The background of the cover is a dark green-grey color. It features a complex geometric pattern of thin black lines. A grid of squares is visible, with some squares containing smaller, nested squares. The lines vary in thickness and orientation, creating a sense of depth and complexity. The overall effect is a modern, architectural aesthetic.

Leonard
Weinberg

*The
Transformation
of Italian
Communism*

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Dedication

To professor John Clarke Adams, scholar and teacher

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Preface

This study has two purposes. The first is descriptive and the other analytical. It provides readers with a detailed account of how the Italian Communist Party (PCI) was transformed into the Democratic Party of The Left (PDS) and the meaning of that occurrence for Italy's troubled political party system. Second, this study aspires to achieve a somewhat broader goal. Its more ambitious objective is to call readers' attention to the impact of international developments on domestic party politics not only in Italy but among the industrialized democracies in general. Accordingly, it is a study of a single case but one that points towards a truly widespread, though often neglected, phenomenon.¹

Not many years ago, the PCI was a powerful force in Italian politics. Because of its mass membership and substantial support among Italian voters, the PCI was the largest non-ruling communist party in the Western world. Its participation in the underground Resistance movement to Nazi-Fascist control of Italy during World War II had earned the party enormous prestige. Its sensitivity to the role of culture in Italian society, a sensitivity not unrelated to Antonio Gramsci's writings, helped win the support of a large number of Italy's leading intellectuals—artists, writers, scientists, musicians, film makers—who saw it as the only plausible means available for transforming or at least reforming the country's distorted economy and corrupt political system.² Abroad, political observers in the United States, as well as other Western European nations, who detested the Soviet Union and the other Communist regimes of Eastern Europe, often came to view the PCI as a democratic and progressive force in Italian society, one worthy of emulation by communist parties in France, Spain and elsewhere.

Furthermore, over the course of the PCI's postwar career, certainly by the mid-1970s, it sometimes appeared as if the party was destined to rule Italy, its pursuit of power having an inexorable quality to it.³ But the goal proved to be elusive. And now this party in which so many Italians had placed so much trust no longer exists. As will be depicted in a later

chapter, some long-time party militants even mourned its passing with the same sense of loss usually reserved for the death of a loved one. Psychiatrists in Milan have even offered counseling to help the bereaved recover from their postcommunist depression.⁴ For instance, on hearing the news of the PCI's imminent death one longtime party member in Rome told a reporter that he only had cried three times in his life: when his wife had died; when the PCI leader Enrico Berlinguer had died; and when he heard the news that the party itself was going to pass from the scene.⁵

The immediate source of all this distress was an event that caused immense glee in other parts of Europe. When the Berlin Wall came down during the evening of November 9–10, 1989, Achille Occhetto, the PCI's recently chosen secretary, reached the conclusion that the division of Europe dating from the Yalta Conference of 1945 had come to an end. The cold war was finally over. At the time of this momentous development Occhetto was in Brussels conferring with Neil Kinnock, the British Labour party leader, over the future of the European Left. As they both watched the Wall coming down on television, Occhetto told Kinnock what he intended to do about this event and the other historic changes that were occurring in Eastern Europe during the fall of 1989. A few days later he first informed members of his own party.⁶

On November 12 Occhetto took the opportunity provided by a meeting of wartime Resistance veterans in Bologna to announce his intention not only to change his party's name, a possibility that had been under discussion for some time, but to replace the PCI with a completely new political formation.⁷ Dismantling the PCI proved to be no easy task. Despite the peremptory nature of Occhetto's decision, he certainly had his work cut out for him, as will be seen. Supporters and opponents of party change struggled for over a year before Occhetto was able to achieve his objective. That objective involved the formation of the PDS, a new postcommunist political party. In achieving this goal Occhetto and his followers sought to create a modern political organization, one which would appeal to the increasingly prosperous and issue-sensitive Italian electorate without the burden of the PCI's Marxist heritage. And by divesting itself of its communist past, the new party, Occhetto hoped, would come to rule Italy, the aim its predecessor had never been able to reach.

