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Parties and Legislatures: An Explication

by

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PARTIES AND LEGISLATURES: AN EXPLICATION

The study of legislative institutions recently has moved beyond the rather parochial preoccupation with the European and American experiences to an examination of legislatures in developing political systems. Scholars engaged in this research have recognized the essential point that simply because legislatures in many nations appear to be marginal to political decision-making, they are not necessarily insignificant to the political systems in which they exist. Many of these research efforts therefore have concentrated on the identification and analysis of less apparent functions of legislative institutions.¹

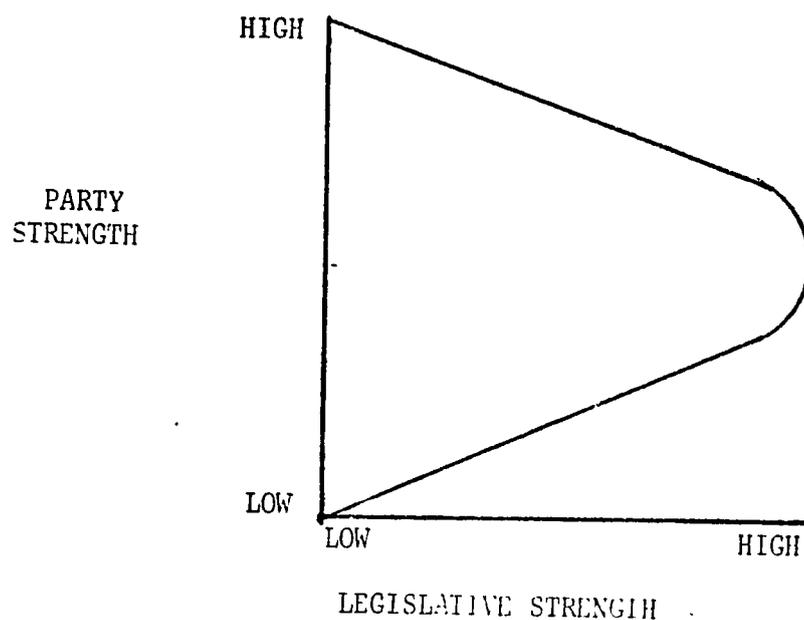
This research approach is extremely important and long overdue; however, as the literature now stands there are at least two major failings. First, this research remains non-comparative; most of the works are single nation studies, or collections of such studies. Few units of analysis common to all legislatures have been identified, and therefore attempts to generalize have been quite limited and tentative.² Secondly, at least one critical question has been skipped over: what accounts for the strength or weakness of legislatures in different nations?

The burden of this paper is to explicate the relation between this question and the activities of political parties. Indicators of legislative strength will be suggested and a general typology of party-legislature situations will be developed. It is not being asserted that party is the only variable on which the condition of the legislature depends. Rather, the activities of political parties and the position of legislative institutions are interdependent.

THE VARIABLES

The relation between party strength and legislative strength can be approximated by the curve shown in Figure 1;

FIGURE 1



that is, legislatures appear to be weak in systems with the very strongest and the very weakest political parties, and legislatures are strongest in systems with political parties of only moderate strength. These are parties strong enough to support the legislative institution but not strong enough to dominate it. All systems do not necessarily fall on the curve; however, large deviations from the curve indicate unstable situations. Before analyzing the relation suggested in Figure 1, an indication of what is meant by legislative strength and party strength should be provided.

Legislative Strength. One obvious dimension of legislative strength is the prominence of the legislature in the decision-making process.³ The questions that can be asked to place a legislature along this dimension are these; is the legislative process central to or incidental to political

decision-making? Is the legislature where "the action" takes place, or simply a legitimizing arena for decisions taken in other forums? Are legislators consulted on policy, or simply informed of decisions after they are made? Answers to these questions would be suggested by the ability of the legislature to accept, amend, or reject proposed legislation no matter who has initiated it. Essentially this dimension reflects the relation between the legislature and those who hold executive power; is the legislature superior to the executive, subordinate, or an equal partner in the decision-making process?

The main limitation of this dimension is that it produces some strange bedfellows. Falling into the broad category of strong legislatures would be institutions as diverse as the American Congress, the French National Assembly during the 4th Republic, the current Chilean Congress, and perhaps the Reichstag during the Weimar Republic. Even more disconcerting would be the collection of nations classified as weak; the British Parliament, the Supreme Soviet, the Indian Parliament, and the Brazilian National Congress are all, to varying degrees, legislatures subordinate to the executive.

The problem with the decision-making dimension is that it provides a static criterion for institutional arrangements constantly subject to change. The National Assembly during the 4th Republic was as central to political decision-making as the American Congress is today; the difference is that the life of the 4th Republic was twelve years, whereas the American Congress has maintained its position for 183 years. Similarly, neither the British Parliament nor the Brazilian National Congress is able to accept, reject, or amend Government proposals at will; however, it would be shocking should an irate Prime Minister order British soldiers to close the House of Commons

whereas the abolition of the Brazilian National Congress by the military of that country would occasion no great surprise.

A second dimension is required that reflects the stability of the legislature's position and therefore the likelihood of change. The dimension proposed here is the support that the legislature can command from the members of the political system. The questions that would be asked to place a legislature on this dimension would be these; if other elements in the political system threaten the existence or the prerogatives of the legislature, will counter-forces be generated to oppose such steps? Are actions of the legislature considered legitimate by the public at large as well as the important attentive groups in the system? In sum, is the legislature a popular institution whose existence is supported by mass and attentive publics? ⁴

The power of the National Assembly in the 4th Republic came to an end because it did not have this support; the American Congress continues to wield its power because it does have this support. The British Parliament will continue to exist because an attempt to abolish it would be inconceivable to the citizens of Britain; the Brazilian Congress could cease to exist tomorrow, and few Brazilians would know, and fewer would care.

Therefore, a strong legislature is one that has decision-making power and commands the support of the members of the political system; a weaker legislature has one characteristic but not the other; the weakest legislatures have neither decision-making power nor the support of the public. It would appear that the support dimension is the primary indicator of the stability of a legislature's position. Legislatures that are highly supported will tend to persist in their current decision-making role with

only small fluctuations. Legislatures with less support are subject to much greater variation on the decision-making dimension.

Party Strength. In measuring the strength of political parties, the major task is to develop criteria that distinguish between the cliques and factions that exist in almost any governmental system, and modern political parties. Five such criteria can be identified.

First, strong political parties are characterized by a continuous party structure, which Chambers defines as a relatively durable, regularized, and stable connection among active leaders and between them and their followers.⁵ This contrasts with highly transient factions which occasionally form within legislatures, or perhaps organize prior to elections and disband shortly thereafter.

