See also D.Beetham, Max Weber and the Theory of Modern Politics, Cambridge: Polity Press, 1985.

(49) J.LaPalombara, Italy: The Politics of Planning, New York: Syracuse Press, 1966, pp.31-32.

(50) J.LaPalombara, op.cit. p.55.

(51) R.Parboni, 'La privatizzazione dell'economia Italiana' in Stato e Mercato, December, 1984, pp.385-430.

(52) M.Neufeld, Italy: School for Awakening Countries, New York: Ithaca Press, 1960.

(53) E.Galli della Loggia, 'La cultura liberal-democratico nella societa italiana', Il Mulino, Mar-April, 1987, 190-217.

(54) E.C.Banfield, The Moral Bases of a Backward Society, New York: Free Press, 1958; see A.Pizzorno, 'Amoral Familism and Historical Marginality' in International Review of Community Development, 1966, .

(55) L.Anderlini, 'Tre paradossi del sistema politico italiano', Il Ponte, Jan-Feb, 1987, pp.5-34. The expression 'vicarious dynamism' is originally Galli's.

(56) D.Sassoon, Contemporary Italy, London: Longman, 1986, p.61; E.Kurzweil, Italian Entrepreneurs - Rearguard of Progress, New York: Praeger, 1983, p.17.

- (57) Mario G.Rossi, op.cit. pp.93-4.
- (58) L.Weiss, 'The Italian State and Small Businessmen' in European Journal of Sociology, Vol.33, 1984, pp.214-241.
- (59) J.LaPalombara, op.cit. pp.
- (60) M.Salvati, op.cit. pp.62-4, 89-97.
- (61) D.Hine, 'The Labour Movement and Communism in France and Italy Since 1945', in M.Kolinsky and W.Paterson (eds), Social and Political Movements in Western Europe, London: Croom Helm, 1976, pp.178-208.
- (62) P.Ranci, 'Italy: the Weak State' in G.Shepherd and R.Duchene (eds), Managing Industrial Change in Western Europe, 1987, p.119.
- (63) K.Allen and A.Stevenson, op.cit. Chapter 2.
- (64) G.Provasi, op.cit. pp.38-9.
- (65) J.Scott, Corporations, Classes and Capitalism, London: Hutchinson, 1985, pp.154-5.
- (66) A.M.Chiesi, 'Property, Capital and Network Structure in Italy', in F.N.Stokman et al. (eds), Networks of Corporate Power, Cambridge: Polity Press, 1985, pp.199-214.
- (67) P.Furlong, 'State, Finance and Industry in Italy' in A.Cox (ed), The State, Finance and Industry, Brighton: Wheatsheaf, pp.142-171.
- (68) A.Martinelli, op.cit. 1981, pp.94-5.
- (69) G.Pasquino and U.Pecchini, 'The National Context', in J.Hayward and M.Watson (eds), Planning, Politics and Public Policy - The British, French and Italian Experience, Cambridge University Press, 1975.
- (70) Most of this and the following paragraphs are based on G.Provasi, op.cit.
- (71) R.Parboni, op.cit. 1984.

(72) F.Spotts and T.Wieser, Italy, A Difficult Democracy, Cambridge University Press, 1986, p.210.

(73) A.Martinelli, op.cit. 1981.

(74) L.Menapace, op.cit.

(75) M.Regini: 'The Conditions for Political Exchange' in J.Goldthorpe, Order and Conflict in Contemporary Capitalism, Oxford: Clarendon, 1984; and 'Relazioni industriali e sistema politico: l'evoluzione recente e le prospettive degli anni'80' in M.Carrieri and P.Prulli (eds), Il teorema sindacale, Bologna: Il Mulino, 1985, pp.15-42; and 'Social Pacts in Italy' in I.Scholten (ed), Political Stability and Neo-Corporatism, London: Sage, 1987, pp.195-215.

(76) R.Dahrendorf, After Social Democracy, London: Liberal Publication Department for the Unservile State Group, 1980.

(77) M.Golden, 'Interest Representation, Party Systems and the State: Italy in Comparative Perspective', Comparative Politics, April, 1986, pp.279-301.

(78) G.Giugni, op.cit. p.56.

(79) P.Furlong, 'Italy' in F.F.Ridley (ed), Politics and Policy in Western Europe, London: Croom Helm, 1984, pp.115-153.

THE DEFEAT OF THE 'HISTORIC COMPROMISE'

It was shown in Chapters Two to Four that the DC was able to identify itself as a centre party and to reinforce that identity by establishing itself as the key party of a centre block in a three-block system. Established in the period 1946-53, this system was consolidated in 1963 by the creation of the Centre-Left. We also saw, however, that the bulk of the opposition to the DC lay to the left, and that the political culture of the country tended to be left of the coalition formula. The asymmetric nature of the three-block system mattered.

In concluding Chapter Four an outline of development in the 1970s and '80s was presented which suggested that the 1970s saw this asymmetry increase in such a way that a steady trend towards a two-block system was visible, a trend which inspired visions of a return to grand coalition. It is the intertwining of these tendencies which we examine in this chapter, and in particular the significance of the governments of national or democratic solidarity, which it is argued constituted a watershed in the development of the system and Italian political culture.

The present Chapter begins by looking briefly at the response of Enrico Berlinguer, the PCI leader, to the development of a two-block, or bipolar, dynamic focusing on the PCI as the core of an alternative governing coalition. It then concentrates on the Christian Democratic Party and its attempts to grapple with changes in the catholic world and in

There were deeper, more historic roots to Berlinguer's speech too. Although its message of the need to work with the DC and to realise its aims on a consensual basis was dramatic and shocking - one only has to think how Labour supporters reacted to suggestions that they needed to form a coalition with David Owen in order to gain acceptability in the 1980s - it was not entirely novel either. Berlinguer placed his message in the context of Gramsci's and Togliatti's stress on alliances and winning moral leadership, and the whole idea had the important precedent of the CLN experience.

A. Italy was not Germany

The PCI elite was acutely aware of the difficulties that were involved in their coming to power. The smoothness of the transition to government by the SPD in Germany via the brief Grosse Koalition could not be repeated in Italy.^A The expectations of the Italian left, and of its opponents, were much higher. Unlike the SPD, the PCI had had no Bad Godesberg, ie no refounding Congress where Marxism had formally been abandoned. So Berlinguer spoke of Chile, and warned that the DC could not be suddenly ejected from power by a left obtaining marginally over 50 per cent of the seats in parliament. The shock of such a sudden transition would be

A. The CDU-CSU dominated West German government for the entire post-war period until 1966, without any sort of grand coalition such as occurred in Italy and elsewhere. In 1966 it entered a grand coalition with the opposition Social Democrats, and in 1969 itself went into the opposition, leaving the Social Democrats the dominant force in government.

too great for the right and centre to bear. After all, previous 'alternations' in power in Italy had been semi-permanent in nature.

The dilemma for the PCI elite was that it could not gain the consent of key veto groups on its coming to power if it maintained its radical image, yet it could not simply abandon that image and disillusion its followers, especially given the disillusion with the Centre-Left and the expectations that precisely the PCI would deliver where the PSI had failed to. Somehow, the PCI had to live up to its promise of radical reform without itself being the detonator of a destabilising counter-mobilisation. Evidence that an anti-democratic back-lash was possible was horribly visible. In December 1969 a bomb attributed to the neo-fascist Right had exploded in a crowded bank in Milan, and this was widely seen as an attempt to promote popular anxieties, even fear, and to force the state into a more authoritarian style of government, and between 1970 and 1972 increasingly numerous and violent clashes in the streets were accompanied by a resurgence of support for the MSI.

B. The PCI and 'Centrifugation'

The difficulty of the position the PCI found itself in can be seen if we examine what happened to the PSI when it abandoned its oppositional role. On the face of it, the PSI's entry in to government had resulted in its being severely punished. Half of the party's Deputies had broken away within a year to form a separate party (the PSIUP), and that party had been electorally confirmed in 1968 at the same

time that the PCI's vote had continued to rise. The 'unambiguously' left vote had thus risen from 25.3% (PCI) in 1963 to 31.3% (PCI and PSIUP) in 1968. By contrast, the vote for the centrist socialist parties had declined from 19.9% to 14.5% in the same period. From a Sartorian perspective this was a situation of electoral (and parliamentary) centrifugation on the left.

But things were not so straight-forward. Perhaps half of the PSI's vote in 1963 was implicitly the PSIUP's, given the exit of those Deputies in 1964, so that the PSI's losses in 1968 were less than might have been expected. Perhaps it was the PSIUP Deputies who erred. Certainly they did not survive the 1972 election. Moreover, to go back in time, if the PSI's success in 1958, like the DC's, can be interpreted as an attempt by partisan electorates to prevent the looming DC/PSI coalition,² the success of the PSI vote in 1963, by which time the decision to form the Centre-Left had been taken, indicates that by then the electorate had accepted the leadership that was being given them. The left electorate was to some extent centripetal too. After all, in 1968 three-quarters of the PSI/PSDI electorate remained loyal to the PSU.

This counters the centrifugation thesis, but it still fails to grasp the entire complexity of the situation. The backing of the Centre-Left was not support for centrifugation, but it was support for the evolution of the centre to the left, and the reinforcing of the PCI (and continued support for the PSIUP in 1968) could indicate no more than the desire to continue reinforcing the gradual evolution of

the centre to the left. In other words, an electoral endorsement of a cautiously progressive trasformismo. The problem was that despite the tendency of the Socialist tradition to fragment, the post-war party system was based on disciplined parties, not individual notables, and eventually this pattern of moving to the left hit up against the PCI. It could not be consumed piece-meal, as the PSI was. This was the problem.

This argument of a preference amongst voters for a gradual, evolutionary shift to the left could be confirmed by looking at the PCI itself. In a sense, the PSIUP's rejection of the DC was a more extreme position than that of the PCI itself, and the PCI allowed that element within it that was equally intransigent towards the DC first to organise itself as a distinct sub-group, and then expelled it from the party. In the 1972 the groups to the left of the PCI fared as miserably as the PSIUP, failing to gain parliamentary representation.^A

It has too, to be said, that the PCI's inexorably rising vote over twenty years could not be assumed to derive from an ideologically intransigent position. On the contrary, the party had fought consistently to extricate itself from the ideological cul de sac in which it found itself after 1947-48, even if the road to be travelled was apparently never ending, given the impossibility of simply renouncing the Soviet link and the succession of events in the Communist

A. The PSIUP gained 1.9%, the Party of Proletarian Unity (PdUP) gained 0.7%, the Revolutionary Communist Party 0.3%.

world. Thus Togliatti's break with the Soviet model in 1956 was countered by the condemnation of the Hungarian uprising as counter-revolutionary, and neither the Yalta memorandum of 1964 nor the condemnation of the invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968 ended the ambiguity of the PCI's status as a 'reformist Communist' party. Still, even that ambiguity implied an openness to the centre that was absent in the French Communist Party, and this distinction was confirmed in the sociological differences between the parties. The PCI was less a workers' party than the PCF, and more a party of workers and their families, and of the petty bourgeoisie,³ the votes of the latter being sought to consolidate the party's domination of important areas of local government, a domination translated into regional government responsibilities in 1970.

There was little reason, then, for the PCI to think that extremist positions vis a vis the DC would be rewarded, even if it was equally clear that conceding too much would also be deeply unpopular. Berlinguer's elaboration of the 'Historic Compromise' was designed to update the strategy of seeking power on a realistic basis, avoiding destabilisation by combining electoral success with coalition strategy. In the wake of the 1975-76 'electoral earthquake', Berlinguer's reformulation of the party's understanding of its political strategy was concretised in the governments of 'national solidarity'. These were Christian Democratic monocolore governments operating in an environment of high crisis.

They were a disaster for the PCI, and ended the possibility of the formation of a two-block system led by the Communists. The DC rejected the temptation to submit to a

strategy of two-block confrontation, insisting on its centrist orientation in order both to gain PCI support and, ultimately, to ensure that that party remained labelled a party of the extreme left, ineligible to govern.

II THE DC AT THE CENTRE OF THE STORM

In this Part of the chapter and the next we look at the DC, stressing the enormous pressures which were put on the party by the welling up of social and political frustrations. These pressures reflected different perceptions of the DC: as a 'regime party' bordering on illegitimacy, opposed by the left-DC and other governmental parties; as the core of a clerico-capitalist state, by traditional socialist maximalists; as the core of 'party government', challenged by pan-syndicalism and direct forms of democracy; and as a corrupt expression of catholic culture.

Moro's insistence on maintaining the link with the catholic world and using it to retain a centrist/reformist image for the party was particularly important in the face of these multiple attacks. It enabled the DC to avoid becoming a party of the right/centre-right and provided a reason for rejecting the alternative left - its Marxism. At all times, the centrality of the DC put it under great pressure. Far from being non-responsive to social change and upheaval the factional turmoil of these years, largely centring on cross-party arrangements, indicates the intensity of the battle to retain the party's social and political predominance.

A. Ferment in the Catholic World

The establishment of the Centre-Left had added a specifically politico-cultural contribution to already rising socioeconomic expectations fed by the economic miracle of the late 1950s, early 1960s. The effects of social change and the impact of Vatican II combined with the widening conviction in the catholic world that the DC was a conservative hindrance to progress meant that the principle of catholic unity was fundamentally challenged in the late 1960s.

At the xth Party Congress in 1967, Donat Cattin, the leader of the trade union left had been forced by the pressure from ACLI and CISL to speak of the need for a credible reformist catholic party to compete with the lay left, and in 1968 Donat Cattin called for a second catholic party to be formed before the prospective 1973 election. The remorseless decline of the Dutch Catholic People's Party from a steady post-war 31% (average 1946-63) to 27% in 1967, 23.3% in 1971 and 18.0% in 1972 provided a remarkable contemporary spur to action.⁴ Somehow the DC had to retain its interclassist and catholic base, to reconcile its conservative interests with the desire for change and the urgent need for collective social, especially urban, reform.

The 1968 election had seen the immediate threat of the PSU beaten off, but it had also revealed the fact that the DC could not advance to the left at those parties' expense. Its location on the centre-right was clear. As we shall see below, the continuing temptation to try and turn the party into a centre-left one was weak. The only real options were between accepting the two-block logic in which the DC was the

party of the centre-right, and continuing to assert the three-block logic.

In late 1968 the DC was confronted by the threat of internal schism and secession, the unreliability of its major coalition ally, the PSU which was clearly drawn towards the left, and by a tendency to confrontation with the PCI. In the period 1969-75 a number of attempts were made, led principally by Fanfani, to confront the PCI head-on in a way which would probably have confirmed the two-block structuring of the party system. For a variety of reasons these attempts were defeated, and Moro maintained the party's centrist character and outfaced the PCI.

B. Moro's 'Left Switch'

The first effect of the 1968 election, however, was to undermine Moro's position. The PSU leaders vetoed further participation in his government and the DC's oligarchic leadership took the opportunity to reassert itself. Although preferences for arrangements with the Communists or with the right existed, the only realistic coalition was with the PSU and competition within the DC was largely about who could and would arrange this, and with what aims.

After twenty years of political and economic management many Christian Democrats now had a technocratic vision of government and an assumption that further economic success was the key to regaining popular consent. In this they were not unlike politicians in many West European countries, not least Britain, where 'politics' as a national and cultural phenomenon was largely avoided in the 1950s and '60s⁵ as a

constituent part, and reflection, of the assumed 'end of ideology'. The Dorotei with their clientelist and managerial-manipulative roots were particularly vulnerable to the danger of underestimating the significance of cultural change and it was Moro's long-felt concern for these matters which distinguished him from the other notables.

Moro resigned the premiership and moved rather sharply to the left, voicing his appreciation for the idealism of modern youth and criticising his party's loss of contact with the changing reality of society and its demands. Moro feared the myopic and self-interested manoeuvrings of his colleagues both for the effects it could have on the party, and for the effect the collapse of the DC would have on Italian democracy.⁶ Whilst Moro manoeuvred to gain the backing of the left, attempts to rebuild the Centre-Left struggled on.

A series of weak governments faced the storm of protest which swept Italy between 1968-70, making major concessions to trade-union demands. The first post-election government was a care-taker government, led by Giovanni Leone. Already in 1963 he had presided over such a government, waiting for the Centre-Left to be formalised. It was a government without authority. The government that followed was little better. The Leone government had been tolerated as a result of an agreement between Mariano Rumor, the head of the Dorotei and De Martino, the Socialist who was expected to gain the leadership of the PSU at its Congress. In fact De Martino was not recognised as leader and Rumor's post-Leone government had to include all the PSU faction leaders. These were deeply divided amongst themselves, both by considera-

tions of ideology and long-term strategy, and also by immediate personal and organisational considerations - the PSDI leaders, traditionally pro-DC had more or less swept the board once the return to government with the DC was agreed upon, and the PSI leaders were not at all happy.

Dissatisfaction within the DC was also manifest. When Rumor resigned as secretary to take up the premiership, in accordance with the DC's practice of avoiding the concentration of leadership power, the Dorotei's number two, Flaminio Piccoli, was elected secretary. However, Piccoli gained only 85 votes compared to 87 blank votes from a divided opposition. Dissidents on the centre and right were not willing to work with the 'left', and the left, at the xth Congress (1967), had mustered only 24 per cent of the vote. Even with the support of Paolo Emilio Taviani's mediating group they could only muster 36 per cent.

In February 1969, Moro made a key speech launching a 'strategy of attention' towards the PCI, a move which allowed him to present himself as a leader for the left even whilst remaining essentially tolerable to the Dorotei, which the left's own leaders were not. Neither the la base component of the left, which sought to involve the PCI in institutional reform nor the trade union Forze sociali wanted to move the DC into a governing relationship with the PCI. The trade unionists, as we have seen, were extremely hostile to the PCI. Their position was one of recognising the validity of the workers struggle, of promoting trade union rights. Neither was Moro, as yet, contemplating a closer relationship with the PCI,⁷ and Andreotti belittled Moro's 'shift to the

left' as indicating neither a personal change of temperament nor anything new as far as the DC was concerned.⁸

Nevertheless, the move was significant, for Moro's intellectual authority, his status as a notable in his own right, and his profound religiosity, allowed him to unite the left of the party and the Dorotei. He provided a very effective basis for recuperating catholic dissent⁹ and for maintaining the party's solid material links with society: the left had gained a champion, whilst the notables were happy that the left would be subordinated to one of their kind. Thus, for example, the proposal by Ciriaco De Mita, a la base leader, that the constitutional pact with the PCI of 1946-47 ought to be reestablished was contained within Moro's push to regain the party leadership.

At the XIth Congress in June/July 1969 Moro's position remained minoritarian, but he now had the backing of 43% of the party. According to Provasi, this Congress saw the party divided between a labourite/reformist wing and a technocratic, managerial conservative party.¹⁰ Although the presence of the trade unions and the lingering influence of Dossetti provided an entree into the party for the workerist ideas of the late '60s, it was now clear to the bulk of the party that the hope, championed by Fanfani in the 1950s, of displacing the PSI & occupying more firmly a centre/centre-left position was vain. The choice was between centrism and conservatism, and Fanfani now tended to the latter.

C. Fanfani's Ambitions

The Dorotei's continuing domination of the party was

now dependent on Fanfani for its majority, and Fanfani used this leverage to try and gain his party's backing as the official presidential candidate, Saragat's presidency being due to end in 1971. He sought to augment the presidential aspect of Italian democracy as a way out of the crisis which focused on the fragmentation of the party system, and to this end could expect the support of conservatives. Perhaps he also hoped for the backing of the PCI, as he had done in 1962, encouraged by Gronchi's election in 1955. Fanfani's supposed appeal to the PCI was that Moro looked a likely figure to unite the DC vote, and a strong relaunch of the Centre-Left encouraged by him was likely to benefit the PSI, confirming the PCI's marginalisation. In the event, his moves to gain conservative support lost him any chance of Communist sympathy.

In September 1969 Fanfani saw his protege, Armando Forlani acquire the party secretaryship in a generational coup which overthrew Piccoli. Meanwhile, Mariano Rumor had found himself deprived of the PSU's support by its re-division, and the DC had to choose between the PSI and the PSDI. The new DC leadership arrangement backed the PSI, but now the attempt to make this a permanent arrangement, excluding the PCI and able to provide solid and enduring government was made clear. The so-called preambolo Forlani sought to tie the Socialists to the Christian Democrats by vetoing continuing PCI/PSI arrangements at the local level, particularly in view of the forthcoming first round of regional elections.¹¹

At the same time that the party was seeking to tie the PSI to it, Fanfani was trying to reinforce his position on a

mixture of institutional and charismatic bases. The year 1970 saw three governments, and in the spring crisis Fanfani attempted to establish a 'directory' of the four centrist party secretaries as the core of a new government. This idea was not accepted for not only did it exclude the PSI but it followed talk, in the winter of 1969-70, of early elections and a return to law and order government based on the return of the Liberals. These ideas were associated with the gathering right-wing backlash to the Hot Autumn and were additionally coloured by the dramatic new appearance of right-wing terrorism signalled by the Piazza Fontana bombing. Although it was Mauro Ferro, a Socialist who now shifted to the newly independent PSDI who had proposed the return of the Liberals and a law and order government,¹² Fanfani was seen as moving in the same direction, and with the PSDI at this time emphatically more right-wing than the DC itself¹³ any hypothesised exclusion of the PSI was a serious matter.¹⁴

This was a difficult period. Not only was the DC under pressure from the Vatican not to favour the PSI because of its proposals for divorce legislation, but the Socialists themselves were as determined not to be resubordinated to the DC as the DC was to secure a stable relationship with the PSI. To this end they posed as both a serious government party and an oppositional party seeking a 'more advanced equilibrium', ie one which advanced the position of the PCI. It was this the anti-Socialists opposed so strongly.¹⁵

The Centre-Left was clearly a difficult alliance to maintain, but Fanfani's abandonment of centrism as a party strategy seemed to point to an abandonment of centrism as a

political strategy too. The party was not ready to follow Fanfani on either account. Andreotti now stepped forward to offer the possibility of maintaining the party's centrist strategy, but without the PSI.

D. Andreotti: Conservative Centrism

In the summer of 1970, when Rumor's third government fell, Andreotti attempted to form a government which would survive by the good-will of the PCI. Andreotti was not identified with the Left at all, but with the Vatican right and various forms of often unsavoury business interests, but as leader of the DC in the Chamber of Deputies his contacts with PCI parliamentarians was close. Fanfani rallied the DC's centre and right to block Andreotti, but it was his close ally, Emilio Colombo who formed the next government. Colombo attempted to mediate with the unions, and via them, the PCI,¹⁶ but he could not adopt neo-corporatist positions, even if the opportunity was supposedly there,¹⁷ both because he himself was backed by business interests seeking protection from labour militancy, not more concessions to it, and because his party was not willing to play second fiddle to the CGIL and PCI. Meanwhile, however, Andreotti was overseeing a series of major reforms of parliamentary procedure which confirmed the importance of the PCI and that institutions growing political centrality.¹⁸

At the same time, the party elected Giovanni Leone as president, rejecting Fanfani and Moro alike, both of whom seemed in odour of PCI support,¹⁹ if for different reasons, a move which 'balanced' Andreotti and Colombo's cautiously

institutional and technocratic approaches towards the PCI. This balanced approach was reflected in Forlani's watchword for the electoral campaign - 'centrality'. The election had been brought forward a year to 1972 by the need to preempt the divorce election in order to maintain PSI support, and circumstances made Forlani's approach a judicious choice. It was fully in keeping with the DC's traditional image as a centre party, but more specifically relevant was the fact that the right block had been reorganised under the leadership of Giorgio Almirante so that once again, and in fact for the last time, something like a three-block system really did exist.

In the local and regional elections of 1970-71 the MSI vote rose to 16.2% in Rome, where of course its visibility was at a maximum, and in Sicily it gained 16.3% of the vote. The party did well in small communes in particular, and there was talk of the party gaining 12% of the vote in the national election. As it turned out, Almirante's newly inspired party gained almost nine per cent of the vote.^A The DC's vote stayed rock-steady, at least in aggregate, contrary to the predictions of opinion polls and commentators who saw the DC as awfully exposed on two flanks.²⁰ The revitalised 'tripolar' situation in which "The DC, the PCI and DN [MSI] were the major protagonists"²¹ had, as per Sartori's model, done wonders for the party.

In order to bring about the early election Emilio Colombo had resigned, and Giulio Andreotti had formed the

A. Actually 8.7%, whilst the PLI, still excluded from government, as it had been since 1957, gained 3.9%.

care-taker government which administered the country during the ensuing election. This government, like two others before it, never gained a vote of confidence,^A but in the aftermath of the election Andreotti formed a government with the PLI and PSDI which did gain a vote of confidence. Andreotti's aim was to confirm the DC as the centre linch-pin of the party system, able to form coalitions to left or right as the occasion required. Whereas Forlani had abandoned the party centrist strategy, Andreotti sought to confirm it, but he risked pushing the PSI back into the arms of the PCI and so creating a two-block system. Moreover, the importance of the PCI was now such that a centrist political strategy increasingly seemed to indicate the need not to exclude the PCI whereas Andreotti's formula, which would embrace alternately the PLI or the PSI, excluded, as though equal, the MSI and PCI.

By 1973 both the DC and US political intelligence were convinced that Moro's strategy of attention towards the PCI was more realistic than Fanfani's confrontational approach.²² In any case, the DC was not a party which could be transformed into an authoritarian centre-right party, whilst the PSI was now willing to resume its coalition relationship with the DC. Both Moro and Fanfani opposed the right-leaning approach of Andreotti and they now jointly engineered a coup against him, however different their understandings of their

A. The others were De Gasperi-8, July 1953, which was replaced by Einaudi's nominee Giuseppe Pella, and Fanfani-1 which followed Pella's. Similar governments were formed by Andreotti (again) in 1979, to precede that year's election, and by Fanfani in 1987 for similar reasons.

own party's relationship with the PSI remained. Whilst Fanfani emphasised the party aspect of the centrist strategy, so that the PSI's position had once again been successfully undermined by extra-democratic political forces, as in 1964, Moro was more concerned that the coalition with the PSI was an essential part of a centrist political strategy enlarging the area of democracy. The two strategies, or emphases, were not necessarily contradictory, though the tension between them was intense. In June 1973 Andreotti's experiment of governing with Malagodi was liquidated by the XIIIth Party Congress and Mariano Rumor once more came to head a Centre-Left government.

E. Fanfani's Last Chance

The relaunch of the Centre-Left was ignominious and provided Fanfani with a final opportunity to establish a more authoritative role for himself and his party. Weak in its handling of civil order and of the economy, Rumor's name and the political formula associated with it were once again associated with vacillation and indecisiveness. The key moment in deciding Fanfani to relaunch his campaign against the PCI probably came when Berlinguer made his Historic Compromise speech, with Fanfani interpreting it as a sign of weakness to be taken advantage of.²³ The caution of the PCI and of the government allowed Fanfani's ambition to regain the upper hand over Moro's strategic vision, and he relaunched his confrontational approach, now a full-fledged strategy of bipolarisation, DC versus PCI. His tool was the divorce referendum campaign.

The referendum idea originated with Fanfani in 1970 when he was trying to form a government. A key issue separating the DC from the PSI and the lay parties had been the proposed divorce legislation, and Fanfani persuaded the Vatican to accept the legislation in return for a promise to effect legislation creating the possibility of an abrogative referendum. The referendum, like the 'ordinary' regions, was one of the institutions foreseen in the constitution but only now realised. A lay movement championing the repeal of the divorce legislation had sprung up, and a referendum had been due in 1972, but that had been avoided by calling an early election - the first one in the history of the Republic. Now Fanfani put himself at the head of the continuing campaign, revitalising it.

There is no doubt that neither the PCI nor the Catholic Church were united in their attitudes to this referendum, and there is evidence to suggest that both wanted to avoid a bruising confrontation which both feared they might lose.²⁴ The Church campaign had, therefore, lacked decisive support until Fanfani saw that it presented him with an opportunity, and on the opposite side it was the Radical Party which made the running, forcing the PCI to mobilise. The cautious moves of Moro and the left, and of Berlinguer, towards some sort of accommodation were thus pushed to one side.

Fanfani's reelection as secretary had amounted to an acceptance of the need for an authoritative figure to lead the party in a difficult period and this, together with his characteristic dynamism and historic political standing was sufficient to overcome doubts in the Vatican and the party as

to the wisdom of his strategy. At least, no one tried to stop him. But in practice, Vatican support was not forthcoming, the Vatican leaving the matter to the Italian episcopate, which itself proved to be divided and uninspiring. Party support was equally lacklustre. In the aftermath of the defeat, Fanfani was not slow to attack the Church for having failed to adequately support him, but it was evident that neither the DC as a whole nor the Church were inspired by Fanfani's resumption of integralist ways of thinking.

For the DC, Fanfani's last attempt to create a catholic front and reconquer Italian society led it to be identified with the MSI, the only other party to back the yes vote in the referendum. This was worse than the ambiguities of Andreotti's right-leaning centrism. Nevertheless, Fanfani was not immediately removed from his position, for the obvious alternative was Moro, which seemed, perhaps unreasonably, to be leaping from one extreme to the other. Fanfani was thus able to keep the initiative, and in the Winter of 1974-75 the confrontationist front between Fanfani and the PSDI, first seen in 1969-70, reappeared. The PSDI forced Rumor to resign, denouncing the PSI as unfit to govern. Again, a crude attempt to subordinate the Socialists was visible, and perhaps another attempt to force early elections, but again this manoeuvre failed, and Moro established a government with the Republicans.

What finally brought Fanfani down was his running of the 1975 regional elections campaign. At the meeting of the party's National Council in January 1975 he gained a ban on any form of negotiation between the DC and the PCI, promoting

a head-on confrontation. In the same period the legge Reale anti-terrorist law was passed, the terrorist threat having reached new heights, a fact not unconnected with Fanfani's plans for many commentators; and in February the DC's youth wing was disbanded for its positive attitude to the left.

The regional elections took place in a tense atmosphere of left and right terrorism and with Fanfani using the example of the Portuguese revolution to attack the Italian Communist Party. Fanfani's confrontational strategy was at full tilt. The massive advance of the PCI assured Fanfani's rapid removal from the party secretaryship. It was as much the DC of Fanfani, as the PCI of Berlinguer, which was seen as a danger to democracy (see next section).

Fanfani was forced out at a meeting of the National Council, but the choice of substitute was not easy. The Dorotei were still not willing to accept Moro's alternative approach. They knew that their political and electoral base was deeply hostile to the idea of coming to terms with the PCI; the developing openness towards the PCI was essentially an elite matter.²⁵ The Dorotei thus sought to get Flaminio Piccoli reelected as political secretary, preferring to concentrate narrowly on their own party's management of the state and the electorate. Maintaining the intra-party, intra-block game, as Moro was seeking to do, was becoming too difficult.

This insularism of the Dorotei was perhaps their most damaging contribution to the party, and it naturally tended to support the strategy of two-block confrontation if it was felt that there was a choice. It was the ability and will-

ingness to play the inter-block game which distinguished leaders like Fanfani, Forlani, Andreotti and Moro. Now, in 1975, the party had to choose again. The Dorotei remained cautious, the left strong enough to block Piccoli, but not to impose their own candidate. The compromise effected was the election of Benigno Zaccagnini, an 'institutional' solution in that 'Zac' was the President of the National Council.

F. The Problem of DC Legitimacy

A major problem of Fanfani's political style, and of the Dorotei's mode of governing, was that they heightened the problem of the DC's 'illegitimacy'. It is perhaps wrong to talk of the legitimacy of individual parties in a multi-party democracy, since it is the functioning of the whole which is the important point. One of the major criticism's of Sartori's model is its insistence on the illegitimacy of the PCI and MSI (and PSI for a considerable period). A key feature of Moro's strategy was that part of the point of the 'strategy of attention' vis a vis the PCI was to force the DC to compete on an electorally competitive programmatic and ethical level, rather than rely on state resources.

