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The New Moderates

A motive analysis of the Swedish Moderates' stated
transformation during 2003-2006.

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Abstract

This thesis investigates the Swedish Moderates' transformation under Fredrik Reinfeldt. The question at issue is as follows: *What motive(s) were behind the Moderates' declared transformation after Reinfeldt became party leader?* We define the actor who possesses the motives, which is Reinfeldt and his closest associates, and the action we want to explain.

Indications of what motives the actor had are given in four separate chapters that together form the foundation of our conclusion. We examine (A) the actor's stated motives, (B) the actor's previous motives, (C) other similar actor's motives and (D) motives behind parties' actions in general.

We received strong support for *viability* and *societal change* which indicates that the Moderates changed in order to make the policies more viable and to adapt to certain changes in the society. Vote-maximisation got support, although not as strong as *viability* and *societal change*. Still, there is a possibility that vote-maximisation was very important for the Moderates. The motive is often denied by parties and is therefore more difficult to find evidence for. However, considering the support we have found in our material, we argue that vote-maximisation probably was of great importance for the Moderates.

Key words: the Moderates, Fredrik Reinfeldt, motive analysis, vote-maximisation, policy change

Thank you

Prof. Axel Hadenius, Patrik Norinder, Anna Ravelid, Per Schlingmann and the personel at the Moderates' office in Stockholm.

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1 Introduction

The subject we are dealing with in this thesis was not, originally, of great interest to us. As a matter of fact, we did not plan to write about Swedish politics. Our original idea revolved around the study of states who either had “failed” or were on the verge of “failing”. We were very intrigued by a handful of problems all of these states seem to face; difficulties regarding foreign-aid distribution being one of them. After several discussions regarding choice of topic we found ourselves moving away from this original field of study and towards other subjects within other political science fields. These discussions were all taking place during 2006. Or to be more specific, shortly after the Swedish election to the national parliament in september.

The four parties in the right wing alliance won a majority of the seats in the Swedish parliament in the 2006 election. The major reason behind the change was that the conservative Moderates greatly increased their share of votes compared to their prior election. The success was commonly explained as consequence of the Moderates’ transformation. After the election 2002 the party elected a new party leader and the party’s rhetoric became softer, dealing with peoples everyday life instead of their traditional tax-reduction policies. This change of direction sparked our interest in the field of Swedish politics. Rather than discussing our ideas regarding our original thesis, that of failed states, we found ourselves discussing this political party’s declared transformation. So, as a consequence, we decided to continue these discussions and explore them even deeper in the thesis you are about to read.

2 Problem and Statement of Purpose

2.1 Problem

The 2002 election turned out to be a disaster for the Moderates, gaining only a 15,2% support compared to 22,9% in the election of 1998. The party was in need of reform. The task of transforming the party was delegated to Fredrik Reinfeldt (Wiklund, 2006:86ff). Reinfeldt and his closest associates started a renewal of the party, creating the epitaph the *new labour party*, and in 2005 the leader officially announced the birth of the *New Moderates*:

The task I was given was to restore the Moderates after a tough election loss, to renew and develop the Moderates in a new age and to develop the Moderates from the challenges that the people in Sweden go through.

(The Moderates' party conference, 2005-08-26).

This is rather interesting since this particular party has been sceptical regarding party reforms. Prior to Reinfeldt, the Moderates had “from the 1970:s and onwards developed into a strong ideologically convinced party with a stable political program” (Håkansson, 2005:92, Bäck – Möller, 2003:67). We are not alone in notifying this change. One popular opinion, particularly in the media, has been that the Moderates have moved towards the middle on the political left/right scale, from their original position on the right. A full and comprehensive insight into the true motives behind the transformation is yet to be fulfilled. We are therefore inclined to reveal the motive(s) behind the supposedly changed Moderates. The main question at issue is as follows:

What motive(s) were behind the Moderates declared transformation after Reinfeldt became party leader?

The question below is also of importance, yet this will only be answered indirectly and in connection to the first question. It will not be analysed independently.

Why did the Moderates apply their particular approach and why did this transformation take place during this particular period?

2.2 Statement of purpose

The purpose of this thesis is to examine Sweden's Moderate-party and why the new leadership started a renewal of the party in 2003. We are interested in the motives behind this change and why this particular approach was implemented in this particular period¹. We are only interested in the party's motives behind the declared transformation; we will not investigate whether a change of political content actually took place². This is interesting because it says something about the Moderates and how the party functions. The thesis will also say something about why the Moderates won the election since the Moderates' way of acting proved to be successful in the election in 2006.

Our future conclusions are not to be generalised onto other parties. However, the conclusions could be vital for an understanding of contemporary politics, primarily in Sweden. The thesis will provide information on the political climate and the context in which parties act. Hopefully, the thesis will open up a debate regarding the political arena itself since it concerns, for example, party relations towards citizens and members, the autonomy of the party elite, how it coincides/conflict with democratic values etc. These questions are not to be analysed by us. Rather, we hope for a cumulative process to take place where the questions above are to be handled by researchers alike and strengthen our knowledge in the field of party-politics.

Some research has been made regarding "New Moderates". By comparing speeches held by several of the Moderates leaders, Thorstensson (2006) wonders whether Reinfeldt upholds a different ideology than the previous leaders. We differ from Thorstenssons thesis' purpose by investigating *the motives behind* the rhetoric change. Several non-scientific writings have also been published (see Ljunggren, 2006, Wiklund 2006 etc.). These writings are different from our purpose; none of them thoroughly investigate the real motives behind the the Moderates' change. One must keep in mind that the limited existence of research on the matter is not strange considering that the change started only a couple of years ago. Also, Håkansson remarks that parties' strategic considerations in general are not studied remotely as much as other parts of party behaviour (2005:100). These examples show that there is a great void waiting to be filled. We intend on doing just that.

¹ Note that we are not going to explain why a specific actor possesses specific motives by, for example, review their childhood. However, our actors' previous political stands are interesting in this thesis since they have claimed that they have had the same views for a longer period of time. Our interest is delimited to the actors grown up life though. This is explained further in the method-section.

² Political content, we argue, is official standpoints on specific issues. For example, the party's national budget-proposition, proposed motions in the parliament and decisions taken in party conferences. Declared transformation, we argue, is more general standpoints. For example, debate articles and statements in interviews.

3 Theory

In this chapter the thesis' theoretical framework is presented. First, we describe the theoretical foundation that our thesis rests upon. Second, we outline strategic motives that parties are expected to have according to theorists.

3.1 Theoretical perspective

The conclusions of an analysis of party behaviour will differ depending on which perspective one chose to apply. Here we will discuss our perspective and contrast it to some of the other major perspectives regarding party behaviour.

We are interested in the actions of a certain actor, the Moderates, and we argue that it is possible to distinguish a group of people who can be said to act, at least partly, in an autonomous way (see ch. 5). The actions carried out by the party are preceeded by considerations and are therefore rational to some extent; the party acts in the way which is conceived to correspond most accurately with the party's wishes. This idea was uplifted by Downs (1957) who saw parties as self-driven mechanisms existing only for the sake of power. We do not agree even though Downs' thesis of an autonomic party is quite appealing. Party actions, we argue, are based on some level of autonomy but we believe that this power is limited. Structures working outside of a party are still of importance and are therefore included in our calculus. Also, within the structure of every party there are several forces competing against each other and the party elite must therefore, as we see it, compromise its political agenda in order to achieve its goals and, in the long run, survive (compare Przeworski & Sprague and Strom in Håkansson, 2005:70ff).

With these premises in mind a party is never *fully free*; it has to adapt to factors outside the party (i.e. economic, cultural and social) and within the party (compromises in the decision-making process). These viewpoints can be said to be influenced by (1) the structural position and (2) the organisational position. We do not reject these perspectives but to apply them would be rather unsatisfactory since this thesis' intention is to reveal the motives behind party *behaviour*. If we would adopt the structural position we would find ourselves in a catch 22 situation since party behaviour within the structural approach is severely dependent on behaviour lying outside a party's domain and it would therefore be rather difficult to locate the origins of the motives.

Within the organisational approach, a party acts in line with its internal structures and rules and its main priority is survival, action is of less importance (Håkansson, 2005:63ff). We find this view rather deterministic and its main ideas

would stand in conflict with our stated purpose. We are interested in party action itself and the motives lying underneath so if we analysed this, using an organisational perspective, we would not be able to see the party as an actor with motives since the perspective regards internal structures and rules as deciding factors over actions.

As noted in numerous analyses, the professionalism (see ch. 9) of political parties does in fact give us strong incentives to view party behaviour from our perspective. We believe that a successive professionalism promotes an elite in every party – compare with Michels theory of oligarchy (Michels, 1983) – which in turn allow for the elite to form policies and to act on a relatively free platform. This argument is supported by Przeworski & Sprague (1986) who described parties as “actors with elbow room, but they must regard institutional and structural relationships when deciding over goals, calculus, decisions and actions” (Håkansson, 2005:71).

