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A MODEL FOR THE ANALYSIS OF GOVERNMENT-PARTY RELATIONSHIPS

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In a previous paper, an effort was made to define what is meant by party government, by party decision and by supporting party in order to establish a base on which to build a model designed to examine and ultimately account for types of party government (1). The aim of the present paper is to examine these types of party government: we shall do so following the approach proposed by R.S. Katz, that is to say both in terms of the extent to which governments are of a party type of government ('partyness') and in terms of the relative position, so to speak, which a given government occupies according to a number of possible 'dimensions' of party government (2).

In order to undertake this analysis, however, we must first circumscribe what may be referred to as the 'space' within which party and government intersect. We shall then look at the dimension or dimensions along which these relationships can be located. It will become possible to identify, third, a number of types of government-party relationships. Finally, it seems

valuable to make a number of methodological remarks about the way in which these matters can be tested empirically.

Party activities and governmental activities: the space of party-government relationships

Party-government relationships take place at a number of points which correspond to the different activities or 'functions' undertaken by governments, on the one hand, and by parties, on the other. Together, these points can be regarded as forming a 'space'; such a space is likely to vary somewhat from country to country, given that the activities of governments and perhaps even more of parties are likely to vary. We need therefore to look at the activities of governments and the activities of parties to see where and in what ways these are likely to intersect.

For a period at least, the literature on coalition-formation concentrated on the relationship between parties and governments at one level, namely that of the allocation of portfolios among the various parties (3). The underlying assumption was that the way in which parties wanted to intervene in the governmental process was through the composition of the government: this approach was adopted in part because it was pointed out that parties wanted to achieve 'power' and that membership of the government was the way to fulfil this aim; it was also probably adopted because is obviously easier to quantify the extent to which parties participate in a government if numbers

of ministers of various parties are taken into account; there is moreover little doubt that participation in the government gives substantial opportunities for a party to have a say in public decision-making.

It came to be recognised, however, that a policy component had to be considered alongside the 'power' component: parties are not only interested in placing some of their members in the government: they have programmes which they wish to see carried out, in part at least (4). Indeed, such a policy component is necessary if one is to account for the part played by parties which support a minority government without being members of that government (5). Moreover, it has long been felt that the policy influence of parties was not necessarily exactly proportional to the size of these parties or even to the number of ministers which they have: a study relating to the influence of the FDP in the German government provides clear evidence in this direction (10 Klingemann). Thus it seems that one needs at least two consider two different aspects of government-party relationships if the influence of parties is to be realistically assessed.

Yet there are two further elements in this relationship which need to be taken into account. The first concerns the demands may by parties for favours and patronage, especially because, in some countries at least, these play an important part. Admittedly, that part is difficult to measure with precision. Moreover, it is difficult to locate precisely these favours in the

general ocntext of government-party relationships. On the one hand, they may be regarded as 'policies', more limited in character admittedly, but of the same kind as the national policies which parties put forward: indeed, at the borderline, some national policies put forward by a political party can also be regarded as 'bribes' designed to capture segments of the electorate. On the other hand, these favours are typically concerned with individuals or at most small districts and they are therefore of a different kind from what are usually regarded as party policies; as a matter of fact, they are conceived as different by the parties themselves, since they are often asked for in secret and at least have typically an 'unofficial' character. They should therefore be regarded as forming a separate category.

Indeed, for these reasons, the extent to which favours and patronage are regarded as acceptable or are at least tolerated varies markedly from country to country. Where they are viewed as interfering in an unwarranted manner with the 'proper' working of administrative bodies, they tend to be restricted and, at the limit, may only exist on a minute scale. Thus, while they are forms of relationships between governments and the parties supporting these governments (as well as sometimes even the parties in opposition), the extent to which they exist is likely to depend on the political culture of the country as much as and perhaps even more than on the relative strength of the bodies involved.