That the DC too had a legitimacy problem was recognised by the left DC early on. As early as 1965 Leopoldo Elia described the political situation in Italy as one where the DC had acquired state power as an "occupying, but not legitimate" force. Elia was a constitutional lawyer who later became President of the Supreme Court (1981-85) and whose political associations were securely with the DC left, first with the Dossettiani, as an advisor to Moro after 1969, and

to De Mita in the 1980's. According to Ruggiero Orfei, a historian of the DC, De Gasperi himself had recognised the fact that the DC's occupation of power was based on its anti-communism and the guarantees it provided the Church, but that in times of social tension neither the government nor the catholic world were adequate to maintain social order. That needed the backing of the PCI.²⁶

The problem of party legitimacy was confirmed by Giuseppe Di Palma. He argued that the problem of the DC was less an inheritance of illegitimacy deriving from having substituted itself for Fascism than the 'inheritance of the inheritance' ie the delegitimation that occurred in the aligning election of 1948. This problem affected both major parties: they had mutually delegitimised each other.²⁷

On the bases of these analyses, government in Italy can be described as an **asymmetrical dyarchy**, with the DC dominating the cabinet and para-state and the PCI involved in the country's governance at the local level and at the 'invisible' national level, and ensuring the opposition's substantive loyalty. It was precisely the growing illegitimacy of the DC in the 1960s, deriving from its increasingly corrupt and questionable occupation of power, that provoked Elia's analysis.²⁸ The failure of the Centre-Left to challenge this then provoked the tendency to look to the PCI for a solution. Since it too had a legitimacy problem, the crisis of the Centre-Left presented a massive problem, and it was above all Enrico Berlinguer and Aldo Moro who recognised this difficulty. The Historic Compromise and the governments of national solidarity saw the crisis of the system of polity management

based on the visible mutual hostility and covert accommodation of the two principal parties in the party system.

III POLITICAL CONFRONTATION AND POLITICAL LEGITIMACY

The electoral advance of the PCI in 1975 and 1976 created a situation where the DC had to make an open political arrangement with that party. This was the climax of a long-term, if not uninterrupted, trend towards a confrontation between the two parties. The surprising result, in which both the unconventional politics of the Radicals and the appalling violence of the left played major roles in addition to those played by Moro and Berlinguer, was the considerable relegitimation of party government.

The DC also found a new legitimation, not least from the PCI; whilst the PCI's defence of the Republic, capitalist and bourgeois though it was, triggered a profound internal crisis in the Red sub-culture level which eventually brought its elites and masses together on a new, 'post-communist' basis, signalling the new legitimation of that party too. The crisis of the PCI lasted the entire decade of the 1980s, and saw the challenge to the DC shift radically to the PSI. But that is the subject of Chapter Seven. This Chapter considers the conflicting party and political centrist strategies behind the work of Aldo Moro; the 'Refoundation' of the DC and the confrontation with the PCI; and, finally, the relegitimation of party government and the collapse of the bipolar process that made the PCI the vehicle for establishing a two-block system able to put the DC into the oppo-

sition.

A. Moro's Strategic Aims

Following the shock advance of the PCI in the 1975 regional elections,^A Moro made a major speech at the party's National Council meeting. He warned that 'the future is no longer in our hands', arguing that a 'third phase' had begun, subsequent to Centrism and the Centre-Left. Undoubtedly Moro was seeking to sensitise the party to the need to reform itself and to accept the challenge presented by the PCI. Large sections of the party, notably la base, had never thought that the future lay solely in the DC's hands and had consistently sought to enlarge the area of democracy. This had been a difficult task when it had referred to the PSI, now that it apparently meant embracing the PCI too the problem was infinitely greater.

The assassination of Moro in 1978 by the Red Brigades and the subsequent demise of the national solidarity formula, of which Moro had been the linchpin, has given rise to much debate about Moro's intentions. As with the debates about the intentions of Gronchi and Tambroni, Segni and De Lorenzo, the enterprise easily leads in the wrong direction. The situation was one that demanded flexibility, and Moro himself probably saw the precise outcome of the game as essentially undetermined. A key reason for such openness on Moro's part

A. The PCI moved into the governing council's of Piedmont, Liguria and the Marches, as well as confirming its hold of Tuscany, Umbria and Emilia-Romagna acquired in the first regional elections of 1970. It also captured most of Italy's city (communal) administrations.

is the ambiguity of the relationship between the centrist party strategy, focusing on maintaining the DC's domination of a centre block, and the centrist political strategy, focusing on the encouragement of a fully relational centrism where no party appropriated the centre. The major interpretations of Moro's intentions can be reviewed in terms of the emphasis placed on each during the Historic Compromise.

For Baget Bozzo, Moro's aim was to defeat the PCI by rebuilding and strengthening the DC on the basis of the confrontation with the Communists. This confrontation would force the DC to compete on a new moral and programmatic basis, and the cultural and popular grounds for this lay in the post-Conciliar (Vatican II) catholic world. This would allow the DC to continue to dominate - the PCI, like the PSI, would be subordinated to the DC - but in everyone's interests, or in the general interest at least.²⁹

In this interpretation, Moro is seen as intending to maintain the unity of the centrist party strategy and the centrist political strategy, believing that the new DC's party centrism, being based in competitive and collaborative intercourse with the PCI, would be accepted as constructive and progressive, ie politically centrist. The problem arose in that Moro, as both a loyal Christian Democrat and a man committed to high ideals could not see that progress, for the political class as a whole, might be greater if the DC were defeated and went on to successfully aggregate a loyal opposition. 'Ultimately' then, Moro was a conservative, and in fact Baget Bozzo moved to support the Socialists from 1980.

For Geoffrey Pridham, too, Moro's strategy in the 1960s

and '70s `revolved around the retention of the DC's power position', but he would hardly have been as successful a party politician as he undoubtedly was had this not been to the fore. The question is, how much did the fact that Moro was also finely attuned to the problem of `system maintenance' lead him to an openness regarding the significance of the relationship with the PCI, despite the fact that the `evidence suggests that at heart he maintained strong reservations about a formal coalition with the PCI.', particularly given that `Of DC leaders Moro was, perhaps, the most strategically aware of social consensus and stability' as political aims and requirements?³⁰

For many, Moro's awareness of the needs of the democratic system, and his vision of a `completed democracy', meant precisely the full legitimization of the PCI through full cabinet coalition, leading to alternation.³¹ In such a case, Moro would clearly have been prioritising the centrist political strategy and initiating a sharp break in party strategy, for the latter would now have become that of preparing to aggregate a right/centre-right loyal opposition - a far cry from governing the country from a progressive, centre-moving-left position. As a democrat, Moro could accept such an outcome if it happened, but not a priori. His position was flexible, but not self-negating. `Constructive opposition', whether openly or merely tacitly given, was a good enough role for the PCI but not for the DC. Indeed, for a convinced left catholic, the PCI's willingness to fulfil this role was probably both its `saving grace' and all that was conceivably permissible, and Moro expected the PCI to share

this interpretation of its role. It was a view which asserted the importance of the PCI as a political force which gave the country leadership, participated in determining its future, but which also stressed the difficulty of the PCI becoming the predominant political force: Italy was a 'difficult democracy' where alternation was more or less impossible.³²

Moro updated Elia's thesis according to which the problem was the illegitimacy of both the opposition and the governing party. Moro sought to raise the standing of both, but primarily the former, in a strategy which fused political and party centrism by seeking to consolidate the Christian Democratic and Communist Party 'asymmetric dyarchy'. Development of the Historic Compromise in the direction sought by the PCI, however, was to be avoided, for it was both objectively difficult and involved inflicting a defeat on the DC, reversing the asymmetry.

B. Refoundation and Confrontation

For Moro it was possible to work towards defeating the PCI, whilst using its creative force, through two processes. On the one hand, the antagonistic-competitive aspect of the relationship between the two parties could be used to force an internal renewal of the DC; on the other, moving the PCI into giving the DC openly acknowledged support would enable the DC to govern. This took the PCI a step further than the 'constructive opposition' which Togliatti had offered the opening to the left, but nevertheless left it in the opposition. This confirmed the PCI's legitimacy for some, perhaps

even extended it, but was far from guaranteeing it.

The first, the internal transformation of the DC, was initiated by the election of Zaccagnini as party political secretary in 1975. This choice was popular in the catholic world where Zaccagnini was known as 'honest Zac', and did much to fire enthusiasm in support of an internal renewal of the party. Moro's message, that the DC had to be its own alternative, was one that the DC left had nurtured for over twenty years, and the conservatives in the party found it infinitely preferable to the possibility of defeat by the PCI. Moreover, although they were the intended target, they were also able to play a major role in the reshaping of the party. Thus, the reelection of Zaccagnini at the 1976 Congress saw him backed by key Dorotei like Rumor and Colombo.

The success of the DC in the subsequent election was undoubtedly due to the power of its anti-communist appeal in the face of an expected massive advance by the PCI, a situation pungently captured by Indro Montanelli's editorial injunction, 'To hold one's nose, but to vote DC'; nevertheless, the defeat of the Dorotei by Moro and Zaccagnini, and their identification with the new Catholicism of Vatican II undoubtedly increased the extent to which catholic activists gave positive support to the party. The 1976 election also saw the most thorough-going rejuvenation of its parliamentary personnel since the founding of the Republic³³, and although Zaccagnini was held firmly in check by the party's still powerful traditional oligarchs, a series of initiatives were undertaken in the five years of his secretaryship which did

boost the party's links with progressive forces in the catholic world.

The running of the tide in favour of the PCI was revealed in all its strength in the 1975 regional and local elections, and the likelihood of this being repeated at the national level led the PSI to withdraw its external support to the DC in January 1976. The PSI's affinities with the PCI had always been great, and now opposing it seemed electorally foolhardy. Even the Liberals abandoned their right-leaning leader, Malagodi, when the collapse of Andreotti's coalition signalled that in a party system whose centre of gravity was ever moving to the left they were no more coalitionable than the MSI had been in 1960. Similarly the national elite of the PSDI was forced to change tack, in its case by increasing defections in favour of local governments of the left. The Republicans faced a similar if lesser challenge, but their leader, Ugo La Malfa, was in any case establishing himself as a mediator between the DC and the PCI now that the PSI's shift left had reduced its capacity to play this role.³⁴

By the winter of 1975 all the parties were anticipating an early election, and this duly took place in the summer of 1976. The result was dramatic, but indecisive: the Centre-Left was definitively killed off by the size of the Communist advance, but alternation was still not born. The PSI underwent a massive generational leadership change immediately before the election which left its new elite seeking legitimation at a time when the party base was profoundly hostile to the DC, whilst the traditionally staunchly anti-communist PLI and PSDI lost half to two-thirds of their small elector-

ates. Not even Zaccagnini's offer of a government of 'equal parity' in which the Socialists would have gained half of the cabinet posts could induce the PSI to back a Centre-Left formula.

For its part, the PCI faced a veto from the USA and domestic interests. As its leadership had foreseen, only through the DC could it gain enough support to come to power. Like it or not, the DC and the PCI were forced to cooperate in some way. The Historic Compromise had to be given concrete meaning.

In August 1976 the government of 'non-no-confidence' was born. This was a monocolore led by Giulio Andreotti, a great believer in the DC's centrist party project, and negotiated largely by Aldo Moro. Andreotti gained an inaugural vote of confidence thanks to the abstention of the parties of the 'constitutional arc', a formula which excluded the extreme right MSI, and the extreme left Democrazia proletaria which had just gained entry to parliament, as well as the anti-system, but essentially unlocatable, Radicals. The formula included the Communists and as an echo of Fanfani's 1960 government of 'parallel convergence' was a step towards the further expansion of the centre.

The PCI behaved very much as it had in the CLN, demonstrating a willingness to compromise and to avoid government collapse in the face of the threat of radical destabilisation. This threat was both economic and terrorist, with the terrorism of the left moving towards a grisly climax precisely in the years in which the PCI found itself once more with governing responsibilities at a national level, even if

without ministerial portfolios. The Communist defence of capitalist economic rationality against union militancy and of the bourgeois Republic against terrorism amounted, for many on the left, to that party's final convergence on the political centre.

The PSI was not slow to attempt to profit from this situation, again repeating a story similar to the CLN. As the PCI/DC relationship had squeezed the PSI in the 1940s, now it threatened to make that party finally irrelevant, and in response the party sought to gain the leadership of the new social movements, outflanking the PCI on the left. In March 1977 it sought to provoke a government crisis, but was blocked by the PCI. This, and the PCI's defence of the capitalist state, pitched in terms of a defence of the Republic which the party had helped to build, and to defend, led to the attack on the DC-state, which figured prominently from the early 1960s, becoming an attack on the partitocrazia ie on parties and multi-party government, including the PCI.

An anti-party emphasis to the protest politics of the 1970s was common in Western Europe, but in Italy the formidable strength of the trade union revival in 1969 had contrasted with the weakness of the party left, reinforcing anti-party feeling. Thus, pan-syndicalism gained great significance in Italy, whilst the interest in both the catholic and the Marxist sub-cultures for council or base democracy also made the idea of direct democracy particularly appealing. The passage of legislation enabling the use of the referendum instrument at the start of the decade fuelled this movement, with the Radicals spear-heading the drive to overcome the

inertia of the party system through the use of referenda. The Radicals hostility to the PCI was particularly marked, and its argument that the party's elite preferred a comfortable position of permanent opposition to the risks of challenging the DC was damaging because it rang true. But what could the PCI do? Moro's analysis that Italy was a 'difficult democracy' reflected Berlinguer's belief that a Historic Compromise was needed given the impossibility of alternation and, now, the impossibility of standing on the side-lines, fiddling while the Republic burned. At the very moment that the PCI was being thrust on to the governmental stage, fundamentally challenging the DC's quasi-monopoly of state power, the party was being attacked for failing to challenge the DC.

The failure of the PCI to back the PSI's attempt to bring down the government in the spring of 1977 coincided with a major speech by Moro in defence of his party and its history. With the party deeply involved in corruption scandals that eventually led to the early resignation of the Italian President, Leone, in 1978, Moro aggressively echoed the PCI's defence of the Republic, championing the DC's role in the Republic's construction and survival. In retrospect, the survival of the DC monocolore government in the spring of 1977 has been seen as the crucial turning point when the DC won the battle with the PCI.³⁵ Neither now, nor until after the failure of the Historic Compromise, did any party share the DC's governmental power. The DC was the party of government which faced the terrorist onslaught and which had guaranteed provided liberal democracy and the conditions for economic growth. The party had to be accepted warts and all

- the corruptions of individual ministers and so on was trivial by comparison to the benefits Italy had gained from Christian Democratic government.

The confrontation between the DC and the PCI was being won by the DC. In the summer of 1977 its Festivals of Friendship were judged to be rather successful, and that summer's transformation of the non-no-confidence government into a legislative coalition did not alter the fundamental fact of the continuing exclusion of the Communists from government. Indeed, when La Malfa made steps towards recognising PCI ministerial eligibility in October weeks of polemic ensued. Berlinguer's insistence on access in December, provoked by union and membership pressure, provoked Andreotti's resignation in January 1978. By now, governmental support short of inclusion in the cabinet had seen abstention and legislative coalition and little else remained. It was in this situation that Moro was kidnapped.

Whilst the kidnapping of Moro gradually turned in to a martyrdom, Andreotti formed a new government from which the PCI was again excluded, the new government being formally based on a political and programmatic accord which permitted the PCI to give a positive vote of confidence. This in itself provoked the PLI into opposition, but the PCI gained all but nothing with which to convince its supporters of the correctness of its strategy and by the end of 1978 the PCI elite was desperate.³⁶ A final attempt was made to force entry into the cabinet, but this served only to bring the government down and initiate a process leading to the early election of 1979. The legislature had lasted only three

years, compared to the four of the previous two, and, given the circumstances of socioeconomic and political turmoil, many identified a trend to parliamentary collapse.

In the 1979 election the PCI's vote fell for the first time in the history of the Republican parliament, and it continued to decline throughout the 1980s. At the same time the electoral turnout fell. The party had failed to convince the doubters that it was a respectable party of government, and it convinced many of its supporters that it was no longer a party of opposition. The competitive edge had gone out of the party system. The vote for the DC, by contrast, was almost exactly the same as it had been in 1963, and it had been little different in the intervening elections. The combination of refoundation and confrontation had brought it a great victory.

C. The Relegitimation of Party Government

For eight weeks between March and May 1978 the very fundamentals of democracy and of party government were challenged when Aldo Moro, the acknowledged leader of the DC was held in captivity by Red Brigade terrorists. The PCI backed the DC steadfastly in its refusal to bargain with terrorists, and following Moro's assassination in May he immediately achieved the status of a lay saint. In the meantime, Andreotti's monocolor continued to exclude the Communists so that the DC remained the party of government par excellence. In the long run, the terrorist compounding of socioeconomic crisis dramatically relegitimated the Christian Democratic Party and party government in Italy.³⁷ In the political

sphere, the clear and clearly valuable distinction between the 'armed parties' and the competitive electoral parties, revalidated the electoral arena and the parties that fought in it; whilst the principle of party government bearing ultimate responsibility for the economy was established through the PCI's rejection of trade union intransigence and the recognition that the 1975 bilateral agreement between labour and private business had damaged the national interest by boosting inflation.

This relegitimation of party government was not immediately evident at the time. Just a month after the election, two referenda, promoted by the Radicals, showed that anti-party feeling continued to run high. Though neither referendum succeeded in repealing the legislation it attacked, the very fact that the proposed repeal of the 1975 anti-terrorist legislation could gain any credibility in the wake of Moro's murder was astonishing, whilst the near victory (44% in favour) of the repeal of new legislation permitting the state funding of parties was taken by the Radicals as a moral victory in their attack on the partitocrazia.

In the same month as the referenda were held, President Leone was forced to resign over allegations of involvement in the Lockheed bribe scandals, and the election of Alessandro Pertini in his stead was a significantly anti-party affair.³⁸ Pertini was elected for his personal, not party capacity, and his popularity so restored the dignity of the institution, that the parties chose to select his successor on a single ballot, thus avoiding the undignified spectacle where the

President required several ballots to be elected.^A

The considerable re-legitimation of the DC and of party government did not end criticism of the DC and of the blocked party system. Indeed, criticism of both remained significant through the 1980s, but 'legitimation' is a process, 'legitimacy' something that has to be constantly reacquired, and in the crisis years 1977-78 it became clear that there was really little alternative to party government, that if improvement was sought - which it clearly was - it had to be done through the party system or otherwise via democratic means which did not challenge party government, except perhaps in the very longest of long runs. The continuing vitality of social movements in the Italy of the 1980s was no longer linked to ideas of pan-syndicalism or conciliar democracy as alternatives to party government. The rise of the Greens and the speed of their gaining parliamentary representation in 1987, the challenge of the PSI to the dominant parties - the 'asymmetric dyarchy' - from the beginning of the decade, and the response of both major parties to these challenges bear witness to the renewed emphasis on the importance of party government and party competition. So, above all, does the dramatic decline of terrorism. More violent and of longer duration than in West Germany, violence peaked in 1978-79 and by 1982 was a marginal political phenomenon.

A. A unique event. Compare: Einaudi and Gronchi, 4; Segni, 9; Saragat 21 and Leone, 23. Pertini required 16.

IV A WATERSHED: THE HISTORIC COMPROMISE IN RETROSPECT

The confrontation between the DC and the PCI was an outcome built into the long-term structural dynamic of the party system. It was fore-shadowed in the 1948 election, which saw a strong tendency to left/right confrontation and the creation of a two-block system, but its realisation was delayed by the creation of the three-block party system. Because the three-block system was asymmetric, a tendency to reinstate a two-block confrontation was built into the structure of the party system, and though the PCI's leadership of the second block was not unchallenged, by the 1970s there was no alternative left. The confrontation between the DC and the PCI was one that had been put off for thirty years. It was both the end of a cycle and a watershed.

A. A Culmination

The creation of the three-block structure between 1946 and 1953 was the result of decisions taken by the political class. It was a deliberate avoidance of two-block confrontation. Its creation depended on the January 1947 split in the Socialist Party, giving rise to the PSDI and their seven per cent of the vote in 1948, and its survival depended on the maintenance of relations with the Left as well as the Right. This was guaranteed by the actions of the 1948-53 government and by the defeat of the so-called swindle law (legge truffa) in 1953.

The breakaway of the PSDI in January 1947 had certainly not created a strong centre-left alternative to the DC since

Saragat had been unable to pull the bulk of the party behind him. The failure of the PSI to follow Saragat led to its subordination to the PCI in the 1940s and '50s and this meant that the two-block tendency focused firmly on the PCI. Thus it was that in the early 1960s, Pietro Nenni, who more than anyone could have led the PSI into backing Saragat, himself sided with the DC, confirming the danger of a two-block confrontation which focused on the PCI. It is not surprising that judgments of Nenni's tactical and leadership abilities have been harsh.³⁹

The alliance of the DC with the PSI in the early 1960s did not end the PCI's domination of the bipolar tendency any more than the alliance with the PSDI in 1947-48. The possibility that the two-block dynamic would refocus on the DC and the PSI/PSDI was slim given the PCI's domination of the socialist sub-culture in the 1950s, and the conservatism of the Centre-Left guaranteed that this possibility did not emerge. By 1968 the two-block dynamic was focused squarely on the PCI and the DC. The Centre-Left, then, was a continuation of centrism both in the sense that it was another attempt to preempt two-block confrontation, and in the sense that it failed to replace the PCI as the champion of the alternative to DC domination. A third attempt to head-off the confrontation could not be made - the clash between the two dominant parties in the late 1970s was the end of a cycle. Explicable in terms of the structural dynamic of the system created in the 1946-53 period, it brought that dynamic to a conclusion, making it a watershed in the development of the party system.

B. A Watershed

Being the end of a cycle, it was natural that there were substantial continuities in the behaviour of Moro and Berlinguer in the 1970s and that of earlier key political figures in similar circumstances. Just as De Gasperi, Togliatti and Saragat in the '40s, and Nenni and Moro in the 60s, had sought to avoid a confrontation which would lead to extreme political strategies gaining the upper hand, so did Moro and Berlinguer in the 1970s. But as we have seen, by the 1970s the three-block 'buffer' had gone, and the circumstances of both revolutionary left-wing violence and widespread fears about the involvement of the security and intelligence apparatuses in violent right-wing destabilisation were rich evidence of the continuing presence of extremists hoping to gain from the political class' loss of control. Precisely the lack of a buffer, and Moro and Berlinguer's ability to lead the unwilling parties to work together, made it clear that the dominant political parties, however hostile to each other in many respects, had enough in common to bring them to cooperate when it was necessary. Essentially this meant in defence of the Republic, good and bad, as a creation of the CLN and the democratic multi-party system. Neither party was an anti-system party, neither was entirely illegitimate.

Whilst it no longer made much sense to see the PCI as an anti-system party when it so vigorously defended the Republic and its thirty year history against destabilisation coming from the left in both the industrial and political

spheres, it was also clear that the Communist Party had been the bearer of a mission - to defeat the DC. Not everyone wanted this outcome of course, but it was clear that antipathy towards the DC not only embraced the PCI and the new radical parties but was shared to a considerable degree by its coalition partners and even went deeply into its own electorate. The DC was supported for being anti-Communist, not for being the DC. The PCI was, to a large extent, supported for being anti-DC. In failing to defeat the DC it had failed in its mission, and the PCI was not the only loser. The unsuitability of the PCI was, in a sense, everybody's loss, and even within the DC voices appeared saying that a spell in opposition would do the party good, as it had done the West German CDU-CSU.⁴⁰ Needless to say, for the bulk of the DC this took too far the argument that the regeneration of the DC was what the country needed. Nevertheless, the secretary of the party for fully seven years from 1983-90, Ciriaco De Mita, was feared by some (and admired by some others) as harbouring similar views.

Moro had defeated the PCI by maintaining the centrist party strategy against the temptation of Fanfani and others to abandon it for a straight-forward two-block confrontation. He united the party because he maintained, in extremis, the traditional unity of the political and party centrist strategies. However, since the Historic Compromise demonstrated the reasonableness and responsibility of the PCI, the continuation of the centrist party strategy in the 1980s was more and more revealed as merely a means for maintaining the power of the party. Less and less was it a means for realising a

progressive political strategy or even for avoiding a radically conservative degeneration of the political system.

In looking at Moro's continuing fusion of centrist party and political strategies we saw that the success of the former was tending to contradict the latter; by the time the party system settled down after the shocks of the collapse of the Historic Compromise it was obvious. Increasingly, the maintenance of the centrist party strategy was seen as conservative in itself, conflicting with a centrist political strategy which had to be based on alternation. Not even a grand coalition would do, for the domination of the DC and the PCI in the 1976-78 period had seen a weakening of the relevance of parliamentary and electoral opposition, ie of the conflictual element in the political class's contradictory unity, which had brought tremendous disquiet. This unease had been voiced by all the minor parties, for they tended to be squeezed out of the political picture, but it was the PSI which played the crucial role, establishing itself as the basis for an alternation which would challenge the stifling domination of the two major parties.

When the governments of national solidarity finally gave way in 1979 the atmosphere was one of deep crisis. It was far from clear at the time that the terrorist onslaught was peaking and about to collapse. It was far from clear that the troubled economy, just hit by the 'second oil shock' was going to make a major recovery. And it was also far from clear that a new coalition formula was available, able to provide the necessary parliamentary backing to maintain government. In fact, the 1980s turned out to be a decade of

economic and political transformation. The economy boomed, the DC lost its control of the premiership for the first time since it had acquired it in 1945, and the PCI lost its domination over the PSI for the first time in the history of the Republic. The Historic Compromise had been a watershed.

- (1) P.Farneti, Il sistema politica italiano, 1973, p.26.
- (2) P.Farneti, The Italian Party System, London: Frances Pinter, 1985, p.188.
- (3) K.von Beyme, Political parties in Western Democracies, Aldershot: Gower, 1985, pp.104-11, 220, 262.
- (4) H.Daalder, 'The Netherlands', in H.Daalder (ed), Party Systems in Denmark, Austria, Switzerland, the Nethrelands and Belgium, London: Frances Pinter, 1987, pp.196-7.
- (5) See eg T.Smith, 'The British Constitution: Unwritten and Unravelled' in J.Hayward and P.Norton, The Political Science of British politics, Brighton: Wheatsheaf, 1986, pp.65-84.
- (6) G.Tamburrano, PCI e PSI nel sistema democristiano, Bari: Laterza, 1978, pp.51-54.
- (7) R.Ruffilli, 'L'ultimo Moro: dalla crisi del centro-sinistra all'avvio della Terza fase', in F.Malgeri (ed), Storia della Democrazia cristiana, Vol.4, 1989, pp.317-334, pp.327-8.
- (8) R.Orfei, L'occupazione del potere. I democristiani, 1945-75, Milan: Longanesi, 1976, p.246.
- (9) S.Magister, La politica Vaticana e l'Italia, 1943-78, Rome; Riuniti,

1979.

(10) G.Provasi, Borghesia industriale e DC: Sviluppo economico e mediazione politica dall Ricostruzione agli anni '70, Bari: De Donato, 1977, chapter 5.

(11) Pierluigi Castellani, 'La Democrazia cristiana dal centro-sinistra al delitto Moro (1962-78)', in F.Malgeri, op.cit. Vol.4, 1989, pp.3-116, p.58.

(12) G.Galli, Storia della DC, Bari: Laterza, 1978, p.331.

(13) A.Marradi, 'Italy: From "Centrism" to the Crisis of the Centre-Left Coalitions', in E.Browne and J.Dreijmanis (eds), Government Coalitions in Western Democracies, London: Longman, 1982, pp33-70.

(14) L.Gualtieri, the Liberal president of the the parliamentary commission investigating unsolved terrorist atrocities is but the latest to have hypothesised the existnce of a 'politico-military complex' operating during the period of the strategy of tension in support of conservative aims. The political direction of the key ministries in this period was limited to a very small elite, mostly from the DC and PSDI. See the report in La Repubblica, 30 November, 1988.

(15) O.M.Petracca, 'L'opposizione liberale al centro-sinistra', in Biblioteca della Liberta, 1971.

(16) P.Castellani, op.cit. 1989, p.60.

(17) M.Regini, 'Social Pacts in Italy' in I.Scholten (ed), Political Stability and Neo-corporatism, London: Sage, 1987, pp.195-215.

(18) See eg D.Hine, 'Thirty Years of the Italian Replib: Governability and Constituional Reform', Government and Opposition, Winter, 1981, pp.63-80.

(19) G.Morosa and G.Moncalvo, De Mita il nuovo potere, Milan: Sperling and Kupfer, 1982, p.170.

(20) A.Spreafico, 'Risultati elettorali ed evoluzione del sistema partitico', in M.Caciagli and A.Spreafico (eds), Un sistema alla prova, Bologna: Il Mulino, 1975, pp.25-83.

(21) G.Mammarella, op.cit. p.398. The fusion of the remaining monarchists in the MSI led it to be known officially as the Destra Nazionale (National Right).

(22) G.Galli, op.cit. 1978, pp.336-8.

(23) G.Galli, op.cit. 1978, pp.379-380.

(24) G.Galli, op.cit. 1978, p.381.

(25) R.Putnam et al., 'Polarizzazione e depolarizzazione in Italia, 1968-81', in Il Mulino, 1983.

(26) R.Orfei, op.cit. 1976, p.24.

(27) G.Di Palma, 'Italy: Is there a Legacy and is it Fascist?' in J.H.Herz (ed), From Dictatorship to Democracy: Coping with the Legacies of Authoritarianism and Totalitarianism, London, 1982, pp.107-134.

(28) R.Orfei, op.cit. p.37.

(29) G.Baget Bozzo, 'La crisi della DC in Mondoperaio, March, 1988, p.5.

(30) G.Pridham, Political Parties and Coalitional Behaviour in Italy, London: Routledge, 1988. Quotes in this paragraphs are found on pp.153, 112, 168 and 317 respectively.

(31) C.De Stefanis, La guerra dei sette anni, Milan, 1973.

(32) A.Moro's speech at the XIIth Congress, June, 1973.

(33) M.Cotta, 'Il rinnovamento del personale parlamentare democristiano', Il Mulino, Sept-Oct. 1978.

(34) G.Mammarella, op.cit. p.469.

(35) G.Baget Bozzo, in A.Moro, L'intelligenza e gli avvenimenti. Testi, 1959-78, Garzanti, 1979, pp.349-355, cited in A.Gismondi, Alle Soglie del Potere. Storia e cronaca della solidarietà nazionale, 1976-79, Milan: SugarCo. 1986, p.152.

(36) S.Tarrow, 'Historic Compromise or Bourgeois hegemony?' in H.Machin (ed), National Communism in Western Europe: A third way to socialism?, London: Methuen, 1983, pp.124-153.

(37) P.Farneti, 'Italy: the Response to Overload', in R.Rose (ed), Challenge to Governance, 1980, pp.199-214.

(38) G.Pasquino, Istituzioni, partiti, lobbies, Rome: Laterza, 1988, pp.44-8.

(39) S.M.Di Scala, Renewing Italian Socialism. From Nenni to Craxi, Oxford University Press, 1988.

(40) Documents from AREL, the think-tank associated with the catholic and DC intellectuals.

THE TRANSFORMATION OF CENTRE DOMINATION IN THE 1980s

In Chapter Six it was shown that both Moro and Berlinguer were severely constrained by the inherited structure of the party system. Both were concerned by the destabilising effects which the tendency for a two block confrontation to become dominant would provoke, but neither could avoid it. They had to manage it, attempting to benefit from it. They did this, it was argued, by attempting to smother the confrontational aspect, Berlinguer stressing the need to cooperate with the DC in a Historic Compromise, Moro keeping the centrist tradition of his party alive, in opposition to Fanfani's confrontational strategy.

It was also argued that the final working-out of the complex structural dynamic within the context of which Moro, Berlinguer and other established party leaders found themselves acting was accompanied by a rejection of the party system and of the parties. Despite the perpetual drama of Italian politics, in which crisi follows crisi with monotonous (approximately annual) regularity, the evolution of centrism, without alternation, encouraged the view that there was no change, that trasformismo smothered everything of worth in its grey embrace. This stimulus to radicalism has been a constant of post-unification Italian history.

The consequences, in Republican Italy, were the rise of opposition within both sub-cultures to the party elites which represented them politically, and the exacerbation of anti-party attitudes. Thus, opposition in the catholic world to

the cautiously progressive De Gasperi and the ambiguously progressive Fanfani finally erupted into open 'contestation' in the 1960s, whilst discontent with the conservative oppositionalism of the PCI led to the emergence of an extra-party fringe in the early 1960s. The eve of the 1976 election saw the birth of extreme left terrorist activity which was whipped into a frenzy of activity by the concretisation of the Historic Compromise immediately thereafter. The lay/liberal world too made a precise contribution, with the Radicals spearheading the anti-party attack on the cattocommunist, 'neo-totalitarian', partitocrazia. The chief victims of the assault on the party system were, then the two main parties.

