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**ELECTORAL RULES, ETHNIC POLITICS, AND POLITICAL
PARTY DEVELOPMENT IN NEW DEMOCRACIES:
THE CASES OF ESTONIA, LATVIA, AND CZECHOSLOVAKIA**

By

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ABSTRACT

ELECTORAL RULES, ETHNIC POLITICS AND POLITICAL PARTY DEVELOPMENT IN NEW DEMOCRACIES: THE CASES OF ESTONIA, LATVIA, AND CZECHOSLOVAKIA

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Recent developments in Eastern Europe and the former USSR have raised the question of the survivability of new democracies in this region of the world. The political problems associated with rapid economic transformation are compounded by the existence of severe ethnic cleavage in many of these new democracies. A key factor, which will affect the survivability of these new democratic regimes is the degree of cohesiveness attained in the emerging system of political parties.

This dissertation applies several existing theories on political party and party systems development, to the cases of Estonia, Latvia, and Czechoslovakia. In particular, institutional, social and cultural explanations are applied to two sets of dependent variables. The first deals with short-term issues of party behavior, especially regarding party/candidate entry into competition, and the nomination strategies of both large, conglomerate and ethnically particular parties. Standard OLS and Logit techniques are employed in testing the effects of varying district

magnitude, ethnic composition of electoral districts and the "gate-keeper" effect exerted by structured political parties, on the dependent variables of independent candidate entry, the propensity of large parties to over-nominate, and the nomination strategies of the Russian minority party, during the course of the Estonian Supreme Soviet elections of March 18, 1990. The general findings of this section indicate that, although varying district magnitude had a significant impact on independent candidate entry, it did not affect the nominating strategies of either large parties or ethnically particular ones.

The second section of this dissertation deals with the more distal issues of individual party development. To this extent, a comparative approach was adopted, which examined the evolution of three modal types of political parties in the period immediately following the founding elections of 1990 in Estonia, Latvia and Czechoslovakia, with special focus on the degree to which these parties fragmented and the degree to which the conflicts between parties became polarized. In general, it was found that, in accordance with existing institutional theories, the degree of fragmentation and the polarization of inter-party conflicts was primarily a function of the use of different electoral systems.

To my parents, Toaru and Miyako, without whose love and support this would never have come to pass; and to my son, David Tetsuji Ishiyama, with all of my love.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter 1: Introduction	1
a) The Problem: Democratization and Political Parties.....	8
b) The Dimensions of Analysis.....	20
c) Research Limitations.....	37
d) The Organization of this Thesis.....	41
Chapter 2 Literature Review: The Dimensions of Party Behavior and Development	48
a) What is a Political Party?.....	48
b) The Effects of Ethno-Politics on Political Parties.....	59
c) Electoral Rules and Party Fragmentation....	68
d) The Single Transferable Vote.....	75
e) The Impact of "Structured" Political Parties.....	86
f) Summary of the Model.....	93
Chapter 3: Research Design and Methodology	99
a) Research Design and Data Sources.....	99
b) Dependent and Independent Variables.....	107
c) The Quantitative Method.....	126
d) The Interpretation of the Results.....	129
Chapter 4: The Estonian Supreme Soviet Elections, March, 1990.....	130
a) Debates over the Electoral Law, November 1989.....	130
b) The Republican Parliamentary Campaign....	140
c) The Election Results.....	142
d) The Model.....	144
e) The Evidence.....	149
f) Discussion and Conclusions.....	162
Chapter 5: The Evolution of the Major Transitional Parties in Estonia and Latvia, 1990-91.....	169
a) Pre-Election Developments.....	178
b) The Communist Parties: From Power to Dissolution.....	193

c) The Founding Elections: March 18, 1990....	209
d) The Popular Fronts after the Elections: The PFE.....	215
e) The PFL.....	230
f) The Communist Parties after the Elections: The CPE.....	243
g) The CPL.....	254
h) Discussion and Conclusions.....	264
 Chapter 6: The Evolution of the Major Transitional Parties in Czechoslovakia 1990-91	269
a) Structural Elements and the Czechoslovak Case.....	271
b) The Electoral Law.....	277
c) The Results of the June Election.....	281
d) Changes within the Civic Forum and Public Against Violence.....	285
e) The Evolution of the CPCZ.....	302
f) The Evolution of Ethnically Particular Parties: The Slovak National Party (SNS) ..	318
g) Discussion and Conclusions.....	332
 Chapter 7: Conclusions	336
 Bibliography.....	355

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Population by Nationality: Czechoslovakia.....	64
Table 2. Population by Ethnic Group: Baltic Republics.....	65
Table 3. Electoral District Magnitude and Ethnic Composition: Estonia.....	119
Table 4. Characteristics of the Estonian Supreme Soviet Election, March 1990.....	143
Table 5. Pearson's Correlation Coefficient (r) Matrix for Major Independent Variables.....	148
Table 6. Coefficient Estimates for Independent Candidate Proliferation: Multiple Model 1.....	152
Table 7. Coefficient Estimates for Independent Candidate Proliferation: Multiple Model 2.....	153
Table 8. Coefficient Estimates for Independent Candidate Proliferation: Multiple Model 3.....	154
Table 9. Coefficient Estimates for OSTK Nominating Choices: Logit Model.....	155
Table 10. Coefficient Estimates for the Intensity of OSTK Nominating Choices.....	156
Table 11. Average Number of Candidates Contesting Seats: Estonian Supreme Soviet Elections, 1990.....	160
Table 12. PFE Over/Under-nomination at the Individual District Level.....	161

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Sample Ballot (In Russian).....	134
Figure 2: Sample Ballot (In Estonian).....	135

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

- CPE -- Communist Party of Estonia
- CPL -- Communist Party of Latvia
- CPCZ -- Communist Party of Czechoslovakia
- CPSL -- Communist Party of Slovakia
- EHS -- Estonian Heritage Society
- ENIP -- Estonian National Independence Party
- FPTP -- First-Past-the-Post electoral system
- IME -- The Economic Self-financing Plan of Estonia
(isemajandav Eesti)
- Interfront - International Front of Workers in the LaSSR
(Internatsional'noe dvizhenie trudiashchikhsia
LaSSR)
- Intermovement- International Movement of Workers in the
ESSR (Internatsional'noe dvizhenie
trudiashchikhsia ESSR)
- LNIM -- Latvian National Independence Movement
- MRP-AEG -- Estonian Group for the Disclosure
of the Molotov - Ribbentrop Pact"
(Estonian acronym)
- OF -- Civic Forum (Obcanske Forum)
- OSTK -- United Council of Labor Collectives
(Ob'edinennyi sovet trudovykh kollektivov)
- PPE -- Party of Entrepreneurs (Estonia)
- PF -- Popular Front
- PFE -- Popular Front of Estonia
- PFL -- Popular Front of Latvia

PR -- Proportional Representation electoral system
SNS -- Slovak National Party (Slovenske Narodna Strana)
SNTV -- Single Non-Transferable Vote electoral system
STV -- Single Transferable Vote electoral system
VPN -- Public Against Violence (Slovakia)

Chapter 1: Introduction

Every so often, political systems create quasi-experimental conditions in which theories in the social sciences are inadvertently tested. These conditions are never controlled as genuine experiments, but the propositions are generally more significant than those that can be tested in experiments. In this sense, the cases of democratic experimentation in Eastern Europe offer a unique opportunity to test a variety of theories of democratization developed from the western experience.¹ Indeed, the experiments in democracy and democratization have opened a window of opportunity for political scientists, in that a number of longstanding theories can now be applied.

Recent events have revived a longstanding interest among comparativists -- the survivability of the democratic experiments in the "New" Eastern Europe. This is especially true among longtime observers of politics in the Soviet Union and in Eastern Europe, where recent events, such as the August coup in the USSR and the newly won independence of the Baltic states, have offered a tantalizing opportunity not only to observe the unfolding of "political drama" but to bring to bear some of the basic principles of

¹For a discussion of such "natural experiments," see Brody and Brownstein (1973) p. 218.

comparative political analysis to explain and predict the future course of democratizatsiia in these countries.

One commonly cited argument is the relationship between the developing system of political parties and the emergence of "stable" political democracy. Among the characteristics of party systems which are most often cited as in the Western literature on political party systems as contributing to stable democratization are: the degree of party pluralism (Duverger, 1954; Sartori, 1966); the degree of ideological polarization (Downs, 1957; Sartori, 1966; 1986), and the organizational types of political parties which comprise the emergent system (Duverger, 1954; Kirchheimer, 1965).

In general, there have been three contending approaches which have dominated the investigation of party systems development. On the one hand there is the contention that the principal features of a party system are due to the incentives generated by electoral laws (Rae, 1967; Lijphart and Grofman, 1984; Grofman and Lijphart, 1986). A second approach holds that the key features of an emergent party system are due primarily to the "cleavages" which exist in a socio-political environment (see for example the now classic argument made by Lipset and Rokkan, 1966). A third approach holds that a key determinant which is crucial in understanding the early stages of the development of political parties and party systems, is the transition period itself, especially the rapidity of the collapse of

the authoritarian regime (Rustow, 1970). This approach has gained current favor particularly among Latin American specialists (O'Donnell, Schmitter and Whitehead, 1986).

The purpose of this dissertation is both substantive and empirical. Substantively, this work deals with a single, central question: To what extent can political outcomes be manipulated and conditioned by employing methods of constitutional or electoral systems engineering? Using the evidence presented by the cases of two Baltic states, Estonia and Latvia, from March, 1990, until the Fall of 1991, and Czechoslovakia from June 1990, until the Fall of 1991, this work proposes to test existing hypotheses related to electoral institutions and their impact on two political outcomes: the "trajectory" of party systems development in these newly independent countries, and the degree to which electoral rules act as conflict-dampening mechanisms in ethnically cleaved societies.

The design of an electoral system in affecting these political outcomes is of fundamental importance for two reasons. First, unlike social and economic conditions for democracy, institutions, in general, and electoral systems, in particular, are within the grasp of political leaders to manipulate. As Sartori notes, "electoral systems are the most specifically manipulative instruments of politics"

(Sartori: 1968, p. 273).² Second, electoral rules provide the structure through which political conflicts move in a democracy. This was underlined by Rudolf Wildenmann (1965), who claimed that electoral systems are vitally important because they create the channels through political conflicts must move.

Despite the wealth of research on the political consequences of electoral laws, especially their operation in western democracies, relatively little has been done in applying such theories to the promotion of the stable development of political democracy in ethnically cleaved societies. Indeed, ethnically cleaved societies provide a special set of circumstances for the operation of electoral rules, a situation which amounts to a relatively difficult tradeoff for electoral systems engineers. On the one hand, an electoral system such as Proportional Representation, which rewards minority groups may have the following implications within an ethnically cleaved society: First it may keep one ethnic bloc from becoming too monolithic and thus running roughshod over the views of others; Second it

²This tradition is rooted primarily in the work of the "Institutionalist" school within comparative party systems development. Although the modern manifestation of institutionalism stems from the work of Maurice Duverger (1963), Riker (1984) demonstrates that the proposition that democratization, conceptualized as institutional change, has been a longstanding argument in traditional political science. The most modern manifestation of the "New Institutionalism" is perhaps positive political theory. For the connection between the "New Statism" in comparative politics and Positive Political Theory see March and Olsen (1984).

may provide representation, and thus perhaps a stake in the current political system for minority groups. On the other hand, it may not provide enough incentive for such groups to moderate the demands they make, and may make government less stable and less effective due to the need for coalition government.

An electoral system such as "First-Past-the Post" (FPTP) on the other hand, may lead to the establishment of a stable and effective government, and the reduction of the danger of party systems "hyper-fractionalization," but it may also lead to the dominance of a single ethnic political bloc and the disaffection of minority groups from the political system. As a result, it may be the case that, in ethnically bi-polar societies, where ethnic cleavage takes on a distinct territorial dimension (as is the case in the Baltic-Russian cleavage in both Latvia and Estonia), "First-Past-the-Post" systems (FPTP) may in fact strengthen the lines of polarized ethnic conflict, although it may lead to reduction of the number of political parties.³

Despite the seeming intractability of this tradeoff, there are a number of promising "mixed" systems which theoretically combine the advantages of PR and FPTP

³The term "First-Past-the-Post" is somewhat misleading. Although used extensively in the literature as the monnaker for a variety of majority and plurality systems, there is a substantial difference between electoral systems which employ plurlaity thresholds versus majority thresholds. However, since this is the most commonly used term in the leiterature, it will henceforth be applied to refer to the majority system in Latvia.

systems. Examples of such "hybrid" systems include the Additional-Member system (currently used in the Federal Republic of Germany) and the Single Transferable Vote (STV - currently used in the Republic of Ireland and Malta). Of particular interest is the STV systems, which was adopted to govern the Supreme Soviet election in Estonia in 1990.

The purpose here, however, is not to establish a deterministic relationship between electoral laws and the fragmentation of the "transitional parties" or on the dimension of inter-ethnic conflict. Such claims cannot be made even under the best of conditions. Rather, as Duverger reminds us:

the relationship between electoral rules and party systems is not mechanical and automatic: A particular electoral regime does not necessarily produce a particular party system; it merely exerts pressure in the direction of this system; it is a force which acts among several other forces some of which tend in the opposite direction. (Duverger, 1986, p.71)

What this work intends is to assess the possible impact of electoral experiments on the development of both systems of political parties and the degree of inter-ethnic conflict exhibited, by using existing electoral systems theory as a means to "throw light" on very current events. What is necessary then is to isolate electoral rules while controlling for other factors which may impact upon such evolution. Although sadly "experimental" control over this process of development is difficult, if not

impossible, such controls can be approximated through the careful selection of comparative cases -- or at least controlling for the primary dimensions cited in existing theory to assess the differential impact of electoral experiments. These dimensions include: 1) the ethno-political dimension; 2) other elements of the "electoral system" such as the "structure of offices," and the impact of territorial arrangements such as federalism; 3) the international environment; 4) the level of "political development" attained.

Thus, in the cases which will be considered -- Estonia, Latvia, and Czechoslovakia, several key dimensions are controlled for, while others, particularly the electoral system, are allowed to vary. In the analytical section of this work, comparisons are made where ethno-political, territorial-structural, international and developmental dimensions while allowing for variation in electoral rule (the Single Transferable Vote System in Estonia which is a form of proportional representation, versus First-Past-the-Post system in Latvia and List-Proportional Representation in Czechoslovakia). This will allow for a closer examination of the expectation that differences in STV, FPTP, and Proportional Representation systems will result in different trajectories of development for different types of party systems.

The Problem: Democratization and Political Parties

Democratization in Eastern Europe began with great hope and had for five years been intimately tied with economic perestroika. According to the version of his plenum report published in Pravda on January 28, 1987, General Secretary Gorbachev argued that, "a house can be put in order only by the person who feels he is the owner" (Hahn, 1987). CPSU Secretary Aleksandr Yakovlev in April 1987, echoed these sentiments when he stated that "democracy and openness are the most effective remedies for any anti-social phenomena If democracy had operated reliably everywhere, it would surely not have been possible for glaring problems to pile up in the social and economic spheres."⁴ In 1987, Gorbachev was to make the claim that "further democratization is the main guarantee of the irreversible nature of the ongoing processes. We want more socialism and hence more democracy."⁵

The theme that a linkage existed between democratization and the success of economic perestroika was echoed by other Eastern European political leaders. The concern over lack of substantive participation and its deleterious effect on the morale of the population was

⁴In a speech before an audience of Tadzhik Intelligentsia. See Kommunist Tadzhikstana (Dushanbe), April 12, 1987. Quoted in Werner Hahn, 1987.

⁵Quoted in Christian Science Monitor, March 18, 1987, p. 14, and New York Times, March 2, 1988, pp. 8 and 10.

reflected in statements made by the then new First Secretary of the MSzWP (Hungarian Communist Party) Karolyi Grosz in an interview with the New York Times. He underlined the necessity of political reform as a prerequisite for economic reform when he cited the necessity of changing "the nature of central guidance" and to have the Communist Party play less of a frontal role, ceding terrain to both governmental and non-governmental organizations. Moreover, he linked political reform directly to the creation of greater innovation and creativity in the economic sphere: "So what we need is a political structure that is being built from bottom to the top, from the grass-roots level and whose key words are voluntary activity, creativity and freedom of creativity." Tolerance for political activity by voluntary associations such as the Federation of Young Democrats (Fidesz) was also mentioned: "If they [the informal groups] fit into this structure, we will have countless Fidesz's or any other organizations. Our general rule is that everything is possible unless it is prohibited."⁶

Yet, the very "democratization," which was considered so vitally important to the success of economic restructuring in both the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, ultimately led to the demise of communist rule. It unleashed forces which had long been dormant; in the USSR democratization

⁶Interview in "Hungary Said to be Model for Gorbachev," New York Times, July 10, 1988, p. 14.

led to the re-emergence of ethnic particularism and the capture of local republican governments by avowedly separatist political movements. Ultimately, this led to the collapse of Soviet Union as a political entity. Democratization, indeed, became the "pandora's box" which ushered in a new era in Eastern Europe.

As a result, new opportunities and new questions face the student of Soviet and Eastern European politics, perhaps the most pressing being the fate of democracy in the former communist bloc. Western theory has pointed to the necessity of internal social and political cohesiveness, the need for a stable economic base, the necessity of a responsible, educated and literate society, etc.⁷ Given that the history of the developing world is littered with examples of failed experiments in democratization, the temptation for pessimism is great indeed.

Tumultuous events have swept away many of the basic assumptions that we could confidently rely on in the past, leaving many students of Soviet and East European politics scrambling just to remain current. However, the preoccupation with current events sometimes acts more as a distraction than a constructive exercise. It tends to detract attention from the very real opportunity to link theory with events of contemporary importance -- that the

⁷These dimensions were also mentioned in Korbonski (1989) as important considerations in Eastern European democratization.

experiments in democratization and political reform which swept Eastern Europe and the USSR in the period of 1989-1991 have provided a working laboratory in which to apply some basic theoretical principles developed in the West. One long-standing effort in the study of political democracy has been the issue of the survivability of fledgling democracies.

At the minimum, democratization involves the introduction of political competition through the alteration or restructuring of electoral rules. But what are the factors which contribute to the development of stable democratization? One widely cited factor in the literature is the role played by the political party. Some theorists have focused exclusively on the role of the political party in building the conditions for democracy. An extreme position is held by E.E. Schattschneider, who claimed that "political parties created democracy and that modern democracy is unthinkable save in terms of the parties" (Schattschneider, 1942, p. 1).

Although extreme, the notion that political parties play a vital role in the creation of democracy has been echoed by interested politicians throughout Eastern Europe and the USSR. Thus, for example Marju Lauristin, deputy chairperson of the Supreme Council of Estonia and a leader of the Estonian Popular Front, emphasized the vital role that political parties would play in Estonian democratization: "the atmosphere within the [Estonian]

population is such that mass protests are possible and we need political forms to express this atmosphere. We must not wait for the masses to take to the streets."⁸ The future role played by the parties in the success or failure of democratization was also underlined by the Estonian Communist Party Secretary, Mikk Titma, when he argued that "the time of amorphous public organizations like the popular front has passed. They have oriented the Estonian political development towards democracy, but they cannot solve specific economic and political tasks. Only parties defending their programs are able to do this."⁹

Students of democratization have also pointed to the activities of political parties as crucial to the survivability of fledgling democracies. Political scientists and sociologists have provided an impressive list of the basic functions of the political party in political democracies. Among those most commonly cited are: representation (and brokerage), conversion and aggregation; integration (participation, socialization and mobilization); persuasion, repression, leadership recruitment, policy formulation and control of government. It is through these basic functions that parties assist in creating the conditions for stable democracy (Almond and Powell, 1978;

⁸Profil, January 22, 1990, p. 50 in FBIS-SOV January 24, 1990, p. 53.

⁹Moscow TASS, February 3, 1990 in FBIS-SOV February 5, 1990.

Huntington, 1968; Lipset, 1960; Lapalombara and Weiner, 1966; Apter, 1965; Rustow, 1955; Lipset and Rokkan, 1967; Sartori, 1976). For instance, Apter (1965) writes :

It is the political party that links the various functional bodies together. Party groups may be organized in factories schools, churches clans extended families and cooperatives which will then be linked together by their connection with the party To this extent, channels of communication are opened up between otherwise hostile or non-communicating groups, bringing them into sets of relationships out of which the state is built. This, more than any other factor, is the basis of the success of the single-party state, its monolithic structure helps create many intermediate groupings in the society that binds them together, even those parts that are likely to be hostile to each other. Hence, the political party derives its significance in terms quite opposite to those of the elite (Apter, 1965, p. 188).

Further, not only do political parties provide the school in which practices of tolerance and compromise are promoted, but parties play a vital systems maintaining function in the operation of political democracy, once it is established. Thus, political parties provide a set of alternative political programs and a pool of political leaders, while at the same time providing legitimacy for the system and limiting contention to issues revolving around leaders and policies rather than the legitimacy of the system itself (Bollen, 1980).

Yet another line of inquiry focuses on the impact of the party system in maintaining political stability. As Pridham has noted, the political parties "provide a crucial

test of exactly how far democracies are pluralist, furthermore they are central to the acquisition of legitimacy by new democracies. Needless to say it is important to approach the whole question of regime consolidation through an analysis of the party system" (Pridham, 1990 p. 2). G. Bingham Powell asserts that a strong system of political parties is essential for a strong democracy. The party system shapes citizen participation through the electoral process. The stability of political leadership depends on party activities in the electoral and legislative arenas. The dynamics of the party system may either inhibit or exacerbate turmoil and violence. The strategies and commitments of party leaders can be critical for the support of the democratic regime in times of crisis (Powell, 1982, p. 7). Similarly, K. Sontheimer has also noted that "the stability of the party system is the really decisive factor for the stability of the whole system in all democratic systems in which political parties play a prevalent role both in the formation of governments and the development of political will."¹⁰

One such systemic characteristic which affects the degree of political stability is the degree of "fractionalization" in the party system. Indeed, the existence of extreme party pluralism may lead to perpetual

¹⁰K. Sontheimer, "Wie Stabill Sind die Demokationen Westeuropas?" Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, December 8, 1987, p. 10. Quoted in Pridham, 1990, p. 2

governmental instability in which no individual political party commands enough electoral support to form the core of an operating coalition (Fisichella, 1984). A classic example of is the kind of legislative deadlock which paralyzed the French Fourth Republic. The empirical linkage between party systems instability and governmental instability was illustrated by Taylor and Herman (1971), who employed data on nineteen parliamentary systems from 1945-1969.

Although, party systems fractionalization and governmental instability may not necessarily lead to political instability (as illustrated in the case of Italy),¹¹ in the case of an immature democracy, along with rapid social and economic change, the fractionalization of party politics can be dangerous (see Lipset, 1960).

A second systemic characteristic, beyond the number of political parties, is the character of systems fractionalization. Ideological polarization has often been cited as a key factor affecting political stability, exerting an independent effect apart from the number of parties. Sartori, for instance, argues that it is not so much the degree of fractionalization which is important in terms of predicting government stability as it is the degree of ideological distance which exists between the major competitive parties (Sartori, 1966). The historical record has

¹¹This distinction is made by Lancaster (1990) where the existence of governmental instability in Italy did not translate into a basic questioning of the "rules of the game."

demonstrated that violent politics is often the outcome of such irreconcilable ideological differences among political parties. The disintegration of Germany's Weimar Republic in the 1930's, the advent of Italian fascism a decade earlier, the Spanish Civil War, the Chinese Civil War, and the civil strife which has plagued much of Africa are just a few examples of the effects of ideological polarization. In competitive political situations some political leaders are willing to risk violence, and persuade thousands, and perhaps millions of persons to join them in these endeavors.

What are the key issues which divide Central and Eastern European societies in the post-communist era? One central political problem is the existence of ethnic cleavage. Indeed, the economic and social problems which beset many newly emerging Eastern European democracies are further complicated by the existence of what scholars have referred to as "deeply divided societies" (Nordlinger, 1972; Lorwin, 1971). A society is deeply divided if ascriptive ties generate an antagonistic segmentation of society, based on terminal identities with high political salience, sustained over a substantial period of time and a wide variety of issues. As a minimum condition, boundaries between rival groups must be sharp enough so that membership is clear and with few exceptions, unchangeable.¹²

¹²Milton Esman's definition of "communalism" as "competitive group solidarities within the same political system based on ethnic, linguistic, racial or religious identities," is similar to the "deeply divided society," although the latter represents a much more intransigent form of communalism (Esman, 1973, p. 49).

The character of such societies has been cited as an important determinant in explaining the failure of democratic experiments in the developing world. Unlike the cross-cutting loyalties characteristic of pluralist societies, in "deeply divided societies" expanded political participation can have a disintegrative effect in terms of political democracy. Indeed, the proposition has been frequently advanced that increased political consciousness, as the result of social mobilization, could be expected to "strain or destroy" the cohesion of states with ethnically diverse populations (Deutsch, 1961). Thus, "an expansion of political participation seems to have one effect in a multi-ethnic society and another in a homogeneous culture" (Deutsch, 1961, p. 501). For Weiner (1971), in an ethnically pluralistic society, "the same political decisions that have a unifying effect under conditions of low political participation can have a disintegrating effect when there is large scale political participation" (Weiner 1971, p. 182).

The political relevance of ethnicity has been amply demonstrated in Eastern Europe and the former USSR. In the USSR expanded political participation through the instrument of "Glasnost", "much to the chagrin of the Soviet leadership, inadvertently encouraged the expression of nationalistic sentiment, among both Russians and non-Russians." According Hajda and Beissinger:

it reinforced old nationalisms that had long existed (as in Armenia or the Ukraine) and gave rise to new nationalisms where they were weakly developed before (as in Byelorussia or Moldavia). Even small and relatively unknown groups (such as the Gagauz) began to agitate for cultural autonomy, expressing a new national awareness that previously could only simmer below the surface" (Hajda and Beissinger, 1990, p. 313).

This, of course, does not imply that ethnicity lies at the heart of all politics in Eastern Europe. Even in the most severely divided society, there are also other issues, especially those relating to rapid economic and political transformation. Nor do ethnic affiliations govern behavior in all situations. If they did, the bonds across ethnic lines that make a multi-ethnic society possible could never develop. Everywhere there exist buyers and sellers, officials and citizens, co-workers, and members of professions; all of these roles are to some degree independent of the ethnic origins of their members.

However, especially in deeply divided societies, ethnic allegiances tend to permeate organizations, activities, and roles to which they are formally unrelated. As Horowitz notes, "the permeative character of ethnic affiliations, by infusing so many sectors of social life, imparts a pervasive quality to ethnic conflict and raises sharply the stakes of politics" (Horowitz, 1985, pp. 7-8). Organizational pluralism, rather than creating the cross-cutting cleavages so vital to the promotion of political

cooperation, has tended to strengthen schism on ethnic lines in the developing world. This, in turn, has also been strongly reflected in the party systems of such countries. In name or in fact, ethnically based parties have grown up, often with perfectly irreconcilable aims. In societies where ethnicity permeates all organizational life, virtually all political events have ethnic consequences. Where parties break along ethnic lines, elections are divisive. When armed forces are ethnically fragmented, military coups, launched ostensibly to quell disorder, are often launched to benefit one group over another. In divided societies then, ethnic conflict is at the heart of politics. Ethnic divisions offer challenges to the cohesion of states and sometimes to peaceful relations among states. Ethnic conflict strains the bonds that sustain civility and is often at the root of political violence. In sum, in divided societies, ethnic affiliations are powerful, pervasive, permeative, and passionate.

Thus, in the initial transition to democracy, two problems emerge. The first is the question of how to prevent extreme party systems fractionalization. The second is how to build inter-ethnic consensus and to avoid political polarization along ethnic lines. These are the principal problems facing the political leadership of the new democracies of Eastern Europe. What, if any, are the solutions to these two dilemmas?

The Dimensions of Analysis

One often-cited structural solution to the problem of ethnic cleavage is that of "consociationalism." Consociationalism as a structural solution to ethnic cleavage grew in popularity and was internationalized within a few years between 1967 and 1974, when several important works were published dealing with the cases of the Netherlands, Belgium, Austria, Switzerland and Canada. Shortly thereafter, the concept was applied to developing countries such as Lebanon, Malaysia, Cyprus, Colombia, Uruguay and Nigeria. Studies of consociationalism in operating political democracies have both specified its characteristics and the conditions under which a consociational formula would be successful. The first is the problem of the "impermeability" of ethnic blocs; the second feature is the existence of vertical linkages between mass and elite within each cultural bloc. A corollary of the impermeability between subcultures is the internal cohesion of each segment under the leadership of a unified elite (Lijphart 1974). In this way, through the consolidation of blocs, Swiss federalism, with its powerful and primarily homogeneous cantons, effectively dampened ethnic conflict because of the sparseness of contentious issues at the confederal level of politics and the "tranquilizing effect" of compartmentalization (Daalder, 1974, p. 110).

However, what makes consociationalism operate successfully is the use of the principle of proportionality. Lijphart (1974, 1977) stresses the necessity of integrating as many subcultures as possible into the political game, in order to create the conditions of cooperation among elites (see also Bailey, 1969; McCrae 1974; Lorwin, 1971). Thus, as a minimal condition, the successful operation of consociationalism is best guaranteed by electoral principles which assure proportional representation in the central institutions of government.¹³

Yet the success of consociational experiments depends, to a large extent, upon the state of "bloc" relations. In a fragmented society, if the various subcultures are of comparable numerical strength, they will be more inclined to cooperate than they would in society where one bloc is numerically dominant. The best illustrations of such an equilibrium are found in Switzerland and the Netherlands (Van Mierlo, 1986). In Belgium, on the contrary, where two large, but numerically disproportionate subcultures confront one another, each fears the other. Francophones are concerned about the numerical superiority of the Flemish, who in turn feel frustrated by the cultural domination of the Francophones. Thus, in Belgium, the necessity of strict proportionality, coupled with the veto

¹³Nordlinger (1972), as well, refers to the proportionality principle as a "conflict regulating technique."

power of the Francophones, is not only desirable, but necessary (see Lorwin, 1971).

Although much of consociational literature has focused on Europe, the model has also been cited as applicable to the developing world (Rothschild, 1970; Lawler, 1976; Lijphart, 1986). As Daalder (1974) notes, consociationalism is a potentially important solution to the problems of building democracy in deeply divided societies, primarily because it promotes political stability and elite cooperation where it might not otherwise develop:

The typological coining of the model of consociational democracy constitutes a major contribution to the literature. It widens our understanding of the variegated possibilities of effective democratic rule, and undermines the assumptions of dichotomous models based implicitly on the contrast between Britain and the United States, on the one hand, and Weimar Germany, the French Third and Fourth Republics, and Italy on the other (Daalder 1974, p.51).

However, there have been critics of consociationalism. One such critic is Brian Barry, who accepts the basic premise of the consociational model, yet claims that it has been applied with more enthusiasm than care. Not only is the consociational scheme inapplicable in certain cases, but when policy prescription is involved, this practice can lead to consociational remedies which may aggravate the conflict in deeply divided societies rather than remedy it (Barry 1975a, 1975b). From a more analytic standpoint, Barry contends that consociational theory, in

its tendency to emphasize cooperative relations among sub-unit elites, may lead to greater polarization between consolidated ethnic blocs, rather than cooperation. The consolidation of ethnic blocs may lead to greater urge for separation than the development of elite level linkages (see also Horowitz, 1985).¹⁴ Rather, what is required is the creation of "intra-ethnic cleavage" where, instead of the creation of ethnic blocs, ethnic grouping are fragmented and hence rendered "harmless."

Thus, in recent years, structural or institutional solutions to the problem of ethnic conflict have been cited as a means to manage ethnic conflict. These studies have created the basis for the synthesis of studies of party systems fractionalization and ethnic conflict. The former have included the analyses of the impact of electoral rules, the structure of elective office (such as through the differential impact of Presidential versus parliamentary systems), and territorial arrangements (such as federalism, confederalism, consociationalism etc.) (Rae, 1967, 1971; Duverger, 1963; MacKenzie, 1958; Pomper, 1968; and Butler, Penniman and Ranney, 1981; Rose 1983; Bogdanor and Butler 1983; Freidrich, 1937; Schattschneider, 1942;

¹⁴In discussing the effects of Nigerian consociationalism during the First Republic, Horowitz (1985) noted that one of the principal shortcomings of the Nigerian experiment was the exacerbation of interethnic tension which inevitably led to the Biafran Civil War.

Key, 1949; Dahl, 1956; Pateman, 1970; Sartori, 1965; Schumpeter, 1950).

Although the majority of these studies have focused on the impact of different electoral institutions on the development of "party systems" in the West, several, most notably by scholars of Latin American politics, have noted the impact that such manipulations can have on the course of political conflict and party development in new democracies. For example, O'Donnell, Schmitter and Whitehead (1986) note that "Democracy itself may itself be a matter of principles, but democratization involves putting them into practice through specific and detailed rules and procedures, which quite often have effects far beyond their seemingly microscopic significance" (O'Donnell et al., 1986 p. 10).

However there has been little consensus among those who investigate the political consequences of electoral institutions on what is the best form to pursue.¹⁵ The debate has focused primarily on the different consequences of First-Past-the-Post systems (FPTP) and Proportional Representation systems (PR). On the one hand, detractors of PR have argued that it is inimical to political stability. In other words, any practical electoral system must minimize the probability of political fractionalization. Thus, neo-classical democratic theory, especially that

¹⁵For more on this debate see Straffin, 1980; Nurmi, 1981, 1983; Bordley, 1983; Merrill 1984.

represented by James Madison, holds that among the numerous advantages promised by a well-constructed union based on majority rule and a republican form of government, none deserved to be more accurately developed than its tendency to break and control the violence of faction. A modern defender of First-Past-the-Post systems, Maurice Duverger, not too long ago made the claim that:

The ethical arguments about the authenticity of representation and the fairness of the distribution of seats compare with that of votes are largely, if not completely, specious. One cannot seriously present PR as a moral and fair system, and the plurality and majority systems as immoral techniques, because they are alleged to be unfair. On the contrary, one must clearly state that PR generally weakens democracy and that plurality and majority systems strengthen it, which, in the final analysis, makes the latter more moral and just. The first duty in the development of morality and justice in political relationships consists of reinforcing democracy and weakening dictatorship (Duverger, 1984, p. 35).

Further, advocates of FPTP have also argued that it may act as a means to dampen ethnic conflict by stabilizing the party system in deeply divided societies. Part of this logic involves the assumption that in reducing the number of parties, minorities are forced to participate through multi-ethnic coalition parties.¹⁶ Some evidence seems to support this claim. For example, Ahmad's thoughtful study of Malaysia illustrates how the adoption of FPTP in the

¹⁶This, in part, might explain its continued use after 1979 in the Nigeria.

first six parliamentary elections after independence strengthened the position of the multi-ethnic coalition government party against ethnically based "flank" parties (Ahmad, 1989).

On the other hand, detractors of FPTP have noted the potential for instability, especially if minorities are consistently denied representation. For example, Victor Considerant, to whom, together with John Stuart Mill, we owe the classical formulation of the theory of PR, once argued that "should the Chamber of Representatives represent the electorate? That is the whole question. If such is the case, every opinion, however absurd, even monstrous, it may appear, must have its representatives in proportion to its strength in the electorate" (quoted in Hermens, 1984). Modern critics of majority/plurality systems have argued that such systems not only produce massive distortions in the allocation of seats in the legislature, but that they tend toward the consistent denial of representation to important minorities (Lakeman, 1984). This, according to Wright (1984), may jeopardize the very political stability that advocates of FPTP hold so dear:

A practical electoral system, besides ensuring accurate representation, must also ensure that it is possible to form an effective government, and should lead to stability consistent with responsiveness to public opinion. For long-term stability, governing bodies must be capable of winning and retaining the confidence of the people, and this can only be

expected when the electoral system guarantees effective representation (Wright, 1984, p. 127).

Others, have argued that PR can be employed to contain destructive ethnic conflict. For Horowitz, the electoral system can be utilized to condition ethno-political relations, especially during the early transition to democracy:

Is it possible that PR imposed before a party system crystallizes, can actually prevent the emergence of ethnic parties? In the early evolution of ethnic parties, lines frequently are not clearly drawn. Ethnic voting may not approach 100 percent the first time around, but it may be high enough, in a first-past-the-post system, so that, if groups are territorially concentrated the party that gains the most of a group's votes will win all of its seats. This will make it fruitless for dissident members of the group to withhold support from that party. Rates of ethnic voting will increase, and the identification of each party with an ethnic group will be complete. Under PR however, dissident votes will count and perhaps it will be harder to complete the alignment parties with groups of a prominently demarcated subgroup withholds its support from a party purporting to represent the whole group, PR may be enough to fortify this reluctance. Very likely this will not make for non-ethnic or multi-ethnic parties; it will only mean that this particular ethnic group will be represented by more than one party (Horowitz, 1985, p. 649).