Finally, these favours should not be considered only in themselves but also in relation to the need for governments to have some instruments with which to put pressure on parties. They are part of a large set of trade-off relationships in which governments are engaged. By giving favours to individual party members of a particular district, a government may ensure the continued support of the party members in that district: its proposals may therefore be more readily accepted. Admittedly, patronage is not the only mechanism by which trade-offs occur: for instance a party may be prepared to receive relatively few ministerial posts in exchange for policies which the government is prepared to implement. Indeed, trade-offs occur also at the level of the policies themselves, both among the parties and between the government and the parties which support this government. The set of exchange arrangements is thus extremely complex. Yet it seems that patronage and favours are a <u>form</u> of relationship between parties and governments which is both important and distinct from the relationships stemming from ministerial appopintments and from policy development. They must therefore be taken into account in a general analysis of these relationships.

Party-government relationships need to be made more general in another essential manner. So far, these relationships have been considered mainly from the angle of the possible influence and effect of parties on governments: such a standpoint is clearly one-sided. It is not only that parties may exercise more or less influence on governments and at the limit exercise no

influence at all; it is that governments also attempt to influence and at the limit wish to control parties: indeed, some national leaders have created parties to strengthen their influence. Such a situation is not infrequent: it may be especially noticeable among parties which are relatively new and primarily among those which have been set up by national political leaders in office who want to increase their support among the population. This can easily be seen in the context of many Third World parties which are entirely controlled by the leader who created them; but it can also be observed to an extent in Western Europe among all the parties which support a government, as these parties are likely to be regarded by national leaders and by ministers as instruments designed to help them in their political campaigns.

This governmental influence on parties can and does take place with respect to all three aspects which we examined earlier. It takes place at the level of favours, as we noted previously: the party may want to extract favours, but the government is (or is likely to be) the body which decides to distribute these favours in a 'strategic' manner, that is to say to those whom it feels are critical to win over or support. Governmental influence can and does also take place at the level of policies: ministers are very often likely to take strong steps to force the party to adopt certain items of policy which had so far given no or a very low priority; in some cases, national leaders and ministers are even forcing the party to change their standpoint and to support policies which they had previously rejected. Finally, governmental

influence can and does take place at the level of appointments: leaders and ministers thus often intervene in the selection of memnbers of the party hierarchy, both in the country and in the legislature, particularly at the top, though this pressure may also be exercised at regional or local levels.

We need therefore to think of the 'space' of the relationship between parties and governments as extending in terms of substance from national policy-making and the composition of the government to the distribution of patronage in return for popular support, while it can vary from dependence of the government on the party, at one extreme, to dependence of the party on the government, at the other. Given the complex character of these relationships, it is not surprising that they should vary sharply from country to country and, indeed, that the whole of the 'space' should be not be occupied everywhere. We need to describe the dimensions along which party-government relationships can be located before examining, at least in a broad manner, the characteristics of some 'types' of party-government relations which appear to exist widely in the contemporary world.

Dimensions of government-party relationships

The structure of the problems posed by party-government relationships suggests that there must be dimensions along which these relationships take place: as a matter of fact, two dimensions suggest themselves naturally. Yet, as one looks at the

problem more closely, a number of difficulties emerge which cannot be satisfactorily overcome. So far at least, it seems that the questions posed can only be partly solved, though a partial solution already constitutes an advance in our understanding of government-party relationships.

The two dimensions which come to mind as soon as one considers the problem are those of autonomy v. interdependence, on the one hand, and of the direction of the dependence, on the other. The description of these dimensions in itself indicates some of the difficulties which will be encountered. For the question of the relationship between governments and the parties supporting them raises two main issues; but these issues are both distinct and interconnected.

On the one hand, this relationship varies according to the extent to which government and supporting party or parties are autonomous from each other. Indeed, one of the most important aspects of an inquiry into governments must be to identify the extent to which these governments can act as autonomous agents: but, if the governments are autonomous, the supporting parties are also autonomous. In practice, we are confronted here with a dimension, governments and parties being more or less autonomous or more or less dependent on each other: for instance, it is very likely that there will be areas of autonomy and that these will vary from country to country and from time to time. Thus it is sometimes suggested that governments are more often autonomous

from parties with respect to foreign affairs than with respect to home affairs.