Our rational actor perspective suggests a somewhat free agent (compare ch. 5), and therefore we assume that parties act out of consciousness and must therefore have somewhat clear goals behind every action. We choose not to take any stand on what these particular goals may be and, according to our purpose, we do not intend to reveal the party’s ultimate goals. It is fully satisfactory to investigate the more specific motives in this specific situation. In the following section we describe three clearly defined motives that we are going to look for in the empirical analysis, since we can not rely solely on the motives stated by the Moderates (see ch. 4).

3.2 Theoretical motives

A motive is the considered intention an actor has to a specific action. We have made a distinction between strategic motives and preferential motives. The strategic motives are motives that can help the actor to achieve certain goals. Preferential motives on the other hand are the motives that are directly related to the actors’ preferences, they are goals in themselves (comp. Esaiasson et al, 2005:322-323). Sjöblom (1968) have a theory that parties main goal is *program realisation* and that strategic motives exist at the same time; parties try to achieve their preferences by making strategic considerations. The motives presented below are strategic motives and are mainly derived from Sjöblom. Preferential motives are excluded here for two reasons. First, we can not specify all political preferential motives since there are too many. Second, parties expose their preferential motives much more willingly than their strategic motives and we will therefore be able to find preferential motives anyhow.

3.2.1 Vote-maximisation

According to Håkansson, a party *vote-maximises* when "as many voters as possible is to be won regardless of who they are and what politics the party traditionally enhance" (2005:81). In *An Economic Theory of Democracy* Downs argue: "if everyone knew which type of ideology would win, all parties would adopt it" (Downs, 1957:101).

According to Sjöblom, when a party vote-maximises it should "act so that the party is given as many votes as possible at the general elections" This view is, on a fundamental level, in fact inclined with the other authors' view on vote-maximising. However, none of the authors provide a full and comprehensive view on the term in question. Still, a clear definition of the term is much needed since it will serve as our guiding light (see "Method"). We have therefore designed our own definition of the term vote-maximisation by fusing previous views on this particular term together. The definition is as follows:

Vote-maximisation is when a political party consciously transforms its political agenda based on other factors than ideology and/or traditional platform in order to gain votes for the party's ultimate goal(s) in question.

3.2.2 Parliamentary influence

Parliamentary influence, we argue, is quite different from sheer vote-maximisation. To act in order to achieve parliamentary influence "the party believes it can not obtain its own majority and should therefore calculate with the possibility of having to form a coalition with one or more of the other parties (Sjöblom, 1968:79-80). Therefore, we adjust our vote-maximisation-definition above in order to obtain an independent definition of Parliamentary influence:

Parliamentary influence is when a political party consciously transforms its political agenda in order to adjust to the other party or parties it wishes to collaborate with.

3.2.3 Internal cohesion

A motive that is less controversial is that of internal cohesion. It is reasonable to believe that cohesion smoothes the process of party efforts. Cohesion is a must for the party to persevere; if the members within show no bond nor understanding whatsoever one can assume that this particular group will not exist for much longer (Bäck & Möller, 2003:54).

Sjöblom differentiates between three types of support within the party cohesion; opinion-support, vote-support and resource-support (Sjöblom, 1968:85).

In this thesis we base our term on the first two. The third is more focused on the party's members and their will to contribute with financial and personnel means. This is of less interest since this thesis' focus is placed on the elite's motives behind a specific action and does not include all members. Sjöblom means that "it seems fitting to relate 'party cohesion' primarily to the content in the party's output". Therefore, the strive for party cohesion is:

When a political party make decisions about standpoints, candidates and propaganda content in such a way as to ensure that the greatest possible unity can exist among the party members.

4 Method and Material

The aim of this thesis is to find the motives behind the Moderates' change after the new leadership took over in 2003. In this section we will explain *how* this will be done and what kind of material we will use.

The method we have employed draws upon the motive analysis in the way it is portrayed by Hadenius (1984) and Esaiasson et al (2005). The method is rather similar to Hadenius' suggestions but it is slightly different, especially in chapter (B) (see 4.2 and 7), which will become obvious when we describe the different parts below. The analysis consists of four parts which will be commented separately since each part employs a particular method and a specific set of material:

- (A) Stated motives by the actor
- (B) Other actions by the actor
- (C) Similar actions by other actors
- (D) Similar actions by actors in general

4.1 (A) Stated motives by the actor

In chapter 6 we display the various motives we have found in our material and analyse the statements made in accordance to a scheme of analysis in order to find out what motive(s) they consider to be most important. The scheme of analysis is based on three different criteria's:

- *Frequency* – If a motive is repeated frequently we assume that it is of importance.
- *Stability* – If a motive have persevered during a longer period of time it is more likely that this motive was important to the actor. The motive should be stated immediately after the action, or preferably before the action if it really was at hand.
- *Position* – If a motive has a prominent position or is emphasised in some particular way it should be considered as more important.

We do need to point out that the risks of arbitrary conclusions are quite substantive (see Esaiasson et al, 2005:331 and Hadenius, 1984:149). Still, as long as our criterions and conclusions are argued in a schematic manner and revealed

as openly as possible, we think (and hopefully so will the readers) that our future conclusions will be of a valid nature.

In the material we will search for 1) the motive(s) stated by the Moderates themselves³ and 2) strategic motives derived from literature. Our established definitions of our different motives (see ch. 3.2) are used in order for us to locate these within the statements made by our actor in the material at hand. It is quite risky to depend only on our actors stated motives since we assume that actors, maybe specifically political actors, are not very likely keen on revealing the true motives if these involve strategic considerations and self-interest (Esaiasson et al, 2005:320-321). Strategic motives defined in advance are therefore necessary. Still, we are open for other motives than the ones we have reviewed in the theory-section since there is a possibility that the *real* motives are to be found outside of our theoretical framework.

4.1.1 The process

How then have we applied the method explained above? We have studied a large scope of material which includes:

- TV and radio-interviews with our key actors in programs produced by Swedish National Television (*SVT*) and Swedish National Radio (*SR*), and therefore available on the net (svt.se, sr.se). Also, “Specials” dealing with the election 2006 and longer pieces dealing with special occasions such as “Almedalsveckan” are included.
- Articles in Sweden’s four major newspapers⁴: *Dagens Nyheter* (DN), *Svenska Dagbladet* (SvD), *Göteborgsposten* (GP) and *Sydsvenska Dagbladet*⁵.
- *Medborgaren*, the party’s own journal.

The TV and radio material were found through searches on the web (sr.se and svt.se) and do probably not contain all interviews the actors have done since 2003⁶. However, a majority of their interviews in these channels are probably found and we do not consider the selection to be much of a problem since the actors should give voice to, by and large, the same motives in all interviews⁷.

³ Statements made regarding the motives behind the action must come from at least one of the actors above (or be approved by them).

⁴ By size of edition, excluding “yellow papers” (www.dn.se/DNet/jsp/polopoly.jsp?d=602&a=493183 2007-03-22, www.citygate.se/network/main.asp 2007-03-22).

⁵ No motives were found in *Sydsvenska Dagbladet*

⁶ We have searched the TV and radio channels homepages. We have searched the actors’ names, the epithets “nya moderaterna” (“new Moderates”), “Sveriges nya arbetarparti” (“Sweden’s new labour party”) and “val 2006” (“election 2006”).

⁷ A big number of cases are therefore not particularly important. It soon becomes obvious which motives the actor consider important (or at least chose to reveal).

The interviews are un-edited and are therefore regarded as a first-hand source and as less problematical concerning tendency and proximity. It is not very likely that the journalists have had the chance to deceive the audience. The actors, however, can not be assumed to be totally honest which we have discussed above regarding strategic motives (ch. 3.2).

The newspaper-category is similar regarding the searches for material and the actors' honesty. However, the possibility is that the articles could portray the actors' statement in a less truthful way than the unedited interviews in TV and radio. It would then increase the tendency problem but we rely to great extent on the journalists in the major newspapers and we do therefore not consider it to be a problem.

We have read every edition of the Moderates' internal journal, *Medborgaren*, from the election 2002 to the election 2006. Anyone is free to get a subscription and it is therefore not likely that any confidential material would appear. Still, statements made by the actor for the internal arena should be classified as more reliable than statements made for the external arena (Hadenius 1980:164). Additionally, the statements are made close in time to the related change.

However, we did not find any debates of the party's strategies and policies in the journal which makes us believe that the journal is used more as a medium for convincing its readers. It should be regarded as a tendency-problem since different views of the party's change existed in the Moderates but almost none of these were presented in the journal. The journal is still of importance since it is a first-hand source.

Some of the material discussed above involves statements of the Moderates change years after it started (see ch. 5.1). It could be a problem with proximity in time since "the more time that goes by, the greater the risk for memory lapses, gradual rationalizations and the opportunity to let oneself be affected by what others said and wrote on the matter" (Hadenius, 1984:162). We show that we are aware of this in the discussion of the stability criterion.