From this perspective, PR has advantages over FPTP in that it: 1) may fragment the support of one or more ethnic groups, especially a majority group, and prevent it from achieving permanent domination; 2) may induce ethnic groups, especially a majority, to behave more moderately toward another group and engage in inter-ethnic bargaining;

3) may encourage the formation of multiethnic coalitions;
 4) may preserve a measure of fluidity or multipolar balance among several groups to prevent bifurcation and the permanent exclusion of the resulting minority; 5) may reduce the disparity between votes won and seats won, so as to reduce the possibility that a minority or plurality ethnic group can, by itself, gain a majority of seats (Horowitz, 1985, p. 632).

Sartori, too, points to the shortcomings of FPTP under the conditions of ethnic cleavage, contending that the system will have no impact whatsoever on reducing the degree of ethnic conflict, and may in fact serve to weaken "multi-ethnic" parties.

.... a two-party format is impossible (emphasis his) -- under whatever electoral system -- if racial, linguistic, ideologically alienated incoercible minorities are concentrated in particular constituencies or geographical pockets. If so, the effect of a plurality system will only be reductive vis-a-vis the third parties which do not represent incoercible minorities (Sartori, 1986, p. 59).¹⁷

¹⁷The intervening effect of the existence of a geographically concentrated minority has also been investigated. Especially on the basis of the Canadian exception, Rae reformulated Duverger's law from the theory that, "the simple majority, single ballot systems favors the two party system," to "plurality formulae are always associated with two-party competition except where strong local parties exist" (Rae, 1967, p. 95).

In sum, then, the literature on the impact of electoral rules falls into two categories -- on the one hand, there are those, like Duverger, who hold that the generation of political stability is primarily determined by whether party systems fractionalization can be prevented. On the other hand, there are those like Lakeman and Wright, who contend that the maintenance of long-run stability is achieved through building consensus and legitimacy for existing institutions. Indeed, political stability is less a function of party systems fractionalization, and more of a product of increasing the degree of representativeness.

However, overlaying this conflict is the issue of ethnic political conflict. Again, two perspectives exist. The first holds that the promotion of FPTP systems fosters the consolidation of multi-ethnic coalitions, and hence consensus is built within the framework of the political party. On the other hand, there are those who argue that the maximization of representativeness and direct participation of all parties in the legislature is absolutely vital. So which is best for promoting political stability in ethnically divided societies? Each may have deleterious consequences, especially on the nature of party politics in ethnically divided, new democracies.

On the one hand, FPTP systems may promote consolidation of large political parties, but whether or not it leads to the reduction of ethnic conflict depends heavily on the distribution of the ethnic population; where

consensus can be built at the level of the district, it is possible that consensus can be built within political parties. However, under the condition of ethnic bipolarism, where ethnic groups are geographically concentrated, the introduction of FPTP may create the consolidation of ethnically particularistic parties, even those with avowedly separatist aims. Moreover, FPTP systems may lead to widespread feelings of political deprivation, thus jeopardizing the creation of long term inter-ethnic consensus in a new democracy.

On the other hand, PR systems may create the conditions by which ethnically particularistic parties are "fragmented" (see Horowitz, 1985). Proportional Representation may also lead to general party systems fractionalization and the fragmentation of multi-ethnic coalitions, generating the potential for the kind of legislative deadlock which plagued the Weimar Republic, and the French Third and Fourth Republics. This possibility does not bode well for countries which are in the initial transition to democracy and beset with the numerous problems associated with rapid social and economic transformation. Indeed, with the prospect of widespread unemployment, heightened levels of monetary inflation, and general recession, which inevitably accompanies a transition to a market economy, the fractionalization of the party system at its initial stage of development may lead to politically crippling legislative deadlock and paralysis.

Nonetheless, there is some common ground between the two approaches. Both see the role of the political party as central in promoting political stability in new democracies. Advocates of FPTP point to the strengthening of multi-ethnic coalitions at the expense of "minority" or "extremist" parties. Proponents of PR focus on the potential to fragment ethnic party blocs in order to prevent the consolidation of ethnic separatism, and to provide the benefits of representativeness to "integrate" minority populations into the political process.

What is missing from this debate is the consideration of wide range of electoral systems, which in fact often combine elements of FPTP with PR. There exist a number of "mixed systems" which combine features of both PR and FPTP, two of which are currently being undertaken in Eastern Europe -- the "additional-member" system in Hungary, and STV (the Single Transferable Vote) in Estonia. Yet as an experiment in dealing with the problems of ethnic conflict, Estonia stands as a unique case in all of Eastern Europe.¹⁸

Although much attention has been paid to the effect electoral laws have on both the degree of party systems

¹⁸This is not surprising in that Estonia has always enjoyed the status as a "laboratory republic" or one where various techniques and administrative methods were first tested. For example, Estonia received polio vaccinations before the Russian Republic; its collective farms in the 1970s shifted to less centralized and more profitable management techniques. Also, Estonia was at the forefront of the computerization of the economy and civil administration in the 1970s and 1980s (see Taagepera, 1975; Parmis and Jarvesoo, 1978).

fractionalization and ethnic political conflict, other factors which must also be taken into account. One such factor, in the literature on political democracy, has been the specification of the "developmental" conditions for the emergence of a successful democratic system. To a large extent, this analytical framework was erected in the 1950's and 1960's, with relatively few alterations in subsequent decades, and is rooted in a much older sociological tradition (see Weber 1947; Parsons and Shils, 1951; Parsons, 1951; Sutton, 1963). Building upon this tradition, political scientists in the 1950's and 1960's erected various political models which corresponded to this "traditional" versus "modern" dichotomy. Scholars like David Apter, who pointed to the distinction between the secular-libertarian and the sacred-collectivity models, and Fred Riggs, who focused on the polar images of "agraria" and "industria" as a framework in the analysis of administrative systems, attempted to link political forms with the level of development society had attained (Apter, 1965; Riggs, 1957, 1964).

In this theoretical vein, which in part was a reaction to the early predominance of institutionalist approaches, the argument emerged that party systems development was primarily a function of the impact of environments rather than as product of the manipulation of electoral institutions (see LaPalombara and Weiner, 1966. An

extreme claim was made by Lipset and Rokkan in 1967 when they argued that:

In most cases it makes little sense to treat electoral systems as independent variables and party systems as dependent any attempt at systematic analysis of variations in the conditions and strategies of party competition must start out from such differentiations of developmental phases (Lipset and Rokkan, 1967, p. 30).

Myron Weiner, in his treatment of the deviant case of single party-dominance coupled with multi-partism in India, contended that it was precisely the ethnic and regional cleavages in Indian society which gave rise to the particular features of the Indian party system, despite the continuous use of plurality formula with single member districts. Moreover, the continued existence and survival of minor parties in India was due to their role as providing emotional satisfaction to activists, entirely apart from the goal of winning elections (Weiner, 1957, pp. 223, 262-264).

Such criticisms have compelled modern analyses of the effects of electoral institutions to take into account how an exogenous social, economic, and political environment shapes the consequences of institutional change. This was reflected in claims made by Rose (1984, p. 78) who argued that, "to understand the workings of electoral systems in practice, we must consider both the generic properties of the system and specific national contexts The workings

of an electoral system cannot be understood simply in terms of definitional and abstract properties; they must be evaluated by the analysis of an electoral system-in-a-political system." Moreover, in an earlier warning, Rae (1967, p. 68) argued that inferences made about the distal effects of electoral systems on party systems, "must be made with the greatest caution, since the observed associations may reflect the influence of intervening or underlying factors in the political system which are independent of electoral law."

Beyond the level of political development, another factor of importance to the degree of party systems development and ethnic conflict is the impact of the international environment.¹⁹ Although there has been a tendency among students of Central and Eastern European politics, in the post communist era, to treat the various cases (including the Baltic states)²⁰ as being similar on this dimension, there is one outstanding and obvious difference between the process of democratization and party development in the countries of East/Central Europe and the Union

¹⁹Perhaps one of the most articulate and comprehensive approaches to the study of party and party systems was formulated by the Workshop on Political Parties of the European Consortium for Political Research. In the development of what was referred to as a "multi-dimensional" approach, the Workshop constructed a theoretical framework which emphasized as a principal dimension the impact of the international environment on party behaviour See Daalder and Mair (1983), and Pridham (1990).

²⁰For example see Bogdanor (1990).

Republics of the former USSR. Although in many ways the process of party development has followed a similar course in both types of cases, the issue of political independence and the undefined relationship with the USSR, dominated politics in the Baltic states in 1990-1991. The issue of independence so permeated the nature of politics in the Baltic states that all other issues were subsumed by the struggle for political independence from Moscow. As some have observed, the issue of independence acted as a consolidating influence on the development of Estonian parties, a kind of "rally around the flag" effect (Kionka, 1990a).

Beyond these general approaches to the study of political parties and party system development, there have been more specific studies of "democratization" which have emphasized an historical dimension. For example, Dankwart Rustow (1970), rather than dealing with the consequences of electoral reform and institutional choice, focused primarily on the "pre-democratic" phase leading up to and including a reform movement (for a discussion of this point see also Dahl, 1971, p. 36; and Pye, 1990). In his dynamic approach to the study of "democratization," Rustow suggested that the way in which democratization began vitally colors the process which follows. Here, democratization includes a "decision phase", or a "deliberate decision on the part of political leaders to accept the existence of diversity in unity, and, to that end, institutionalize some

crucial aspect of democratic procedure" (Rustow, 1970, p. 355). Thus, this "dynamic" model envisages each phase as a legacy that interacts with later phases in determining the ultimate shape of the party system.

This study intends to assess the impact of three electoral experiments in Eastern Europe in the early stages of the transition to democracy on the development of a party system. The three electoral experiments are: a consociational-PR scheme in Czechoslovakia; FPTP in Latvia; and STV in Estonia. These three sets of electoral rules governed the legislative elections of 1990 in each country. Along the "ethno-political" dimension, all three can be classified as ethnically bi-polar. Moreover, in terms of the dimension of the "international environment," the significant aspect which differentiates the cases was the relationship with the USSR. Unlike Czechoslovakia in 1990, both Estonia and Latvia were not technically independent, and to a large extent internal politics within these Baltic countries was largely contingent upon the relationship with Moscow. Finally, on the "dynamic/historical" dimension all three cases have had similar experiences under communist rule. However, before we can address the specific questions under investigation, there are limitations imposed by the very recent nature of Eastern European democratization which must first be considered. Indeed, given the rapidity of events, can the impact of electoral laws be analyzed and applied to fledgling democratic experiments in Eastern

Europe after only one election? It is to this issue that we now turn.

Research Limitations

The elections which were held in 1990 throughout Eastern Europe and the USSR can all be characterized as "founding elections" (O'Donnell and Schmitter, 1986, Part IV p. 61). For O'Donnell and Schmitter, founding elections are of great importance. Beyond the fanfare associated with initial elections, founding elections can have important consequences in shaping the pattern of politics which follows. A founding election defines the politically relevant actors and establishes them in positions of political power. It can demonstrate to the "winners" the utility of electoral strategies; on the other hand, it may infuriate the losers. In 1990, all of the elections, including those in the USSR, were, in varying degrees, competitive multi-party elections. Yet these elections took place not in well established democracies, but in countries which had not known real choice for over four decades, and in some cases never. Analysis of such elections poses many problems for the researcher. Thus, these elections cannot be expected to yield the kind of information that most electoral researchers are accustomed to. They are transitional elections, elections occurring in a world still struggling

to be born. Ultimately how they are to be interpreted must depend upon events still far in the future.

As a result, a complete scientific analysis of these elections is not possible until the radical changes which have so transformed Central and Eastern Europe have been assimilated into the political structure of the countries concerned. For as de Tocqueville observed, there is an intimate connection between the survival of democratic institutions and the spread of democratic political habits. The state of public opinion revealed by a single election is quite insufficient to determine whether or not such a political culture has taken root. As O'Donnell and Schmitter note, at the time of a founding election, party identification is likely to be weak, surveys of public attitudes unreliable and public opinion highly volatile (O'Donnell and Schmitter, 1986, Part IV p. 61). Thus, the ultimate "distal" effects of electoral reforms will probably not be known until two or three elections have occurred.

Nonetheless, founding elections can have a significant impact on the future pattern of party competition. There are, according to O'Donnell and Schmitter, two primary possibilities. The first is that the founding elections, "have a sort of freezing effect upon subsequent political developments" (O'Donnell and Schmitter, 1986, Part IV, p. 62). This type was exemplified in the cases of Italy in 1948 and Japan in 1952. The contrary pattern is exemplified by democracies which emerged in southern

European democracies like Greece, Portugal and Spain where "the supposed freeze in partisan alignments quickly thawed, and there were remarkable vote shifts in subsequent elections" (O'Donnell and Schmitter, 1986, Part IV, p. 62).

Given the relatively new nature of East European democracy, there are certain limitations of which the researcher must be cognizant. The first is the limitation imposed by the literature on electoral rules and party systems development. Much of this literature has been developed based upon the analysis of developed democracies. To apply these theories without adaptation runs the risk of inappropriately extrapolating theory to inapplicable cases. Thus, what is required is the construction of limited questions, logically derived from existing theory. One solution to this problem is to examine the behavior and the evolution of the political parties themselves, rather than attempting to focus on the characteristics of a yet undefined party system.

One such limited question is suggested by the "proximal" hypothesis offered by Rae (1967) that varying district magnitude (the number of seats per district) is the principal component of an electoral system which leads to party systems fractionalization (Rae, 1967; Rae, Hanby, and Loosemore, 1971). This question can be adjusted to apply to individual parties. In other words new parties may form or split from the Popular Front or the communist Party--or they may not. In either case, developments

within, and the actions taken by, parties will ultimately shape what emerges. Thus, the analysis should not focus its attention at the system level, or in other words the degree of party systems fractionalization, but rather at the level of the individual parties themselves, or the degree of party fragmentation. Second, any research on the question of political parties should take into account other important dimensions which impact upon them in the course of organizational development. This of course requires the examination of a broad range of different theoretical approaches to party development, structural, socio-historical and dynamic approaches to the issue of party development.

Finally, in order to test these hypotheses -- i.e., to determine what makes a difference in party development -- any research must be conducted in a comparative fashion. Of course, case selection is primarily a function of the dimensions the researcher wishes to control or vary. On the other hand, the level of analysis at which comparisons are made, and the methods employed for investigation, is affected by the evidence available. The availability and character of evidence in turn is a function of the previously discussed limitation -- namely, that with only empirical data availability for a very short time period following founding elections, standard methodological techniques which deal with developments over time (such as time series techniques) are of limited applicability here.

Rather, the kind of evidence available suggests the construction of a mixed research agenda, or one which employs standard methodological techniques as well as more qualitatively oriented ones.

The Organization of this Thesis

What this work focuses on is not the question of the characteristics of some future party system, but rather a set of more limited but related questions. During the period of democratic transition, what accounts for party behavior and the degree of internal fragmentation among the political parties which comprise the initial party format? Why do certain parties fragment and others not? Why do similar political parties fragment on very different lines in different countries?

The organization of this work is driven by these questions. Thus, the balance of this dissertation will be divided into two major sections. In the first section (Chapters 2 and 3), attention will be paid first to a discussion of the body of literature relating to the generation of party fragmentation. Particular attention will be paid to institutional, social cleavage, and dynamic/historical approaches to party development. The focus of Chapter 2 will be on the creation of a synthetic framework based upon the analysis of the incentives

generated by specific types of electoral systems, the impact of asymmetric ethnic bi-polarism, the effects of the international dimension and the "dynamics of collapse" of the old regime and their impact on party nominating behavior and fragmentation. From this framework, both proximal hypotheses (those which deal with party behavior during founding elections) and "distal" hypotheses (those which deal with the evolution of types of political parties) will be derived, beginning with: 1) ethno-political approaches; 2) institutional approaches; 3) organizational approaches; 4) and dynamic historical approaches. From these general hypotheses, Chapter 3 will focus primarily on the research design, operationalization of relevant concepts, the generation of both proximal and distal working hypotheses, and a brief discussion of the evidence employed.

Section 2, which includes Chapters 4, 5, and 6, will deal with the evidence itself, in which two types of comparisons will be made. For the purposes of testing the set of "proximal" hypotheses, comparisons will be made across parties within a single state (Estonia) to test the "proximal effects" of varying district magnitude and ethnic-geographic concentration on party electoral behavior. Chapters 5 and 6 will focus on the more distal developments of the individual parties themselves.

Chapter 4 concerns the evidence presented by Estonia, where district magnitude varies and where there is considerable degree of ethnic geographic concentration.

Secondly, to avoid what Sartori refers to as "the distorted or inadequate comparative perspective resulting from a single-country yardstick" (Sartori, 1968, p. 89), distal hypotheses will be tested at the level of cross national comparisons, with Latvia in Chapter 5 and Czechoslovakia in Chapter 6. The national cases were selected for the following reasons. In terms of the social cleavage dimension, Estonia and Latvia and Czechoslovakia are similar in terms of class structure; in addition they are ethnically bifurcated societies (Czechs versus Slovaks, and the titular nationalities Estonians and Latvians versus Russians). On the other hand, in terms of the institutional dimension, all three cases vary. Czechoslovakia employs a standard PR-List formula; Latvia in the elections of March 1990 employed a standard majority formula based upon the Soviet model; while Estonia employed a rarely used "mixed technique" of the "Single Transferable Vote" (STV).

Moreover, on the dimension of the "structure of office" at the national level, all three cases were characterized by a relatively weakened presidency based on the model of the French Third Republic. The cases differ, however, in terms of territorial arrangement. Czechoslovakia is a federal republic -- a federalism which became more real rather than a facade with the demise of communist rule and the actions of the "Government of National Understanding" -- whereas Latvia and Estonia remain essentially unitary states.

At the level of "within country" analysis, comparisons across various political parties in the immediate period following founding elections will be examined. In general, three distinct types of party organizations existed in all three cases. The first was the broad-based umbrella group or the Popular Front. The Popular Front often represented a coalition of widely disparate groups which had coalesced in their opposition to Communist rule. Born of political dissent, the Popular Front was designed primarily to maximize political support, often at the expense of internal cohesion and discipline. Although effective instruments for political protest, the collapse of communist rule put many of these organizations in the position of having to make the rapid transition from opposition to governance. However, the advantages of maintaining the popular front, even after the collapse of the old regime, was advocated by many Eastern European political leaders. This attitude was reflected by Pelczynski (1990) when he argued that

Is not the analogy of wartime Britain more appropriate than that of parliamentary democracy in normal times? Parties in a western democracy are normally rooted in civil society -- a dense network of more or less organized communities and interest groups -- which guarantees their relevance and stability. But civil society is still in its infancy in Eastern Europe. The electorate is rootless and liable to volatile swings of mood and shifts of allegiance. The maintenance of a broad movement (rather than a free-for all) for a few more years, until the foundations of the market economy and civil society are securely laid, would not seem such a bad thing after all (Pelczynski, 1990, p. 6).

Yet such coalitions have the disadvantage of failing to provide for a clear alternative focus of government, so that popular discontent can be channeled into a constitutional opposition. Furthermore, such umbrella movements have the disadvantage of often framing political activity into romantic and moralistic terms, in that popular fronts are promoted as standing above inter-party squabbling. Thus, as Garton-Ash notes, popular fronts in Eastern Europe have tended to promote an "anti-political mood" a "language of philosophic and moral absolutes of right against wrong, love against hate, truth against falsehood" (Garton-Ash, 1990, pp. 51-52).

Another type of political organization which populated the post-communist era was the communist party. Although, subsequent to the collapse of communist rule, many altered their names (with the notable exception of the Czechoslovak Communist Party) and some disappeared altogether, the communist parties were an organizational alternative to the popular fronts. Guided by the principle of democratic centralism, and endowed with significant organizational resources, the communist parties were relatively potent political organizations. However, like the popular fronts, these parties have sought to remain a unifying force, an umbrella group in service of a largely undefined left-wing.

A third type of political party which emerged in the immediate post-communist era, especially in deeply-cleaved societies, was the ethnically particularistic political party. Unlike the popular front, or for that matter the communist parties, these political groupings sought, as their goal, political separation, and as a result, sought to establish roots within a particular ethnic community. Examples of such ethnically particularistic minority parties include the Slovak National Party and the Estonian and Latvian Russian/Interfront.

In what direction are these various types of political parties moving? To answer this, within each of the "case-study" chapters, a comparison of the evolution of these three types of parties, with particular emphasis on internal fragmentation, will be undertaken. Chapter 5 will focus on the evolution of the Popular Fronts and the Communist Parties in the Baltic states of Estonia and Latvia (thus controlling for the effect of an international environment). Chapter 6 will focus on the evolution of the Popular Front and the Communist Party, as well as an ethnically particularistic party the Slovak National Party (SNS). Finally, in the concluding chapter (Chapter 7) emphasis will be placed on returning to comparing the individual cases regarding the trajectory of fragmentation. In addition, a future research program and prospects for the future "success" of democratization will be examined. However, before turning to the theoretical implications of

different electoral experiments, the general definition of such concepts as "political party" and "assymetric ethnic bi-polarity" must first be addressed. It is to this I now turn in Chapter 2.

Chapter 2: Literature Review -- The Dimensions of Party Behavior and Development

The purpose of this chapter is to construct both proximal and distal hypotheses (couched as "expectations") regarding the initial stages of the transition to democracy in Czechoslovakia, Estonia, and Latvia. However, two conceptual and classificatory issues must first be resolved. First, is it legitimate to refer to the three types of "parties" mentioned in Chapter 1 as political parties? Second, is it legitimate to consider the cases of Czechoslovakia, Estonia, and Latvia as representative of the case of "asymmetric ethnic bi-polarism?" Much of this, of course, depends on how each of these concepts is defined.

What Is a Political Party?

The definition of a political party has long been a highly contentious issue in political science. In general, one question regarding the definition of a political party has dominated the debate: What differentiates it from other types of organizations? Two sub-questions are related to this general issue: 1) What organizational characteristics are unique to the political party?; 2) what are the unique activities of the political party as opposed to other organizations? One can distinguish two broad conceptual

The distinctive feature of the organizational approach is that the political party is seen as a socio-political organization which has characteristics which are different from other organizations. In general, the organizational approach to the political party holds that it is distinguished by a particular set of organizational principles. Rooted in an older body of literature, the organizational approach emphasizes the relations between the constituent parts of the party, such as relations between the leadership and the rank and file membership (Michels, 1962; McKenzie, 1964). More recently, several scholars, most notably those who study the role of the political party in political development, have articulated several distinct characteristics which define the political party: 1) continuity in organization -- that is an organization whose expected life span is not dependent on the life span of current leaders; 2) manifest and presumably permanent organization at the local level, with regularized communications and other relationships between local and national units; 3) self-conscious determination for leaders at both national and local levels to capture and to hold decision-making power alone or in coalition with others, not simply to influence the exercise of power; and 4) a concern on the part of the organization for seeking followers at the polls, or in some manner striving for popular support.

This conception of the political party excludes organizations which would be at least nominally considered parties by the electoral approach. Thus, LaPalombara and Weiner for example explicitly exclude from their definition "loosely knit groups of notables with limited and intermittent relationships to local counterparts" (LaPalombara and Weiner, 1966, p. 6; see also Lipset and Rokkan, 1967a, 1967b; Almond and Powell, 1966).

Secondly, this definitional tack emphasizes the socio-political role played by the party. The key dimension which differentiates the party from other organizations, according to this approach, is the party's role in socio-political mobilization, national integration, and state building. For example, S.M. Lipset and Stein Rokkan saw political parties as essentially "agencies of mobilization and as such have helped to integrate local communities into the nation or the broader federation. This was true of the earliest competitive party systems and it is eminently true of the single-party nations of the post-colonial era" (Lipset and Rokkan, 1967a, p. 4).²¹

²¹In a similar vein Samuel Huntington emphasizes the function of the political party as an institution which structures participation:

The modern, developed polity differs from the traditional polity in the nature of its political institutions. The institutions of the traditional polity need only structure participation of a small segment of society. The institutions of a modern polity must organize the participation of the mass of the population. The crucial institutional distinction between the two is thus in the organizations for structuring mass participation in politics. The distinctive institution of the modern polity is con-

Similarly, for LaPalomabara and Weiner, the political party, wherever it has emerged, performed common functions in a wide variety of political systems at different stages of social, political and economic development. Indeed, "whether in a free society or under a totalitarian regime, the organization called the party is expected to organize public opinion and to communicate demands to the center of governmental power and decision-making"(LaPalombara and Weiner, 1966 p. 3; see also Huntington, 1968, p. 398).

Thus, the political party, from this perspective has two distinctive qualities: they are organizations which mobilize and integrate disparate interests, and they are highly structured as compared to other types of political organizations.

However, this approach can be criticized as both too narrow in scope, yet too broad. On the one hand, this conception of the political party is overly broad. There are many organizations which seek political power, which integrate and mobilize disparate interests, and also have distinct chains of command and local organization, but which do not qualify as political parties. The Lebanese Christian militias are a case in point. Although these military formations undoubtedly include a political element, the military arm during the civil war clearly dominated the activities of such organizations.

sequently the political party (Huntington, 1968, p. 398).

On the other hand, this approach to the political party is overly narrow in its focus, particularly in its demand that a political party possess a highly structured internal organization. Several groupings which are undoubtedly political parties (the French UDF comes to mind as well as the American Democratic Party) are far less internally disciplined than many trade-union organizations.

The "electoral" image of the political party, on the other hand, views it as a group of individuals who organize to achieve some specific purpose -- winning competitive elections. In this formulation, the pursuit of election becomes part of the definition. Thus, Leon Epstein defines the political party as "any group of individuals, however loosely organized, whose avowed purpose is winning elections" (Epstein, 1967). Similarly, Anthony Downs defines the political party as "a team seeking to control the governing apparatus by gaining office in a duly constituted election." (Downs, 1957, p. 25) Kenneth Janda (1980) defines the political party as "a set of organizations that pursue a goal of placing their avowed representatives in government positions" (Janda 1980, p. 5). What distinguishes the political party, then, is not any particular set of organizational characteristics but rather the common goal of seeking elected office.

Nonetheless, this approach to the political party has come under harsh criticism, especially from comparativists. Among these critics is Rupert Emerson, who argues that the

electoral approach to the political party has unnecessarily limited inquiry to only those countries which have competitive elections (Emerson, 1966, p. 269). Hodgkin also questions the utility of limiting the scope of inquiry so as to include only parties which seek elective office as their singular goal. "There is nothing to be gained by attempting a precise definition of the term 'party' at this point For the moment it is probably most convenient to consider as 'parties' all political organizations which regard themselves as parties and which are generally so regarded" (Hodgkin, 1961, pp. 15-16). Moreover, MacIntyre (1972) in his analysis of African mass parties, contends that the electoral conception of the political party is highly ethno-centric, and of little applicability outside of Western Europe or North America.

Why do we think of parties, rather than as, say churches? The answer that they have some of the marks of American political parties, and that they call themselves parties does nothing to show that in fact the meaning of "party" is not radically changed when the cultural context is radically changed, or that even if it is not changed the description has not become inapplicable. The intentions, the beliefs, the concepts which inform the practices of African mass parties provide so different a context that there can be no question of transporting the phenomena of party to this context (MacIntyre, 1972, p. 14).

More recent definitions have attempted to synthesize these two conceptions, usually in terms of broadening the goal of the political party to include "seeking power"

rather than the more limited goal of seeking victory in election. Kay Lawson, for example, defines the political party as a set of governing groups that seek authorization from the public, regardless of whether they face competitive elections (Lawson, 1976 p. 3). Alan Ware contends the political party is a body "that intend(s) to exercise some control over a state, and that its members are not simply the representatives of a single interest in society." (Ware 1988, p.16) Indeed, Ware claims that the electoral conception of the party "is simply not general enough." (Ware, 1988, p. 17).

Others have sought to combine the goal-oriented definition of the political party with its organizational features. Thus, according to this conception, the political party has "unique" organizational or structural features, largely as the result of its pursuit of office. An example of this approach is offered by Joseph Schlesinger, who argues that the political party is unique as compared to other types of organizations because of the goals which it pursues (one of which is gaining political office). As a result, the characteristics of party organization are fundamentally different from other types of political organizations, such as interest groups and the private firm, producing for a market (Schlesinger, 1984). Thus, the party's organizational features are a product of the competitive environment.

To understand parties, we must recognize that they do not perform and adapt as businesses, bureaus, or interest groups; nor can they be expected to do so, given their peculiar combination of organizational properties. Parties are perhaps best described as organized trial and error Nevertheless it is the party organization which assures that the right choices, i.e., those which win elections, are retained and the wrong ones rejected (Schlesinger, 1984, p. 390).

Perhaps a synthesis of these two approaches would be of some help here. Clearly, two dimensions are necessary (and sufficient) conditions for any definition of the political party. First a political party must seek to place its representatives in government (which differentiates it from interest groups, trade unions and pressure groups) through a particular set of legal means. These means may not necessarily be through "free and competitive elections" but it requires seeking the control of the state through established rules or procedures. The latter quality differentiates the political party from other mobilization/integrative, multi-interest organizations which seek to control the state (such as the Christian militias) but do not do so through established rules. This definition also includes parties in "single party states," in that power is held through established rules and procedures (although in many cases this single party created these rules and procedures).

Second, the political party is by nature a multi-interest body. Within the ranks of a political party there

always exist internal conflict. Even among single-issue parties there are conflicts over procedure. This is illustrated, for example, by several ethnically particularistic parties in Eastern Europe, such as the Slovak National Party, which, although unified in the pursuit of attaining Slovak independence, is highly cleaved over the issue of timing and strategy (i.e., the promotion of civil disobedience or working toward negotiated independence within the framework of the Czechoslovak constitution).

This definition has the additional advantage of not claiming that a "political party," once fulfilling these requirements, will always remain a political party. Thus, for example, the Chinese Communist Party, which began first as an "intellectual club" led by Li Ta-chao and Chen Tu-hsiu became a "political party" when it established an alliance with the Kuomintang in 1924, for through this action it accepted the "basic rules" of the KMT-created Constitution. However, following the break in 1927, the CCP reverted to a primarily military organization under the leadership of Mao. With the Communist military victory, the CCP once again, in 1949, became a "political party" through the establishment of rules by which it would govern.

On the other hand, this definition also suggests that an organization which was not a political party can become one. Thus, for example, the various Popular Front organizations throughout Eastern Europe (such as the Civic Forum,

Sajudis, and Solidarity), although originally not designed during the period of communist rule to seek political power through established rules (indeed these organizations attempted to circumvent such rules), became political parties with the establishment of democratic transition and the introduction of elections (for this argument see White, 1990, p.56).

These two dimensions, the requirement that a political party seeks office through established rules, and to qualify as a political party it must be by nature a multi-interest body, applies directly to the parties which exist in Eastern Europe. Indeed, the challenge facing the political parties in Eastern Europe, during the period of democratic transition, involves the question of how these "movements" or proto-parties transformed themselves in the face of a new political environment. This new environment requires that party organizations, which were designed primarily to influence public policy or to overturn the established order, must now transform themselves into an office-seeking of slate-making organization within an established legal order. This new environment will affect the internal relations between different interests within the party, resulting in the emergence of irreconcilable differences and collapse, in some, and the maintenance of cohesion, in others.

At this point, we can put the role of the party in democratic "transition" into perspective. With the col-

lapse of communist rule and the transition to democracy, the ends of political activity have shifted from the articulation of dissent and protest, to the desire to win electoral victory. The above discussion of the political party points to the relevant dependent variables for investigation. First of all, to define the political party as an organization which seeks certain and distinct ends (political power) compels us to consider "the behavioral component" of the party. In the era of competitive elections the desire is to seek office. In the short run, this would involve the consideration of different party strategies designed to win election, such as the decisions where to run candidates, how many to run, and whether or not to run.

Secondly, to define the political party as multi-interest organization naturally points to the question of how parties as organizations evolve in the face of a changing political environments. In the short run, the primary behavioral question becomes: How does this shift affect the behavior of different kinds of political parties? In the long run, what kinds of political parties in the initial phase of democratic transition can be expected to survive? Do "conglomerate" parties fragment under new competitive conditions, or do they remain intact? Are ethnically particularistic parties advantaged in the early stages of democratization in ethnically bi-polar societies?

The Effect of Ethno-Politics on Political Parties

A second issue which is of great importance for the purposes of this study is whether the cases under investigation conform to the category of deeply divided societies. Moreover, this section will focus on the political effects of cultural pluralism in general, and those of deeply cleaved societies in particular.

The importance of cultural pluralism in political development has been noted by a number of scholars (Smock and Smock, 1975; Young, 1976; Jackson, 1974; Daalder, 1974a, 1974b; Geertz, 1963). Moreover, in contradistinction to the political pluralist approach, which held that "modernization" would generate cross-cutting cleavages and hence mitigate the impact of "primordial" sentiments, several scholars have noted the increased political importance of cultural pluralism as a result of modernization. Thus, Young emphasizes that the cultural groupings that weigh on the cohesion of many states are modern realities (Young, 1976, p. 34). As modernization proceeds, formally indistinct tribal entities became much broader, much more structured, self-conscious, and ideologically enclosed, while at the same time geographically more open than the tribes of another time. Modernization has simultaneously brought about a territorial opening and redefinition, in

more abstract terms, of cultural identities (Gottman, 1980; Stack, 1981). Thus as Dogan and Pelassy note:

For a conscious feeling of belonging to a subculture to crystallize, it is necessary that the nation-state be established, the and impersonal bureaucracy develop, that a dominant language spread, and that a body of national legislation be implemented. The development of media, transportation, school enrollment or urbanization paradoxically does not necessarily favor a homogenization of society. Indeed, these very elements that objectively unify styles of living at the same time provided minorities with the mean of subjectively recognizing themselves as conscious entities (Dogan and Pelassy, 1990).

The persistence of primordial identity may have two general consequences. First, the citizen tends to reserve "patriotism" more for the community than for the larger collectivity, which often results in tensions that endanger national unity. Empirical studies have confirmed the link between vertical segmentation and instability, intensity of conflicts, and violence (Morrison and Stevenson, 1972; Smock and Smock, 1975; Baker, 1983). Cultural pluralism, in turn, often results in the crystallization of vertical solidarities and the anesthetization of horizontal conflicts between classes. Thus, for example, the individual in Nigeria, who feels that he or she belongs to the Ibo or Hausa community, will tend to align his/her political behavior with that of ethnic kin, even if they do not represent his/her own class interests (see Horowitz, 1985). The pervasiveness of communitarian allegiances in demo-

cratic elections has also been documented for modern India, where in a variety of situations the elector is likely to cast a ballot consistent with the vote of his/her community rather than to further economic interests (Young, 1976).

One specific type of "cultural pluralism" is what Eric Nordlinger has referred to as the "deeply divided society" (Nordlinger, 1972). A "deeply divided society" refers to the situation where ascriptive ties generate an antagonistic segmentation of society, based on terminal identities with high political salience, sustained over a substantial period of time and a wide variety of issues (Nordlinger, 1972). More often than not, a deeply divided society is characterized by "ethnic territorial concentration, developmental inequalities and ethnically torn political parties"²² (Enloe, 1973, p. 118).

Several scholars have focused on the political consequences of "deeply cleaved societies" especially its impact on political parties (Lijphart, 1971, 1968, 1986; Lorwin, 1971; McCrae, 1974). From this perspective, party politics in deeply divided societies mirror the ethnic cleavages within the country. Thus, for Nordlinger, ethnic segmentation "takes on a high degree of political salience as they invariably do in deeply divided societies, and they will form the basis of conflict groups" (Nordlinger 1972 p.

²²For an in depth discussion of the conditions under which ascriptive identities become politically important, Nelson Kasfir (1976) especially pp. 28-85.

10; see also Enloe 1973, pp. 20-21; Lijphart, 1974, 1977; J. Steiner, 1974; K. Steiner, 1972; Powell, 1970; McRae, 1974; Lorwin, 1971).