On the other hand, if there is a relationship of interdependence between governments and supporting parties, this relationship can vary markedly from one extreme of total dependence of the government on the party or parties supporting it to the other extreme of total dependence of the party or parties on the government, with an intermediate point corresponding to equal and reciprocal influence. We saw earlier that parties have often been set up with a view to helping governments and in particular leaders to maintain and even increase their hold on the nation; but the extent of dependence is likely to vary from country to country and indeed over time: we have therefore here also a dimension according to which we can measure (at least in theory) the relationship between government and suppporting party or parties in individual countries.

Thus it is sensible - indeed inevitable - that we should describe government-party relationships as being defined by the two dimensions of autonomy v. interdependence and of the direction of the dependence. Yet these two dimensions are manifestly interconnected: only to the extent that relationships are interdependent can one refer to the 'direction' of the dependence. If governments and supporting parties were fully autonomous from each other, there would be no direction of dependence, as there would be no dependence of one on the other: at most one can say

that, in such a case, there would be perfect 'equality' between the two elements, an equality which would stem from the absence of any rapport. Of course, in the real world, there is no 'pure' case of this type: governments and supporting parties have always some rapport; the fact that the party 'supports' a government is already a form of rapport. As we indicated earlier, there will tend to be policy fields in which there is autonomy and policy fields in which there is interdependence. Thus one can truly refer to a two-dimensional space within which one can define the nature of government-party relationships in individual countries at various moments in time. Yet, in reality, too, because there cannot be a 'direction' of dependence if there is autonomy, countries will only be located in a part of the space which has just been defined, this part having the shape of a triangle in which one side is the 'direction of dependence' axis while the other two sides join each other at the autonomy end of the 'autonomy-interdependence' dimension and at the middle point with respect to the 'direction of dependence' dimension. This is another way of saying that the two dimensions are in part interconnected as one is a condition of the other, but that, given the ambiguous character of real-world relationships between governments and supporting parties, these two dimensions have also to be regarded as distinct for many practical purposes (Diagram I).

The location of countries with respect to the two dimensions is determined by the relationships between the

governments and the supporting parties with respect to the three sets of activities which we described in the previous section. The part played by parties in the composition of governments and, conversely, the role of governments in the composition of the leadership group of the supporting parties are clearly essential elements both with respect to the 'autonomy-interdependence' dimension and with respect to the 'direction of dependence' dimension. Countries in which governments are appointed separately from parties and where governments do not interfere or interfere very little in the composition of the party leadership will tend to be located towards the 'autonomy' end of the 'autonomy-interdependence' dimension, at least with respect to attempts to exercise influence through the appointments of persons. Countries in which the party appoints the ministers but where the ministers do not affect the composition of the party leadership group are located towards the interdependence end of the 'autonomy-interdependence' dimension and towards the 'party dominant' end of the 'direction of dependence' dimension. Where the government has set up a party whose top leadership group it controls while the membership of the government remains independent from the party, the country is located also close to the interdependence end of the 'autonomy-interdependence' dimension, but towards the government-dominant end of the 'direction of dependence' dimension. Many countries are likely to be located at some distance from these extreme positions.

Yet, as was pointed out earlier, the appointments aspect of the problem is only one component; both the policy and the distribution of favours components have to be taken into account to locate countries in the space in a comprehensive manner. On both aspects, however, there are greater difficulties in coming to a satisfactory conclusion. While one can assess, indeed even measure (though, as we shall argue later, with some limitations) the extent to which the members of the government or of the leadership group of the supporting parties are interdependent or autonomous from each other, such a judgement is more difficult to pass with respect to policies and to the distribution of favours. With respect to policies, there are problems about the determination of the 'authorship', so to speak, that is to say, about the determination of who originated and subsequently developed particular proposals; there are also problems arising out of the fact that answers may be markedly different in connection with the various substantive fields. We noted earlier that governments are perhaps more autonomous, in general, in the context of foreign affairs than in the context of home affairs; the distinction does not stop at this point. Further contrasts may occur within the home affairs fields: governments may thus be more autonomous in economic matters (or at least in most aspects of economics) than in social matters. Given these variations, a problem of 'weighting' arises before one can arrive at an overall assessment of the extent to which a given government is 'autonomous', depends on the party or parties which support it or, on the contrary, dominates these parties. Yet such a weighting is