To understand the PCI's transformation into the PDS without discussing the broader international context in which it occurred would be

to attempt to stage a performance of *Hamlet* without the Prince of Denmark. The necessity of such a discussion, in turn, raises a broader issue, one concerning the general effect of international forces on domestic party politics. Somewhat surprisingly, this is a subject which does not appear to have prompted much commentary among political scientists interested in the nature of party politics within the industrialized democracies.

In order to compensate for the limited amount of attention this topic has received, the first chapter of this study will offer a discussion and a set of relevant concepts, which, it is hoped, will prove useful in helping to understand the impact of international developments on political party life within the western democracies.

Chapter 2 will introduce readers to the Italian political system, a system often depicted as immobile or "blocked" but one presently (1993) going through a process of profound change. In any event, the party system's defining attributes will be discussed, along with the various historic events, social circumstances and economic conditions that are widely believed to have determined its shape. At this point, there will be a discussion of the various international forces at work in postwar Italy which also played a crucial role in shaping the structure of party politics.

Next, there will be a relatively long chapter in which the PCI's transformation into the *Partito Democratico della Sinistra* (Democratic Party of the Left—PDS) will be described in some detail. Attention will also be paid, though not as much, to the efforts of Occhetto's opponents to retain a Communist presence in Italy by forming the *Rifondazione Comunista*, a "refounded" communist party. There will be commentary on the impact the dramatic events of 1989 had on the various party leaders seeking to promote or retard the end of Italian communism.

Chapters 4 and 5 will be devoted to the organizational and intellectual ferment brought on by the process of change unleashed by Occhetto's reaction to the startling events of 1989. In particular, chapter 4 will describe how a "mass" party with a large professional staff and many ancillary organizations under its auspices has been transformed into a "light" party that appeals for support to individual Italian citizens rather than the country's working classes. Consideration also will be given to efforts by supporters of party reform to borrow organizational forms (e.g., the "shadow" government) used in other countries to promote their objectives.

No description of the collapse of the communist enterprise in Italy would be complete without some account of the personal impact of 1989 and of Gorbachev's earlier reform initiatives on the country's intellectuals. In particular, chapter 5 will be concerned with the personal effect the PCI's end had on individuals who had devoted many years of their lives to the party. It will also contain a discussion of how many Marxist intellectuals responded to the collapse of communist regimes (*socialismo reale*) in Eastern Europe and elsewhere. What happens when prophecy fails?

The last chapter has two purposes. First it will offer readers an assessment of 1989 and subsequent international developments, including the disintegration of the Soviet Union itself, on the Italian party system as a whole. Such an assessment at this point is almost the equivalent of shooting at a moving target because of the exceptional changes presently underway. Their outcome remains uncertain, but some things seem clear: the declining power of parties in general, for example. Finally, this writer will return to the study's analytical objective by evaluating the impact the different kinds of international forces; for example, events, governmental organizations, foreign political parties, had on Italian party politics and the end of Italian communism.

Finally, the reader should be aware that almost all of this book was written in 1992 and 1993 before the full weight of the scandals discussed in the last chapter was felt on the Italian party system. As a consequence there is no discussion of the parliamentary elections of March 1994. At this balloting the entire party system underwent a radical transformation with the long dominant and scandal-ridden Christian Democrats (renamed the Popular Party for the occasion) not only expelled from power but almost reduced to a marginal force. Likewise, the Italian Socialist Party, the Christian Democrats long-time coalition partner, has virtually disappeared, with its most visible leaders facing criminal charges.

Despite these dramatic occurrences the PDS, still under the leadership of Achille Occhetto, failed in its bid for power. Instead of moving to the Left, Italian voters have preferred to place their country's future in the hands of a right-wing coalition led by a mutli-billionaire businessman and including representatives of the neo-fascist National Alliance. The post-communist PDS seems no closer to power than its communist predecessor.