This was important, for the relegitimation of the party system went hand in hand with the emergence of a major 'new' political protagonist: the PSI. This party underwent a dramatic transformation in the late 1970s, emerging as the centre of a national political debate for the first time in a generation,¹ and it benefited from and pioneered the revalidation of multi-party competition.

One of the consequences of the national solidarity governments was the generalised realisation that the DC and the PCI really were not engaged in a fight to the death. The politics of the party system was not a zero-sum game in which one side had to try to maintain the exclusion of the other at all costs, whilst the other sought to deny the formally governing party either legitimacy or effective state power. Both parties did seek to prevent the other exercising power, but the aim was not the destruction of the opponent,

in order oneself to prosper, but the provision of government. Good government, or better government. Or bad government, as things stood. And the blame for forty years of inadequate government was pinned on the parties of the 'asymmetric dyarchy' - the PCI and the DC.

The PSI, led by Bettino Craxi, a formidable politician who benefited enormously from being the right man in the right place at the right time, declared that it could provide better government and political stability. That it could provide a socialist alternative to the DC which was safe. This it would do from within the government area, effecting a division of the party system into two blocks by establishing that the key political cleavage ran through the governing area. Exactly what the PSI (and PSDI) had been unwilling to do in the 1940s and unable to do in the 1960s. It is this strategy, and the limits to it, presented principally by the reactive strategies of the Christian Democratic Party and of the PCI, which we look at in this chapter.

I 'BIPOLAR GOVERNMENT: THE PSI CHALLENGE TO THE DC

The PSI was in a difficult situation in the 1970s, torn between the need to support the DC in order to provide government stability and the clear signs of the increasing attractiveness of the left with which it was historically linked. Whatever the party did it was widely damned. Both the move towards a rapprochement between the PCI and DC and the conflict between them which concentrated the vote made the PSI, like the other small parties, irrelevant. In a

desperate attempt to regenerate the party a wide-ranging generational coup took place in the party in 1976 in which Bettino Craxi was elected party secretary.

A. Craxi and Structural Opportunity

Craxi was the leader of the 'autonomy' faction which vaunted the party's independence from the PCI, symbolising the desire of the party not to swap subordination to the DC with resubordination to the Communist Party, but Craxi was also elected because this faction was weak. Craxi was thought unlikely to be able to challenge the oligarchic factional rule which made the PSI's internal organisation resemble that of the DC. In fact, Craxi's combative personality, tactical skill and patience, and his sheer ambition to succeed at the party government game ensured that he maximised the structural opportunity which the Andreotti governments presented.

This structural opportunity was a consequence of the 1976 election. Far from being the final nail in the coffin of the small parties, the governments of national solidarity gave them new significance, for the locking together of two 'illegitimate' parties heightened discord within both their electorates whilst the liberal/lay culture attacked the quasi-coalition as heralding a bureaucratic nightmare as catholic and socialist statisms reinforced each other. The PSI could hope to attract the discontented from all three traditional cultural areas and overturn the centrality of the DC. In fact, within three years Craxi established himself as the arbiter as to which Christian Democratic leader could

form a government, and within seven he was himself Prime Minister. Italy's first Socialist Premier.

Craxi's offensive matured rapidly. In September 1976 he outlined ambitious plans for organisational, ideological and strategic change to the party's Central Committee, and by 1977 the strategy of establishing the PSI as an avowedly reformist socialist party had been launched. The aim was to create a 'socialist pole' of electoral attraction in which the PSI would gain the leadership of the small lay parties and offer an alternative to each of the major parties and to the near paralysis of the party system which their joint, but antagonistic, domination ensured.

As we have argued in Chapter Six, the Historic Compromise marked a culmination and watershed in the development of the structural dynamic of the party system, so Craxi's ambition meshed with propitious circumstances, and his newly won leadership of the PSI made him the right man in the right place at the right time. Craxi's PSI made a key contribution to ending the governments of national solidarity, encouraging internal opposition to it within the DC and the PCI through his condemnation of it, and by acting as a potential focus for electoral discontent. The local government elections of 1978, which saw the PCI losing ground to the PSI offensive, reinforced the Communist's conviction that backing Andreotti was risking much for little gain.

B. Challenging DC/PCI Bipolarity

The withdrawal of Communist support for Andreotti's monocolore governments in early 1979 made the PSI the arbiter

of coalition formation. Despite President Pertini's concern not to have to call an election after only three years, Craxi refused to back a DC minority government and an early election became inevitable. The alternative to growing 'ungovernability', Craxi argued, was to avoid both a suicidal resubordination of the PSI to the DC and a risky reedition of the Popular Front. A Socialist led coalition with the DC would establish a 'socialist alternative' which would guarantee 'five years of stability and governability'. The widening recognition that the coalition game was about providing government, rather than an anti-Communist/anti-capitalist power struggle was thus given concrete form and projected onto the PSI. Craxi would synthesise stability and change to bring the reform that the Italian electorate had been seeking for nearly forty years.

Craxi's audacious proposal of a Socialist premiership was based on the fact that without the PSI's at least tacit consent, a government could not be formed, and in the wake of the 1979 election Pertini offered a mandate to Craxi after the Christian Democrats had proven unable to put together the backing for a vote of confidence. Of course, Craxi failed too, but the government which was formed, thanks to PSI abstention in the vote of confidence, was clearly operating under the threat of a Socialist veto. The DC's strangle-hold over government formation had been severely weakened.

Craxi worked to weaken it further. The call for a Socialist Premier was based both on the specific inability of the DC to claim to represent and lead the nation, and on the generic need for rotation in a dynamic democracy. Such

rotation could be provided by the parties internal of the government coalition. This theory, of 'alternanza', was posed as a safe but innovative alternative to the full-blown 'alternativa' which put the DC in the opposition and the PCI in the driving seat. It was a theory which could not but appeal to the DC's traditional allies.

In February 1980 the XIVth Congress of the Christian Democratic Party ended Zaccagnini's leadership and with it the preference for an arrangement with the PCI. In a matter of weeks Francesco Cossiga resigned and formed a new government, this time numerically strengthened by Socialist participation. After a six-year absence from government Socialist Ministers reappeared, and with substantial portfolios - Health, Defence, Transport and State Industry among others. Government stability was, however, far from assured, because the PSI had to prove its substantial autonomy in matters of policy. Intense conflict was built into the coalition as the DC tried to subordinate the PSI and the latter sought to deny that subordination. However, unlike in the 1950s and '60s when governments fell as the result of struggles internal to a DC whose domination of government was electorally invulnerable,² the electorate could now be expected to punish a party which provoked government collapse out of mere self-interest. This new situation did not entirely bring an end to the pattern of high governmental turn-over, but it was a new factor which bolstered the view that party competition was about providing good government, not about self-interest.

The period of government with Cossiga was a difficult one for Craxi, but he maintained control of his party and

increased his appeal to the lay parties. Already attracted by the idea of alternanza they were further flattered by the revision of the theory of the new third pole which now became the 'lay pole', rather than a socialist one. In 1981 the minor parties of the coalition exploited the scandals over the mysterious Masonic lodge Propaganda-2 to bring Cossiga's government down, and the upshot of this confrontation was the appointment of Giovanni Spadolini, the leader of the Republican Party, as Prime Minister. Now the DC's strangle-hold over the premiership had been broken.

Spadolini presided over Italian government from June 1981 to the end of 1982 when the DC exploited new tensions to reassert its right, as the majority party, to lead the government. The DC was now lead by Ciriaco De Mita, a new Secretary associated with the party's left. De Mita's election was a response to Craxi's challenge. He appeared to continue Zaccagnini's drive to renew the party, and his favouring of the PCI was matched by a high degree of antipathy towards the PSI and Craxi personally. The DC's aim in electing him was to force the PSI to accept subordination to this vigorous new leader and his radical programme to cope with the country's massive economic problems, or to reject him and accept responsibility for the country's economic problems and renewed government instability. The PSI had to accept domination by the DC or switch to the PCI. Craxi refused the terms of the dilemma and attacked De Mita as the face of the 1980s neo-liberal new conservatism in Italy whilst steadfastly and adamantly refusing identification with the PCI which he castigated for its inadequacy and cowardice

in failing to destalinize. The intense conflict between the DC and PSI, focusing on De Mita and Craxi personally, led into another early election in 1983.

The result led directly to Craxi being installed as premier, less because the PSI did well, than because the DC did badly. The PSI's modest gains were actually a great disappointment to the party. Much of the electorate remained tied to traditional habits and the transformation of the bipolar challenge so that it now rotated around a DC/PSI core was far from clear. In effect, the electoral confrontation was useful to Craxi in highlighting that perspective, but the campaign was not enough to convince. The acquisition of the premiership did give Craxi the opportunity to distinguish his party's government from that of the DC's, and reinforced the marginalisation of the PCI which was crucial to PSI success.

As befitted the leader of a modern party, Craxi had his staff and his programme for the new government ready and waiting, and although the editor of the left independent Repubblica mocked it as incompetent the Milan stock exchange rose.³ The reaction of the PCI was confused, as it was throughout the early 1980s. Vividly marginalised, the party was aware that the DC and PSI had a common interest in its electoral decline and attacked the government as the true face of the new conservatism. Yet without the PSI as a potential ally the isolation of the PCI was increased, and its official new strategy, the 'democratic alternative' was unrealisable. Not surprisingly, given such confusion, the 'consociational temptation' remained alive, further revealing the party's own doubts as to its legitimacy whilst enhancing

the legitimacy of the DC. Craxi's hostility to the PCI continually twisted the knife in the wound, and the 1987 election and even more the 1988 administrative elections seemed to be turning the irrelevance of the PCI into a self-perpetuating process. By 1988 the sorpasso which dominated political gossip was no longer that of the PCI over the DC, as it had been a decade earlier, but of the PSI over the PCI.⁴ From mid-1988 a PSI-led two-block challenge was being canvassed,⁵ the leadership of the bipolar dynamic had shifted.

C. Challenging DC Centrality

Having wrested the premiership from the DC, Craxi strove to promote the image of his party and the lay-socialist area at the expense of the coalition's major party - the DC. Craxi's aim was to show, from the position of Premier, that the primary political fault-line ran through the governing coalition rather than between the coalition and the PCI, ie he sought to demonstrate the existence of 'bipolar government'. If successful, he would show that the political alternative to the DC was not doomed to permanent opposition, nor did a virtue have to be made of such a situation. In-system reform was possible. Craxi directed his attention to four main areas in all of which the DC was vulnerable. The most significant for the DC as an organisation historically rooted in the catholic world was Craxi's assault on the special relationship between Catholicism and the DC.

1. The Catholic World

Craxi's attack on catholic unity was two-pronged,

directed at the Vatican, at Church-state relations, and at the catholic sub-culture, especially its organisational and electoral links with the DC. Craxi had worked at developing a constructive and positive relationship with the Vatican since his election as party secretary. In 1978, during the Moro abduction crisis, he had differentiated his party from the others by supporting negotiations with the Red Brigade kidnapers. Invoking the Italian humanitarian tradition he had worked together with the Vatican to save the statesman's life. Subsequently, when his mandate to form a government in the 1979 crisis had proved fruitless, he made it clear that his failure was the result of the other parties blocking him, not a veto from the Vatican, as in the late 1950s and early '60s.⁶ The PSI's acceptability to the Vatican was based on the former's uncompromising attacks on Marxism and Craxi's willingness to put pragmatism before anti-clerical dogma, thus enabling collaboration with the Vatican, as well as by the close personal relationship between John Paul II and president Pertini, himself a life-long Socialist.

Craxi entered office determined to demonstrate to the Vatican that it did not need to rely on a special relationship with one party to secure its legitimate interests. It could rely on formal inter-state Vatican/Italian diplomacy. The result of Craxi's long-developed association with the Vatican bore rapid fruit. In February 1984 the Villa Madama Accords were signed, replacing the 1929 Lateran Pact, and their implementation was celebrated in June 1985. This updating of Church-state relations had been on the political agenda for a long time, but the DC had been unable to tackle

such a contentious topic without inflaming the lay/clerical cleavage. The concern to downplay this cleavage has already been commented on in explaining Fanfani's defeat over the divorce referendum, but the tendency grew, so that even the (anti-)abortion referendum had received scant Church backing, whilst the legislation itself had won papal approval.⁷ When, in December 1985, work on the details of the agreement between the Education minister, Franca Falcucci (DC), and Cardinal Poletti on the teaching of religion in the state schools provoked an outcry from the Independent Left,^A the leading parties rushed to stifle it.⁸ In the public at large the Accords were generally well-received, and the PCI backed them in parliament. The PSI's ability to break the log-jam in this area of fundamental policy importance gave the party's image as a capable and reformist moderniser a great boost.

Craxi did not allow the close links with the Vatican to wither when the premiership passed back to the DC. In September 1987 the Commission on Culture and Education of the Chamber of Deputies determined the details for implementing religious education in the state schools only to have the Italian episcopate reject them as inadmissible. Vatican pressure was applied to force the government to reopen the issue, and within days the PSI was seen to leap-frog the DC in order to reach the basis for an understanding with the Vatican.⁹ The PSI was determined to ensure that it retained the political initiative and that the Church-state relation-

A. The Independent Left comprised those who had entered parliament in 1976 and 1979 elections via PCI lists, but who were not members of the PCI. They were a part of the transition of the Italian left/PCI to 'post-communism'.

ship remained a corporatist one, not one based on parentela, or party access. It also signalled the PSI's readiness to accommodate Vatican interests to the catholic electorate, something which contrasted with the DC's reluctance to champion Church conservatism in the divorce and abortion issues.

In fact, the DC could not champion Catholic interests on such issues because the Catholic world was no longer compact. The 'contestation' of the 1960s had threatened to split the catholic world and, by the end of the decade, the DC too. Only Moro's careful leadership and confrontation with the PCI, and the much criticised, but ultimately constructively ambiguous, leadership of Paul VI, had allowed unity to be rebuilt.¹⁰ Nevertheless, the push towards an open plurality of the catholic vote remained a fundamental threat hanging over the catholic world through the 1980s, with a split (facilitated by Vatican II) developing between Pope John XXIII's unequivocal support for continuing unity in support of the DC and the Italian Church's greater openness to other political forces.¹¹ Particularly significant was a debate that opened up within the catholic world itself about the relationship between the PSI and *Comunione e Liberazione*, and in particular its political offshoot, the *Movimento popolare*.

Comunione e Liberazione is often taken to be a fundamentally right-wing movement because of its commitment to Catholicism, its hostility to communism and its allegedly neo-integralist and fundamentalist ideology.¹² Nevertheless, its active commitment to catholic social doctrine gives it appeal to Italy's idealistic and post-marxist youth, whilst

its urgent championing of social reform and attacks on the lay neo-conservatism of the DC as led by De Mita could not but make it attractive to the PSI. That interest has been reciprocated. G.Cesana, the leader of Movimento popolare, defended his movement's interest in the PSI. Support for the DC, he argued, was contingent on the DC's behaviour, not mechanical, and other parties, 'particularly those which count most' deserved attention, especially as the spread of catholic values ended the necessity for narrow catholic unity.¹³ Not even the issue of abortion, an obvious stumbling-block for continuing and deepening relations between the two organisations is necessarily an insurmountable hurdle. In January 1989, the developing counter-attack on the practice of Italy's abortion law was dramatised by a police raid, instigated by the aging Christian Democratic Health Minister, on a prestigious Milan institute with the aim of securing evidence about its working practices. Political debate reached fever-pitch, yet in February Claudio Martelli, a senior figure in the PSI, and Roberto Formigoni, Euro-MP and leader of Movimento popolare from 1975-87, flaunted their mutual regard even over this deeply divisive issue.¹⁴

The PSI's outflanking of the DC is clearly being countered by expansive ambitions within the catholic world, but both movements, for all their ideological ambiguity, represent a clear threat to the DC and the principle of catholic unity. At the same time, the DC is no longer a necessary and privileged interlocutor for the Vatican.

2. Economic management

On the economic front Craxi won two major political

victories, the first a set-piece confrontation with the PCI, the second through the repeated annual struggle to get the budget pushed through parliament on schedule, something that Christian Democratic government had proved notoriously unable to do.

The victory over the PCI was achieved via the 1985 referendum on wage-indexing. It was decisive in that it redefined who it was who determined where the interests of the industrial working class lay. Craxi denied the PCI's exclusive right to define that interest, and to define it in such a way that it clashed with the government defined general interest. The possibility that the unions could damage working class interests by pursuing their own narrow, sectional interest had been recognised by the PCI, and in particular Lucio Lama the head of the CGIL, during the national solidarity governments. Then, of course, it had been part of a much larger strategy aiming to bring about both neo-corporatist and consociational arrangements. Now, Craxi was asserting the government's ability to define what was in the general interest in opposition to the PCI. His success confirmed the authority of government in socioeconomic matters and established the principle that deflationary measures could be in the interests of the workers. By 1989, Craxi was able to exploit De Mita's budget difficulties to predict a future government of left unity which would seek to rationalise public spending in the national-popular interest.¹⁵

The ground for this sophisticated political message was prepared through the annual battles to secure the passage of the budget, and by the battle to plug a tax-loophole favour-

ing commercial traders in 1984-85. In this latter battle, the PSI backed the Republican Finance Minister, Bruno Visentini, to the extent not only of risking the government's survival, but also of arranging a political front spanning the PRI, the Socialists and the PCI. The target, of course, was the DC. The ghost of this front was raised in early 1989 when the PSI and the Republicans, together with international financial circles,¹⁶ criticised the new DC-led government for courting popularity at the expense of budgetary rectitude and the genuine national interest.

Craxi fought hard to get his budgets accepted by the end of the parliamentary year since the failure to do this inevitably indicated the addition of inflationary amendments. Craxi's wish was to saddle the DC with the blame for these, thus labelling the party as structurally incapable of leading a constructive financial policy because of its clientelistic roots and the domination of the national party organisation over the parliamentary party. In fact, whereas the DC was able to get the budget accepted on time only three times in the history of the Republic (in 1969, 1974 and 1976), Craxi got his budget ratified on three occasions out of four - 1983, 1984 and 1986.¹⁷ As early as October 1983 the *Espresso* magazine had hailed Craxi as at last providing a government with the courage to govern,¹⁸ and in fact though his first government was put in a minority position on 163 occasions, mostly over financial details, his vigorous use of the vote of confidence and of decrees forced many of his measures through.

Craxi was fortunate to govern in a period when expan-

sionary US budgeting was benefiting the West European economies in general, but his force and determination contributed to creating Italy's 'second economic miracle'. Against predictions, 1984, the first full year of Craxi's premiership, was a good year for the Italian economy, and further good years followed. By October 1986 L'Espresso was reporting Italy to be living through a neo-capitalist revolution following the dramatic transformation of the Italian stock market and the taming of inflation.¹⁹

3. Foreign policy

Craxi's economic success was in itself a major source of international recognition, with Italy being 'discovered' as a good investment,²⁰ but Craxi became the first Italian statesman since De Gasperi to win an international reputation for his foreign policy initiatives. Under the DC, Italian foreign policy had been virtually non-existent,²¹ but already this had changed under Spadolini with, for example, the despatch of a peace-keeping force to the Lebanon. During Craxi's government, this force was expanded and gained great prestige by contrast to the French and US contingents which suffered murderous losses thanks to their governments' less even-handed, pro-Israeli, positions. Craxi, in fact, promoted relations with Yasser Arafat, encouraging the development towards his formal international recognition in 1988.

While Craxi promoted Italy's role as Western Europe's special link with the Mediterranean, he did not neglect the super-power relationship. In particular, he took an active part in arranging the western response to the USSR's deployment of the SS-20s, an involvement which ended with the

siting of Cruise missiles in Comiso, Sicily. Finally, Craxi also won his case, made at the Tokyo economic summit of May 1986, for Italy's entry to the 'Club of Five', leading to Italy hosting the 1987 Venice Summit.²² The fact that in the event the aged Fanfani, rather than the youthful Craxi, represented Italy confirmed the DC's aged image.

4. Law and Order

On coming to office, Craxi promoted a decisive campaign against the mafia,²³ not least because this was an area where the DC's reputation suffered. This involvement was highlighted by the contemporary prominence of the 'Cirillo affair' in which a Neapolitan Christian Democrat, Ciro Cirillo, appeared to have secured his release from his kidnappers thanks to the party's intimacy with both the Camorra and the secret services. Sweeping operations against the mafia and the camorra in 1985 and '86, leading to mass trials, gave the impression that at last the state was tackling this running sore in Italy's side. It contrasted sharply with the widely-held belief that the DC was deeply involved with organised crime.

Craxi also benefited from the continuing success of the battle against terrorism. A historical low-point was registered in Italy's terrorist problem in 1986 with only one dead and two injured in a mere thirty recorded incidents.²⁴ 'Governability' appeared to be working not only for the economy, but for law and order too.

In four key areas then, relations with the catholic world, the economy, foreign affairs and 'law and order', the PSI presented a major challenge to the DC's record as the

party of government, and it did so whilst proclaiming its centrality in a party system dominated by the Christian Democrats on its right and the Communists on its left. The centrality of the DC was challenged in terms both of its natural domination of government and its indispensability.

II THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC RESPONSE

The Christian Democratic Party had beaten off the challenge of PCI-led bipolarity in the 1970s with a strategy which combined confrontation and cooperation with the Communists. This had maintained both the DC's identification as a centre party and the three-block structure of the party system, yet the significance of the blocks had been substantially revised. Now they were much more widely seen as the result of party strategies and coalition arrangements and possibilities, hardly at all as the warring cores of alternative political systems.

In the 1980s a similar pattern of confrontation and cooperation came to characterise the DC's relationship with the PSI, but as we have seen, it was the PSI which was able to claim to be the centre of the party system, the only party able to provide stability of government, indeed to guarantee 'governability'. The fundamental division within the DC between the 'centre' factions favouring close links with the PSI and the left favouring closer links with the PCI continued to exist, but the strategies remained complementary, united by the perception that the PSI was the principal

competitive threat. The clarity of factional organisation thus weakened.²⁵ Nevertheless, tension between the two blocks within the DC was inevitably high since the two strategies were not easily combined. Indeed, the possibility existed that the long-run aims of the two strategies were fundamentally divergent. Stressing the link with the PSI tended to emphasise the continuing unity of the political and party centrist strategy where the DC would never let go of power. By contrast, stressing the link with the PCI hinted at an acceptance of a two-block party system in which the DC would be fundamentally reorganised, losing its clientelist and power-for-power's-sake image finally and fully to be relegitimated as a modern, programmatic party of the centre-right, like the West German CDU. Here the centrist political strategy required a decisive break with the centrist party strategy.

A. Reasserting 'Centre-Left Centrism'

President Pertini's nomination of Craxi as a Prime minister designate in the wake of the 1979 election was not a move that found no favour in the DC. That it should succeed was unthinkable, but since Craxi was not attempting to form a left coalition the reappearance of the PSI as a central actor implied the end of both the crypto-Grand coalition and any tendency towards a two-block system based on the exclusion of the PCI and the PSI. It pointed to a reassertion of 'Centre-Left Centrism'.

1. The 'Preambolo'

The formal leadership of the party, principally Zaccag-

nini, remained keen to maintain the link with the PCI, so it blocked Craxi's attempts to form a government. Nevertheless, a certain complementarity of the two factional blocks within the DC was evident. The centre preferred a link with the PSI, but not with the PSI dominant, so Zaccagnini's veto was not entirely unwelcome. Similarly, the DC-left was, in the main, seeking not to bring the PCI into the cabinet but to effect institutional reforms which would strengthen the two dominant parties, preferably to the benefit of the DC and particularly the left-DC with its desire to match institutional reform with the reform of their own party.

Since the PCI was not willing to back Zaccagnini without gaining access to the cabinet for at least the Independent Left, the only way of securing a reasonably stable government was for Zaccagnini to be replaced by someone with whom Craxi could do business. In the meantime, Cossiga's government survived by the abstention in the vote of confidence of the PSI and PRI.

In February 1980 the DC held its XIVth Party Congress and duly put Zaccagnini in the minority on the basis of the Preambolo, or preamble, put forward by Armando Forlani which vetoed continuing links with the PCI. Shortly thereafter Cossiga formed his second government with the PSI, as we have seen, gaining major portfolios. The DC was rather satisfied at having drawn the PSI into taking responsibility for governing the country, for 1980-81 were crisis years for the Italian economy and the terrorist attack was still in full swing. The Cossiga governments were widely seen as a swing to the right, mirroring developments in the USA and Great

Britain. Outside parliament, 1980 came to be seen as a turning point in the relationship between the unions and big business thanks to the 'March of the 40,000' in Turin, a protest against strike action opposing Fiat's projected layoffs. In parliament, the decisive attack launched by the state on terrorism caused concern about civil liberties, leading the Radicals to put the government under pressure by initiating the process for a referendum, held in 1981, again to overturn anti-terrorist legislation, whilst tough economic measures and the increasing use of decrees to force executive measures through parliament brought accusations that parliamentary democracy was being subverted.

What brought Cossiga's second government down at the end of 1980 was hostility to the new political formula and its leadership - the hostility of the PSI-left to Craxi, and of the DC-left to the inglorious leadership being given their party.²⁶ For the latter, their defeat in the preambolo appeared to be a defeat for the party's 'renovation', and the 1980 administrative elections had seen the DC's vote crumble, whereas the main benefactors had been the PSI and PSDI. The DC-left wanted to reassert itself to improve the party's image and to try, once more, to squeeze the PSI/PSDI in a situation of confrontation/ cooperation between the DC and PCI.

2. The New Right in Italy?

In fact, the accusations of neo-conservatism and worse (Cossiga was widely denounced as a hangman in the streets) thrown at the Cossiga governments reflected the tremendous sense of anti-climax and frustration following the failure of

the Historic Compromise. It is much more doubtful that party leaders, of whatever persuasion, saw much alternative to decisive anti-terrorist action nor, indeed, to the necessity to try and bring state spending under control. In fact, Italy's inability to control public spending was to a large extent associated with the DC regime's welfare generosity, so 'uncharacteristic of parties of the right'.²⁷ Of course, the nature of this generosity was a favourite target of the PCI, the liberal parties and the left-DC, but a left/right line-up in party system terms did not exist on this question as it did (perhaps uncharacteristically in a comparative perspective) in Great Britain and the USA.

Inside the DC a harsh neo-liberal, monetarist position existed, but it was championed by Nino Andreatta, from the left of the party, in terms of the requirement for international social democracy to adjust to the new economic climate.²⁸ Andreatta's position nevertheless isolated him within the party which, working from its organisational roots rather than an intellectual base, preferred to maintain state spending. Rather than stressing 'cuts' and the need to control demand, the party stressed the need to modernise the economy and promote post-Fordist flexibility, so that it allegedly 'rediscovered the market from the left'.²⁹

The DC's traditional promotion of the small scale sector, 'discovered' in the latter 1970s, strengthened this position, but the big business giants and the public sector were not neglected. Their contribution to the country's post-war boom was evident. Thus the DC took the opposite policy course to Thatcherite Britain, allowing inflation to

roar whilst overseeing, and supporting, a major programme of industrial investment and restructuring which prevented the destruction of large swathes of industry seen in Britain and yet succeeded in bringing inflation down.³⁰ Moreover, the defence of workers' rights and social conditions continued to play a significant role, and this was accepted by the business classes as a necessary condition for their own success.³¹

The 'rediscovery of the market' by the DC was similar to that made by the French Socialists under Mitterrand when they discovered the constraints of international competition,³² but the DC rediscovered it with thirty years experience of governing Italy's economy and society, so that whilst it rejected Fanfani's extreme statism it did not turn full circle to a Thatcherite commitment to 'rolling back the state'. Nor could such an idea appeal to a party whose power remained critically linked to the state's penetration of society, including its economy. The same was true of the PSI, and in the 1980s it was often to be found on the same side as the DC in battles which saw a confrontation between 'Rome and Turin', or the power of the parties and the power of FIAT³³ and other oligopolies. By the late 1980s the similarity between the positions of the parties in matters of principle was even clearer, as the PCI under Occhetto made clear its own 'rediscovery of the firm', explicitly echoing the French Socialists.³⁴ This is not to say that the DC/PSI coalition was not conservative, but it was conservative by virtue of its exclusion of the PCI and the greater weight it would be able to bring to bear in defence of union and worker

interests, not by virtue of being a capitalist reaction to which there was a socialist alternative.

3. The resurgence of the DC-left

The DC's loss of the premiership in the spring of 1981 under the pressure of its own coalition allies' use of the P-2 scandal was a major blow to the party. Nevertheless, the party was able to exploit even this situation by contrasting Spadolini's introduction of wage and price controls in the name of the need for economic 'rigour' to their own party's social concern deriving from its populist roots. In 1982, Western governments had still to discover that they could survive a 'revolution of falling expectations' and the DC hoped to see the PRI (and PSI) pay a price for their enhanced involvement in harsh government decisions. In the event the DC's double game, seeking to retain its populist-welfare base whilst simultaneously appealing to those appreciating the need for economic discipline (Andreatta was a key economic minister) backfired. Disputes between Andreatta and the Socialist Minister Rino Formica were blamed for the failure of Spadolini's programme,³⁵ whilst the successes of the government worked to the PRI's credit and to the credit of the 'lay pole' which Craxi was now vigorously promoting.

As it became clear that the PSI could not be simply reabsorbed into a new edition of Centre-Left centrism, pressure grew inside the DC to confront him rather than fudge the issue by trying to half use, half appease, him. This line was pushed by the DC-left, naturally, and they also used the sense of crisis inside the party which the loss of the premiership had promoted in order to call an emergency National

Assembly in November 1981. This was an extraordinary meeting of party leaders, members and concerned intellectuals and activists from the catholic world, concerned at the failure of the DC to revamp its image. Forlani, the organiser of the preambolo, and all those associated with the turn of 1980, were largely discredited. There was an evident need for new faces to emerge and it was not difficult to persuade the centre factions that a more combative approach to Craxi's attempted domination could be in the party's interests. Consequently, at the xvth Congress in February 1982 Ciriaco De Mita, known for his robust character, long-term regard for the PCI and hostility to Craxi, was elected secretary.

B. The Emergency Anti-Craxi Coalition

De Mita came from the same la base faction as Zaccagnini and he had the same respect for the PCI and the same interest in reforming the party, yet his election as secretary was backed not only by the left, but also by key factional oligarchs like Flaminio Piccoli, a leading figure in the Dorotei, Amintore Fanfani and Giulio Andreotti. The first two of these had been amongst those who had brought Zaccagnini down only two years previously.³⁶

1. De Mita's party-wide support

The point was, that now De Mita was expected to lead the coalition with the PSI. Thirty years earlier, it had been la base which had pushed for the establishment of the formal coalition with the PSI and this had been the dominant coalition strategy in the party from the time the Dorotei had accepted it, subject to their leadership, in the early 1960s.

Even Moro's 'attention' towards the PCI had been forced on the party by the PSI's revolt against the Centre-Left, even if the powerful electoral drives behind this disengagement, like the turmoil in the catholic world, were the result of the Dorotei's own conservatism in guiding that formula. Now, in the 1980s, the link with the PSI was inevitable, coalition with the PCI being out of the question, at least until the trauma of the Historic Compromise was well past.

What De Mita could do, as a known opponent of the PSI, was confront Craxi head on in his attempt to dominate the DC. Moreover, as a leader of the left, dependent on the centre for his power, De Mita was less likely to be able to use the personal prominence that would develop from the highly personal nature of the looming clash with Craxi in order to establish a dictatorial domination over the party - as Craxi had done in his.

The left continued to back De Mita because he re-launched the 'renewal' of the party and because, in conjunction with this renewal, he reasserted the irrelevance of the lay sub-culture as an independent political force. Only two sub-cultures, two political alternatives existed in Italy, the reformist catholic and the Marxist.³⁷ The PSI had to decide where it belonged, the DC had to 'pull its socks up', accept the formidable challenge of the PCI, and rebuild its links with the reformist catholic hinterland. The extraordinary National Assembly of 1981 had already initiated this process. The problem for the centre was that this aspect of the strategy seemed to push the party towards abandoning party centrism in favour of accepting a two-block structure.