difficult to discover in a truly rigorous manner: one has therefore to be content with a less precise overall judgement of the position at which a given country should be located in the space with respect to policy elaboration and development.

The difficulties are even greater with respect to the determination of the location of countries in the context of the distribution of favours. This is in the first place because, as was already pointed out, a 'veil of ignorance' often exists in this respect: it is then not possible to know what position each country occupies in this respect and comparisons across countries become hazardous as a result; second, even when one can find out what favours are distributed, it is sometimes difficult to assess whether a given governmental decision has to be classified as a 'favour' or is a 'normal' administrative decision; third, the problem of weighting is even more serious than with respect to policy-making, given the very large number of small advantages distributed by governments. Moreover, while favours which are handed out are evidence of the dependence of governments on parties, they are likely to be compensated for by other advantages received by the government, for instance in the form of electoral or other support. While a government which has to distribute many favours must therefore be regarded as being as a result dependent on the parties which support it, these parties may also be subsequently dependent on the government because of compensating activities which party members may have to undertake.

Indeed, as we suggested earlier, it is not always clear which body depends on the other in the context of the distribution of favours. The party members which count on these favours cannot easily 'afford' to break from the government if these are not immediately forthcoming. Moreover, as we also know, favours are also often distributed in order to obtain policy support. Thus the matter raises the general question of the determination of the overall position of a given country in the two-dimensional space. As it is not easy to achieve a satisfactory assessment of each country's position with respect to each of the components, and in particular of the policy-making and favours components, it is consequently unrealistic to expect to attain a truly precise result at the global level. Furthermore, these three components have also to be weighted: the basis for such a weighting is not altogether easy to discover.

One cannot therefore expect to achieve, and at any rate to achieve as yet a precise determination of the position of countries in the two-dimensional space which we have described here. Yet there is a further problem which arises from changes in the positions occupied over time by the different countries. This is especially likely to occur among countries in which the parties are not yet or alternatively are no longer 'consolidated'. One can in particular expect substantial movements over time in many Third World countries as well as, for the current period at least, in Central and Eastern European countries, though one is also likely to find some movements among Western countries as well. This is

precisely the reason why an over time analysis is important: if a theory of government-party relationships is to be elaborated, we need to be able to assess in what direction or directions these relationships tend to move when the characteristics of parties change. This can be achieved only if one can monitor the changes in these relationships over time on the two-dimensional space which we have defined here.

The problem of the location of countries in this two-dimensional space thus appears difficult to solve, especially if one wishes to be precise in the determination of the positions of each country which is being analysed. If we are to proceed further, we need therefore to look at the concrete situation and the extent to which some general assessment can be obtained: if it becomes possible to locate countries, albeit in a rather rough manner, and if we are also able to monitor changes which take place over time, progress will have been made and the area of 'party government' will cease to be what it is at present, namely a 'terra (almost completely) incognita'.

Broad patterns of party-government relationships

Ostensibly at least, a substantial number of countries seem to be characterised by a small number of types of government-party relationships. The best is therefore to start by examining these types in order to see whether they give rise in turn to 'sub-types' which can be regarded as variations around the main

models. This method might also provide at least a partial solution to the problem of the analysis of changes over time, since, at least in many cases, these changes are relatively slow.