Second, durable structures eventually produce de-personalized parties. Weber indicated that in their formative stage, parties were closely identified with a particular leader.⁶ These "aristocratic cliques" were dependent upon a central personality or family and disappeared when these individuals left the political arena. As parties developed, leadership became more collective and less personalized. More recently, Huntington has suggested that "the strength of a political party is measured by its ability to survive its founder or the charismatic leader who first brings it to power."⁷ Thus, if a party disappears when its leader passes from the scene, this implies that a highly personalized and, therefore, a very weak party existed. If leadership can be successfully transferred from one to another, this indicates a stronger party.

A third criterion of party strength is the complexity of the party organization; organizational complexity refers to the linkages between the party structure and both socio-economic organizations and voters. Huntington

asserts that strong parties have complex organizations connecting them with the rest of the participants in the political system; weak factional groupings are simply organized and only loosely related to other societal groups or to mass electorates.⁸

The existence of a complex organization would be verified by the party's following. Strong political parties should exhibit a greater range, density, and stability of support than factions.⁹ The strength of a political party on this fourth criterion reaches a peak when it monopolizes political power to the extent that it drives other organizations out of the political arena. Thus, parties that are part of a multi-party system in which no party can claim a majority following are weaker on this criterion than parties in a two-party system, which are weaker than single parties operating without opposition.

A fifth criterion of party strength is evidence that the party is engaged in the performance of political activities. There are three broad categories of party activities: electoral, constituent, and governmental. Electoral activities are those directly involved with the process of contesting elections. Making nominations, organizing and financing campaigns, and the articulation of platforms and positions are examples of this type of activity.

Constituency activity refers to the articulation, aggregation, and communication of demands by the party to political decision-makers. It also involves demand reduction in the sense that the party organization deals with particularistic demands such as arranging licenses, providing for the personal welfare of those in need, and dispensing patronage to party supporters.¹⁰

Government activities refer to the organization of government institutions, the making of public policy, conciliating among conflicting interests of various groups, and the imposition of party discipline on party members in the legislature.¹¹

Although weak parties may partially and occasionally engage in one or more of these activities, the strong party undertakes all of them in a relatively continuous, coordinated, and visible fashion.

To summarize, strong parties have durable rather than ad hoc structures, de-personalized leadership, complex organizations, broad followings, and regularly perform electoral, constituent, and governmental activity. The most important variable is the extent to which the party engages in political activities. As the party regularly undertakes these activities, its structure will become more continuous and eventually leadership will become less personalized.

The complexity of the organization and the breadth of its following depend upon the type of activity toward which the party most successfully directs its efforts. To the extent that parties succeed in electoral and constituent activities, they will increase their following and become more organizationally complex. Parties which are simply governmental cliques concentrating on policy-making will have relatively narrow followings and simple organizations. Strong political parties engage in all three activities, and the strongest political parties monopolize these activities in their political systems; that is, none but the party organization successfully participates in these activities.

Party Strength and Legislative Strength. Of crucial importance to the position of the legislature is the role that the individual legislator

plays in the performance of these political activities. If these activities are dominated by the party with only perfunctory participation by the legislator, then this weakens the legislature on both the decisional and the support dimensions. Party domination of government activities diminishes the decisional role of the legislature; party control of constituency and electoral activities diminishes the popular support accruing to the legislature.

Alternatively the party and the legislators may share these activities. To the extent that the legislators participate in governmental activities, the decisional role of the legislature will increase. To the extent that legislators take an active role in constituency and electoral activities, support for the legislature will increase. Legislative participation in these latter activities is of primary significance; successful electoral and constituency activity increases the saliency of the legislator and puts him in a stronger position to claim the right to participate in governmental activities.¹²

Finally, in the event that neither the party nor the legislators are able to successfully perform these political activities, both will be weak and the political system will be dominated by non-party and non-legislative elements.

The extent to which parties, legislators, or other elements in the political system monopolize or share these activities depends upon the resources at the disposal of each. "Political resources" are the requisites for participating in these activities in a given system, and they obviously vary from nation to nation. In some systems, capital is the primary resource, in others guns, in still others charisma. Both the constitutional distribution

of power and the political culture of a system effect the nature of the available resources and the access of parties, legislators, soldiers, and bureaucrats to them.

Those who possess these system-relevant political resources are able to contest or control elections, deal with constituent demands, and exercise government power. If the required resources are controlled by the party, then the party will monopolize political activities and the legislature and other elements will be weak. If the resources are controlled by the army or the bureaucracy, then both the parties and the legislature will be weak. If all elements in the system have access to the resources, then the strength of each will depend upon the share of the resources it is able to claim which will then determine its ability to participate in political activities.

This framework of political activities and political resources can be used to explain the strength and weakness of the legislature in different systems.

PARTY STRENGTH AND LEGISLATIVE STRENGTH: WESTERN EXPERIENCES

The British Experience. The British parliamentary experience appears to be particularly troublesome for the relation depicted in Figure 1 because the accepted view today is that the British Parliament was strongest in a period when its political parties were weakest. Mackenzie suggests that the Commons won its "final victory" in 1829 when the principle of ministerial responsibility became accepted.¹³ However, it is generally agreed that at that time, political parties were, at most, embryonic. Namier forcefully demonstrates that 18th century British politics was partyless;¹⁴ Mackenzie agrees, and he and Ostrogorski place the emergence of party in Britain

during the period immediately following the 1832 Reform Act.¹⁵ Therefore, in the early 19th century, the British Parliament would be located in the lower right hand corner of Figure 1, some distance from the party-legislature curve.

An explanation for the success of the British legislature in a weak party situation involves an examination of the political resources of the individual members of the legislature.

The British MPs of this period usually were notable people representing prominent families. Given a limited franchise and sufficient funds they could easily engineer their own election to office. The family connections and other personal resources of the MP enabled him to deal with the limited number of demands generated by this limited constituency. The MP could provide good offices for his constituents in their dealings with the Government and could handle personal problems that might be brought to them. Thus, the resources controlled by the individual MP were sufficient to enable him to perform the electoral and constituent activities without the aid of party.¹⁶

The need for party arose at the governmental level. It was clear that as long as legislators operated independently in the parliament, the Crown would be able to manipulate legislative outcomes to suit its own purposes.¹⁷ Intra-parliamentary groups, bound together by interests as diverse as region, ideology, or money as well as support or opposition to the monarchy, emerged in Parliament.¹⁸ These groups were narrow, personal cadres, weak both structurally and organizationally. They confined themselves almost exclusively to governmental activities. In doing so, they may have helped to strengthen the decision-making power of the legislature; however, they did not raise the general support accruing to the institution, particularly

among those who were not represented in the legislature.