Notes

1. For discussions of this type of case study see, Sidney Verba, "Some Dilemmas in Comparative Research," *Comparative Politics* 20,1 (1967): 111-27; see also Harry Eckstein, "Case Study and Theory in Political Science," in , *Handbook of Political Science: Strategies of Inquiry*, vol. 7, eds. Fred Greenstein and Nelson Polsby (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1975) 99-104.
2. Antonio Gramsci, *The Modern Prince and Other Writings* (New York: International Publishers, 1957), 135-88.
3. See, for example, Celso Ghini, *Il Terremoto Del 15 Giugno* (Milan: Feltrinelli, 1976), 232-68.
4. Francesca Codignola and Emilio Fava, *Psicodinamica del Post-Comunista* (Rome: Il Pensiero Scientifico Editore, 1992), 17-30.
5. *Il Manifesto* 16 November, 1989, 6-7.
6. See, Achille Occhetto, *Un indimenticabile '89* (Milan: Feltrinelli, 1990), 120-23.
7. For an account see Chiara Valentini, *Il nome e la cosa: Viaggio nel PCI che cambia* (Milan: Feltrinelli, 1990), 7-8.

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1

The Impact of International Developments on Domestic Party Politics

In *The White House Years* Henry Kissinger, then the Secretary of State under Nixon, describes visiting Rome in order to discuss mutual foreign policy concerns with Italian leaders. To his surprise, neither Italy's foreign minister nor its prime minister shared Kissinger's enthusiasm for the subject. Thus, "... each visit left me with the impression that its primary purpose was fulfilled by our arrival at the airport. This symbolized that the United States took Italy seriously; it produced photographic evidence that Italian leaders were being consulted." And, "... one sometimes could not avoid the impression that to discuss international affairs with their Foreign Minister was to risk boring him."¹

What really interested Kissinger's hosts was not the peace process in the Middle East or nuclear arms negotiations with the Soviets but domestic politics in Italy. The struggle for supremacy among the various *correnti* of the ruling Christian Democratic party (DC) over which one would get the most desirable cabinet posts and other tangible benefits of power or the relationship between the Christian Democrats and other political parties in the Italian system were subjects infinitely more important to these veteran politicians than events far removed from their field of vision or ability to control. The working assumption was that international events and domestic party politics bore little relationship to one another.

But, is this true? Aren't their occasions when developments outside a country's borders have consequences so far as its political party system is concerned? Isn't the behavior of political parties, singly or taken collectively, influenced by the international environment of the nation in which they compete for power?

2 The Transformation of Italian Communism

Modern politics in the Western democracies abounds with cases involving such consequences. For instance, Kissinger's own Vietnam era "peace is at hand" remark, uttered after he returned from Paris negotiations with the North Vietnamese, helped the reelection chances of President Nixon during the 1972 American election campaign. And, of course, Nixon's original victory in the 1968 election was aided immensely by the conflicts within the Democratic party brought on by the Johnson Administration's decision to escalate the direct American involvement in the Vietnam conflict. Similarly, in Israel popular resentment over the government's management of the October 1973 Yom Kippur War with Egypt and Syria contributed to the Labor Party's defeat in the subsequent parliamentary elections.

But the international cause need not be a war nor the domestic party affect the outcome of an election. Policy decisions made by international organizations, foreign governments and even such private entities as banks and other business enterprises may have far-reaching domestic party political consequences. For example, during the 1930s the British Labour Party suffered a serious factional division when American banks made additional loans to the government of Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald contingent on its willingness to slash payments to unemployed workers in the middle of the worldwide Depression. And, can there be any doubt but that same Depression enhanced popular support for the reform-minded Social Democrats in Sweden and for such extremists as the Communist and Nazi parties in Weimar Germany?

More recent developments may be cited. For example, in the 1950s the dispute between the Soviet Union and Mao's China over the possibility of "peaceful co-existence" with the West stimulated the formation of numerous pro-Chinese communist parties in various parts of the world including the industrialized democracies of Western Europe. Or, the 1968 decision made by Leonid Brezhnev and the rest of the Soviet leadership to use force in order to end the "Prague Spring" reforms of Alexander Dubcek in Czechoslovakia led to widespread member defections among pro-Soviet communist parties active in the same democracies. Despite these and a vast number of other illustrations that could be used to suggest a relationship between international occurrences and domestic party politics, the professional literature virtually ignores the subject. If we ask ourselves why national political party systems are the way they are, the answers provided by the now classic commentaries rarely draw the reader's attention to international developments.