2. De Mita and 'bipolarity'

De Mita's renewal of the party saw him encourage the promotion of younger cadres in the regions, seek to restore party organisation in several of the regions by dispatching party commissioners, and introduce prestigious catholic 'externals', ie non-party members, into the National Council and into the 1983 electoral lists. Candidate selection in 1983 saw a turnover of candidates almost as high as that in 1976, thus producing a second wave of invigoration in the parliamentary party.³⁸

De Mita's redefinition of his party caught the mood of disgust in the catholic world with the corruption and clientelism, but it also linked this with the 'new conservatism' of the 1980s. The attack on the DC's profligacy, led by the PRI, had hit home, and De Mita sought to steal Spadolini's clothes, promoting 'rigour' and co-opting Andreatta as one of his political advisors.³⁹ In this way De Mita's championing of economic governability was a weapon with which to hit back at the criticisms of the lay-socialist (and Communist and neo-Fascist) area and with which to hit out at the unreformed parts of his own party.

This emphasis, and neo-liberal rhetoric, reinforced the argument that Italy had a fundamentally two-block political system, and it appeared to be an abandonment of the populist, welfarist and centrist orientation of the party. De Mita was widely portrayed as an Italian version of the Thatcher/Reaganite agenda, and of the switch from the SPD led government back to the CDU-CSU in Germany.

However, as we have seen, this neo-liberal position was

not simply identifiable with the right in Italy. Andreatta came from the DC-left and, in many respects, De Mita was stealing the idea of economic rigour from opponents of the DC. He recognised the appeal of Spadolini's government to be what Craxi offered - governability and a basis for continued economic success. As for Thatcherism, we have seen that the DC's economic policies were fundamentally different to those followed in Britain. Moreover, the West German Christian Democratic Party, which was seen as relevant to parts of the DC because of its successful reorganisation and come-back, cannot be equated to the British Conservative Party,⁴⁰ nor the West German party system with the British, not least because of the existence, as in Italy, of structural links between trade unions and the CDU.⁴¹

Classic definitions of left and right seemed almost irrelevant as the main challenge to the DC was now the PSI, and it appeared to have abandoned socialism for an ideology of nationalist modernisation.⁴² The programme analysis carried out by Mastropaolo and Slater saw the PSI to the right of the DC in 1979 in terms of the classic left/right spectrum (see reproduction, p.58). Competition was definitely in the centre and about sound economic management. De Mita was not seeking to turn the party into the centre-right party of two-block system. What he was doing was comparable to the Spanish Socialist Party, itself rapidly turning into a centrist party.⁴³ The situation throughout Western Europe was one of confusion regarding political identities in policy terms.⁴⁴ In Italy, De Mita was competing in the centre for centre votes.

De Mita's economic position was not, thus, an unambiguous attempt to redefine the party as the party of a centre-right block. As we shall, see, the electoral defeat of 1983 forced De Mita to soften his position, but it is important not to mistake De Mita's intentions. We can reinforce the argument that De Mita was not seeking primarily to redefine the block structure and the location of his party if we consider a key motivation behind the assertion that the lay/lay-socialist area did not exist.

The argument that only two political cultures existed which could create the bases for alternation and the completion of democracy was an impetuous challenge to the PSI. In effect, De Mita, like Moro before him, was asserting his conviction of the strength of the catholic political culture as enshrined in the DC. It was not afraid of the idea of alternation, of l'alternativa, indeed it positively welcomed the idea as the culmination of the centrist political strategy for which the DC, since De Gasperi, had fought. This was De Mita's response to Craxi. It belittled the Socialist Party and Craxi's claims. It proclaimed the democratic virtues and ambitions of the DC. It forced the PSI to choose between subordination to the PCI or DC. It complemented the 'pro-PSI' tactic of Forlani, Andreotti et al. which was of enticing the PSI into an embrace with the DC from which it would not be able to escape because it had become dependent on access to government and its resources. Neither tactic was truly pro-PSI, far from it! Both were pro-DC.

C. De Mita: Ambiguities and Downfall

The emergency anti-Craxi coalition of 1982 led to seven years of De Mita's secretaryship, the longest continuous occupation of the post in the party's history (see Appendix 3). De Mita always vigorously denied that the DC was a conservative party. He was not even happy that it should be labelled a centre-right party, but stressing the need for Craxi to subordinate himself to one of the two major parties in a bipolar scheme clearly pushed the DC to the right.⁴⁵ The contradiction was blatant and Giorgio Galli devoted one of his comment column's in Panorama to it.⁴⁶ More important to De Mita's fate was the conviction of his opponents that the contradiction was dangerous to the party.

In the late 1980s, the bulk of the party remained wedded to the idea that it was a centre party, ie that the centre party strategy and centrist political strategy should not be distinguished, as De Mita tended to do. Baget Bozzo even argued that the overall orientation of the party was 'centre-left'.⁴⁷ Certainly De Mita's apparent push to the neo-conservative right in 1983 had weakened him. He had only survived the 1984 Congress and the examination of the party's calamitous electoral weakening because of the absolute imperative that the party remain loyal to its leader. To replace De Mita, when he had been specifically chosen to oppose Craxi, would have been to give Craxi a tremendous political gift, and De Mita's proud hostility to Craxi usefully echoed Moro's vindication of his party.

De Mita never challenged his opposition head on over the question of whether Italy had, or was developing a two-

block system, but his insistence on the challenge presented by the PCI, and his verbal attacks on the inadequacies of the old-style party, especially in his first years as secretary, were unrelenting.⁴⁸ His onslaught on his own party was useful, for he was preparing it for a fight against a potential left coalition by challenging its structures, practices and above all its image. De Mita's zeal and honesty appealed to broad swathes of the country's lay elite, not least in the business and opinion-making worlds. One of the prime conquests made by De Mita was Eugenio Scalfari, editor of the *Repubblica* which, since its foundation in 1976 had been identified with an independent left orientation because of its questioning of the assumption that the DC was bound to govern. Scalfari became a harsh critic of Craxi and the PSI, but he was only one of many who looked with favour on De Mita and his secretaryship.⁴⁹

Nor was De Mita without backing in the catholic world, for his modernity and laicism remained fundamentally and openly inspired by Christian values. The Jesuits and Catholic Action in particular encouraged his battle against the clientelist and oligarchic roots and structure of the party,⁵⁰ being especially supportive of his attempts to improve the party's image at the local level in key regions like Palermo. By contrast, he caused outrage in the highly active and politically influential *Comunione e Liberazione* which contributed to his downfall in 1989. That organisation, nevertheless, was not always looked on with favour by Rome, and in any case, after 1983 De Mita's rampant laicity was toned down as the attempt to rebuild bridges between the

party and Catholicism continued, and in 1987 the Church's support for the DC was noticeably greater than it had been in 1979 or 1983.⁵¹

The increased support for the DC from the Church did not prevent De Mita's internal opposition, in close collaboration with *Comunione e liberazione*, from putting out a dissenting document on the eve of the 1987 election. Known as the 'Document of the 39' from the number of signatories the document not only vigorously asserted the party's catholic and popular nature, rejecting the party's creeping transformation into a conservative party,⁵² but spelled out its alternative strategy. It expressed the fear that De Mita would drive Craxi into the arms of the Communist Party, provoking the creation of that bipolar situation which he too readily spoke of. What was needed was a more sincere cooperation with the PSI. For several reasons the moment for the switch was ripe, De Mita's days were numbered.

One pressing reason was the election of the youthful Achille Occhetto as General Vice-Secretary of the PCI at that party's Congress in 1986. The post was newly created, and along with a generational revolution within the party pointed to a process of renewal in that party. In the aftermath of the 1987 election, Occhetto made a major speech acknowledging Craxi's role in ushering in a new period in Italian politics and concluding that the 'consociational' temptation should be definitively abandoned in favour of the strategy of the 'democratic alternative', unequivocally confirming the existence of a bipolar system.⁵³ Shortly thereafter, the PSI allied with the PCI in Milan to switch the city's government

to the left, and with the possibility of similar action in ten of Italy's regions the PSI was clearly signalling its ability to hit back at an aggressive coalition partner.⁵⁴

At the same time, the PSI had a certain vulnerability, in part derived from its new strength. The 1983 election had propelled Craxi into the Premier's office, but this confirmed the PSI's close relationship with the DC, however conflictual both sides made it, and was perhaps one reason why the PCI's vote losses in 1987 were limited. Moreover, the 1983 election results had seen the PSI fail to break through in the opinion-voting and urban electorate of the North, the very electorate to which its modernising image was aimed. Instead, the party was being transformed into a 'southern party', and hence into a certain dependence on being in office for its access to state resources.⁵⁵ Although the 1987 election checked this trend, to go into the opposition, except during the next election campaign itself, was still out of the question, so the PSI was condemned to work with the DC for another four to five years. Better, then, thought De Mita's opposition, that its links with the Communist Party should not be encouraged by continued hostility, particularly since, following the regional and urban elections of 1985, it appeared that the end of a ten year long cycle favouring the left had come to an end.⁵⁶ Subsequently, the DC had been able to wind up many remaining left coalitions in favour of pentapartito coalitions which reflected the national government, and the reversal of this, as in Milan, was not acceptable.⁵⁷

De Mita had done all that was needed. He had symbo-

lised the 'new' party and replaced the image of a politically and commercially corrupt party which had resulted from the 1981 loss of the premiership in the P-2 scandal and 1978 loss of the presidency in the wake of the Lockheed scandal. In 1985 he had engineered the election of Francesco Cossiga as President on the first ballot, and in the spring of 1987 Craxi had been brought down, leading to his replacement by a Christian Democratic Prime Minister. Now the party had to do all it could to reassert its power and to convince the PSI to ignore the temptation to switch alliances. Since the PCI still had double the number of PSI deputies following the 1987 election any hope entertained by Craxi of catching that party up and assuming the mantle of leadership of a left block had been dealt a severe blow.

THE PARLIAMENTARY BALANCE
Number of Deputies

	PSI	PCI	Ratio
1946	115	104	1 : 0.9
1953	75	143	1 : 1.9
1958	84	140	1 : 1.7
1963	87	166	1 : 1.9
1972	61	179	1 : 2.9
1976	57	228	1 : 4.0
1979	62	201	1 : 3.2
1983	73	198	1 : 2.7
1987	94	177	1 : 1.9

Already at the 1986 Congress the 'party of rigour' had been abandoned in favour of 'White reformism', which in offering reform without danger echoed Craxi,⁵⁸ whilst 'centrality', not 'bipolarism', was to the fore. In this development the Communist newspaper L'Unita recognised the influence of Andreotti who had 'buried De Mita's Reaganism' to

provide a guarantee for the party's popular tradition.⁵⁹

Andreotti was the pivot of power inside the party. He had backed De Mita in 1982, but from 1983 he moved to counter his bipolarising tendency and by 1987 he was openly preparing to move against him. The size of his own faction doubled between 1980 and 1989 to eighteen per cent, so when Baget Bozzo wrote in March 1987 that the party had to choose between 'Andreotti and Andreatta', the decision had already been taken.⁶⁰

In the autumn of 1987 the factions, relatively dormant since 1982, reappeared. Unity behind De Mita and the inevitability of the link with Craxi had weakened the distinction between the left and the centre. Now the decision to back Craxi more positively reopened it. Armando Forlani, De Mita's narrowly defeated opponent in 1982, formed a grouping called the New Democratic Alliance⁶¹ which moved towards the grouping of southern notables known as the 'Gulf' faction thanks to their links with Naples. These then moved towards a regrouping of old Dorotei notables known as 'Reformist Commitment',⁶² whose birth Emilio Colombo described as the rebirth of the centre. This created 'Popular Action', and at the Congress in 1989 Forlani floated the idea of changing the party's name to the Popular Party in order to stress its mass, hence, supposedly, anti-conservative nature. This change would also enable the party to discard the conservative aura surrounding the DC's name and reinforce the link with the PSI on a reformist basis. The proposal did not succeed, but De Mita was unhorsed as Andreotti switched back to the renewed centre block.

Before De Mita lost power he made one final attempt to state the bipolar case, clearly signalling the division between the centrist political strategy and the centrist party strategy. But he made it only when the battle was, at least in the short term, lost. Andreotti's position was critical to De Mita's position, but Andreotti was bitterly opposed to the two-block scheme,⁶³ being a committed supporter of maintaining the party centrist strategy. In November 1987, exploiting the ambiguity in the Secretary's position, he accused De Mita of having no strategy at all, and by February 1988 the key move in easing De Mita out of his post had made with the announcement that De Mita should become Prime Minister. In accordance with DC tradition and the realities of internal power, De Mita had to resign as Secretary.⁶⁴

Whilst these manoeuvres were taking place, the bipolar strategy gained dramatic and bloody prominence with the assassination by the Red Brigades of one of De Mita's key advisors, Roberto Ruffilli.⁶⁵ Ruffilli was a convinced exponent of the benefits of alternation in a modern democracy and De Mita's linkage with the idea gained sudden force, particularly as he became Prime Minister in the same period. De Mita was reinvigorated, and in his inaugural address he asserted the need for Westminster style democracy. But this was his swan-song and little came of it. Within a year he was unseated as Secretary and the left rapidly lost all prominence in the party. Andreotti became Prime Minister. The clearly stated aim of the party now was to prevent alternation, but the fear of those who supported De Mita was that

should alternation be forced on the party it would survive less well as a populist catholic party than as the centre-right catch-all party for which De Mita had pushed.⁶⁶

III BETWEEN BIPOLARITY AND DIFFUSION

In making strategic political decisions the major party elites have to seek not merely to increase their party's share of the votes, but also to consider how their relations with other parties will influence the shape, or structure, of the party system. Thus, in the 1980s, Craxi called for votes for the lay-socialist area, not merely his party, and vigorously attacked the PCI, in order to break through in the centre, whilst Giorgio Napolitano of the PCI urged on his party the need somehow to maintain a positive relationship with the PSI if it was to make its stated strategy of the 'democratic alternative' even minimally realistic. For its part, the DC pursued a centrist orientation, but was torn between preparing for a two-block party system and striving to avoid it. How the system would develop was unclear, but the game was no longer between maintaining a three-block structure against a two-block threat. Now the collapse of the Right and the weakening of the two-block dynamic was accentuating the trend towards a confused and confusing mixture of diffusion, or multi-polarity, and of depolarisation, or so-called 'uni-polarity'. The DC could hope to retain its dominance if this trend dominated, by virtue of its size, able to aggregate, as necessary, a shifting coalition of the other parties around its bulk.

The key to the system's development was the relationship between the PCI and the PSI. If the two parties combined in some fashion, the smaller parties and the electorate would be forced to take sides, as they had been in 1947/48. So long as political aggregation was not promoted in this way, the fragmentation of the party system and weakening polarisation would encourage diffusion,⁶⁷ ie the disaggregation of the party system. Despite the frequent pronouncements about their imminent demise, the small centre parties demonstrated a capacity to survive based on the meagre quantity of votes required and their prominence in cabinet and the para-state, not to mention the support of state funding. The MSI, Radicals and DP, and from 1987 the Greens, could all rely on their non-governmental status to attract a variegated protest vote, whilst regional parties such as the Lombardy League and Sardinian Action Party were growing in significance. It was in part the strength of the tendency to diffusion which allowed the DC to reject De Mita. If the PSI fought off the embrace of its confirmation as the DC's privileged partner it would be accused of destabilising irresponsibility. If it knuckled under, it would leave the PCI to dominate a hodgepodge of parties that was not a credible basis for an alternative government.

A. Left Unity - the Key to Bipolarity

In the post-war period the Italian left was divided between Communists, Socialists and Social Democrats; between lay left and catholic left. The lay left itself was divided between socialists and liberals (the PRI), and even the rise

of the New Left in the 1970s, itself a further fragmentation of the left, displayed this divide: the liberal Radicals contrasting with the socialist DP. As against this fragmentation, there is great concentration: the PCI and PSI accounted for some 40% of the valid vote. There were two problems to overcoming their division. The first was their internal division deriving from ideological orientation, historical antipathy and policy judgments. The second was the external question of the circumstances in which a narrow parliamentary majority for the left/centre-left would be politically adequate. Elected specifically to assert PSI 'autonomy', Craxi went on to attack the PCI relentlessly for over a decade. Yet so long as the aim was to reweight the balance internal to the left, and so long as Craxi remained a potential Mitterrand, the purpose of this attack was alliance. The paradox of the 1980s was that left unity could only proceed on the basis of heightened discord.

Considerable progress towards a more balanced situation on the left was made in the 1980s. The PCI's parliamentary representation declined continuously from 1976 as it apparently became locked into a circle of failure and irrelevance, whilst by contrast the PSI grew, though not in a steady fashion, nor at a corresponding rate. Growth was negligible in 1979, limited in 1983 and only reached the sort of levels hoped for in 1987. The slowness of the process was a problem for Craxi, but by 1987 the situation was transformed by comparison with 1976. Then the PCI had had three times the electorate and four times the number of deputies, by the end of the eighties it was less than twice the size of the PSI

and roughly the same size as the lay-socialist area.

As we have seen, the 1987 election and the triumphs of 1988 led to talk of a Socialist sorpasso, somewhat vindicating Craxi's strategy. But the ball began to roll very late, perhaps too late to prevent the PCI sorting its problems out. The exclusion of the PCI came to an end in 1987.

Craxi's loss of the premiership weakened his position so that he himself needed the PCI in order to be able to withstand the pressure exerted against him. The logic of the DC's 34% of the vote compared to the PSI's 14% was that the Prime Minister would again be a Christian Democrat, and probably until 1992. The DC made it quite clear that it intended to run the country until at least 1992, not least because of the need to prepare for the challenge for the single market, and the minor government parties were no automatic allies of Craxi.⁶⁸ Giorgio La Malfa in particular supported De Mita's argument that there was a need for decisive government, whilst the PLI was growing aware that its reorientation to the left had left a potential gap on the right.⁶⁹

Craxi's attempts to demonstrate the continuing authority of the PSI were of dubious value. Thus the Socialist power of veto on DC premier candidates merely delayed De Mita's appointment for nine months and played into Andreotti's hands.^A Equally, the attempt to create a left/right polarisation isolating the DC via a series of referenda on nuclear and judicial issues failed to have the desired effect

A. Though this aspect of it may have been deliberate.

when the DC ducked the confrontation, whereas the campaign brought criticism within Italy's elite circles of Craxi's continuing demagoguery and the threat to the country's institutional development. The entire episode back-fired, as it was taken to be indicative of the negative potential of referenda, particularly when exploited as weapons in party political struggle.⁷⁰

The DC too showed increasing interest in the PCI as a way of putting pressure on the PSI, De Mita's final initiatives in this direction being subsumed within a new strategy in which the neo-Dorotei, as we shall see in the next section, sought to reorientate the DC to the left. By the late 1980s both the DC and the PSI were seeking both to maintain the exclusion of the PCI to their own benefit, and to use that party against their coalition partner. Both tendencies encouraged the progressive assimilation of the PCI with the centre. This process has been traced as a continuous development in the analysis of party programmes referred to in the introduction (see reproduction p.58), but at the coalition and electoral levels it had been less than obvious. From the mid-1980s the process became apparent at these levels too.

The initial reaction of the PCI to the assumption of the premiership by Craxi was one of undiluted hostility, a response to the confirmation of their isolation. The confrontation in the 1985 referendum on the wage-indexing system confirmed the intense antagonism between the parties, and Alessandro Natta, the new secretary who took over after Berlinguer's death, completely misjudged the party's strength in the face of the new government alliance. Nevertheless,

under trade union and public pressure the PCI cooperated with the PSI over tax reform, whilst the party's 'right', led by Giorgio Napolitano, openly criticised the bankruptcy of aiming for a democratic alternative whilst relentlessly attacking the PSI.

The defeat in the referendum and the poor showing in the 1985 regional elections led to the election of the youthful Achille Occhetto as Natta's deputy. As we have seen, Occhetto rejected the 'consociational temptation' in a major speech of November 1987 marking his appointment, but the intense hostility of the DC of a decade earlier was waning,⁷¹ and despite Occhetto's new determination to follow a two-block strategy talks between De Mita, La Malfa and Natta took place in early 1988 which led to renewed Communist speculation about a 'grand coalition' which would precede alternation.⁷²

The PSI's cautious interest in the PCI thus competed with that of the DC. In the summer of 1988 the PSI reopened the question of left unity, and Craxi even tentatively aired a date for its realisation - 1992, ie coinciding with the next election and the new Europe of the single market.⁷³ That same summer, Natta resigned as Secretary of the PCI, not without rumours of internal intrigue exploiting his illness. Occhetto became Secretary and his decisively moderate behaviour and declarations encouraged the possibility of further rapprochement between the parties. He set out a 'new course' for the party which consisted in no less than 'conquering the centre', stressing the importance of serious policy initiatives, rather than rhetoric, in achieving this aim.⁷⁴ Over

the Winter of 1988-89 Occhetto established himself as a major new protagonist on the Italian political stage, and in February 1989, the month of the DC Congress, the PSI again aired the possibility of left unity in 1992.⁷⁵

In the autumn of 1989, Occhetto set in motion a process which led to the extraordinary party congress of March 1990. Preceded by consultations of the entire party about the need to change the party's name and completely recast itself, the Congress aimed to win mass support for a dramatic modernisation of the party. The new elite had no intention of finding itself misunderstood and crossed by its own rank and file as it had been a decade earlier. The aim of the new leadership was not simply to update the party in a belated 'Bad Godesberg', but to present the Congress as marking the dissolution of the PCI and the opportunity for the recasting of the entire left block of the party system.

In the 1990s an arithmetically marginal majority for the left was likely to be politically adequate in a way that it previously had not been. Not only was the possibility that the PCI harboured Leninist dreams inconceivably remote, but at a more domestic and pragmatic level the reform of the Italian state seemed in many ways more practicable with the DC in the opposition. Not least, the reform of the 'idiosyncratic welfare state' which the DC had built⁷⁶ was all but inconceivable so long as the DC remained dominant. For the PSI the advantages of alternation range from the higher pay off in terms of ministerial portfolios through the need to reinforce success or inevitably to once more decline, to the possibility of definitively overtaking the PCI to become the

dominant party of the Left and of government, to say nothing of politico-ideological motivations. Even as a coequal government partner with the PCI, a status it could hardly ever hope to stabilise with the DC, it could hope to establish a new predominance such as that exercised by the DC since 1947. The motivations for the PCI were largely the same, though the Communists were driven by the hope of regaining access to the cabinet from which they had been so rudely expelled forty years earlier.

If the left were to win an electoral victory and expel the DC from government, the enlarged centre of the quasi-one-block system would be transformed by 'fission'. The existence of a programmatic centre-left and centre-right would be matched by the existence of a two-block party system. But such an outcome was not guaranteed, the DC might not be able to survive as a hegemonic centre-right party, and only this would secure the formation of a two-block structure, rather than a reversal of the three-block structure, with the left predominant.

B. Catholic Populism: A Strategy for the 1990s

The opposition which defeated De Mita at the February 1989 Congress had sought to reinforce the coalition with the PSI throughout the 1980s, but had been wary of legitimising a two-block interpretation of the party system. As the DC sought to compete with the PSI's tentative moves towards the Communist Party in the late 1980s it too moved towards the PCI, but whereas De Mita did so with a view to gaining support for constitutional reform, the neo-Dorotei did so in an

electorally manipulative and competitive way. They sought to gain Communist support to cope with the problem of the state's growing indebtedness, for a broad consensus was required which would impose common political burden-sharing rather than loading it on one political block.⁷⁷ At the same time, and the PCI's reassociation with the DC on a key economic policy orientation would reinforce the ease of this, they hoped to gain votes from the left block themselves as the decline of the PCI continued. In the process they would demonstrate the non-existence of the two-block schema and the universal nature of the catholic party and its popular appeal.

1. The DC's new courting of the PCI

Under Andreotti and Forlani the DC sought to reassert its 'centre moving left' image to encourage the decline of the PCI and reinforce its own unchallenged plurality position in an increasingly unstructured party system. An expression of positive attitudes vis a vis the PCI was thus noticeable as the new leaders stressed the party's 'Popular' origins. Although a full-blown coalition was not the intention, even this remained a possibility according to Vittorio Sbardella, Andreotti's right-hand man.⁷⁸ Sbardella, an ex-MSI man himself, has never been an admirer of the PCI, unlike many on the DC left, but in keeping with the neo-transformist tradition of the party, of which Andreotti is the supreme artist, he was not content to sit back and watch the PSI reap all the benefits of the PCI's decline. Even if the overall size of a potential left block was not increasing, a 40% block dominated by its centrist component would be intolerable, so votes

leaving the PCI had to be intercepted.

The realism of the DC's new strategy is open to question given that much contemporary analysis of electoral volatility in Western Europe indicates cross-block vote transfers to be rare.⁷⁹ In Italy, the comprehensive analysis of vote flows by the Cattaneo Institute, covering the interaction of spoiled votes and abstention as well as positive voting, indicated that of recent elections only in 1979 did voters switch directly from the PCI to the DC to a significant extent. This was tentatively interpreted as indicating a one-off 'release' of Communist sympathizers who had been 'trapped' in the DC's embrace until released by the governments of national solidarity.⁸⁰ Other analyses, however, tell a different story, and it must be noted that the Cattaneo analysts acknowledged the difficulties which Italy's geographically and culturally fragmented political landscape presents, and in particular the unreliability of their data for southern Italy due to boundary changes.

It may be that the complex organisational web with which the DC covers Italy is well equipped to provide its leaders with information about electoral conditions at the local level, and it is particularly in the south that the PCI's vote is seen as vulnerable to the DC. This is understandable since it is alien to both the industrial proletarian tradition of northern Italy and to the Red sub-culture of central Italy. Thus Remo Gaspari enabled local PCI/DC coalitions throughout the Abruzzi,⁸¹ and Vincenzo Scotti, a key leader of the Gulf faction, personally reinstated the DC's fortunes in Naples after the set-backs of 1975 and 1980.⁸²

The PCI's vulnerability to the DC was even reported in the party newspaper, l'Unita, with cross-block losses to the DC, PRI and MSI outnumbering losses within the left.⁸³ Whatever judgments are made about the accuracy and significance of such findings,^A it is clear that the new leadership aimed in this direction. Referring to Fanfani's hopes of shifting the DC to the left in the 1950s and '60s, Antonio Gava, leader of the Grande centro, reiterated the DC's status as a popular party and affirmed 'We can achieve today that breakthrough to the left which Fanfani did not achieve'.⁸⁴ The difference was that whereas Fanfani sought out PSI voters, now it was votes from the PCI which were being chased.

This strategy was rendered possible by the crisis of Communism, the European wide confusion as to left and right when it came to finding economic strategies to deal with the crises of the 1970s and '80s, and by the decisive assimilation of the PLI, PSI and even the PCI in the centre of the Italian party system. The result, as the philosopher Giacomo Marramao put it, was the danger of 'the parties becoming identical, all the same', of 'homologisation, absolute indistinguishability'.⁸⁵ Farneti's vision of unipolarity was coming true with a vengeance.

2. Catholic Populism: a universal/catch-all strategy

De Mita and his leading opponents, Forlani and Andreotti, had a common interest in rebuilding the party's links with the catholic world. In organisational terms one of the

A. And these are subject to even more doubt in the light of the uncovering of major electoral frauds in the aftermath of the 1987 election in southern Italy.

key 'catholic' interest groups which the party had to win back if it was to avoid becoming a conservative party was CISL. As we have seen, in the late 1960s CISL moved into open confrontation with the DC and by 1979 its links with the catholic world were so attenuated that it elected a non-catholic, Pierre Carniti, as its secretary. Carniti conducted an increasingly autonomous politics in the 1980s, deeply hostile to the various governments' financially 'conservative' tendencies, and at the 1984 Party Congress Carniti's deputy, Franco Marini, clashed bitterly with De Mita in precisely these terms.

Both sides, in fact, the union and the party/government, were seeking out the other for their own purposes. Already the 1983 'Scotti Accords' had established a quasi-corporatist tripartitism, and Scotti was a key figure in the neo-Dorotei. By the time De Mita came to have responsibility, as prime minister, for the budget in 1988, his neo-liberal conservatism was long past. His budget, as we noted, brought international criticism, but within weeks, and subsequent to De Mita's defeat at the 1989 Congress, the DC regained the full allegiance of the powerful CISL union confederation and its three million members.⁸⁶ The DC was deliberately seeking to outflank the PLI, PRI and PSI on their left.

To a considerable extent the handicap that identification with the Catholic Church had presented in the 1970s and early '80s was a thing of the past now that legislation existed permitting both divorce and abortion. The party could accommodate fairly intransigent opponents to the legislation because they would not leave the catholic party,

especially so long as exponents of Comunione e Liberazione were active within its ranks, yet at the same time the widely recognised different approaches within the catholic world, and in particular papal backing for the legislation, made the DC's own tolerant attitudes easier to combine with a profession of catholic loyalty. Indeed, the party's combination of tolerance and catholic certitude made it able to contain and use the diffuse sense of moral disappointment that followed in the wake of legislative liberalisation. As we have seen, even PSI remained open to dialogue, even with harsh critics like Roberto Formigoni, whilst in the vast diaspora of environmental politics too the support for ecological health, or more simply 'life', had brought a certain anti-abortion backlash.

The world of environmentalist politics in Italy is an extremely heterogeneous one, and one of its important components is that of catholic pacifism and third worldwide. The environmental movement spans the party system, and in the 1980s its challenge to left/right structuring complemented the fact that this was decaying of its own accord. It thus provided an important area in which the DC could seek to assert its catch-all nature and the irrelevance of the left/right schema, contrary to the rather contradictory arguments which De Mita (two blocks, but neither on the right) and Craxi ('bipolar government') were pushing.

Catholicism is an ideal universalist ideology with which to embrace new movements in Italian society, and after the trauma of the 1960s and '70s, the 1980s saw a resurgence of catholic culture as simultaneously both distinctive and

all-embracing. This movement was both broadly cultural and specifically political, with large numbers of schools being set up from about 1986 to develop political skills and awareness.⁸⁷ To a large extent these were a response to the DC's failure to rid itself of its unacceptable features, but clearly there was no guarantee that the benefits of catholic organisation would not be channelled once more into the DC. As the revived, more pluralist, but still distinctly catholic, sub-culture renewed its assault on Italian society in the 1980s, Laura Balbo of the Independent Left warned of the danger that catholic penetration of the various social movements would smother their potential for radical change. There was a danger, she saw of 'a tendency towards the subordination of the left vis a vis catholic values'.⁸⁸ It was precisely this that the DC of Andreotti and Forlani was aiming for.

3. The inevitability of defeat?

Two strategies have been presented for the DC. On the one hand, De Mita pursued a centrist strategy which, nevertheless, saw the possibility that defeat was coming whatever the party did. Given this it sought to prepare the DC as a centre-right catch-all party able to aggregate an anti-socialist opposition and confirm the validity of the principle of alternation by contributing to the creation of a strong two-block system on the basis of which it would at some point return to government. For Pietro Scoppola, De Mita's defeat put the party back into the hands of those who wanted to emphasise the party's catholic and populist roots, a strategy that would lead to the probable fragmentation of the right

and the domination of a new 'socialist' hegemony.

But for De Mita's critics, his strategy was seen as alienating substantial sections of the party's traditional mass base, not least by fuelling CISL's antipathies, and as painting itself into the conservative corner. De Mita was guaranteeing the party's defeat, and once in the opposition its support base was likely to dissolve. Much of the DC's southern vote was a vote for it as the government party, and its working class support would be lost if CISL worked with the other unions and the left parties in a neo-corporatist strategy, as was likely. Finally, these losses would reduce the DC to a conservative rump and alienate catholic progressives so that not even the party's Catholicism would serve as a mass aggregative basis.