In England, as in other countries, when the franchise was expanded, it became impossible for the individual legislator to do all that he had done before. Most scholars trace the birth of extra-governmental party organizations to the spread of the franchise;¹⁹ as the constituent and electoral activities required to maintain parliamentary majorities became more complex, party organization became essential if these activities were to be effectively performed.

Eventually, the parties achieved a dominant role in the performance of these activities, and then became capable of dominating governmental activities. Party unity in the legislature was enforced with the tacit threat of electoral and constituent repercussions. Thus, to the extent that the legislator came to rely on the party organization for the performance of electoral and constituent activities, he came to depend upon the party for instructions in the performance of governmental activities. Party government, in this way, replaced legislative government and the decision-making strength of the legislature declined.

The emergence of the extra-governmental organizations which led to the decline of legislative decision-making also strengthened the legislature on the support dimension. With the expanded franchise, the resources of individual legislators were insufficient to perform electoral and constituent activities satisfactorily. The party organization, by nominating candidates for office, organizing campaigns, and by communicating and articulating constituency demands, increased the saliency of the legislature and turned it into an organ of popular representation capable of commanding the support of the members of the political system. Without

extra-governmental organizations, the decision-making power of the legislature might have been higher, but subject to much greater variation because support for the legislature would have been substantially lower. However, as the system did develop, significant changes in the current position of the Parliament seem improbable.

The European Experience. Parties emerged on the Continent in close association with parliamentary institutions, sometimes beginning within the legislature and sometimes outside the legislature.²⁰ As in England, external organizations formed in response to the situation created by an expanding electorate. Differences between the British and the Continental experience can be attributed to multiple political parties; in the context of this discussion, the following points should be made about the implications of a multi-party system for legislative strength.

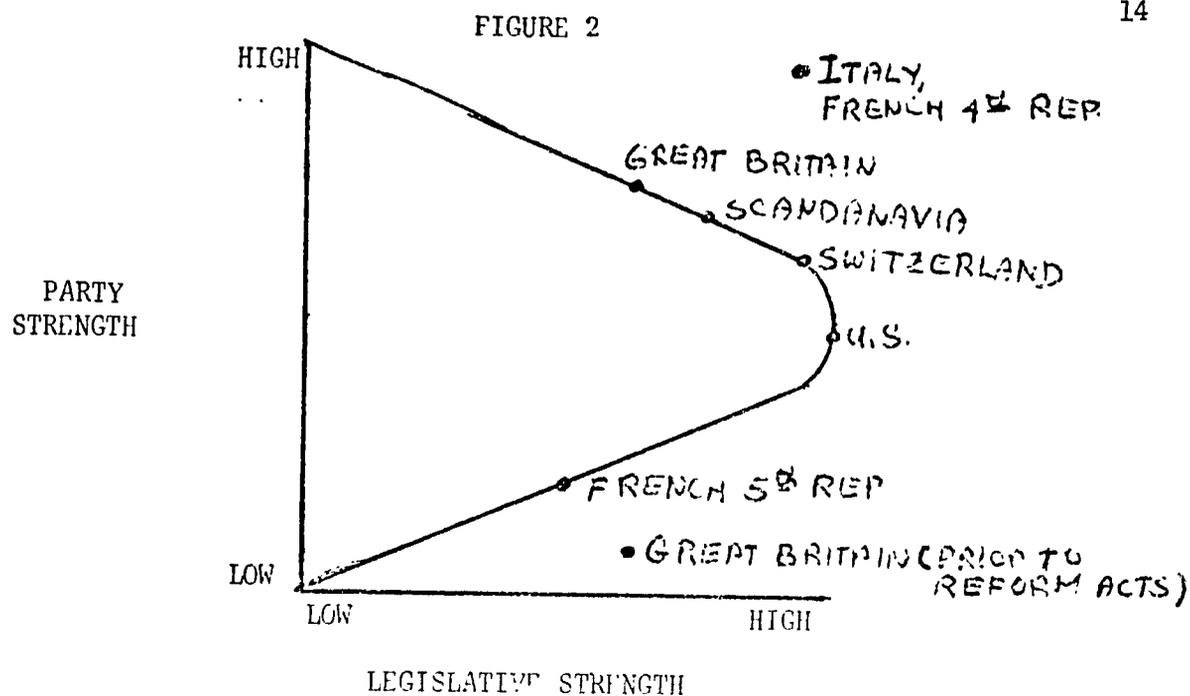
First, these parties are generally strong according to the five criteria identified earlier. The greatest weakness is on the criterion of following; because of societal cleavages and the institutional arrangements that accommodate them, parties that do not generate mass followings are encouraged and parties of "majority bent" are rare.²¹ In this sense, they are weaker than parties existing in two-party situations. Because of a limited following, some of these parties also may have quite simple organizations.

Second, legislatures in these systems are generally weak on one of the two criteria of legislative strength. In those systems where the parties are able to compromise and form relatively stable government coalitions (Scandinavia, the Low Countries), the decision-making power of the legislature declines, but support for the legislature increases. The assumption

here is that support increases when an institution performs effectively, and one index of such effective performance is the ability of the parties to resolve their differences and to produce stable government.²²

In those systems where the parties are not able to reach such accommodations (Italy, French 3rd and 4th Republics, Weimar Germany) decision-making power may rise, but support for the legislature decreases. Legislative stalemates are common, executive instability is endemic, and political apathy and alienation increase. This makes the position of the legislature very unstable, and sets the stage for a dismantling of legislative power by non-legislative and non-party forces.

The various British and European situations are displayed in Figure 2. European multi-party systems in which parties successfully govern are located on the upper half of the curve; systems in which the parties do not successfully govern are located above and to the right of the curve (strong parties-strong legislature). This is an unstable situation which will eventually be resolved by a return to the curve, typically to the bottom half, in which both the parties and the legislature are weakened by other elements in the system. Obviously de Gaulle's rise to power and the forming of the 5th French Republic exemplifies that scenario. Weimar Germany and post-war Greece are additional cases. Alternatively, but less frequently, one party (or coalition of parties) may emerge as the dominant political force over an extended period of time; in that case, the system will return to the top half of the curve.



The American Experience. The American experience with legislative development was atypical because the American Congress began with a strong presumption of supremacy. This has been accredited to the distrust of executive power so prevalent in the new nation because of the abuses of English monarchs and their royal Governors. The Constitution depicts the Congress as the first branch of government and in most of the states Governors were extremely weak and the legislature was strong.²³ Perhaps no other nation began its political experience with a situation so conducive to legislative strength.