Some of the major statements on the subject respond to the question by citing institutional factors. There are important commentaries by Maurice Duverger and other major analysts which emphasize the role played by electoral laws.² Specifically, the number of significant political parties in a nation will be strongly influenced by whether or not the law requires that votes be counted by means of proportional representation. If it does, the country is very likely to have a multi-party system; if the votes are counted, as they are in the United States and Great Britain, on the basis of a plurality, winner-take-all arrangement, the result is likely to be a system dominated by two or three major parties.

Other institutional explanations for the configuration of party systems refer to the structure of government. For example, the fact that American politics has long been dominated by two parties has been linked to the role of the presidency and the every four year contest to win the office. Likewise, the smaller number of major parties active in France during the Fifth Republic as compared to its predecessor has been associated with the creation of a powerful presidency selected on the basis of a direct popular vote. In both instances, in order to contend seriously for the post, political groups are compelled to coalesce around a handful of serious contenders.³

Not only is the structure of the national government thought to make a difference but so too is the relationship between the latter and sub-national institutions. In particular, federalism is often believed to promote a decentralized party system. Again the United States is typically offered as Exhibit "A" in these discussions.⁴ The dynamic in countries where the national-sub-national relationship is unitary and power concentrated at the center is the opposite. The impulse is towards centralized parties.

If not more, then certainly as influential explanations for party systems are those which emphasize the nature of society from which parties have emerged. Seymour Martin Lipset and Stein Rokkan produced one of the most important accounts in this tradition.⁵ According to their well-known formulation, modern party systems are the outgrowth of the historic cleavages nations experienced as they achieved national unity and industrial development. The parties in the system: agrarian, clerical, anti-clerical, liberal, radical, socialist, etc., and their relative levels of support in the electorate reflect the various ways in which the drive to achieve a unified nation-state and the industrialization of the economy were experienced in different countries. And, once in place, the party

systems of the European democracies tended to remain "frozen" at least through the 1960s.

More recent works by Hans Daalder, Peter Mair, Russell Dalton, and others emphasize the extent to which the party systems Lipset and Rokkan characterized as "frozen" have, in fact, undergone significant changes over the last few decades. New parties have appeared on the scene and some old ones have exited from it. Voting behavior in the European democracies has become more volatile, etc. But the underlying sources of these changes are still believed to be changes in the domestic economies and societies of the affected nations.⁶

In addition to institutional and social, there are also cultural explanations for the contours of national party systems. In this vein, such observers as Giovanni Sartori have made a distinction between open and closed belief systems.⁷ According to Sartori's formulation, there are some national cultures, the American and British ones for example, where people learn by induction and experimentation, and where they come to new experiences without much in the way of preconceptions. On the other hand, there are other nations, for example, France and Italy, where the process of learning is built around deductive reasoning, the application of abstract principles to particular cases. As a consequence, reality gets to be defined by the pre-existing abstraction or generalization rather than the other way around. The party political relevance of Sartori's distinction is as follows. In countries where closed beliefs predominate, the party system is composed of ideological parties, ones whose elaborate and highly abstract world views make it hard for them to compromise with one another. The tendencies are towards polarization and immobility. On the other hand, pragmatism and a willingness to bargain and adapt to new circumstances are the dominant motifs of parties active in nations with open belief systems.

The focus on domestic circumstances that dominates the study of political party systems applies as well to the study of individual political parties. If we ask how political parties come to life in the first place, the answers furnished by the literature once again call our attention to the domestic.

Klaus von Beyme identifies three prevailing explanations for the origins of parties.⁸ The first he labels "institutional" by which he has in mind accounts that link the formation of parties to the strengthening of parliamentary powers and the expansion of the franchise. Those who

propose this explanation have in mind the largely unanticipated emergence of parties in the United States and Western Europe in the 19th century as absolutist monarchies that were replaced by parliamentary systems of rule and as the right to vote was made available to large numbers of ordinary people. According to at least one line of reasoning, the appearance of parties reflected the efforts of forces at work inside congress or parliament to channel and control the newly influential and potentially threatening mass electorate.⁹ But of course other interpretations of these developments are not uncommon, particularly by those struck by the appearance of socialist parties in Europe at the end of the century.