An impressionistic survey of government-party relationships suggests that, while positions at the three corners of the triangle are unlikely to be often occupied, positions near these three corners often are. To begin with, the top corner, which is characterised by the autonomy of governments with respect to parties (as well as, conversely, by the autonomy of parties with respect to governments) corresponds to a form of 'separation' between the two elements which is likely to exist when governments can emerge independently from parties. This situation is likely to be found when the executive has a source of legitimacy of its own, as in some monarchical systems where the government is of a 'bureaucratic' type (for instance in 19th century Central Europe), and parties are also 'autonomous'; it occurs also where the executive has military support, but the parties have not been abolished (as was to an extent the case in Brazil under military rule); above all, it occurs in some presidential systems, if the 'party' of the president is in effect sharply distinct from the 'party' which nominally supports the president in the legislature: this case approximates that of the United States and, possibly, of some other presidential systems. In the American case, however, the large amount of favours which are distributed suggests that the autonomy of the government vis-a-vis the parties (and of the parties vis-a-vis the government) may be somewhat reduced.

The second rather extreme type of government-party relationships is that of the dependent party: cases of this kind are located towards the bottom corner of the triangle and close to the 'party-dependent' end of the 'direction of dependence' dimension. This type is that of governments which can rely on a docile supporting party. If the party is indeed entirely docile and does not contribute at all to the personnel of the government (as in some monarchies where ministers are drawn from the entourage of the King or from military men and civil servants), the country has then to be located at the extreme end of the 'direction of dependence' dimension. This kind of situation can be found in a number of new countries, for instance in Black Africa, where the single party is often set up in order to help the leader to both mobilise and control the population. Over time, however, such a situation changes: in many cases, there will be some reciprocal influence as well as some role of the party in the composition of the government; indeed, the party may even play a substantial part in providing a base for the selection of the government members and at least be a sounding-board for governmental policies, as has long been the case with the PRI in Mexico. Moreover, there may be areas of complete autonomy of the government (as in particular in foreign affairs) and even of the party (occasionally on some issues, for instance on matters of conscience).

If one then moves a little from this extreme position, one can see how changes affect the model somewhat. Britain is a

case in point, as it moved gradually from the extreme of government dominance which characterised government-party relationships in that country in the late 18th century; but the move remained partial and indeed affected the parties to a different extent. The Conservative party may be regarded as still relatively close to the 'government-dominant' end of the dimension: to an extent as in Mexico, the party has a role in the determination of the group from which ministers are selected and indeed the (parliamentary) party has an effective role in the selection of the leader; on the other hand, the party is fully dependent on the government for the selection of its internal leadership group. There is thus 'fusion' of the leadership of the party and of the government, a fusion which benefits the government rather than the party. Meanwhile, the policy of the party is effectively decided by the leader and a small entourage, although the party may play some part, especially when it is in opposition. Finally, patronage is of limited significance. The Conservative party is thus at some distance, but not very far, from the 'government-dominant' corner of the triangle. It differs somewhat from the Labour party in this respect, as, in this case, there is more reciprocal influence, both in terms of the composition of the government and the party leadership and with respect to policy-making. Yet the difference is not very marked, as the governmental leadership of the Labour party always insisted on its right to implement and even to shape party policy and the party rank-and-file is generally reduced to manifesting its

discontent but can rarely force alternative policies on the leadership.

The other bottom corner of the triangle has traditionally been occupied by Communist States, as the party leadership, rather than the governmental leadership, dictated policy and as the former appointed the latter (and indeed appointed, through the nomenklatura system, members of the public service well below the governmental level). This system was also a case of 'fusion', as is the case of systems where parties depend on the government, but the 'fusion' is exercised here to the benefit of the party rather than to the benefit of the government or, to use the Communist terminology, of the 'State apparatus'. A key element in this configuration is constituted by the high visibility of the party chiefs and the low (or at least lower) visibility of the government leaders: the fact that Gorbachev has endeavoured to set up a presidential type of arrangement is an indication that the previous system favoured markedly the party and that he proposes to reduce this role in the policy-making process as well as perhaps in the selection of the governmental personnel. The aim is to increase the autonomy of the government or to achieve reciprocal dependence between government and party, though this last point is less clear, given that the Communist party has lost prestige in the Soviet Union, although not to the same extent as in other Eastern and Central European States.