Consequently the American Congress was able to exercise a great deal of decision-making power before party organizations of even moderate strength had formed. However, the growth of party, again concurrent with the spread of the franchise, was very rapid and, at least by the age of Jackson, modern party organizations were functioning in the United States.²⁴

The most salient feature of the American parties has been their failure to perform governmental activities. Almost since their inception, they

have remained largely electoral and constituent organizations. What is crucial for this discussion is that the parties never dominated electoral and constituent activities. Because of federalism, the decentralization of power, the importance of private funds for political campaigns, and, eventually, the direct primary and the rise of powerful private interest groups, the American legislator has always had a degree of electoral independence from the party.²⁵

Constituency demands are dealt with by the legislator, or by local organizations dominated by the legislator; the relation of the party organization to this process is variable, but usually marginal.²⁶ The resources of the American legislator explain his ability to work at the constituent level successfully. First, in an affluent society such as the United States, constituency demands are not as severe as they are in other systems, either in content or in volume. Second, as a result of the decentralized nature of political power in the Congress, individual legislators possess influence sufficient to effectively represent the needs of their constituents to government bureaucrats. American legislators have seen to it that they have large, well-paid staffs, many of whom are assigned exclusively to constituent work.

Finally, the data strongly suggests that the American legislator and his institution, though objectively powerful, are not very visible to most Americans. The people know little of their representatives or their activities, and tend to hold Presidents rather than congressmen responsible for good times and bad times.²⁷ Therefore, support for the legislative institution remains quite high and this reinforces its strong decision-making role. Because of this strong support, the American system is essentially

stable. Narrow range oscillations between periods of executive strength and legislative strength are common. Crisis situations, especially those in which foreign policy considerations are prominent, tend to create the conditions for temporary Executive dominance. Such episodes are invariably followed by a re-assertion of legislative control. Despite the recurrent theme of the decline of Congress,²⁸ the American national legislature remains the most powerful legislative body in the world.

The strength of the American Congress is a direct result of the failure of parties to perform governmental activities; this in turn is caused by the sharing of constituency and electoral activities among the parties, legislators, and private groups with the dominant role usually belonging to the legislator. In the British and European situations, in contrast, the strength of the parties in governmental activities is a reflection of their dominance in electoral and constituency activities. The same conceptual framework used to analyze the British, European, and American models is directly applicable to non-western situations.

PARTY STRENGTH AND LEGISLATIVE STRENGTH: NON-WESTERN EXPERIENCES

Legislatures in non-western nations can be placed in three broad categories: legislatures dominated by a single party, legislatures dominated by non-party elements, or strong legislatures similar to western parliamentary systems.

Party Domination. In this case, a political party virtually monopolizes the three political activities. Most candidates for the legislature are party members and their candidacy is approved by the party. Constituency organizations are established and operated by the party and are essential

components of the party's structure. Legislators do not have the necessary resources to significantly engage in these activities. Consequently, the party performs governmental activities and legislative support for its politics is expected. Dissent may be allowed and sometimes encouraged in debate, but legislative policy-making initiative is inconceivable and voting against the Government is unacceptable.²⁹

Obviously, this category covers a rather wide span of nations, including the Mexican dominant party system, pluralist one-party systems in Kenya, Tanzania, and Tunisia, more authoritarian one-party systems in Nationalist China and Algeria, and systems dominated by the Communist Party.³⁰

In the more pluralist systems, the party may not completely monopolize all of the three functions. In Tanzania, legislators may be contacted directly by constituents, a party nomination may be awarded primarily because of the popularity of the nominee in his constituency, some private campaigning may be conducted by the individual candidates, and certain legislators may be consulted by the Government before decisions are made.³¹ However, the party is in firm control of the system and the legislature is secondary and subservient to the party; the party, rather than the legislature, is the object of the support of the aware members of the political system, and thus in any confrontation between the two, the party is the presumptive winner.

These systems are located toward the upper left-hand corner of Figure 1, with the communist systems furthest to the left and the more pluralist systems somewhat to the right.

Non-Party, Non-Legislative Domination. In systems dominated by non-party elements, both the parties and the legislature are weak. There are three types of systems which fall into this broad category.

The simplest type is one in which neither parties nor a legislature exist. Typically, political power is monopolized by military elements who form a revolutionary council; the head of the Government may receive the formal title of President, or Chairman of the Council. Systems such as this are quite common now in northern Africa (Libya, Sudan, Somalia, Mali, Dahomey, Nigeria) but exist in Asia (Thailand) and Latin America as well (Argentina, and at times Brazil, Peru, and Ecuador).

A similar situation is one in which the executive claims to rule through a political party. It then becomes an empirical problem to decide whether in fact the organization is a political party or merely a different name for the military junta. In such systems, the legislature either does not exist, (e.g., Burma, Central African Republic) or is a benign appendage to the government (e.g., Haiti, Malawi, Chad).

The third situation in this category of legislatures dominated by non-party elements is one in which both a legislature and political parties exist and both are weak compared to an executive, usually backed by the military. These situations are particularly common in Asia (South Korea, South Vietnam, Indonesia, Thailand between 1969 and 1971, Iran) and Latin America (Guatemala, Nicaragua, Argentina prior to 1966, Brazil, Paraguay, Cuba before 1968). In nations such as these, the configuration of party, legislative, and executive strength is more complex than in the other developing nations previously discussed.

Although political parties in these systems vary in regard to leadership, structure, organization, and following, they are uniformly weak in their performance of political activities. They are weak in electoral activities; they provide little support for their candidates and, in fact, are

likely to depend upon the candidate for money and supplies. Minor parties proliferate prior to the election simply to provide labels for groups of candidates. Peterson offers the following description of the situation in Brazil:

Each candidate for federal or state deputy conducts his own campaign and runs for all intents and purposes independent of party. The political organizations rarely assist a candidate for office. . . in any but the most general manner and provide no financial assistance. The candidate must sell his name and himself in any way that he can.³²

Personalist parties. . . were led nationally by a prominent figure who possessed either considerable personal popularity, or wealth, or both. For one reason or another, the leading personality preferred to remain independent of the major parties, finding greater success and satisfaction in conducting an organization of his own. The other members of such an organization were attracted to it either by ties of personal loyalty to the leader or by the hope of greater personal gain to be obtained through riding on his coattails.³³

Several of the minor parties. . . lend their party labels to ad hoc groups that formed within the state with the sole purpose of registering a slate of candidates. These groups formed just prior to the election, normally had little success in gaining office and disappeared the day after the election was over.³⁴

In nations where a party affiliation is not required of the candidate, independent candidacies may be as numerous as party candidacies.³⁵

Also, these parties do not perform constituent activities. Because they are primarily electoral instruments, organizations at the local level are likely to dissolve after the election; no cadres remain to provide linkages with voters and to deal with their problems. Instead, parties which have been successful in electing their candidates to the legislature become parliamentary groups. Their members concern themselves with legislative maneuvering and only incidentally with constituent problems. However, because many members have been elected with only marginal aid from the party, the party groups do not always control the legislative process; rather, it is often every man for himself with executive cooptation of legislators and

desertion from one party to another fairly common occurrences.³⁶

In these systems, parties participate only marginally in electoral and constituent activities; generally, the legislator is on his own. The question then is why such weak parties are associated with weak legislatures in developing systems when the British Parliament increased its strength and the American Congress flourishes under quite similar circumstances? The answer again involves the resources of the individual legislators. Quite simply, the legislator in developing systems is armed with fewer political resources than his Anglo-American counterpart, and confronts a much more difficult situation.