There is, however, an additional distinction which essentially constitutes a sub-category of the "deeply cleaved society." This is the "ethnically bi-polar" state, a term coined by Milne (see Milne, 1981). According to Milne, the distinctive feature of an ethnically bi-polar state is the existence of two large and equally matched "blocs" (in terms of size) which confront each other, and constitute opposite and impermeable poles. For Milne, such a situation exists in countries like Malaysia and Fiji, where such cleavages have led to intense ethnic competition, resulting in more undesirable political consequences than those arising from ethnic divisions which are not bi-polar (Milne, 1981 p. 8; see also Mauzy, 1978, pp. 8-10 and Singham, 1968). Politics under such conditions are usually highly conflictual because there are no balancing or arbitrating groups to mitigate conflict. Assimilation is also more difficult because neither group believes that it should do the accommodating -- one because it is indigenous and the other because it regards itself as being the heir to a great world civilization. One particularly notable feature of such societies is the very strong creation of "centrifugal tendencies of cultural fragmentation" which affect the nature of party politics (Lijphart, 1971b, p. 9).

Do the cases of Czechoslovakia, Estonia and Latvia correspond to this model of ethnically bi-polar states? In one sense these cases are characterized by the existence of ethnic territorial concentration (in Czechoslovakia along an East-West territorial dimension; in Estonia, and Latvia this dimension is overlapped by a urban-rural one) and a large degree of impermeability (in part indicated by the emergence of relatively assertive ethnically particularistic parties, such as the Society for Moravia and Silesia and the SNS in Czechoslovakia, and the Russian Intermovement in the Baltic states). On the other hand, however, these states are not characterized by "equally matched" blocs, but by a large degree of asymmetry in terms of the size of opposing groups (See Table 1). In Czechoslovakia, Czechs outnumber Slovaks nearly two to one. In Latvia and Estonia, the distribution is somewhat more equal, especially in Latvia (see Table 2).

Another feature of "deeply cleaved societies" is the degree to which there is a geographic concentration or dispersion of the minority population. In terms of geographic concentration, the overwhelming majority of Czech and Slovaks live within the boundaries of their relative republics. In Latvia and Estonia the overwhelming majority of Russians and other non-titular residents are concentrated

Table 1: Population by Nationality Czechoslovakia

	Czech Socialist Republic		Slovak Socialist Republic		Total	
	'000	%	'000	%	'000	%
Czech	9742	94.1	62	1.2	9804	62.9
Slovak	412	4.0	4541	86.7	4953	31.8
Magyar (Hungarian)	22	0.2	575	11.0	597	3.8
German	51	0.5	3	0.1	54	0.3
Polish	70	0.7	3	0.1	73	0.5
Ukrainian and Russian	15	0.1	40	0.7	55	0.3
Others	30	0.4	13	0.2	51	0.3
Total	10350	100	5237	100	15587	100

Source: Federal Statistical Office, Prague.
(estimates, 31 December 1987)

Table 2: Population by Ethnic Group, Baltic Republics.
(as of 1/89)*

	Lithuania	Latvia	Estonia
Population (millions)	3.67	2.68	1.73
Titular Nationality (%)	79.6	51.8	61.2
Russian (%)	9.4	33.8	30.2
Other**	11.0	14.5	8.6

* reported in Anderson and Silver (1989)

** other category includes Poles, Byelorussians, Ukrainians, etc.

in the cities, especially the Latvian city of Riga and the Estonian cities of Tallin, Tartu, Narva and Kohtla-Jarve (see Taagepera 1982).

Theoretically, this affects the strategies of political parties, especially in terms of where to run candidates. Under conditions in which an ethnic minority is concentrated in a few electoral districts and comprises a local majority, then an ethnically particularistic party would have the strong incentive to concentrate its efforts in areas where such a local majority exists.²³ On the other hand, if the minority population is widely dispersed, then the ethnically particularistic party may have an incentive to run candidates in all districts, especially if the electoral system allows for multiple representatives per district.

From the above, two principal effects of a "deeply cleaved" society on ethnic lines can be derived, especially as it effects the behavior and development of political parties. First of all, ethnic bi-polarism, combined with geographic concentration, should provide a strong incentive for ethnically particularistic parties to concentrate their election efforts geographically. On the other hand, this effect should be less pronounced among organizations which began the process of transformation as umbrella groupings of widely disparate interests, which sought to integrate different ethnic groupings in a united front -- e.g., the Popular Front.

²³This was certainly the case the strategy of the minority Ibo party when it concentrated its efforts (and candidates) in southern Nigeria in the elections of 1979 (see Horowitz, 1985).

In terms of distal effects, the environment of ethno-politics should impact differently on ethnically particularistic political parties as compared to conglomerate parties. The re-emergence of "primordial sentiments" as the central criteria of political identification should consolidate and strengthen those political parties which claim to represent a particular community. On the other hand, it should lead to centrifugal pressures that would lead to the fragmentation of conglomerate parties like the Popular Front. To summarize both these proximal and distal expectations:

Distal Expectation 1: Within the environment of "assymetrically bipolar societies" party fragmentation in the period of democratic transition should be most pronounced among umbrella groupings such as the Popular Front and the residual communist party. However, among ethnically particularistic parties, especially those which purport to represent the minority, this fragmentation should not occur.

Proximal Expectation 1: In terms of immediate behavioral consequences, the environment of "deeply cleaved societies" should also affect the character of party strategy. In other words proclaimed multi-ethnic "conglomerate parties" should run candidates in all electoral constituencies and regions. Ethnically particularistic parties should rather run candidates only in districts where they have a chance of winning (i.e. districts in which the national minority comprises a local majority).

Electoral Rules and Party Fragmentation

Beyond the pressures exerted by an assymetrically bipolar society, a second source of pressure exerted on

political parties is the electoral system. In particular, the importance of the electoral system on political parties has long been a focal point of political science scholarship (Friedrich, 1937; Schattschneider, 1942; Key, 1949, Duverger, 1954). Although the principal focus of analyses concerning the consequences of electoral systems has been on party systems' fractionalization, the introduction of electoral reform has also been cited as playing a significant role in fostering or retarding ethnic conflict. The delimitation of constituencies, the electoral principle (such as proportional representation versus first-past-the-post system), the number of members per constituency, and the ballot structure all may alter ethnic alignments, ethnic electoral appeals, multi-ethnic coalitions, the growth of extremist parties, and hence systemic outcomes (Horowitz, 1985, 635-651). Unfortunately, scholarly studies of electoral systems have tended to ignore the impact of electoral experiments in deeply divided societies. Although the debate has had some relevance regarding the impact of these structural techniques on ethnic politics, it has scarcely touched upon ethnic variables.²⁴

Nonetheless, party systems fractionalization, individual party fragmentation and ethnic conflict are not

²⁴An outstanding exception is the earlier work of J.A. Laponce who dealt explicitly with electoral systems experimentation and ethnic conflict (Laponce, 1957 and 1960).

entirely unrelated. For example, the fractionalization of the party system, and the fragmentation of the dominant northern Nigerian party, the Nigerian Peoples' Party (NPP), which resulted from the "electoral engineering" experiments of the 1970s, is often cited as having contributed to the conditions which led to the military coup of 1985. Thus, Horowitz notes that in the case of Nigeria the:

rationale of Nigerian federalism through the proliferation of states and the devolution of power made it possible for minority parties in the North to control the states in the 1979 elections, thereby fragmenting party support in the North and insuring party proliferation overall Thus in Nigeria, the major innovations pulled in opposite directions: the presidential distribution requirements toward fewer parties, the new states, more (Horowitz, 1985, p. 636).

If electoral systems are important in affecting both the degree of party systems fractionalization, party fragmentation, and ethnic conflict in deeply cleaved societies, then the most immediate question that arises is definitional in nature: What is an "electoral system?" The term has often been used to describe a wide range of rules and procedures, as well as the offices open for political competition. For example, Peter Fishburn (1983) has pointed to thirteen factors which can be used in classifying electoral systems, including ease of voter access, suffrage and registration requirements, the ease of party/candidate access to the political process, and others.

What rules should be focused on? Perhaps the most relevant for our purposes are the rules which govern national legislative elections. Attention to rules governing national legislative elections is reasonable because legislative offices in competitive democracies are pivotal. No matter how important the executive, the execution of executive policy and the legitimacy of executive power rests ultimately with the elected legislative representatives of the people. It follows, then, that the core unit in political parties is the legislative group. Legislatures bring together elected officials whose activities must be organized. Only by organizing can they effectively allot positions. No matter how much candidates may wish to play down their partisan affiliation in an election campaign, ultimately they must make an open partisan commitment in the legislature

There are a myriad of rules which govern national legislative elections. Several scholars have offered various classifying schemes which provide minimal criteria designed to differentiate types of electoral systems. One such classificatory scheme, offered by Douglas Rae, focuses on four central features of any electoral system: 1) the electoral formula or the means by which vote totals are translated into seats; 2) the ballot structure and the related feature of: 3) the number of ballots; 4) the district magnitude, or the number of seats assigned to an

electoral district.²⁵ Since Rae's Political Consequences of Electoral Laws represents the first systematic attempt to deal with classifying and identifying the effects of systems beyond a simple "plurality vs PR" dichotomy" it merits detailed discussion here.

First, there is the dimension of the electoral formula. For Rae, three types of electoral formulae determine how many votes constitute a legitimate claim on a legislative seat: 1) the majority formula, or where a single party or candidate has obtained more votes than its combined opposition; 2) a plurality formula, when a single party or candidate has obtained more votes than its single strongest competitor but has not necessarily polled a higher total than the combined opposition; and 3) a proportional representation formula, where the share of seats awarded to any party should be equal to the share of the vote which it has won (Rae, 1967, pp. 19-39).

Further, a second dimension of an electoral system is the ballot structure, which can be differentiated into two types: the categorical versus the ordinal ballot. In the categorical ballot structure, the voter is forced to choose only one party or candidate as opposed to others. In an ordinal ballot, voters can express a more complex rank ordering of parties or candidates. Thus, simple candidate ballots used in British, as well as most Commonwealth and

²⁵A similar classificatory schema is offered by David Butler (1981).

American elections, force voters to choose one candidate. However, PR formulas also employ categorical ballot structures. For example, simple party-list ballots are also categorical, since they allow no inter-party division of a single elector's mandate. The essential point for inter-party competition is that a voter must choose a single party.

On the other hand, ordinal ballots allow the voter to express a more complex, equivocal preference by rank ordering candidates or parties. The voter may thus say that he/she prefers A most, B second, C third, and so on. But the important attribute of an ordinal ballot structure is that the voter is not compelled to decide unequivocally in favor of a single party or candidate. He/she may instead distribute his/her mandate among a number of competing parties or candidates. The key difference, in terms of ballot structure, then, has to do with the number of alternatives available to the voter. In a single (as opposed to, say, a runoff election) categorical ballot, the number of choices available to the voter is limited. The voter can only vote for one candidate or party; an ordinal ballot, on the other hand, increases the number of choices available.

Finally, Rae draws a distinction between different types of electoral districts according to the number of seats per district, or the district magnitude. In disaggregating the impact of these three components, Rae found

that the greatest single feature impacting on the fractionalization of the party system was varying district magnitude (Rae, 1967). Theoretically, the increased district magnitude gives greater incentive for parties to enter into competition. Empirically, district magnitude was found to impact greatly upon two "threshold" measures which effectively act as barriers to party entry: the "threshold of Representation" and the "threshold of exclusion" (Rae, Hanby, Loosemore, 1971). This hypothesis was further confirmed by later empirical studies of West European democracies (Tufte, 1973; Laakso and Taagepera, 1979; Taagepera, 1986, Taagepera, 1989a).

Although most analyses of the impact of electoral systems have focused on the impact at the national level, several scholars have noted that both thresholds operate at the district level as well, especially when district magnitudes vary within a country. Indeed, increasing the number of seats open for party competition increases the incentive for entry into the competitive fray at the level of the electoral district (Palfrey, 1984; Greenberg and Shepsle, 1987). This suggests, that in order to isolate the effects of increasing district magnitude, one should investigate a case which has varying district magnitudes within the country, thus controlling for other aspects of the electoral system. Only one such case exists in Eastern Europe and that is Estonia.

In sum, then:

Proximal expectation 2: As district magnitude increases, then the incentive for entry into competitive politics increases. Thus with increased district magnitude there will exist a strong incentive for ethnically particularistic party to contest elections in districts where the minority population constitutes a small but significant portion of the population. Conglomerate parties should be unaffected by district magnitude.

To examine both the propensity of an electoral system to increase the incentive for entry and the effect it has on the behavior of ethnically particularistic parties, one requirement is to allow for district magnitude to vary across electoral districts while controlling for ballot structure and electoral formula. One electoral system which allows for such variation is the Single Transferable Vote (STV), currently employed in Estonia. It is to a discussion of the features and consequences of this peculiar mixed system that we now turn.

The Single Transferable Vote

Although much of the debate over the political and ethno-political consequences of electoral laws continues to focus on the differential impact of FPTP versus PR systems,

there is a range of "mixed" systems which have attempted to combine the properties of both. The two most prominent of these are the Additional Member system and the Single Transferable Vote (STV). More importantly, both of these "mixed systems" are employed in elections in two East European countries, the additional-member system in Hungary, and STV (sometimes known as the Hare-Clark system) in Estonia.²⁶ Of great interest is STV which has been cited as promising because it combines the cited stabilizing features of FPTP systems with the long term representativeness of PR (Finer, 1975; Lakeman, 1984). However, STV has not, until 1990, been employed in an assymmetrically deeply divided society such as Estonia. Thus, in this sense, Estonia is a truly unique experiment.

STV was first proposed by Thomas J. Hare in England and Carl George Andrae in Denmark in the 1850s. It is presently used to elect public officials in several countries, including Australia, the Republic of Ireland, Northern Ireland, and Malta. It is also used in local elections in Cambridge, Massachusetts, in school board elections in New York City, and in numerous private organizations. John Stuart Mill (1862) once placed it "among the greatest improvements yet made in the theory and practice of government." In general, STV has been lauded on the grounds of its fairness and the proportionality of its rep-

²⁶For a very positive appraisal of the STV system, see Hallet (1984)

representatives and has tended to yield distributions of seats in legislative assemblies that closely approximate the distributions of popular votes.

The defining characteristic of PR systems is the allocation of mandates based on a party's total vote in each constituency. STV, in contrast, does not have this characteristic because votes are not cast for party lists but rather for individual candidates. Thus, as is the case for all of the majority systems, but not for ordinary PR, it is possible to conduct STV elections without parties or other combinations of candidates at all (Katz, 1984, p. 135; Hallet, 1984).

Moreover, STV has thus been cited in the literature as an electoral system which provides a worthy alternative to PR or majority systems (see Finer, 1975; Lakeman, 1984). As Enid Lakeman points out, one of the key advantages of STV is that it widens the range of choice open to voters, and thus the discrimination with which the popular will may be determined. In single-member systems, there are likely to be, in each district, two or at most three candidates with any chance at being elected. Hence, at most, the voter has only two or three policy platforms from which to choose. On the other hand, in PR-list systems the voter is afforded more choices. However he/she can only choose the entire program of one party or the entire program of another. STV, it is argued, is superior to majority/plurality or PR in that it allows the alternative

to the voter to discriminate between each party's group of candidates (Lakeman, 1984). Empirically, in the Republic of Ireland, several merits have been attributed to the system. These include: 1) increased candidate accountability relative to PR systems (Sacks, 1970; Mair, 1986); 2) the promotion of more proportional outcomes as compared to first-past-the-post; and 3) government stability.

In general, STV is based on multi-member constituencies in which voters rank order candidates on a 1,2,3... basis. Candidates are elected if they receive a quota (Q), known as the Droop quota, of the total valid poll (TVP) in the constituencies, this quota being calculated according to the number of seats (s) in the constituencies. The exact calculation is as follows:

$$q = \text{TVP} / (s + 1) + 1$$

which in a hypothetical four seat constituency with a valid poll of 50,000 is:

$$50,000 / 4 + 1 + 1 = 10,001$$

As is immediately evident, no more than four candidates can receive this quota, in that five quotas or 50,005 votes amount to five votes more than the total valid poll. If no

candidate receives a quota on the basis of the count of first preferences, the candidate receiving the fewest votes is eliminated and all of his votes transferred to other candidates according to second preferences. Alternatively, if one or more candidates receives sufficient first preferences, equal to or surpassing the quota, and if not all of the seats are distributed at the end of the first preference count, any of their surpluses over and above the quota are distributed to the other candidates in proportion to the second preferences of all the ballot papers of the elected candidates. Thus, if candidate X has a surplus of 2,000 first preferences over and above a 8,000 quota (i.e., 10,000 votes in all) then these 2,000 votes are distributed in proportion to the second preferences on all 10,000 of candidate X's ballot papers. This process of electing/eliminating candidates and distributing their surpluses/total votes according to the next ranking preference continues until all the seats have been filled. As is often the case, a number of ballots cast do not show some or all possible preferences; and at various stages, these are deemed nontransferable. Since this reduces the number of votes in circulation, the last seat in a constituency is regularly awarded to a candidate who, though not reaching the quota, has an unbeatable lead or is the only one remaining in the contest (for a detailed account of the counting process in STV see Hand, 1979).

Of particular interest, for our purposes, is the cited impact of STV on: 1) nomination strategies for both large and minor parties; and 2) the cited consequences on party organizational development. Given the multiple seats open for competition at the district level, several scholars advise a strategy of under-nomination. This would make sense, as the argument goes, because to increasing the number of candidates that a party nominates would run the risk of splitting the party's support in a particular district (Cohan, McKinley and Mugan, 1975; Katz, 1981; Lijphart and Irwin 1979).

However, in Ireland, representatives under STV tend to represent informal single-member constituencies. In the Irish case, the multi-member constituencies are informally regarded as simply sets of single-member constituencies, where representatives carve out personal bailiwicks within the larger constituency which represent specific sub-constituencies (Sacks, 1970; Mair, 1986). Thus, there is the informal recognition among candidates within a particular party that they represent small sub-constituencies within the large multi-member constituencies. Hence, as long as there is this informal recognition the major parties tend to nominate as many candidates as there are seats.

However, such intra-party bailiwicking is not always easily attained and this informal recognition breaks down. It is often the case in Ireland that the Fianna Fail, and

to a lesser extent the opposition party Fianna Gael, nominates more candidates than can really hope to win seats. The reason for this behavior is that the nominees of the Fianna Fail perceive the election as not a competition between parties, but rather as a competition between candidates. Such over-nomination is often the norm in Fianna Fail, despite the existence of many arguments against such a strategy. The result of such over-nomination, as Mair (1986) notes, is, "that such a strategy promotes an intense level of intra-party competition in which, for example, Fianna Fail candidates will vie against one another rather than against the other parties over, say, which of the three nominated will take the only two winnable Fianna Fail seats in a four seat constituency" (Mair, 1986, p. 293).

STV is also said to have effects on minor parties as well. Because STV more closely resembles PR in terms of its proportionality profile as compared to majority/plurality systems, one would expect that the proliferation of political parties would also be true of STV systems (Lijphart and Gibberd, 1977). As noted earlier, the quota necessary to be elected in an STV contest is determined by dividing the total valid poll by one more than the total number of seats, and then adding one to the result. From this it is clear that as the number of seats in a district increases, the quota decreases as a percentage of the total valid poll. In a 3-seat constituency, for example, the

divisor is 4 ($3 + 1$) and the quota is therefore approximately 25% of the total valid poll. In a 9-seat constituency, on the other hand, the divisor employed is 10 ($9+1$) and therefore the quota is just 10% of TVP. Thus, for a minor party with a fairly even geographic spread of support, the larger the constituency (in terms of seats) the greater is the opportunity to win seats. One would expect, then, that minor parties would nominate candidates in multiple seat constituencies, especially large ones.

In fact, however, the party behavior of minor parties is quite different under STV as compared to PR systems. Due to the structure of the vote and electoral procedure, PR systems tend to nationalize politics. As a result, minor parties tend to present candidate lists in all districts, including those in which they may have no hope of gaining representation, increasing their percentage of the vote without increasing their shares of seats. STV, however, tends to localize and personalize politics. Minor parties usually present candidates only where they have a reasonable chance of election (Katz, 1980). Therefore, there is a relatively strong incentive for a political party to concentrate its candidates in districts in which it has a relatively strong base of support. The incentive for entry is further strengthened by the existence of multiple-member districts, especially where the party's electoral support may be large but not a majority in the district.

Thus, given the increasing opportunities for entry associated with STV, one would expect that minor parties do contest and prefer districts of large magnitude. In general, this has been true for the Irish case. However what is clearly shown by Gallagher (1975) the converse -- that large parties prefer smaller district magnitudes -- is not necessarily true. Rather, depending on its precise vote, a large party may prefer a 4-seat to a 3-seat constituency or a 5-seat to a 4-seat constituency.

A simple example will be sufficient to illustrate this point. If party X wins 51% of first preferences in area Y, then, *ceteris paribus*, it will win 2 seats if Y is a 3-seat constituency, 2 seats also if Y is a 4-seat constituency and 3 seats if Y is a 5-seat constituency. In other words, a 51% vote will win it 66% of the seats in one case, 50% in another case, and 60% in the third case. Thus, for larger parties whose electoral support is much more diffuse -- such as an organization like the Popular Front organizations -- they should concentrate their efforts on both small and large constituencies, rather than middle range ones. Of course, this depends heavily on how much electoral support a large political party enjoys in the constituencies.

Another cited consequence of STV is the long-term organizational effect. As already mentioned, STV tends to encourage intense intra-party rivalry, with the result that it tends to create good constituency representatives rather

than effective legislators. Secondly, there also is the tendency to de-politicize electoral contests which are associated with such intra-party rivalry. Part of this effect is due to the structure of incentives presented by STV, especially those due to the nature of intra-party voting as a characteristic of the system.

Although intra-party voting is not limited to STV (witness, for example, the use of the direct primary in the American voting system, the nomination of more candidates than a party elects in the Japanese systems of SNTV, and personal preference voting in some list PR systems) the practice of intra-party voting in STV is substantially different from other systems. When transfer votes remain within a party, STV differs from other preference voting systems with regard to what Rae has referred to as the "ballot structure" (Rae, 1967). Most intra-party preference systems require what is essentially a categorical vote. Voters must support one candidate or a few candidates to the exclusion of others. Even in some PR systems with cumulation, which allow an ordinal choice, each voter has only a limited number of votes and once a vote (or set of votes) is cast these are irretrievably lost to other candidates. In STV, on the other hand, voting is truly ordinal; a candidate can appeal for the second preference votes of those who may strongly support someone else. Moreover, since those preferences will not become relevant until either the strongly supported candidate is elected or

eliminated, then voters can give candidates their support without diminishing their support for the candidate they most prefer.

Even when votes transcend party lines, there remain differences between PR-list systems and STV. When a party's voters in a list system are allowed to express preferences among the candidates in the list, the voter must remain within the party list. Even when the voter is afforded the choice of supporting candidates of other parties, such as the panachage system in Brazil, each vote is first partially cast for the candidate's party; mandates are assigned to each list on the basis of the number of whole or partial votes received by any of its candidates -- after this is calculated, then which individual candidates on the list are elected is determined.

In STV, votes are given only to candidates. A large personal vote for an individual candidate does his or her colleagues no good unless it is transferred explicitly to them (which is not required in STV). Moreover, voters can support a candidate without having to support the party of that candidate. As a result, a wise candidate should not overly concentrate his/her efforts on identification with his/her party. Rather, the candidate should concentrate his/her efforts on enhancing personal appeal without necessarily encouraging support for other candidates of their party. The interpersonal nature of competition as promoted by STV thus may supersede inter-party competition rather

than remaining strictly within party boundaries (Katz, 1980, 1984; Mair, 1984).

The necessity of competing along personal rather than ideological lines has had a distinct organizational effect. In the case of Ireland, when a party has more than one candidate in a constituency the candidates tend to divide the territory into personal bailiwicks, although this does not always occur. This is more than simply a campaign device: it is the organizing principle of Irish political parties. Irish constituency parties come into existence only to contend elections; other than a small national headquarters, the only organizations that have any continual existence are the local branches and the informal groups of branches that are the basis of a particular politician's bailiwick.

In sum, both the theoretical and empirical properties of STV have demonstrated that it generates both proximal effect (expressed in party strategy) and more distal consequences (promoting broad based coalitions), yet these properties depend heavily on distribution of party electoral strength. Nonetheless, from the above properties, several expectations can be generated regarding both the behavior of political parties (in terms of nomination strategies) and more distal effects, in application to a situation of assymetric ethnic bi-polarism.

Proximal Expectation 3: In general, because of the incentives generated by STV, large parties, espe-

cially conglomerate parties, where there is a relatively high degree of intra-party debate, should tend to over-nominate in every electoral district, and especially concentrate on three and five member districts where seat rewards are greatest.

Distal Expectation 2: In comparison to either PR or First-Past-the-Post systems, the tendency for the fragmentation of umbrella groupings should be less under STV as compared to PR and more than under First Past-the-Post.

Distal Expectation 3: In comparison to PR, the propensity for the fragmentation of ethnically particularistic parties should be less under the conditions of STV and more than First-Past-the-Post systems.

The Impact of "Structured" Political Parties

Beyond the pressures exerted on political parties by the social environment and electoral institutions, a third approach emphasizes the impact of the party organization itself as an independent variable. For example, in the study of American party politics, the organizational variable has been used in explaining and predicting outcomes of legislative and presidential elections (see Eldersveld, 1964; Katz and Eldersveld, 1961; Cutright and Rossi, 1958a, 1958b). Among students of comparative political development, the political party plays a vital role in integration and mobilization (Huntington, 1968; Foltz, 1963). Others, focusing primarily on European political parties, have noted that the features of party organization impact upon a

range of party behaviors, most notably coalition strategies. The organizational structure has been found to have an impact on party coalition strategies and ideological positioning (Pridham, 1990, pp. 24-31) Groennings for example observes that "it is easier for a structured party with loose central control to coalesce with another party of the same character than one with tight discipline, because a highly centralized party can present a threat to a loosely structured party" (Groennings, 1970).

One particularly interesting approach, which incorporates the use of the party organization as an independent variable is that offered by Giovanni Sartori (1966, 1968). Sartori begins with the institutionalist argument that electoral laws influence the characteristics of a political party system. However, Sartori holds that the characteristics of a political environment mitigate the incentives of electoral rules. More specifically, this political environment is determined by the degree of the "structural consolidation" of an existing party system.

Surprisingly enough we usually discuss the effects of (electoral rules) as if party systems all belong to a similar phase of development. Now, not only is the number of parties of little significance unless it is related to given stages of structural consolidation of the party system but the point is that the effects are definitely related to the relative delicacy or maturity of the party system in question The problem can be approached at this point" (Sartori, 1966; p.167).

For Sartori, a party system acquires "structure" when the parties which comprise it acquire structure. At the minimum, a structured political party requires the existence of a national platform, a unified symbol, and some stable organization at the local level. However, these characteristics are not by themselves sufficient for a party system to acquire "structure." The party system acquires structure when it becomes perceived as a system of channelment of political society rather than as mere images (Sartori, 1986, p. 55).

Nonetheless, parties can create the conditions for "system structuring." Through their gate-keeping role, parties can impede the entry of other political actors and hence, over time, present themselves as the only political "avenues" for the electorate (Kirchheimer, 1965, especially pp. 965-7; Gunther, 1989). So strong was this effect in Post-Franco Spain, that, Gunther, in analyzing the consequences of the "limited vote" system, concluded that it neutralized some of the posited effects of the electoral system adopted in 1977 (Gunther, 1989). Moreover, as Antonio Bar has pointed out, this inability of the parties, at least initially, to perform this gate-keeping role has often led to political instability and the collapse of fragile, new democracies (Bar, 1984, p. 134).

Thus, for both the theoretical and empirical literature, the existence of structured parties has a cited dampening effect on the generation of party systems' pluralism.

For Sartori, party atomization (which is an extreme form of party pluralism) is the product of both the degree of structure of party systems and the type of electoral system adopted. It is the combined effect of both electoral laws and the political environment (defined as the characteristics of the party systems environment) which produce either extreme pluralism or moderate pluralism (conceived as the number of political parties). Thus, "initial choices" are of vital importance (Sartori, 1966, p. 56).

At the heart of Sartori's analysis is an underlying assumption as to the role of the political party in dampening the incentives for entry into political competition. It is primarily the party acting as "gatekeeper" which mitigates or strengthens the effects of either PR or FPTP systems. Clearly, then, strong structuring of early parties can act as a powerful restraining force containing early party proliferation, in that structured political parties are able to coopt otherwise independent candidates (and potential cores for independent political parties) into themselves.

Although of great interest, two points must be made regarding Sartori's analysis. First of all, like most other general analyses of the effects of electoral systems, Sartori has made a relatively simplistic distinction between majority/plurality systems and proportional representation. There is, in fact, a wide variety of electoral systems, many which seek to combine the representational

features of PR with the stabilizing impact of majority/plurality systems (see for example, Lakeman, 1984; Lijphart and Grofman, 1984; Grofman and Lijphart, 1986). This becomes especially important in the context of cases like Estonia and Hungary where mixed (STV and Additional Member systems) have been adopted.

A second shortcoming in Sartori's analysis is the unfortunate dichotomous assumption that parties either are "structured" or "unstructured." Part of this may be due to an older body of literature which posited that all parties in the West were inexorably moving toward some ideal, modal, type. (Michels, 1962; McKenzie, 1964) There are, in fact, however, range of different organizational types which populate the gray area between structure and unstructured.

Nonetheless, the "organizational" variable is especially useful in the context of democratic transition. Following the Sartorian tack, the tendency toward extreme pluralism or moderate pluralism may be vitally affected by what kinds of party organizations comprise the initial political format. But what affects the kinds of parties which comprise this initial format?

Recently, a "historical" dimension has been cited, especially by students of Latin American and Iberian democratic transitions, as having a profound impact on the parties' role as gatekeepers. Mainwaring, for example, in dealing with the broad category of urban social movements,

argues that the large social movements in Brazil which opposed authoritarianism were so fragmented that, "under these conditions of internal differentiation and conflict, the democratizing potential of social movements (was) bound to be limited" (Mainwaring, 1987, p. 139). Moreover, for Mainwaring the internal fragmentation of urban socio-political movements was in large part due to the conscious historical policy of the state (Mainwaring, 1987, p. 135). Antonio Bar, referring to the case of Spanish democratic transition, noted that the political parties were, at least initially, unable to control party pluralism and, "this was in part due to the historic conditions under which the transition to democracy took place in Spain, a transition in which a whole set of different forces converged as active elements" (Bar, 1984, p. 134).

But can the "parties" which have emerged in the "post communist era" be considered "structured?" To some extent, both types of "conglomerate parties" (PF and Communist) exhibited at least the minimal features of structuration. First of all, both the Popular Fronts and Communist parties had unified symbols in all three of the cases under investigation. In Czechoslovakia, the Civic Forum/Public Against Violence ran its own slate of candidates. This was also the case of nominees endorsed by the Popular Front of Latvia and Estonia. Such endorsements appeared on the ballot in Estonia and were widely publicized in Latvia. The Communist party of Czechoslovakia (CPCZ) remained intact

and ran its slate of candidates under its label. In Estonia, the situation was somewhat more complex. Ethnic Estonian communists endorsed candidates under the banner of the Free Estonia Association (Vaba Eesti). The Communist Party of Estonia (CPE) retained a separate organization and did not actively participate in the elections, although the organizational resources of the CPE were at the disposal of the Free Estonia Association. In Latvia, however, two Communist parties ran for election -- the independent Communist Party and the Communist Party-CPSU.

In terms of local organization, the communist parties were widely criticized for maintaining ownership and property as well the maintenance of local party cells in all districts and enterprises. Moreover, in Estonia, the Popular Front maintained local committees and organizations in every district -- as evidenced by often dual endorsement of candidates by both the national Popular Front and the local Popular Front committees, which appeared on the ballot. Thus, at least in the case of Estonia, which is the venue for testing our "proximal" expectations, both the Communist Party and the Popular Front could be classified as at least minimally "structured."

The above organizational/historical dimensions suggest the following proximal and distal expectations:

Proximal Expectation 4: The presence of a minimally "structured" conglomerate political party contending an election at the district level will have a damp-

ening effect on entry. Thus where structured political parties compete there should be a marked decline in candidate entry. This effect should become magnified when two or more "structured parties are present.

Distal Expectation 4: The party format, largely as a result of the "totalitarian legacy" is generally populated by minimally conglomerate political parties. As a result the tendency for fragmentation among these conglomerate parties should be much more pronounced in Czechoslovakia as compared to either Estonia or Latvia.

Distal Expectation 5: As far as the ethnically particular parties are concerned, the degree of fragmentation should again be most pronounced in Czechoslovakia and least pronounced in Latvia.

Summary of the Model

The above discussion of the relevant literature (ethno-political, institutional, and organizational/historical dimensions) focused on deriving general expectations concerning party behavior (candidate entry and the choice of where to enter, i.e. proximal expectations 1-5) and more "distal expectations" related to the degree of party fragmentation (distal expectations 1-4). From these expectations three different sets of hypotheses can be derived. The following is a summary of the general model and justification.

I.

$$1) y_1 = f(m, -cong)$$

where: y_1 = candidate entry

m = district magnitude

cong = presence of conglomerate structured party

Justification: The first set deals with the general incentives for candidate entry. In other words, it combines the proposition that increasing district magnitude increases the incentive for entry (Rae, 1967), combined with the party organizational proposition (Sartori, 1966, 1968) that structured political parties dampen the incentive for candidate entry (derived from proximal expectations 2 and 4). This first set of hypotheses deals with the general incentives for candidate entry generated by increasing district magnitude in the presence of structured political parties, and will be tested using Estonia, where magnitude (m) varies between one and five.

II. The second set of hypotheses deals with the general issue of the "character" of ethnic politics or where different types of political parties nominate candidates. The first subset (2a) deals with the ethnically particularistic party.

$$2a) Y_{eth} = f(\text{ethnic}, m, -\text{cong})$$

where: Y_{eth} = ethnically particular party's candidate entry

ethnic= ethnic composition of district

m= district magnitude

cong= presence of structured conglomerate party

Justification: From proximal expectations 1 and 2, as magnitude increases the incentive for all parties to enter increases. However, this is also dependent upon the ethnic composition of the district, which should not exert a deterrent effect on umbrella parties (since they seek to broaden support) but should act as a deterrent for ethnically particular parties (proximal expectation 1). CONG is derived from proximal expectation 4, which holds the presence of a conglomerate umbrella party may draw support away from the ethnically particularistic party, thus exerting a deterrent effect on entry.

The second subset of hypotheses (2b) deals with the behavior of conglomerate parties on where to enter candidates.

$$2b) y_u = f(m, -cong)$$

where: y_u = conglomerate party's candidate entry

m= district magnitude

cong = presence of other structured conglomerate party

Justification: Given the particular incentives generated by STV, (proximal expectation 3), a large party's decision to

enter a candidate is a function of district magnitude -- where the specific expectation is that an umbrella party (like the PF and the Communist Party) will concentrate and over-nominate in three and five member districts. Again, CONG refers to the presence of another structured conglomerate party which may deter entry in that both conglomerate parties may compete for same constituency. Ethnicity is not considered because these parties attempt to appeal to a "multi-ethnic constituency" and as a result should not be deterred from entry by the ethnic composition of the district.

III. The final set of hypotheses deals with comparisons made across national cases. The principal question focuses on the tendency towards party fragmentation in the face of varying electoral institutions (PR-list, STV, and FPTP). Further, the effects of the international environment, while controlling for the conditions of assymetric ethnic bi-polarity and organizational and historical factors, will be tested.

1) In comparing Czechoslovakia on the one hand, with Estonia, and Latvia on the other, fragmentation should be exhibited among all political parties more so in Czechoslovakia than in Estonia or Latvia. In the latter cases, however, because of the international dimension (i.e., the

unresolved relations with Moscow, which has polarized politics in the Baltics) fragmentation in the ethnically particularistic "non-Baltic" (meaning ethnically non-Estonian or non-Latvian) parties should be less; this should be also true for the umbrella parties in the Baltic states.

2) In controlling for the international dimension, and comparing Estonia and Latvia, because of the properties of STV, which benefits "large parties," tendencies toward fragmentation should be at a similarly low level in both cases for umbrella PF parties. However, the tendencies for fragmentation for umbrella Communist Parties should differ. Assuming the communist party is an electoral minority, then the incentive to disband should be higher in Latvia than in Estonia.