A second line of explanation for the emergence of parties which von Beyme identifies concerns "crises" brought on, among other things, by the appearance of new states. In the course of a struggle to achieve national independence, a mass movement transforms itself into a political party. In the European context, von Beyme refers to the emergence of the Sinn Fein in 1918 as Ireland fought to win its independence from Britain. Post World War II developments in Asia, Africa and the Middle East furnish an abundance of examples of this pattern at work.¹⁰

Finally, there are explanations built around the concept of "modernization." The appearance of parties, in this view, occurs concomitantly with the growth of cities, the spread of formal education, the development of channels of mass communication and the secularization of society.¹¹ Where large numbers of people are socially mobilized and become alert to the possibilities of political activity parties appear on the scene.

There is even some evidence that the fortunes of particular kinds of parties are linked to the modernization process. John Kautsky and others have observed that Communist parties typically fare much better as societies experience the social and economic changes associated with modernization than they do under more stable circumstances. It is the impact of the strains and dislocations of change itself that stimulated support for communism in the developing areas.¹² Once parties have made their appearances, their subsequent performances—how well they do at the polls for example—are thought to be determined by a number of domestic considerations. For instance, a topic that has provoked substantial debate over the decades has been the failure of a socialist party to take root in the United States. By contrast to Great Britain, France, Germany, Italy, and other industrialized democracies, America has stood

apart in terms of the reluctance of its voters to cast ballots for the socialist cause. Why should this be the case? Those putting forward explanations have stressed, *inter alia*, the role of the frontier, the absence of a feudalism-based class system and the multi-ethnic, multi-racial composition of the American working class.¹³

Of course, the above case simply represents a single example of a far more general phenomenon: the linkage between a party's behavior and the social structure of the country in which it is active. Until the emergence of so-called "catch-all" parties in the 1960s, those committed to winning votes from all segments of society, most observers of politics in Western Europe almost defined individual parties by the nature of the social strata, religious confession or region they sought to represent.¹⁴ The whole constellation of ideas concerning the meaning of parties of the Left, Center, and Right is rooted in this perspective.

Even the long-term decline of parties that appeal to voters on the basis of certain specific economic or social criteria has been related to changing conditions. Parties that define themselves as the expressions of peasant farmers or of blue collar workers inevitably suffer as these groups shrink in size relative to others in advanced industrialized societies. The same logic applies to the fate of explicitly religious parties under increasingly secular conditions.

There is another tradition in the study of political parties that shifts the focus of attention away from factors external to the party, the sociological determinants of a party's electoral support, to ones at work within the organization itself. Robert Michels' work offers the classic statement of this perspective.¹⁵ According to this line of reasoning, parties are typically complex organizations that no matter how committed to the principles of democratic rule they purport to be they inevitably develop the need for leadership. The latter, according to Michels' "iron law of oligarchy," evolve interests separate from or even inimical to those of the party's members or supporters. Party leaders also devise strategies for maintaining themselves in positions of power. As a consequence, the performances of political parties in government or in the venue of electoral politics are shaped by the needs of party elites over all other considerations.

An emphasis on the crucial role of party elites need not stress oligarchical tendencies. For instance, discussions initiated by Arend Lijphart concerning "consociational democracy" emphasize the important role

of party leaders in achieving power-sharing agreements in profoundly divided societies.¹⁶ In the absence of such benign arrangements various social groups in these segmented, conflict-ridden societies might come to regard the government as in the hands of their enemies and pursue their goals outside the electoral arena through the use of violence. The multi-sided civil war in Lebanon during the late 1970s and early 1980s provides an example of what may happen when these power-sharing agreements break down.

There is no reason why political parties must exist in perpetuity. Many of them have ceased to exist. Richard Rose and Thomas Mackie have investigated the reasons for these extinctions.¹⁷ Their analysis was based on the record of competitive elections in some nineteen countries dating back to the early 1830s. Rose and Mackie report that 42 percent of the parties in their records were ephemeral in the sense that they disappeared after competing at no more than three elections. But not all the parties that became "institutionalized," that is survived for more than three elections endured indefinitely. Some merged with other parties, others split apart, while nearly a quarter disappeared completely. Only about one third (64) of their total of 195 "institutionalized" parties persisted intact.