4.2 (B) Other actions by the actor

In chapter 7 we will examine the actors' political background to see if their previous beliefs and actions are similar to those expressed when the actors carried out the described change. By placing the actors' previous actions and beliefs in relation to the studied change we will be able to see if the actors' stated motives are reasonable and correspond to the action in question. This is especially important if the Moderates had any strategic motives (see ch. 3.2). If they did, it should become obvious when comparing actions and beliefs during a longer period of time. The most genuine motives we can possibly link to the actors are the ones they had before they knew they would become responsible for the renewal of the party.

There is a lot of available material dealing with Fredrik Reinfeldt. Some of this material gives a little information about the other actors too; however, this

information is rather limited. Our primary sources here are not scientific writings and the authors can sometimes be suspected to be tendentious. Stig-Björn Ljunggren is for example known to have socialistic views and it therefore reasonable to believe that he wants to portray the Moderates in a less positive way. However, we use the material to get facts and we try to avoid the authors own interpretations. Since we have more than one source to most of the described events we are able to diminish the problem of the authors' tendency. This does also reduce the problem of proximity which can be said to occur when events in the first half of the 1990's are described in second hand-sources. Even though Wiklund's book (2006) must be regarded as a second-hand source, large parts of it seem to be Reinfeldt's own description of his political career and the course of action when he took over the party leadership.

Reinfeldt himself has also written two books of interest which reveals some of his earlier beliefs. The books are valuable since they are first-hand sources of Reinfeldt's beliefs and should portray his views sincerely. However, *Det sovande folket* (1993) is much more critical to the welfare-state than *Nostalgitrippen* (1995)⁸. How this should be interpreted is discussed in chapter 7.

4.3 (C) Similar actions by other actors

In chapter 8, we will look for other actors within the political party-sphere who sought to implement a somewhat similar approach like the one by the Moderates. If the motives expressed by these actors are similar to our actors' motives, we argue that the support for these particular motives increases.

The "New" Democrats in the US and "New" Labour in the UK are good examples to portray for this purpose since they acted within a similar context and adjusted to this situation by stating a reform of their political agendas. In the search for the motives behind these two parties' stated change we draw upon already reached conclusions. These can be found in various science-journals where the authors, mostly political scientists, discuss the action in order to understand why these changes took place. Obviously we cannot go through all of the material dealing with this matter. Therefore, we investigated some of the major and impartial journals⁹. We have chosen to use previous research in this case because we have neither time nor space to do independent studies of our analogy-examples. Our conclusions will be based on other scientists' conclusions¹⁰. Also, the problem with the analogies is that even though the actions give the impression of being similar, the actors' motives may be different. Therefore we need to value this chapter as less important than ch. 6 and 7.

⁸ With co-writers Graner and Lindvall.

⁹ In addition a book by Fairclough is used. This book is not considered to be impartial due certain seemingly subjective comments by the author.

¹⁰ Not on our own interpretation like chapter 6 and 7.

4.4 (D) Similar actions by actors in general

Chapter 9 bears some resemblance to the previous, but the focus is more on theories, both empirically tested and strictly hypothetical. By studying these we will find out how parties can act. This is important for our understanding of the Moderates transformation. If the generally accepted theories that we present correspond with our case it will strengthen our previous conclusions, especially if the theories are empirically tested. However, if all the general motives derived from the theories differ from the motives we have found with the Moderates, this will not necessarily undermine our conclusions, but it will certainly raise some doubts.

The abstract theories tend to overlap with the discussion in our theoretical motives-section and therefore we do not repeat the definitions and discussions of strategic motives (see ch. 3.2). However, we broaden the discussion of vote-maximisation extensively.

Håkansson (2005) reviews empirical research of Swedish parties in addition to his assessment of more abstract theories. These studies are less problematical from a proximity perspective since they deal with Swedish conditions. Also, tendency should not be much of a problem since Håkansson seems to have an intersubjective approach and expose his material and ideas openly.

We have relied rather heavily on Håkansson's review of empirical studies since we do not have time to review all existing studies. However, we have examined a lot of the existing party theories, often in original texts (i.e. primary sources)¹¹.

4.5 Drawing conclusions

The first step in order to be able to reveal the Moderates' motives behind their change is to clearly describe which individuals we consider as responsible for the change, i.e. the *actor*. This is done in 5.1. We also have to make clear what constitutes the Moderates' stated change so the reader knows exactly what *action* we try to explain. The action is described in chapter 5.2 and consists of several components¹². We have also used additional facts regarding the change and the actors' views of the change in our analysis of each chapter. These are drawn mainly from interviews in Wiklund (2006) and our own interviews with the former head of communication Per Schlingmann (currently party secretary) and

¹¹ However, not many of the works are mentioned in the thesis since it was not useful enough.

¹² We argue that these components are so tightly connected that they must correspond to the same motives (compare Hadenius, 1980:168-170).

former parliamentary member and “new Moderates”-critic Patrik Norinder. Norinder’s views help us contrast the actors’ motives; if strategic motives were at hand (see below) he would probably reveal them more openly than the actors. He had insight in the Moderate party’s decision process since he worked in the parliament and was active in the Moderates, for example through the party’s conferences. Since he is very critical to the Moderates change we presume that he may perhaps overstate the power of the party elite and ascribe them motives they did not have.

A problem, which we have not been able to evade in any part of the thesis, is that strategic motives seldom are revealed officially by the the actors. Since we have not been able to listen to the main actors’ internal discussions there is a chance that the actors consciously conceal strategic motives. This tendency problem is somewhat avoided by letting our investigation-chapters (see ch. 6-9) function as a complement to each other. Together, we argue, they provide an understanding of what motives the party actually had when stating its change. For example, if one chapter is in favour of motive X and the following chapter is aswell, we argue that the value of motive X has increased. However, had the following chapter favoured another motive, by contrast, the value of motive X would have decreased. It is important to point out that we regard section A and B as most important since these are based on our own study. Section C and D can not reveal the Moderates’ motives in themselves. Still, as we mentioned, they can certainly strengthen prior conclusions.

The conclusion of the motives *total* support will be done in the chapter 10 and it will be based on each of our four investigation-chapters. The motives are examined separately here but we discuss their relevance in comparison to each other too.

5 Action and actor

5.1 The Action

We have pointed out before that we are interested in the “New Moderates” and the change they claimed to have done. Also, we want to know what the Moderates meant when they argued they were “new” and “Sweden’s new labour party”. This is essential to our analysis because of the way in which the party changed can be related to certain motives.

The “New Moderates” was presented at the Moderates’ party conference in 2005. The concept was created by Per Schlingmann, head of communication at that time (“Hjärgänget”, 2006-09-18). Schlingmann said that the Moderates tried to emphasise and almost exaggrate their political change in order to make it clear for people that the party had made an actual change (Schlingmann, 2007-02-14).

The year before, 2004, Reinfeldt held a speech before the celebration of the 100 year anniversary of the moderate party, in which the epithet “Sweden’s new labour party” was introduced (“Hjärgänget”, 2006-09-18). Even though the concept was used in a somewhat different way than their main political antagonists, the Social Democratic Labour Party, the label labour party could be interpreted as a way of changing the party’s image. The change can be understood as a change to a softer image that was friendlier to the welfare state. This can be compared to the image of a harsh tax-reducing party that existed before. This change is manifested in the article, “Vi lägger om vår politik” in Dagens Nyheter (2004-03-04), where party leader Fredrik Reinfeldt, together with Anders Borg and Mikael Odenberg, admits that the Moderates earlier tax-reducing proposals were unfair and that they would have gained the wealthiest persons in society.

However, the change towards this renewal of the party started earlier. Already before Reinfeldt took over he wrote, together with Borg and Littorin, an activity plan that outlined a new path for the Moderates (Wiklund, 2006:90-92). But it was after the election committee’s unanimous decision to recommend Fredrik Reinfeldt as party leader that the new direction became clear. This happened early summer 2003 and we consider this to be the first component of the Moderates transformation. The people behind this change are presented more thoroughly below.

5.2 The Actor

In our problem-chapter above (ch. 2.1) we stated that it is necessary to define the actor involved in order to achieve a comprehensive picture of the action itself and the specific motive(s) behind it.

Party leader *Fredrik Reinfeldt* is the key player since he was elected in order to recover the party. The other actors can not be derived from their official positions within the party. However, we have been able to locate the central actors based on the course of events that followed the resignation of Bo Lundgren. These have been further confirmed in our interviews and in several articles in newspapers.

Sven-Otto Littorin and *Anders Borg* were both personally appointed to the Moderates after the party's harsh defeat in the 2002 election. Littorin was appointed as party secretary and Borg as the head of the party's parliament council. Before Lundgren resigned, Reinfeldt, Borg and Littorin together analysed the Moderates situation and in which direction they wanted to take the party. They cooperated closely after Lundgren's resignation too and together planned a reform of the Moderates (Ljunggren, 2006:162; Wiklund, 2006:90-92, 145-147, 167 and "Reinfeldts "sväng" får stöd. Revanschsugna moderater applåderar den nya skattepolitiken", 2004-03-13).