The above summary suggests the creation of a two-stage research design, the first which deals with "within country" analysis of party behavior and the second which deals with more distal effects across time. The next chapter will proceed with 1) the articulation of a two-stage research design and a brief description and assessment of data sources; 2) the operationalization of central concepts; 3) the construction of a set of working hypotheses with respect to both within-country analysis and cross

national comparisons; and 4) model specification and discussion of appropriate methodology.

Chapter 3: Research Design and Methodology

In Chapter 2, a general model posited both proximal and distal hypotheses regarding party behavior and longer term tendencies towards party "fragmentation" in the post communist era. This chapter will proceed with: 1) the articulation of a two-stage research design and a brief description and assessment of data sources; 2) the operationalization of central concepts; 3) the construction of a set of working hypotheses with respect to both within-country analysis and cross national comparisons and model specification and discussion of appropriate methodology (both quantitative and qualitative/historical).

Research Design and Data Sources

Several questions guide this inquiry. First, does expanded district magnitude increase the incentive for entry for prospective candidates even in the presence of more or less structured political parties, and does this effect hold true in the case of founding elections? Does varying district magnitude affect the choice of individual political parties as to where candidates are to be nominated? Or does this depend more on the distribution of the electorate at the district level? In a more general

sense, in comparing across national cases, do variations in the type of electoral system adopted affect the tendencies toward fragmentation among the three types of political parties which constitute the initial party format?

What these questions suggest is the construction of a two-stage research design at both the level of the political party, and the level of the nation-state. Such two-stage designs have been advocated by many scholars (Rokkan, 1966; Merritt and Rokkan, 1966; Hopkins and Wallerstein, 1967; Przeworski and Teune, 1970; Lijphart, 1971a). Rokkan, for example, distinguishes between tests of "macro-hypotheses" concerning the "inter-relations of structural elements of total systems," and "micro-hypotheses" which consciously limit the number of cases, and where one relies on the comparative method as opposed to the statistical method.¹ Such micro-hypotheses involve the use of micro-replications designed to "test out in other national and cultural settings a proposition already validated in one setting" (Rokkan 1970, p. 52). As a result, then, in this second stage, issues such as "nationality" can be treated as a variable on a par with occupation, age, sex, type of neighborhood, etc. (Merritt and Rokkan, 1966, pp. 19-20). Hopkins and Wallerstein make a similar distinction between "truly cross-national studies," in which total systems are

¹For the distinction between the "experimental," the "statistical," and the "comparative" method, see Lijphart, 1971.

units of analysis, and "multi-national but cross-individual research" (Hopkins and Wallerstein, 1967, p. 33; Przeworski and Teune, 1970, pp. 33-43; Smelser, 1976, pp. 215-220).

To answer the set of proximal questions requires a micro-level approach, in which aspects of the electoral system (such as the electoral formula and ballot structure) are controlled for, while allowing district magnitude to vary. Only one such case exists in Eastern Europe and that is Estonia, where one of the Single Transferable Vote's defining characteristics is varying district magnitude. On the other hand, to assess the impact of a variety of electoral systems as a whole on the tendencies for fragmentation requires controlling for such dimensions as ethnic bipolarism, while allowing for variation in electoral systems (PR versus STV versus First-Past-the-Post). The cases which fit these criteria are Czechoslovakia, and the Baltic States of Estonia and Latvia, respectively. On the other hand, the impact of the international environment must also be considered, which would suggest a "third stage" of comparison -- between Latvia and Estonia.

What are we comparing at each stage? In stage 1, the unit of comparison is the behavior of individual political parties, more specifically the three types of parties which comprise the initial format -- the Conglomerate-PF, the Conglomerate-Communist and the ethnically particularistic minority party. In stages 2 and 3, the comparison concerns

the evolution of these parties in the wake of "founding elections."

In the first stage, which roughly corresponds to what Lijphart (1971a) refers to as the "interpretive case study," statistical techniques will be employed in order to relate varying district magnitude, and the presence of a "structured" political party to the dependent variables of "candidate entry" and the party choice in terms of where to run candidates. In stage two, more qualitative techniques, based upon the analysis of published public statements and reports appearing in Baltic, Soviet, and Czechoslovakian journals, newspapers, and periodicals will be utilized.

For stage 1, data were collected on the Estonian Supreme Soviet elections on nominations by political, social, and economic organizations which was reported for each of the 42 territorial electoral districts in the February 21, 1990, edition of Sovetskaya Estoniya. In addition, data on victorious candidates were accumulated from the March 23, 1990, edition of Sovetskaya Estoniya. Regarding the ethnic composition of electoral districts, more recent (1989 census data) is yet unavailable; thus, data were extrapolated from 1979 Estonian republic census data on the ethnic composition of rural districts and cities, as reported by Taagepera (1982).

For the purposes of stages 2 and 3, data were gathered for the time period March 1990 (the date of the Estonian and Latvian founding elections) through March 1991

on developments within each of the major types of political parties. This information was primarily derived from Soviet newspapers (most notably Pravda, Izvestiya, Sovetskaya Rossiya and Moscow News) as well as from Foreign Broadcast Information Service - USSR (FBIS-SOV) and Radio Free Europe/ Radio Liberty Research Reports for 1990-1991 (RFE/RL Research Report). For Czechoslovakia, similar data were gathered from RFE/RL Research Reports for 1990-1991, as well as from Foreign Broadcast Information Service-Eastern Europe (FBIS-EEU) reports for the period of June 1990 - April 1991.

In assessing the data, several possible objections should be considered. First of all, the data on the Estonian elections did not report individual electoral returns, in part because of the complexity of the use of the Droop quota -- only winners were declared. Thus, the use of standard electoral systems analysis to measure the propensity for fragmentation generated by an electoral system (such as "fractionalization" of vote shares -- see Rae, Hanby, and Loosemore, 1971) is inappropriate. On the other hand, such information is not necessary to answer the question at hand, given that the focus involves the choice of prospective party candidates on whether or not, or where, to enter.

Another possible objection relates to the use of 1979 data on the ethnic composition of regions and cities in Estonia, rather than more recent figures, which calls into

question the "representativeness" of 1979 data. Moreover, if there have been shifts, these probably do not account for more than a few percentage points. Further, I am not interested as much in the precise proportion of the population which is Estonian or non-Estonian, but rather a comparison of districts in which Estonians are the majority, Russian are the majority, or the population is "mixed." Such divisions at the district level in all likelihood have not changed significantly since 1979.

In terms of the qualitative data, one possible objection to the use of statements made in news publications is that such statements do not truly reflect the inner workings of the various political parties, nor can they be used a gauge for the alignment of forces within these groupings. Indeed, leaders of such political groupings can at times be out of touch, and as such do not necessarily represent the views held within the rank and file.

In response to this objection, the assumption that the statements made by political leaders accurately reflects the internal conflicts within the various political groupings, is bolstered by observation that, in the early stages of democratization, the actions of principal political leaders often set the agenda for political conflict. Thus, for example Gunther (1989) noted that a key variable in the development of the Spanish party system, in the first decade after democratic transition, were the actions of the principal party leaders. Others have noted

that in the early stages of the development of political parties, it is the leadership which sets the political agenda and the initial organizational framework of the political party (Panebianco, 1988; Lowi, 1971).

The type of qualitative data limits what can and cannot be claimed in the analysis of "tendencies" within the various political parties which comprise the "initial format." No claims concerning the ultimate distal consequence of party fragmentation can be made. Indeed, without the benefit of several elections, one cannot begin to draw conclusions regarding the number of parties which will comprise some future party format. However, one can assess the degree to which the existing parties fragment and along what lines.

Finally, it should be noted here that this design does not correspond to what Strauss and Corbin refer to as the "grounded theory" approach in which the researcher's aim is to "build theory" inductively, or where the researcher "begins with an area of study and what is relevant to that area is allowed to emerge" (Strauss and Corbin, 1990, p. 23). Nor is the approach similar to either the "atheoretical case study," the "hypothesis-generating," "theory confirming," "theory-infirmiting," or "deviant case studies," identified by Lijphart (1971a). Rather, the general approach is similar to the "interpretative case study," which seeks to "make explicit use of established theoretical propositions" with an aim at "throwing light on

the case rather than of improving the generalization in any way" (Lijphart, 1971a p. 688). Although the specific aim is not to refine existing theories, such an approach has the added advantage of highlighting which theories may be more applicable than others.²

One key difference however, between what is proposed here, as opposed to the traditional use of the interpretive case study, is the introduction of comparative controls, especially for the purpose of highlighting the effects of specific variables -- most notably in stage 2 the differential impact of FPTP and STV as electoral systems in comparing Latvia and Estonia (thus controlling for ethnic bipolarity, the international dimension, and structured vs unstructured political parties constituting the initial format). Such distal comparisons between Estonia and Latvia will be made in Chapter 5. In stage 3, the focus is on controlling for ethnic bi-polarity and the organizational dimension, while allowing for variation along the international and structural dimensions, broadly comparing the Czechoslovak consociational-PR model with the Baltic states. It should be noted however, that such comparisons, made in stage 3 (see Chapter 6) must be made with the greatest care, since the international status of Czechos-

²For examples see Hudson (1967) and Beer (1968). An interesting example of such an "interpretive case study" is Micheal Hudson's insightful case study of Lebanon, where, in light of existing development theories, he discovers a serious discrepancy between the country's socio-economic and political development (see Hudson, 1967).

lovakia is considerably different from that of the Baltic states. As a result, then, Chapter 6 will deal exclusively with an interpretive analysis of developments within Czechoslovakia.

Before dealing with the aforementioned proximal and distal hypotheses in Chapters 4, 5 and 6, the next section will operationalize and provide measurements for the relevant variables in the quantitative part of this work -- the within-country analysis of Estonia.

Dependent and Independent Variables

In the quantitative portion of this study there are three dependent variables-- independent candidate entry, candidate nomination by ethnically particularistic party, and over or under-nomination by the large umbrella party.

The first is operationalized as the number of independent candidates standing for election per electoral district. There are two reasons for the use of the simple number of independent candidates entering the competitive race in each electoral district, rather than the characteristics of a party system, such as the degree of party pluralism. First of all, the number of independent candidates who choose to run for office reflects, to some degree, the underlying and latent fractionalization of the political environment. Secondly, if there is an incentive

for a candidate to enter into competition, and this incentive is encouraged by the electoral system, or the lack of structured political parties, then each candidate represents a potential political party of the future.³

The second dependent variable -- where parties choose to run -- is operationalized merely as a dichotomous choice: to run a candidate or not to run a candidate. This choice applies to all three types of political parties -- conglomerate-PF, the Communist Party, and the ethnically particularistic minority party. In particular, the nominating behavior of the "ethnically particularistic" party is of concern here. Indeed, whether this party seeks to nominate candidates in districts in which non-Estonians are in the minority may reflect, to some extent, the electoral system's ability to promote the interests of the minority ethnic groups, which, under the conditions of FPTP, would have been excluded. In general, then, this may also be reflective of the electoral system's ability to promote inter-ethnic cooperation, by depriving the claims

³One possible objection to the use of the number of independent candidates is the assumption that candidates enter the competitive fray simply as the result of incentives generated by the electoral environment. Certainly, there are candidates who run for office for reasons entirely apart from seeking electoral victory, for emotional satisfaction for instance.

One possible response to this objection is the fact that a number of independent candidates were elected in the Estonian Supreme Soviet elections, demonstrating that a large proportion of independents were serious candidates for office.

of the minority party that the interest of non-Estonians have been neglected.

The third dependent variable -- the propensity for "over-nomination" at the district level -- deals with the kind of choices facing the conglomerate parties, whether particular characteristics of a district affects the decision, by conglomerate parties, to over-nominate (or under-nominate) candidates. The degree of over-nomination and under-nomination will be measured by whether the number of nominations exceeds (or is less than) the number of seats available at the district level.

A second operational issue relates to the independent variables. The first, "district magnitude," is simply defined as the seats open for competition at the district level. The second, "the presence of structured or unstructured parties," requires some clarification. How does one go about measuring "structure?" There are two ways to approach this issue. The first is to conceive of the degree of structure or structurelessness in terms of the competitive relations among the political parties or the "systemic structure." This certainly was suggested by Downs (1957) and later spatial theorists who followed. This usually involves the idea that the competitive relations among political parties in some issue space have achieved an equilibrium. However, in the early period of democratic transition such structure does not usually exist.

The second, which is the concept of "structure/structurelessness" as advocated by Sartori, holds that whether or not a party system is structured depends on the features of the parties which comprise that system. In other words, whether or not individual political parties have achieved the status a "systems of channelment" largely determines the degree of party systems structuration. For Sartori, all that is required for the existence of a structured party system is that at least two political parties have acquired a "unified symbol," a "national platform," and some degree of organization.

To categorize structured versus unstructured parties I propose the use of Sartori's three criteria. In Estonia, two parties in the initial format qualify as "structured" -- or meet the conditions of possessing a national spread, a distinct program, and a local organization. The first is the Estonian Popular Front (PFE) which was founded at a conference on October 1-2, 1988, where representatives of local chapters met to elect the top leaders and adopt a general program. Edgar Savisaar, along with Marju Lauristin (head of the Department of Journalism at Tartu State University) were the most visible and prominent of the PFE's leadership. In addition, to establish its independent credentials, this conference proposed rules which would prevent PFE members from simultaneously belonging to both the CPE (Communist Party of Estonia) or government leadership and the PFE. However, PFE members and leaders

were allowed to belong to the CPE as rank and file members.⁴

At the same time, the Popular Front declared its intention to nominate candidates to the Supreme Soviet election and local elections of 1989-1990. It also articulated a policy position on the issue of national sovereignty, a position which was first issued by the PFE Initiative center in a statement on July 23, 1988, and later re-issued in October:

Every Nation has an inalienable right to be the master of its fate For the first time in Estonian history, these values -- national sovereignty and statehood -- were realized to an appreciable extent with the Republic of Estonia Stalinist large nation policy liquidated Estonian sovereignty Estonians do not presently consider the Estonian SSR a sovereign state The Initiative Center does not presently consider the Estonian SSR a sovereign state... The Initiative Center does not approve of separatist attempts that do not take into account the very real international, economic, political and ethnic factors that affect Estonia's situation Estonia's political sovereignty can, under the present world conditions, come about only in the form of a socialist nation state based on the right of self-determination. The least painful path toward it is a transformation of the Soviet Union into a federal state into a confederation of states Also, a practically functioning political mechanism with juridical guarantees must be developed that would ensure the reality of national self-

⁴This, however, was different from what occurred in Latvia. Whereas in Estonia, PFE leaders remained CPE members (but not leaders), in Latvia PFE members were forbidden from being CPL members. Thus, the PFE was not only more lenient regarding the establishment of membership boundaries, and as a result far less "structured" than its Latvian counterpart, but also far more tolerant in its relations with the CPE than was the Latvian Popular Front vis-a-vis the CPL.

determination put to leaving the union The Popular Front can assume responsibility for implementing these perspectives only if radical perestroika continues. A victory of the opponents to perestroika would force us to seek other ways to defend the Estonian country and people (Quoted in Taagepera, 1989b, p. 178).

The Popular Front from 1988-1990 grew rapidly in both strength and membership. By June, 1988, it claimed 40,000 supporters, and by August, 1988, it claimed 60,000 members. One-third of these were CPE members.⁵ Along with the expansion in officially registered members, there emerged a concerted effort, between the Autumn of 1988 and the Summer of 1989, to organize support groups and local PF committees in all 41 non-military electoral districts in Estonia.⁶ As one observer noted, the Popular Front by the end of 1989 had:

reached out into most of the state and public organizations. The Front's members have gained valuable practical experience in these independent activities in conditions of shaping up economic and political pluralism. It was the birth of the Popular Front and

⁵The PFE had 13,000 members in late May ("In Brief," Homeland June 1, 1988) more than 40,000 members on June 9 ("Popular Front in Action," Homeland, June 15, 1988), and nearly 60,000 in late July according to Leonid Miloslavsky and Nina Belyayeva, "The Popular Front: Lessons from Estonia's Experience in pro-Perestroika Civic Initiative," Moscow News, August 7-14, 1988, p. 16.

⁶Oleg, Yanitsky, "A New Force is Born," Moscow New Times, April 3-9, pp. 28-30, in FBIS-SOV April 12, 1990 p. 103.

the organizations like it, including the ones opposing the Front, that have in effect drastically enhanced the inner structure of society in the republic."⁷

As a result then, the Estonian Popular Front, in terms of Sartori's criteria (the existence of a national platform, the existence of local organization, the existence of a "national spread") had, by 1989, acquired the basic characteristics of a structured political party.

But what of other political parties which emerged simultaneous to the development of the PFE? In February 1988, prior to the foundation of the Popular Front, the Eesti Rahvasliku Soltumatuse Partei (ENIP -- the Estonian National Independence Party) was founded. On August 20, 1988, 102 charter members participated in the drafting of the party's rules and platform. Article 1 of the ENIP charter claimed that it was, "a political union of individuals, and its goal is restoration of the independent democratic Estonian state on the basis of generally recognized principles of international law." A political declaration, also adopted on 20 August 1988, outlined the willingness of ENIP to cooperate with the ethnic Russian population in Estonia, thus indicating the desire to establish a national spread.

⁷ "A New Force is Born." in Moscow New Times, April 3-9, p. 30 in FBIS-SOV April 12, 1990, p. 103.

The demand for independence is not extremism; it is the most realistic sober and illusion-free way to overcome our concerns and problems. The Stalinist policy of conquest has not been a blessing for Russian either; age old villages of central Russia are empty, fertile fields are fallow and grown over, and grain must be imported The Russian people feel even more insecure than we do, in face of prospects of new onslaughts of Stalinism. Their hope for a more normal future would receive a boost when another Stalinist crime is undone through the restoration of our independence.⁸

Although ENIP might be classified as a "structured" political party, it did not seek to register for the Supreme Soviet election. This organization chose not to run in the Supreme Soviet elections of 1990, but opted for the elections to the Independent Estonian Congress held in May of 1990. However, at the end of May 1990, ENIP did apply for and receive recognition as a registered political party, perhaps indicative of its intention to participate in future elections.

Other groups also began to form throughout early 1988. One organization which emerged in 1988 was the Eesti Muinsuskaitse Selts or the Estonian Heritage Society (EHS), which claimed 6,000 members in August 1988. The first republic-wide meeting of the local heritage societies took place in October 1986, but the nationwide organization was not formally created until December 12, 1987. The EHS

⁸ERSP asutava koosoleku poliitiline deklaratsioon-
Political declaration of the Charter Meeting of the ENIP
adopted on August 20, 1988, quoted in Taagepera, 1989b, p.
177.

was headed by Trivimi Velliste, a journalist, and Mart Laar, a historian. It was organized along ethnic lines with Estonian, Russian, Jewish and Armenian Branches. The principal goal of the EHS, however, was limited to the restoration of the national flag and the restoration of pre-war monuments and churches. Moreover, the EHS did not take a stand regarding a political program for the future.⁹

Another political group was the Green Movement. The Green Movement was formally created on May 23, 1988. Its charter voiced local and world-wide ecological concerns, demanded phasing out of nuclear energy, supported the formation of a Nordic Nuclear-Free Zone to include Estonia, opposed excessive immigration and the "colonialist economic activities" of the central Moscow ministries. While the Green movement wants to prevent the destruction of the Estonian ecology, it advanced no explicitly political proposal and announced the intention of fielding candidates only if other groupings failed to do so.¹⁰

Thus, of the number of opposition groups which advocated a transition to Estonian independence, the only one

⁹See Trivimi Velliste, "Four Months of Heritage Society," Homeland, April 20, 1988; Mart Laar, "A Fruit of Combined Effort," Homeland, June 15, 1988, which documents the first opening of a monument by the heritage society; Evgenia Gurin Lvov, "Society of Jewish Culture," Homeland, July 6, 1988.

¹⁰See Hilda Kaljula, "The Greens are Coming," Homeland, May 25, 1988; Tiit Maade, "Green for Survival," Homeland, June 22, 1988; Juhan Aare, "Estonia is Ill says the No.1 Green Journalist," Homeland, August 3, 1988

which approximated the criteria for "structure" was the Popular Front. Most of the other major opposition groups made no explicitly political statements, nor did they develop political programs (with the possible exception of ENIP which chose to boycott the March elections). Moreover, none of the other political movements or parties was as concerned with the rapid development of local organization as was the Estonian Popular Front.

The second "structured" political party was the Communist Party of Estonia (CPE). The CPE not only possessed substantial organizational resources at the local level (largely as a legacy of the past,) but also proclaimed itself as the only organization which could unite both Estonians and Russians in a common front (see Taagepera, 1989b, 1989c; Misiunas and Taagepera, 1989). In addition, the CPE, through the establishment of Vaba Eesti (the Free Estonia Association) in the early spring of 1990, sought to repair its tarnished image through the adoption of an electoral program which emphasized not only continued support of economic restructuring, but also the gradual transition to Estonian independence. As a result, then, in terms of Sartori's criteria, CPE/Vaba Eesti also qualifies as a "structured conglomerate party."

A third political party which emerged was the International Movement (Interfront) and the United Council of Labor Collectives (OSTK), which were formed in Estonia among Russian-speaking workers employed in large industrial

firms under the direction of the central ministries. Their ostensible purpose was to defend the interests of national minorities in the Republic from the alleged excesses either perpetrated or contemplated by the Estonian Popular Front and their allies in the Estonian Communist Party. The available evidence suggests, however, that these were essentially paper organizations set up at the direction of the economic management of large enterprises, probably with the assistance, if not encouragement, from their superiors in Moscow. Nonetheless, because of the organizational advantage they had, especially in terms of resources and access to the work place, coupled with the existence of a geographically concentrated constituency in the north-eastern third of the republic, the OSTK enjoyed an advantage over other less well organized and well situated Estonian political groups. However, the OSTK's and Interfront's political positions have been rather fuzzy; the one specific claim it made was that it was primarily oriented toward the protection of the rights of non-Estonians. The base of its political support is in Tallin and also in the northeast around Narva where the concentration of non-Estonians is the greatest. During the elections of 1990, Interfront candidates ran under endorsements from the OSTK.¹¹

¹¹For an in-depth discussion of the emergence of the Interfront and the OSTK, see Urban, 1989, pp. 4-5.

Intermovement/OSTK, although it shared some of the features of "structuration" (such as the establishment of local organization, and a national symbol), does not qualify as a structured party in that its appeal was limited only to a particular segment of the population. Indeed, its entire political platform was oriented towards the protection of the non-Estonian minority and did not seek to establish a national spread -- as opposed to the Estonian PF and the CPE/Vaba Eesti. Thus, for the purposes of this work, OSTK is classified as a distinct type of political party: the ethnically particularistic party, which is not considered "structured."

The third independent variable, or the ethnic composition of electoral districts, is perhaps the most problematic, given the relatively limited nature of district level data accumulated in 1979. Unfortunately, as indicated by Table 3, although 1979 data were relatively complete in terms of the ethnic composition of original administrative regions and electoral districts (the four districts of Tallin -- Kallinin, Mere, Lenin and October¹² -- the cities of Kothla-Jarve, Narva, Parnu, Sillimae and Tartu, and the 15 rural regions), it is incomplete given

¹²These districts have been since renamed as North, South, East and West.

Table 3: Electoral District Magnitude and Ethnic Composition: Estonia

Dist name	dist magnitude	population ^a (in thousands)	%Estonian ^a	%non-Estonian ^{ab}
Tallin #1 (Kallinin)	5	123.607 (total for districts Tallin 1 & 2)	40.6	59.4
Tallin #2 (Kallinin)	3	-----	---	---
Tallin #3 (Mere)	1	69.798 (total for districts Tallin 3 & 4)	46.6	53.4
Tallin #4 (Mere)	2	-----	---	---
Tallin #5 (Lenin)	4	105.576 (total for districts Tallin 5 & 6)	62.3	37.7
Tallin #6 (Lenin)	4	-----	---	---
Tallin #7 (October)	3	91.939 (total for districts Tallin 7 & 8)	56.9	42.1
Tallin #8 (October)	3	-----	---	---
Kohlta-Jarve City #9	5	72.699	26.4	73.6
Narva City #10	1	72.783 (total for Narva city districts 10-14)	4.9	95.1
Narva city #11	1	-----	---	---
Narva city #12	1	-----	---	---
Narva city #13	1	-----	---	---
Narva city #14	1	-----	---	---

Table 3 (cont'd)

Dist name	dist magnitude	population ^a (in thousands)	%Estonian ^a	%non-Estonian ^{ab}
Parnu city #15	2	54.051	74.1	26.9
		(total for Parnu city districts 15-17)		
Parnu city #16	2	-----	---	---
Parnu city #17	1	-----	---	---
Sillimae city #18	1	16.151	4.3	95.7
		(total for Sillimae city districts 18-20)		
Sillimae city #19	1	-----	---	---
Sillimae city #20	1	-----	---	---
Tartu city #21	3	104.381	74.4	25.6
		(total for Tartu city districts 21-22)		
Tartu city #22	3	-----	---	---
Haapsalu #23	3	17.100	86.5	13.5
Harju #24	2	65.800	78.3	21.7
		(total for Harju districts 24-25)		
Harju #25	3	-----	---	---
Hiumma #26	2	6.600	95.6	4.4
Jogeva #27	4	29.500	89.0	11.0
Kingiseppa #28	3	24.300	93.8	6.2
Kohlta-Jarve rural #29	3	26.000	68.1	31.9
Paide #30	3	23.700	92.6	7.4

Table 3 (cont'd)

Dist name	dist magnitude	population ^a (in thousands)	%Estonian ^a	%non-Estonian ^{ab}
Polva #31	3	27.100	93.5	6.5
Parnu rural #32	1	33.200 (total for Parnu rural districts 32-35)	94.6	5.4
Parnu rural #33	1	-----	---	---
Parnu rural #34	1	-----	---	---
Parnu rural #35	1	-----	---	---
Rakvere #36	5	40.500	88.3	11.7
Rapla #37	3	24.000	92.0	8.0
Tartu rural #38	2	42.100 (total for Tartu rural districts 38-39)	84.1	15.9
Tartu rural #39	2	-----	---	---
Valga #40	3	20.300	92.1	7.9
Viljandi #41	4	34.600	90.4	9.6
Voru #42 ^c	4	28.800	93.5	6.5

^a = 1979 census data. Source: Taagepera (1982)

^b = includes Russians, Ukrainians, Byelorussians, Poles etc.

^c = four additional seats reserved for the military were not included.

the sub-division of many regions into smaller electoral districts in the spring of 1990. To this extent, then, more recent data accumulated in 1989 would not be of much help given that it was accumulated along the same lines of the 1979 census.¹³

The sub-division of districts (such as dividing the Tallin Kallinin city district into two separate electoral districts of four mandates each) was largely due the decision to leave districting (as well as the number of mandates per population) up to the local authorities (see Taagepera, 1990b). Originally the electoral rules (see Chapter 4) envisaged the allocation of two seats to each rural district, city and city district in Tallin (for a total of 48), with an additional 49 seats allocated to districts and cities based on population. Four seats were reserved for the Soviet military units in the republic. However, several administrative regions were subdivided into smaller units (such as the division of the 8-mandate Kallinin district into one 5-member and a one 3-member district). In general, the sub-division of districts followed no discernible pattern, especially in terms of ethnicity. For example, Sillamae, and Narva, non-Estonian dominated cities, were originally allocated three and five seats

¹³In addition to the 42 territorial districts created for the purposes of the Supreme Soviet election, there were also four military districts in which four of the 105 seats in the Supreme Soviet were reserved for Soviet military units stationed in Estonia.

(respectively) in single districts. However, local authorities subdivided these districts into several single mandate districts. On the other hand, in the Parnu rural district (which is overwhelmingly Estonian), local electoral authorities sub-divided the region into four single seat districts.¹⁴

The sub-division of the original electoral districts creates several problems. First of all, there is the possibility that the re-drawing of electoral district boundaries was characterized by a significant degree of gerrymandering in which data on the ethnic composition of "old districts" would be rendered meaningless, especially if the boundaries drawn significantly altered the ethnic composition of the new districts. Indeed, to infer that the data compiled on "old" districts could be used to characterize the new districts may run the risk of committing a severe ecological fallacy. However, three pieces of circumstantial evidence justify the use of the data, albeit in a somewhat altered form. First, although potentially a crucial issue in the debate over the electoral law, (see chapter 4) little was mentioned on the issue of redistricting. Secondly, where significant redistricting took place it was where either the Estonians or Russians comprised a solid majority (80% and above), so redistricting may have had

¹⁴This example contradicts the claim made by Taagepera (1990a; 1990b, p. 307) that the practice of subdividing districts into single mandate constituencies was solely a "Russian phenomena."

little impact on the character of the newly created districts, at least in terms of making one group a majority. Thirdly, and most telling of all, is that when one examines the ethnic identity of nominees reported in the February 21, 1990 edition of Sovetskaya Estoniya for each new electoral district, one finds a distribution which roughly corresponds to the old district. Thus, for example, in the Tallin districts #1 and #2, which were located in the Kallinin city district, seven of the 21 nominees in district #1 were non-Estonian (33%) and 13 of 19 in district #2 (68%). This compares to the 59.4% non-Estonian majority which comprised the old Kallinin district. Although in the new alignment, non-Estonians were a minority in district 1, they still constituted a significant minority. In other words, when mixed districts were subdivided they remained "mixed." This was also true for the old Tallin Mere, Lenin and October districts.¹⁵

Nonetheless, the nature of the data places restrictions on how the independent variable of district ethnic composition is to be operationalized. Rather than the preferred "interval" measure of ethnic composition, a surrogate "ordinal" measure will be employed:

¹⁵Although ethnicity was not directly reported in the February issue of Sovietskaya Estoniya, ethnic identity was discerned through the familial name and patronymic of the candidate.

- 1- predominantly Estonian (where Estonian population comprises 80% of the district population);
- 2- mixed/Estonian (where 50-79% of the district's population is Estonian);
- 3- mixed/non-Estonian (where 20-49% of the district's population is Estonian);
- 4- predominantly non-Estonian (where Estonian population comprises less than 20% of district population).

In the new districts, where such population data are lacking, the proportion of nominees who were Estonian will be used as a surrogate measure. This, of course, assumes that the proportion of nominees who are Estonian will correspond roughly to the proportion of the district's population which is Estonian. Although a weak surrogate, it can be defended on the following grounds: 1) given the requirements of the Estonian electoral law (which required that nominees be residents of the district and that a minimum of 150 signatures be accumulated for independent nominations "or by citizens initiative"), one might assume that the nominees have latent support within the district, and given the ethnically charged nature of Estonian politics in the early spring of 1990, the basis of this support was in all probability along ethnic lines; 2) what is necessary for this measure is not a precise percentage, but a figure

which roughly categorizes a district as mixed or in the direction of either predominantly Estonian or predominantly non-Estonian.

The Quantitative Method

In order to deal with the proximal hypotheses (i.e., where the dependent variables are candidate entry, party choice in where to nominate, and the extent that over-nomination takes place), three separate and distinct techniques will be employed. To assess the impact of increasing district magnitude in the presence of structured (or unstructured) parties on independent candidate entry I have utilized a variation of ordinary least squares which employs the natural log of the dependent and independent variables. More specifically:

Equation 1:

$$\text{Cand} = a_1 + b_1 \ln(\text{seats}) + b_2 \text{Popfront} + b_3 \text{Vaba/KPE} + b_4 \text{ethnic} + e_1$$

Equation 2:

$$\text{Cand} = a_1 + b_1 \ln(\text{seats}) + b_2 \text{Popfront} + b_3 \text{Vaba/KPE} + e_2$$

Equation 3:

$$\text{Cand} = a_1 + b_1 \ln(\text{seats}) + b_5 \text{C1} + e_3$$

Where:

cand= the number of independent candidates competing
 seats= the district magnitude
 Popfront= percent of seats nominated by Popular Front
 Vaba/KPE= percent of seats nominated by the Free Estonia
 Association and the Communist Party of Estonia
 ethnic = ethnic composition of electoral district
 (coded 1-4 -- see above)
 C1 = Districts in which both PFE and Free Estonia
 Association/KPE nominated candidates

The reason for employing a semi-log model is the expectation that the relationship between the dependent variable "candidate entry" and the independent variable "district magnitude" will not be a strictly linear one. Indeed, the theoretical expectation that additional seats would create an ever increasing incentive for entry suggests that the relationship is more approximated by a quadratic function. In other words, with every marginal increase in district magnitude, there is a greater increase in the incentive for candidate entry.

In order to assess the impact of district magnitude on the choice of the ethnically particularistic party to enter candidates into the political fray, I have chosen to adopt the "logit model," a model of qualitative choice, in which the dependent variable is defined as the probability of entering a candidate in a district by the ethnically particularistic party (OSTK). The model takes the form:

Equation 4:

$$\log\left(\frac{p_i}{1 - p_i}\right) = a_1 + b_1 \text{seats} + b_4 \text{ethnic} + b_2 \text{Popfront} + e_4$$

Equation 5:

$$\text{PerOSTK} = a_1 + b_1 \text{seats} + b_4 \text{ethnic} + b_2 \text{Popfront} + e_5$$

where:

Prob (yes)= the probability that the ethnically particularistic party (OSTK) will enter a candidate

PerOSTK= the percentage of seats nominated for by OSTK

seats = district magnitude

ethnic = ethnic composition of electoral district (coded 1-4 -- see chapter 3)

Popfront= percent of seats nominated by Popular Front

Finally, to assess the proximal expectation that the peculiar features of STV encourage large political parties to over-nominate in particular kinds of districts, a descriptive analysis of the nominating behavior of the Popular Front will be examined for districts of varying magnitude, and will constitute the third major section of Chapter 4.

The Interpretation of the Results

The quantitative design is well suited to assess the impact of varying district magnitude, the presence of structured political parties and the ethnic composition of electoral districts on candidate entry, the nominating strategy of ethnically particularistic parties, and the nominating strategies of large parties, particularly since other aspects of the electoral system -- i.e., ballot structure and electoral formula, the international environment as well as socio-cultural factors are controlled for. Moreover, at the cross-national level, by introducing controls for the international dimension and asymmetric ethnic bi-polarity, and by focusing the analysis on the evolution of three distinct types of parties, while simultaneously allowing for variation in terms of the structural dimension, the design seems well-suited to assess the impact of the various electoral experiments on the trajectory of party development established in the initial transition to democracy in Eastern Europe. With this in mind, Chapter 4 proceeds with the analysis of the evidence presented by the Estonian Supreme Soviet elections of March 18, 1990.

Chapter 4: The Estonian Supreme Soviet Elections, March, 1990

In the previous chapter, three sets of hypotheses were generated, relating the effect of varying district magnitude on the degree of candidate entry, and the nominating choices of ethnically particularistic parties as well as large political parties. The goal of this chapter is to test these hypotheses. Before proceeding to the empirical analysis, the first section of this chapter will focus on a brief narrative of the evolution of the Estonian variant of STV, paying particular attention to the debates over the electoral law in November, 1989, as well as the general results of the March 18, 1990, Supreme Soviet election.

Debates Over the Electoral Law: November, 1989

Discussions over the electoral law which was to govern both the local elections of December, 1989, and the republican parliamentary elections of March, 1990, were held in the Estonian Supreme Soviet in November, 1989. Three of the four major political groupings in the republic were involved in the debate. These included representatives from the Communist Party of Estonia, (CPE), the Popular

Front of Estonia (PFE), and the OSTK (Joint Council of Workers' Collectives). The national radicals, who were in favor of Estonian political independence, declined to participate, claiming that the actions taken by the Supreme Soviet were illegal. Three issues were considered. First, the law governing republic-wide elections, passed on November 17, 1989, provided for a number of changes in the character of the new Supreme Soviet and the way it was to be chosen. The new Supreme Soviet was reduced from 284 seats to a more manageable 105 seats, the reduction, to a large extent, a result of removing institutional representation in the legislature. Each rural district, republic-level city and city district in Tallin received two seats to begin with (48 in all) and a further 53 seats were allocated to districts and cities on the basis of their population, using simple quotas and largest remainders. The remaining four seats were to be filled by Soviet army units stationed in Estonia, estimated at more than 100,000. Allocating those units special seats prevented the possibility of the soldiers' vote being thrown at will in selected districts to tilt the outcome in favor of anti-independence candidates. This had happened a year earlier in the elections for the Congress of People's Deputies in Moscow. It also highlighted the incongruity of electoral participation by what most Estonians considered a military occupation force.