The 18th century British MP had to face a restricted electorate with only moderate demands to make; the legislator in developing nations must deal with an universally enfranchised population with an enormous range of public and private needs. In America, such demands are handled at various levels of a highly decentralized political system, populated by a plethora of elected officials. In highly centralized developing systems demands are quite likely to be focused on the individual legislator, because he is probably the only participant in the national arena who is responsible to a local electorate.³⁷

The British MP was likely to be from a prominent family with access to vast political resources. The American legislator, though probably not from a prominent family, will have a great deal of influence on legislative decision-making and a large staff to aid him in dealing with constituents. The legislator in developing nations is likely to be of moderate means and certainly will have limited access to political resources. His presence in the legislature in a nation where decisions probably are made by the

military and the bureaucracy verifies his political impotence. The staff assistance available to him "is trivial and embarrassing when compared with that available in established parliaments."³⁸ In sum, the legislator is confronted with a heavy load of demands and his political resources are insufficient to deal with them satisfactorily.³⁹

The result of this gap between demands on legislators and their ability to produce satisfactory outputs is a decline in the support accruing to the legislature. It is possible that this is the course of events anticipated by executive leaders who permit the establishment of a legislature. They may conceive of the legislature as a means of insulating themselves from public demands. Failures of the government can be laid at the door of the assembly, and military leaders can often pose as reformers by closing down the legislature.

The government ensures such legislative failures by obstructing the activities of political parties and by failing to form an effective party organization of its own. The government will dominate the relevant political resources; it will control communications, its police will harass party organizers, it will exploit government power to prevent financial resources from reaching party politicians. Government leaders remain aloof from party politics and treat such activities with public disdain.⁴⁰ If a government party is established, it will serve simply as an electoral vehicle and perhaps a rallying point for those who can be persuaded to support the government in the legislature. Significantly, constituent activity will be eschewed as this may broaden the organization and force government leaders to be responsive to a wider demand structure.

In sum, weak parties exacerbate the demand-output gap and therefore help to make a legislature weak by reducing (or failing to add to) its support.

This provides the conditions for aggrandizement of executive power. Legislatures in this situation will find themselves the subject of executive abuse and manipulation; the existence of the legislature is a matter of political debate and coups against the institution involving the jailing of members are expected occurrences. If these legislatures are to be strengthened, stronger political parties are required. While this may lead to party dominated decision-making, it will also lead to a more highly supported legislative institution.

Strong Legislatures in Developing Nations. It is no accident that in those parts of Asia, Africa, and Latin America where legislatures have the greatest support and prominence, political parties are of moderate strength. Chile, Uruguay, Israel, Ceylon, India, and the Philippines are probably the nations in the "Third World" with the most successful legislative institutions. These nations are characterized by political parties that have continuous structures, that are not identified with one dominant personality, that have relatively complex organizations, and that have relatively stable followings. Moderation of party strength is suggested by open competition among political parties in these nations, which indicates general access to political resources. In the case of the Congress Party of India, moderation also is suggested by the high degree of pluralism within the party.

In each of these systems, constituent and electoral activities are effectively performed by the party and by the individual legislators. The extent to which the legislators are independently involved in this process suggests the strength of the legislature and therefore the moderation of party strength. It would appear that legislators are least involved in India and Ceylon, and most involved in Uruguay and the Philippines, with Chile and Israel somewhere in between. All of these systems are located

on the top half of the curve in Figure 1, with the Philippines furthest to the right and India furthest to the left.

The further to the left a legislature is on the curve on Figure 1, the more party dominated the system and the weaker the legislature. It would seem that successful legislative institutions in developing nations tend to be party dominated because one would not expect legislators in developing nations to possess the political resources necessary to support a stronger, more autonomous institution. However, the Philippine Congress and the Uruguayan General Assembly appear to be exceptions to this generalization. As in the United States, the strength of both legislatures is the product of a decentralized party system.

The national parties in the Philippines are loose, shifting alliances of very strong local organizations; these organizations dominate constituent activities by performing a wide variety of particularistic and general political services.⁴¹ As in America, the grouping of these organizations into national coalitions is occasioned by Presidential election campaigns.⁴² Legislative electoral activities are shared by the candidates, the local organizations and private interest groups; consequently, the Philippine legislator can act quite independently of his national party affiliation.⁴³

Therefore, the explanation for the strength of the Philippine Congress lies in the strength of the local (as opposed to the national) party organizations, particularly in the performance of electoral and constituent activities. The fact that in certain situations, the local organizations depend upon the personal popularity and financial resources of its candidates⁴⁴ further strengthens the legislature. Because national governmental outputs are marginal to the strength of these local organizations, they have little desire to perform governmental functions or to use their dominant position

in constituent and electoral activities to enforce party discipline in the legislature.

The situation in Uruguay is similar to the Philippines. Here too, national parties (lemas) are loose coalitions of strong local organizations that cooperate to achieve national legislative and Presidential majorities. The legislator's primary affiliation is with the local sub-lema rather than with the national party and these local organizations work with the legislator in electoral and constituent activities. McDonald describes the system in this way:

One form of organization. . . is the neighborhood political club whose political functions resembles the old ward machines once common in United States cities. The sub-lema clubs establish a direct access for the voter to the political system. When his interests are subverted intentionally or unintentionally by the bureaucracy, the voter has recourse to the legislator whose club he supports. . . . The legislator can short-circuit the bureaucratic maze, expedite procedures, and otherwise serve the interests of the voter. In return, the sub-lema leaders derive a ready-made campaign organization which springs to life during the elections. . . . The clubs serve neighborhood social as well as national political functions. This on-going involvement and access to the government help explain the profound stability of the system in the face of economic, social, and political crises.⁴⁵

Again, as in the Philippines and the United States, such sharing of electoral and constituent activities does not produce party discipline in the legislature.