What explains party extinctions? Here Rose and Mackie do stress the impact of one type of international event—world war—in disturbing the careers of different political parties. They report that World Wars I and II had such consequences. Nonetheless, the overall thrust of their analysis is to stress such domestic considerations as the failure to win a share of government power as the causes of party disappearances.

In such a brief and truncated summary of the literature, it is inevitable that the major lines of analysis and argumentation were reduced to their simplest form. Nevertheless, it seems reasonable to say that a fair-minded reading of most of the major works in the study of party politics in the industrialized democracies would lead to the conclusion that developments outside the borders of the countries involved had little impact on the configuration of domestic political party activity.

But this is manifestly not the case. In fact, there is an abundance of evidence to suggest quite the opposite.

To begin with, examples drawn from the inauguration of party systems and individual parties, a variety of cases may come under scrutiny. First, the formation or the reformation of the party system in the Federal

Republic of Germany after World War II was clearly shaped by decisions taken by the allied occupation authorities. In the period 1945–1949 the willingness of American, French and British authorities to license some parties, for example, the Christian Democratic Union (CDU), while denying approval to other aspirants, for example, refugee or would-be refugee parties, had longterm consequences for the new West German party system.¹⁸ At the level of the individual party, one obvious question to ask is, where did Communist parties come from? After the October 1917 Revolution and the consolidation of Bolshevik control in the Soviet Union, Communist parties, Leninist in character and affiliated with the Third International, appear in Germany, France, Italy, Spain, Great Britain, the United States, and a long list of other countries. Clearly, these parties, some of which went on to achieve great influence, derived their inspiration from an international event or series of events.¹⁹

An analogous pattern is observable as a result of the 1959 Castroite Revolution in Cuba. In the years immediately following the events in Havana, pro-Castro parties emerged in Colombia, Venezuela, and a number of other Latin American countries.²⁰ In the absence of Castro's achievement would there have been such "revolutions within the revolution" in the Western Hemisphere?

At the other end of the ideological spectrum, a strong case can be made for the international derivation of various fascist parties during the 1930s. Parties ranging from the trivial, Sir Oswald Mosely's British Union of Fascists, to the important, the Peronists in Argentina, were inspired by the Italian model established by Mussolini.²¹

The reader should not be left with the impression that it is only extremist parties that have made their appearances as the result, at least in part, of developments outside the countries in which they contest for power. For instance, the roots of the Socialist party in the West African nation of Senegal are to be found in the French Socialist party, of which, prior to the achievement of Senegalese independence, it was once a part.²²

And while it would be too strong a statement to say that it was formed initially by external forces, it is true, nonetheless, that the Socialist party of Portugal was helped substantially by the Socialist International during the crucial period in the 1970s when that country's new democratic regime was undergoing a process of consolidation.²³

Irredentism provides another basis for the role of an external cause in the formation of a political party. The Sinn Fein's activities in the Re-

public of Ireland are directed towards bringing Ulster under the control of the Republican government in Dublin. Presumably, if there were no Northern Ireland, there would be no Sinn Fein to fight for its elimination.²⁴

International forces are also at work in the maintenance of already existing political parties and political party systems. In some cases the term maintenance may be taken literally in the sense that the external force—another government, an international organization or a foreign political party—will provide cash payments to political parties whose outlook it regards with favor. Such was the case, for example, in democratic Czechoslovakia in the years immediately before its dismemberment as a result of the 1938 Munich agreement. In this instance the Nazi dictatorship in Germany helped to maintain a Nazi party in the Sudetenland, the German-speaking part of Czechoslovakia.

But in other cases no cash payments seem to be required. The post World War II party system in Finland was strongly influenced by the Soviet Union's determination to maintain friendly elements in power in Helsinki. Finnish parties and politicians had to think twice or more before doing or saying things that might be construed as unfriendly by their powerful neighbor.²⁵ Thanks to their behavior the term "Finlandization", a type of self-censorship, entered the vocabulary of students of the cold war era.