The electoral rule itself resulted from an uneasy compromise. The Joint Council of Work Collectives (OSTK) favored the retention of the standard Soviet one-seat districts -- which was more by habit than a perception of self-interest, since single seat districts tend to penalize minorities. The Popular Front proposed simple quota and largest remainders, with about three seats per district. This implied the use of party or group lists, which the Communist leaders refused to accept because they knew they would do better individually than under the despised CPE label. They proposed the Single Non-Transferable Vote system modeled after Japan. The PFE electoral rules specialist, Peet Kask, strongly objected, because the SNTV could randomly distort the relationship between seats and votes and the risks were especially high in a new democracy where the relative strengths of various groupings were unknown at the time. As a compromise, Kask then proposed the STV, which was effectively a non-list Proportional Representation system (Taagepera, 1990b). Another reason for the adoption of STV, although this was offered later, was the concern that the Soviet-style FPTP system, which had been retained by all of the other republics in the USSR, "under current conditions would only intensify inter-ethnic confrontation."⁴²

⁴²Reported in Izvestiya, December 4, 1989, p. 3.

However, the district magnitude, which was a crucial factor in determining the PR-ness of STV, was left up to local county and city authorities to decide, with the choices ranging from one to five. Some of the Russian-dominated northeastern districts picked one-seat electoral districts (such was the case in Narva) but this was not always true. The Kohtla-Järve city authorities (where 74% of the population is Non-Estonian) selected a single large 5-member district. Moreover, single-seat districts were not entirely a "Russian phenomenon." For example, Pärnu county chose single-member seats (although 75% of the population of the Pärnu region is Estonian -- see Table 4). Elsewhere, three-seat districts predominated. By March, there were nineteen single-member districts, six 2-member districts, thirteen 3-member districts, five 4-member districts, and three 5-member districts.

The ballot structure was similar to that employed in the Republic of Ireland. In such a system ballots are not invalidated when the voter leaves more than one name on the ballot. Rather, the voter has the opportunity to rank-order candidates from his/her first choice to his/her final choice, and can conceivably list as many candidates as he/she wishes. The only restriction is that the voter cannot assign a number 1 to more than one candidate (See attached sample ballots in Figures 1 and 2).

There were, however, other features of the Estonian variant of STV which differentiated it from the versions

Figure 1: Sample Ballot (In Russian)

Образец

ИЗБИРАТЕЛЬНЫЙ БЮЛЛЕТЕНЬ

по выборам в Верховный Совет

Эстонской ССР

18 марта 1990 г.

Пятимандатный Хаапсалуский избирательный округ № 50

При заполнении избирательного бюллетеня определите степень предпочтительности кандидатов в депутаты, поставив соответствующий порядковый номер в графу, расположенную за фамилией, именем и отчеством кандидата в депутаты. Номером «1» отметьте кандидата, которого Вы хотите видеть депутатом. Номером «2» отметьте кандидата, который тоже мог бы быть депутатом. Номерами «3», «4» и т. д. можете отметить всех остальных кандидатов, которых Вы поддерживаете.

Недействительным признается избирательный бюллетень, в котором номером «1» не помечен ни один кандидат, или номером «1» помечено два или более кандидатов, или же кандидат помечен одновременно номером «1» и каким-то другим номером.

Кандидаты в депутаты:

Иванова Вера Николаевна

Объединенным советом трудовых коллективов Эстонской ССР

Ялакас Тайми Хуговна

Народным фронтом Эстонии

Капп Юло Кальювич

Коммунистической партией Эстонии

Каск Оскар Константинович

Союзом трудовых коллективов Эстонии

Ныу Эви Рудольфовна

Ляэнемааским народным фронтом

Орав Пеэтер Михкелевич

трудовым коллективом фабрики «Олев»

Петров Иван Иванович

в порядке гражданской инициативы

Сидоров Петр Семенович

собранием избирателей улицы Линда города Хаапсалу

Figure 2: Sample Ballot (In Estonian)

Näidis

VALIMISSEDEL**Eesti NSV Ülemnõukogu valimisel****18. märtsil 1990****Vilemandaadiline Haapsalu vallimisringkond nr. 50**

Valimisedeli täitmisel märkige saadikukandidaatide nimede juures olevatesse lahtritesse oma valik numbrilises järjekorras. Number «1» märkige kandidaadile, keda tahate näha saadikuna. Numbriga «2» võite märkida kandidaadi, kes võiks olla samuti saadikuks. Numbritega «3», «4» jne. võite märkida ülejäänud kandidaadi, keda pooldate.

Kehtetuks tunnistatakse valimisedel, kus numbriga «1» ei ole märgistatud ükski kandidaat või on märgistatud numbriga «1» kaks või enam kandidaati või on kandidaat üheaegselt märgistatud numbriga «1» ja mõne teise numbriga.

Saadikukandidaadid:**Veera Ivanova**☐**Eesti NSV Ohendatud Töökollektiivide Nõukogu poolt****Taimi Jalakas**☐**Eestimaa Rahvarinde poolt****Olo Kapp**☐**Eestimaa Kommunistliku Partei poolt****Oskar Kask**☐**Eesti Töökollektiivide Liidu poolt****Evi Nõu**☐**Läänemaa Rahvarinde poolt****Peter Orav**☐**Vabriku «Olev» töökollektiivi poolt****Ivan Petrov**☐**Kodanikualgatuse korras****Pjotr Sidorov**☐**Haapsalu linna Linda tänava valijate koosseisu poolt**

employed in Ireland.⁴³ The most notable was the electoral requirement that a candidate must attain 50% of the first place votes in order to win election. If not, then a runoff election was to held in which the top two contenders were to be pitted against one another (if there were ties between three or more candidates for first place and two or more candidates for second place, then the number of second place votes received acted as tie-breaker, and so on).

The nomination procedure was made rather simple. Candidates could be nominated at their place of employment, or by some organized group affiliation, or they could be nominated by local citizens' initiative.⁴⁴ The last required the convocation of a nomination meeting with a minimum participation of 150 registered voters. Moreover, there was no restriction placed on the number of nominations which could be received by an individual candidate. For example, a candidate could be nominated by both the Popular Front and the CPE (the Communist Party of Estonia) and the OSTK (the Joint Council of Labor Collectives -- a front organization for Intermovement, the party founded in 1988 by non-Estonians). This remarkable feature allowed

⁴³Malta also has STV and Estonian system is different from this.

⁴⁴The abolition of both the Republic-level Congress of Peoples' Deputies and the institution of the pre-electoral nomination meetings, which had limited who could participate in the nomination of candidates, was reported in Izvestiya, August 13, 1989; see also Yuri Kraft, "Should Democracy be Egged On?" Moscow News, August 13-20, 1989, p. 9.

candidates to receive several and widely variant nominations, which made it difficult to establish candidate identities and loyalties.

Another contentious issue was the residency requirements for candidates running for office in the district in which they lived or worked, a measure sponsored by the CPE. Candidates standing for election had to be at least age twenty-one, with at least ten years residence in the district. Some deputies argued that the CPE-sponsored residency requirement was undesirable because this would force the republic's leading political, business, cultural, and academic figures to compete against each other in Tallin and the university city of Tartu, and, therefore, the overall number of deputies in the new parliament with specialized knowledge or political experience would be greatly reduced. Still others argued that the restrictions would give the countryside greater representation, long deserved, in the government of the republic. However, according to Edgar Savisaar, leader of the Estonian Popular Front, the CPE had purposefully proposed the residence qualification in order to improve its own position. Indeed, because of the residency requirement, the CPE would command an unfair advantage in the campaign in that other organizations did not have the local cells capable of mobilizing voter support.⁴⁵

⁴⁵Reede, January 26, 1990, in Kionka (1990a).

The new electoral law was not without its critics. On the one hand, PFE officials were not overly pleased with the electoral law. For instance, Savisaar, in an article published in the cultural weekly Reede, argued that the electoral law in fact favored the CPE. He argued that, "first and foremost it was to the CPE's benefit to abandon the list method in favor of individual elections The CPE knew that it would be beaten as a party among other parties. In an election of individuals, however, the CPE does not win or lose."⁴⁶ Savisaar continued to criticize the electoral law because, "now the voter cannot be at all certain what sort of politics the candidate will play after the election. The choice becomes much less well defined."⁴⁷

Others leaders of groups within the PFE were also highly critical of the new electoral law. Thus, Pavel Lepp, the Deputy Chairman of the Estonian Democratic Labor Party, argued that the electoral law adopted in November was

currently too democratic for us. It runs somewhat ahead of the political situation which exists in society and is geared toward a multi-party system Whoever maintains that we are close to the creation of a multi-party system is engaging in wishful thinking.⁴⁸

⁴⁶Ibid.

⁴⁷Ibid.

⁴⁸Sovetskaya Estoniya, December 7, 1989, p. 2, in FBIS-SOV December 28, 1989, p. 67.

On the other hand, anti-independence forces also complained about the electoral law. Two communist party leaders who later became active in the OSTK/Intermovement alliance, V. Busel and G. Israelyan, on November 17, 1989, criticized the electoral law, arguing that it was the product of the Popular Front's "imperial attitude." In particular they made explicit reference to the Estonian-American scholar and electoral specialist, Rein Taagepera, who was active as an adviser to the PFE on the formulation of the law governing elections. They argued that the "new program was drawn upon coordination with the West and the North (a reference to Finland) and the on-duty guardian from California without the participation of Communists at all."⁴⁹ According to a member of the CPE Central Committee, Rein Palmuar, the adoption of the electoral law had also clearly alienated moderates within the Russian population. Moreover, at "the same time the PFE had demonstrated its inability to lead the republic in that it had no concrete economic program and it had no idea what it was -- whether it was a party or not."⁵⁰

⁴⁹Molodezh Estoniya, November 17, 1989, p. 1, in FBIS-SOV December 14, 1989, p. 74.

⁵⁰Sovetskaya Estoniya, December 7, 1989, p. 2, in FBIS-SOV December 28, 1989, p. 67.

Although there remained widespread dissatisfaction with the electoral law, the STV system was used to govern the local elections held on December 10, 1989. Despite the complexity of the new system, it was reported that 9,182 candidates competed for 4,209 mandates in the local elections.⁵¹ However, there were several difficulties in implementing the new system. These difficulties were especially apparent in the Russian speaking districts of Tallin where in at least four multi-member districts the 50% turnout required to legitimize the election results was not attained.⁵² Despite these, this relatively complex method presented few difficulties for the public or the vote counters and remained the method employed governing the republican Supreme Soviet election of March 18, 1990.

The Republican Parliamentary Campaign

Considering that the election to the republican Supreme Soviet in 1990 was the first openly competitive election in the Republic, the campaign itself was remarkably tame and relatively open. In the weeks before the election, the CPE's Estonian-language daily Rahva Haal,

⁵¹Moscow Trud, December 12, 1989, in FBIS-SOV December 15, 1989, p. 38.

⁵²Moscow Television Service, December 18, 1989, in FBIS-SOV December 21, 1989.

published four to five statements by each candidate daily, showing no obvious bias against any particular party. Estonian Television also ran several election programs, such as the weekly program Valimisstuudio (Election Studio), a panel presentation in which all parties endorsing candidates had an opportunity to describe their platforms and answer questions from representatives of other parties.⁵³

However, there was some evidence of dirty politicking during the campaign, much of it committed by the Free Estonia Association. On March 4, the coalition published in Rahva Haal a list of candidates endorsed by the Association without the consent of the candidates. This act enraged a number of candidates who were not running on the Communist platform and consequently did not wish voters to associate their candidacy with the Communist Party. Three of the victims, all members of the Liberal Democratic Party running under the banner of the Popular Front, wrote an open letter to Rahva Haal reaffirming their affiliation with the Popular Front.⁵⁴ In addition, Popular Front officials accused the Association of making a practice of

⁵³"Valimisstuudio" (Election Studio), reported in Kionka, 1990b.

⁵⁴This letter was authored by the academician Tiit Kabin, the artis Enn Poldroos, and the writer Tiit Kallas, and published in Rahva Haal, March 6, 1990 (reported in Kionka, 1990b, p. 22).

wining and dining rural leaders who could influence local constituencies.⁵⁵

The Election Results

To summarize the general features of the March 1990 elections to the Estonian Supreme Soviet, there were a total of 105 seats divided into 46 electoral districts. Four of these districts, numbers 43-46, were reserved for Soviet military personnel stationed in Estonia. In total, there were 474 candidates who stood for election for the 46 districts. Subtracting from this total the 74 endorsements made by the PFE and the 47 endorsements made by Free Estonia Association (there were 4 joint nominations made by the PFE and the Association -- these were counted at half weight), 363 independents (independents were defined as all other candidates who were not running under endorsement from the PFE or Vaba Eesti/KPE) competed for 105 mandates. In the actual elections, among districts not reserved for the military (42 districts and 101 seats) a total of 361 independent candidates stood for election. Among the total number of candidates there were 32 women, 346 Estonians, 99 Russians and 29 other nationalities. In terms of the age ranges of the candidates, there were twenty-one candidates

⁵⁵This expose appeared in Paevaleht, March 15, 1990 (reported in Kionka, 1990b, p. 23).

**Table 4. Characteristics of the Estonian Supreme Soviet
Election, March 1990**

Number of Seats	105
Number of Electoral Districts	46
Number of Military Districts	4
Average District Magnitude	2.28
Total Number of Candidates	474
Average Number of Candidates/District	10.30
Number of Endorsements Made by PFE	74
Number of Endorsements Made by Free Estonia Association and CPE	47
Number of Joint Endorsements Made by both PFE and Free Estonia Association	4
Number of Independent Candidates	361* **
Voter Turnout (%)	78.37

* Independents were defined as all other candidates not running under endorsement from the PFE or the Free Estonia Association.

** This figure does not include the military districts #43-#46.

Source: Sovetskaya Estoniya, February 21, 1990, pp. 3-4,
and Sovetskaya Estoniya, March 23, 1990, pp. 1-4.

who were 29 and under, 108 candidates who were of ages 30-39, 194 who were ages 40-49 and 151 who were fifty and older. In terms of occupation, four were classified officially as workers, 25 as collective farmers and 378 as professionals. There were also 13 military candidates (12 of whom ran in the exclusively military districts).⁵⁶ Among the 105 winners of the election to the Supreme Soviet, 22 were Russians, 81 were Estonian and two belonged to other nationalities. Of the 1,164,603 registered voters, 912,648 (78.37%) turned out on March 18 (see Table 4).

The Model

Given that a principal proposition of the institutionalist literature has been that the higher the barriers to entry, the greater the disincentive facing political parties to enter, the Estonian case represents a natural laboratory in which to test the effects of one feature of the electoral system: district magnitude. Indeed, although there exists consistency along several dimensions -- namely the ballot structure, the electoral formula, and the existence of a second ballot -- the system does vary on a key dimension: district magnitude. As a result, and in

⁵⁶These aggregate figures were reported in Sovetskaya Estoniya, February 21, 1990, pp. 3-4.

combination with the impact of structured parties, we would expect the following.

1) In general, in comparing across the 46 electoral districts in Estonia, we would expect that the greater the district magnitude, the greater the incentive to enter. As a result, we would expect the number of independent candidates to increase as district magnitude increases.

2) However, given Sartori's concerns, the greater the number of structured parties (the PFE and KPE/Vaba Eesti), which channel demands and coopt candidates, the less is the incentive for independents to enter.

3) However, the mere presence of a structured political party may not be enough. For example, political parties may choose not to intervene actively into the nomination process. In other words, we would expect that the greater the activity of the structured political party in nominating candidates, the less is the incentive for candidates to run independently of party endorsements and hence the greater is the dampening effect of structured political parties.

4) It may be the case however, that it is not the mere presence or activity of a single structured political party, but the presence of two or more such organizations

that makes a difference. The reasoning behind this is that both the presence and activity of two competing political organizations within the same district will attempt to squeeze out independent candidates. Thus, we would expect the presence of two or more structured parties to have a dampening effect on independent candidate proliferation.

Before proceeding with the analysis of the data, a major qualification must be made. In Chapter 3, a set of equations was generated which related such factors as the number of seats available for competition, the ethnic composition of a particular electoral district, and the activities of a structured political party on the dependent variables of independent candidate proliferation, and the nomination strategies of the ethnically particularistic party. However, to detect the potential problem of multicollinearity, a set of simple Pearson correlation coefficients for the variables involved was generated (see Table 5). The initial results indicate the following. The district magnitude (SEATS) was relatively uncorrelated with the ethnic composition of an electoral district ($r = .2743$). Similarly, SEATS was relatively uncorrelated with the ratio of PFE nominations to seats ($r = .2795$). In addition, the ethnic composition of a district (ETHNIC) was relatively uncorrelated with the ratio of Free Estonia Association/CPE nominations (Vaba/KPE: $r = -.0458$).

Finally, VABA/KPE and POPFRONT were uncorrelated with one another ($r = .2467$).

On the other hand, a relatively high degree of correlation existed between SEATS with C1 (or whether or not both the PFE and the Free Estonia Association ran in a district: $r = .5513$). Moreover, such a relationship also exists between POPFRONT and ETHNIC ($r = .6533$). The generation of such correlation coefficients has both substantive and methodological implications. First, the existence of a high degree of correlation between SEATS and C1 indicates that the greater the district magnitude the greater the likelihood that the two structured parties would be competing against one another. In addition, the high degree of correlation between POPFRONT and ETHNIC would seem to indicate that the more Estonian a district the more likely the PFE would nominate candidates. Although interesting research questions, these are beyond the present scope of this study, which does not seek to explain the behavior of the "structured parties" but rather their gatekeeper role at the level of the electoral district.

Secondly, the low correlation between the ethnic composition of a district and SEATS would indicate that size of district was neither entirely a Russian nor an Estonian phenomenon.

Methodologically, the above would also suggest a slight alteration in the set of equations cited in Chapter 3. These equations were modified to minimize the potential

**Table 5. Pearson's Correlation Coefficient (r) Matrix for
Major Independent Variables**

	SEATS	POPFRONT	VABA/KPE	ETHNIC	C1
SEATS	1.000	.2795	.2052	-.2743	.5513**
POPFRONT	.2795	1.000	.2467	-.6533**	-----
VABA/KPE	.2052	.2467	1.000	-.0458	-----
ETHNIC	-.2743	-.6533**	-.0458	1.000	-----
C1	.5513**	-----	-----	-----	1.000

Number of cases: 46

* 1-tailed significance = .01

** 1-tailed significance = .001

multi-collinearity problem. The first equation regresses the variable CAND, or the number of independent candidates running with the district magnitude (SEATS), ETHNIC, POPFRONT, and VABA/KPE. The latter is employed as a surrogate measure of the dampening effects of the activities of a structured political party at the district level, as an admittedly imperfect substitute for C1. However, the use of this measure in lieu of others is justifiable in the sense that it still tests the potential dampening effects of the activities of a structured political party on the incentives generated for candidate entry and the nomination strategies of an ethnically particularistic party. The second equation drops ETHNIC, in that a high degree of collinearity is suspected between ETHNIC and POPFRONT.

The Evidence⁵⁷

Turning to the analysis of the data concerning the number of independent candidates running, Tables 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11 report the results of the multiple regression including the variables cited in the original model. Table 6 reports the general results of regressing the number of

⁵⁷ Evidence on the nominations was collected from the February 21 1990 edition of Sovetskaya Estoniya pp. 1, 3-5. The election results themselves, in terms of winners, were collected from the March 23, 1990 edition of Sovetskaya Estoniya pp. 1 and 4.

independent candidates at the district level against the $\ln(\text{SEATS})$, POPFRONT , VABA/KPE and ETHNIC . Table 7 reports the results for the regression of CANDIDAT against the $\ln(\text{SEATS})$, POPFRONT , and VABA/KPE , omitting ETHNIC due to the suspected existence of collinearity between that variable and POPFRONT .

As is indicated by the general results of Table 6, the most significant variable is clearly the number of seats per district. This would seem to correspond to hypothesis that increasing district magnitude offers a greater incentive for the entry of independent candidates.

However, contrary to our hypothesis, as the percentage of seats nominated by a structured political party (the PFE) increased, thus reducing the openings available for independent candidates and parties, independent candidate entry was not markedly depressed. Although the sign is positive (as was originally hypothesized) POPFRONT had a negligible dampening effect on candidate proliferation. This was also true for VABA/KPE . The ethnic composition of an electoral district also apparently did not affect independent candidate proliferation.

Table 7 reports the results of the regression after omitting the variable ETHNIC . Again, the most important effect was exerted by the number of seats per district, and a negligible effect was exerted by the variables POPFRONT and VABA/KPE . In addition, the explanatory power of the equation was not significantly improved.

To illustrate further the negligible dampening effects of the combination of both structured parties on independent candidate proliferation Table 8 is included. The results test the proposition that the presence of two or more structured political parties has a marked effect on candidate proliferation. The dependent variable, independent candidate proliferation, is regressed against the additional independent variable C1. In this cases the sign of the coefficient is positive (rather than negative) as originally hypothesized, and the effect of competition among structured parties is once again negligible.

Although the general results indicate that C1 had a negligible role in reducing independent candidate proliferation, these results must be considered carefully, because of the high degree of collinearity between this variable and SEATS. Nonetheless, these results seem to reaffirm the notion that the nomination activities of the structured political parties had little or no effect on independent candidate proliferation at the district level.

Tables 9 and 10 report the results concerning the nominating choices of the ethnically particularistic party OSTK. As is indicated by Table 9, which reports the results of the logit estimation where the dependent variable is the choice of whether or not the OSTK endorsed a candidate in a district race, increasing the district magnitude had little impact on this choice. Rather, as would be expected from a political party which claims a

**Table 6. Coefficient Estimates for Independent Candidate
Proliferation: Multiple Model 1**

Dependent variable: Cand variable	Coefficient	t-score

Constant	.39 (3.79)	.10
ln(Seats)	8.97 (1.58)	5.67*
% of seats nominated by Popular Front	.02 (.03)	.84
% of seats nominated by Vaba/KPE	.01 (.02)	.59
Ethnic composition of electoral district	.97 (.10)	.95
Number of cases	46	
R ²	.53	
Adjusted R ²	.48	
Standard Error	5.40	

*p _ .05		
**p _ .10		

**Table 7. Coefficient Estimates for Independent Candidate
Proliferation: Multiple Model 2**

Dependent variable: Cand variable	Coefficient	t-score

Constant	3.59 (1.72)	2.08
ln(Seats)	8.56 (1.51)	5.63*
% of seats nominated by Popular Front	.06 (.02)	.29
% of seats nominated by Vaba/KPE	.02 (.02)	.81
Number of cases	46	
R ²	.52	
Adjusted R ²	.48	
Standard Error	5.39	

*p _ .05		
**p _ .10		

**Table 8. Coefficient Estimates for Independent Candidate
Proliferation: Multiple Model 3**

Dependent variable: Cand variable	Coefficient	t-score

Constant	1.37 (.13)	10.24*
ln(Seats)	1.60 (.15)	7.24*
Nomination of candidates by two structured parties	3.43 e ⁻⁰³ (.11)	.03
Number of cases	46	
R ²	.68	
Adjusted R ²	.67	
Standard Error	.43	

*p _ .05		
**p _ .10		

**Table 9. Coefficient Estimates for OSTK Nominating Choices:
Logit Model**

Dependent variable: PROB		
variable	Coefficient	t-score

Constant	1.37 (.56)	10.24*
Seats	.46 (.46)	.99
Ethnic Composition of Electoral District	2.26 (.91)	2.46*
% Seats Nominated by Popular Front	-1.43 (.56)	-2.51*
Number of cases ¹	31	
R ²	.80	
Percent Correctly Predicted	80.1	

*p _ .05		
**p _ .10		

¹ These included only those districts in which the PFE nominated candidates. In fifteen districts the PFE did not run candidates.

**Table 10. Coefficient Estimates for the Intensity of OSTK
Nominating Choices**

Dependent variable: PEROSTK variable	Coefficient	t-score

Constant	.26 (.87)	.30
Seats	.02 (.13)	.14
Ethnic Composition of Electoral District	.41 (.09)	4.47*
% Seats Nominated by Popular Front	-.15 (.19)	-.77
Number of cases	46	
R ²	.43	
Adjusted R ²	.37	
Standard Error	.35	

*p _ .05		
**p _ .10		

particular ethnic constituency, the ethnic composition of the electoral district was of the correct sign in relation to the dependent variable and statistically significant ($t = 2.46$). However, the deterrent effect exerted by the activity of a single structured political party, the PFE, was also important in the choice of the OSTK in endorsing candidates (where the sign of the coefficient is negative, as predicted and the relationship is statistically significant: $t = -2.51$).

Table 10 reports the degree to which OSTK intensively pursued the available seats. In other words, the dependent variable PEROSTK measures the ratio of nominations made by the OSTK to seats available at the district level. In general, it would appear again that the most important variable affecting the decision on how many candidates to endorse in a particular district was based primarily upon the ethnic composition of a district. On the other hand, the dampening effect exerted by the PFE was substantially reduced to the point of insignificance.

However, the inference that the PFE did not deter the intensity by which the OSTK nominated candidates must be considered in the light of OSTK behavior. Of the fifteen districts in which the OSTK nominated candidates, in all but two they sought to nominate as many candidates as there were seats. OSTK thus sought to maximize the probability of success by endorsing as many candidates as possible in districts in which they stood a reasonable chance of

success. This is further illustrated by the regional character of OSTK nominations. Of the 31 endorsements issued by OSTK, 27 were in Tallin and the northeastern cities of Kohtla-Jarve and Narva. Moreover, in the fourteen districts in which the OSTK nominated candidates, nine had a non-Estonian majority, four had a substantial non-Estonian minority (20-49% non-Estonian), and only one was predominantly an Estonian electoral district (electoral district #38, in the Tartu rural region of which the population was 15.9% non-Estonian).

Although based upon the above preliminary results one might conclude that the presence and activity of structured political parties had little or no effect on candidate proliferation and had only a marginal effect on the nominating choices of the ethnically particularistic party, it may be that such effects exist only when there are not a large number of seats available. In addition, whether or not this dampening effect occurs on candidate proliferation may depend heavily on whether or not the structured political parties choose to run candidates for all seats available in a district. This suggests that one needs to control for whether or not a structured political party nominated candidates for all or most of the seats available in a district.

Additional evidence to bolster the proposition that PFE exerted little in the way of a "dampening effect" is illustrated by Tables 11 and 12. Moreover, Table 12 serves

another purpose in that it acts as a test for general hypothesis 3, concerning the propensity of the PFE to over-nominate in electoral districts. To illustrate this relationship Table 11 first reports the district magnitude, the number of candidates running in such districts, the number of districts of that magnitude, and the average number of candidates per seat. Table 12 reports the cases where the Popular Front nominated more candidates than there were seats available, nominated candidates equal to the number of seats available, and where the PFE nominated fewer candidates than seats available.

Thus, in six of the 19 single-member districts, the Popular Front nominated one candidate, whereas in 13 districts they did not nominate any candidates. Among the two-member districts, in two cases the PFE nominated two candidates, and in one case it nominated three candidates (the only case where the PFE over-nominated was in the Parnu City district No. 15). In two of the 2-member districts it nominated only one candidate, and in two districts it did not nominate anyone. The table continues with the 3, 4, 5 member districts as well. In general, the results illustrate that the PFE did not tend to over-nominate for individual districts as has been suggested by the current empirical literature on the effects of STV.

**Table 11. Average Number of Candidates Contesting Seats:
Estonian Supreme Soviet Elections, 1990**

seats	candidates	#of districts	candidates/seat
1	75	19	3.95
2	55	6	9.17
3	189	13	14.54
4	90	5	18.00
5	65	3	21.66

Table 12. PFE Over/Under-nomination at the Individual District Level

seats	popfront nominates:	all	+1	-1	-2	-3	-4	-5
1		6	0	13	*	*	*	*
2		2	1	2	1	*	*	*
3		7	0	5	1	*	*	*
4		2	0	2	0	1	0	*
5		1	0	1	0	0	0	1

Key:

seats = district magnitude(m)

P= number of popular Front nominees in district

popfront nominates:

all= number of districts in which Popular front nominates
number of candidates equal to district magnitude (m=P)

+1= number of districts in which Popular Front over-
nominates number of candidates = m+1

-1= number of districts in which Popular Front under-
nominates number of candidates = m-1

-2= number of districts in which Popular Front under-
nominates number of candidates = m-2

-3= number of districts in which Popular Front under-
nominates number of candidates = m-3

-4= number of districts in which Popular Front under-
nominates number of candidates = m-4

-5= number of districts in which Popular Front under-
nominates number of candidates = m-5

*= inapplicable

Discussion and Conclusions

The above analysis has focused on testing the general hypotheses that: 1) increasing district magnitude tends to increase independent candidate proliferation; 2) the existence of a structured party organization at the district level tends to dampen the tendency towards independent candidate proliferation; 3) that the particular features of STV encourage large parties to over-nominate at the district level. The preceding analysis has demonstrated that, at least in the case of the Estonian Supreme Soviet election of March, 18, 1990, there was a systematic and remarkably strong relationship between increasing district magnitude and independent candidate proliferation. Indeed, increasing district magnitude provided the "openings" for independent candidates and greater incentive for entry. However, the evidence did not support Sartori's assertion that the existence of structured political parties served to dampen the incentive for candidate proliferation.

Part of the explanation for why structured political parties did not have a discernible impact on the degree of candidate proliferation may lie in another feature of the Estonian electoral system: that any candidate could enter into the competitive fray without having to rely exclusively on a nomination from any of the structured political parties. Indeed, candidates could be nominated by a variety of organizations, such as the place of employment, the

local labor collective, by citizens' initiative through petition, etc.. Thus, the maintenance of this feature of the Estonian electoral system deprived political parties of a key instrument by which they could wield control over candidate proliferation: the monopoly over candidate recruitment.

This may account for the lack of a dampening effect of the structured parties on candidate proliferation in the short run. However, over the course of several elections, there could be a discernible trend towards a magnification of this dampening effect. Much of this depends on whether candidates can be convinced that only through identification with a structured political party can victory be attained. Although I am in no position to make such conclusions about future developments, an examination of the data on the winners in the Estonian Supreme Soviet election may reveal certain tendencies. Of the 105 winners, 32 were nominated by the Popular Front, 20 by the Free Estonia Association/CPE, and 14 by the OSTK, for a total of 64. Thus, a rather large number of candidates (41/105 or 39%) won without nomination from one of the three structured political parties. Nonetheless, nearly two-thirds of the seats were accounted for by the PFE, Free Estonia Association/CPE or OSTK nominees. Over time the dampening effect may become more pronounced, especially as potential candidates realize that the probability of victory is increased through association with a structured party. But

this depends heavily on the ability of these parties to convince candidates that victory depends on their endorsement.

A second reason might be that simply having a national platform, a nation symbol and local organization is not really what makes a difference for structured parties. Indeed, it may be due to their own internal configuration, their own internal coherency, the chain of command etc. This represents a potential line of future inquiry.

In the short run, however, one can expect that the Popular Front must depend heavily on non-PFE sponsored members in the Supreme Soviet, such as the PFE-leaning labor union legislators or independent sympathizers. Such a coalition is fragile at best, since the PFE has no way to deprive them of office if they do not adhere to a coalition. Moreover, new entrants into party competition also began appearing after the March elections. For example, in May, the Supreme Soviet Presidium officially granted requests for registration made by the ENIP, and three parties headed by former leaders in the Popular Front, the Estonian Christian Democratic Union, the Social Democratic party of Estonia (led by M. Lauristin who won as a PFE candidate) and the Estonian Liberal Democratic party (led by E. Poldroos, former leader in the PFE and a PFE loser in

the Supreme Soviet elections).⁵⁸ The trend, at least for the time being, seems to be in the direction of greater party proliferation.

This, may be only a temporary phenomenon. Although (as Chapter 5 will demonstrate) the tendency through 1990-1991 was in the direction of greater party proliferation, many of these new parties lacked a substantial constituency base or local organization. Indeed these new parties (such as the Social Democratic Party) received substantial foreign financial and technical support and remained little more than collections of individuals and a label. In a sense, the parties which began to emerge in the wake of the founding elections were far from "structured." Lacking such characteristics as a local organization would disadvantage these new parties, particularly in the face of competition with more structured parties (such as the CPE). In turn, this may result in a contraction in the number of parties, and a dampening of the fractionalizing effect of STV. Thus, in terms of long-term developments within the Estonian party system, the extent of system fractionalization remains relatively unclear.

Regarding the effects of the electoral system on the choices made by ethnically particularistic parties, it appears from the immediate evidence that the OSTK did not respond to increasing district magnitude, but rather

⁵⁸"Estonian Parliament Endorses New Parties, Flag," FBIS-SOV May 11, 1990, p. 78.

concentrated on districts where it stood a reasonable chance of winning seats. These were overwhelmingly in the non-Estonian districts of the northeast. Moreover, regardless of both the size of the district (in terms of district magnitude) and the presence of PFE candidates, the OSTK, almost without exception, nominated as many candidates as there were seats. The strategy seems to have worked: of a total of 31 endorsements made, fourteen won seats in the Supreme Soviet, a success ratio of 45%. This compared favorably to both the PFE (43%) and the Free Estonia Association (42.5%). In essence, then, the OSTK's electoral strategy was not effectively altered by varying district magnitude. It concentrated its support where it stood a reasonable chance of success, and did not enter into competition outside of its regional base of support. This would seem to contradict the notion that increasing the district magnitude provides an incentive for an ethnically particularistic party to include districts where a substantial minority exists, and to extend its activities beyond its regional base.

Finally, the proposition that the particular features of STV provide an incentive for large parties to over-nominate at the district level was not borne out. Instead, as illustrated by the PFE, the tendency was toward nominating as many or fewer candidates than there were seats available. Since earlier empirical studies of the operation of STV have linked the practice of over-nomination to

party infighting, that the PFE did quite the opposite may indicate its own organizational coherence and sense of unity during the campaign. However, as shall be demonstrated in Chapter 5, one of the characteristics of the development of the PFE in the first year following the founding legislative elections was the rapid development of infighting and dissolution.

This chapter suggests several lines of further inquiry. Although the focus was on investigating the proximal effects of varying district magnitude on independent candidate proliferation, the choices made by the ethnically particularistic party and the nominating behavior of the Popular Front, the more interesting and challenging questions are those which relate to more distal consequences, especially regarding the propensity towards party system fragmentation and inter-ethnic and inter-party conflict. This would require the adoption of a truly comparative perspective, especially comparing the Estonian model to other electoral experiments in Eastern Europe. If the Estonian model is worth emulating, then comparing the Estonian case with other cases, especially those which have adopted either PR or FPTP, is required. These questions can only be addressed by extending this analysis to include other Eastern European cases, especially those whose electoral rules are of a fundamentally different character, but where other dimensions, most notably the ethnic and international dimensions, are similar to those in Estonia. The

investigation of the more distal consequences of electoral experimentation is the subject of Chapters 5 and 6.

Chapter 5: The Evolution of the Major Transitional Parties in Estonia and Latvia 1990-1991

Although the previous chapter focused primarily on analyzing the "proximal effects" of a particular electoral system (STV) and its impact on party behavior, of potentially greater significance are the distal effects various electoral arrangements have on: 1) the development of the characteristics of a party system in newly emerging democracies, and 2) the development of inter-ethnic relations in ethnically bi-polar states. At the heart of these cited effects is the degree to which the electoral system: 1) offers the incentive for entry; 2) offers the incentive for inter-ethnic political cooperation versus political conflict. Indeed, it is claimed that the existence of these incentives generated by electoral systems not only creates the basis for more versus fewer political parties but also promotes the emergence of political parties which claim a multi-ethnic constituency rather than an ethnically particularistic one.

Current works on the impact of electoral systems have concentrated primarily on measuring these distal effects in terms of the basic numerical parameters of a party system or the degree of ideological polarization in that system. The application of this approach to newly developing democracies is of somewhat limited utility, however, especially

given that the basic parameters of the party system have not yet been established. Thus, classic questions regarding the number of parties or the spatial distribution of party programs will simply have to wait. However, this does not mean that theories regarding the evolution of party systems cannot be employed. What it does require is a reorientation of inquiry to focus precisely on the pressures which electoral systems are said to exert.