McDonald states that

. . . theoretically sub-lemas can enforce discipline [but] in practice sub-lema leaders have difficulty doing so since their followers in the legislature are too few to provide substantial legislative power. Moreover, a dissident legislator can bargain with another sub-lema should he decide to switch affiliations. It is possible to find sub-lemas of different lemas combining on specific legislative issues. . . .⁴⁶

The data from the Philippines and Uruguay suggest that strong legislatures in developing systems exist when national parties are loose coalitions of local organizations. The resources of these organizations when combined with those of the legislators are sufficient to perform electoral and

constituent activities and thereby maintain support for the legislature. The alternatives appear to be strong national party organizations that subordinate the legislature, or weak national organizations that permit the executive to subordinate the legislature.

CONCLUSION: LEGISLATURE-PARTY SITUATIONS
IN DEVELOPMENTAL PERSPECTIVE

The interdependent relation between party strength and legislative strength explicated to this point permits a categorization of the types of change that can be expected to take place as political systems develop.

The origin of party-dominant situations is commonly traced to the movements for national independence from colonial powers. After independence, revolutionary movements seek to become governments and thereby assert control of the new nation. Some are successful; TANU in Tanzania and Neo-Desotour in Tunisia have been able to govern their nations. These parties also dominate constituent and electoral activities and the result for the legislature has been decisional subordination.

In other new nations, the revolutionary fervor quickly subsided; the party of independence withered away and was replaced by leadership cadres that ran the nation in the name of a party which, in reality, no longer existed. Wallerstein suggests that as the party declined, legislatures came to be "gatherings of local notables;" legislators were "representatives of local electors charged with interceding on their behalf or negotiating with the central authority."⁴⁷ In terms of our discussion, this can be seen as a shifting of constituent activities from the party to the individual legislators. A gap then opens between the government and the legislators, and executive dominance of the legislature replaces party dominance.

Such developments are of little consequence for the legislature's decision-making power; it remains weak in either case. However, support for the legislature may be greater under party domination. In this case, nonresponsive governmental outputs are party failures because the party is responsible for constituent activities; under executive domination such failures may be depicted as legislative failures, thereby discrediting the parliament.

Systems in the party dominant situation may be the result of a previous development sequence during which the legislature may have been more significant. In Kenya after independence, party competition between KANU and KADU, and then between KANU and KPU, produced a legislature that was mildly prominent in the decision-making process.⁴⁸ However, in 1969 opposition parties were banned, and as KANU monopolized all political activities, the prominence of the legislature receded. In Algeria, the immediate post-independence period witnessed a disintegration of the FLN and the simultaneous rise of an influential assembly in which many of the important leaders of the nation sat. After Ben Bella, and later Boumedienne, consolidated the FLN's power, the strength of the legislature receded and eventually the institution ceased to exist.⁴⁹

Two factors invariably are involved in situations in which non-legislative, non-party elements assert control of a system. A combination of fragile political parties and internal or external crisis seems to create the conditions for unsuccessful parliamentary experiences culminating in a military coup. In Nigeria, Uganda, Burma, and Cambodia the military closed the parliament after or during chaotic periods of civil war or external threat. The numerous coups against parliament that have occurred

in Thailand since World War II have all been justified by references to a corrupt and inefficient parliament unable to govern effectively in the face of grave national danger.⁵⁰

In these nations, the political parties were weak on all the dimensions that have been defined. The legislatures varied in their decision-making strength but were uniformly weak on the support dimension. The severity of the problems confronting the nation coupled with the domination of political resources by executive elements and the impotency of party meant inevitable failure for the parliamentary institution; support--low at the outset-- disappeared entirely, and neither executive domination nor the passing of parliament evoked any serious opposition.

In sum, parties, legislatures, and executives compete for access to political resources without which they cannot perform political activities. Effective execution of constituent activities is essential for parties and legislatures in order to create and preserve popular support upon which they depend. Any legislature is subject to a decrease in support because of its inability to deal with rapidly increasing demands.⁵¹ For legislatures in most developing systems, any decrease in support is serious because support is likely to be low initially. The argument here is that in such systems support for the legislature must remain minimal in the absence of political party organizations of at least moderate strength that can share with the legislators the task of performing constituency and electoral activities.

FOOTNOTES

1. The best of this research is contained in three anthologies. See, Allan Kornberg and Lloyd D. Musolf, eds. LEGISLATURES IN DEVELOPMENTAL PERSPECTIVE, (Durham: Duke University Press, 1970); Weston H. Agor, ed., LATIN AMERICAN LEGISLATURES: THEIR ROLE AND INFLUENCE, (New York: Praeger, 1971); and, Allan Kornberg, ed. LEGISLATURES IN COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE, (New York: David McKay, forthcoming). Also, see Raymond Hopkins, "The Role of the M.P. in Tanzania," AMERICAN POLITICAL SCIENCE REVIEW, LXIV:3 (September, 1970), pp. 754-771, and Michael L. Mezey, "The Functions of a Minimal Legislature: Role Perceptions of Thai Legislators," WESTERN POLITICAL QUARTERLY, XXV:4 (December, 1972).

2. The major exceptions to this statement are "functions" and "roles." For a discussion of functions as a common unit of analysis, see Robert Packenham, "Legislatures and Political Development," in Kornberg and Musolf, op. cit., pp. 521-582. For a discussion of roles, see Malcolm Jewell, "Attitudinal Determinants of Legislative Behavior: The Utility of Role Analysis," in Kornberg and Musolf, op. cit., pp. 460-500. The various articles in Kornberg, ed. LEGISLATURES IN COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE, seem to adopt a more comparative approach. They have not been considered here because the volume is not yet available.

3. This is the dimension commonly used in the literature. In Agor, op. cit., Latin American legislatures are categorized according to their "decisional" influence. Another discussion of Latin American legislatures concludes with the observation that "in most countries congress does not participate in determining national policy in the independent manner and to the extent usually deemed necessary to the successful operation of

democratic and responsible government." Robert Scott, "Legislatures and Legislation," in Harold E. Davis, ed., *GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS IN LATIN AMERICA*, (New York: Ronald Press, 1958), p. 329. In summarizing the situation in Southeast Asia, Lucien Pye asserts that "the formally constituted law-making bodies have not as yet become the focus for the rule-making functions." Lucien Pye, "The Politics of Southeast Asia," in Gabriel Almond and James Coleman, eds., *THE POLITICS OF THE DEVELOPING AREAS*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1960), p. 144. For a good first step toward the measurement of legislative decisional strength, see Jean Blondel, *et. al.*, "Comparative Legislative Behavior," *Government and Opposition*, 5:1 (Winter, 1969-1970), pp. 67-85.