In addition to money or the threat of force, ideas have crossed national borders to play a role in domestic party political life. Not many years ago the term "eurocommunism" was widely discussed throughout Western Europe.²⁶ Generally speaking, it referred to the acceptance of pluralism and the democratic rules of the game by three of the major Communist parties active in Western Europe during the 1970s—those in France, Italy and Spain to be specific. The "eurocommunist" outlook originally was a quality attributed to the Italian party, which then became attractive in the other locales as the Soviet model came to look increasingly implausible in the context of a prosperous Western Europe.

Another concept that has crossed national borders in recent years to assume a significant role in domestic party politics is that of environmental protection. Green parties have become active and succeeded in electing candidates to public office not only in Germany but now in various other European democracies as well.²⁷ Just as developments occurring outside a nation's borders have an impact on the formation and maintenance of political parties so too these occurrences may con-

tribute to the extinction of political parties. The most obvious cases are ones involving foreign conquest. In some of the most severe cases the occupying power employs force to eliminate the entire range of parties active in the system. The fate of Dutch or Danish parties during the Nazi occupation of their homelands during World War II is illustrative. But the international events causing or contributing to party disappearances need not include military defeat in war. The decision taken by the leadership of the British Communist party to have it cease operations was made in the wake of the events in Eastern Europe in 1989 and the subsequent disintegration of the Soviet Union.

The relative handful of cases described in the previous paragraphs were intended to convince the reader that international environment may have a substantial and continuous impact on domestic party politics. This appears to be true over the entire life span of parties and party systems from their initiation to their extinction. At this point the problem becomes one of imposing some order on the observed pattern of interaction between the international environment and the arena of domestic party politics. Fortunately there is a set of concepts and a body of writing which may be applied to the circumstances with which we are confronted.

Linkage theory is a body of ideas devised originally by scholars working in the field of international relations, James Rosenau most conspicuously. Rosenau defined a linkage "as any recurrent sequence of behavior that originates in one system and is reacted to in another."²⁸ This concept is clearly pertinent to the subject at hand. Rosenau goes on to specify three separate types of linkage processes.

First, he refers to a penetrative process. This occurs, he writes, when members of one polity participate in the political process of another. An example of this pattern might involve the behavior of the Soviet ambassador to Communist Poland, or indeed the entire Soviet leadership, to the threat posed to that country's leadership by the Solidarity trade union movement during 1981. In this case, with high stakes involved, from the USSR's perspective, Andropov and the other Soviet leaders acted as if they were crucial decision makers in the Polish political system, as indeed they were. In their absence would General Jaruzelski have come to power in the way he did? Another instance of the penetrative type of linkage may be found in the long-term relationship between Lebanon and Syria in the Middle East. As with the erstwhile Soviet-Polish rela-

tionship this is a case in which key decision makers in the dominant country, Hafez al-Asad in Syria most obviously, are able to affect who does or does not come to lead the weak and strife-ridden nation of Lebanon.²⁹

The second and most common form of linkage, according to Rosenau, is a reactive process. In these circumstances an external actor does not play a direct role in the domestic politics of another nation. The boundary between national and international is preserved. Nonetheless, a reactive linkage exists when the behavior of international actors of one kind or another causes a domestic political response, a response that would not have occurred in the absence of the external stimulus. The 1983 British general election in which the Conservatives under the leadership of Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher won a landslide victory over the Labour party may be used as an example of this reactive process. The level of support that Thatcher and her party enjoyed in this contest was influenced by the outcome of the Falklands Islands War in which British forces decisively defeated the Argentine army and naval forces in the struggle to control this remote island chain in the South Atlantic. Despite a high unemployment rate and other serious economic problems besetting their country, many British voters reacted to the victory in the war by rewarding the Thatcher government's successful resolution of the conflict with their ballots.