One potentially fruitful reconfiguration of such questions focuses not on the specific features of some future system of political parties but on the developments which occur in those which comprise the initial format. Indeed, future tendencies in party system development will depend heavily on what is occurring within the existing parties themselves -- new parties may be born, but they will be born out of the carcass of the old. In this sense, the focus on development of individual parties, the degree to which they decay and fragment, or the kind of evolution they experience makes a great deal more sense than focusing on a yet undefined system of political parties.

The key to restating the distal questions regarding the development of party politics in Eastern Europe is rooted in noting the "pressures" exerted by the social and political environment on existing political parties. As mentioned in earlier chapters, the sources of these pressures include those exerted by institutions, both the structure of offices and the electoral system, existing

social "cleavages," the pressures towards consolidation or fragmentation exerted by the international environment, and the degree of structuration of the individual political parties themselves.

Unfortunately, such direct measurement of the strength of these pressures is hardly possible without the benefit of more than one national election. For example, traditional measures which reflect the "logic" of the pressures the proximal effects of electoral laws generate largely depend upon the passage of time. However, such measurements are of little utility when neither party identities nor party platforms are fully developed, either among candidates or voters.

Such analyses are further hindered by the kinds of political parties which populate the initial party format in the period of democratic transition. These political parties are not "political parties" in the classic sense, but rather "transitional" parties. Such parties share many of the features of the more familiar electoral parties of the West, such as the existence of electoral programs, often complicated nomination procedures, and a degree of internal structuring. However, what qualifies these parties as "transitional" is that they are party organizations which were designed initially not to compete in free elections but performed other functions (such as the Communist parties) or were designed to achieve some other purpose (such as the promotion of independence or the

protection of minority rights in the case of the Popular Fronts and the "ethnically particularistic" parties). As these party organizations sought to broaden their basis of mass support, it was often at the expense of maintaining internal cohesion or ideological consistency.

Given these limitations, direct assessment of the role played by the manipulation of electoral rules or other institutional structures becomes extremely problematic. To partially resolve these problems, a two-fold strategy will be employed. First, rather than employ direct measures of the impact of electoral rules and institutional manipulation, more indirect comparative observations will be utilized. To this extent, largely descriptive and interpretive techniques will be employed to assess the evolution of the transitional conglomerate parties (the Popular Fronts and the Communist Parties) especially in terms of whether these parties reflect "fragmentary" and polarizing tendencies which correspond to the tendencies posited by existing theories on party evolution. Thus, if it is the case that the distal "defractionalizing" effect of electoral systems comes into play, then one would expect that the greater the district magnitude, the more difficult it would be for the conglomerate transitional parties to remain cohesive. Such tendencies should be reflected even in the short run, especially as party politicians become aware of the opportunities created by the electoral system.

I will focus primarily on two dimensions in the development of these conglomerate parties. The first relates to the relative propensity of these transitional parties to fissure. Although clearly, given the heterogeneous nature of these types of transitional parties, one would expect latent pressures towards fragmentation, these pressures may be mitigated by centripetal counterpressures. Among the principal counterpressures are the "rally around the flag" effect exerted by the existence of a common foe. In the cases of the Estonian and Latvian independence movement, this common foe was represented by Soviet dominance and its local representatives in the communist anti-independence movement. Additional centripetal pressures may be exerted by the opportunities created by the electoral system itself, which may serve to unify diverse elements within conglomerate parties in order to capture electoral victory.

The second dimension relates to the quality of the political conflict which emerges. Indeed, as noted earlier, the consolidation of transitional parties may in turn lead to the greater polarization of political conflict. This may be especially true in deeply cleaved societies where the lines of linguistic, cultural and political conflict are clearly drawn. For example, in ethnically bipolar societies where ethnic cleavage takes on a distinctly territorial character, the introduction of FPTP may in fact strengthen the lines of polarized ethnic conflict. It may

also lead to the consolidation of a multi-interest, but essentially ethnically homogeneous, umbrella party.

To investigate the development of the transitional parties in the period immediately following the founding elections of 1990, this chapter will focus primarily on comparisons between the Estonian and Latvian cases. The time frame involved is the first year following the founding elections of March 18, 1990 in Estonia and Latvia, and June 1990 in Czechoslovakia. Particular attention will be paid to the events which occurred at the two major congresses for the Communist Parties (the CPE and the CPL) and the two congresses of the PFE and the October, 1990, congress of the PFL. These meetings represented major turning points in the evolution of these transitional parties, where important decisions on restructuring the party's organizations and programs to fit the changing political conditions were made.

To investigate the quality of the lines of political cleavage, this analysis will focus on: 1) the public statements made by officials within each of these organizations which illustrate the dimensions of "intra-party" conflict within the PFE, the PFL, the CPE and CPL; 2) the relationship of the "transitional" parties to either the "radical independence" parties (such as the Estonian National Independence Party (ENIP), and the Latvian National Independence Movement (LNIM) or the non-Baltic conservative parties

(such as OSTK/Intermovement in Estonia and Interfront in Latvia).

However, it is the existence of counter-pressures which makes it necessary to isolate the effects of electoral rules while controlling for other factors which may impact upon the evolution of transitional parties. Although we do not have "experimental" control over this process of development, we can best approximate such controls through careful selection of comparative cases -- or at least control for the primary dimensions cited in existing theory to assess the differential impact of electoral experiments. These dimensions include: 1) the ethno-political dimension; 2) other elements of the "electoral system" such as the "structure of offices," and the impact of territorial arrangements such as federalism; 3) the international environment; 4) the level of "political development" attained.

With the above considerations in mind, the distal expectations posited in Chapter 2, can be restated here to fit the particular cases of Estonia and Latvia. For the sake of making a direct comparison between the Estonian and Latvian cases, these expectations will be couched in terms of similar and differential hypotheses.

Similar Hypothesis 1: In general, within the environment of "assymmetrically bipolar societies," party fragmentation in the period of democratic transition should be most pronounced among umbrella groupings such as the Popular Front and the residual communist

party. However, among ethnically particularistic parties, especially those which purport to represent the minority, this fragmentation should not occur. This process of fragmentation should result in similar trajectories of party development for both Estonia and Latvia.

Similar Hypothesis 2: In general, the threat posed to the Baltic independence movement in the period 1990-1991, both external and internal, should serve to exert a kind of consolidating effect on the conglomerate parties, especially the popular fronts.

Similar Hypothesis 3: As a result of the above two effects, one would expect that there would emerge two diametrically opposed political poles, based largely upon inter-ethnic political conflict, pitting predominantly ethnic Baltic parties versus non-baltic (i.e. Russian) ones.

Differential Hypothesis 1: On the other hand, given the incentives generated by the greater PR-ness of STV, the tendency for the fragmentation of umbrella groupings should be more under STV as compared to First-Past-the-Post systems. As a result, one would expect that the tendency towards fragmentation would be greater for the Estonian umbrella parties as opposed to their Latvian counterparts.

Differential Hypothesis 2: In terms of the effect the electoral system has on the inter-ethnic political conflict among political parties, one would expect that STV would promote the emergence of sub-ethnic political conflicts, hence preventing the consolidation of two diametrically opposed ethnic blocs. The existence of FPTP in Latvia, on the other hand, should promote the exact opposite effect -- the consolidation of two opposed ethno-political poles.

However, there are other factors which cannot be controlled for, which relate to the particularities of each of the cases. These include the events which preceded the founding elections, which often sets the stage for the politics which was to characterize the elections

themselves. As Dix (1988) and O'Donnell (1986) have noted, this historical dimension, which is often specific to an individual case, creates the initial conditions which set the pattern for future trajectories of democratization. In addition, as Gunther (1989) has noted, discrete actions taken by political leaders during the transition, although seemingly microscopic, can have a significant impact on shaping the contours of party development. Thus, any investigation of the distal consequences of electoral laws must be tailored to fit the particularities of each case.

With this in mind, in this chapter, comparisons will be made across the two types of political parties which comprised the initial format following the founding elections of March 18, 1990. The cases selected for investigation are Estonia and Latvia, whose similarities introduce controls for the ethno-political, territorial-structural, international and developmental dimensions while allowing for variation in electoral rule (STV versus FPTP). This will allow for a closer examination of the expectation that differences between STV and FPTP will result in different trajectories in the development of the transitional political parties. In Chapter 6, we relax the controls over other aspects of the electoral system -- such as the impact of territorial arrangements like federalism in Czechoslovakia -- as well as the international dimension.

This chapter focuses on the development of the transitional parties in Estonia and Latvia -- with

particular attention to their evolution and responses to an altered political environment. However, to deal with the evolution of each political party since the founding elections of 1990, it is necessary examine the status of each at the moment of the founding election and the particular histories which set the stage for their development after the elections. It is to this task I now turn.

**Pre-Election Developments:
The Estonian and Latvian Popular Fronts**

Leonid Brezhnev's death in 1983, and the eventual accession to power by Gorbachev in 1985, brought few visible changes in Estonia and Latvia. There were, however, certain trends emerging. For example, in 1985, departing from previous practice, "native" Estonians, Arnold Ruutel and Bruno Saul became the Head of State and Chairman of the Council of Ministers respectively. Moreover, there were noticeable trends in both the Estonian and central press' coverage of the economic and social problems of the Baltics in a far more open fashion than in the past (Misiunas and Taagepera, 1989). However, by and large, the Baltic states trailed Moscow in political activity, and no significant institutional readjustment occurred as it had in the USSR as a whole. Nonetheless, with the increasingly tolerant political environment associated with Glasnost', events were unleashed which ultimately gave birth to the foundation of the Popular Front.

Originally designed as the "conscience of Perestroika," these groups were not envisaged by their founders as political parties. Indeed, the original conception of the Popular Front, put forward by the Soviet jurist Boris Kurashvilli in Sovetskaya Molodezh in April 1988, viewed it as an organization which would unite all socially active people, both Communists and non-Party members. The purpose of this Popular Front, according to Kurashvilli, would not be to act as a second party or a political alternative to the CPSU, but instead as a "watchdog," monitoring, but not supplanting, the government and party apparatus. For the purposes of this role, Kurashvilli insisted that the Front should include even individuals representing the opposition.⁵⁹

Perhaps the most successful manifestation of the "Popular Front" emerged in the Baltic republics. However, the Popular Fronts in Latvia and Estonia were not born of concrete economic or political debates; rather, the birth of both the Latvian and the Estonian Popular Fronts arose from the concern with the environment (see M. Taagepera, 1989).⁶⁰

⁵⁹See Boris Kurashvilli on the Popular Front in Moscow News, March 6, 1988; See also Tolz, 1990, p. 17.

⁶⁰For a relatively complete discussion of the origins of the Popular Fronts in the Baltic States at the end of 1987 and early 1988, see Clemens (1991), especially Chapters 6 and 7.

The idea of a Popular Front was immediately taken up in Estonia. Only a few days after the original proposal in Moscow, an Estonian Popular Front was created on April 13, 1988, by Edgar Savisaar, a former middle-ranking official in the republic planning committee, who, gradually frozen out of any duties, left. On the same night, an "initiative group" was formed and worked out a declaration which was submitted to the Estonian Communist Party Central Committee (CPE CC) and the ESSR Supreme Soviet Presidium. After a meeting of the CPE CC on April 29, 1988, official approval for the establishment of a Popular Front was obtained.⁶¹

Not only did these organizations attract an extremely large membership throughout 1988 and 1989,⁶² but they also received extensive support from the republics' party authorities. Indeed, the inaugural Congresses of the Estonian, Latvian, and Lithuanian (Sajudis) Popular Fronts were attended and addressed by top Party and government officials. For example, on September 13, 1988, Reuters

⁶¹A full translation of the principles of the PFE is published in "Popular Front: Gaining Strength," Homeland, May 25, 1988, p. 1.

⁶²The Estonian Popular Front claimed 40,000 supporters in June and 60,000 in August 1988 and it was reported that one-third of these were CPE members. The PF had 13,000 members in late May ("In Brief." Homeland, June 1, 1988) more than 40,000 members on June 9 ("Popular Front in Action." Homeland, June 15, 1988) and nearly 60,000 in late July according to Leonid Miloslavsky and Nina Belyayeva, "The Popular Front: Lessons from Estonia's Experience in pro-Perestroika Civic Initiative," Moscow News, August 7-14, 1988, p. 16.

In Latvia, by the middle of 1989 it was reported that the PFL had about 250,000 members.

reported that Enn Poldroos, a co-founder of the Estonian Popular Front, had been elected a candidate member of the Central Committee of the Estonian Communist Party.

The initial programs of the Baltic Popular Fronts were quite similar in their goals. Keeping to the original "conception" of the Popular Front as a coordinating body for the informal groups in support of "perestroika," these goals included the demand for republican sovereignty, in accordance with the Leninist principle of federation. In the economic sphere, the programs mirrored that of reform communism, or the demand for the introduction of republic economic accountability and the establishment of various forms of property ownership -- cooperative, state, and private. In the sphere of nationality issues, the Baltic Popular Fronts took great pains to guarantee the national minorities living in the particular republic the right to express their national self-consciousness in public and to encourage the development of their individual culture and language.⁶³ What was also made quite clear was the continued denial that the Popular Fronts represented a real opposition.

However, several events served to alter the environment in which the Popular Fronts operated. First, there were the economic difficulties in implementing market

⁶³The initial program of the Estonian Popular Front appears in Sovetskaya Estoniya, October 5, 1988. For the Latvian Popular Front see Sovetskaya Latvija, October 18, 1988, p. 1.

reforms, such as the IME self-management program in Estonia, the intensification of "democratization" with the introduction of all-Union competitive elections in 1989, the worsening condition of Baltic-Moscow relations, and the political crises of identity which wracked both the Estonian and Latvian Communist parties. In addition, there emerged more radically nationalist movements which further pressured the Popular Fronts to alter their perceived role on the issue of political independence.⁶⁴

Of these developments three are perhaps most significant. The first was the introduction of competitive elections through the vehicle of the Congress of People's Deputies elections of May 1989. The second was the emergence of a more radically nationalist challenge to both the PFE and the PFL. Finally developments within both the Estonian and Latvian Communist Parties, especially the movement towards dissolution, further lessened the threat posed to the Popular Fronts.

The USSR's legislative system was revised in 1989 to provide for direct elections to a Congress of People's Deputies (CPD) that would debate large issues and then elect a bicameral USSR Supreme Soviet. Although these elections were not fully competitive, in that the Communist

⁶⁴For a relatively complete narrative of the events to the spring and summer of 1989, and the role played by the radical movements in Latvia and Estonia in pressuring the PFE and PFL to adopt a more explicitly political role in the republics, see Clemens (1991).

Party and all-Union organizations were reserved seats in the CPD, and organizations like the Popular Fronts were forbidden from actively nominating their own candidates, the elections served to catalyze the transformation of the Popular Fronts. Despite many handicaps, the Baltic Popular Fronts proved remarkably effective in mobilizing support for their preferred candidates for the CPD (Taagepera, 1990a; Bungs, 1989). Thus, for example, of the twenty-one candidates unofficially endorsed by the PFE, eighteen were elected (Clemens, 1991, p. 133).

A second development was the growing political activity of the radical Baltic Nationalist parties. In the period 1987-1989, several political organizations had emerged which began calling for the complete and immediate restoration of the independence of the Baltic states. The leading proponent of this position in Estonia was the Estonian National Independence Party (ENIP), which had evolved from a "voluntary" organization known as the "Estonian Group for the Disclosure of the Molotov Ribbentrop Pact" (Estonian acronym: MRP-AEG) formed in August, 1987. In January 1988, the leaders of this informal group proposed the establishment of an explicitly political organization whose primary purpose was to push for Estonian independence. When the text of the secret protocol to the Molotov Ribbentrop pact was published in August, the MRP-AEG dissolved and re-emerged as ENIP on August 20. Throughout 1988-1989, ENIP increased its

political activity. On September 14, the ENIP sent a memorandum to the United Nations detailing Estonia's problems under Soviet rule. On November 6, the ENIP appealed to the UN requesting the deployment of peacekeeping forces.

However, overshadowing all of these events was the campaign to establish an alternative Parliament to the existing Supreme Soviet, the so-called "Congress of Estonia." The campaign launched in March 1989, registered citizens who had lived in Estonia before June 1940 and their descendants. Non-Estonians could apply for citizenship if they supported the principle of Estonian independence. In November, 1989 local committees formed a republic-wide General Citizens' Committee to coordinate these activities, chaired by the leader of ENIP, Tunne Kelam (Clemens, 1991, 184-185).

By January, 1990, the campaign had registered more than 700,000 including Estonians living abroad. In February, 557,163 voters elected a 499-member Congress from a slate of over 1,100 candidates. The results of the elections were as follows: persons affiliated with no party received the most seats, 109; PFE candidates won 107 seats; the cultural organization the Estonian Heritage Society won 104 seats; the ENIP, 70; the CPE, 39. Ironically, although the PFE had participated in the elections, it had long registered its opposition to the very idea of creating an alternative parliament. On March 11-12 the Congress

elected a seventy-eight member council to continue its work.

Despite its strong showing in the elections, the PFE was poorly represented on the council, while the ENIP was strongly represented.⁶⁵ The PFE, despite being the second largest contingent in the Congress, received only 18 seats on the council. ENIP, on the other hand received 17. Combined with the six received by the Estonian Heritage Society, the largest single contingent in the council was that group which favored immediate independence.⁶⁶

A similar process occurred in Latvia, although the intensity of the radical independence movement was somewhat blunted by pre-emptive actions taken by the PFL. Thus, for instance in August 1989, a signature campaign, sponsored by the LNIM, designed to register voters for a Latvian Citizens' Congress patterned after the Estonian Congress, succeeded in obtaining 480,000 signatures. However, these efforts did not culminate in the immediate establishment of

⁶⁵This discrepancy, as suggested by Rein Taagepera (1990b), was probably due to elector rates. Each delegate could vote for eighteen council candidates. Had elections followed what Taagepera refers to as the "square root" formula (as did elections to the Congress itself), each delegate could have voted for only eight council candidates -- an approach that probably would have netted stronger representation for the PFE on the council. As a result of this system ENIP members recieved the most votes to the Council (five of the top ten, nine of the top twenty members), wheras no leading member of the PFE scored in the top five and only two in the top twenty. See Homeland, March 21 1990, p. 2.

⁶⁶Ibid.

an alternative parliament in Latvia. This was largely because of the efforts of the PFL leadership, which asserted that the Citizens' Committees and registration campaign of the LNIM were unsound and unrealistic and would jeopardize the PFL's chances in the elections to Latvia's Supreme Soviet. Moreover, as Dainis Ivans, the PFL chair argued, since one could not expect the Kremlin of the United Nations to welcome plenipotentiaries from an independent Latvian republic, it was imprudent for the LNIM to adopt such a course. Instead, he argued, the LNIM and the PFL should cooperate and concentrate their efforts on winning election to the Supreme Soviet.⁶⁷

As a result of these developments, PFE and the PFL were faced with something of an identity crisis as early as November, 1989. On the one hand there was the general recognition that Popular Fronts must fully embrace the Baltic independence. Moreover, with the abolition of Constitutional guarantees concerning the "leading role of the Communist Party" in the fall, and the imminence of electoral competition, they were also confronted with the prospect of having to reconfigure their organizations to win such elections. Indeed, with the adoption of the electoral

⁶⁷Sovetskaya Latvija, August 24, 1989, p. 3, in FBIS-SOV October 18, 1989, pp. 77-78.

law in November 1989,⁶⁸ and the electoral success experienced by both the Latvian and Estonian Popular Fronts in the local elections of December⁶⁹ the most immediate ques-

⁶⁸As was the case in Estonia -- see Chapter 4 -- in Latvia there was considerable debate on the electoral law which would govern both the December local elections and the March Supreme Soviet elections. However, the debate was primarily oriented around how best to adjust the Soviet FPTP system without introducing a wholesale overhaul of the electoral rule. Indeed, the debate revolved around the Latvian Communist Party's proposal to retain the institution of the Congress of Peoples Deputies (essentially a congress of electors which had been employed in the all-Union elections of 1989). On the other hand, the Popular Front proposed direct elections to the Supreme Soviet. The latter proposal was adopted by the Republic Supreme Soviet on November 10, 1989. At the same session a debate over the proposal for a directly elected presidency also occurred. However, this motion was defeated on the grounds that the extensive functions envisaged for the president would threaten to restrict the Supreme Soviet's activities and could lead to a "new authoritarianism." The motion was defeated. For an account of the November 10, session of the Latvian Supreme Soviet session, see Moscow Pravda, November 11, 1989, p. 3.

⁶⁹In Latvia 14,586 local deputy seats were contested with over 24,500 names on the ballot. Seventy-five percent of the candidates were ethnic Latvians. Moreover ethnic Latvians accounted for 83% of those winning seats, a remarkable figure given that ethnic Latvians constitute 51% of the republic's population. Of these 57% were supported by the PFL, 39% by Interfront -- the communist party did not endorse all candidates, but did endorse the 117 secretaries of the party city and regional committees for election (Moscow TASS, December 11, 1989, in FBIS-SOV, p. 79). Of these 117 only 66 were elected, which one observer remarked was disastrous for the Communist Party (Moscow Television Service December 14, 1989, in FBIS-SOV December 15, 1989; Also Moscow Pravda, December 15, 1989, p. 6).

In Estonia, 9182 candidates ran for 4,209 mandates. The Intermovement however, unlike in Latvia, chose to boycott the local elections. In four of the forty-two electoral districts, elections were not held because of the requirement that at least 50% of the electorate turnout at the district level. In general, the local elections proved to be quite beneficial to the Estonian Popular Front (for a summary of the local results in Estonia see Moscow Domestic Service, December 18, 1989 in

tion became one of whether or not the Popular Fronts should transform themselves into "political parties" with an explicit electoral program, or remain a coordinating council, in which a variety of political parties would cooperate in tactical terms. The latter perspective was reflected in comments made by Estonian Popular Front spokesman Rein Viedemann, who argued that the Front should remain a "union of democratic parties" rather than transforming itself into a political party.⁷⁰

Others within the ranks of the Popular Front advocated accelerating the transformation of the PFE into either a genuine political party or several political parties. For example, on December 25, 1989, Marju Lauristin and Enn Poldroos unilaterally announced the establishment of an Estonian Social Democratic Independence Party (which ironically was also the name considered for the Popular Front), which on January 11-12 held its initial Congress in the city of Tartu. Lauristin was elected as chairperson of the party.⁷¹ Other political parties were also formed from January to March 1990, usually on the initiative of recognized leaders within the PFE. For

FBIS-SOV December 21, 1989, p. 73; also Moscow Trud, December 12, 1989 p. 3 in FBIS-SOV December 15, 1989, p. 78).

⁷⁰Tallinn Domestic Service, in FBIS-SOV January 2, 1991, pp. 65-66.

⁷¹See Izvestiya, December 25, 1989, p. 11. Also Sovetskaya Estoniya, March 4, 1990, p. 2.

example, Enn Poldroos, a co-founder of the Popular Front, established the Liberal Party in January 1990. In March, another member of the PFE Council, Tiyt Made, established the Party of Entrepreneurs (PPE). In general, however, these parties remained quite small, their memberships hardly extending beyond their respective leaderships. As a result, they stopped short of a formal break with the Popular Front, opting rather to run candidates in the March Republican Supreme Soviet elections under the Popular Front's label.⁷²

In Latvia, a similar evolution of the Popular Front occurred, with similar results.⁷³ In June, 1989 the Latvian Popular Fronts's Executive Council adopted a resolution reaffirming the organization's nature as a heterogeneous "mass socio-political organization." The draft electoral program of the PFL also contained many elements similar to that of the PFE program (Bungs, 1989). It endorsed Latvian independence and the creation of a multi-party system, albeit without a specific timetable. Moreover, like the PFE, the PFL adopted an electoral platform which emphasized both the necessity of establishing Latvian independence, the promotion of inter-ethnic harmony, and a

⁷²"Popular Front to Run Elections as 'Single Bloc'" Homeland, February 21, 1990, pp. 1,3.

⁷³As was the case in Estonia, a founding Congress of the Latvian Social Democratic Independence Party was held in Riga in December 1989. See Moscow TASS, December 7, 1989, in FBIS-SOV, December 8, 1989, p. 76.

general commitment to the introduction of market reforms into the Republics' economies.⁷⁴ However, one significant difference existed in comparison with the PFE. Unlike the Estonian Popular Front, where rank and file members could maintain their membership in the CPE, the PFL called for the severance of all ties with the CPL. In part a concession to the LNIM, the program also called for the "suspension of organizations and parties organizationally subordinate to the USSR or other countries."⁷⁵

Nonetheless, despite this outward show of political unity, there existed a deep division within the PFL over generally the timing of Latvian political independence and the Front's attitude towards the LNIM. As Krasnaya Zvezda observed, the Second Congress of the PFL and its electoral program demonstrated the existence of significant divisions between "moderates" and "radicals," particularly on the issue of formal association with the LNIM. On the one hand, there were the "moderates" who pressed for continued dialogue with the Latvian Communist Party and with Moscow, who rallied around the leadership of Dainis Ivans, chairman of the movement since its inception in 1988. On the other hand, there were the "radicals" associated with the editorial board of the PFL's bulletin Atmoda, who pressed

⁷⁴For the announcement of the Latvian PF's political and economic goals, as well as electoral platform, see Riga Domestic Service, January 13, 1990, in FBIS-SOV January 23, 1990, p. 68.

⁷⁵Ibid.

for the acceleration of the move towards real political independence and closer association with the LNIM. Such disputes led Ivans to complain that the PFL's bulletin Atmoda "had practically become a publication of the independence movement."⁷⁶ At the Congress, Ivans faced a significant political challenge when the LNIM delegates sponsored an alternative candidate for the position of the movement's chair. However, Ivans was able to defeat the challenger and retain his position.⁷⁷ \ \ Ibid.

The victory of the PFL in the local elections of December, coupled with the prospect of national power in the coming republic elections of March, also compelled the PFL to alter its strategy from pressuring existing authority in the direction of political and economic reform, to the seizure of political power. Thus, in an announcement on January 8, 1990, the Latvian Popular Front Council formally declared the PFL's intention to run as a unified political front under a single electoral banner, arguing that "under new circumstances, with a split in the communist party (of Latvia) the Latvian Peoples Front has acquired a realistic role of a political center The Latvian Peoples' Front (through the elections) must get

⁷⁶Krasnaya Zvezda, October 14, 1989, p. 12, in FBIS-SOV October 18, 1989, p. 78.

⁷⁷ \ \

into the Soviets in order to be able to participate in the transformation of Latvia."⁷⁸

Thus, on the eve of the "founding elections" of March 18, 1990, both the Estonian and Latvian Popular Fronts had followed a remarkably similar trajectory. Both had initially begun as movements in support of Perestroika rather than as an instrument designed to supplant communist rule. This was particularly true in Estonia, where the foundation of the Popular Front was conducted under the auspices of former Communist officials (such as the current Prime Minister Edgar Savisaar) along with its endorsement by the CPE. In Latvia, Communist participation in the establishment of the Popular Front was also extensive. However, the rapidly growing demands for Baltic independence, especially on the part of the "radical" independence parties, ENIP and the LNIM, led the Popular Fronts to reconceptualize their role and purpose. Although short of declaring themselves political parties, the Popular Fronts had begun to establish a working political organization which had many features of a political party -- each established an electoral program, each endorsed a slate of candidates in the December, 1989, local elections and the March 18, 1990 Republic-level elections, and each had established some semblance of local organization through a working system of local committees. For all intents and purposes, despite

⁷⁸Riga Radio announcement, in FBIS-SOV January 8, 1990, p. 48.

the continued denial that the Popular Fronts were political parties, they indeed had, in many ways, become exactly that.

On the other hand, the Popular Fronts retained many of the features of the "people's movement." In both the cases of the PFE and the PFL, those who had largely conceptualized the Popular Front as a broad-based coalition of diverse organizations remained at the helm. Moreover, the notion that the Fronts would merely act as an organization coordinating the activities of these diverse elements was generally retained.

The Communist Parties: From Power to Dissolution

The pressures which had compelled the Popular Fronts to evolve from mass movements designed as the "watchdogs" of Perestroika to political movements intent on acquiring office, also served to fundamentally transform the Communist parties of both republics. In general, the schism which emerged in both Communist parties was related to two general issues. First, there was the question of the political "independence" of the Baltic states, and the related issue of the establishment of a communist party which was also independent of Moscow. The second issue revolved around the debate over their future role following the introduction of competitive election -- or, in other

words, should communists remain true to an older conception of "party," in which the CPE and CPL would retain its "leading role," or would it necessarily have to transform itself into an organization which could freely compete in electoral combat.⁷⁹ The latter would require not only altering the party's position vis-a-vis the issue of Baltic independence, creating the potential for a schism between Baltic and non-Baltic communists within the party, but also would necessarily involve the fundamental restructuring of the party itself.

In comparing the two Baltic communist parties, one key element which differentiated the evolution of the CPE and the CPL in the period preceding the founding legislative elections of 1990, was that, in the former, the reformists had gained the upper hand nearly a year before the elections, whereas in the CPL the conservative forces remained dominant. One significant political development within the CPE was the replacement of Siberian-born Karl Vaino, who had headed the party since 1978, with Vaino Valyas in June of 1988. Valyas had been denied the position as First Secretary in favor of Vaino in 1978, and was at that time serving as the Soviet Ambassador to Nicaragua. It was under Valyas' leadership that the CPE sought to

⁷⁹As one PFE leader, Rein Veidemann, noted in October, 1989, in Estonia a wing was "becoming more prominent, pressing fairly persistently for the Communist Party to become independent as in countries of People's democracies." Tallinn Domestic Service, October 15, 1989, in FBIS-SOV October 18, 1989, pp. 85-86.

identify with the moderate wing of the PFE, hoping that together they could restructure Estonia in ways acceptable to Moscow. Further, it was under Valyas that the CPE became "nativized": the CPE Central Committee was reduced, leaving more than half of its members native Estonians. Membership in the Estonian Supreme Soviet also shifted so that two-thirds of its members (186 out of 285) were Estonian (Taagepera, 1989b, 1989c). In Latvia, on the other hand, non-Latvians were disproportionately represented in the party's leadership, and ethnic Latvians were outnumbered by non-Latvians in the rank and file membership (Dreifelds, 1989).

These developments served to sharpen the debates within the CPE over the twin issues of independence and the party's identity. As Estonians ascended to the party leadership, Russians and others in the ranks became increasingly uneasy. This growing internal tension was reflected in an interview conducted by Sovetskaya Estoniya on April 29, 1989, with J. Saarnit, the First Secretary of the Tallin city party committee, who warned that the situation in the capital had become especially precarious. In Tallin, he said, Estonians made up 47% of the population, but only 32% of the city CPE organization. For Saarnit, the debate within the city committee reflected the fact that "we do not know each other. I am speaking of Estonians and Russians even at the level of members of the gorkom (city committee). We do not know what is of concern

to whom and why. In general there is too much emotion, too many spontaneous and unpredictable actions."⁸⁰ It was especially important to avoid a split in the CPE, Saarnit warned, because this would allow the Estonian National Independence Party and other radical Estonian nationalists the opportunity to seize power.

Although the threat of split within the ranks of the CPE continued to simmer throughout the summer and fall of 1989, at least the appearance of a general consensus remained. For example the CPE Party Secretary for Ideology, Mikk Titma (who was appointed to replace Indrek Toome in November 1989) argued that, although Marxism-Leninism no longer seemed relevant to most Estonians, the "CPSU should remain the central authority of the country."⁸¹

The results of the local elections of December, 1989, served to catalyze the debate over the restructuring of the party to meet new political conditions. Indeed, it was the dominant theme of the Party's 16th Central Committee Plenum in December. In the opening report, First Secretary Valyas argued that, since it was inevitable that the CPSU would abandon Article 6 of the USSR Constitution (which had guaranteed the leading role of the Communist Party in Soviet society), it was now necessary for the party to

⁸⁰Interview with Saarnit, in Sovetskaya Estoniya, April 12, 1989, p. 3.

⁸¹Mikk Titma interviewed in Der Standard, October 12, 1989.

adjust to the practical conditions of a multi-party competition. This would necessarily require that the CPE redefine its role and structure.⁸² However, Valyas stopped short of calling for the establishment of an "independent" CPE, opting rather for calls to replicate in the republican organization the process of CPSU restructuring.

We have to realize that the path toward autonomy for the Lithuanian Communist Party (i.e. the declared independence of the Lithuanian party in 1989) cannot serve as a direct example for the reformation of the Estonian Communist Party The building of the CPSU on the principle of the autonomy of republic communist parties is the guarantee of the Estonian Communist Party's autonomy. The separation of union republic communist parties from the CPSU cannot be an end in itself. The aim is the sovereign development of the Republic.⁸³

On the other hand, "reformists" within the republican Communist party leadership, grouped around the Prime Minister Indrek Toome and Mikk Titma, pressed for a more radical transformation of the party in the direction of both the establishment of an independent republican party organization and a powerful electoral machine. As Titma was to note, "in order to accelerate Perestroika and make the party a powerful instrument for change we need a radical restructuring of the party itself: The determination of its new position in society and the strategy and tactics that

⁸²Moscow Television Service, January 4, 1990 in FBIS-SOV, January 4, 1990, p. 48.

⁸³Izvestiya, January 6, 1990, p. 1.

make it possible to react sensitively to the changing situation."⁸⁴ However, when interviewed on the Soviet Vremya evening newscast of January 4, 1990, Titma emphasized that some continued relationship with Moscow would be maintained, albeit a goal secondary to the establishment of a new role for the party in Estonian politics.⁸⁵

The reformists took the first step in the transformation of the CPE, by founding Vaba Eesti (the Free Estonia Association) on January 29, 1990.⁸⁶ The Free Estonia Association was designed as an electoral front, founded by leading reformists within the CPE. The Estonian Prime Minister Indrek Toome, became chair of the association. In justifying the creation of Vaba Eesti, Titma argued that the time of amorphous political movements was over, and that political parties now should combat one another in direct electoral confrontation.⁸⁷ Subsequently, Titma spoke to the absolute need for the fundamental

⁸⁴Sovetskaya Estoniya, January 17, 1990, p. 2, in FBIS-SOV February 23, 1990, p. 50.

⁸⁵Moscow Television Service, January 4, 1990, in FBIS-SOV January 5, 1990, p. 48.

⁸⁶Tallinn Domestic Service, January 29, 1990, in FBIS-SOV January 31, 1990.

⁸⁷Clemens (1991, p. 183) claims that the creation of Vaba Eesti represented a fundamental break on the part of Titma and then Prime Minister Indrek Toome with the CPE. If this were the case, then the creation of Vaba Eesti would not have been couched in terms as a means to save the CPE.

reorientation of the goals and direction of the Estonian Communist party. Largely because of the "crisis of Perestroika" and the economic problems of inflation, a general decline in the standard of living, and the increasing dangers of "social segregation and inter-ethnic tension" the "party must change radically. It must be independent and not merely an arm of Moscow which weakens its credibility and its ability to control a rapidly polarizing political situation."⁸⁸

The attempts at an 11th-hour transformation of the CPE into an electoral party, however, did not signify the final break with Moscow. Although both "independent" and "loyalist" trends were apparent within the CPE, it appeared that these differences would remain submerged, at least for the purposes of the Supreme Soviet electoral campaign. For example, during the nomination process it was often the case that the CPE and Vaba Eesti would collaborate in nominations of candidates (a process which was concluded in February). Toome, the chairman of the Association, was not only nominated by the Association, but also by the Central Committee of the CPE.⁸⁹

In comparison to developments within the Estonian Communist Party, the crisis which wracked the Latvian Communist Party was far deeper, the lines of cleavage far

⁸⁸Moscow TASS, February 3, 1990, in FBIS-SOV February 5, 1990.

⁸⁹See Sovetskaya Estoniya, February 21, 1990, p. 3.

clearer and the polemic between the two far more openly discussed in both the Latvian and central press. In August, Ivan Kezbers, a high-ranking member of the Central Committee, openly promoted the establishment of a genuinely independent communist party.⁹⁰ The acknowledgment that a crisis was impending emerged on November 30, 1989 when at a meeting of the Central Committee, an appeal was delivered, signed by thirty-nine communists, including eight members of the Central Committee, which called for "renouncing the utopian aims of building a communist society and the dogmatic treatment of Marxism-Leninism." The document proclaimed that the Communist Party of Latvia should become politically, organizationally and economically independent, and a party designed specifically for electoral competition.⁹¹ However, accompanying this call for an independent communist party was also an appeal for unity.