4. My view of the meaning of "support" is strongly influenced by David Easton's discussion of the concept. See *A SYSTEMS ANALYSIS OF POLITICAL LIFE* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1965), especially pp. 153-170, 209-211, 277, and 288. Jack Dennis' discussion of support for the institution of elections is similar to my application of the concept to legislatures. See, Jack Dennis, "Support for the Institution of Elections by the Mass Public," *AMERICAN POLITICAL SCIENCE REVIEW*, LXIV:3 (September, 1970), pp. 819-835. See John C. Wahlke, *PUBLIC POLICY AND REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT: THE ROLE OF THE REPRESENTED*, (Laboratory for Political Research: University of Iowa, 1967), pp. 29-46, for a general treatment of the relevance of the support dimension to the legislature. For a discussion of support for a state legislature, see G. R. Boynton, Samuel C. Patterson, and Ronald D. Hedlund, "The Structure of Public Support for Legislative Institutions," *MIDWEST JOURNAL OF POLITICAL SCIENCE*, 12 (May, 1968), pp. 163-180. See Weston H. Agor, "The Decision Role of the Senate in the Chilean Political

System," in Agor, ed., op. cit., pp. 24-26, for an evaluation of public support as a base for the decisional influence of the Chilean Senate.

5. William Nisbet Chambers, *POLITICAL PARTIES IN A NEW NATION: THE AMERICAN EXPERIENCE, 1776-1809*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1963), p. 45.

6. Max Weber, "Politics as a Vocation," in Hans Gerth and C. Wright Mills, eds. *FROM MAX WEBER: ESSAYS IN SOCIOLOGY*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1946), pp. 102-107.

7. Samuel P. Huntington, *POLITICAL ORDER IN CHANGING SOCIETIES*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968), p. 409. This criterion also is used in the definition of political parties posited by Joseph La Palombara and Myron Weiner, *POLITICAL PARTIES AND POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966), p. 6.

8. Huntington, op. cit., p. 410.

9. See Chambers, op. cit., p. 47 and La Palombara and Weiner, op. cit., p. 6.

10. For a discussion of the full range of constituency activities that can be performed by a political party, see Norman N. Miller, "The Rural African Party: Political Participation in Tanzania," *AMERICAN POLITICAL SCIENCE REVIEW*, LXIV:2 (June, 1970), pp. 548-571.

11. The performance of political activities as a criterion of party strength is suggested by Chambers, op. cit., pp. 45-46; however, he does not divide the activities into the categories that I have defined. In La Palombara and Weiner, op. cit., p. 6, activities similar to these are implied as characteristics of political parties. Their definition of parties includes "manifest and presumably permanent organization at the local level," . . . a

"self-conscious determination. . . to hold decision-making power. . ."

and "a concern on the part of the organization for seeking followers at the polls or in some manner striving for popular support."

12. The true significance of recent research revealing "alternative" (i.e., non-decisional) functions of legislatures in developing systems is that most of these functions in some way involve constituency activities. This writer has found that a demand-reduction function was performed in the Thai legislature. Paekenham, op. cit., discovered similar functions in the Brazilian legislature and in other non-western systems. The argument here is that to the extent that these alternative functions are successfully performed by the legislature, the legislature will increase the support accruing to it.

13. Kenneth Mackenzie, *THE ENGLISH PARLIAMENT*, (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1950), pp. 87-90.

14. Sir Lewis Namier, *THE STRUCTURE OF POLITICS AT THE ACCESSION OF GEORGE III*, 2nd ed. (London: Macmillan and Co., Ltd., 1951).

15. Mackenzie, op. cit., p. 114. Moise Ostrogorski, *DEMOCRACY AND THE ORGANIZATION OF POLITICAL PARTIES, VOLUME I* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday and Co., 1964), pp. 70-79.

16. See Namier, op. cit., for the data on which this conclusion is based.

17. J. H. Plumb, *THE GROWTH OF POLITICAL STABILITY IN ENGLAND, 1675-1725*, (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1967), p. 60.

18. For a general statement of the origin of these parliamentary factions, see Maurice Duverger, *POLITICAL PARTIES* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1963), pp. xxiii-xxvi.

19. Ibid., xxxii-xxxvii; also, see La Palombara and Weincr, POLITICAL PARTIES AND POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT, op. cit., pp. 8-14; and, Ostrogorski, op. cit., p. 72.

20. Duverger, op. cit., pp. xxiii-xxvi; also, see Roy C. Macridis, "Introduction: The History, Functions, and Typology of Parties," in Roy C. Macridis, ed. POLITICAL PARTIES: CONTEMPORARY TRENDS AND IDEAS, (New York: Harper and Row, 1967), pp. 9-17.

21. Duverger, op. cit., pp. 206-280.

22. See, Gerhard Loewenberg, "The Influence of Parliamentary Behavior on Regime Stability," COMPARATIVE POLITICS, 3(2), January, 1971, pp. 177-200.

23. See Charles Thach, THE CREATION OF THE PRESIDENCY (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1922), pp. 26-54. The development of the concept of popular representation by legislative assemblies in the United States is brilliantly analyzed in J. R. Pole, POLITICAL REPRESENTATION IN ENGLAND AND THE ORIGINS OF THE AMERICAN REPUBLIC (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966).

24. The early development of the American party system is well told in many sources. See particularly, William Nisbet Chambers and Walter Dean Burnham, eds. THE AMERICAN PARTY SYSTEMS: STAGES OF POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1967), Chapters 1, 3, and 4; Wilfred Binkley, AMERICAN POLITICAL PARTIES: THEIR NATURAL HISTORY, 4th ed. (New York: A. A. Knopf), 1962, Chapters 1-7; Richard Hofstadter, THE IDEA OF A PARTY SYSTEM: THE RISE OF LEGITIMATE OPPOSITION IN THE UNITED STATES, 1780-1840, (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1970).

25. See V. O. Key, Jr. POLITICS, PARTIES, AND PRESSURE GROUPS, 5th ed. (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1964), Chapter 16. Also, see the comments

of individual congressmen in Charles Clapp, *THE CONGRESSMAN: HIS WORK AS HE SEES IT*, (Garden City: Doubleday and Co., 1963), Chapter 8.

26. Clapp, *op. cit.*, Chapter 2; also, see Hugh Douglas Price, "The Electoral Arena," in David B. Truman, ed., *THE CONGRESS AND AMERICA'S FUTURE*, (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1965), pp. 48-49.