The party's response to this situation was to reject De Mita, but it was a possibly vain attempt to avoid defeat, for the two-block dynamic was never adequately smothered for a strategy based on reasserting DC centrality and the marginalisation of all other forces to work. A decisive blow to Andreotti and Forlani was the arrival of Occhetto at the summit of the PCI. His decisive rejection of the 'consociational temptation' and dramatic dissolution of the PCI to recast the left block was a fundamental assertion of the existence of a two-block dynamic in Italy. It was a recasting which attempted to overcome the divisions of the left by appealing to Don Sturzo, the founder of the original catholic Populist Party, as well as to key figures of the radical liberal left like the Rossellis and Piero Gobetti, without forgetting the Soviet Union of Gorbachev.⁸⁹

In the 1990s the party system no longer hovers between different versions of two- and three block structures, but between a two-block structure and 'diffusion'. However, a fragmented and depolarised party landscape in which the DC alone was a major party able to bind a governing coalition together would be one in which domination, rather than a pluralist *Allgemeinkoalitionsfähigkeit*, would continue to be the main theme of the polity. As against this possibility a two-block structure might finally assert itself.

The late 'waning of opposition' in Italy, ie the visible collapse of Communist Leninism, is, paradoxically, the very basis on which opposition in Italy can be made meaningful. Competition between two political blocks could emerge in the 1990s as a bout of aggregation promoting bipolarism takes place between the DC and a post-Communist left block. However, a critical intervening question remains the position of the small parties. Will the lay parties side with the DC as they did in 1947? Will the PSI side with the 'new' not-the-PCI PCI as it did in 1947? Will the vote for the Greens prevent the left establishing a viable governmental block?

The unity of the left ultimately still depends on the interplay between the electorate and the party elites. One scenario for the development of a left block begins with the electorate indicating in the 1990 regional elections that it likes the idea of alternation. This leads to the PSI being encouraged to risk joining the PCI in open opposition to the DC, possibly provoking a confrontational early election in

1991. But Italian election results are rarely so decisive. The Greens and the other parties might be squeezed, but it is not at all certain they would disappear. Perhaps Dahren-dorf's argument that greater party political conflict is what is needed in order to promote innovation and aggregation, or 'strategic change'⁹⁰ is applicable. It would suggest that the PCI and PSI should attack the DC uncompromisingly in order to squeeze the other parties into alignment and the electorate into aggregation. If this confrontation does not take place the lay parties are likely merely to continue their juggling act, surviving as permanently governing parties, whilst the MSI, DP and Greens survive as permanently opposing parties. The system will remain 'blocked'.

(1). S.M.Di Scala, Renewing Italian Socialism: From Nenni to Craxi, Oxford University Press, 1988, p.188. Much of the first section of this Chapter derives from Di Scala's work.

(2) A.Zuckerman, The Politics of Faction, Yale University Press, 1979.

(3) *ibid.* pp.214-5.

(4) La Repubblica, 31/5/88; 28/6/88; Mondoperaio, July 1988.

(5) L'Espresso, 12/6/88.

(6) S.M.Di Scala, *op.cit.*, p.226.

(7) P.Furlong, 'The Changing Role of the Vatican in Italian Politics' in L.Quatermaine and J.Pollard (eds), Italy Today: Patterns of Life and Politics, Exeter University, 1987, pp.63-79.

- (8) S.M.Di Scala, op.cit. p.226.
- (9) La Repubblica, 4-5/10/87.
- (10) A.Riccardi, Il potere del Papa, Rome: laterza, 1988, Chapters 7-10, esp. pp.300-307.
- (11) S.Magister, 'L'Azione cattolica e i conflitti interni all Chiesa' in P.Corbetta and R.Leonardi (eds), Politica in Italia, Bologna: Il Mulino, 1987, pp.241-159.
- (12) L.Accattoli, 'Il Movimento popolare: forza e limiti di un messianismo politico', in P.Corbetta and R.Leonardi (eds), ibid. 1988, pp.293-313.
- (13) L'Espresso, 18/10/87 p.15.
- (14) La Repubblica, 5-6/2/89, p.9.
- (15) La Repubblica, 10/2/89, p.7.
- (16) The Financial Times, 31/1/89.
- (17) See CENSIS: XXII Rapporto/1988 sulla situazione sociale del paese, Milan: Franco Angeli, 1988, pp.820-844.
- (18) L'Espresso 9/10/83.
- (19) L'Espresso, 5/10/86.
- (20) M.B.Miller, 'Il boom della borsa e i paradossi della liberalizzazione', in P.Corbetta & R.Leonardi, op.cit. 1987 edition, pp.197-221.
- (21) G.Pasquino, 'The Italian Christian Democrats' in R.Morgan and Silvestri (eds), Moderates and Conservatives in Western Europe, London: Heinemann, 1982.
- (22) J.L.Harper, 'Il vertice di Venezia', in P.Corbetta and R.Leonardi (eds), op.cit. 1988, pp.69-92.
- (23) G.Mammarella, L'Italia contemporanea, Bologna: Il Mulino, 1987,

p.543.

(24) 'Gli avvenimenti del 1987' in P.Corbetta and R.Leonardi (eds), *op.cit.*, 1988.

(25) M.Follini, L'arcipelago democristiano, Rome: Laterza, 1990.

(26) G.Mammarella, *op.cit.* p.512.

(27) D.Hine, 'Italy', in A.Ware (ed), Political Parties: Electoral Change and Structural Response, Oxford, Blackwell, 1987, p.75.

(28) N.Andreatta, 'La sinistra democristiana e il governo del paese', Il Mulino, March/April, 1986, pp.263-78.

(29) P.Roggi, Scelte politiche e teorie economiche in Italia, 1946-86, Torino: Giapichelli, 1987, pp.131-152.

(30) S.Giavazzi and L.Spaventa, 'Italy: the real effects of inflation and disinflation', Economic Policy, April, 1989, pp.133-171.

(31) E.Pontarollo, 'Industrial Policy in Italy: reality and Illusion' in P.R.Beige et al. (eds), A competitive future for Europe?, London: Croom Helm, 1987, pp.213-240, esp. p.217.

(32) J.Vickers and V.Wright, 'The Politics of Industrial Privatisation in Western Europe', West European Politics, October 1988, p.2.

(33) See eg A.Friedman, Agnelli and the Network of Italian Power, London: Harrop, 1988.

(34) La Repubblica, 5-6/2/89, p.5.

(35) R.Leonardi, 'The Changing Balance: The Rise of the Small Parties in the 1983 Elections', in H.Penniman (ed), Italy at the Polls, 1983, American Enterprise Institute, 1987, pp.100-119, pp.105-6.

(36) C.Dane (ed), La Democrazia cristiana per gli anni '80, atti del XIV Congresso Nazionale, Roma 15-20 febbraio 1980, Rome: Cinque Lune, 1982.

(37) The Jan-Feb. edition of Tempo presente was devoted to refuting this

argument and to assessing its political significance.

(38) D.Wertman, 'The Christian Democrats: The Big Losers' in H.Penniman, *op.cit.* 1987, pp.40-45.

(39) A.Levi, La DC nell'Italia che cambia, Roma: Laterza, 1984, pp.43-44.

(40) P.J.Grafe, Die Modernisierung der CDU, Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1986.

(41) E.Grande, 'Neo-conservatism and conservative-liberal economic policy in West Germany', European Journal of Political Research, No.3, 1987, pp.281-296.

(42) A.A.Rosa, L'Espresso, 29/3/87.

(43) See La Repubblica, 17/2/89, p.12.

(44) P.Walters, 'Overview' in F.F.Ridley (ed), Policies and Politics in Western Europe: The Impact of the Recession, London: Croom Helm, 1984.

(45) See C.De Mita, Ragionando di politica, Milano: Rusconi, 1983 for his own account of what it did and did not mean.

(46) G.Galli, 'Conservatore sara lei', Panorama, 27/3/88, p.36.

(47) G.Baget Bozzo, La Repubblica, 31/10/87, p.10.

(48) M.Follini, L'arcipelago democristiano, Rome: Laterza, 1990, p.111.

(49) L'Espresso, 27/3/88, pp.9-11.

(50) G.Baget Bozzo, 'La strategia dei gesuiti', La Repubblica, 31/10/87, p.10.

(51) P.A.Daniels, 'The End of the Craxi Era? The Italian parliamentary elections of June 1987', Parliamentary Affairs, 1988, pp.258-286.

(52) On which see P.Furlong, The Italian DC: From Catholic Movement to Conservative party, Hull Papers in Politics, No. 26, 1982.

- (53) L'Espresso, 6/12/87.
- (54) L'Espresso, 20/12/87.
- (55) P. Corbetta, A. Parisi and H. Schadee, Elezioni in Italia: Struttura e tipologia delle consultazioni politiche, Bologna: Il Mulino, 1988, pp.152-5.
- (56) G. Martinotti, 'Electoral Trends in Italy: The Cycle 1970-85', West European Politics, April, 1986, pp.253-82.
- (57) B. Palombelli, Corriere della Sera, p.3.
- (58) See Il popolo, 27/5/86.
- (59) L'Unita, 30/5/86.
- (60) La Repubblica, 4/3/87.
- (61) La Repubblica, 19/11/87.
- (62) La Repubblica, 31/10/87.
- (63) La Repubblica, 29/8/87.
- (64) La Repubblica, 5/2/88.
- (65) La Repubblica, 17/4/88.
- (66) P. Scoppola, La Repubblica, 22/2/89.
- (67) G. Smith, 'Western European Party Systems: On the Trail of a Typology', West European Politics, April, 1979, pp.128-143; also Politics in Western Europe, 1989, 5th edn., Chapter 5.
- (68) M. Rhodes, 'Craxi e l'area laico-socialista: terza forza or tre forze?', in P. Corbetta and R. Leonardi (eds), Politica in Italia, 1988 edn., pp.173-196.
- (69) G. Ross, La Repubblica, 20/12/88.

(70) P.V.Uleri, 'I partiti politici e le consultazioni referendarie in tema di giustizia e nucleare', in P.Corbetta and R.Leonardi, op.cit. pp.197-235.

(71) L'Espresso, 16/8/87.

(72) L'Espresso, 17/1/88.

(73) L'Espresso, 12/6/88.

(74) L'Espresso, 3/7/88.

(75) La Repubblica, 8/2/89.

(76) M.Ferrera, 'Italy' in P.Flora (ed), Growth to Limits: The Western European Welfare States Since World War II, Berlin: De Gruyter, 1987.

(77) L'Espresso, 15/5/88.

(78) La Repubblica, 25/1/89, p.5.

(79) P.Mair, 'Adaptation and Control: Towards an Understanding of Party System Change' in H.Daalder and P.Mair (eds), Western European Party Systems: Continuity and Change, London: Sage, 1985, pp.405-429, pp.410-414.

(80) P.Corbetta et al. op.cit. 1988, p.99.

(81) La Repubblica, 27/1/89.

(82) L.Cecchini, Il Palazzo dei Veleni, CZ: Rubbinetto, 1987, p.152.

(83) D.Hine, 'The Italian General Election of 1987', Electoral Studies, 1987, pp.267-270.

(84) La Repubblica, 21/2/89.

(85) L'Espresso, 3/7/88.

(86) La Repubblica, 21/2/89, p.7.

(87) L'Espresso, 28/8/86. Also, Corrado Morgia, 'Comunisti e cattolici: educazione politica e rinnovamento', Critica marxista, 27:5, 1989, 25-37.

(88) L'Espresso, 25/1/87.

(89) La Repubblica, 8/3/90.

(90) R.Dahrendorf, The New Social Conflict, London: Weidenfed and Nicholson, 1988.

This thesis has focused on what can justifiably be called the obsession of the Italian Christian Democratic Party with the 'centre' throughout the whole of the post-war period to the present. In the first chapter it was suggested that the centre exists in two senses in the Italian party system. Firstly, there is the centre as the centre block, dominated by the DC, secondly, there is the relational centre which is defined by the interaction of the core parties, and these span all three blocks. The body of the thesis examined the process in which these two centres were created, maintained and transformed, as well as their tendency to move closer together.

The analysis of the DC's strategy focused on the interaction between the elite of that party and the elites and electorates of the other parties. A distinction was drawn between a party-centrist strategy which sought to maintain the centre block through its electoral appeal, and a political-centrist strategy which sought to foster a cooperative relationship between the political blocks. The tension between the two strategies was highlighted and shown to have been particularly significant in two periods. Firstly, the decade from 1953, when the party-centrist strategy risked negating the political-centrist strategy, a situation described as 'exclusionary centrism' to highlight its democratic ambiguity. Secondly, in the 1980s, when leading Christian Democrats thought the success of the centrist political strategy required the ending the party-centrist strategy, that is, the end of the DC's identification with a centre

block, to create the possibility of alternation.

The analysis of the Italian party system and the Christian Democratic Party was undertaken as an analysis of centre domination, and the meaning of this term, and the key points established in the thesis, are now summarised in five sections. The first section makes explicit the argument that centre domination can be structurally organised in just three basic ways, whilst the second restates the important distinction to be made between blocks and poles, the centre and the core. The third section describes the functioning of centre domination as a process of 'polity management' in which a 'political class' plays a major role, and thus considers the relevance of the 'consociational democracy' theme to Italy. The fourth section sketches the evolution of the Italian party system and the fifth assesses the impact of sustained party system interaction on state and nation-building in Italy.

I THREE FORMS OF CENTRE DOMINATION

Centre domination is a situation of political stability deriving from the existence of a working party system. The basis of this stability is the organisation of conflict as a competitive struggle between political blocks to determine who has access to government, and who does not. The existence of a stable, if shifting, pattern of interactions creates a 'relational centre', and this evolving centre can be said to be dominant. This dominance arises from the fact

that the core parties who define the centre believe that its existence is to their advantage, even if they seek to change the structure on which it is based, eg from a three-block to a two-block system.

Given the need for government in multi-party systems to be based on the support of a parliamentary majority there are three basic ways in which political conflict can be structured, all of which have been relevant in post-war Italy. The first possibility is that a single, multipolar, block exists so that either shifting minorities secure a majority on a rotating basis, or else government is majoritarian to the point of unanimity. The CLN came very close to this latter form, and in the 1970s it seemed highly likely that a grand coalition would be formed. In the 1980s, both variants of the one-block structure, that is grand coalition and *Allgemeinkoalitionsfähigkeit*, played minor roles in shaping party strategies.

The second way of structuring the existence of a relational centre is the two-block system in which two parties or coalitions are each able to secure the government. It is the creation of such a structure that the dominant elites of the Italian political class have consistently sought to avoid, fearing that direct two-block confrontation would see the destruction of the party system and the installation of a facade democracy.

Finally, the centre can be secured via the operation of a three-block system, one of the blocks being a centre block since there is not *Allgemeinkoalitionsfähigkeit*. The fact that the centre block can vary in size gives rise to three

variants of the three-block system: the flank-dominant variant, as found in West Germany, the parity variant, as found in the Netherlands, and the centre-dominant variant, as found in Italy. The last variant bears a host of dysfunctions but these, it is argued, were the price paid for the party system's survival beyond its 'installation phase' (1943-53). Section five suggests there is no need for this price to continue to be paid, pace the conservative conclusion of La Palombara's otherwise radical work of revision.¹

II TWO VIEWS OF PARTY SYSTEM STRUCTURE

The basis of party system stability is argued to be the formation of a stable pattern of interactions between parties grouped into blocks. But what constitutes a stable pattern of interactions? Here it helps to distinguish between blocks and poles, the centre block and the relational centre (or core centre), to show that block interaction does not take place between unitary and sovereign blocks.

Blocks may consist of single parties, but they are likely to be coalitions, and since parties are 'poles' of attraction, blocks are likely to be multipolar. In Italy, all the blocks have been multipolar, though by the early 1970s only the centre block remained so, right and left being identified with the MSI and the PCI respectively.

Whether block interaction will be stable depends partly on system structure, as discussed in the next section, and very much on the nature of cross-block relations. Usually, blocks will be internally divided over the question of the nature of the relations which ought to prevail across block

divides, and in multipolar blocks different parties are likely to have different views on this matter. In Italy, cross-block relations have been of exceptional importance given the degree of formal hostility between the blocks. Often, factions, or tendencies, within parties have been of particular significance because of their attitudes to cross-block relations.

The significance of linkages across blocks, including linkages based on electoral competitiveness, is obscured in the linear spatial logic of the block (or polar) model. Thus, whereas the concept of the centre block distinguishes sharply between blocks, the concept of the (relational or core) centre^A points to what blocks have in common. Parties that contribute to the creation and definition of the centre should be considered to be core parties, regardless of the block they are in. In Italy, the PCI was a part of the core, and not to be counted-out as an anti-system party. The relationship between the PCI and the DC laid the foundations of the Italian party system and of the Republic. Without a party system core, there cannot be a party system at all, and it is a secondary point as to whether a centre block exists.

The model which sees party competition as taking place along a single, linear, left/right dimension uncovers only part of the truth. It discovers the irreducible difference between left and right, or perhaps between left and centre and right, but it fails to see another aspect of party compe-

A. Henceforward the term centre will refer to the relational centre.

tition, which is about cooperation and overlap with regard to goals and/or the means of achieving divergent goals. A mechanical and/or multi-dimensional model of party interaction must supplement the linear one. For this reason the concept of 'polarisation', whilst undoubtedly contributing to an explanation of the structure and dynamics of the Italian party system (and of party system interaction in general), is misleading.

'Polarisation' emphasises solely the ideological distance between parties, and completely overlooks the elements of overlap between parties which make the system manageable in the first place. Overlap is important in two principle areas. First, with regard to other elites, there is a common determination to establish a political class, that is to maintain political leadership in the hands of party elites, as far as possible. Secondly, and relatedly, with regard to the mass publics, there is agreement to pursue economic growth ('productivism') in order to gain their support.

III THE CENTRE AS DYNAMIC CONFLICT-HANDLING

The creation of a centre in Italy was the work of the new political class which asserted itself in the wake of the collapse of Fascism in and through the Committee for National Liberation, or CLN. De Gasperi and Togliatti were particularly important figures since they claimed to represent parties which in turn represented the vast new, and initially untested, electorates. The importance of the relationship between Togliatti and De Gasperi was such that the DC and

the PCI came to dominate the party system as parties of popular and catholic anti-socialism, and of socialism, respectively.

Although many Socialists, Actionists and even Communists favoured a confrontational stance versus the DC, an attitude that many figures on the right shared, such a strategy was avoided until 1947. The two-block situation which developed as a result of the 1947 rupture was, however, highly unstable, and did not last out the first legislature. In fact, the election of 1953 confirmed the possibility of building a three-block party system in Italy. The creation of this party system, it was argued, was the work of a political class which, although divided in its aims and in large part over the means for achieving them at least agreed to avoid the collapse of multi-party interaction and the establishment of a quasi-democracy such as followed the civil war in Greece.

Both the definition of the DC as a centre party and the establishment maintenance of the three-block system in the 1950s and '60s were thus regarded as innovative and creative forms of political behaviour, for they enabled the collapse of the nascent party system to be avoided. Although De Gasperi specifically, and the DC in general, played a crucial role in this process, many other parties participated in it. The long-term evolution of the system was regarded as reflecting the interaction between the three blocks. Thus the evolution of the centre was the outcome of a process of interaction between a political class spanning all three blocks.

The imperfect (because it excluded the right) grand coalition of the period 1944-47/48 did not last however, nor was it recreated during the late 1970s years of the Historic Compromise and governments of national solidarity. For this reason, the term 'consociational democracy' has been widely regarded as irrelevant in Italy, since grand or extended coalitions are a major feature of such democracies.² However, it is not the case that the concept is simply inapplicable to Italy: it has been suggested to be meaningless tout court, and for two reasons. First, the elite accommodation which it sees as an antidote to the lack of consensus at the societal level is, on the one hand, not always forthcoming when it ought to be, whilst on the other, elite cooperation is a basic feature of any working democracy.³ Secondly, the degree of conflict that consociational institutions supposedly managed peacefully was probably not present in those societies anyway.⁴

What is striking about the Italian case is precisely that conflict at the mass level was intense, and that elites did exist who had no intention of smothering this conflict. Precisely for these reasons the political class that asserted its dominance against the confrontational alternative was unable to maintain the grand coalition which it had established, at the elite level only, beyond the initiation of the full-blooded electoral campaign of 1947-48.

The establishment of the centre-dominant three-block system apparently based, as Sartori insists, on a pro- and anti-system or constitutional logic, thus instituted a form of more or less 'invisible' elite cooperation in circum-

stances where 'visible' cooperation genuinely was difficult because of the high capacity for conflict in the polity. The high degree of elite accommodation of the CLN was, then, competing against an alternative approach to politics in which the low degree of cohesion in Italian society would have carried greater political weight. Equally the struggle to build and maintain the three-block system was a struggle to preserve and build upon the political cooperation that existed.

Nevertheless, to the extent that it can be doubted that either electorates or elites seeking a more confrontational politics sought to engage in a negative-sum game in which every one lost out, then it can be doubted that the political class did not give the Italian electorate as a whole more or less what it wanted, in broad political terms. This point reinforces Farneti's claim, backed up as we saw in Chapter One by Pasquino, that the general orientation of Italian government over time has corresponded to the general will of the electorate. None of which is to gainsay Pasquino's point that in the process of consolidating a functioning multi-party democracy the political class also benefited itself in a way which was, in a significant sense uncontrollable by society at large. Nor is it to gainsay the argument that the continuity of this system is uncalled for if the evolution of political culture, pari passu with the evolution of the party system, has progressed to such a point that the centre-dominant three-block system is redundant.

The one-block system created at the elite level in Italy between 1944-47 could not be sustained, but the survival of the embryonic relational centre was provided for by the creation of the centre-dominant three block system which avoided the dangers of a two-block confrontation. The structure installed, however, froze visible conflict at a high intensity, as Sartori correctly saw. The new structure guaranteed the continuance of centre domination but in a way which favoured Christian Democratic influence over its development whilst minimising the influence of other parties, even the DC's block allies.

Nevertheless, precisely the danger of Christian Democrat hegemony maximised dissent within the centre block and within the catholic movement itself, encouraging linkages not only with the right block, but with the excluded left. These linkages were eventually consummated by the 'opening to the left', which provoked tremendous political conflict as left and right fought bitterly against their renewed exclusion and the development of political tendencies which they opposed. The accession of the PSI to the centre confirmed the ability of the three-block system to prevent two-block confrontation yet to glory in political conflict.

The three-block system thus went through two phases, that of apparent domination by the DC, or 'exclusionary centrism', with its paradoxically anti-centrist, quasi-totalitarian implications, and that of the Centre-Left. The succession of the Centre-Left to Centrism was indicative of

the asymmetry of the three-block structure, and dissatisfaction with the Centre-Left reinforced this asymmetry, leading towards the tendency for a two-block system to assert itself again, this time through alternation based solely on the PCI.

A SCHEMATIC HISTORY OF THE ITALIAN PARTY SYSTEM

<u>Date</u>	<u>Block Structure</u>	<u>Comments</u>
1944-47	One-Block	Synchronic centrism (Elite level only)
1947-53	Transitional Two-/Three-Block	Crisis of centrism - two-block tendency (Party system installation phase)
1953-68	Three-Block	Linear centrism: a) exclusionary b) Centre-Left (Party system consolidation phase)
1968-90	Transitional Three-/Two-Block (Diffusion)	Two-Block Tendency a) PCI-based b) PSI-based (Mature democracy, cyclical challenge)
1990s	Two-/One-Block?	Flux. Absence of a dominant structure

The apparently unavoidable tendency to two-block structuration was evident from 1968, but for many, by this time, the promise of alternation was not a matter of radical socialism. For some it did mean this, for others it meant only the releasing of reformist energies trapped by the three-block structure, and for others still it meant little more than an invigorating change of leadership. The country's political culture was changing. Alternation, however, did mean transforming the block structure and by 1975, when this was inescapably on the agenda, the danger that a two-block confrontation would still provoke destabilisation was very real.

The problem facing the political class in the 1970s was immense. Alternation based on the PCI was, as Moro and Berlinguer both realised, a matter of extreme difficulty, yet at the same time innovation was clearly required, for dissatisfaction with the partitocrazia was becoming critical. In the event, the failure of the PCI to end the three-block structure helped make that party as much the target of attack as the DC-regime, and the tendency to two-block structuration based on the PCI collapsed. This caused anti-party and anti-party system feeling to intensify, but the combination of terrorist and economic challenge did a great deal to reassert the legitimacy of party government.

Furthermore, a new basis for creating a two-block structure on an acceptable basis appeared as Craxi, the new leader of the PSI, rapidly set about trying to replace the PCI as the alternative to the DC. Unfortunately for Craxi, the PSI was a weak vessel with which to achieve this aim, and before he could follow in Mitterrand's footsteps of rebuilding a successful government-orientated left block, the PCI acquired its own new leadership. Occhetto rejected the 'consociational temptation' and defined the PCI as an implacable block enemy of the DC, but on a straightforward centre-left/centre-right basis.

By the late 1980s all the traditional core parties, MSI included, appeared to be rather close to each other, commonly overlapping a new, indistinctly defined, centre. For the first time, the intervention of non-party actors to prevent the creation of a two-block system looked highly unlikely. The centre-dominant three-block system was redundant.

The question was, was the DC redundant too? The danger was, that having lost its role as the 'regime party', the DC would break up and a new centre block, dominated by the Socialists, be created. Opposition to De Mita's interest in establishing the DC as the core of one block of a two-block, alternating, system stemmed from the fear that the DC's passage into the opposition would mean its collapse, provoked by the loss of the southern 'vote of exchange', to the new 'regime party', and of elites, militants and electorates unwilling to accept identification with a rightist block.

V THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE PARTY SYSTEM
TO NATION- AND STATE-BUILDING

The current destructuring of the post-war party system is widely seen as reflecting the continuing absence of an ethically meritorious, popularly respected, unified 'nation-state' in Italy. This thesis qualifies that interpretation, throwing further light on the nature of the DC's 'success' as a political party.

Though the Italian state is some one hundred and twenty years old, its political elites are widely regarded as having failed to construct a 'nation-state'. This failure is seen as having led to the collapse of Liberal Italy and the rise and fall of Fascism, whilst Republican Italy is typically described as a society still rent by deep cleavages and cursed by a fragmented and dysfunctional party system. Against this, it can be argued that the establishment of a parliamentary democracy based on solidly-rooted mass-based parties made a positive contribution to the process of na-

tion-building, if not to that of state-building.

The contribution of the Italian party system and Christian Democratic strategy to constructing a successful nation-state in Italy has been obscured by the intensity of conflict in the party system and by the fact that parliament remains primarily an arena for inter-party struggle, rather than a provider of government. That the parliamentary regime survived thanks to the creation of the three-block system was good; what was not good were the effects of that structure on political life.

Long-term multi-party interaction meant that by the 1980s it was clear that Italian democracy had been consolidated and that the party system could be restructured without bringing political disaster. National unity, in the sense of societal cohesion, had increased as a result of the process of peaceful party competition first put into motion in the 1940s on the basis of anti-Fascist unity. There was, too, recognition in the 1980s that reform to complete the building of an efficient, constitutional and respected state was the principle task facing Italy's competing political parties. But only recognition.

Reforms were sought because the continuing, long-term, institutional failure of Italian government was self-evident but, with notable exceptions,^A the political class was in no hurry to implement major constitutional reforms since it was easy to spot losers, difficult to be certain of who would be

A. For example the promoters of the referendum to abrogate the electoral laws, campaigning in 1990 with the aim of forcing new, hopefully less proportional, laws to be drafted.

the winners. The problem was that whilst the parliamentary regime had survived thanks to the structure of the party system adopted, that structure had created a dysfunctional parliamentary system from the governmental point of view. As a result, the party system could be reformed only with the greatest difficulty, even though the three-block party system was redundant.

Right through into the 1990s the prominence of the antagonistic elements in the Italian party system intertwined with the dysfunctional aspects of the residual three-block structure so that the lingering failure to implement reform meant that Italian national unity and state capacity, particularly juridical, remained significantly weaker than in comparable countries. Consequently, as the hitherto prevailing party system continued to unravel, and the sustainability of the second economic miracle was questioned, the failures of the political class, not their achievements, dominated attention. Yet the tendencies towards the construction of a one- or two-block party system structure were so strong that the reinforcement of national unity was undeniable.

It was the failure of state-building which was more marked. Thus, whilst, like the other countries of Western Europe in the 1990s, Italy could look forward to an economically successful, social-liberal future, it was entirely uncertain whether the state would finally be reformed in such a way as to make it institutionally stronger and better able to earn the respect of its citizens. The construction of a working party system in the late 1940s and early 1950s was, thus, both a major contribution to state-

and nation-building in Italy, and a hindrance to those processes, especially state-building, thanks to the particular form it took.

(1) J.LaPalombara, Democracy Italian Style, Yale University Press, 1987, Chapter Nine: Primum Vivere. See G.Pasquino's review, Polis, April, 1988, pp.202-210.

(2) A.Pappalardo, 'The Conditions for Consociational Democracy: A Logical and Empirical Critique', in European Journal of Political Research, 9, 1981, pp.365-90; also 'La politica consociativa nella democrazia italiana', in Rivista italiana di scienze politiche, 10:1, 1980, 73-123.

(3) D.A.Rustow, 'Transitions to Democracy. Towards a Dynamic Model', Comparative Politics, 2, 1970, pp.337-363; B.Barry, 'Political Accommodation and Consociational Democracy', British Journal of Political Science, 5, 1975, pp.477-505; L.Morlino, 'Democratic Consolidation: Definition and Models', Rivista internazionale di Scienze Politiche, August, 1986, pp.197-238.

(4) H.Daalder, 'The Consociational Democracy Theme', World Politics, 26:4, pp.604-621.

Post-Fascist Civilian Governments
(Notes overleaf)

APPENDIX 1

No.	Prime Minister	Ministers/Support	Duration of Confidence
-	I. Bonomi	CLN	June 1944 - Nov. 1944
-	I. Bonomi	CLN (less PSI & Pd'a)	Dec. 1944 - June 1945
1	F. Parri	CLN	June 1945 - Dec. 1945
2	A. De Gasperi 1	CLN	Dec. 1945 - July 1946
3	A. De Gasperi 2	CLN (less PLI; Pd'a +)	July 1946 - Feb. 1947
4	A. De Gasperi 3	CLN (less PLI & Pd'a)	July 1946 - Feb. 1947
5	A. De Gasperi 4	DC <u>PLI</u> (PSDI & PRI from Dec)	May 1947 - May 1948
6	A. De Gasperi 5	DC <u>PSDI</u> PLI PRI	May 1948 - Jan. 1950
7	A. De Gasperi 6	DC PSDI PRI PLI+	Jan. 1950 - July 1951
8	A. De Gasperi 7	DC PRI PSDI+ PLI+	July 1951 - June 1953
9	- A. De Gasperi 8	DC DC PRI*	(July 1953)
10	G. Pella	DC PRI* PLI* Mon* PSDI+ MSI+	Aug 1953 - Jan. 1954
11	- A. Fanfani 1	DC	(Jan. 1954)
12	M. Scelba	DC <u>PSDI</u> PLI PRI*	Feb. 1954 - June 1955
13	A. Segni 1	DC <u>PSDI</u> PLI PRI* Mon+	July 1955 - May 1957
14	A. Zoli	DC Mon* MSI*	May 1957 - June 1958
15	A. Fanfani 2	DC PSDI PRI*	July 1958 - Jan. 1959
16	A. Segni 2	DC PLI* Mon* MSI*	Feb. 1959 - Feb. 1960
17	F. Tambroni	DC MSI*	Mar. 1960 - July 1960
18	A. Fanfani 3	DC PSDI* PRI* PLI* PSI+ Mon+	July 1960 - Feb. 1962
19	A. Fanfani 4	DC PSDI PRI PSI*	Feb. 1962 - May 1963
20	G. Leone 1	DC PSI+ PSDI+ PRI+ Mon+	June 1963 - Nov. 1963
21	A. Moro 1	DC <u>PSI</u> PSDI PRI	Dec. 1963 - June 1964
22	A. Moro 2	DC <u>PSI</u> PSDI PRI	July 1964 - Jan. 1966
23	A. Moro 3	DC <u>PSI</u> PSDI (PSU Oct'66) PRI	Feb. 1966 - June 1968
24	G. Leone 2	DC <u>PSU</u> + PRI+	June 1968 - Nov. 1968
25	M. Rumor 1	DC <u>PSU</u> PRI	Dec. 1968 - July 1969
26	M. Rumor 2	DC <u>PSI</u> * PSDI* PRI+	Aug. 1969 - Feb. 1970
27	M. Rumor 3	DC <u>PSI</u> PSDI PRI	Mar. 1970 - July 1970
28	E. Colombo	DC <u>PSI</u> PSDI PRI	Aug. 1970 - Jan. 1972
29	- G. Andreotti 1	DC	(February 1972)
30	G. Andreotti 2	DC PSDI PLI PRI*	June 1972 - June 1973
31	M. Rumor 4	DC PSI PSDI PRI	July 1973 - Mar. 1974
32	M. Rumor 5	DC PSI PSDI PRI*	Mar. 1974 - Oct. 1974
33	A. Moro 4	DC <u>PRI</u> PSI* PSDI* PLI+	Nov. 1974 - Jan. 1976
34	A. Moro 5	DC <u>PSDI</u> * PSI+ PRI+ PLI+	Feb. 1976 - Apr. 1976
35	G. Andreotti 3	DC PCI+ PSI+ PSDI+ PRI+ PLI+	July 1976 - Jan. 1978
36	G. Andreotti 4	DC PCI* PSI* PSDI* PRI*	Mar. 1978 - Jan. 1979
37	- G. Andreotti 5	DC PSDI <u>PRI</u>	(March 1979)
38	F. Cossiga 1	DC PSDI <u>PLI</u> PSI+ PRI+	Aug. 1979 - Mar. 1980
39	F. Cossiga 2	DC PSI PRI	Apr. 1980 - Sep. 1980
40	A. Forlani	DC PSI PSDI PRI	Oct. 1980 - May 1981
41	G. Spadolini 1	PRI DC PSI PSDI PLI	June 1981 - Aug. 1982
42	G. Spadolini 2	PRI DC PSI PSDI PLI	Aug. 1982 - Nov. 1982
43	A. Fanfani 5	DC PSI PSDI PLI PRI+	Dec. 1982 - Apr. 1983
44	B. Craxi 1	PSI <u>DC</u> PSDI PRI PLI	Aug. 1983 - June 1986
45	B. Craxi 2	PSI <u>DC</u> PSDI PRI PLI	Aug. 1986 - Mar. 1987
46	- A. Fanfani 6	DC! PSI* PSDI* DP* PR*	(April 1987)
47	G. Gorla 1	DC <u>PSI</u> PSDI PRI PLI	July 1987 - Mar. 1988
48	C. De Mita	DC <u>PSI</u> PSDI PRI PLI	Apr. 1988 - May 1989
49	G. Andreotti 6	DC <u>PSI</u> PSDI PRI PLI	July 1989 -

The first party listed holds the premiership; underlining indicates vice-premiership, otherwise order indicates weight of portfolios held. * shows external support, + shows support by abstention in vote of confidence; ! the DC abstained so that opposition votes would bring down `its' government, provoking an election. The other parties supported the government in protest at this manoeuvre. - shows failure to gain a vote of confidence.