Can we Latvian Communists overcome our own mistakes and the resistance of the conservative forces so as to reform the Party and win real popular support instead of the ostentatious authority stipulated by law? Relying on its historically established multinational membership, the Communist Party of Latvia ought to stand for consolidation within the Party and the society of people of different nationalities on the basis of universal human principles, equality and

⁹⁰Riga Domestic Service, August 30, 1989, in FBIS-SOV September 5, 1989.

⁹¹Moscow TASS, November 30, 1989, in FBIS-SOV December 1, 1989, p. 72.

democracy. The Party must dispel the mood of instability and apathy.⁹²

Like in the case of the CPE, the line adopted by the republican party's top leadership under First Secretary Jan Vagris had generally supported the conception of an "autonomous" party organization, but firmly a part of a somewhat looser CPSU structure.⁹³ This moderate position had been adopted at large by the CPL Central Committee in September when it had issued a declaration of the intention of seeking Latvian autonomy within the federation.⁹⁴ However, the "statement of the 39" represented the first open demand that the CPL declare itself completely independent from the CPSU.

This event prompted an immediate response from the CPSU loyalists, who rallied around the Riga city party organization. The loyalists not only rejected the call for the establishment of an independent Latvian party organization, but also openly attacked the Vagris leadership and called for severe punitive actions to be taken against the Popular Front. On November 28, 1989, the Bureau of the

⁹²Reported in Moscow News, December 10, 1989, p. 7. The leader of group of 39 was M. Rukamne, First Secretary of the Riga Kirovskii Regional Party Committee, and CPL Central Committee member.

⁹³Moscow Tass, December 5, 1989, in FBIS-SOV December 5, 1990, p. 96.

⁹⁴Reported in Sovetskaya Latvija, September 1, 1989, p. 1, in FBIS-SOV September 10, 1990, pp. 65-67.

Riga city committee of the CPL condemned the actions of the "group of 39", arguing that "one cannot fail to see that the purpose of this campaign is to divert our forces from the pre-election struggle and from the implementations of the ideas of putting the republic on to the path of economic accountability, self-government and self-financing." The solution to this dilemma "must be the elimination of current disagreements, strict observation of party discipline and the preservation of the organizational and ideological unity of the party."⁹⁵ Alfred Rubiks (then mayor of Riga and member of the CPL Central committee) was particularly incensed by the "ineptness" of the party in that it had relinquished the initiative by allowing "grassroots movements" like the Popular Front to emerge in the first place.⁹⁶ Moreover, he accused the Party leadership under Vagris of passivity and held the leadership accountable for the CPL's failures in the local elections of December.⁹⁷

The Bureau of the Central Committee turns a deaf ear or takes an increasingly conciliatory stand with respect to Latvia's Popular Front and its leadership. Further passivity of the Bureau and other Latvian leaders in the given political situation is

⁹⁵Declaration issued in Riga Sovetskaya Latvija, November 28, 1989, p. 4, in FBIS-SOV December 3, 1990, p. 70.

⁹⁶Moscow TASS December 5, 1989, in FBIS-SOV December 5, 1989, p. 62.

⁹⁷Ibid.

inadmissible, and therefore I propose the following: the Party should give a principled assessment to the Congress of Latvia's Popular Front without delay; it should define the liabilities for its members who not only fail to meet the requirements of the CPSU Rules and Program, but also pursue subversive tactics with regard to Soviet power under the guise of perestroika demagoguery who contribute to dissent in the Party, to a loosening of the Soviet Socialist Republics and further complications in inter-ethnic relations. After the local elections it will be too late. Soviets will be set up on the platform of the Popular Front and the real power will pass from the Soviets to the Popular Front.⁹⁸

By January, the situation had, according to Vagris, reached "crisis proportions." In a remarkably frank opening speech to a special plenum of the CPL on January 23, 1990, broadcast live on Latvian television, Vagris emphasized the necessity of maintaining the unity of the party and this was necessary "to prevent bloodshed." If the Latvian party dissolved,

then democracy, openness, and restructuring will come to an end with this burden of responsibility upon our shoulders and being in the eyes of history and the present we must discuss the most acute problem, the possible split in the party. With deep concern I follow the speeches because I am not able to relieve myself of the feeling that the major communist leaders are discussing this too lightly and thoughtlessly. However, critically we assess the party, who would assume the responsibility of asserting that an attempt to amputate it would not be fatal to society?⁹⁹

⁹⁸Quoted in Moscow News, December 10, 1989, p. 7. For further accounts of the debates within the Latvian Communist Party see Moscow Krasnaya Zvezda, December 21, 1989, p. 4, in FBIS-SOV January 3, 1990, pp. 54-56.

⁹⁹Reported in Riga Domestic Service, January 23, 1990, in FBIS-SOV January 24, 1990, pp. 96-105.

The growing fissures in both the CPE and the CPL were exacerbated by the increasingly assertive activities of the non-Estonian, and primarily, Russian ethnic political movements. In 1989, two such organizations were founded in Estonia, the United Council of Labor Collectives (OSTK -- Ob'edinennyi sovet trudovykh kollektivov) and Intermovement (International Movement of Workers in the ESSR-- Internatsional'noe dvizhenie trudiashchikhsia ESSR). OSTK was an organization initially created to coordinate protests against the government's wish to place all economic activity, including industry, under the control of Republican authorities. The initial focus of the movement was primarily on protecting the interests of "non-Estonian" workers, although the United Council was founded mainly by directors of large plants and enterprises subordinate to the All-Union ministries in Moscow. Intermovement, on the other hand, concentrated not only on the protection of "economic rights" but also with the broader challenges presented by the resurgence of Estonian nationalism. The leadership troika of Intermovement included Vladimir Yarovoi and Igor Shepelevich, both of whom were factory directors. The third member of the leadership was Evgenny

Kogan, an engineer.¹⁰⁰

In 1989-1990, these groups began to become more politically active, moving beyond their original goal of protecting the interests of the Russian minority, in the direction of overt political activity. At its constituent congress on March 4-5 1989 in Tallin, Intermovement attacked the CPE leadership for its tolerance of the PFE and the growing tide of Estonian nationalism, voicing "crude insults and threats instead of constructive criticism."¹⁰¹ In August 1989, largely in response to the adoption of what they claimed were discriminatory residence requirements for participation in the local election of December, both OSTK and Intermovement coordinated a series of republic-wide strikes. Approximately 18,000 workers from twenty-six enterprises took part. Although only 5 percent of the republic's labor force was involved, the action not only shut down supplies for all-Union ministries, but interfered with transport and other local activities.¹⁰² The strike itself was largely unsuccessful

¹⁰⁰On the origins of the Intermovement see Moscow News, April 8-15, 1990, p. 11. Kogan was injured in an auto accident shortly before the Congress of Peoples' deputies elections in June 1989, and his physical plight apparently aroused much sympathy among voters. Indeed, Kogan claimed that this greatly affected his political style and he "learned and appreciated the value of scathing words that wrench tears of sympathy from kind hearts."

¹⁰¹Statement on Intermovement made by Valyas, reported in Sovetskaya Estoniya, May 5, 1989, p. 1.

¹⁰²Moscow News, September 3-10, 1989, p. 9.

in paralyzing the Estonian economy. However, it did prompt the CPE leadership to acknowledge the political clout of the Intermovement/OSTK. Valyas, for example, in September acknowledged that the voting law (see Chapter 4) may have been drafted with undo haste and without sufficient consideration for non-Estonians. Indeed he acknowledged that this was in part due to the CPE's failure to pay sufficient attention to the complaints of Intermovement/OSTK leaders.¹⁰³

In Latvia, non-Latvian political activity increased throughout 1988-1989, paralleling that of Estonia. On October 18, 1988, the foundation of Interfront marked the beginning of organized activity. The organization's founding charter was penned by directors of 153 all-Union enterprises in the Republic (Dreifelds, 1989, p. 86). Coincident with the creation of Interfront was the foundation of the Latvian Union of Workers (Soyuz Rabochikh Latvii) which was designed to organize all-union enterprises (such as OSTK did in Estonia).¹⁰⁴

As was the case in Estonia, it was the declaration by the Latvian Supreme Soviet in favor of the establishment of republican sovereignty which intensified the political activities of Interfront. At the 15th and last session of

¹⁰³Quoted in London Financial Times, August 17, 1989, p. 2

¹⁰⁴Moscow Domestic Service September 18, 1989, in FBIS-SOV September 18, 1989, p. 61.

the 11th Latvian Supreme Soviet in February, 1990 a resolution was adopted which called for the transformation of the "Latvian SSR into an Independent Latvia." It established a commission which would prepare a referendum on the restoration of independence and the drafting of treaties the would define Latvia's relations with other states.¹⁰⁵

The leadership of Interfront was quick to condemn the action. As was the case in Estonia, the Latvian Interfront was particularly active in the establishment of strike committees in the spring of 1990 in protest of the declaration. On Latvian television, Ivan Lopatin, the Interfront chair and CPL member of the Supreme Soviet, condemned the decision, singling out communists who had voted in support of the action.

Today you have acted as the party of the representatives of those bourgeois parties of the twenties. Referring to the fact that, in 1940, the people of Latvia were not asked to decide on rejoining the Soviet Union, today also without asking the opinion of the people, you have taken a decision of a similar kind, to please the new ruling class which burst through in our republic, the creative and scientific intelligentsia of the leading clique of the Popular Front of Latvia. You have blatantly trampled on the views of those in the republic who do not agree with what has been proposed and the decisions adopted today. You have deliberately made a split in our society, and let this be on the conscience of those who today voted in favor of that split. I think that

¹⁰⁵This resolution brought Latvia in line with similar declarations by the Supreme Soviets of Estonia and Lithuania on November 12 and 23, 1989. See Bungs (1990a).

we will not have long to wait for a reaction to such decisions.¹⁰⁶

Both in Latvia and in Estonia, increased Baltic nationalism pressured the Popular Fronts and the Communist parties to adopt increasingly independence minded positions. As a result, this served to activate and catalyze the fears of the non-Baltic segments of the population leading to the creation of organizational alternatives to the Baltic Communist parties such as Intermovement and OSTK in Estonia and the Interfront in Latvia. In the Estonian and Latvian cases the pre-election political spectrums were remarkably similar. The Popular Fronts and the communist parties were sandwiched between more radically minded Baltic independence movements on the one hand, and the Interfront and Intermovement on the other. Despite these similarities, the trajectory of development which characterized the Popular Fronts and the Communist parties was radically different in Estonia as compared to Latvia following the founding elections of March 1990.

¹⁰⁶Riga Domestic Service, February 15, 1990, in FBIS-SOV February 20, 1990, p. 94.

The Founding Elections: March 18, 1990

The "founding" elections in both Estonia and Latvia produced radically different results. In Estonia, the PFE did not win the necessary two-thirds majority required for legislative action and a declaration of independence on its own.¹⁰⁷ In the end, three political groupings emerged within the Estonian Supreme Soviet. The PFE and its allies, won 49 seats, The Free Estonia Association won 29 seats and the "international bloc" opposition Estonian political independence led by Intermovement/OSTK won 27 seats.¹⁰⁸ In Latvia, the PFL and its allies won a clear majority in the Supreme Soviet, which enabled the PFL to operate without legislative constraint. On the other hand (as shall be demonstrated in later sections of this chapter), it also exacerbated inter-ethnic tension and the

¹⁰⁷Counting multiply-endorsed candidates at half weight, the CPE/ Vaba Eesti endorsed 43.5 candidates and 10 won. The PFE nominated 61 candidates and 28 won, 35.5 and 8.5 for the slightly more radical Estonian Union of Work Collectives (STKE) and 15 and three for the Greens. OSTK endorsed 27 candidates and 12 won election. The five candidates of the Independent Democratic Party of Russia all lost. The bulk of the remaining candidates and winners had no party affiliation or were nominated by citizens' initiative.

¹⁰⁸Komsomolskaya Pravda, March 23, 1990 p. 1, in FBIS-SOV March 26, 1990, p. 130. Kionka (1990a, p. 18) reports that a large number of national radicals who mostly ran as independents won about 22% of the seats and aligned themselves with the PFE. The PFE itself won only 24% of the seats; the "Free-Estonia association" won 28% of the seats and non-Estonian chiefly Intermovement and OSTK about 26% of the seats.

polarization of the Latvian political landscape into two clear and distinct camps.

Since Chapter 4 focused on the Estonian Supreme Soviet elections, this section will concentrate on the Latvian Supreme Soviet elections. In terms of the electoral rule, the standard Soviet formula was employed, which involved the convocation of a series of special "electoral meetings" designed to winnow down the number of candidates competing and reduce the ease of candidate access. To be officially registered, candidates had to be nominated by a minimum of 500 votes at each such meeting. Nine-hundred and eighty-nine such conferences took place in labor collectives and at places of employment, as well as 735 residential assemblies of voters, 98 assemblies of various social organizations and 72 meetings of military personnel. Five-hundred and eighty-four contenders originally entered contest; however, after the completion of the nomination phase, which lasted from January-February 27, 1990, 388 candidates remained, competing for 201 seats in the Supreme Soviet.¹⁰⁹ Of these, 94% of them were vying for the first time; 69% were party members; 45.9% were nominated by the

¹⁰⁹These are figures which were reported in Sovetskaya Latvija, February 27, 1990 p. 3, in FBIS-SOV March 16, 1990, p. 105. However, Taagepera (1990b) using data from the Latvian Popular Front publication Atmoda on March 27, 1990, reported that 395 candidates were registered. I am employing the official data from February, reported in Sovetskaya Latvija.

For further information on candidate profiles see Moscow Tass International Service, March 17, 1990, in FBIS-SOV March 19, 1990, p. 115.

Popular Front, 16% of the candidates were nominated by the Latvian Agrarian Union; two percent were nominated by Interfront. Only 7.4% of the contenders were women and 4.1% were under the age of thirty.¹¹⁰ In terms of ethnicity 62.5% of the 388 candidates were Latvian, 26.5% were Russian, 3.6% Ukrainian, 1.5 % Byelorussian 1.2%. In 53 out of the 201 single member districts only one candidate ran. In contrast to elections in the other Baltic states, the number of unopposed candidates (53) was markedly larger than in Lithuania (8) and Estonia (0). At the other extreme, in the Riga electoral districts #29 and #46, five candidates were registered.

Beyond the use of FPTP electoral rules, several other features of the Latvian election differentiated it from the Estonian case. For example, no special provision for military representation was provided in Latvia. Moreover, the Supreme Soviet's size was the same as the previous Supreme Soviet and no significant re-districting took place. In terms of ballot structure, one notable difference between standard FPTP systems and the Soviet majority system was the use of negative voting, in which the voter could either vote for candidates or vote against all candidates on the ballot. This was especially relevant in districts in which only one candidate was running, in that if a majority of

¹¹⁰Of 388 candidates only 23 were women. See Moscow Tass International Service March 17, 1990, in FBIS-SOV March 19, 1990, p. 115.

voters voted against the candidate then the election would be nullified and new elections would be required.

The electoral formula in the Latvian elections involved the use of a majority rule in which there were several formal requirements for victory. First, at least 50 percent of registered voters in a district had to participate in the election. If this requirement was not met then new elections would be called, with new candidates. If only one or two candidates were running, and all failed to receive a majority of positive votes then new elections with new candidates were also called. Seventeen such new elections took place on April 1, 1990, of which 10 were in Riga. In districts where multiple candidates ran, the victorious candidate had to receive at least the support of 50% of the voters. If this did not occur, then a run-off election would take place between the two candidates who had received the most votes. Moreover, in such run-offs the turnout clause was relaxed so as not to require the minimum of 50%. Such run-offs occurred in 14 districts and were held on March 25.

The elections brought a clear victory for the pro-independence political groupings. Based upon the analysis of district-level lists of winners, the following picture is revealed.¹¹¹ Candidates claiming membership in the PFL

¹¹¹A complete list of Latvian deputies elected on March 18, 1990, is provided by Riga Sovetskaya Latvija, March 23, 1990, pp. 1-2, in FBIS-SOV April 18, 1990, pp. 100-106.

For an updated list see News, American Latvian Association, June 7, 1990.

won 111 seats outright. Together with its close allies, the total number in the independence camp came to 131 seats. Within this bloc, 55 winners listed or co-listed Communist Party affiliation, 19 listed of co-listed Latvian National Independence Movement affiliation, 18 the Agrarian Union, 6 the Green Party and 5 the Social Democratic Workers Party. Only 13 winners in the Latvian elections listed the International Front, but candidates running under the CPL label added to an anti-independence bloc of some 55 members. However, on crucial issues such as independence where a two-thirds majority was needed, the elections produced a comfortable majority for the PFL, unlike the case of the Estonian PFE.

One possible explanation for the PFL's victory was that the Front had been successful in building bonds between Latvians and non-Latvians. Thus, according to this explanation, since immigration trends had reduced the Latvian majority to a mere 52% of the population in the Republic, the lopsided victory of the pro-independence forces in the March elections reflected the PFL's success in convincing non-Latvians of necessity of independence. Indeed, of the 197 seats settled by early May, 139 went to Latvians whereas 58 went to non-Latvians, which might support the conclusion that non-Latvians voted heavily in favor of Latvian candidates (Taagepera, 1990a, 1990b, p. 309). However, this explanation is not entirely born out by other

evidence. First of all, the use of the Soviet electoral rule undoubtedly assisted the pro-independence candidates, especially in districts outside of Riga, a city where ethnic Latvians are clearly in the minority. A second factor which may have also contributed to the victory of the independence forces was the widespread lack of turnout among non-Latvians. Indeed, the turnout rates in those districts where non-Latvians were in a majority were much lower than in Latvian districts. Voter turnout was generally lower in Riga (where non-Latvians predominate) as compared to reported republic-wide 80.4%. Thus ten seats in Riga were not filled due to voter turnout being less than the required 50% of registered voters.¹¹²

Moreover, the claim that the PFL had successfully "bridged" inter-ethnic differences between Latvians and non-Latvians does not seem to be borne out by attitudes exhibited in pre-election voter polls. Nor was this emphasis on accommodation readily in evidence in statements by the political protagonists in the Latvian Supreme Soviet. Thus, for example, shortly following the elections, Dainis Ivans, chairman of the PFL, was to proclaim that the "new Latvian Parliament will be the arena of a war of nerves" between pro-independence and anti-independence forces.¹¹³

¹¹²See Riga Domestic Service, March 19, 1990, in FBIS-SOV March 19, 1990, p. 113.

¹¹³Statement reported in Moscow TASS, March 20, 1990, in FBIS-SOV March 20, 1990, p. 113.

Finally, as will be demonstrated shortly, the trend in the development of Latvian party politics was more in the direction of "polarization" into two diametrically opposed camps, with an accompanying increase in the degree of inter-ethnic tension, contrary to the claims that the election results had demonstrated an increasing degree of accommodation. In comparison to the rather fragmented outcome of the Estonian elections, the creation of two camps in Latvia was to contribute greatly to the confrontational nature of Latvian politics in 1990-1991.

The Popular Fronts after the Elections:

The PFE

Following the elections of March, the development of the Popular Fronts in Estonia and Latvia were to follow very different courses. The question of identity and the position the Popular Fronts were to take vis-a-vis Baltic independence and the radical nationalist movements dominated the internal debates within both the PFE and PFL.

The key difference in the trajectory followed by the PFL and the PFE, was, in the latter case, internal dissension within the PFE, and open conflicts over its organizational structure, erupted very early on, and continued throughout 1991. In the Latvian case, on the other hand, the internal conflicts over the PFL were subsumed in the name of maintaining a united front against the internal

communist threat and the external threat to Latvian independence, emanating from Moscow.

The interaction of these pressures was in evidence in the Estonian case almost immediately after the founding elections of March. Indeed, the political circumstances which existed at the time of the PFE Second Congress in May of 1990, were profoundly different as compared to the founding Congress of 1988. In the intervening nineteen months, the Supreme Soviet had declared Estonian sovereignty, launched the economic self-financing plan (IME -Isemajandav Eesti) passed a package of laws on "citizenship issues" and conducted Estonia's first democratic Supreme Soviet elections in March. However, two factors most vitally affected the subsequent development of the PFE. First, the results of the founding election in March had not guaranteed the PFE an absolute majority in the Supreme Soviet, making it necessary to rely upon compromise and coalition politics in the Supreme Soviet. Second, it was the emergence of other political forces which sought to oppose the PFE, and the challenge which they signified, which served to exert a consolidating pressure on the proceedings of the Congress. These were the Second Congress of Estonia (May 25) and the founding Congress of the Interregional Council (May 26).

After a euphoric first meeting in March 1990, the Congress of Estonia encountered serious political opposition from the Popular Front-led Supreme Soviet and

government. Although several members of the Estonian Congress had also been elected to the Supreme Soviet (they had run as independents during the campaign), and the PFE had participated in the elections to the Estonian Congress, relations between the two bodies grew progressively worse following the March elections. In the weeks before the second meeting of the Congress of Estonia, leading PFE activists conducted a bitter press campaign against it, accusing the Congress and ENIP of splitting Estonian society by withholding support from the Supreme Soviet.

The day after the Congress of Estonia met, a group of non-Estonian deputies to the Supreme Soviet formed another alternative power structure in Estonia. Some 170 delegates convened in the northeastern city of Kohtla-Jarve to establish the Interregional Council of People's Deputies and Workers of the USSR. The Interregional Council dedicated itself to preserving the Soviet federation and voted not to abide by laws passed by the Estonian Supreme Soviet, but to obey only the central authorities.

Against this background of political maneuvering, with one alternative power structure already in place, and another in the making, the leaders of the Popular Front concerned themselves with two issues at the second PFE congress. First, the PFE leadership sought to place the PFE in the middle of the Estonian political spectrum, attacking extreme on both sides of the independence issue. Second, the debate over the PFE's organizational identity was

subsumed in favor of maintaining an united front in the face of the threat from both the national radicals in the Congress of Estonia and the Russian secessionists.

The Popular Front leaders were undoubtedly somewhat concerned about events in northeastern Estonia and the forces behind them. In his speech to the congress, deputy Vladimir Kallinin referred to the founders of the new power structure in the northeast as "intellectual dwarfs who strive to defend the so-called achievements of socialism we could laugh at them if only they weren't backed by powerful war machines."¹¹⁴

The leaders of the PFE, however, directed their harshest attacks on the Congress of Estonia. For example, in an interview with the Helsinki journal Hufrudstadsladet on May 7, 1990 Rein Ruutsoos, a PF activist, argued that the PFE in Estonia had no "illusions of Western support for independence, and "in this respect the PF is different from the groups which took the initiative for the Estonian Congress. These have always put their faith in the United States which is now kicking us in the teeth"¹¹⁵. According to Ruutsoo, the fundamental issue which divided the PFE and the radicals in the Congress of Estonia was the issue of

¹¹⁴Rahva Haal, May 29, 1990, p. 1, quoted in Kionka, 1990a, p. 18.

¹¹⁵Reported in FBIS-SOV May 11, 1990, p. 78. Ruutosso himself was a member of the Estonian Congress and representative of the PFE in that body. He is also a leader in the Social Democratic Independence Party.

immediate independence. For him, Estonia could not reach a categorical decision on independence as Lithuania had done because such an action would compel the Russians in the northeast to secede. The PFE was the only political force in the republic that would guarantee this would not occur.¹¹⁶

Beyond the attempt to distance themselves from the national radicals, the second PFE Congress also dealt with question of its organizational identity. On the one hand, there were those who held that the Popular Front should transform itself into a political party, with a streamlined organization modeled after the Communist Party. Advocates of this approach included the Prime Minister Edgar Savisaar, Popular Front Board Chairman Ignar Fyuk, and the PFE parliamentary caucus leader Arvo Junti. The general logic behind this was that Estonian society had not matured as a civil society to the extent of being able to support a truly multi-party system. Moreover, the threat represented by the challenges posed by both the national radicals and the Russian secessionists, made it necessary to transform the PFE into a "leading party" until the point in time where a mass political party was no longer needed to "guarantee democratization."

This attitude was reflected in statements made at the PFE's Second Congress by Prime Minister Savisaar. In an

¹¹⁶Ibid.

interview on April 15, 1990, he emphasized the importance of transforming the PFE into a more coherent organization with the "registration of support groups with the reformation and renaming of local leading bodies wherever necessary." Moreover, Savisaar voiced concern over the maintaining and strengthening the organizational coherence of the Popular Front noting that although the front had been "a good political school, demonstrated by the success of those people who have grown out the People's Front, "the rather loose and incoherent nature of the organization might prove to be disastrous in the upcoming months.¹¹⁷ Citing the dissolution of the Czechoslovak Civic Forum and the Solidarity movement in Poland following their ascent to power, Savisaar warned that unless the PFE assumed a leading role in Estonian society, and improved discipline within the organization and its parliamentary component, then the fracturing of the movement could lead to disastrous consequences.

It is very important at the moment that the Peoples' Front not become weak. It is clear that a number of People's Front leaders cross over into the state apparatus. It is necessary at the moment that both the people's support as well as the peoples' control over the parliament and the government continue.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁷Tallinn Domestic Service, April 15, 1990, in FBIS-SOV April 16, 1990, p. 103.

¹¹⁸Ibid.

On the other hand, an alternative position was advocated by PFE leaders like Ugo Nugis, Rein Viedemann, and Marju Lauristin, who contended that the Front be reorganized to afford greater flexibility for the groups and fledging parties which comprised the PFE. Lauristin in particular, favored the notion of maintaining the rather loose format of the PFE in order to maximize the free development of multi-partism. Nugis and Viedemann argued even more strongly for the dissolution of the Front, contending, in an interview with Krasnaya Zvezda, that "the PF must be relegated to the backburner as having already performed its task." Moreover, they condemned the PFE leadership, and Savisaar himself, for their refusal to cooperate more closely with the Congress of Estonia and for not "working actively enough to pull the Republic out of the USSR."¹¹⁹

The second PFE congress did little to resolve this debate. As a result, during the spring and summer of 1990, several PFE politicians unilaterally took actions to establish independent political parties, albeit operating under the umbrella of the PFE. These included the Liberal Democratic Party, the Estonian Democratic Labor Party, the Estonian Social Democratic Independence Party, the Russian Social Democratic Party of Estonia. Although these parties had existed in name for some time under the umbrella of the

¹¹⁹Krasnaya Zvezda, May 24, 1990, p. 3, in FBIS-SOV June 3, 1990, p. 76.

PFE, they were largely paper organizations with limited membership and little or not local organization. However, in the summer and fall of 1990, these parties began to create alternative party structures. Thus, in July, 1990 preparatory work was begun for the foundation of a Social democratic Party of Estonia which was announced in a declaration issued by a joint meeting the Estonian Democratic Labor Party, The Estonian Social Democratic Independence Party, the Russian Social Democratic Party of Estonia and the Association of the Estonian Socialist Party abroad.¹²⁰ At its inaugural Congress on September 8, 1990, which was attended by 133 members of the Social Democratic Independence Party, 66 members of the Democratic Labor Party, and 44 members of the Russian Social Democratic Party of Estonia, the Social Democratic Party of Estonia was born. The party immediately declared that it would establish its own independent social democratic faction within the parliament, apart from the PFE. It's program was decidedly social democratic in nature, declaring its opposition to the ideal that "capitalism exist as the panacea for all of our problems" and declared its commitment to the promotion of inter-ethnic cooperation. In terms of party organization, territorial committees were formed in each of the major cities and electoral districts in the Republic, and a central leadership was selected with

¹²⁰Statement published in Sovetskaya Estoniya, July 10, 1990, p. 3, in FBIS-SOV August 1, 1990, p. 61.

Marju Lauristin as the chairperson of the party, two deputy chairs, a secretariat and Iokahannes Mikheleson as the party president.¹²¹ Similar declarations and congresses were held for the Estonian Liberal Democratic Party and the Party of Entrepreneurs in the fall of 1990.

Changes in the political environment served to temporarily arrest the debates within the PFE. First, Moscow's turn to the right in early 1991, leading to the crackdown on the Baltic Republics, galvanized political support for the PFE leadership. On this tide of popular support, the PFE government was able to conduct a plebiscite on independence on March 3, 1991, which led to vote in favor of independence for Estonia, and indirectly a popular vote of confidence for the PFE-led government. In addition, the domestic challenges to the PFE had also receded. With the exception of having conducted the all-Union referendum in northeastern Estonia, the Interregional Council had been quiet. Moreover the CPE had split with Moscow in March, 1990 and had formalized the split in December, resulting in the weakening of the CPE. The Congress of Estonia had also continued to lose influence, primarily because its leadership had made a number of grave strategic errors, the most greivous of which was to enter into an unholy alliance with the CPE in calling for the ouster of the PFE-led government in November 1990.

¹²¹Sovetskaya Estoniya, September 11, 1990, pp. 1-2, in FBIS-SOV September 23, 1990, p. 76.

However, with the lessening of the threat to PFE-dominance the process of internal differentiation which had been subsumed at the Second Congress emerged rapidly in the week leading up to the PFE Third Congress. In the weeks leading up to the PFE Third Congress in April 1991, the debates which had characterized the Second Congress erupted once again. Two questions dominated the proceedings at the Third Congress: 1) had the period of democratic transition been completed sufficiently to alter the organizational format of the PFE?; 2) and if so what organizational form should the PFE take? These questions were vital, as Illar Hallaste noted since "it is difficult even for members of the Popular Front to explain what the Popular Front actually is."¹²²

In general, the debate at the Third Congress echoed the issues which had been introduced at the Second Congress. On the one hand, Savisaar and others within the top leadership argued that the time was ripe to transform the PFE into a genuine political party and as the single voice for Estonian political independence. Not only was this desirable but necessary, given the continued threat to Estonian independence presented by Moscow. In an article published shortly before the Third Congress, Savisaar declared that "the current government is not dangling in thin air. It is supported by the Popular Front which in

¹²²Paevaleht, April 14, 1991, in Kionka, 1991, p. 18.

turn is supported by every third resident of Estonia." Moreover, for Savisaar, the Popular Front was the government of Estonia and "it must be made clear to people what the Estonian People will gain or lose if the Popular Front leaves the government."¹²³ PFE board chairman Ignar Fyuk, also underlined the indispensability of the PFE, when she claimed that "saying no to the Popular Front is like saying yes to totalitarianism."¹²⁴ Further, in her speech to the Third Congress, Fyuk openly admonished those Supreme Soviet deputies who were elected with the help of the Front, but who had forgotten the movement and struck out on their own, saying that the "Popular Front has outwardly behaved like a party" but is now lacking in requisite "internal discipline."¹²⁵

On the other hand, advocates of the position that the PFE remain a "coordinating body" for all "democratically minded parties," resisted the creation of a unitary Popular Front, preferring instead to allow the natural proliferation and coalescence of parties that had been under way in Estonia for a year and a half. For example, Lauristin was reported to have been stunned to hear Savisaar's condemnation of political parties at the Third Congress:

¹²³Rahva Haal, March 8, 1991, in Kionka, 1991, p. 19.

¹²⁴TASS, April 13, 1991, in Kionka, 1991, p. 18.

¹²⁵See Paevaleht, April 14, 1991, in Kionka, 1991, p. 19.

It is painful to hear how easily political parties are spoken of as little groups that splinter society and bicker among themselves. Actually, Estonian society has move in the direction of cooperation in the past year.¹²⁶

Others, like PFE Supreme Soviet deputy Liia Hanni, favored a looser PFE for reasons of parity. Given the heterogeneous nature of the Front no single group within the PFE should have the sole right to use the PFE's good name and considerable influence. The academic, Andres Tarand, objected to the proposal whereby one party would rule out participation by others: "The inevitable preservation of the Popular Front must be dictated by the mood of the people, not by the desire of one party to brush others aside."¹²⁷

After considerable discussion, the Congress voted for a compromise measure by postponing the issue of defining the PFE. In essence the status quo was upheld. The PFE was to remain a "mass movement" which compelled a Tartu daily to publish an article under the tongue-in-cheek headline "Edgar Savisaar, Partyless as Before."¹²⁸ Yet that the status quo was maintained represented a defeat of sorts for those whose sought the dissolution of the PFE and the establishment of true multi-partism. Nonetheless, this

¹²⁶Postimees, April 15, 1991, in Kionka, 1991, p. 18.

¹²⁷Ibid.

¹²⁸Ibid.

defeat did not compel the various "political parties" which had comprised the PFE to bolt. This was largely due to the perception as one observer noted:

For the moment there is no alternative to Savisaar. Within the People's Front, to be sure, social democratic, liberal and agrarian parties have emerged, which are collaborating with the green movement which is not part of the People's Front. But the leaders of these parties continue to support the prime minister who has thus far not joined any one of the political parties.¹²⁹

This was also reflected in statements made by Lauristin, who was offered the post of Prime Minister by the radical nationalists and the reform Communists in the Supreme Soviet following the Congress, turned the offer down by saying "I am not a deserter."¹³⁰

Several factors seem to have contributed to the fact that the status quo was maintained. First of all, despite the increasing differences within the PFE over fundamental questions concerning its future identity, the continued existence of the Soviet threat to Estonian independence exerted a powerful centripetal pressure on the PFE. Secondly, the fact that the PFE had assumed power without the advantage of commanding a clear majority in parliament, meant that dissolution would lead to political disaster for

¹²⁹Vienna Die Presse, April 2, 1991, in FBIS-SOV May 2, 1991, p. 46.

¹³⁰Ibid.

both the Front and the government. This concern was clearly in the minds of most PFE leaders, and was exemplified by the many references to the political difficulties resulting from the collapse and dissolution of the Civic Forum in Czechoslovakia, and Solidarity in Poland.

On the other hand, the lessening of the threat posed by both the CPE loyalists and the radicals in the Estonian Congress throughout 1990-1991 appears to have catalyzed the process of internal differentiation, but only up to a point. The overarching threat presented by the external environment -- i.e., from Moscow -- served to provide sufficient incentive for the PFE to avoid the question of reorganization and identity and to retain the image of the PFE as a highly heterogeneous "citizens' movement" or a coalition of several distinct and often different viewpoints.

Another factor was the emerging alignment of ethno-political forces. Although the emergence of the OSTK and Intermovement as the "champions" of the non-Estonian minority had created a challenge to the PFE, and threatened ethnic political conflict within the republic, these movements remained largely ineffectual. To a large extent this was due to the fracturing of the CPE and victory of the independence wing of the party which sought to identify itself as the principal champion of ethnic harmony. In addition, it was due to the actions of the PFE itself, which sought to present itself as the champion of inter-ethnic harmony

through its attacks on the more radical Estonian nationalists in the Congress of Estonia and in ENIP.

Although it is difficult to derive an essential cause for the evolution of the PFE, clearly one of the principal factors which affected the course of its development was the fact that the PFE had been unable to secure a majority in Parliament. Much of this was due to operation of the electoral system, which in essence had served to disadvantage the PFE by promoting the representation of other groups, most notably the independents associated with ENIP and the Russian conservative elements in the Northeast. Thus, the first few months after the founding elections were characterized by the PFE's attempts to discredit its opponents, and by calls made by the Savisaar leadership for internal PFE discipline. Although, this should have served to consolidate the PFE, developments among the other political groupings, most notably the Communist party, torn by its own identity crisis, served to weaken the threat posed, thus lessening the necessity of transforming the PFE into a leading force in the Republic. Indeed, the latent disputes within the PFE, both over policy and between competing personalities, increased as the internal threat to the PFE lessened. On the other hand, the continued external threat posed by Moscow served to exert a centripetal pressure on the PFE. What the PFE had become by the spring of 1991 was something like a political party, but far from a unified or coherent one.

The PFL

Unlike the PFE, the PFL moved in a radically different direction. The PFL, in the first year following the founding election, moved in the direction of: 1) cooperation with radical Latvian nationalists represented by the LNIM; 2) an increasingly confrontational position vis-a-vis the Latvian Communist party, in part attributable to the growing non-Baltic chauvinism adopted by the CPL after its 25th Congress in April of 1990; 3) the establishment of internal discipline and the coordination of the disparate political forces under its direction.

In general, the forces which had led to the partial dissolution of the PFE, but also the moderation of PFE politics, were largely absent in the Latvian case. First, unlike in the Estonian case, the PFL won an outright majority in the Supreme Soviet elections of March. Second, the PFL had established an alliance with the national radicals, especially the LNIM, who had run under a common banner in the elections. As a result, the PFL, unlike the PFE, was not compelled to moderate both its political position on independence and its attitude towards the CPL nor the Russian extremists. In addition, the increased threat to Latvian independence in 1991 served to consolidate the PFL,

but also served to polarize Latvian politics into two diametrically opposed, and ethnically based, camps.