Per Schlingmann, former head of communications within the Moderates, was according to Reinfeldt "the main architect behind the Moderates' renewal", the inventor of the concept of "Sweden's new labour party" and the leader of the party's propaganda approach ("Moderaterna byter partisekreterare", SvD, "Hjärgänget" 2006-09-18; "PR-snillet bakom m-omgörningen", SvD, 2006-09-28; 2005-09-28; "Slaget om väljarna", DN, 2005-10-08). He was certainly the most influential person regarding the communication of the new political direction.

Per Schlingmann and Patrik Norinder agree regarding the central actors even though Schlingmann add that everyone in the party committee has influence on the party's actions (Schlingmann, 2007-02-14 and Norinder, 2007-03-27).

6 A: Stated motives by the actor

In this chapter the Moderates stated motives are examined. The material we have used is described and evaluated in the Method (ch. 4.1). The material was assessed with a scheme of analysis and the results are presented in tables (see Appendix 11.1 – 11.3). The results are first presented separately and then compared in the analysis. We soon found that the Moderates had motives in addition to the ones defined in advance. These were easily placed in two categories. When a statement referred to changes in society we labelled this particular statement as a *societal change*-motive. When a statement referred to a wish to make their policies more viable we labelled the statement as a *viability*-motive.

6.1 Findings: TV and Radio

The motives declared by the party in TV/Radio (see Appendix 11.1), are clearly in favour of the *vote-maximisation*-strategy. Reinfeldt repeatedly expressed how the Moderates new approach is designed to attract all voters. For example: "Everybody can vote for the New Moderates. I think it is very important to use that approach" (SVT, 2006-03-09). This coincides with our definition of *vote-maximisation* displayed above. Furthermore, Reinfeldt do mention both *viability* and *societal change* as motives behind the change yet he does not give these any prominent position. Not only are they less frequently expressed than the *vote-maximisation* motive but they are also less emphasised and often positioned in the background of the various utterances. *Internal cohesion* is mentioned once, very subtle and discreet, which leads us to remove this motive from our conclusion. *Parliamentary influence* is not mentioned at all.

6.2 Findings: Newspapers

The results in the newspaper-category (see Appendix 11.2) are quite complex and we must therefore lean on our own interpretations and common sense in order to be able to draw any conclusions. The frequency criterion suggests that *societal change* is the dominant motive. However, the stability criterion indicates the *viability* factor as the prominent motive. Considering how the emphasis on the *societal change* motive was expressed we are led to believe that, with the frequency criterion included, this particular motive is in fact the dominant force.

Reinfeldt is clearly in favour of this: "Sweden has changed and we have changed in order to solve the problems of our time" ("Moderaterna plagierar sossarnas affisch", GP, 2006-03-18). Although more stable than the *societal change* motive, the *viability* motive was expressed in a more discreet manner. In other words, instead of clearly stating *viability* as a motive behind the change, as Reinfeldt did in the quote above, we base our *viability* findings on our own interpretation. We believe that this is a strong argument for a less dominant role of *viability*. In contrast to the TV/radio findings, there is little in favour of the *vote-maximisation* approach. There were no findings that expressed an indication of *parliamentary influence* or *internal cohesion*.

6.3 Findings: Medborgaren

The result of the findings in Medborgaren is presented in the Appendix 11.3. It shows that *societal change* and *viability* are the most frequently stated motives by the Moderates. They are followed by *vote-maximisation*, which was linked once to *viability*.

Viability was mentioned twice in 2003, after Reinfeldt took over the leadership. Since these motives were mentioned again in 2005 and 2006 they must be considered as stable. *Societal change*, however, was only mentioned during 2005 and 2006 and can not be said to be stable. In fact we must pose the question: is *societal change* an explanation invented after the change?

The motives' position in the text is somewhat different but not enough to change the status of the motives. *Vote-maximisation* were mentioned more subtle than the other motives which can be explained by the fact that it is a strategical motive that actors often try to hide, which we have mentioned above. Frequency must therefore be considered as the decisive category even though the stability is a reason to emphasise the importance of *viability* and *vote-maximisation* compared with the other motives.

Internal cohesion appears only once and it should perhaps be understood as an explanation of *how* the change was supposed to take place, rather than as a goal in itself.

6.4 Analysis

Viability and *societal change* are the most frequently stated motives in all categories except in the TV/radio-category where *vote-maximisation* was the most frequent. The motives' stability and position in the texts and other presentations differ somewhat but it does not affect the mentioned motives' prominent positions. The support for both *viability* and *societal change* is very substantive. The motives are further strengthened with explanations by the actors. An

implication to the *viability* motive is that the Moderates former policies not were considered as viable by the actors. This is confirmed for example with Anders Borg's views of the Moderates budget proposal in 1999 (Wiklund, 2006:145-152). An implication to the *societal change* motive is that the actors believed that the society actually changed. Per Schlingmann argue that the main problem in Sweden 10-20 years ago was lack of productivity. The Moderates tried to solve this problem with tax policies. Today the main problem is that a lot of people are outside of the labour market and the focus is therefore to solve this problem (Schlingmann, 2007-02-14).

Vote-maximisation did in fact receive relatively strong support. We believe that one reason for its frequency in the TV/radio-category is that the actors are aware of how important this medium is for attracting the large scope of voters (compared to *Medborgaren* for example). They are therefore inclined to express themselves in more sensitive manners, particularly emphasizing their own agendas' functionality with the public opinion, which is interpreted as *vote-maximisation*.

However, considering the controversial nature of *vote-maximisation* it is not likely to be openly revealed by the Moderates. If, for example, a party existed solely for the sake of reaching power they certainly would not state this since it goes against the society's norms and conventions. We cannot, therefore, receive a *total* support for this particular motive in this chapter even though chances are that this motive was in fact the dominant feature behind the Moderates' change.

The two remaining motives, *internal cohesion* and *parliamentary influence*, did not receive any significant support. *Internal cohesion* was mentioned once in both *Medborgaren* and the TV/radio-category, yet one occasion is, we argue, too irregular to be of any value.

6.5 Conclusion

Viability and *societal change* received strong support. They are the most important motives according to the actors own statements. They were further supported by confirming the implications that follows of the motives.

Vote-maximisation got fair support, which is more than expected, considering that it is a strategic motive. Other motives did not receive any significant support.

7 B: Other actions by the actor

Per Schlingmann argued in our interview that the new leadership in 2003 evaluated the Moderate's policies independent from the earlier leadership (Schlingmann, 2007-02-14). The implication that follows is that our actors had a vision of a change before they got the decisive power. In the following section we examine the actors' political views in the past. Reinfeldt's history will be examined separately since we maintain that he is the most important person behind the change.

7.1 Fredrik Reinfeldt

What exactly were Reinfeldt's views in the past? Hints are given in his early writings, for example in *Det sovande folket* (1993) which presents ideas that differ heavily from the actions of the "New Moderates". In this book Reinfeldt attacked the welfare state and advocated the idea that the voters are not always right. Reinfeldt argued that the voters must "understand that they also have to change in order for the civil society to function" (Ljunggren, 2006:96). He also declared that "[w]e do not want a society where people are starving, but no other standard demands should be financed with taxes" (Ljunggren, 2006:97). Several years later after he had become the leader of the "New Moderates", Reinfeldt declared that the book was written to please his critics in the Moderates' youth organisation, MUF. He wanted to promote internal cohesion in the organisation and admits that he exaggerated his critic of the welfare state. The critics had accused Reinfeldt of being a political coward who embraced the welfare state (Ljunggren, 2006:93-104 and Wiklund, 2006:51-52).

Reinfeldt's take on the welfare state relate to the episode around 1990 when two fractions struggled for power in the Moderates youth organisation, MUF. Reinfeldt lead the conservative fraction and Ulf Kristoffersson the neo-liberal fraction. Reinfeldt's conservative beliefs made it impossible for him to accept the radical suggestions from the neo-liberals about eliminating the welfare state. Even if he wanted to reduce the welfare state, unlike the Social democrats, he wanted such a reduction to be performed slowly (Wiklund, 2006:35ff).

Reinfeldt published *Nostalgitrippen* in 1995¹³. The book was critical to several parts of the Moderate's features. Reinfeldt felt that the party under Bildt placed

¹³ With co-writers Magnus G. Graner and Martin Lindvall.

too little focus on people's everyday life. Reinfeldt has, as the leader of the Moderates, worked hard to incorporate this particular view into the party's political agenda (Ljunggren, 2006:13-15). Reinfeldt also criticised Carl Bildt, party leader at the time, in an interview. Reinfeldt claimed that Bildt spoke of the politics as a system which required a single solution, "[h]owever, the new generation of individualists does not want one single solution" ("Ung kritik mot Bildt", SvD, 1995-01-28).