Christian Democrat Secretaries

Alcide De Gasperi	April 1944 - September 1946
Attilio Piccioni	September 1946 - January 1949
Giuseppe Cappi	January 1949 - June 1949
Paolo Emilio Taviani	June 1949 - April 1950
Guido Gonella	April 1950 - September 1953
Alcide De Gasperi	September 1953 - June 1954
Amintore Fanfani	June 1954 - January 1959
Aldo Moro	January 1959 - January 1964
Mariano Rumor	January 1964 - December 1968
Flaminio Piccoli	December 1968 - November 1969
Arnaldo Forlani	November 1969 - June 1973
Amintore Fanfani	June 1973 - July 1975
Benigno Zaccagnini	July 1975 - February 1980
Flaminio Piccoli	February 1980 - May 1982
Ciriaco De Mita	May 1982 - February 1989
Arnaldo Forlani	February 1989 -

Election Results

	1946	1948	1953	1958	1963	1968	1972	1976	1979	1983	1987
/PdUP	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1.5	2.2	1.7	1.8
IUP	-	-	-	-	-	4.4	1.9	-	-	-	-
I	18.9	[31.0]	22.6	22.7	25.3	26.9	27.2	34.4	30.4	29.9	26.6
I	20.7	[PF]	12.8	14.2	13.8	[14.5]	9.6	9.6	9.8	11.4	14.3
DI	-	7.1	4.5	4.5	6.1	[PSU]	5.1	3.4	3.8	4.1	3.0
I	(4.4)	2.5	1.6	1.4	1.4	2.0	2.9	3.1	3.0	5.1	3.7
I	35.1	48.5	40.1	42.4	38.3	39.1	38.8	38.7	38.3	32.9	34.3
I	(6.8)	3.8	3.0	3.5	7.0	5.8	3.9	1.3	1.9	2.9	2.1
n.	2.8	2.8	6.9	4.8	1.7	1.3	-	-	-	-	-
I	-	2.0	5.8	4.8	5.1	4.4	8.7	6.1	5.3	6.8	5.9
	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1.1	3.5	2.2	2.6
eens	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2.5

Notes

Figures are totals of votes cast. Several minor, mostly regional, parties are not included. Totals do not reach 100%. With the exception of the Radicals (PR) and the Greens, the parties are ordered according to prevailing images of party left/right ordering.

The PCI and PSI presented joint lists in 1946 as a Popular Front. The PSDI and PSI were united as the PSU from 1966-69. In 1964 the left-PSI split to form the PSIUP, which gained representation in its own right in 1968, but dissolved after failure to gain parliamentary representation in 1972. DP & PdUP are New Left parties outflanking the PCI.

One aim of this thesis is to extend the study of 'the centre' in West European party systems, a concept reviewed in detail by Hans Daalder in 1984.¹ It is argued that the main advantage to be drawn from developing the theorisation of the centre lies in what can be learnt about party system structure and dynamics.

Daalder's article rebutted Duverger's argument that 'the centre does not exist in politics'.² Pointing to the widespread political use of the term and to its analytical importance, Daalder reversed the preoccupation with left and right and concluded his article by categorising West European party systems according to the nature and salience of the centre in them. The bulk of Daalder's article consists of a review of existing theory, and according to Daalder the centre had been analysed in three distinct ways: as a spatial, as a mechanical and as a cleavage-related concept.

This appendix is concerned principally with the second, the mechanical, model of the centre. In **Section I** we shall see that according to the mechanical model the centre cannot be occupied. Since, it is clear that in some party systems a centre 'bloc'^A exists the aim of this appendix is to explore the significance of this discrepancy for party system theory in general, and for the understanding of the

. It is common to use the French term bloc when referring to political groupings. However, as this chapter develops an argument based on block structure (one- two- and three-block), it seemed stylistically more agreeable to use the English term. Moreover, the French term implies a degree of cohesion which the structural approach questions.

Italian party system and its leading party in particular.

The analytical approach which receives least attention is the cleavage-based one, discussed in **Section II**. According to this approach, a centre block arises from the presence of multiple and cross-cutting cleavages whose interaction prevents a simple division between a 'left' and a 'right'. Such simple division occurs only where there is just one cleavage in society, or where the several cleavages (eg religious and linguistic and/or socioeconomic) coincide.

As we shall see, Daalder himself is fairly dismissive of the cleavage-based approach as a way of understanding the centre, either conceptually or empirically, and, in fact, the concept of 'cleavage' has been much debated.³ It will be argued that this approach, and the idea that the social dimension can have an autonomous impact on the structure of the party system, can usefully be put to one side, if not ignored. This permits attention to be focused on just two of Daalder's three approaches, thus: competing parties not only exploit potential cleavages with varying degrees of success, they do so according to factors which can be understood as essentially either spatial or mechanical. By relating the spatial dimension to ideology and to electoral considerations, and the mechanical dimension to inter-elite and coalitional considerations, a distinction is drawn between two levels of party system interaction, the electoral/mobilisational and the governmental.

The spatial approach is considered in **Section III**. It receives more attention than the cleavage-based one not only because in the hands of party elites spatial imagery becomes

an active, rather than passive, creator of party system structure, but also because the spatial approach challenges the central axiom of the mechanical model. In it, the centre may be occupied. The section starts by briefly outlining the main points about the centre in spatial modelling and the major debates within the approach.

Section III continues by developing an argument to the effect that the existence of a centre is 'necessary' to a working party system, whatever the theoretical problems of establishing a centre in a 'nonreduceable multi-dimensional space'. This analysis shows that the necessary existence of a centre, described as '**centre dominance**', does not mean, even in the spatial model, that the centre must be occupied. Indeed, if other mechanisms, such as referenda (in Switzerland in particular) do not 'locate' the centre, the proximity of many parties to each other, and hence to the centre is argued to be destabilising.

Section IV brings the three approaches together to consider their interaction in the 'real world', and in particular to analyse the significance of block structure for managing political change. Both uni- and multi-dimensional modelling are used in relation to the main argument about the block structuring of party systems to show that the distinction between the occupiable spatial centre and the non-occupiable mechanical centre is an essential one if the structure and dynamics of party systems are to be better understood. The distinction between the two centres permits a new insight into the role of party elites as 'polity managers'.

In this model, the idea of the **unoccupied centre** is fundamental. The centre is NOT contingently unoccupied, which is the case with the spatial model, but necessarily unoccupied. The centre is an outcome, a result, something to be understood in a purely relational sense, so that any attempt to occupy the centre serves only to displace it.

Nevertheless, the idea that the centre exists, in some sense, is not abandoned. The argument developed in Section III, that the existence of the centre equates to the existence of the necessary minimum of order required for a party system to be operative, is applicable to the mechanical centre too. However, in order to emphasise the idea that the centre cannot exist in its own right, the term 'centre domination' which indicates the necessity of there being a centre, is dropped here in preference for the term '**core domination**'. The **relational centre** of the mechanical model is thus an outcome of the political interaction of 'core parties'. Non-core parties, defined below, are irrelevant parties.

In so far as the centre is defined by party competition, and not, say, by referenda or by a strong state bureaucracy in a strongly depoliticised polity, the centre is always an outcome of party interaction so that its identification with single parties is potentially misleading. Daalder is thus right to query the validity of using spatial terminology when moving from a spatial approach to mechanical modelling of the centre.⁴ Daalder even suggests that spatial terminology per se is 'meaningless', in segmented

societies, where parties which are ideologically and socio-
logically (but not culturally) nearly identical share out
government posts etc., and in situations of Allgemeinkoali-
tionsfahigkeit, that is, in situations where all parties are
willing to form coalitions with any of the others. Daalder
does not, however, follow up his observation theoretically.

The unsuitability of left/centre/right spatial termi-
nology in a mechanical theoretical approach is muddled in
Daalder's review because his analysis of the mechanical
centre is based on models which mix mechanical and spatial
dynamics. Thus, Sartori's centripetal/centrifugal model
focuses on movement towards or away from the central 'pole'
in a tripolar, left- centre-right, organised party system;
whilst the models identify a pivot/hinge/key party which is
seen in the same light. Empirically this is not unsatisfac-
tory, since it is doubtful that spatial terminology is ever
meaningless in the real world, but it is essential to distin-
guish models and reality. A pure mechanical model of inter-
action is needed in which the existence of a
left/centre/right axis is not taken for granted.

A. Block Structure

If spatial terminology is forsworn, we are left to
consider the variety of purely mechanical relationships whose
interaction will create a centre. Three distinct forms of
party system organisation and their variants are described
here, leading to a typology of ideal-type party system sub-
structure. Next, the relationship between party strategy and
block structure is analysed, leading to a justification of
there being only three basic structural alternatives.

1. The one-block system.

The most straight-forward ideal type of block structure is the one-block system. Here, all the parties are willing to form coalitions with all other parties, that is, there is Allgemeinkoalitionsfähigkeit. The one-block structure does not mean, however, that a party system is 'unipolar', as opposed to being 'bipolar' or 'tripolar'.

Whilst Sartori's 'pole-based' analysis inspires the mechanical approach, the polar terminology is best abandoned in favour of a block-based one, and for three reasons. First, since Sartori's 'poles' will probably contain more than one party, each so-called 'pole' may contain what are, in effect, different poles of attraction, for that is what parties are. Sartori's terminology is thus misleading.

Secondly, whilst one component of a party's attractiveness is undoubtedly its block location the two phenomena, party and block, should be kept distinct. Blocks are the result of coalition formation, thus of elite action, whereas parties straddle the elite and mass dimensions. Thus, not only may parties within a pole/block have much that distinguishes them from each other, as with the bourgeois block in Sweden, but for some parties the elite's decision to identify with a particular block may contradict the party's traditional ideological identity. This is the case with the DC's more radical allies who, from Saragat's Social Democrats to Nennis's Socialists, suffered from their identification with a conservative centre block.

Thirdly, the polar sub-organisation of party systems encourages the importation of spatial analysis into the

mechanical model because its imagery is spatial and linear. 'Block' terminology avoids this, for blocks may overlap, as we shall see. The spatial aspect of party system organisation is far from irrelevant to understanding party system dynamics and structure, but the theorisation of the interaction between the mechanical and spatial forces in the real world should be distinct from the theorisation of either of the two models. Section IV uses the 'issue salience' approach to understanding voter behaviour and party competition to avoid collapsing the mechanical model back on to the spatial model.⁵ Polar terminology, then, is avoided and blocks are considered to be potentially multi-polar.^A

The one-block system has two principle forms. The synchronic, or grand coalition, which involves all parties in government simultaneously; and the diachronic. The latter is the complexly rotating form which gave birth to the term *Allgemeinkoalitionsfähigkeit*, and which lies at the root of mathematical coalition theory. An 'impure' version of either would exclude parties incapable of creating an independent block.⁶

2. The two-block system

Systems structured in this way can vary according to two issues: according to whether they are balanced, and according to the cohesion of the blocks. The first variation is relatively straight-forward. The cases of Austria and Northern Ireland can be taken as examples of two-block party

Were the one-block structure not multipolar there would be a one-party state, with all that that entails.

systems which have been respectively balanced and unbalanced.

The second variation, that of cohesion, descends from the distinction between blocks and poles. Duverger, for example, has spoken of a **four-party system** (left, centre-left, centre-right, right) as a variation of the two-block structure based on two pairs of parties.⁷ There is no reason, of course, why there should be such pairing, ie such intrinsic block cohesion,⁸ and hence no reason why there should be only two parties on either side of a two-block system. Indeed, at this point there is no reason why there should be only two blocks - multiple conflict may surely induce the existence of more than two blocks. In fact, cohesion is imposed extrinsically, by the 'necessity' of maintaining governmental order (and, of course, such order is not always maintained). The assumption of block coherence derived from linear-spatial logic is misleading.

Given the weaknesses of the 'four-party system' approach it is better to define three variants of the two-block system: the 'pure' variant, which is balanced and contain only two parties, and two 'impure' variants, each with more than two parties, but in one case balanced, and in the other case not.

The 'pure' two-block system is extremely rare. Even the British/UK party system is 'impure', and on both counts. Firstly, there are consistently more than two relevant parties, even at the parliamentary level, let alone at the electoral level. The electoral system, of course, like the domination of parliament by two major parties with which it is linked, is a powerful feature of a political system which

seeks to reinforce the two-block logic of party system structuration to achieve strong, but controlled, government. Yet, despite the electoral system, the system's 'third parties' are far from 'irrelevant', for their presence signals, and in part causes, the non-cohesion of the supposed second (non-Conservative) block - hence the constant denial that the term 'anti-Thatcher majority' was meaningful. The foremost consequence of non-two-partiness is that the British party system has been, and remains, seriously 'unbalanced' in the Conservative Party's favour.⁹

The more openly multi-polar two-block system demonstrates an interesting relationship between block cohesion and balance. In Sweden, for example, a fairly cohesive 'socialist' block has faced a near equal, but non-cohesive 'bourgeois' one, resulting in the Social Democratic 'hegemony'. The non-cohesion of the bourgeois block in Sweden is a double one. First, the block is multi-polar, that is, it comprises three parties, not one, and this sees both electoral competitiveness and issue-based governmental antagonism within the block.¹⁰ Though intrinsic ideological tensions work against block cohesion they do not prevent a certain unity existing vis-a-vis the Social Democrats seen (with their Communist support) as a 'block'. It is, after all, useful to consider Sweden as having a two-block party system. Yet this cohesion is to a large extent extrinsically induced, and the two-block, mechanical, logic is only predominant, not unique.

In fact, the bourgeois block is not only divided ideologically. It is also divided by differing evaluations of

the utility of the two-block structure. The alternatives are not without appeal, particularly to the Agrarian/Centre Party and the Liberal (People's) Party, so strategies differ independently of ideological/policy considerations. Thus, the Moderate (Conservative) Party is the keenest promoter of two-block confrontation not just in order to win over supporters to its ideological world view, but because it is the structure most likely to benefit the party. The party is too small to create a flank-dominant three-block system on its own, and has no potential block allies for such a development. Equally, an imperfect one-block solution might exclude it. The Centre Party, like the Liberals in certain periods, has, however, been interested in the emergence of a three-block structure based on their party and the Social Democrats, and in *Allgemeinkoalitionsfähigkeit*, preferably imperfect. Party strategists may, thus, be oriented both by ideological/spatial motives and by a calculus of political prominence rooted in structural considerations.

3. The three-block party system

Party system interactions may be organised according to a three-block structure, in which case three distinct variants exist: flank dominant, parity and centre dominant. First, the '**flank dominant**' variant where the centre block performs as a pivot or hinge. Germany is the obvious example. Here one small party is able to constitute a block in its own right because its support is always, or nearly always, needed for government formation by two other blocks.

Although the temptation to identify the pivot block with the centre is strong, it must be resisted. The struc-

ture of the West German party system can be considered to be triangular, rather than linear, so that the relational centre and the FDP do not coincide.¹¹ The Free Democrats may be very close to the relational centre, and they may not. In principle, the smaller the centre block the nearer one could expect it to be pulled towards the relational centre. However, even a small centre block (the FDP) may be able, thanks to its coalition power, to draw well away from the centre which would be created by the two larger parties alone, thus pulling the relational centre some distance from its expected linear location.

The second variant of the three-block system is the 'parity' variant, where three blocks each take 25-40% of the seats, the Netherlands coming close to this. Little need be said about this other than that like most of the party system structures discussed it permits alternation. This is not true of the 'centre-dominant' three-block system. Here the centre block takes some 45% to 60% of seats, and the opposition is divided into two blocks, each taking at least ten per cent of the vote.

The figure of ten per cent as an important size threshold for parties has been indicated in different contexts by Jean Blondel, Francis Castles and Peter Mair, and Gordon Smith.¹² Here, parties smaller than this are considered to be unable to create relevant blocks in their own right, unless they have access to government (in which case the flank-dominant three-block system will exist). Thus it can be doubted that a three-block system has been structurally dominant in Italy since 1976 when the right's vote collapsed

from a stable level averaging 13.3% (1953-72) to a new stable level averaging 6.0% (1976-87), precipitating the Liberal Party's reorientation to the 'centre block', to the extent that this still existed by this stage of the party system's evolution.

A TYPOLOGY OF PARTY SYSTEM STRUCTURES
=====

Ideal Types

	<u>One-block</u>	<u>Two-block</u>	<u>Three-block</u>
1.	Allgemein- koalitions- fahigkeit	Pure (two party) (balanced)	Flank Dominant
2.	Grand Coalition	Impure (Balanced)	Parity
3.	Impure (3A Diachronic) (3B Synchronic)	Impure (Unbalanced)	Centre dominant

The ten per cent rule goes a long way towards defining **non-core parties** and resolving the problem that the five-fold division of the 'typical' West European party system suggested by von Beyme,¹³ and/or the rise of the Greens and other parties which promote new 'dimensions', could make for four- or five-block systems. In short, small parties which cannot act as a 'hinge block' must gain at least ten per cent of the vote, perhaps more, singly or in coalition, in order to be relevant as a block. Parties which fail both to achieve

independent block relevance and fail to become components of a two- or three-block structure will be historical failures.

B Party Strategies and System Fluidity

As the three alternative modes of sub-structural organisation by block discussed here are ideal types, more than one may be expected to be relevant for understanding the structuring of actual party systems. In looking at the Swedish party system we saw that several modes of interaction were relevant because different parties are interested in pursuing the interactions patterns of different systemic structures. The point can surely be generalised. In the Italian party system the added complication that party factions may develop over which block structure to favour is clearly evident.

It is, then, not only the pure one-block model of *Allgemeinkoalitionsfähigkeit* which will render a party system fluid, but also the battle of different parties (and sometimes factions) to achieve a pattern of block structuration which benefits their interests. A consideration of the basic nature of block structuration in party systems should, then, be a key component of **party strategy**.

It is worth noting that structural considerations will not influence party strategy in the pure two-block system, where just two parties, both satisfied with the structure, exist. This raises a question of block 'rigidity' which bears on the discussion of the meaning of consensus and the nature of change in Sections III and IV. It can be argued that the structural fixity of the imperfect two-block form in

Britain, a consequence of exceptional constitutional rules and the conservatism of the second party (Labour), is actually a rigidity which has rendered the British party system increasingly dysfunctional.¹⁴ The differently structured Italian party system can be suggested as another example of rigidity which has tended to smother political innovation and flexibility. There, rigidity stemmed from the fact that any challenge to the centre-dominant three-block system seemed to undermine the entire political system, not just one particular way of structuring the party system.

The tenacity of the established block structures in Britain and Italy suggests that major party strategists, including those of 'second' parties (Labour, the PCI and PSI), may not always be totally committed to challenging the existing structure. A major reason for such caution is the intensity of the impact which changing block structure, especially a rigid one, will have on government formation. It is time to consider the effect of the 'requirement' for government formation on block structuration.

C The Limitation of Structural Alternatives

Although competing block-based party strategies introduce fluidity into a party system, party system fluidity will be limited if the number of feasible alternative structures is rather few. In fact, not many alternative modes of structuration have been presented, and this needs to be justified. The argument is that it is the need of would-be governments to gain the support, or toleration, of at least half-plus-one of parliamentary seats which limits the alternatives avail-

able.

If only one party can gain fifty per cent (plus one) of the seats, alone or as the core of a coalition, a three-block system will develop, for if two parties can gain half the seats, alone or as the cores of different coalitions, a two-block or flank-dominant three-block system, will develop. If three parties each gain 25-40% of the vote a parity three-block system will develop. If we move to consider a situation with four major parties it can be seen that we must start reproducing the two- or three-block schema set out above, or move to the one-block model.

Having considered various aspects of the mechanical model, including the importance of party strategy and the special significance of government formation, we can move on to consider the other two approaches identified by Daalder as contributing to the theorisation of the centre.

II THE CLEAVAGE-BASED CENTRE:

MOBILISATIONAL AND GOVERNMENTAL MANIPULATION

Daalder, we have said, dismisses the cleavage-based approach as unhelpful in two respects. First, this approach is unable to theorise the general significance of the centre in party systems given that it divides party systems in to those with a centre, and those without one. Secondly, where a centre does exist, this approach is inadequate to the task of explaining why. What is crucial, Daalder rightly points out, is how alternative potential cleavage bases have been,

and are, made dominant or suppressed, through political competition.

Cleavages, then, are important in so far as they provide the raw material with which political elites work, but in so far as which dominate(s) is not pre-given, cleavages cannot be regarded as autonomously productive of party system structure. Two points can be made about the relationship between social structure and party system structure.¹⁵ First, it is still a matter of debate as to whether 'religion' or 'class' has been more significant in structuring the post-war West European electorate.¹⁶ Thus, any claim about the direct impact of a particular social cleavage on party system structure faces the immediate objection that its impact is neither unmediated nor securely quantifiable. Secondly, the fact that there may be little or no connection between electoral-mobilisational strategies and inter-party relations at the governmental level¹⁷ indicates that a distinction should be made between two levels of party system interaction: the mobilisational and the governmental.

We have already seen that the governmental level of interaction can be influenced by mechanical/structural, that is non-ideological considerations. Of course, ideological gain and structural (or positional) gain are likely to be linked. Nevertheless, the two dimensions remain conceptually distinct. In fact, in distinguishing poles from blocks an example was given which saw parties make decisions about block structure which fundamentally challenge their ideological image. There is no doubt that the Socialists, and especially the Social Democrats, weakened their ideological/

electoral positions by joining the centre block.

No explanation for the behaviour of the Socialist/Social Democrat elites was attempted, but we are now in a position to suggest that the concern with maintaining government order, indissolubly linked to the desire to build and/or maintain a three-block structure, as opposed to a two-block structure, was determinant. Consequently, whilst it would be absurd to suggest that the structuring of governmental relations is not influenced by ideology, a hypothesis can be put forward that a linear-spatial approach stressing ideological juxtaposition and identity will be more directly relevant to the analysis of electoral mobilisation since ideological confrontation and differentiation is the stuff of party competition. By contrast, at the governmental level, questions of ideology are frequently mediated by the requirements of government-making, so that the mechanical model will be of direct relevance.

Equally, if party elites handle cleavages differently at the electoral and governmental levels, so that in the former, cleavages are thorough-going, rigid divisions, whereas in the latter pragmatic compromises and inspired innovations blur differences of principle, then the two spatial models of competition, the multidimensional and the linear (or unidimensional) might more accurately explain conflict in each arena. Thus, the linear model of space, with its clear-cut divisions between left (and centre) and right would be appropriate for considering the electoral level, where partisanship, or at least block-loyalty, rather than volatility, tends to be the rule;¹⁸ whilst a multidimensional model,

where complexity does permit flexibility, would be more appropriate for understanding party interaction at the governmental level. These are sweeping hypotheses, and a proper consideration of the spatial approach to the centre is clearly called for.

III THE SPATIAL CENTRE

Within the spatial approach 'space' is understood in two ways: as uni-dimensional, where a linear spectrum runs from left, through centre, to right, and as multi-dimensional. At the heart of the discussion on the merits of each when applied to party competition lies an argument about whether the space under discussion is issue-determined, or party-based, or whether parties organise society according to a 'super issue', for example, maintaining the status quo as opposed to greater social justice.¹⁹ Three key points about the centre in the spatial model can be made, with the first serving to provide a limited outline of the different understandings of 'space'.

First, the 'centre' does not have to be understood in linear terms, that is, as a median point between a 'left' and a 'right'. The centre can be a 'nexus' within a multi-dimensional space. If space is perceived as 'party space' this nexus will equate to the relational centre in the mechanical model.

Multi-dimensionality is a difficult concept because it is difficult to visualise.²⁰ It is, perhaps, easiest to understand as party space. Then we can take the example of a

die, or some such polyhedron, where each face is a separate dimension, defined by a party. The dots on each die face can be regarded as the organisation of each party. The centre is then the 'nexus' within the cube (or whatever shape), which results from the multiple crossovers of the lines of interaction between the parties.

Where multi-dimensionality is a matter of issue-space, two inter-related problems arise which make understanding the nature of issue space, and the place of parties in it, difficult. The first problem is the connectedness or non-connectedness of different issues, the second the relationship between individual parties and issues. If issues are unconnected and parties pursue different issues, say religious education on the one hand and economic justice on the other, the two parties concerned do not interact, at least at the level of issues. They may do so in terms of organisational ability in turning out the vote. Furthermore, in the mathematical model of coalition formation, non-connectedness will mean that there is no basis for coalition formation, no stable, or determinate 'centre'.

The chief solution to these and other problems has been to insist that whilst parties may 'own' certain issues, or dimensions, giving them a 'core' electorate, parties do compete, and parties are connected, on at least one dimension. Usually, moreover, issues are roughly reducible to a single dominant 'super-dimension', the left-right dimension, along which all parties can be placed. This solution, which Sartori advocates most strongly, returns to a predominantly linear model of space.²¹

An alternative solution to the problems of connectedness is to not only accept that many issues are 'owned' by parties, but to accept that parties compete past each other, stressing 'their' preferred issues. Thus, parties compete by offering alternative Weltanschauungen, or world views. Nevertheless, a surprisingly large amount of the content of these alternative global political images may overlap, providing the basis for the construction of a centre.²²

The second and third points to be noted about the centre in the spatial model can be dealt with quickly. Thus, secondly, the nexus, or nodal centre, in the multi-dimensional model party-space model does not need to be occupied (either by one, or more than one, party). It clearly is not in the example based on the die. Thirdly, however, in the spatial model (whether uni- or multi-dimensional), the centre MAY be occupied, by one or more parties. This may involve one or more parties being at the centre of the nexus whilst the other parties are distant from it, so that the centre party/ies is/are a sort of microcosm of the other parties. Clearly the nodality of the centre will give any party/ies which occupy it considerable strategic significance. Alternatively, all the parties may be move to become more or less proximate to each other so that the centre nexus appears to embrace the parties, rather than being distinct from them.²³

A Centre Domination

Having made these preliminary points it is time to consider the indispensability of the centre. In this re-

spect, the spatial model should have priority of exposition over the mechanical model since spatially-based mathematical theories of coalition have been much concerned with the existence, or non-existence of a centre. Like Daalder, I claim little understanding of the mathematical arguments involved,²⁴ but there are grounds for arguing that the assumption that a centre is necessary to there being a working party system is viable and useful. Starting from this premiss turns the assumption that there is no 'equilibrium' position where space is irreducibly multidimensional on its head, avoiding the difficulties faced by those wishing to counter the negative proposition on its own grounds.²⁵

This rejection of mathematically-based models which see disorder as the norm²⁶ seems justified by the critical response that such abstract modelling is, in the words of Ralf Dahrendorf, 'sociologically insensitive'.²⁷ Given the doubts concerning the impact of the social dimension on party system structure the expression 'politically insensitive' might be more appropriate, and indeed the mathematical approach to coalition formation has been described elsewhere as 'policy blind'.²⁸

Another reason for refusing to accept that the assumption of centre domination is a problem is the striking contrast between the obsession of the mathematical approach with centre indeterminacy and instability, and the empirically founded assumption of electoral and party system analysis that the opposite holds, or has held, sway. The same is true of empirical party competition theory. Explicit in Anthony Downs' Economic Theory of Democracy²⁹, it is implicit in the

insistence of Sartori and others that a multiply-defined left/right axis of competition dominates, for where there is left/right linearity there must be a centre. Equally, the 'issue salience' approach of Budge et al. can be understood to confirm the importance of the centre.

A final, normative, reason for rejecting the apolitical approach is that it facilitates an authoritarian anti-politics. One response to political indeterminacy and instability is to limit government turnover by holding infrequent elections, another is to remove some issues from the political arena. To an extent this already happens, so that more radical proposals might be thought only to extend a sound anti-democratic principle. For example, the assertion of a non-electoral basis for governmental legitimacy, such as expertise, or the shifting of decision-making from government to markets. Combined, the two solutions create an authoritarian liberalism.³⁰

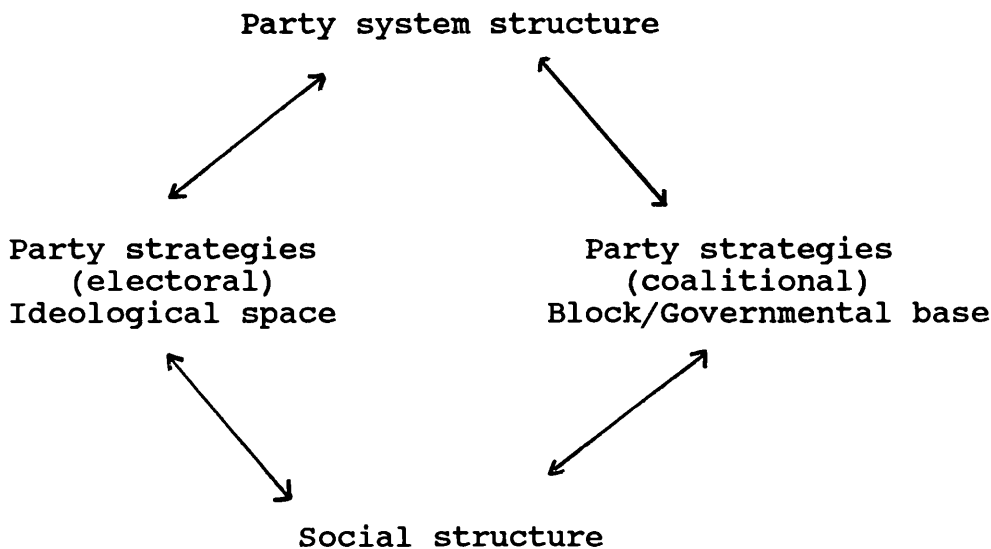
IV THE 'REAL' WORLD AND THE MODELS

The three ways of viewing the centre have been sharply distinguished and presented as analytically distinct. To understand the 'real world', nevertheless, all three perspectives must be considered, even if two approaches have been stressed as 'actively' shaping the possibilities which the third (cleavage structure) presents. Given this emphasis, the study of social cleavage as opposed to block structure or ideological confrontations is of interest not so much for any 'reflection' found in the party system so much as for

the possible revelation of 'failed' cleavages. However, since it is the case not only that parties make class, but also that class makes parties,³¹ consideration of the interdependence of social structure and party system structure is unavoidable in any concrete historical analysis.