Communist States were not the only group of countries in which a substantial dominance of the party over the government has existed for a long period. Another type is provided by many of those parliamentary systems which have typically coalition governments and in which both the selection of ministers and the determination of policies are markedly influenced by the government parties; moreover, in several of these countries, though not in all, substantial levels of patronage tend also to be found. These systems are not located as close to the corner of the triangle as Communist countries tended to be before the late 1980s, admittedly; but they are not very distant from this corner. What makes the difference is some governmental autonomy and a degree of counterbalancing governmental influence: ministers are able to put some pressure on their party on policy matters; moreover, though they are rarely able to influence the composition of the top leadership organs of their party, there is often some leeway in governmental appointments, at least in some countries, as a result of the choice of persons coming from outside strict party ranks.

There are thus a number of relatively clear types of government-party relationships, as well as a number of discernible moves taking place over time. These moves seem to lead countries gradually towards positions away from the corners and inside the triangle. Truly central positions do not seem to be often occupied, however. As a result of the extent of consultation taking place between government and party, the case of Swedish

social democratic governments seems to be the closest which can be found to a central position, though the country appears to occupy a half-way point on the 'direction of dependence' dimension only and does remain close to the 'interdependence' end of the 'autonomy-interdependence' dimension. Moreover, Sweden and perhaps occasionally other Scandinavian countries appear to be the only or at least the clearest examples of such 'middle' positions being taken.

'Central' positions in the triangle are perhaps not occupied because a choice has to be made, ultimately, between 'autonomy' and 'interdependence', leaving some scope for manoeuvre only at the margin. The case of the Fifth French Republic appears interesting in this respect. It was set up on the basis of an ideology of governmental autonomy put forward by De Gaulle, against a background of party dominance over the government in the past: thus the aim was to achieve a balance between the two extremes. In practice, as the system came into being, a docile Gaullist party emerged almost immediately as a response to the need to strengthen governmental support: France thus moved to a position not unlike that of Britain under the Conservatives and indeed even originally somewhat closer to the 'government-dominant' corner of the triangle. Government-party relations subsequently moved somewhat from that corner: with the Socialists in power in the 1980s, the location of the French system appeared to be close to that of the British system under Labour

governments, that is to say at some distance from the 'government-dominant' corner of the triangle, but also at a substantial distance from the mid-point of reciprocal influence which appears to characterise Swedish social democratic governments.

The types and moves which have been indicated here are based on impressions rather than firm evidence. They suggest that comparisons and contrasts can be made, however; they also suggest that the number of broad categorisations is probably relatively small: it seems therefore possible to look for what may be referred to as 'satellite' sub-types and to describe the moves taking place around each of the types. Yet we cannot proceed much further in such an inquiry unless we improve on 'impressions' and achieve a degree of firmness in the characterisations. Some mechanisms have therefore to be found in order to describe with a greater degree of precision the positions occupied by each country at given points in time. Can these mechanisms be found, given the difficulties which were mentioned earlier in the collection of the data and in the weighting to be given to these data if they are to provide a general description of government-party relationships?

What methodology can be used and how precise can it be

While recognising that a precise measurement of the manner in which governments and parties relate to each other is a very distant goal, one can identify already some means of going beyond relatively subjective impressions and of providing

empirical evidence. This is indeed essential if we do not merely wish to describe situations but attempt to account for government-party relationships, for instance by examining these in the light of the characteristics of the political system and in particular of the party system (6).