Another belief of Reinfeldt was that the Moderates had to formulate policies regarding, for example, environmental and social issues since this did not exist in the moderate policies at the time. In *Nostalgitrippen* this was presented as a proposed strategy for the election in 1998 together with the idea that the party should acquire less conformistic representatives (i.e. white, middle-aged males with similar views) (Ljunggren, 2006:107 and Reinfeldt et al 1995:135-145).

Reinfeldt's views, presented in *Nostalgitrippen* and in interviews, were strongly disliked in the party's leadership, especially by party leader Carl Bildt. Reinfeldt was called to a meeting where he, in front of the parliamentary group¹⁴, was condemned by the leadership (Ljunggren, 2006:107-108 and Wiklund 2006: 64-65).

Reinfeldt argued the same year that the party dealt with the welfare debate in the wrong way. Reinfeldt argued that the party has to decrease people's worries about changes and show exactly how proposed tax reductions shall be financed, i.e. prove them as *viable* ("M måste visa att det bryr sig om människor:[...]", SvD, 11/11-1995).

7.2 Anders Borg, Sven-Otto Littorin and Per Schlingmann

The other main actors behind the Moderates' change have had opinions that differed from Reinfeldt's. *Fria moderata studentförbundet* ("Unbound moderate student association"), FMSF, was a network with rather radical neo-liberals, loosely connected with the Moderates (Ljunggren, 2006:137). *Anders Borg* was vice president of FMSF during 1990-91 and he was also a speech-writer for Carl Bildt during his time as the party leader. However, that does not mean that he always agreed with the Moderates. In 1999 he found that the party's budget-proposal was wrongfully constructed and too critical of the labour laws. Today he describes himself as social-liberal and pragmatic, compared to his earlier neo-liberal views (Wiklund, 2006:145-152).

Sven-Otto Littorin was, as we mentioned before, party secretary before Reinfeldt took over and he worked for the Moderates when Carl Bildt was the leader. Littorin and several others left the party and took other jobs the period

¹⁴ The parliament group is everyone representing the Moderates in the parliament.

after Bildt's resignation as a consequence of the party's diminutive acceptance for new ideas. When Littorin was asked to become party secretary in 2002 he demanded that Anders Borg would join him, which makes it reasonable to believe that he had political views that were similar to Borg's (Wiklund, 2006:165-167).

Per Schlingmann was appointed by the Moderates as head of communication after Reinfeldt became party leader. He met Reinfeldt during their time in the Moderates youth organisation, MUF. When Schlingmann left his position as press secretary in MUF in 1995 he started working with communication in the private sector. When he came back to the Moderates his first reaction was that there was a lack of devotion to the voters' opinions. Schlingmann and Reinfeldt met several times after their time in MUF and both felt that the Moderates were in need of reforms. They wanted to make the Moderates policies more connected to people's everyday life in addition to their idea of an improved communication and developed media strategy (Wiklund, 2006:160).

7.3 Analysis

Reinfeldt has had, as explained above, the same political views during his whole political career. The actual motives behind these views are harder to find. There is a possibility that he in fact made strategic considerations all along. In the final chapter in *Nostalgitrippen* (1995) Reinfeldt and co-writers present strategic advises for the party concerning the issue on how to attract voters. This is not necessarily a case of *vote-maximisation* since the particular suggestions presented did not stand in conflict with the party's policies. However, the expansion of the party's policies would imply a change of the Moderates' traditional agenda that match our vote-maximisation definition.

At the same time much of Reinfeldt's critique was based on his conservative beliefs and his opinion that the Moderates had forgot about their conservative heritage. This is confirmed by Nilsson (2004) who regards the Moderate's period with Bildt and Lundgren as a parenthesis from a historical perspective (2004:237).

Reinfeldt's strategical proposals in *Nostalgitrippen* (1995) correspond very well with his subsequent actions since he has included environmental and welfare issues in the Moderates policies. Moreover, the idea that it is necessary to clearly show how reduced taxes shall be financed, i.e. *viability* (presented in "M måste visa att det bryr sig om människor:[...]", SvD, 1995-11-11), correspond completely with the article, "Vi lägger om vår politik" in which Reinfeldt argued, together with Mikael Odenberg and Anders Borg, that the Moderates' previous tax reduction-proposals were unfair and not *viable* ("Vi lägger om vår politik", DN, 2004-03-04).

Internal cohesion was probably a motive for Reinfeldt when he, as it seems, tried to unite the Moderates' youth organisation, MUF. However, later on he provoked Bildt and the Moderate party when he was a member of the parliament. Reinfeldt and the other actors challenged the Moderates' organisation when they

transformed the party (Schlingmann, 2007-02-14) so the correspondence between the different actions is not very extensive.

The other actors' views might not have been that consistent. Littorin and Borg were loyal to the previous leaderships, both under Carl Bildt and Bo Lundgren. This can be contrasted with Reinfeldt who criticised Bildt heavily. Borg was also a rather radical neo-liberal when he was younger. However, Borg has declared that he has become more social-liberal. This change of opinion should not be regarded as a strategic move since the first signs of this change came before he knew the party would perform poorly in the election 2002 (Wiklund, 2006:145-152).

7.4 Conclusion

The major conclusion in this chapter is that Reinfeldt has had similar beliefs from the beginning of his political career. This indicates that the Moderates' sudden transformation after he became party leader was not done in order to *vote-maximise*. Still, there are some indications that Reinfeldt have had vote-maximisation as a motive during a long period of time. Therefore we consider this chapter to give a fair support for *vote-maximisation*.

Viability got strong support since it was a significant correspondence between Reinfeldts' earlier actions and the Moderates' change when he became party leader.

Internal cohesion got some support but it is unambiguous. Therefore we consider the support weak.

Societal change and *parliamentary influence* were not supported at all.

8 C: Similar actions performed by similar actors

As mentioned in our method-chapter (4.3), this is the section where we will investigate other political parties' similar transformations. We use the New Democrats (U.S) and New Labour (G.B.) as analogy-examples in order to find out what motive(s) they had behind these particular declarations of change. The results can further strengthen our conclusions regarding the Moderates' motives behind their described change. Remember that we base our conclusions on other authors' conclusions. Their findings are not generally acknowledged and are based on their very own interpretations so, therefore we argue, our conclusions are of relevance, yet they must be looked at with a rather critical eye.

8.1 The (New) Democrats

"A significant electoral defeat provides the occasion for rethinking a party's message", writes Jon F. Hale (1995). The author is referring to the Democrats loss in the 1980 election; an election which came to be known as the worst disaster for the party since the 1930:s. The election in 1984 changed little as the Republicans tightened their seat in the White House. The party was in need of change and in 1985 the Democrats launched the Democratic Leadership Council (DLC) with the aim "to reconstruct the identity of the national party to make it more appealing to mainstream voters who had been deserting the party in recent elections" (ibid.).

However, the first years proved to be quite unsuccessful for the DLC and the Democrats faced another defeat in the 1988 election. It was argued that their nominee Dukakis "never articulated an alternative vision for the country" (ibid.). The party decided to delegate more power to the DLC and transform it into a clear "idea-based movement focused on shaping a specific mainstream alternative identity for the party" (ibid.). This task was supported by the soon to be president Clinton who wanted a course everybody could support. This was the beginning of the New Democrats.

As the DLC got an institutionalized role within the party, the organisation worked for ways in promoting the national Democratic party as the centred alternative. The election of 1988 was lost, they said, due the party's lack of identity and was seen by the voters as "liberal fundamentalism", a term associated "with tax and spend policies that contradict the interests of average families; [...] with ambivalence toward the assertion of American values and interests abroad;

and with an adversarial stance toward mainstream moral and cultural values” (ibid.).

This perception drove many traditional Democrats to vote for the firmer alternative, the Republicans. Well aware of this, the Democrats had to moderate their presumably liberal rhetoric in order to gain the upper hand. They replaced the term *liberal* with the less controversial term *progressive* when identifying the party’s position (Hale, 1995:207-233). The New Democrats was now a party with a centred rhetoric, yet its content was in large parts still of the traditional liberal kind. Author Robert L. Borosage writes that “[the party] contrasts its ‘New Democrats’ agenda with that of the conservative Republicans on the one hand and that of the old, failed, liberal Democrats on the other. Yet its program often belie its rhetoric” (Borosage, 1993:148-150). This view was shared by Miller and Salholz: “Instead of one all-encompassing vision, there will be two” (Salholz & Miller, 1993:19-20). Clinton, they continue, wanted “to create a government that looks like the rest of America”, a reform they refer to as “non-ideological” (ibid). Clinton himself underscored this when he announced his entry into the presidential campaign: “The change I seek and the change that we must all seek, isn't liberal or conservative. It's different and it's both” (Hale, 1995).