If social cleavage cannot be ignored, neither can the spatial organisation of party systems which, despite the strictures of the mechanical model must be regarded as ubiquitous. This point is considered in the following subsection on the uni- and multi-dimensional models of space where the question of the interdependence of social structure and political ideology is also addressed. To whatever extent social structure and political ideology are interdependent, it is clear that the ideological/spatial organisation of the party system reduces potential sociopolitical complexity drastically.³² Not least of the reasons for this is the fact that party-based ideological structuring of party systems tends to be predominantly uni-dimensional (left/right), despite a deeper multi-dimensionality of both political and social interactions. This simplification helps political elites gain a degree of autonomy from society since, as Lijphart has shown, and as the distinction between the governmental and the electoral level of party system interaction makes clear, the motivations which inform electoral behaviour are not always directly reflected in government behaviour.

The Determination of Party System Structure³³



Finally, block structure too has to be considered both independently and in the context of the other approaches. Constitutional considerations, particularly electoral, play a major role here in empowering parties to shape the relationship between social change and party system change, whilst influencing the development of both. But whilst the requirements of government reinforce the degree of independence which party elites have from sociological and ideological influences, they explain little in themselves. The totality of these, still inevitably simplified, interactions can be summarised diagrammatically.

A Unidimensional and Multidimensional Space

One of the dynamics which organises the process of structuration of party systems is that based in the **unidimensional**, or linear-spatial, understanding of left and right. But as Sartori has pointed out (going so far to describe left and right as 'empty boxes') the issue content of this dimen-

sion is multiple, varying over time and from country to country. Whilst the linear dimension cannot be completely detached from issues and their historical evolution, a number of analyses of the left/right dimension have identified unilinearity as being party-based and party-related, rather than rooted in issues.³⁴ It thus makes sense to see the linkage between issues and the linear left/right spectrum as indirect, mediated by parties and, above all, by block structure.

That left and right, and centre where relevant, are fundamentally defined in relation to the evolution of block structure, and hence of coalition arrangements, with all that that entails in terms of ideology and sociology, makes intuitive sense. Thus, pace Daalder's comment on sectional societies, where there are two blocks one will be seen as the left block, one the right block (as in Austria), and where there are three blocks (as in Italy and the Netherlands) a centre block will exist too. Only in the ideal one-block structure of *Allgemeinkoalitionsfähigkeit* is there no left, centre or right.

Historically, block structure, which in the ideal model makes left and right irrelevant, has been inescapably spatially organised. This is another reason why systemic structural change is such a significant event. Yet, despite the inevitability of linear spatial organisation, the pure mechanical model remains useful for two reasons. First, its view that it is entirely reasonable to see blocks as having much in common, and yet competing. Second, its insistence that the centre cannot be occupied. Let us look at these in

turn.

According to the 'issue salience' model of competition, left/right competition is all but universal, so parties can be 'placed' on a left/right axis. Overall, however, parties compete for support by stressing those issues favourable to them, rather than confronting each other on specific issues. Thus, rather than confronting each other along any issue dimension, parties compete past each other, championing a multitude of different issues, even whilst an element of fundamental antagonism remains. The effect of this is that parties which occupy radically different parts of a block-based, linear, spectrum can have much in common, ie considerable and significant issue overlaps. In Chapter One we saw that Mastropaolo and Slater applied this mode of analysis to Italy and found just this mixture of juxtaposition and overlap to be true of the DC and the PCI.

B Party System Dynamics and the Relational Centre

The dynamic interaction of parties is what defines and locates the relational centre. Thus a degree of conflict between parties can be considered constructive since without it parties will lose their ability to define where society is, and where it is going. Either other institutions will carry out this function, or the polity will be marked by a stultifying consensus which inhibits innovation and change.

In the mechanical model the centre cannot be occupied, but clearly a situation of block proximity can arise that amounts to the same thing. The instability which consensus

unalloyed with alternative mechanisms of political innovation and information-exchange will produce an instability of the relational centre as the old parties falter, and as new ones challenge them. The relational centre, then, goes through phases of lesser and greater mobility, lesser and greater stability and instability.

The nature of the movement of the relational centre can be related to the structure of the party system. Where the interaction of strategies favouring different block structures, or patterns of interaction, is rather high, the relational centre will be more consistently mobile, reducing 'stickiness' and thus reducing instability. Such a picture might fit many party systems, with the post-war Scandinavian party systems providing an example.³⁵

The British case, is a rather rigid system, and might, like Italy, be considered to exhibit a less evolutionary and markedly more erratic development of the relational centre.³⁶ In the 1950s and '60s the centre suffered from weakness of definition through lack of political conflict,³⁷ yet in the 1980s, the increase in conflict overwhelmed the ability of the system to tie government at or near the developing relational centre. Hence the 'extremism' of Thatcherism in contemporary comparative perspective. The rigidity of the British party system makes it consistently weak at mapping the location of the relational centre and at keeping government close to the centre. Here 'government' is used in its longitudinal temporal sense, since individual governments will deviate from the relational centre to some extent given their partisan composition. Individual governments are both

the outcome of the learning process which arises from the development of the entire, interactive, party system, and partisan. The only exception is pure grand coalition which, as a consensual arrangement, cannot last. Only as a disguised form of multi-block competition can it endure, and even then its breakup is implicit.

Whether Italian government, with its rigid three-block system, has also developed in an erratic way is an important question and one which amounts to asking how well, in two senses, the party system has worked as a structure of interaction. The two performances to be measured concern the nature of the evolution of the relational centre and the proximity of individual governments to it. A clue to understanding why different structures perform more or less well is provided by Alan Ware's discussion of parties and democracy. Ware describes party systems as performing three functions with varying success: the provision of choice - who governs, and who does not; information exchange and education (of elites and of electorates); and innovation.³⁸

In marked contrast to the British system, the centre-dominant three-block system has been permanently balanced on the brink of breakdown, but this very fact has provided an information-rich political environment. The evolution of party fortunes has thus been highly educational, as the hyper-politicisation of Italian culture demonstrates, and this has stimulated innovation as party strategists have run to stay on the same spot. Consequently, the relational centre has been in more or less constant evolution, and the

government has been kept near to it.³⁹ And yet the government, coincident with the centre block, has not been the relational centre.

C The Party System as Contradictory Unity

The distinction between government/the centre block and the relational centre is a feature of all party systems. It reflects the relationship of cooperation and conflict, or stable dissensus, necessary to party systems. The relational centre indicates the element of cooperation, or unity in a party system, whereas the fact that the relational centre cannot be occupied indicates that conflict, or contradiction is permanent. Party systems, are then, a form of 'contradictory unity' in which cooperation and conflict combine.

The concept of contradictory unity, rooted in different understandings of the centre, provides a base for integrating the political scientists' analysis of Italian politics with Pizzorno's critique of them. In other words, whilst the political scientists are right to insist that the disunity of the Italian political elite matters, Pizzorno is right to stress that a certain unity none the less exists.

V

CONCLUSION

The spatial, mechanical and cleavage-based approaches to understanding the centre should be kept analytically distinct in order to assess the significance of each. If the cleavage approach identifies the variety of raw materials on which party elites operate, the spatial and mechanical ap-

proaches identify the means by which party elites obtain a measure of political independence from cleavage determination. Simplifying tremendously, party system structure and dynamics can be seen as deriving from the political mediation of ideological [spatial], governmental [mechanical] and sociological [cleavage] processes of structuration.

The specification of a pure mechanical modelling of the centre is new and allows the identification of three useful features of party systems: 1) the existence of three ideal-typical patterns of coalitional mechanics; 2) the significance of attempts to change the substructural organisation of a party system ie to change the number of blocks; 3) the importance of interactions between different ideal-typical models of interaction within real party systems.

The interactions between parties in terms of encouraging the development of feasible alternative block structures are significant in two ways. At the comparative level they permit a way of considering the differing efficiency of party systems in carrying out functions which can be said to be proper to party systems. Within party systems they help simplify the problem of identifying which 'interaction streams' are more important, which less.⁴⁰

The 'issue salience' approach to party competition linked to a model of block structuration allows one to grasp the importance of left-and-right (or left-centre-right) in structuring party systems whilst confirming the importance of multi-dimensional space. It also suggests that the patterns of juxtaposition and confrontation which the linear method favours and which Sartori's 'polar' methodology makes maximum

use of, is more relevant to the electoral-mobilisational arena than the governmental one, though the connection between the two is intimate. Sartori himself distinguishes between the two arenas, differentiating between the 'open', or public, and 'closed' spheres of inter-party interaction and arguing that his model of polarised pluralism 'works' principally because the electorate is structured according to the tripolar pattern.

The thesis argues that the centre-dominant three-block system resulted from elite cooperation which spanned the blocks, and that the vulnerability of that structure constantly reinforced cross-block elite cooperation, challenging the existence of polarisation. Sartori sees the power relationships between the blocks as zero-sum, yet such an approach to coalition formation and to governing would have become a negative-sum game.

Sartori insisted that the party system could change, that depolarisation was possible, denying that he was a structural determinist, but he did not show how change could come about. It is in the distinction between the electoral and the governmental arenas, and their gradual unification through a forty year process of party system interaction that the basis of party system change can be found. The thesis emphasises the role of party strategy in this process to the extent to defining the core party strategists as a political class engaged in polity management.

1) H.Daalder, 'In Search of the Center of European party systems', in American Political Science Review, Vol. 78, 984, pp.92-109.

(2) M.Duverger, Political Parties: Their Organisation and Activity in the Modern State, London: Methuen, 1964, p.215.

(3) A.Zuckerman, 'Political Cleavage: A Conceptual and Theoretical Analysis', British Journal of Political Science, 5:2, April, 1975, pp.231-248.

(4) H.Daalder op.cit. p.101.

(5) I.Budge, I.Crewe and D.Farlie (eds), Party Identification and Beyond: Representations of Voting and Party Competition, London: John Wiley, 1976; I.Budge and D.Farlie, 'The Potentiality of Dimensional Analyses for Explaining Voting and Party Competition', European Journal of Political Research, 6:2, 1978, 203-231; I.Budge and D.Farlie, Explaining and Predicting Elections: Issue Effects and Party Strategies in Twenty-Three Democracies, London: Allen and Unwin, 1983; I.Budge and D.Farlie, 'Party Competition - Selective Emphasis or Direct Confrontation? An Alternative View with Data, in H.Daalder and P.Mair (eds), Western European Party Systems. Continuity and Change, London: Sage, 1983; I.Budge, D.Robertson and D.Hearl (eds), Ideology, Strategy and Party Change: A Spatial Analysis of Post-War Electoral Programmes in Nineteen Democracies, Cambridge University Press, 1987.

(6) See eg P.J.Taylor and A.Lijphart, 'Proportional Tenure v. Proportional Representation: Introducing a New Debate', European Journal of Political Research, Vol.13, 1985, pp.387-399.

(7) M.Duverger, op.cit. pp.229-31.

(8) As Duverger goes on to recognise, pp.236-7, in talking of a four-party system based on Conservative, Liberal, Agrarain, and Socialist parties, but without drawing the necessary conclusions about the inadequacy of the linear-spatial model.

(9) S.Ingle, 'The Emergence of Multi-Party Politics', in J.Hayward and P.Norton (eds), The Political Science of British Politics, Brighton: Wheatsheaf, 1986, pp.105-119;

'Change, Politics and the Party System' in parliamentary Affairs, January 1989, pp.23-36; The British Party System, Oxford: Blackwell, 1987. See also P.J.Taylor and A.Lijphart, op.cit., and M.Linton, Labour Can Still Win, Fabian Society Pamphlet No.532, 1988.

(10) There is no reason why these two problems should coincide. See A.Lijphart, Democracies, Patterns of Majoritarian and Consensus Government in Twenty-One Countries, Yale University Press, 1984, Chapter 8.

(11) F.Urban-Pappi, 'The West German Party System', in West European Politics, October 1984, pp.7-26.

(12) J.Blondel, 'Party Systems and Patterns of Government', Canadian Journal of political Science, 1968, 1/2, pp.180-203; F.Castles and P.Mair, 'Left-Right Political Scales: Some 'Expert' judgments', European Journal of Political Research, March 1984, pp.73-88.

(13) K.von Beyme, Political Parties in Western Democracies, Aldershot: Gower, 1985, pp.255-6.

(14) D.Marquand, The Unprincipled Society. New Demands and Old Politics, London: Fontana, 1988.

(15) The extent to which there is any relationship at all between social cleavage and party system structure is debated see P.Mair, 'The Problem of Party System Change' in Journal of Theoretical Politics, 1 (3), 1989, pp.251-276, esp.258-260, and G.Smith, 'A System Perspective on Party System Change' in ibid. pp.349-363.

(16) R.Inglehart and H.D.Klingemann, op.cit. 'Party Identification, Ideological Preference and the Left-Right Dimension Among Western Mass Publics', in I.Budge, I.Crewe & D.Farlie (eds), Party Identification and Beyond, London: Wiley, 1976, pp.243-273; R.Rose and D.Urwin, 'Social Cohesion, Political Parties and Strains in Regimes', Comparative Political Studies, 1969, 2:1, 7-67.

(17) A.Lijphart, op.cit.

(18) P.Mair (ed), The West European Party System, Oxford University Press, 'Introduction', pp.13-14.

(19) Compare: G.Sani and G.Sartori, 'Polarisation, Fragmentation and Competition in Western Democracies', H.Daalder and P.Mair (eds), Western European Party Systems. Continuity and Change, London:sage, 1983, pp.307-340; I.Budge and D.Farlie, 'Party Competition - Selective Emphasis or Direct Confrontation? An Alternative View with Data', in *ibid.* pp.267-305; A.Arian and M.Shamir, 'The Primarily Political Functions of the Left-Right Continuum', Comparative Politics, 1983, 15:2, PP.139-58. and H.Klingemann and R.Inglehart, 'Party Identification, Ideological Preference and the Left-Right Dimension Among Western Mass Publics', in I.Budge, I.Crewe and D.Farlie (eds), Party Identification and Beyond, London: Wiley, 1976, pp.243-273.

(20) J.Laponce, Left and Right: the topography of political perceptions, University of Toronto, 1981.

(21) G.Sani and G.Sartori, *op.cit.* Also, D.E.Stokes, 'Spatial Models of Party Competition', American Political Science Review, LVII:2, June, 1963, pp.368-377.

(22) I.Budge et al. (eds), *op.cit.* 1987.

(23) See also L.Silvermann, 'The Ideological Mediation of Party-political Responses to Social Change', European Journal of Political Research, 1985, pp.69-93.

(24) H.Daalder, *op.cit.* p.101.

(25) See F.Petry, In Search of the Centre, Some Preliminary Remarks on Equilibrium Conditions in Multi-Party Systems, Workshop on the Centre, European University Institute, 1978; H.Daalder *op.cit.* p.101.

(26) W.Riker, Liberalism Against Populism. A Confrontation Between the Theory of Democracy and the Theory of Social Choice, San Francisco: Freeman and Co., 1982, esp.pp.197-212.

(27) R.Dahrendorf, The Modern Social Conflict, London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1988, p.109.

(28) A.Lijphart, op.cit. pp.52-55.

(29) A.Downs, An Economic Theory of Democracy, New York: Harper and Row, 1957.

(30) See eg N.Bobbio, The Future of Democracy, Cambridge: Polity Press, 1987, esp. Ch.5.

(31) To re-reverse Leys' formulation: C.Leys, Politics in Britain: An Introduction, London: Verso, 1985, p.145.

(32) The merit of recognising that only a few social cleavages 'count' politically, without making the reductionist assumption that just one cleavage is all-determining, goes principally to S.Rokkan. See A.Zuckerman, op.cit. p.234.

(33) It is interesting to note that the vertical organisation of the figure implies, rightly or wrongly, a continuing base/superstructure relationship, despite the diagrammatic indication of interdependence.

(34) Including R.Inglehart and M.Kingemann op.cit.; and A.Arian and M.Shamir, op.cit.

(35) N.Elder, A.H.Thomas and D.Arter, The Consensual Democracies? The Government and Politics of the Scandinavian States, Oxford: Blackwell, 1988, p.58.

(36) Though a counter argument is put strongly by A.G.Jordan and J.J.Richardson, British Politics and the Policy Process: An Arena Approach, London: Allen and Unwin, 1987; also J.J.Richardson, Government and Groups in Britain: Changing Styles, Strathclyde Papers in Government and Politics, No.69, 1990.

(37) T.Smith, op.cit. on 'consensual technocratic reformism', pp.70-72.

(38) A.Ware, Citizens, Parties and the State. A Reappraisal, Oxford/Cambridge: Blackwell/Polity Press, 1987, esp.pp.58 and 70.

(39) P.Farneti, The Italian Party System, London: Pinter, 1985; G.Pasquino, 'Party Government in Italy: Achievements and Prospects', in R.Katz (ed), Party Governments: European and American Experiences, Berlin: De Gruyter, 1987, pp.202-242.

(40) G.Sjoblom, Party Strategies in a Multi-Party System, Lund: Studentlitteratur, 1968.

Bibliography

- Accattoli, L. (1988), 'Il Movimento popolare: forza e limiti di un messianismo politico', in P. Corbetta and R. Leonardi (eds), Politica in Italia, Edizioni 88, pp.293-313.
- Acerbi, A. (1984), La chiesa nel tempo: Sguardi sui progetti di relazioni tra Chiesa e società civile negli ultimi cento anni, Milan: Vita e pensiero, 2nd edition.
- Adams, J. and P. Barile, (1966), The Government of Republican Italy, Boston: Houghton Mifflin.
- Agenzia Industriale Italiana (1986), 'Italy' in P. Burns and J. Dewhurst (eds), Small Business in Europe, London: Macmillan, pp.99-130.
- Allen, K. and A. Stevenson (1974), An Introduction to the Italian Economy, London: Martin Robertson.
- Allum, P. (1973), Italy - Republic without Government?, London: W.W. Norton.
- Allum, P. (1979), 'Italy', in S. Henig (ed), Political Parties in the European Community, London: George Allen & Unwin, pp.135-169.
- Allum, P. and R. Mannheimer (1985), 'Italy' in I. Crewe and D. Denver (eds), Electoral Change in Western Democracies, London: Croom Helm, pp.287-318.
- Almond, G. and S. Verba (1963), The Civic Culture, Princeton University Press.
- Almond, G. and S. Verba (eds), The Civic Culture Revisited, Boston: Little Brown, 1980.
- Ambrosius, G. and W.H. Howard (1989), A Social and Economic History of Twentieth Century Europe, London: Cambridge University Press.
- Amendola, G. (1978), Scelta di una Vita, Milan: Giuffrè.
- Anderlini, L. (1987), 'Tre paradossi del sistema politico italiano', Il Ponte, Jan-Feb, pp.5-34.
- Andreatta, N. (1986), 'La sinistra democristiana e il governo del paese', Il Mulino, March/April, pp.263-278.
- Ardigo, A. (1976), 'Laicità e partecipazione politica', in V. Castronovo (ed), 1976, pp.322-64.
- Arian, A. and S.H. Barnes, (1974), 'The Dominant Party-System - A neglected model of democratic stability', Journal of Politics, August, pp.592-614.
- Bachrach, P. (1969), The Theory of Democratic Elitism, University of London Press.

- Baget Bozzo, G. (1977), Il partito cristiano al potere, Vols. 1 & 2, Florence: Vallecchi, 1974, 1977.
- Baget Bozzo, G. (1988), 'La crisi della DC', Mondoperaio, March, 1988.
- Bagnasco, A. (1977), Tre Italie: la problematica territoriale dello sviluppo italiano, Bologna: Il Mulino, 1977.
- Ball, A. (1988), Modern Politics and Government, London: Macmillan.
- Banfield, E.C. (1958), The Moral Bases of a Backward Society, New York: Free Press.
- Barkan, J. (1984), Visions of Emancipation: The Italian Workers' Movement Since 1945, New York: Praeger.
- Barnes, S.H. (1966), 'Italy: Oppositions on Left, Right and Centre', in R.Dahl (ed), Political Oppositions in Western Democracies, London: Yale University Press, pp.303-331.
- Barnes, S.H. (1974), 'Religion & Class in Electoral Behaviour in Italy', R.Rose (ed), Electoral Behaviour: A Comparative Handbook, New York: Free Press, pp.171-225.
- Barnes, S.H. (1977), Representation in Italy. Institutionalised Tradition and Electoral Choice, London: University of Chicago Press.
- Barnes, S.H. (1984), 'Secular Trends and Partisan Realignment in Italy', in R.Dalton, S.Flanagan and P.Beck (eds), Electoral Change in Advanced Industrial Societies, Princeton University Press, pp.205-230.
- Barry, B. (1975), 'Political Accommodation and Consociational Democracy', British Journal of Political Science, 5, 1975, pp.477-505.
- Barucci, P. (1980), 'Il dibattito sulla costituzione economica', in G.Rossini (ed), Democrazia cristiana e Costituente, Rome: Cinque Lune, Vol.2, pp.673-718.
- Barucci, P. (1984), 'La linea economico-sociale', in G.Rossini (ed), De Gasperi e l'eta del Centrisimo, 1947-53, Rome: Cinque Lune, pp.143-61.
- Bedeschi, L. (1983), 'Movimento cattolico e comunismo' in Dizionario Storico del Mondo Cattolico in Italia, Vol.1, tome 2, pp.29-43.
- Beetham, D. (1985), Max Weber and the Theory of Modern Politics, Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Bellamy, R. (1988), Modern Italian Social Theory, Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Belligni, S. (1983), 'Sul sistema partitico dell'Italia contemporanea. Elementi per una rassegna della letteratura sociopolitologica', Stato e Mercato, No.8, August, pp.317-341.

- Benn, I. (1955), 'The uses of sovereignty', Political Studies, Vol.3, 109-22.
- Besson, J. & G.Bibes (1988), 'The Resurgence of Christian Democracy', in R.Leonardi & R.Nanetti (eds), Italian Politics a Review, Vol.3, pp.92-105.
- von Beyme, K. (1985), Political Parties in Western Democracies, Aldershot: Gower.
- Bille, L. (1990), 'Denmark: The Oscillating Party System', in P.Mair and G.Smith (eds), Understanding Party System Change in Western Europe, London: Sage, pp.42-58.
- Bingham Powell, Jr., G. (1986), 'Extremist Parties and Political Turmoil: Two Puzzles', American Journal of Political Science, May, pp.357-378.
- Black, D. (1958), The Theory of Committees and Elections, Cambridge: University Press.
- Bleaney, M. (1985), The Rise and Fall of Keynesian Economics: An Analysis of its Contribution to Capitalist Development, London: Macmillan.
- Bobbio, N. (1987), The Future of Democracy, Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Bocca, G. (1979), Palmiro Togliatti, Bari: Laterza.
- G.Bocca (1982), Storia della Repubblica italiana, Milano: Rizzoli.
- Bogdanor V. (ed) (1988), Constitutions and Democratic Politics, Aldershot: Gower.
- Bottiglieri, B. (1984), La politica economica dell'Italia centrista (1948-58), Milan: Comunita.
- Brusco, S. (1984), 'Small Firms and Industrial Districts: The Experience of Italy' in D.Keble and E.Weaver (eds), New Firms and Regional Development in Europe, London: Croom Helm, pp.184-202.
- Budge, I. I.Crewe and D.Farlie (eds) (1976), Party Identification and Beyond: Representations of Voting and Party Competition, London: John Wiley.
- Budge, I. and D.Farlie, (1978), 'The Potentiality of Dimensional Analyses for Explaining Voting and Party Competition', European Journal of Political Research, 6:2, pp.203-231.
- Budge, I. and D.Farlie (1983), Explaining and Predicting Elections: Issue Effects and Party Strategies in Twenty-Three Democracies, London: Allen and Unwin.
- Budge, I and D.Farlie (1983), 'Party Competition - Selective Emphasis or Direct Confrontation? An Alternative View with Data, in H.Daalder and P.Mair (eds), pp.267-305.

- Budge, I. D. Robertson and D. Hearl (eds) (1987), Ideology, Strategy and Party Change: A Spatial Analysis of Post-War Electoral Programmes in Nineteen Democracies, Cambridge University Press.
- Burdeau, G. (1987), 'Il fallimento del volontarismo politico' in S. de Seta (ed), pp.55-66.
- Burns, P. and J. Dewhurst (eds) (1986), Small Business in Europe, London: Macmillan.
- Caciagli, M. (1985), 'Il resistibile declino dell' Democrazia cristiana', G. Pasquino (ed), Il sistema politico italiano, Bari: Laterza, pp.101-127.
- Calise, M. (1978), Il sistema DC. Mediazione e conflitto nelle campagne democristiane, Bari: De Donato.
- Calise, M. (1983), 'Lo stato dei partiti in Italia: un tentativo di inquadramento', Laboratorio Politico, March-June, pp.31-49.
- Calise, M. and R. Mannheimer (1981), Governanti in Italia. Un trentennio repubblicano, 1946-76, Bologna: Il Mulino.
- Calise, M. and R. Mannheimer, (1986), 'Come cambiano i governanti in Italia', Rivista italiana di scienza politica, XVI:3, pp.461-483.
- Campanini, G. (1983), 'Genesi e sviluppo della DC' in Dizionario Storico del Mondo Cattolico in Italia, Vol.1, tome 1, pp.102-112.
- Casella, M. (1984), L'Azione Cattolica alla caduta del Fascismo. Attivita e progetti per il dopoguerra, (1942-45), Rome: Studium.
- Cassano, F. (1979), Il teorema DC. La mediazione della DC nella societa e nel sistema politico italiano, Bari: De Donato.
- Cassese, S. (1987), 'Stato e economia. Il problema storico', in P. Lange and M. Regini (eds), Stato e Regolazione Sociale. Nuove prospettive sul caso italiano, Bologna: Il Mulino, pp.45-52.
- Castellani, P. (1989), 'La Democrazia cristiana dal centro-sinistra al delitto Moro (1962-78)', in F. Malgeri, Storia della Democrazia cristiana, Rome: Cinque Lune, Vol.4, pp.3-116.
- Castles, F.G. (1982), The Social Democratic Image of Society, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- Castles, F.G. (ed), (1982), The Impact of Parties: Politics and Policies in Democratic Capitalist States, London: Sage.
- Castles, F.G. (1986), 'Response' in European Journal of Political Research, 14:5/6.
- Castronovo, V. (ed), (1976), L'Italia contemporanea, 1945-75, Turin: Einaudi.
- Cecchini, L. (1987), Il Palazzo dei Veleni, CZ: Rubbinetto.

- CENSIS: XXII Rapporto/1988 sulla situazione sociale del paese, Milan: Franco Angeli, 1988.
- Cerny, P. (1990), The Changing Architecture of Politics. Structure, Agency and the Future of the State, London: Sage.
- Chiarante, G. (1980), La Democrazia cristiana, Rome: Riuniti.
- Chiarante, (1983), 'Tre ipotesi sulla Dc di De Mita', Critica marxista, 21:1, 15-27.
- Chiesi, A.M. (1985), 'Property, Capital and Network Structure in Italy', in F.N.Stokman et al. (eds), Networks of Corporate Power, Cambridge: Polity Press, pp.199-214.
- Chubb, J. (1986), 'The Christian Democratic party: reviving or surviving?', in R.Leonardi & R.Nanetti (eds) Italian Politics: A Review, pp.69-86.
- Clark, M. (1984), Modern Italy, 1871-1982, London: Longman.
- Corbetta, P. and R.Leonardi (eds), (1987), Politica in Italia, Edizione 87, Bologna: Il Mulino.
- Corbetta, P. and R.Leonardi (eds), (1988), Politica in Italia, Edizione 88, Bologna: Il Mulino.
- Corbetta, P. and A.Parisi, (1985) 'Struttura e tipologia delle elezioni in Italia: 1946-83', in G.Pasquino (ed), Il sistema politico italiano, Rome: Laterza, pp.33-73.
- Corbetta, P. A.Parisi and H.Schadee (1987), Elezioni in Italia: Struttura e tipologia delle consultazioni politiche, Bologna: Il Mulino.
- Corner, P. (1979), 'Fascist Agrarian Policy and the Economy in the Inter-War Years' in J.A.Davis (ed), Italy and Gramsci's Passive Revolution, London: Croom Helm, pp.239-274.
- Cotta, M. (1978), 'Il rinnovamento del personale parlamentare democristiano', Il Mulino, Sept-Oct.
- Cotta, M. (1990), 'The "centrality" of Parliament in a protracted democratic consolidation: the Italian case', in U.Liebert and M.Cotta (eds), Parliament and Democratic Consolidation in Southern Europe: Greece, Italy, Portugal, Spain and Turkey, London: Pinter, pp.55-91.
- Crick, B. (1964), In Defence of Politics, Penguin: Harmondsworth.
- Daalder, H. (1984), 'In Search of the Center of European Party Systems', American Political Science Review, Vol. 78, pp.92-109.
- Daalder, H. (1987), 'The Netherlands', in H.Daalder (ed), pp.193-284.
- H.Daalder (ed), (1987), Party Systems in Denmark, Austria, Switzerland, the Netherlands and Belgium, London: Frances Pinter.

- Daalder, H. & P.Mair (eds), (1983), Western European Party Systems. Continuity and Change, London: Sage.
- Dahrendorf, R. (1980), After Social Democracy, London: Liberal Publishing Department for the Unservile State Group.
- Dahrendorf, R. (1988), The Modern Social Conflict, London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson.
- Dane, C. (ed), 1982, La Democrazia cristiana per gli anni '80. Atti del XIV Congresso Nazionale, Roma 15-20 febbraio 1980, Rome: Cinque-Lune.
- Daniels, P.A. (1988), 'The End of the Craxi Era? The Italian parliamentary elections of June 1987' Parliamentary Affairs, pp.258-286.
- Davies, J.A. (ed), (1979), Italy and Gramsci's Passive Revolution, London: Croom Helm.
- Davies, J.A. (1988), Conflict and Control. Law and Order in Nineteenth Century Italy, London: Macmillan.
- De Mita, C. (1983), Ragionando di politica, Milano: Rusconi.
- Dewachter, W. (1985), 'Changes in a Particratie: the Belgian party system from 1944 to 1986', in H.Daalder and P.Mair (eds), pp.285-363.
- Di Palma, G. (1979), Surviving Without Governing: the Italian parties in parliament, University of California Press.
- Di Palma, G. (1982), 'Italy: Is there a Legacy and is it Fascist?' in J.H.Herz (ed), From Dictatorship to Democracy: Coping with the Legacies of Authoritarianism and Totalitarianism, London, pp.107-134.
- Di Scala, S.M. (1988), Renewing Italian Socialism. From Nenni to Craxi, Oxford University Press.
- Dogan, M. (1967), 'Political Cleavage and Social Stratification in France and Italy' in S.M.Lipset and S.Rokkan (eds), Party Systems and Voter Alignments, New York: Free Press, pp.129-195.
- Downs, A. (1957), An Economic Theory of Democracy, New York: Harper and Row.
- Drake, R. (1989), The Revolutionary Mystique. Terrorism in Contemporary Italy, Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indianapolis Press.
- Duverger, M. (1964), Political Parties: Their Organisation and Activity in the Modern State, London: Methuen.
- Dyson, K. (1982), 'Party Government and Party State' in H.Doring and G.Smith (eds), Party Government and Political Culture in Western Germany, London: Macmillan, pp.77-100.
- Evans, P. D.Rueschmeyer and T.Skocpol (1985), Bringing the State Back In, New York: Cambridge University Press.