First, as was already suggested, the assessment of the nature of the relationships between government and supporting parties can be obtained with some degree of precision with respect to appointments. Data can be collected and, to an extent at least, this data is quantifiable. For this assessment to be comprehensive and thus to provide a realistic basis for the determination of government-party relationships, however, data about appointments must provide information about the way in which these are made and about who the decision-makers really are in this context: it is not sufficient to know that ministers are drawn, for instance, from the (parliamentary) party to conclude that the appointments are party-dependent: in the British case, especially in the Conservative party, the government leader has considerable leeway in selecting and indeed in dismissing ministers. There is government dependence on the party only if one can trace a significant influence of the party as such (of its executive or of the parliamentary party at large) in the selection process. Moreover, the party cannot be said either to exercise influence if ministers simply happen to be members of the party without having previously belonged to the leadership group or at least having been close to that leadership group. Evidence for these

characteristics can be obtained, but it is not as readily quantifiable as is the number of ministers drawn from the party.

It is also somewhat difficult to be really precise about the influence taking place in the other direction. Information about the part played by the government in the appointment of members of the party leadership group may be less readily available, as ministers and national leaders may not wish to advertise widely their role in this respect. Yet this information is vital, as only if it is acquired can we discover the true nature of government-party relationships: it may be, for instance, that some apparent forms of dependence of the government on the party or parties supporting it are compensated by an influence in the other direction which is less apparent. We may have to correct the impression referred to in the previous section and according to which only in relatively few cases can one find a reciprocal and balanced form of dependence between government and supporting parties.

Thus this part of the analysis must achieve more than just present data on cabinet memberships. It must provide rather sophisticated information about the true nature of the relationships as far as appointments are concerned and thus establish a firm basis for at least one of the components of the inquiry, given that, as has already been stressed, the investigation of the other two components poses serious problems which are unlikely to be solved more than in part.

Second, the assessment must none the less endeavour to find means of minimising difficulties with respect to the attribution of policy initiatives to governments and/or to supporting parties. In theory at least, the problem is not one of data collection, though obstacles exist at this level in practice, given the mass of decisions taken by governments: these obstacles may be partly overcome by selecting a limited number of important policy cases over a range of fields.

It is more difficult to discover means of obtaining a precise overall picture which can make intra- and intercountry comparisons truly revealing. To begin with, the real involvement of governments and parties may be blurred as the leaders of both types of bodies may have a political interest in giving the impression that they are jointly involved in the enterprise: there may therefore appear to be more reciprocal interdependence than is truly the case. Moreover, as at least important policies develop over a long period and as they often become markedly modified in the process, it may be theoretically difficult to decide who are the true 'authors': there would then seem to be genuine reciprocal influence.

As a matter of fact, however, some of these difficulties may be met by considering a series of cases, as similarities and differences may emerge from the sheer confrontation between cases both in each country and cross-nationally. One might thus be able to identify degrees of autonomy or interdependence and to

distinguish between types of interdependence by contrasting the various cases, although there will be limits to the extent to which a ranking will be obtained. In order to facilitate the process, a common cross-national framework of analysis of all the cases has to be devised. Cases must also be drawn from a wide range of policy fields, as one needs to assess whether differences in patterns of government-party relationships are truly systematic and are related primarily to the substance of these fields.

The most serious problem which the analysis of policy elaboration and development poses is thus the problem of 'weighting', both among the policies and between the 'policy' component and the 'appointment' component of the analysis. It would be unrealistic to hope to find a truly satisfactory and elegant solution to these questions: it seems only possible to suggest arrangements designed to go beyond impressions but may not go as far as providing real rankings. It would be highly valuable to be able to give a score to each case which is studied on the basis of the nature of government-party relationships in this case: one could then add the scores to obtain an overall country picture. Such an undertaking may be unrealistic, however, largely because it may be difficult to elaborate a common scoring scheme for all the countries. One may therefore have to be content with the location of cases in a small number of categories such as those which were used in the previous section: even this result would be an improvement, as the location of countries in one of

these groups could be expected to be 'firm' and not to be based merely on 'impressions'.