8.2 The (New) Labour Party

When analysing the Labour party’s reformation, author John Gray concludes, “the near-destruction of the Conservative Party by Margaret Thatcher was the single most important condition of New Labour’s rise to power” (Gray, 2005:40 and Smith, 2005:586). After over a decade of Thatcherian rule, the internal break-up within the Conservative Party made it possible for the rival Labour Party to seize its long-awaited governmental seat. However, during the Thatcher-era, the government had thrived as a non-socialist party and uttered an almost hostile approach towards collectivism and the Labour Party in general, a view successfully launched upon its citizens. But as the voters’ support for the Tories dropped, the Labour Party, with Tony Blair upfront, launched in 1995 what was to be known as the *New Labour Party*, after successfully withdrawing its free-market critique and the abolishment of “tax and spend”-policies (Gray, 2005:41-42 and Smith, 2003:586-587). A quite radical reform considering the party’s original, more radical, socialistic platform: Even Thatcher asked: “Is he one of us?” (Smith, 2003:587). Blair wanted to modernise the party which is why he removed Clause Four from the party’s constitution¹⁵, a clause that used to stand as a symbol for Labour’s tax and union-friendly policies and its critical stance on the free-market. So what particular motives did the party have when adjusting its traditional platform?

¹⁵ Mandating common ownership of the means of production, distribution and exchange.

In their analysis, political scientists Hills and Waldfogel argues that Labours' adopted agenda "was consistent with public attitudes and voter preferences" (Hills & Waldfogel, 2004:767). The party's approach, according to the authors, relied more on "what works?" than on a clear ideological position. This strategy, however, was not outspokenly confessed by the Labour Party itself. The party was more inclined to point to external factors and Blair frequently mentioned this, more specifically by pointing to an expanding internationalism: "In the increasingly global economy of today, we cannot compete in the old way" (Fairclough, 2005:22). A "reinvention of government" (ibid. 67) was to be expected, performed by the help of "new politics" (ibid. 21). For example, the rather controversial reduction of the party's constitution, as mentioned above, was also a consequence with external factors, namely to change in order to adapt to the Tory-policies implemented during the Thatcherian years: "The pervasive influence of neo-liberal ideas in the 1990s shaped The New Labour world-view", Gray writes (Gray, 2005:42). He proceeds: "Blair was responding to the logic of the situation" (ibid. 44). Political scientist Trevor Smith concurs. The goal "was to set the nation in course better suited to the new millennium" (Smith, 2005:586).

8.3 Analysis

The reforms developed by the Democrats and Labour are quite similar and are developed in an almost identical context. As noted above, their opponents' lengthy stronghold of power frustrated both parties. When comparing the two and their reforms, authors Cambell and Rockman concurs: "These conditions of lengthy political exile from executive power provided political opportunities for both Blair and Clinton that would have been inconceivable without their parties' desperation to win office" (Cambell & Rockman, 2001:37). The Moderates were in a similar situation prior to the election 2006. Not only had the Moderates been out of executive strength for twelve years, their defeat in the 2002 election was surely a major warning sign saying that some reforms were necessary.

As mentioned above, the Democrats defeat in the 1980 election was the worst in over forty years. The Labour party, prior to Blair, had suffered great losses as well. Thatcher, and later on John Major, had convinced UK citizens of Labours socialistic ties during Tory's 18 years of reign. As a consequence there was a general scepticism towards socialism during the neo-liberal waves of the 1980s and the early 1990s. The neo-liberal forefront figure and Tory advisor F.A. Hayek marked this sign of the times whilst stating that "Labour will never win again", indicating liberalism's victory over socialism: A statement that might have been true had Blair not adjusted its policies to the winds of neo-liberalism.

Not only did the context by which the two parties work within share similar features, the different parties surely developed a similar approach in order to tackle its problems. The most striking similarity is Blair's and Clintons' fortifying of *viability* and *societal change* as motives behind their policy changes. Blairs' modernisation and Clintons project "to end welfare as we know it" was the result,

as Sbragia points out, “of a world in which the role of the state has changed emphasis from the welfare projects of the post-war period to the wealth creation functions of the present era” (Sbragia, 2000). These values were not traditional leftist and a reform was therefore a necessity in order to cope with this general change of view.

The Moderates adopted a similar approach with focus on *viability* and *societal change*. For example, they concentrated on Sweden’s unemployment rates and job solutions in their election campaign (Broberg et al, 2007:3, Nuder, Tiden, nr. 1 2007). According to various party analyses, the lack of focus on these specific matters was the main reason why the Social Democrats lost their power. In the Moderates’ analysis of their 2006 election, they claim “the issue regarding work and alienation was the election’s main issue, which united a critique of society shared by the voters and increased the trust for the Moderates” (Broberg et al, 2007:3). The Moderates have evidently been inspired by at least Labours transformation to “New” Labour. Anders Borg declares, “it is obvious that we have had a lot to learn from them” (“Borg och Brown nytt radarpar”, DN, 2007-02-08). Reinfeldt concurs. After visiting 10 Downing Street he said that “[i]n a way he [Blair] is a role model. A lot of the most important measurements required for party renewal were performed by Blair from his starting point, and I have done the same thing with the Moderates” (“Tony Blair Reinfeldts förebild”, DN, 2007-03-07).

Vote-maximisation, which received support in our earlier analysis, is not well-documented in the conclusions we have gone through investigating New Labour and New Democrats. Still, one can interpret actions adopted by Clinton and Blair implemented for the sake of *vote-maximisation*. Hills and Waldfogel seem to suggest this when describing Labours’ new agenda as similar to the voters’ preferences. Clintons “non-ideological” approach can be interpreted in a similar way.

Sociologist Norman Fairclough developed the theory of “The Third Way” whilst analysing Blairs’ Labour party. Parties who adopt to “The Third Way” disregard their true ideological origins; they “share a fascination for opinion polls and a new media characterized as ‘infotainment’” (Needham, 2005:343). What the citation suggests is that the approach, “The Third Way”, requires a tough media campaign. Smith declares that “Blair’s closest advisers were clearly aware of the power now wielded by the media: the campaign was devised with this very much in mind” (Smith, 2005:586). Clinton, in a similar manner, “laid out moderate positions on [...] threshold issues, but their substance was not as important as the image they projected” (Hale, 1995). The Moderates applied a similar approach. “The Moderates will become the best party in Sweden regarding voter contact and campaign methods”, declared Per Schlingmann for example (“Högerspöke ska helt tvättas bort”, SvD, 2006-09-29). According to him, the Moderates overstated their change for the purpose of making it apparent for people (Schlingmann, 2007-02-14).

Internal cohesion received, like our analysis of the Moderates behaviour, no support.

8.4 Conclusion

We are able to conclude that the Democrats' and Labours' changes are similar to the Moderates change. It is therefore likely that the Moderates' motives are rather similar to those found in our analogy-examples.

Both *societal change* and *viability* got strong support primarily because these motives were frequently stated by both Clinton and Blair.

Parliamentary influence was not found as a motive in this chapter either. However, this is usually less important motive in the plurality election systems in US and Great Britain since less co-operation between parties is required (Sjöblom, 1968:?).

Internal cohesion got no support.

9 D: Actions by actors in general

In this chapter the Moderates' change is compared with how parties can act according to relevant theories. We have already argued why we have restricted ourselves to the rational actor-perspective (see ch. 3.1). Therefore, in this chapter, we focus on theories within the rational actor-field. We have already described some strategic motives (see ch. 3.2) that are assumed to expose how parties act in general. We will focus on these and, in addition, studies that give empirical support for theories, mainly from Håkansson's review.

9.1 Party action in theory

Within the rational actor-perspective there are several suggestions from various scholars of what parties basic goals are. Downs (1957:4ff) argued that everyone engaged in party activity are driven by self-interests. The motive behind actions is therefore to get power and money. This is done by forming a program that can get the most possible votes, i.e. *vote-maximisation* (Håkansson, 2005:68-70). In order for a party to be able to *vote-maximise*, it has to be ruled by a party elite. If so, the members influence has certainly decreased. Traditionally, parties have relied heavily on its members. Duverger described this type of parties as *mass-parties* (1963:427).

Kirchheimer (1966) challenged the view of parties as mass-parties. He noticed that some parties had evolved into professional machines focusing less on ideology and membership and more on political leadership, vote maximizing and interest groups. He used the term *catch-all party* to describe this new kind of party. This implies that the role of the single party member becomes weaker and that the elite become stronger (Håkansson, 2005:72-73).

Przeworski (1985) and Przeworski – Sprague (1986) developed the theory of *vote-maximisation* even further by studying western Social Democratic parties. They presented three problems which the party elites face when they try to maximise their votes. *First*, they have to convince the party organisation of the necessity of a change of program. *Second*, the group of voters that traditionally do not vote for the party has to become aware of the change and appreciate it to the degree that they are no longer reluctant to vote for the party. *Third*, and most important, the party has to keep most of their traditional voters (Håkansson 2005:70-72). Przeworski and Sprague can therefore be said to regard the party as an actor that has to take into account the surrounding institutional and structural circumstances when they act (as we argued in ch. 3.1).