Another example of a reactive linkage may be drawn from the experiences of the 1990s. The fact that the erstwhile communist countries of Eastern Europe have been experiencing very serious economic and social dislocations as they convert from command-based to market economies has caused many citizens to seek asylum in the Federal Republic of Germany. Feeling overwhelmed by the problems associated with national reunification, the appearance of large numbers of these asylum-seekers has stimulated a right-wing backlash, with neo-nazi or skinhead youth gangs carrying out acts of violence against the newcomers. This conduct, in turn, has prompted the German government to rethink its policy and contemplate a revision of the Basic Law to make it more difficult for foreigners to take up residence.

The final form of linkage to which Rosenau has called our attention is that of emulation. The latter really represents a particular type of reaction. The emulative type of linkage involves something approximating copycat behavior, in which developments in one country or countries is

replicated in another. Again a number of examples may be used for illustrative purposes.

The student protest movement in the United States against the Vietnam War during the 1960s, displayed throughout the entire industrialized world via the mass media, was emulated by young people at major university centers on the European continent. The effectiveness of this kind of direct protest was then replicated by other groups in the population with other kinds of grievances. In this way "unconventional" political participation was adopted by groups concerned about such issues as the status of women in society and the protection of the physical environment from the destructive effects of ecologically indifferent industrial organizations.

Emulation may also involve the reproduction in one country of an institution found to function successfully in another in dealing with the same kinds of problems. While the Swedes pioneered the use of the ombudsman, an office to investigate citizen complaints about various government bureaucracies, other European countries have found it advantageous to create their own ombudsman units. Problems arising from the interaction between citizens and bureaucracy are hardly confined to Sweden.

Scholars interested in the field of comparative party politics have not completely ignored the concept of linkage. Indeed there is an interesting collection of essays on this theme edited by Kay Lawson.³⁰ For the most part, however, the contributors are concerned with the penetrative, reactive and emulative linkages provided by political parties between citizens and governments *within* the same nations, rather than with the relationships viewed from a cross-national perspective. The exception to this pattern is an essay by Tom Truman about the Australian party system. His paper's focus is on the impact of a number of international events, for example, the Nazi-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact of 1939, the Nazi attack on the Soviet Union in 1941, the postwar Vatican campaign against international communism, on the Australian Labor Party.³¹

To this point, two ideas have been advanced. First, despite the tendency of the literature to look elsewhere, the shape of national party political life is often influenced by international developments. And, second, the concept of linkage, with its attendant ideas of penetration, reaction and emulation, may prove especially useful in aiding our understanding of these impacts. However, before we can begin to grapple

seriously with the subject of this inquiry, some additional remarks need to be made concerning the characteristics of the international-party political relationship. It is best to divide this discussion in two parts; the first concerning domestic party politics, the dependent variable for want of a better term, and the second dwelling on the nature of the international development.

It seems necessary to stress, insofar as domestic party politics is concerned, that a focus on international influences is not intended to replace but simply add to national explanations for the way party politics functions in different nations. That is to say, unless the domestic political situation is susceptible, it is hard to see how international developments will make much of an impact. For instance, the likelihood of a green party being formed in a particular country in response to ones active in other nations seems dependent on the presence of a certain level of general awareness of environmental problems in the national population. If no such awareness exists, if there is no attentive public and no promotional leadership, then the chances seem meager that a green party will take root, no matter how prominent such parties are elsewhere.

Next, we should spell out the level(s) at which the international influence is felt. Is the entire party system affected? Or, is the impact limited to a single party? And, in the latter context, we might also consider such things as the influence on party formation, internal party organization, party doctrine and party extinction. Another obvious issue is the extent to which the international has consequences on a party or parties' strength at the polls. Do they gain or lose popular support as a result of occurrences beyond the national borders.

Finally, we need to specify the nature of the international influence. Here we confront a range of possible sources of such influence. An event, such as a war, would seem the most obvious. For instance, many observers have noted that World War II and the struggle against the Nazi and Fascist dictatorship served to discredit right-wing parties in the immediate aftermath of the war in France, Italy and other European democracies. On the other hand, in the United States the emergence of the cold war conflict with the Soviet Union was used to discredit the Democratic party whose leaders were accused of "twenty years of treason" by their Republican adversaries during the 1952 presidential election campaign.

In addition to events, organizations of one kind or another may provide the source of international influence on domestic party politics.