27. Summaries of this data are provided by Wahlke, *op. cit.*, pp. 1-15, Malcolm Jewell and Samuel Patterson, *THE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS IN THE UNITED STATES*, (New York: Random House, 1966), pp. 340-343, and Roger H. Davidson, "Congress in the American Political System," in Kornberg and Musolf, *op. cit.*, pp. 167-174.

28. This theme is analyzed by John S. Saloma III, *CONGRESS AND THE NEW POLITICS*, (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1969). A wide-ranging defense of the Congress is marshalled by Alfred de Grazia, ed., *CONGRESS: THE FIRST BRANCH OF GOVERNMENT* (Garden City: Doubleday and Co., 1966).

29. Tanzania is typical of nations with legislatures in this situation. See Hopkins, *op. cit.*, pp. 768-770.

30. At this point and throughout the remainder of the discussion, countries will be listed as part of particular categories. These lists are intended to be illustrative rather than exhaustive. It is for those with empirical knowledge of a particular system to place that system in the appropriate category.

31. See, Hopkins, *op. cit.*, p. 770; Henry Bienen, *TANZANIA: PARTY TRANSFORMATION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1967), pp. 386-390; and, J. P. W. B. McAuslan and Yush P. Ghai, "Constitutional Innovation and Political Stability in Tanzania: A Preliminary Assessment," *JOURNAL OF MODERN AFRICAN STUDIES*, IV:4, (December, 1966),

pp. 479-515. See, Aristide R. Zolberg, CREATING POLITICAL ORDER: THE ONE PARTY STATES OF WEST AFRICA (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1966), pp. 112-114, for similar evidence from other one party systems.

32. Phyllis Peterson, "Brazil: Revolution or Reaction?," in Martin Needler, ed., POLITICAL SYSTEMS OF LATIN AMERICA, 2nd ed., (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Co., 1970), p. 540.

33. Ibid., p. 545.

34. Ibid., pp. 545-546; also, see Irving L. Horowitz, REVOLUTION IN BRAZIL: POLITICS AND SOCIETY IN A DEVELOPING NATION (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1964), pp. 175-180.

35. For example, see Ralph E. Crow, "Parliament in the Lebanese Political System," in Kornberg and Musolf, eds., op. cit., pp. 283-286; and, Michael L. Mezey, "Legislative Development and Political Parties: The Case of Thailand." Prepared for delivery at the Shambaugh Conference on Legislative Systems in Developing Countries, Iowa City, Iowa, November, 1971.

36. See, David Wilson, POLITICS IN THAILAND (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1962), pp. 238-239, 243; James A. Bill, "The Politics of Legislative Monarchy: The Iranian Majlis," in Herbert Hirsch and M. Donald Hancock, eds., COMPARATIVE LEGISLATIVE SYSTEMS (New York: The Free Press, 1971), p. 365; and, G. F. Engholm and A. A. Mazrui, "Crossing the Floor and the Tensions of Representation in East Africa," PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS, XXI:2, (Spring, 1968), pp. 137-154.

37. On the legislator as the focus of demands, see Hopkins, op. cit., p. 770; Mezey, "The Functions of a Minimal Legislature"; Bill, op. cit., p. 367; Anirudha Gupta, "The Zambian National Assembly: Study of an African Legislature," PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS, XIX:1 (Winter, 1965-66), p. 53;

J. M. Lee, "Parliament in Republican Ghana," *PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS*, XVI:4 (Autumn, 1963), pp. 376-395; and, John Markakis and Asmalash Beyene, "Representative Institutions in Ethiopia," *JOURNAL OF MODERN AFRICAN STUDIES*, V:2 (September, 1967), pp. 210-211, 214-215.

38. James A. Robinson, "Staffing the Legislature," in Kornberg and Musolf, *op. cit.*, p. 366.

39. The difficulties of the Brazilian legislator are described by Robert Pachtenham, "Functions of the Brazilian National Congress," in Agor, ed., *op. cit.*, pp. 278-279. The extreme of this situation is a legislature operating in a system with no party organizations at all. See Markakis and Beyene, *op. cit.*, p. 217, for a discussion of the Ethiopian situation.

40. Huntington, *op. cit.*, pp. 403-408.

41. Carl H. Landé, *LEADERS, FACTIONS, AND PARTIES: THE STRUCTURE OF PHILIPPINE POLITICS* (New Haven: Yale University Southeast Asia Studies Monograph Series, Number 6, 1964), pp. 41-48.

42. Jean Grossholtz, *THE PHILIPPINES* (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1964), pp. 148-154.

43. *Ibid.*, pp. 145-147; Landé, *op. cit.*, p. 68; Richard A. Styskal, "Philippine Legislators' Reception of Individuals and Interest Groups in the Political Process," *COMPARATIVE POLITICS*, I:3 (April, 1969), pp. 405-422.

44. Landé, *op. cit.*, pp. 57-61.

45. Ronald H. McDonald, "Legislative Politics in Uruguay: A Preliminary Statement," in Agor, ed. *op. cit.*, pp. 125-126.

46. *Ibid.*, p. 117.

47. Immanuel Wallerstein, "The Decline of the Party in Single-Party African States," in La Palombara and Weiner, eds., *op. cit.*, p. 212; also,

see Zolberg, op. cit., p. 114.

48. Newell M. Stultz, "The National Assembly in the Politics of Kenya," in Kornberg and Musolf, eds., op. cit., pp. 309-317.

49. For a brilliant discussion of this brief period of parliamentary prominence in Algeria from September, 1962 to September, 1964, see William B. Quandt, *REVOLUTION AND POLITICAL LEADERSHIP: ALGERIA, 1954-1968*. (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1969), pp. 175-203.

50. See Michael L. Mezey, "The 1971 Coup in Thailand: Understanding Why the Legislature Fails," *ASIAN SURVEY*, XIII:3 (March, 1973). Similar justifications have come from the Peruvian military at the various times that they have intervened in the parliamentary politics of their country. See Terry L. McCoy, "Congress, The President, and Political Instability in Peru," in Agor, ed., op. cit., p. 354.

51. See Karl Dietrich Bracher, "The Crisis of Modern Parliaments," in Roy C. Macridis and Bernard E. Brown, eds., *COMPARATIVE POLITICS: NOTES AND READINGS*, 4th ed., (Homewood, Ill., The Dorsey Press, 1972), pp. 319-320; and, Gerhard Loewenberg, "The Role of Parliaments in Modern Political Systems," in Gerhard Loewenberg, ed. *MODERN PARLIAMENTS: CHANGE OR DECLINE?* (Chicago: Aldine-Atherton, 1971), pp. 1-19.