Håkansson (2005) looks for empirical support for the theories: does Swedish parties *vote-maximise*? The question is difficult to answer since it is hard to compare and evaluate the importance of various studies with somewhat different results. For example, Bäck and Möller (2003) argues that the existing parties in Sweden should still be regarded as *massparties*, despite several factors indicating an evolving volatility in Swedish politics, i.e. diminishing membership figures and voting participation and an increase of pro-politicians within each party (Bäck & Möller, 2003:99ff). Nonetheless, Håkansson finds several results that confirm the theories of vote-maximisation. Håkansson recognises the development of *vote-maximising* elites during the last decades, especially among the Christian democrats, Social democrats and the Liberals (“Folkpartiet”) (Håkansson, 2005:86-93).

The Moderates, on the other hand, developed in an opposite direction from the 1970’s and onward. They became ideologically convinced with a consequent political program. Instead of adapting to the voters opinion, the Moderates tried to convince the voters that their program was superior. However, the election 2002 was disastrous for the Moderates and, as we have argued in this thesis, the Moderates changed significantly with the new leadership the year after (Håkansson, 2005:92-94). Håkansson recognises this¹⁶ and writes that the change appears to be “a typical example of what the rationalistic actor-theory predicts concerning party action” (2005:93). This implies that the Moderates should have increased their focus on *vote-maximisation*.

Håkansson explains that crisis, for example connected to severe election-failures, can reinforce a transformation of a party since both the leadership and the organisation can become more willing to accept a strategy more focused on *vote-maximising*. Furthermore, the loss of members makes the party elite more powerful and free to act as they please (Håkansson, 2005:100).

9.2 Analysis

By studying the literature we have described how parties in general can act. Below, we will link the mentioned theories to the Moderates change in order to see if we can strengthen our previous conclusions.

Vote-maximisation is the most frequently investigated motive in the literature (Håkansson, 2005:70-100). According to Patrik Norinder¹⁷, the Moderates changed because they believed the new stated policy would maximise their share of the votes (Norinder, 2007-03-26). The central actors have stated that they wanted to transform the Moderates into a party everyone could vote on (see for

¹⁶ He does so in a foot-note. The Moderates change did probably occur too recent to be further analysed by Håkansson since he probably wrote the text before the change.

¹⁷ Norinder was one of the Moderates’ members of the Swedish parliament until 2006.

example Schlingmann, 2007-02-14). This is in line with the *vote-maximisation*-theory developed by the authors above.

Kirchheimer, one of the authors mentioned above, recognised the development of *catch-all parties*, ruled by a *vote-maximising* party-elite. There are indications that a similar development occurred in the Moderates, as we have showed in the actor-chapter (ch. 5.2). Sven Otto Littorin has said that the Moderates have evaluated the possibility of abolishing the membership system (“M helrenoverar partiet”, Dagens Nyheter, 2004-07-07). In addition, Norinder claims that the Moderates’ transformation was carried out by the actors (see ch. 5.1) without discussions within the party or the parliament group. Furthermore, he explains why the elite, Reinfeldt and his closest associates, were so powerful. *First*, they had the power to decide who will be commissioned to assignments in committees. *Second*, they had the power over the party’s economy which, according to Norinder, resulted in the forming of an inner circle. *Third*, they monitored the party’s press staff and therefore controlled the party’s external communication. Norinder argues that the elite “bulldozed colleagues in the party”¹⁸ (Norinder, 2007-03-26).

It is possible that Norinder exaggerate the power of the actors and how the actors have been acting since he is critical to the Moderates political change. Still, Schlingmann admits that the party organisation was heavily challenged by the leadership (2007-02-14). The party has probably developed a rather powerful elite and therefore we argue that Bäck and Möller’s description of Swedish parties as *massparties* should be revised (2003:99ff).

When analysing the Moderates change from Przeworski and Sprague’s perspective it seems reasonable to believe that the actors were aware of the three problems that the authors’ described. *First*, the actors tried hard to convince the party organisation that the change was the right thing to do. *Second*, they tried to attract new groups of voters, for example by forming policies in areas like environment and welfare. According to Schlingmann, the Moderates dramatised the change in order to make people aware of it and obtain peoples’ interest. *Third*, the Moderates constantly repeated that “the ideology and ideas are the same but the solutions are new” (for example Wiklund, 2006:145-147 and Schlingmann 14/2-2007). By contrast, Norinder argues that the Moderates in fact “abandoned their traditional ideology and withdraw controversial standpoints” (2007-03-26). “The motive was to attract social-democratic voters” (ibid.). Schlingmann do not agree: “It is not about asking a group of voters what they want and then give it to them. It is about giving the right answers to the contemporary problems in the society” (Schlingmann, 2007-02-14). However, Schlingmann proceeds, “the Moderates based their change on which problems people experience”(ibid.).

Together this offers some support for the *vote-maximisation* motive even though this support is somewhat ambiguous.

¹⁸ Norinder gives an example from his work in the Moderates employment committee. When Reinfeldt and his associates (the actor) had decided to change, the objections from the committee were ignored and Anders Borg took over the responsibility for employment issues.

Parliamentary influence is not considered as a motive in any of our material although it is possible that the Moderates' changed in order to make it easier to co-operate with the other parties in the non-socialist alliance. However, we have not found any support for this vague speculation.

Internal cohesion and *parliamentary influence* have had support in literature by various authors since Sjöblom (1968) wrote his influential dissertation. However, we have not found any particular correspondence between the Moderates change and the nature of these two motives. *Internal cohesion* is easily dismissed. Per Schlingmann says that significant changes in the party demands support from the organisation, however, he admits that the leadership "challenged the party organisation forcefully" (Schlingmann, 2007-02-14). Obviously, Norinder do not dispute this view (Norinder, 2007-03-26).

The motives mentioned by the actors, *viability* and *societal change*, have not been found in literature. Presumably because these are preferential motives and not strategic motives which often is the focus in theoretical literature. Sjöblom deals with preferential motives when he argues that parties strive for *program realisation*. However, he does not discuss what the parties preferences are since it is different from party to party.

9.3 Conclusion

This chapter has dealt with vote-maximisation to a great extent. The literature has showed that the motive is (increasingly) important and in what situations parties develop vote-maximisation strategies. This corresponds well with the situation before and during the Moderates change. Our conclusion is that this chapter gives strong support for *vote-maximisation* but the support in literature does not correspond completely with our material about the actors. The result has to be considered with caution.

Internal cohesion and *parliamentary influence* got support in literature but we could not distinguish a clear correspondence with the Moderates situation. Therefore the support must be regarded as weak.

We have not found any theoretical literature regarding *societal change* and *viability*, presumably due to the nature of preferential motives. Hence, no support in this chapter.

10 Conclusion

The various motives discussed in chapters 6-9 will in this chapter be assessed separately. Each motive will be weighed in accordance to our previous conclusions found in the investigation chapters (6-9) and in relation to each other. This enables us to interpret the importance each motive might hold and, furthermore, reach conclusions on what particular motive we regard as most significant. Our findings above reject the parliamentary influence-motive and the internal cohesion-motive and we will therefore not discuss them further in this conclusion. To make our findings more clear and comprehensible we have compiled the results in a table (fig. 1).

Figure 1
Support for the motives in the various chapters.

	A	B	C	D
Viability	Strong	Strong	Strong	-
Societal change	Strong	-	Strong	-
Vote-maximisation	Fair	Fair	Fair	Strong
Parliamentary influence	-	-	-	Weak
Internal cohesion	-	Weak	-	Weak

10.1 Viability

We find strong evidence suggesting that the Moderates' stated change was a result of the actors' will to abandon the party's prior politics due to its unrealistic formation. This "new" approach, they said, was more realistic and, by contrast to their prior party's policies, possible to implement.

Apart from the D-section, all investigation chapters above supported this viability-approach making it the most valuable motive (together with societal change, as we shall see below). In the A-section, viability received a very strong support. In the scheme of analysis (see Appendix), the support was almost total apart from its weak Position and Stability within the TV/radio category. However, due to this motive's great support in the remaining two categories, especially in

Medborgaren which we qualified as the stronger category, we consider it justified to label this motive as Strong in our result's figure (fig. ?). It received strong support in the B-section as well, due to Reinfeldts' ideas in 1995, especially in the works *Nostalgitrippen* and the highly critical article "M måste visa att de bryr sig", and how these corresponds with his way of thinking during the launch of the New Moderates. In the C-section, we declared how both Blair and Clinton used viability as a motive for the change of their respective parties. It makes the support for the viability motive stronger even though we regard this chapter as less important than the previous two.

Viability was not supported in the D-chapter where we investigated theoretical literature. One plausible explanation is that viability is a preferential motive and that preferential motives are seldom analysed specifically. Scholars have showed a much greater interest for parties' strategic actions which is reasonable since the strategic behaviour is easier to generalise onto other parties (see ch. 3.2 and 9.2).