- Farneti, P. (1973), Il sistema politica italiano, Bologna: Il Mulino.
- Farneti, P. (1975), 'I partiti politici e il sistema di potere' in V.Castronovo (ed), pp.61-104.
- Farneti, P. (1979), 'Patterns of Changing Support for Christian Democracy in Italy: 1946-76', B.Denitch (ed), Legitimation of Regimes: international framework for analysis, London: Sage, pp.249-272.
- Farneti, P. (1980), 'Italy: the Response to Overload', in R.Rose (ed), Challenge to Governance: Studies in Overloaded Politics, Beverley Hills: Sage, pp.199-214.
- Farneti, P. (1985), The Italian Party System (1945-80), London: Frances Pinter.
- Ferrera, M. (1987), 'Italy' in P.Flora (ed), P.Flora (ed), Growth to Limits: The Western European Welfare States Since World War II, Berlin: De Gruyter.
- Finer, S. (1975), Adversarial Politics and Electoral Reform, London: Wigram.
- Flora, P. & A.J.Heidenheimer (1981), The Development of Welfare States in Europe & America, New Brunswick, 1981.
- Foa, V. (1975), 'Sindacati e classe operaia', in V.Castronovo (ed), pp.253-76.
- Follini, M. (1990), L'arcipelago democristiano, Rome: Laterza.
- Fontana, S. (1984), 'Per una storia del trasformismo, (1883-1983)', Il Politico, pp.303-320.
- Forgacs, D. (1986), 'The Left and Fascism: Problems of Definition and Strategy', in D.Forgacs (ed), 1986, pp.21-51.
- Forgacs D. (ed), Rethinking Italian Fascism, Capitalism, Populism and Culture, London: Lawrence and Wishart.
- Friedman, A. (1988), Agnelli and the Network of Italian Power, London: Harrop.
- Furlong, P. (1986), 'The State, Finance and Industry in Italy' in A.Cox (ed), The State, Finance and Industry: A comparative analysis of post-war trends in six advanced industrial economies, Brighton: Wheatsheaf, pp.142-176.
- Furlong, P. (1982), 'The Italian DC: From Catholic Movement to Conservative Party', Hull Papers in Politics, No. 26.
- Furlong, P. (1984), 'Italy' in F.F.Ridley (ed), Policies and Politics in Western Europe: The Impact of the Recession, London: Croom Helm, pp.115-153.
- Furlong, P. (1987), 'The Changing Role of the Vatican in Italian Poli-

- tics' in L.Quatermaine and J.Pollard (eds), Italy Today: Patterns of Life and Politics, Exeter University, pp.63-79.
- Galli, G. (1966), Il bipartismo imperfetto, Bologna: Il Mulino.
- Galli, G. (1972), Il difficile governo, Bologna: Il Mulino.
- Galli, G. (1975), I partiti politici, Turin: UTET.
- Galli, G. (1978), Storia della Democrazia cristiana, Bari: Laterza.
- Galli, G. & A.Prandi, (1970), Patterns of Political Participation in Italy, New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Galli della Loggia, E. (1976), 'Ideologie, classi e costumi' in V.Castronovo (ed), pp.379-434.
- Galli della Loggia, G. (1987), 'La cultura liberal-democratico nella società italiana', Il Mulino, Mar-April, pp.190-217.
- Giavazzi, F. & L.Spaventa, (1989), 'Italy: the Real Effect of Inflation' in Economic Policy, April, pp.133-71.
- Ginsborg, P. (1989), Storia d'Italia dal dopoguerra a oggi, Turin: Einaudi, Vols. 1 & 2.
- Giovagnoli, A. (1980), 'Sulla formazione della classe dirigente democristiana', Il Mulino, Jan-Feb, pp.102-29.
- Giovagnoli, A. (1982), Le premesse della ricostruzione. Tradizione e modernità nella classe dirigente cattolica del dopoguerra, Milan: Nuovo Istituto Editoriale Italian.
- Gismondi, A. (198), Alle Soglie del Potere. Storia e cronaca della solidarietà nazionale, 1976-79, Milan: Sugar Co.
- Golden, M. (1986), 'Interest Representation, Party Systems and the State: Italy in Comparative Perspective', Comparative Politics, April, pp.279-301.
- Grafe, P.J. (1986), Die Modernisierung der CDU, Hamburg: Rowohlt.
- Grande, E. (1987), 'Neo-conservatism and conservative-liberal economic policy in West Germany', European Journal of Political Research, No.3, pp.281-296.
- Greenleaf, W.H. (1983), The British Political Tradition, London: Methuen.
- Grindrod, M. (1968), Italy, London: Benn.
- Gross, D.A. and L.Sigelman, (1984), 'Comparing Party Systems, A Multidimensional Approach', in Comparative Politics, July, pp.463-479.
- Hague, R. and M.Harrop, (1989), Comparative Government and Politics: An Introduction, London: Macmillan.
- Hall, J.A. and G.J.Ikenberry, (1989), The State, Milton Keynes: Open

University Press.

- Hanning, J. (1984), 'Twenty Years of Polarised Pluralism - Giovanni Sartori, Teoria dei partiti e caso italiano, Milan, SugarCo. Edizioni, 1983', European Journal of Political Science, pp.433-43.
- Harper, J.L. (1986), America and the Reconstruction of Italy, 1945-8, Cambridge University Press.
- Harper, J.L. (1988), 'Il vertice di Venezia', in P.Corbetta and R.Leonardi (eds), pp.69-92.
- Hayward, J. and M.Watson (eds), (1975), Planning, Politics and Public Policy - The British, French and Italian Experience, Cambridge University Press.
- Hayward, J. and T.Smith (eds), (1986), The Political Science of British Politics, Brighton: Wheatsheaf.
- Held, D. (1987), Models of Democracy, Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Hine, D. (1976), 'The Labour Movement and Communism in France and Italy Since 1945', in M.Kolinsky and W.Paterson (eds), Social and Political Movements in Western Europe, London: Croom Helm.
- Hine, D. (1981), 'Thirty Years of the Italian Republic: Governability and Constitutional Reform', Government and Opposition, Winter, pp.63-80.
- Hine, D. (1987), 'Italy: Parties and Party Government under Pressure', in A.Ware (ed), Political Parties: Electoral Change and Structural Response, Oxford, Blackwell, pp.72-95.
- Hine, D. (1987), 'The Italian General Election of 1987', Electoral Studies, pp.267-270.
- Hine, D. (1988), 'Italy: Condemned by its Constitution?', in V.Bogdanor (ed), pp.206-228.
- Hine, D. (1990), 'The consolidation of democracy in post-war Italy' in G.Pridham (ed), pp.62-83.
- Hood, C. (1983), The Tools of Government, London: Macmillan.
- Ingle, S.J. (1986), 'The Emergence of Multi-Party Politics', J.Hayward and P.Norton (eds), The Political Science of British Politics, Brighton: Wheatsheaf, pp.105-119.
- Ingle, S.J. (1987), The British Party System, Oxford: Blackwell.
- Ingle, S.J. (1989), 'Change, Politics and the Party System', Parliamentary Affairs, January, pp.23-36.
- Irving, R.E.M. (1979), The Christian Democratic Parties of Western Europe, London: Royal Institute of International Affairs & George Allen and Unwin, pp.58-111.

- Jasay, A. de (1985), The State, Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- Jemolo, A.C. (1960), Church and State in Italy, Oxford: Blackwell.
- Joll, J. (1976), Europe Since 1870, London: Penguin.
- Keane, J. (1988), Democracy and Civil Society. On the Predicaments of European Socialism, the Prospects for Democracy, and the Problem of Controlling Social and Political Power, London: Verso.
- Keble, D. and E.Weaver (eds), (1986), New Firms and Regional Development in Europe, London: Croom Helm.
- King, P. (1987), 'Sovereignty' in D.Miller (ed), The Blackwell Encyclopaedia of Political Thought, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, pp.492-495.
- King, R. (1987), Italy. Economic and Social Studies, London: Harper and Row.
- Kirchheimer, O. (1957), 'The Waning of Opposition in Parliamentary Regimes', in F.S.Burin & K.L.Shell (eds), Politics, Law and Social Change: Selected Essays of Otto Kirchheimer, New York: Columbia University Press, 1969, pp.292-318.
- Kurzweil, E. (1983), Italian Entrepreneurs - Rearguard of Progress, New York: Praeger.
- La Bella, G. (1983), L'IRI nel dopoguerra, Rome: Studium.
- Lane, J-E and S.Ersson, (1987), Politics and Society in Western Europe, London: Sage.
- Lange, P. and M.Regini (eds), (1987), Stato e regolazione sociale. Nuove prospettive sul caso italiano, Bologna: Il Mulino.
- Lange, P. and S.Tarrow (eds), (1980), Italy in Transition. Conflict and Consensus, London: Frank Cass.
- LaPalombara, J. (1966), Italy: The Politics of Planning, New York: Syracuse Press.
- LaPalombara, J. (1987), Democracy Italian Style, London: Yale.
- Laqueur, W. (1982), Europe Since Hitler: The Rebirth of Europe, London: Penguin.
- Laver, M. (1983), Invitation to Politics, Oxford: Robinson.
- Lawson, K. (ed), (1980), Political Parties and Linkage: A Comparative Perspective, New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Leonardi, R. (1983), 'The Changing Balance: The Rise of the Small Parties in the 1983 Elections', in H.Penniman (ed), Italy at the Polls, 1983, American Enterprise Institute, pp.100-119.
- Leonardi, R. & R.Nanetti, (eds), (1986-88) Italian Politics: A Review, London: Pinter, vols. 1-3, annually.

- Leonardi, R. and D.Wertman, (1989), Italian Christian Democracy: The Politics of Dominance, London: Macmillan.
- Levi, A. (1984), La DC nell'Italia che cambia, Roma: Laterza.
- Lijphart, A. (1968), The Politics of Accommodation: Pluralism and Democracy in the Netherlands, Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Lijphart, A. (1969), 'Consociational Democracy', World Politics, 21:2.
- Lijphart, A. (1984), Democracies. Patterns of Majoritarian and Consensus Government in Twenty-One Countries, London: Yale University Press.
- Lindblom, C. (1959), 'The science of "Muddling Through"', Public Administration Review, Spring, pp.79-88.
- Lipset, S.M. and S.Rokkan, (1967), 'Cleavage Structures, Party Systems and Voter Alignments: An Introduction' in S.M.Lipset and S.Rokkan (eds), 1967, pp.1-64.
- Lipset, S.M. and S.Rokkan (eds), (1967), Party Systems and Voter Alignments: Cross National Perspectives, New York: Free Press.
- Lombardo, A. (1981), DC e questione nazionale, Milan: Sugarco.
- Macpherson, C.B. (1977), The Life and Times of Liberal Democracy, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Magister, S. (1979), La politica Vaticana e l'Italia, 1943-78, Rome: Riuniti.
- Magister, S. (1987), 'L'Azione cattolica e i conflitti interni alla Chiesa' in P.Corbetta and R.Leonardi (eds), 1987, pp.241-259.
- Mair, P. (1983), 'Adaptation and Control: Towards an Understanding of Party System Change' in H.Daalder and P.Mair (eds), Western European Party Systems. Continuity and Change, London: Sage, pp.405-429.
- Mair, P. (1987), The Changing Irish Party System. Organisation, ideology and electoral competition, London: Pinter.
- Mair, P. (1990), 'Continuity, Change and the Vulnerability of Party', in P.Mair and G.Smith (eds), 1990, pp.169-187.
- Mair, P. and G.Smith (eds), (1990), Understanding Party System Change in Western Europe, London: Sage.
- Malgeri, F. (ed), (1987-90), Storia della Democrazia cristiana, Rome: Cinque Lune, 5 Vols.
- Mammarella, G. (1978), L'Italia dalla caduta del fascismo ad oggi, Bologna: Il Mulino.
- Mammarella, G. (1987), L'Italia contemporanea, 1943-85, Bologna: Il Mulino.
- Mann, M. (1970) 'The Social Cohesion of Liberal Democracy', in A.Giddens

- and D.Held (eds) Classes, Power and Conflict. Classical and Contemporary Debates, London: Macmillan, 1982.
- Mannheimer, R. and G.Sani, (1987), Il Mercato Elettorale. Identikit dell'elettore italiano, Bologna: Il Mulino.
- Marcucci, G.F. (1982), Alle origini della DC, 1929-44, Brescia: Morcelliana.
- Margiotta-Broglio, F. V.Onida, M.Reineri and E.Rotelli, (1980), La successione. Cattolici, stato e potere negli anni della ricostruzione, Rome: Edizioni Lavoro.
- Marradi, A. (1982), 'Italy: From "Centrism" to the crisis of the Centre-left coalitions', in E.Browne and J.Dreijmanis (eds), Government Coalitions in Western Democracies, London: Longman, pp.33-70.
- Martina, G. (1977), La chiesa in Italia negli ultimi trent'anni, Rome: Studium.
- Martinelli, A. (1981), 'The Italian Experience: A historical perspective' in R.Vernon and Y.Aharoni (eds), 1981, pp.85-98.
- Martinotti, G. (1986), 'Electoral Trends in Italy: The Cycle 1970-85', West European Politics, April, pp.253-282.
- Mastropaolo, A. and M.Slater, (1987), 'Italy 1946-79: Party Platforms and Electoral Behaviour under the Republic' in I.Budge at al. Ideology, Strategy and Party Change. A Spatial Analysis of Post-War Electoral Programmes in Nineteen Democracies, Cambridge University Press, pp.345-68.
- McGuire, M. (1983), 'Is There Still Persistence? Electoral Change in Western Europe, 1948-79', in H.Daalder & P.Mair (eds), Western European Party Systems. Continuity and Change, London: Sage, pp.67-94.
- Menapace, L. (1974), La Democrazia cristiana, Milan: G.Mazzotta.
- Meny, Y. and V.Wright (eds), (1985), Centre-Periphery Relations in Western Europe, London: Allen and Unwin.
- Merli, G. 'Gronchi' (1983) in Dizionario storiografico del Mondo Cattolico in Italia, Vol.2 'I protagonisti', pp.268-273.
- Miccoli, G. (1976), 'Chiesa, partito cattolico e societa civile', in V.Castronovo (ed), L'Italia contemporanea, 1945-75 Turin: Einaudi, pp.191-252.
- Middlemas, K. (1979), Politics in Industrial Society. The Experience of the British System since 1911, London: Andre Deutsch.
- Miller, J.E. (1986), The United States and Italy, 1945-50, University of North Carolina Press: Chapel Hill.
- Miller, M.B. (1987), 'Il boom della borsa e i paradossi della liberalizzazione', in P.Corbetta & R.Leonardi (eds), Vol.2, pp.197-221.

- Milward, A. (1984), The Reconstruction of Western Europe, 1945-51, London: Macmillan.
- Milward, A. (1989), 'Was the Marshall Plan Necessary?' in Diplomatic History, 13:2, pp.231-253
- Moreno, C. (1976/77), 'Trenta anni di regime DC: il cammino della reazione', Monthly Review, edizione italiana, October, pp.19-29 and January, pp.25-34.
- Morgia, C. (1989), 'Comunisti e cattolici: educazione politica e rinnovamento', Critica marxista, 27:5, pp.25-37.
- Morlino, L. (1984), 'The Changing Relationship Between Parties and Society in Italy', West European Politics, October, pp.46-66.
- Morlino, L. (1986), 'Democratic Consolidation: Definition and Models', Rivista Internazionale di Scienze Politiche, August, pp.197-238.
- Moro, R. (1979), La formazione della classe dirigente cattolica, 1929-37, Bologna: Il Mulino.
- Moro, R. (1979), 'I movimenti intellettuali cattolici', in R.Ruffilli (ed), Cultura politica e partiti nell'eta della Costituente, Bologna: Il Mulino, Vol. 2, tome 1, pp.159-261.
- Morosa, G. and G.Moncalvo, (1982), De Mita il nuovo potere, Milan: Sperling and Kupfer.
- Nanetti, R. (1988), Growth and Territorial Politics: the Italian Model of Social Capitalism, London: Frances Pinter.
- Neufeld, M.F. (1961), Italy: school for awakening countries, the Italian labour movement in its political, economic and social setting, 1800-1960, New York: Ithaca.
- Nordlinger, E. (1972), Conflict Regulation in Divided Societies, Cambridge MA, Harvard University Press.
- Nordlinger, E. (1981), On The Autonomy of the Democratic State, Cambridge, MA: Harvard Univeristy Press.
- Nove, A. (1983), The Economics of Feasible Socialism, London: Allen and Unwin.
- Onida, V. (1980), 'I cattolici e la continuita dello stato: profili costituzionali', in F.Margiotto-Broglio et al. La Successione. Cattolici, stato e potere negli anni della ricostruzione, Rome: Edizioni Lavoro, pp.29-94.
- Orfei, R. (1975), Andreotti, Milan: Feltrinelli.
- Orfei, R. (1976), L'occupazione del potere. I democristiani, 1945-75, Milan: Longanesi.
- Panebianco, A. (1982), Modelli di partito, Bologna: Il Mulino.
- Pappalardo, A. (1980), 'La politica consociativa nella democrazia itali-

- ana', Rivista italiana di scienze politiche, 10:1, pp.73-123
- Pappalardo, A. (1981), 'The Conditions for Consociational Democracy: A Logical and Empirical Critique' European Journal of Political Research, 9, pp.365-390.
- Parboni, R. (1984), 'La privatizzazione dell'economia Italiana' in Stato e Mercato, December, pp.385-430.
- Paronetto-Valier, M.L. (1980), 'Il codice di Camaldoli' in G.Rossini (ed), Democrazia cristiana e Costituente, Roem: Cinque Lune, Vol.I, pp.239-262.
- Parisi, A. (ed), (1979), Democristiani, Bologna: Il Mulino.
- Pasquino, G. (1976), 'Capital and Labour in Italy', Government and Opposition, pp.273-293.
- Pasquino, G. (1982), 'The Italian Christian Democrats' in R.Morgan and S.Silvestri (eds), Moderates and Conservatives in Western Europe, London: Heinemann.
- Pasquino, G. (ed), (1985), Il sistema politico italiano, Rome: Laterza.
- Pasquino, G. (1987), 'Party Government in Italy: Achievements and Prospects', in R.Katz (ed), The Future of Party Government. American and European Experiences, Berlin: De Gruyter, pp.202-242.
- Pasquino, G. (1988), Istituzioni, partiti, lobbies, Rome: Laterza.
- Pasquino, G. and U.Pecchini, (1975), 'The National Context', in J.Hayward and M.Watson (eds), Planning, Politics and Public Policy. The British, French and Italian Experience, Cambridge University Press, pp.70-92.
- Pedersen, M.P. (1983), 'Changing Patterns of Electoral Volatility in European Party Systems, 1948-77: Explorations in Explanation', in H.Daalder & P.Mair (eds), Western European Party Systems. Continuity and Change, London: Sage, pp.29-66.
- Petry, F. (1978), untitled papers submitted to the European University Institute 'Workgroup on the Centre', photocopies.
- Pizzorno, A. (1966) 'Amoral Familism and Historical Marginality' in International Review of Community Development.
- Pizzorno, A. (1980), I soggetti del pluralismo. Classi, partiti, sindacati, Bologna: Il Mulino.
- Poggi, G. (1972) 'The Church in Italian Politics, 1945-50', in S.J.Woolf (ed), The Rebirth of Italy, 1945-50, London; Longman, pp.135-155.
- Pontarollo, E. (1987), 'Industrial Policy in Italy: reality and illusion in P.R.Beige et al. (eds), A Competitive Future for Europe?, London: Croom Helm, pp.213-40.
- Pridham, G. (1987), 'Opposition in Italy: From Polarised Pluralism to

- Centripetal Pluralism', E.Kolinssky (ed), Opposition in Western Europe, London: Croom Helm, pp.169-211.
- Pridham, G. (1988), 'Two Roads of Italian Liberalism: the Partito Repubblicano Italiano (PRI) and the Partito Liberale (PLI)', in E.J.Kirchner and G.Smith (eds), Liberal Parties in Western Europe, Cambridge University Press, pp.29-61.
- Pridham, G. (1990), Political Parties and Coalitional Behaviour in Italy, London: Routledge.
- Pridham, G. 'Southern European democracies on the road to consolidation: a comparative assessment of the role of political parties', in G.Pridham (ed), 1990, pp.1-41.
- G.Pridham (ed), (1990), Securing Democracy: political parties and democratic consolidation in southern Europe, London: Routledge.
- Prodi, R. (1980), 'Il quadro economico' in G.Rossini (ed), Democrazia cristiana e Costituente, Rome: Cinque Lune, Vol.III, pp.995-1010.
- Provasi, G. (1976), Borghesia industriale e DC: Sviluppo e mediazione dalla Ricostruzione agli anni '70, Bari: De Donato.
- Putnam, R. et al. (1983), 'Polarizzazione e depolarizzazione in Italia, 1968-81', Il Mulino.
- Quatermaine, L. and John Pollard (1987), Italy Today: Patterns of Life and Politics, Exeter University.
- Quazza, G. (1979), 'Storia della storiografia, storia del potere, storia sociale', in Rivista di storia contemporanea, April.
- Ranci, P. (1987), 'Italy: the Weak State' in G.Shepherd and R.Duchene, (eds), Managing Industrial Change in Western Europe, London: Pinter, 111-144.
- Regini, M. (1984), 'The Conditions for Political Exchange' in J.Goldthorpe, Order and Conflict in Contemporary Capitalism, Oxford: Clarendon.
- Regini, M. (1985), 'Relazioni industriali e sistema politico: l'evoluzione recente e le prospettive degli anni'80', in M.Carrieri & P. Prulli (eds), Il teorema sindacale, Bologna: Il Mulino, pp.15-42.
- Regini, M. (1987), 'Social Pacts in Italy' in I.Scholten (ed), Political Stability and Neo-Corporatism, London: Sage, pp.195-215.
- Rhodes, M. (1988), 'Craxi e l'area laico-socialista: terza forza o tre forze?', in P.Corbetta and R.Leonardi (eds), pp.173-196.
- Rhodes, R.A.W. (1988), 'Interorganisational Networks and the "Problem" of Control in the Policy Process: A Critique of the "New Institutionalism"', West European Politics, 11:2, pp.119-130.
- Rhodes, R.A.W. and V.Wright (eds), (1987), Tensions in the Territorial Politics of Western Europe, London: Frank Cass.

- Riccardi, A. (1979), Roma 'città sacra'? Dalla Conciliazione all'operazione Sturzo, Milan: Vita e pensiero.
- Riccardi, A. (1983), Il 'partito romano' nel secondo dopoguerra, 1945-54, Brescia: Morcelliana.
- Riccardi, A. (ed), (1984), Pio XII, Bari: Laterza.
- Riccardi, A. (1986), 'Chiesa di Pio XII o chiese Italiane?', in A.Riccardi (ed), Le chiese di Pio XII, Bari: Laterza, pp.23-33.
- Riccardi, A. (1988), Il potere del Papa: da Pio XII a Paolo VI, Rome: Laterza.
- Rigobello, A. (1980), 'Cultura europea e il progetto democristiano' in G.Rossini (ed), Democrazia cristiana e Constituent, Rome: Cinque Lune, pp.115-137.
- Riker, W.H. (1962), The Theory of Political Coalitions, New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Riker, W.H. (1982), Liberalism Against Populism. A Confrontation Between the Theory of Democracy and the Theory of Social Choice, San Francisco: Freeman and Co.
- Ristuccia S. (ed) (1975), Intelletuali cattolici tra riformismo e dissenso, Milan: Edizioni di Communita.
- Roggi, P. (1987), Scelte politiche e teorie economiche in Italia, 1946-86, Torino: Giapichelli.
- Rose, R. (1984), Do Parties Make a Difference?, London: Macmillan.
- Rose, R. and T.Mackie (1983), 'Incumbency in Government: Asset or Liability?', in H. Daalder and P.Mair (eds), Western European Party Systems. Continuity and Change, 1983, pp.115-137.
- Rossi, M.G. (1984), 'Le radici del potere DC', Passato e Presente, 1984:6, pp.63-101.
- Rossini, G. (ed), (1980), Democrazia cristiana e Costituente. Bilancio storiografico e prospettive di ricerca, Rome: Cinque lune.
- Rossini, G. (ed), (1984), De Gasperi e l'eta del Centrisimo, 1947-53, Rome: Cinque Lune.
- Ruffilli, R. (1980), 'Formazione del progetto democristiano, dopo il Fascismo' in G.Rossini (ed), Democrazia cristiana e Costituente, Rome: Cinque Lune, Vol.1, pp.31-114.
- Ruffilli, R. (1989), 'L'ultimo Moro: dalla crisi del centro-sinistra all'avvio della Terza fase', in F.Malgeri (ed), Storia della Democrazia cristiana, Vol.4, 1989, pp.317-334.
- Rustow, D.A., (1970), 'Transitions to Democracy Towards a Dynamic Model', Comparative Politics, 2.

- Salvati, Mariuccia, (1982), Stato e industria nella ricostruzione: Alle origini del potere democristiano (1944-49), Milan: Feltrinelli.
- Salvati, Mi. (1984), Economia e politica in Italia dal dopoguerra ad oggi, Milan: Garzanti.
- Sani, R. (1986), Da De Gasperi a Fanfani: "La civiltà cattolica" e il mondo cattolico italiano nel secondo dopoguerra (1945-62), Brescia: Morcelliana.
- Sartori, G. (1966), 'European Political Parties: the Case of Polarised Pluralism', in G.LaPalombara & M.Weiner (eds), Political Parties and Political Development, Princeton: Princeton University Press, pp.137-176.
- Sartori, G. (1969), 'From the Sociology of Politics to Political Sociology', S.M.Lipset (ed), Politics and the Social Sciences, London: Oxford University Press, pp.65-100.
- Sartori, G. (1976), Parties and Party Systems. A Framework of Analysis, Cambridge University Press.
- Sartori, G. (1982), Teoria dei Partiti e Caso Italiano, Milan: SugarCo.
- Sassoon, D. (1986), Contemporary Italy, London: Longman.
- Sassoon, D. (1990), 'The role of the Italian Communist Party in the consolidation of parliamentary democracy in Italy', G.Pridham (ed), Securing Democracy, London: Routledge, pp.84-103.
- Schlesinger, A.M. (1949), The Vital Centre, New York.
- Schmidt, M.G. (1986), 'Note' in European Journal of Political Research, 14:5/6.
- Schonfield, W.R. (1983), 'Political Parties: The Functional Approach and the Structural Alternative', Comparative Politics, July pp.477-99.
- Schumpeter, J.(1943), Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy, London: Allen and Unwin, 1985.
- Scoppola, P. (1977), La proposta politica di De Gasperi, Bologna: Il Mulino.
- Scoppola, P. (1980), Gli anni della Costituente, fra politica e storia, Bologna: Il Mulino.
- Scoppola, P. (1984), 'Per una storia del Centrismo' in G.Rossini (ed), De Gasperi a l'eta del Centrismo, Rome: Cinque Lune, pp.23-51.
- Scoppola, P. (1985), La 'nuova cristianita' perduta, Rome: Studium.
- Scoppola, P. (1986), 'Dalla Assemblea costituente alla "grande riforma", Il Mulino, May-June, pp.453-467.
- Scott, J. (1985), Corporations, Classes and Capitalism, London: Hutchinson.

- Seidler, J. (1986), 'Contested Accommodation: The Catholic Church as a Special Case of Social Change', in Social Forces, June, pp.847-75.
- de Seta, S. (ed), (1987), Societa e partiti politici: il dibattito sulla crisi, Milan: Franco Angeli.
- Sigmund, P.E. (1987), 'The Catholic Tradition and Modern Democracy', The Review of Politics, University of Notre Dame, Fall, pp.530-548.
- Smith, G. (1979), 'Western European Party Systems: On the Trail of a Typology', West European Politics, April, pp.128-143.
- Smith, G. (1989), Politics in Western Europe. A Comparative Analysis, 5th.edition, Aldershot: Gower.
- Smith, G. 'System Change and the People's Party', in P.Mair and G.Smith (eds), Understanding party System Change in Western Europe, pp.157-168.
- Smith, T. (1986), 'The British Constitution: Unwritten and Unravelled', J.Hayward and P.Norton (eds), The Political Science of British Politics, Brighton: Wheatsheaf, pp.65-84.
- Spotts, F. and T.Wieser, (1986), Italy a Difficult Democracy. A Survey of Italian Politics, Cambridge University Press.
- Spreafico, A. (1975) 'Risultati elettorali ed evoluzione del sistema partitico', in M.Caciagli and M.Spreafico (eds), Un sistema alla prova, Bologna: Il Mulino, pp.25-83.
- Tamburrano, G. (1978), PCI e PSI nel sistema democristiano, Bari: Laterza.
- Tarrow, S. (1977), Between Centre and Periphery. Grassroots Politicians in Italy and France, Yale University Press.
- Tarrow, S. (1983), 'Historic Compromise or Bourgeois Hegemony?' in H.Machin (ed), National Communism in Western Europe. A third way to socialism?, London: Methuen.
- Tarrow, S. (1989), Democracy and Disorder. Protest and Politics in Italy, 1965-75, Oxford: Clarendon.
- Taylor, P. and A.Lijphart, (1985), 'Proportional Tenure vs. Proportional Representation: Introducing a New Debate', European Journal of Political Research, Vol.13, pp.341-454.
- Tivey, L. (1988), Interpretations of British Politics. The image and the system, London: Harvester/Wheatsheaf.
- Tosi, S. (1966), 'Italy: Anti-system Opposition Within the System', Government and Opposition, pp. 49-61.
- Tramontin, S. (1987), 'La Democrazia cristiana dalla Resistenza alla Repubblica', in F.Malgeri (ed), Storia della Democrazia cristiana, Vol.1, pp.13-176.
- Traniello, F. (1984), 'Pio XII dal mito alla storia', in A.Riccardi (ed),

- Pio XII, Bari: Laterza, pp.5-29.
- Tromp, B. (1990), 'Party Strategies and System Change in the Netherlands', P.Mair and G.Smith (eds), Understanding Party System Change in Western Europe, pp.82-97.
- Uleri, P.V. (1988), 'I partiti politici e le consultazioni referendarie in tema di giustizia e nucleare', in P.Corbetta and R.Leonardi (eds), pp.197-235.
- Urwin, D. (1987), 'Do Resources Decide, But Votes Count - in the End?' Review Article, West European Politics, April.
- Vacca, G (1987), Tra compromesso e solidarieta, Rome: Riuniti.
- Vernon, R. and Y.Aharoni (eds), (1981), State-Owned Enterprises in Western Economies, London: Croom Helm.
- Verucci, G. (1988), La chiesa nella societa contemporanea. Dal primo dopoguerra al Concilio Vaticano II, Rome: Laterza.
- Vicarelli, F. (1981), 'Note in tema accumulazione di capitale in Italia, 1947-63', in G.Lunghini (ed), Scelte politiche e teorie economiche in Italia, 1945-78, Turin: Einaudi, pp.13-69.
- Vickers, J. and V.Wright, (1988), 'The Politics of Industrial Privatisation in Western Europe', West European Politics, October, pp.1-30.
- Walters, P.'Overview' in F.F.Ridley (ed), Policies and Politics in Western Europe: The Impact of the recession, London: Croom Helm, pp.1-34.
- Ware, A. (1987), Citizens, Parties and the State: A Reappraisal, Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Ware, A. (1989), 'Parties, Electoral Competition and Democracy', Parliamentary Affairs, January, pp.1-22.
- Weiss, L. (1984), 'The Italian State and Small Businessmen' in European Journal of Sociology, Vol.33, pp.214-41.
- Wertman, D. (1987), 'The Christian Democrats: The Big Losers' in H.Penniman (ed), Italy at the Polls, 1983, American Enterprise Institute, pp.35-60.
- Whyte, J.H. (1981), Catholics in Western Democracies, Dublin: Gill and Macmillan.
- Wilensky, H. (1981), 'Leftism, Catholicism and Democratic Corporatism: The Role of Political Parties in Recent Welfare State Development' in P.Flora and A.J.Heidenheimer (eds), The Development of Welfare States in Europe and America, New Brunswick, pp.345-382.
- Woolf, S.J. (ed) (1972), The Rebirth of Italy, 1945-50, London: Longman.
- Zamagni, V. (1986), 'Betting on the Future: The Reconstruction of Italian

Industry, 1946-52', in J.Becker and F.Knippling (eds), Power in Europe: Great Britain, France, Italy and Germany in a Post-War World, 1945-50, Berlin: De Gruyter, pp.283-300.

Zariski, R. (1980), 'Italy' in W.Merkl (ed), (1980), West European Party Systems: Trends and Prospects, New York: Free Press, pp.122-152.

Zuckerman, A. (1979), The Politics of Faction, Yale University Press.

Zunino, P. (ed), (1979), Scritti politici di Alcide De Gasperi, Milan: Feltrinelli.