Since government-party relationships occur both with respect to appointments and with respect to policy elaboration and development, the two components need to be considered in combination, especially in order to see whether they reinforce each other or, on the contrary, whether they pull in different directions. The question has indeed wide significance in terms of governmental structure as it relates to a general matter which was referred to earlier, namely whether parties (and, one should add, governments as well) concentrate on appointment mechanisms to achieve indirectly their policy aims or whether the two types of goals are pursued independently. One needs also to find out whether there are cross-national differences in this respect or whether the strategies of governments and parties tend to be the same.

The third component, that which relates to the distribution of favours and to patronage, is the most difficult to assess in terms of its true extent and importance, as we know. The best that can be hoped is that a survey, even if on a sample basis only, will reveal how much patronage there is and how large are the variations across countries. When this is achieved, one will need to relate these findings to the patterns which will have been discovered with respect to appointments and to policy-making, in order to assess, for instance, whether a wide usage of patronage

reinforces an otherwise large tendency for the government to be dominant or, on the contrary, whether patronage is used in order to compensate for relative governmental weaknesses or for a lack of interdependence between government and supporting parties. Impressionistic evidence from the United States and from some countries where coalitions governments are the norm suggests that patronage compensates rather than reinforces; but this conclusion may not be universal nor be really true even for the countries in which this conclusion appears valid on the surface.

We referred so far to countries: yet countries are not the true units of analysis. Government-party relationships are likely to vary both from party to party and over time: indeed, as was noted earlier, one of the main purposes of the analysis is to discover the extent of these over-time changes. From a methodological standpoint, however, the approach remains the same; the only complication arises from the fact that the data base has to be broader; for the analysis of policy development especially, a substantial increase in data collection has to be anticipated, since one will need to have a number of case-studies for each party and for each time period if conclusions are to be drawn: such an objective may be unattainable for practical reasons. A partial solution to the problem may be found by undertaking two types of case-studies: in only a small number would there be a truly detailed examination of all aspects of policy development, while these would be preceded by a survey of a substantially larger number of cases, albeit not examined in depth. This

arrangement would help to discover broad trends as well as to see which cases would be most profitably be analysed in detail, for instance because they are typical of a certain type of government-party relationships in a given party at a given point in time.

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Government-party relationships are complex and need therefore to be examined carefully. Yet they are difficult to study systematically, primarily because we do not have at our disposal instruments enabling us to make precise assessments and to undertake a comprehensive examination of large numbers of policies. The inquiry must begin, however, even if a first analysis can reveal only a part, perhaps even a small part, of the detailed relationships which exist between governments and the parties which sustain them. A first inquiry will open up the field. It will also do more, as it will provide much needed information about matters which can be regarded as going beyond the specific scope of the topic. To take two examples only. We have been apt to underestimate the role of governments in policy-making: an inquiry into government-party relationships will help to discover the extent of this role. We know also that there is change in political systems, but the character and extent of this change is often not assessed, let alone measured: a study of government-party relationships will help to discover how much change does occur behind the appearance of major transformations.

At a time when many new regimes emerged while others modified their ideology and their structures, it is valuable to look concretely at the forms which these changes take, even if one does so at one point of political life only, especially if this point is as central as that where governments meet political parties.

NOTES

1. This is the paper entitled 'Government and supporting parties: definitions and classifications', which should be regarded asn introduction to the questions discussed in the present paper.

2. R.S. Katz, 'Party Government: A Rationalistic Conception', in F.G. Castles and R. Wildenmann, eds., Visions and Realities of Party Government (1986) Berlin: De Gruyter, p. 42 and foll.

3. On the 'power' approach, which was used primarily to analyse coalition formation processes, see

4. On this problem, see among others, R.L. Peterson et al., 'Government Formation and Policy Formulation' Res Publica, vol 25, (1983) pp. 49-82.

5. See K. Strom, 'Minority Governments in Parliamentary Democracies' Comp. Pol. Stud. vol. 17 (2) (1984), pp. 199-228.

6. This is the object of a subsequent paper, entitled 'The political factors accounting for the relationship between government and the parties which support them' which is also prepared for the May 1991 meeting.

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