10.2 Societal change

Societal change is not, as figure 1 shows, an equally strong motive as viability. However, we do believe it is of some value since it receives very strong support in the A-section. In the B-section, on the other hand, it receives no support whatsoever. How can this be explained? We interpret this as the party either (1) adapted to a particular change that did in fact take place in society right before they declared their change or (2) that this motive was only used in order to justify their declared change. We are leaning towards the first explanation, mainly due to Per Schlingmann's response to what the societal change actually consisted of¹⁹ (see ch. 6.5).

The C-section gave strong support for societal change but we argued above that this chapter is of less relevance compared to the previous two. In 10.1 we also discussed why preferential motives were not mentioned in section D and the same goes for *societal change* since we consider it too to be a preferential motive.

Together, the support for *societal change* is virtually as strong as for *viability*. The absent support in the B-chapter raised some doubts whether the change really was a response to societal changes, but Per Schlingmann offered a fairly reasonable explanation.

¹⁹ Lack of productivity has been replaced with lack of jobs.

10.3 Vote-maximisation

As noted above, strategic motives are frequently studied. *Vote-maximisation* is perhaps the most studied strategic motive and we received strong support for it in the D-chapter. We saw that the traditional mass-parties in Sweden are transforming into *vote-maximising* catch-all parties and that the Moderates have been identified with this type of transformation after the change in 2003.

We have also explained that this kind of strategic motives are often denied by the parties themselves. This might be an explanation to why *vote-maximisation* got less support (“fair”) in the chapters dealing with the parties own statements. The fact that *vote-maximisation* got some support in both section A and B suggests that it could have been a considerably important motive. It was expected that the parties we used as analogy-examples in section C would be careful with revealing *vote-maximisation* as a motive. Relying on other scholars we consider the support for this motive as fair. Thus, the support for the motive increases although the C-chapter is less important than the previous two.

If vote-maximisation was an important motive for the actors, they should have been convinced that this particular change would gain more votes. This seems reasonable since Per Schlingmann said that the aim was to change the Moderates into a party that everyone could vote on (ch.6.5). Still, Sven-Otto Littorin claimed that he was not certain that such a change would improve the Moderates opinion figures; it could have been the other way around (ch. 6.5). This could be in line with one of Przeworski and Sprague’s mentioned problems with vote-maximisation: parties have to keep their traditional voters while trying to attract new voters (ch. 9).

Strategic motives as *vote-maximisation* are difficult to compare with preferential motives as *viability* and *societal change*. They can work together as Sjöblom shows (see ch. 3.2). Program realisation includes realisation of preferences and the strategic considerations are according to this theory made in order to be able to attain these preferences. Having policies that are *viable* and adjusted to *societal changes* are regarded as preferential motives by us. However, it is possible that the actors were trying to *vote-maximise* in different ways while at the same time trying to obtain their preferences. It is also possible that these motives could work as proxys for *vote-maximisation*. They might simply be a better sounding explanation to the party’s attempt to gain more votes.

In short, it is difficult to say exactly how much *vote-maximisation* was a motive behind the Moderates’ change.

10.4 Final discussion

The motives revealed above do not exist independently. They worked in relation to each other and based on our findings we find that the motives above were all

parts of the party's strategy for the 2006 election. It is important to point out, however, that it is not plausible for other parties to implement this particular strategy used by the Moderates. There are many contributing factors necessary for any party to reform in the way that Reinfeld proclaimed. It is not within our reach, however, to draw final conclusions regarding why the Moderates' reform actually took place and why this happened during this particular time. Still, we find it necessary to proclaim a few points regarding this particular matter. These points are not drawn from any research but are based on our own thoughts that surfaced while writing this thesis. The following points can be of inspiration for future researchers and, as such, lead to a cumulative process in which the picture of the Moderates' change becomes clearer.

We argue that the particular reform pursued by the Moderates' were a direct consequence of the loss in the election 2002. After the election, the party seems to have realised how difficult it was for a typical conservative party to convince the public of its right-wing agenda. We believe that this is due to the fact that Sweden and its citizens have since the beginning of left-right politics built a strong sense of left-wing values due to the state's traditionally left-wing government. The main actors within the Moderates were probably aware of this and in order to improve their election results the party had to revitalise its political agenda and proclaim this as much as possible to the citizens of Sweden. Also, it is legitimate to assume that the Moderates' reform would never have happened had the prior actors within the elite never left their positions. We have shown that the new and central actors were all extremely vital for the launch of the New Moderates. We consider these two factors (loss in election 2002 and the new actors) to be central when discussing the party's reform.

We also feel the need to point out the importance of the media, a source of great importance for political parties. This medium is used in order to convince, or at least influence, the voters' behaviour. If media had been of less importance, as it was only some decades ago, we argue that the Moderates reform would have been of less extreme measures. The *vote-maximisation* strategy would at least been of less importance since it implies for a party to reach out to its voters as broadly as possible.

11 Appendix

11.1 Findings TV/Radio

Motive	Material	Placement	Actor
Viability	Speech (<i>Almedalsveckan</i> , 2006-07-05, SVT)	Reoccurring (4x)	FredrikReinfeldt
Societal change	Interview (<i>Utfrågningen</i> , 2006-09-03, SVT)	Reoccurring (2x)	Fredrik Reinfeldt
Vote-maximisation	Interview (<i>Utfrågningen</i> , 2006-09-03, SVT)	Reoccurring (2x)	Fredrik Reinfeldt
Viability	Debate (<i>Slutdebatten</i> , 2006-09-14, SVT)	Subtle	Fredrik Reinfeldt
Vote-maximisation	Interview (<i>Gomorrön Sverige</i> , 2006-09-04, SVT)	Subtle	Fredrik Reinfeldt
Vote-maximisation	Interview (<i>SR Ekot</i> , 2006-04-22)	Emphasised	Fredrik Reinfeldt
Internal cohesion	Interview (<i>SR Ekot</i> , 2006-08-27)	Subtle	Fredrik Reinfeldt
Societal change	Interview (<i>SR Ekot</i> , 2006-08-27)	Emphasised	Fredrik Reinfeldt
Vote-maximisation	Interview (<i>SR Ekot</i> , 2006-08-27)	Subtle	Fredrik Reinfeldt
Viability	Interview (<i>SR Ekot</i> , 2006-08-27)	Subtle	Fredrik Reinfeldt
Vote-maximisation	Interview (<i>SR Ekot</i> , 2005-03-05)	Reoccurring (3x)	Fredrik Reinfeldt
Societal change	Interview (<i>SR Ekot</i> , 2005-03-05)	Emphasised	Fredrik Reinfeldt

Results

Motive	Frequency	Position	Stability
Viability	3	Subtle	None
Vote-maximisation	4	Emphasised	Poor
Societal change	3	Emphasised	Poor

Internal cohesion	1	Subtle	None
Parliamentary influence	0	-	None

11.2 Findings newspapers

Motive	Material	Placement	Actor
Viability	Article (SvD, 20050925)	Subtle	Fredrik Reinfeldt
Viability	Comment (SvD, 20061003)	Subtle	Anders Borg
Vote-maximisation	Article (SvD, 20041303)	Emphasised	Per Schlingman
Viability	Article (SvD, 20041303)	Subtle	Per Schlingman
Vote-maximisation	Article (SvD, 20062809)	Subtle	Per Schlingman
Societal change	Article (DN, 20060203)	Emphasised	Reinfeldt & Borg
Societal change	Article (GP, 20060318)	Emphasised	Fredrik Reinfeldt
Societal change	Article (GP, 20060811)	Emphasised	Fredrik Reinfeldt
Vote-maximisation	Article (GP, 20060822)	Subtle	Fredrik Reinfeldt
Societal change	Article (GP, 20060310)	Subtle	Per Schlingmann

Results

Motive	Frequency	Stability	Position
Societal change	4	Stable	Emphasised
Viability	3	Very stable	Subtle
Vote-maximisation	2	Poor	Subtle
Internal cohesion	-	-	-
Parliamentary influence	-	-	-

11.3 Findings Medborgaren

Motive	Material	Placement	Actor
Viability	Article (nr. 4, 2003)	-	Sven-Otto Littorin
Viability/vote-maximisation	Reinfeldts presentation (nr. 4, 2003)	-	Fredrik Reinfeldt
Societal change	Leader (nr. 4, 2005)	-	Sven-Otto Littorin
Viability	Leader (nr. 4, 2005)	Subtle	Sven-Otto Littorin
Internal cohesion	Article (nr. 4, 2005)	Reoccurring	-
Vote-maximisation	Article (nr. 4, 2005)	Subtle	-
Vote-maximisation	Article (nr. 2, 2006)	-	-
Societal change	Article (nr. 2, 2006)	-	-
Societal change	Article (nr. 3, 2006)	-	-
Societal change	Article (nr. 3, 2006)	-	-
Viability	Leader (nr. 3, 2006)	-	-

Results

Motive	Frequency	Stability	Position
Viability	4	Stable	Emphasised
Societal change	4	Stable	Emphasised
Vote-maximisation	3	Stable	Subtle
Internal cohesion	1	-	Emphasised
Parliamentary influence	-	-	-

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