Like the PFE, the Popular Front of Latvia experienced a kind of "identity crisis" by the time of its Third Congress on October 6-7 1990. Yet, the debates which had marked the PFE Second and Third congresses were strikingly absent from the PFL Third Congress. The majority of speeches delivered echoed a remarkably similar theme -- that the time was now propitious to close ranks, to transform the PFL into the single political force in the Republic, and to prepare for direct confrontation with the CPL. Condemnation of the CPL was not reserved for the CPL loyalists but also directed at the Democratic Labor Party (the former CPL reformist wing which had renamed itself in October).¹³¹ These sentiments were reflected in the opening address by Dainis Ivans, chairman of the Popular Front since its inception in 1988. He expressed the firm belief that the republic's activities should be directed by the PFL and that parliament should be carefully monitored by the PFL board. The "steeling" of the PFL was necessary, Ivans claimed, in order to "destroy the socialist system once and for all."¹³² This was also reflected in statements made by the newly elected Front chairman, Romualds Razuks who called for the "non-recognition of all forms of

¹³¹Moscow TASS, October 7, 1990, in FBIS-SOV October 9, 1990, p. 89.

¹³²Ibid.

communism and socialism and other teachings which in his opinion reject democracy."¹³³ Razuks also called for the creation of a disciplined PFL since "the Popular Front is Latvia's only capable political force."¹³⁴ Moreover, unlike the PFE, which maintained membership ties with the CPE, any connection between the PFL and the CPL were severed by the program adopted in October: "Membership in Latvia's Popular Front is incompatible with communist, national socialist and other totalitarian views Only independent political organizations with a ruling body in Latvia should be allowed in the Republic."¹³⁵

In addition to severing any links with the CPL, the PFL Third Congress ushered in a new emphasis on streamlining the Front into a more disciplined and coherent organization directed by its central leadership. Unlike in Estonia, for example, the post of Front chairman was significantly strengthened. Thus, the Front Chairman (Razuks) was granted the right to handpick both the deputy chair and 50% of the Front's governing council (Duma), which had been previously selected by the Congress itself. The post of council chair, a position which Razuks had held previously, was merged with the position of the Front chairman. Such measures were necessary Razuks argued in his closing

¹³³Ibid.

¹³⁴Ibid.

¹³⁵Ibid., p. 91.

address since "we have to understand the present situation where we are going, who is with us, and who are allies are."¹³⁶

The transformation of the Front into a streamlined and centrally directed organization also involved the establishment of greater central control over both the parliamentary component of the PFL and the chapters operating in the localities. This, Prime Minister Ivars Godmanis argued, was now necessary because internal dissent hampered the government's ability to implement its program of economic reform. Godmanis, in his remarks to the Congress, admonished the former leadership (particularly Dainis Ivans) for having clung too long to the image of the PFL as a "mass movement" and for not creating within the PFL a "shadow government" which would enable the Popular Front to play the "leading role" in implementing economic and political reforms."¹³⁷

These calls for the greater centralization in the PFL were followed by measures adopted in December when the PFL board announced the formation of a new "faction" within the Republic Supreme Soviet which would coordinate the PF parliamentary wing, and institute unspecified sanctions

¹³⁶Moscow TASS, October 6, 1990, in FBIS-SOV October 9, 1990, p. 89.

¹³⁷Speech broadcast on Riga Domestic Service, October 7, 1990, in FBIS-SOV October 9, 1990, p. 90.

against parliamentary members who did not comply with the PFL board's wishes.¹³⁸

In addition to establishing more direct control over its parliamentary wing, efforts were made, in the fall of 1990, to establish greater control and direction over the local branches of the Popular Front and the thirty-odd political organizations and parties which comprised the PFL. The importance of this effort was underlined by Godmanis at the October Congress, when he argued that, if control and coordination of the local branches of the PFL was not instituted, then "those who formerly head the political power will take all the economic power and those have the economic power will sooner or later return to political power."¹³⁹

The effort to coordinate the activities of local branches and the central leadership was complemented by the establishment by the PFL board of a special coordinating center for the thirty movements and parties of the PFL, to be headed by Razuks and responsible solely to the PFL board.¹⁴⁰ By December, the PFL board under Razuks had made substantial efforts to transform the PFL into the "leading" political force in Latvia, prompting Razuks to proclaim the

¹³⁸Riga Domestic Service, December 10, 1990, in FBIS-SOV December 13, 1990, p. 61.

¹³⁹Ibid., p. 90.

¹⁴⁰Moscow TASS, December 12, 1990, in FBIS-SOV December 13, 1990, p. 61.

PFL was the leading voice in the Latvian independence movement and that the "Latvian Supreme Soviet had authorized the PFL board to speak in its name."¹⁴¹

The increased emphasis on internal coherence, and the move towards greater central direction within the PFL, stood in contrast to the sharp and public disagreements which characterized the PFE's Second and Third congresses. To a great extent, this was due to the increasingly sharp rhetoric and actions taken by the forces arrayed against Latvian independence, especially following the triumph of the anti-independence forces in the CPL. The turn to the right in Moscow, in the winter of 1990-1991, was also to have a profound effect on the evolution of the PFL's attitude towards both the CPL and the ethnically particularistic parties, both Latvian and non-Latvian.

Although continuing to hold to the position that cooperation between Latvians and non-Latvians was essential for stability in the republic, PFL leaders were viewing with alarm the possibility of a military coup, sponsored by the Interfront and the CPL.¹⁴² Thus, Prime Minister Godmanis, in an interview with the German weekly Die Welt in December, warned of an impending military action launched under the auspices of the CPL. "I clearly see the danger of

¹⁴¹Riga Domestic Service, in FBIS-SOV December 20, 1990, p. 58.

¹⁴²For a detailed description of the events of September, 1990 to January, 1991, see Dzintra Bungis (1991a).

a military coup the influence of reactionary forces in the republic is increasing."¹⁴³ In response to the growing perception that the republic was under increasing danger from both Moscow and the ethnically particularistic political groupings among the non-Latvian segment of the population, Godamnīs called for the "stepping up" of "educative efforts" among non-Latvians.¹⁴⁴

Other leaders of the PFL called for even more extreme measures to guarantee the security of the republic. For instance, Andrejs Krastsyns, deputy chairman of the Supreme Council, became increasingly vocal on the issue of Latvian citizenship, arguing for the adoption of a citizenship law which would limit citizenship to those who had been citizens of the independent Republic of Latvia before the Soviet takeover of June 17, 1940 (Kionka, Bungis, and Girnius, 1990, p. 28).

Other evidence that the crisis of the winter of 1990-1991 led to increasing inter-ethnic tension, was exhibited by the coverage of events in Latvia by the central press in Moscow. For example, shortly after the conclusion of the PFL Third Congress, Izvestiya contended that the Front's

¹⁴³Interview in Hamburg Die Welt, December 20, 1990, p. 1, in FBIS-SOV December 23, 1990, p. 59.

¹⁴⁴Moscow TASS, December 13, 1990, in FBIS-SOV December 14, 1990, p. 82.

lack of sensitivity to minority issues would ultimately "only cause greater inter-ethnic tension." ¹⁴⁵

Moreover, the PFL leadership became far more shrill in its condemnation of both the Interfront and the CPL. For example, the PFL openly accused the Interfront of illegally planing to restore a dictatorial regime.¹⁴⁶ Further, the PFL fraction in the Latvian National Citizens' Committee, which had been established as an alternative to the Supreme Soviet, issued a position statement calling upon "the non-indigenous population to repatriate voluntarily," and that the presence of the non-Latvian population in the republic was "contributing to Latvia's ethnic death."¹⁴⁷

A second outcome of the PFL Third Congress was the growing cooperation between the PFL and the LNIM. Although the LNIM had co-sponsored many candidates with the PFL in the March elections, it had also conducted elections in the

¹⁴⁵Commentary reported in Izvestiya, October 2, 1990, p. 2.

¹⁴⁶Sovetskaya Rossiya, December 14, 1990, p. 1.

¹⁴⁷Moscow TASS, December 17, 1990, in FBIS-SOV December 18, 1990, pp. 82-83.

These statements were later rejected by PFL leaders. For example in an interview with Izvestiya on April 26, 1991, Andrejs Kratsyns repudiated such statements as being made "only by people who do not engage in real politics." However he also noted that it was "natural that, in condidering the past, not all Latvians have good feelings about Russians" and that it was necessary to allow such sttements even thoguh they are "voicing undemocratic opinions in their publications." Interview with Kratsyns in Izvestiya April 26, 1991 p. 3.

spring of 1990 for an alternative parliament, the Latvian National Citizens' Committee. However, by October, the LNIM and the PFL had moved in the direction of amalgamation. Indeed, one of the official announcements produced by the October congress was the establishment of an official alliance with the Latvian Citizens' Congress, and the establishment of a joint LNIM-PFL faction in the Supreme Soviet (Kionka, Bungis, and Girnius, 1990, pp. 27-28). This announcement was in stark contrast to the PFE's condemnation and polemic conducted against ENIP and the Congress of Estonia. Moreover, unlike in the Estonian case, where the Soviet military crackdown of January-February 1991 had acted to temporarily arrest the identity crisis in the PFE, the crisis in Latvia contributed greatly to the establishment of PFL hegemony within the Latvian independence movement. So great had the PFL's leadership become in the independence movement, that when some LNIM parliamentarians attempted to establish an independent faction within the Supreme Soviet apart from the PFL-led faction after the respite of the Spring, the PFL board denounced this as to it as "untimely" and "provocative" and the move was squashed.¹⁴⁸

Thus, by the Spring of 1991, the PFL had firmly established its position as the leading political movement within Latvian society, and the principal political force

¹⁴⁸Riga Domestic Service, May 8, 1990, FBIS-SOV May 9, 1991, p. 51.

in the drive for the Republic's independence. Although still a heterogeneous organization, the efforts by the PFL leadership in the direction of centralization had been significantly strengthened by the attempted Soviet crackdown on the Latvian independence movement in the winter of 1990-91. This was also assisted by the ability of the PFL to subordinate economic and other social issues to the issue of independence. This was reflected in statements made by Krastyns in an interview with Izvestiya in May 1991.

Although Kratsyns lamented over the fact that movement toward market reform and the inevitable increases in prices had considerably reduced the population's prosperity "against this background of economic difficulties there can be seen the desire of some political groups to take revenge for the defeat in last year's elections."¹⁴⁹ Thus, diligence on the part of the PFL was required against such "reactionary forces," rather than a relaxation of the PFL's efforts to streamline the organization.

Coincident with the consolidation of the PFL into a "leading force" in the republic, was the growing tolerance for Latvian ethnic chauvinism. Although, the PFL leadership stopped short of reiterating the principle of repatriation to the Russian republic of all non-Latvians, there was increasing tolerance for such views in the PFL. Thus Kratsyns, although contending that such calls were

¹⁴⁹Izvestiya, April 26, 1991, p. 3.

extreme and made generally by "people who do not engage in real politics" such attitudes were understandable in that "it is natural that, in considering the past, not all Latvians have good feelings about the Russians."¹⁵⁰ Moreover, the PFL, was in favor of the limitation of the rights of those who plotted against the republic's political institutions. Thus, in response to the CPL's charge that the PFL-led government was engaged in the curtailment of "human rights," Kratsyns response was that, "I do not argue with them. But it seems to me that in our documents there are elements not of the violation of human rights, but of the curtailments of some people's privileges."¹⁵¹ Kratsyns was also against granting citizenship rights to members of the CPL, even if its members qualified for citizenship, since it was "essentially the party of a foreign state" and a "political force which is struggling against Latvia's independence. Can we give citizenship to Communist Party leader (Alfred) Rubiks, if he is doing everything to oppose the restoration of independence? Although under the 1919 law he is undoubtedly a citizen of the Latvian Republic."¹⁵²

Thus, in the year following the founding elections in March of 1990 in Latvia, there were several notable dif-

¹⁵⁰Ibid.

¹⁵¹Ibid.

¹⁵²Ibid.

ferences in the evolution of the PFE and the PFL. Although each had begun primarily as mass organizations in support of "perestroika" and "Glasnost'", and had subsequently evolved to the level of founding elections into political parties competing for elected office, the year 1990-1991 witnessed entirely different trajectories of development for both of these transitional parties.

On the one hand, the PFE during the course of its development experienced major internal pressures toward its dissolution. Indeed, the development of fissiparous tendencies within the PFE, which were only temporarily arrested by the crisis of the fall and winter of 1990-1991, reached crisis proportions by the time of the PFE Third Congress in the Spring of 1991. Although in the end, a tenuous compromise was reached between those who advocated transforming the PFE into a "political party" with "internal discipline" and those who sought the ultimate dissolution of the PFE, the period was characterized by the rapid growth of coherent political parties with independent ideological and economic programs within the Popular Front. The coherence of the PFE as an "umbrella" grouping was largely due to the threat posed by Moscow rather than internal threats posed by either the Estonian Congress of Intermovement, OSTK and the CPE. Nonetheless, despite this, or perhaps because of it, the kind of anti-Communist and implied anti-Russian rhetoric which characterized the PFL was strikingly absent.

On the other hand, the development of the PFL especially after its Second Congress in October 1990, was not marked by the growth of fissiparous tendencies within its ranks, but rather quite the contrary. The Second Congress represented a clear victory for those who advocated the transformation of the PFL into a "disciplined" political organization. Indeed, the fissiparous tendencies which had marked the PFE were largely absent from the PFL. In contrast to the PFE, which was wracked by internal divisions, the PFL Second Congress and its aftermath was marked by the movement towards the establishment of internal organizational discipline. To a great extent, the move towards the establishment of internal discipline was largely a function of the threat posed not only by Moscow, but more importantly by the local opponents to Latvian independence, particularly the CPL, which after its 25th Congress in April of 1990 had moved decisively in the direction of actively opposing Latvian independence.

Again although it is difficult to reduce the essential cause for the differences in the evolution of the PFE and the PFL, clearly one factor which contributed greatly to the emerging polarization between pro-independence and anti-independence forces was the fact that the PFL had scored such a decisive electoral victory in March, 1990. By scoring such a victory, which was undoubtedly assisted by the use of the FPTP electoral rule, the PFL activated opposition, particularly among the more conservative

elements within the CPL and the minority non-Latvian political organizations. Certainly the PFL victory catalyzed the conservative victory at the CPL 25th Congress in April, 1990. In turn, the greater anti-PFL activity and rhetoric on the part of the CPL and Interfront compelled the PFL itself to adopt an increasingly intransigent attitude vis-a-vis these organizations, and greater effort to establish internal discipline. Thus, in stark contrast to the case of the PFE, the PFL had moved rapidly towards its emergence as the "leading" political force in the Republic. However, by doing so, the tenor of Latvian politics became one of an increasing degree of polarization between the PFL on the one hand and the anti-independence forces on the other.

The Communist Parties after the Elections: The CPE

The forces which had shaped the development of the Popular Front in Estonia were also to have a profound effect on the development of the Communist Party of Estonia. First, the March elections had prevented the establishment of PFE hegemony, and had provided for a rather respectable showing for the Communists. Second, the moderation of PFE politics in turn served to assist the struggle of the CPE reformists in transforming the party into one independent of Moscow. However, one factor which

contributed greatly to the different trajectory followed by the CPE as opposed to its Latvian counterpart, was the historical "legacy" where the reformists in the former had captured positions of leadership prior to the founding elections.

The results of the March elections were to have a profound effect on the CPE. The elections had not been a total failure for the CPE. Indeed, the Free-Estonia Association had been relatively successful in capturing 29 seats in the parliament. Two lessons could be derived from the relative success of the association. First, running as an independent communist party could attract some voter support. Secondly, the electoral system benefited the CPE and hence created opportunities for electoral victory which may have not existed under the conditions of FPTP. These lessons were not lost upon the CPE leadership, and at the Party's 20th Congress, measures were adopted to accelerate the establishment of a re-organized CPE, independent of the direction from Moscow.

The 20th Congress of the Communist Party of Estonia opened on March 25, 1990. The beginning of the Congress was marked by the political report of First Secretary Vaino Valyas, which dealt directly with assessing the results of the March 18 elections. Although the CPE and its front organization had captured 29 seats in the legislature, the elections had represented a defeat for the Party. According to Valyas, the chief cause of the mistake was that the

CPE had not been a sufficiently independent political force, and what was now required was the establishment of a truly independent party organization. Thus, for Valyas "only an independent Communist Party of Estonia can efficiently participate in the new political life of Estonia, change tactics in a flexible way, form coalitions and compete with other parties and movements."¹⁵³ In his speech, Valyas pointed to the declining strength of the CPE and the necessity of taking the initiative away from the PFE. However, unlike the PFE, the CPE should also become the chief proponent of representing all residents of the republic. Thus, the "CPE should offer its own highly radical version of the republic's getting out of crisis and promote the establishment of a national status and ensure stability in inter-ethnic relations."¹⁵⁴ Moreover, he urged the delegates to the CPE to speak as a united force and back the program of action that had been proposed.¹⁵⁵ "The independence of the Estonian Communist Party does not mean political isolation. The communists together with other democratic movements and parties may establish a left-wing bloc. CPE activities should increasingly rely on universal

¹⁵³Moscow TASS, April 14, 1990, in FBIS-SOV April 16, 1990, p. 104.

¹⁵⁴Moscow TASS, March 23, 1990, in FBIS-SOV March 26, 1990, p. 131.

¹⁵⁵Moscow Television Service, March 24, 1990, in FBIS-SOV March 26, 1990, p. 128.

human values and a new political thinking."¹⁵⁶

The speech apparently sparked much controversy. Concerning the subsequent committee debates on the speech and draft proposal set forth by Valyas, J. Tamma, First Secretary of the Tartu Party Committee, remarked that during these proceedings "compromise is out of the question at the congress, and no consolidation could be reached on the program's bases."¹⁵⁷ A sharp critic of the draft proposal, I. Panifilov, First Secretary of the Tallin City party committee, spoke against the establishment of an independent party, warning "those who are leading the party towards division are making a grave historical mistake."¹⁵⁸

On March 25, at the insistence of Mikk Titma, the Secretary of Ideology and a leader of the Free Estonia Association, the draft document was put to a vote. A total of 421 delegates voted for the adoption of the draft as the basis of the Party's program, and 232 voted against with 13 abstentions.¹⁵⁹ The group voting against requested a fifteen minute recess in order to confer among themselves. The "fifteen-minute faction," as it was to become known, then announced that it would not take part in voting on the

¹⁵⁶Moscow TASS, March 23, 1990, in FBIS-SOV March 26, 1990, p. 131.

¹⁵⁷Ibid.

¹⁵⁸Ibid.

¹⁵⁹Tallinn Domestic Service, March 25, 1990, in FBIS-SOV March 26, 1990, p. 126.

program of the Communist party. Apparently, however, there were several defections in that in the vote on the program 432 delegates voted for adoption, three against, and 228 abstained.¹⁶⁰ At 1:13 p.m. on March 25, 1990, an independent communist party was born.

However, two caveats were attached to the declaration of independence. The first was the provision of a six-month transitional period in which preparations for the full establishment of an independent communist party organization would be undertaken. In the meantime, a "coalition" Central Committee was created in which places would be reserved for representatives of either wing of the Party. On March 26, the Independent Communist Party of Estonia selected Valyas to the new position of party chair who was directly responsible to the Congress and not subordinate to either the Political Bureau or the Central Committee. Enn-Arno Sillari was elected as First Secretary of the Party as was a 59 member central committee. On the same day, CPSU loyalists founded another communist party, the "CPE-CPSU Program" which elected its own 35-member Central Committee, of which only 17 seats were filled.¹⁶¹

From the outset, the CPSU loyalists were in a much weaker position than the independent party. First, not all loyalists had left the CPE to join the newly established

¹⁶⁰Ibid., pp. 126-127.

¹⁶¹Helsinki Domestic Service, March 26, 1990, in FBIS-SOV March 27, 1990, p. 31.

loyalist party. Several regional party organizations, upon which the CPSU program had counted for political and organizational support, opted not to join the CPSU fraction (although the Tallin city and Tartu city organizations did). On March 29, a special plenary session of the party committees of Narva, Sillamae and Kohtla-Jarve, voted to stay with the Independent Communist Party and supported Vladimir Malkovsky, a Russian and First Secretary of the Narva party committee, to the position as one of the secretaries of the Independent Communist Party. In accepting the nomination, Malkovsky remarked that, although he favored a reconciliation between the two wings of the party, it was clearly necessary for the CPE to become a "full blooded" party capable of dealing with the new political environment which the elections had created.¹⁶²

Beyond the problems posed by the defections of several "non-Estonian" regional organizations, the loyalist wing of the CPE was also beset with financial difficulties. In an interview with Sovetskaya Estoniya on June 20, 1990, First Secretary (CPE-CPSU) Aleksandr Gusev complained that the two communist parties "are operating under far from equal conditions. All the organizational structures and the entire apparatus are working for the independent Communist Party Sillari is categorically opposed to sharing finances, buildings and so forth." Gusev went on to

¹⁶²Tallinn Domestic Service, March 29, 1990, in FBIS-SOV March 30, 1990, pp. 92-93.

say the loyalist wing of the party was experiencing an acute shortage of finances and a shortage of party personnel and that a "difficult situation existed in the rural areas."¹⁶³

The Independent Communist Party after the 20th Congress was also beset with serious difficulties. Of these perhaps the most pressing was the strain the break had on the party's relationship with Moscow. Although the "break" had not yet been made official, and both the loyalist and independent Communist parties had been invited to attend the 28th CPSU party congress, Moscow had clearly begun to favor the loyalist party over the independent CPE. Thus, Sillari commenting on his trip to Moscow in June 1990 reported that:

We were reproached for observing closely the program of the Estonian Communist Party and for not cooperating with the Gusev-Panifilov Party. It, however, is implementing the course of the Intermovement and the strike committees and is fighting in every way against Estonian Independence Indeed the aim of the center is fairly clear: to shape the Estonian Communist Party into a striking force to fight against the Republic of Estonia's Supreme Soviet and its legal government The Gusev-Panifilov party has not been sitting idly by in the meantime. Their aim is to rally most communists under their flag and to start running the affairs of all Estonia. Sympathy from Moscow in any case belongs to them at the moment."¹⁶⁴

¹⁶³Interview with Gusev in Sovetskaya Estoniya, June 20, 1990, p. 2, in FBIS-SOV July 20, 1990, pp. 84-85.

¹⁶⁴Sillari interview in Rahva Haal, May 29, 1990, p. 2, in FBIS-SOV June 12, 1990, pp. 87-88.

Although relations between the two wings of the CPE were strained, there were attempts by the Coalition Central Committee to establish the basis for cooperation between the two factions. In an article published in Sovetskaya Estoniya, three non-Estonian members of the Coalition Central Committee, Malkovksy, Yu. Tolmachev, and In. Zahkarov, issued an appeal to the CPE-CPSU to remain within the Communist Party, underlining the fact that the Party had not yet officially split with Moscow and that a basis for common understanding and cooperation would be of mutual benefit to both wings under "new political conditions." Moreover, these loyalist members of the Independent Communist Party argued that to not cooperate and retain a measure of unity would be disastrous for both wings of the CPE.¹⁶⁵

Further attempts at establishing unity in the party were taken at a plenary meeting on August 5, 1990 when representatives of the two organizations met for the first time since the 20th Congress. Although officially the meeting produced a communique which emphasized the existence of common links between the two parties, there remained significant differences, especially on the nature of the party's relations with Moscow. However, there were trends at the conference in the direction of unity. Panifilov, representing the loyalist party, called for the

¹⁶⁵Sovetskaya Estoniya, April 8, 1990, p. 2, in FBIS-SOV-SUP June 5, 1990, pp. 4-5.

establishment of a broad communist coalition rather than a merger of the two organizations, patterned after the PFE.¹⁶⁶ Vladimir Malkovsky made a similar appeal, in that only such a broad coalition could compete under the conditions of "multi-partism."¹⁶⁷ These sentiments were also expressed by many of the party's rank and file. On September 19, at a conference of the secretaries of the largest primary communist party organizations, a communique was issued which called upon the two central committees to unite at the 21st Party Congress because in the "light of new political conditions the split does not allow communists to become the consolidating force, effectively opposing negative processes in the political and economic sphere and protecting the vital interests of working people."¹⁶⁸

Further efforts were made at forming some left wing coalition, even after the split was formalized in December, 1990, at the 21st congress of the CPE. It was at the 21st Congress of the loyalist party that the Gusev-Panifilov leadership was replaced. An Estonian, Lembit Annus, was elected as First Secretary of the CPE-CPSU program. Annus subsequently articulated a program which was far less

¹⁶⁶Izvestiya, August 5, 1990, p. 2.

¹⁶⁷Moscow Domestic Service, August 30, 1990, in FBIS-SOV August 31, 1990, pp. 39-40.

¹⁶⁸Moscow TASS, September 19, 1990 in FBIS-SOV September 20, 1990, p. 62.

interested in the confrontational policies of his predecessors Gusev and Panifilov. In April 1991, Annus, addressing a meeting of Baltic communist loyalists in Riga, underlined the necessity of cooperation. Annus argued that although the Communist Party of Estonia was undergoing a serious crisis and that the two opposing parties in the Communist camp had diametrically opposed views on several key issues, what was necessary was the formation of a common set of aims specifically geared towards winning electoral victory "or we can expect the same fate as the Communist Parties of other East European countries."¹⁶⁹ This was also reflected at the May, 1991 "Inter-Baltic Communist Party Conference" which sought to coordinate the activities of the loyalist Baltic communist parties. In his speech, Annus was far more conciliatory when compared to the addresses of other Baltic loyalist leaders, such as Alfred Rubiks, the leader of the CPL-CPSU program. Whereas Rubiks openly condemned the Popular Front-led governments of the Baltic states, calling for more direct and confrontational tactics, Annus called on the Communist parties to fight for power through "civilized methods and that the CPE-CPSU program would be willing to join a coalition government in the republic."¹⁷⁰ Moreover, the speech reflected Annus' desire to transform

¹⁶⁹Proceedings reported in Moscow Pravda, April 29, 1991, p. 2.

¹⁷⁰Speech reported in Moscow All-Union Radio MAYAK, April 28, 1991, in FBIS-SOV April 29, 1991, p. 41.

the party into primarily an electoral organization whose expressed purpose was to prepare "for the new elections of 1992."¹⁷¹ In many ways, these statements reflected an earlier call made by Sillari of the Independent Communist Party, when, in June, 1990, he had suggested that the CPE form a left-wing bloc to ensure the future of the multi-party system.¹⁷²

Several distinctive features marked the evolution of the CPE following the founding legislative elections of March 1990. First of all, the elections catalyzed the split between the "independence" and "loyalist" wings of the party. However, the split itself was far from complete. Despite the original polemic which divided the two parties, the incentive generated by the relative success of the Free Estonia Association in the March elections demonstrated the advantages of running as an independent communist party. Secondly, the prospect of becoming electorally competitive, coupled with the financial crisis and mass defections and resignations from both wings of the Party, compelled both wings to seek reconciliation. Although the fundamental issue which divided them, the relationship with the CPSU, remained the greatest

¹⁷¹For a further investigation of Annus's views see also Moscow TASS, May 19, 1991, in FBIS-SOV May 20, 1991, p. 51.

¹⁷²Moscow TASS June 28, 1990, in FBIS-SOV June 29, 1990, p. 88.

impediment to reconciliation, by the spring of 1991 both had made strides towards the formation of a broad electoral coalition modeled in some ways after the PFE. On the other hand the split which wracked the CPL after the 25th Congress was far deeper, and the lines of debate far stronger, resulting in the CPL's adoption of more "extra-legal" means to accomplish its political ends.

The CPL

Like the CPE 20th Congress, the Twenty-fifth Congress of the Latvian Communist Party was held almost immediately after the conclusion of the March elections. Like its Estonian counterpart, it was a stormy affair, ending with the organization's division into two ideologically divided camps.

Unlike in Estonia, the results of the elections were unambiguously disastrous for the CPL. The Party had only been able to capture some 30-odd seats of 201 in the legislature. The PFL, on the other hand, commanded a sizable majority in parliament and with their allies, and had more than the two-thirds majority required for the passage of key legislation. Thus, the appeal of forming a broad electoral front, as the CPE had done with the establishment of the Free Estonia Association, was strikingly absent at the 25th CPL Congress. The principal lesson learned from the

disastrous election of March was not that the CPL had failed to present itself as a credible alternative party to the Latvian voter, but rather that the defeat signified the soft-handed techniques of the reformist leadership under Jan Vagris, and demonstrated the necessity of returning to traditional communist methods to combat the PFL.

Like its Estonian counterpart, the opening of the CPL Congress was marked by appeal for unity. In his keynote address to the Congress, First Secretary Vagris pointed to the necessity of preserving "a radically renewed and organizationally united" CPL which was "a key condition for political stability and democratization."¹⁷³ Boris Pugo, former CPL First Secretary and Chairman of the CPSU Control Committee, who had been dispatched by Moscow to observe the proceedings, also appealed for unity. Although reaffirming the right of the republic to secede from the Union, and expressing approval for the course of the CPL leadership in promoting democratization and the rights of a republic within a "renewed federation," he warned the CPL from emulating Lithuania, saying that "the experience of your southern neighbor is fraught with the most serious consequences." Indeed, he noted that "one of the most important tasks of the congress is to disassociate itself from extremes both from conservative positions and

¹⁷³Riga Domestic Service, reported in Bungis, 1990b, p. 19.

from extreme radicalism which leads to a split in party ranks and ethnic isolation."¹⁷⁴

However, despite appeals made by the party leadership for reconciliation and compromise, a split in the party's ranks was made inevitable by the speech delivered by Fedor Kuzmin, Commander of the Baltic Military district and a member of the CPL politburo. Kuzmin warned the delegates not to follow in the footsteps of the Lithuanian Communist Party which split after trying to "simultaneously restore its combat ability as a republican organization and break its ties with the CPSU." Rather, he urged the delegate to "cleanse its ranks and to dissociate itself from unhealthy forces in the Party."¹⁷⁵

Kuzmin's speech helped set the stage for the subsequent motion introduced on the floor of the Congress to label the of the Vagris leadership as "unsatisfactory." Subsequent to the introduction of this motion, those delegates who favored the establishment of a Latvian Communist Party independent of the CPL walked out in protest, claiming that their views were being systematically disregarded by the majority of the Congress. The remaining 552 delegates decide to continue, and elected a new Central Committee with Alfreds Rubiks, former First Secretary of the Riga party organization, as First Secretary by a vote

¹⁷⁴Riga Domestic Service , April 7, 1990, in Bungs, 1990b, p. 19.

¹⁷⁵Ibid.

of 414-108. The election of Rubiks, a vehement opponent to the republic's independence, was significant in that it provided a formal link between conservatives in the Party and Interfront. Indeed, Rubiks, at the time of his election, was also chair of the Republican strike committee which had been largely organized by the Latvian Interfront. In general, the delegates representing conservative non-Latvians viewed the results of the Congress with great satisfaction. Thus, for example, Ivan Lopatin chairman of the Latvian Interfront and a delegate to the 25th Congress noted "on the one hand a split would weaken the party, but on the other hand a surgical operation was simply essential at this stage of the disease."¹⁷⁶

The results of the split in the CPL in April were quite different as compared to that which had occurred in the CPE. On the one hand, the split was complete, with no mention whatsoever of an interim adjustment period. Moreover, unlike the case of the CPE, the loyalists continued to control the bulk of the organizational resources, especially the party headquarters and property.¹⁷⁷ Finally, there was relatively little in way of an attempt by either side to recruit along multi-ethnic lines, as had been the case in the CPE split. The majority of the membership of the party, which had in general been dominated by

¹⁷⁶Sovetskaya Rossiya, April 10, 1990, p. 2.

¹⁷⁷Moscow TASS, April 14, 1990, in FBIS-SOV April 16, 1990, p. 106.

non-Latvians, remained within the ranks of the CPL. The split left 20,000 members, most of them Latvian, in the Democratic Labor Party (the name coined by the Independent Communist Party in the fall of 1990), and 300,000 members, most of them non-Latvian, in the CPL.¹⁷⁸ This prompted Boris Pugo to observe that "it is hard to imagine that a mono-ethnic Communist Party will have any prospects in a multi-ethnic Soviet Latvia. Sooner or later, it will reach self-dissolution."¹⁷⁹

Following the Congress, the two parties proceeded to adopt their own agendas and programs. Both, however, were beset with problems. The independent party at first sought to establish its own political identity in loyal opposition to the PFL as the only multi-ethnic political organization in Latvia. From the outset the Independent Communist Party was unable to attract the kind of non-Latvian support which it deemed so necessary to its survival. Thus, Ivars Kezbers, who had been elected at the independent CPL meeting in April, 1990, as First Secretary, reported to the CPL Central Committee plenum in June that efforts to attract non-Latvians to the party had largely failed.¹⁸⁰ Moreover, the Independent Communists were relatively weak in its

¹⁷⁸ Vilnius International Service, September 7, 1990, in FBIS-SOV September 10, 1990.

¹⁷⁹ Riga Domestic Service, April 7, 1990, in Bungs, 1990b, p. 20.

¹⁸⁰ Reported in Vilnius Domestic Service, June 28, 1990, in FBIS-SOV July 6, 1990, p. 45.

parliamentary component, able to carry with it only approximately 11 members, whereas the CPL and Interfront commanded approximately 48 members grouped together in the Ravnopravie (equal rights) faction.

Largely as a result of these failures, the independent communists attempted to re-establish ties with the CPL.¹⁸¹ Such efforts however, failed to convince the CPL loyalists of the merits of reconciliation. Indeed in December, Rubiks was to argue that the split in the CPL had actually strengthened the party in that it had freed it from "ideological double dealers."¹⁸² On the other hand, the PFL leadership, was equally unreceptive to the overtures of the Democratic Labor Party. For instance, the PFL Prime Minister Godmanis specifically attacked both the Independent Communist Party and the loyalists as jointly "seeking to overthrow the Supreme Soviet."¹⁸³ Such suspicions were echoed by Andrejs Kratsyns, deputy chairman of the Supreme Council, in April, 1991 when, while being interviewed by Izvestiya, he argued that the Democratic Labor Party was in fact a front organization for the CPL

¹⁸¹Vilnius International Service, September 7, 1990, in FBIS-SOV September 10, 1990.

¹⁸²Moscow TASS, December 1, 1990, in FBIS-SOV December 2, 1990, p. 84.

¹⁸³Ibid.

and that it too was plotting to overthrow the legitimate government of Latvia.¹⁸⁴

Thus, unlike the case in Estonia, where the Independent Communist Party had been relatively successful, its Latvian counterpart found itself caught between two increasingly antagonistic poles. On the one hand its failure to establish its identity as the multi-ethnic bridge between the nationalities placed it in a untenable position in claiming that it represented the interests of Latvians as well as non-Latvians. On the other hand, it was viewed with much suspicion by both the PFL and CPL's leadership, leaving it isolated by the Spring of 1991.

Although weakened by declining membership (membership in June, 1991, had declined from less than 100,000 from an estimated 300,000 in October 1990) and a slip in popularity, the CPL, in 1991, remained the most powerful political organization opposing independence in the Republic. Indeed, despite its declining fortunes, the CPL continued to command sizable resources. In parliament the CPL constructed a stable coalition of anti-independence forces grouped into the Ravnopravie faction. Moreover, the CPL took the lion's share of party property, and continued to maintain control over local party committees.

¹⁸⁴Izvestiya, April 26, 1991, p. 3.

In addition, the CPL loyalists had been active in mobilizing support and streamlining its organization.¹⁸⁵ But what was perhaps most ominous for Latvian authorities was the fact that the CPL commanded the loyalty of a fairly large military contingent. Not only did the CPL loyalists become more publicly critical of the PFL-led government, but also began to rely on extra-parliamentary means to forward their opposition. Apparently the CPL sponsored the use of special forces units, the infamous "Black Berets" or OMON (the acronym of the official name in Russian Otryady Militsii Osobogo Naznacheniya) in strikes against political targets. Unlike in Estonia, where no OMON units were then known to be based,¹⁸⁶ it was widely speculated that these units were in the pay of the CPL, prompting some like Latvian Deputy Prime Minister Ilmars Bisers to claim that such units made up the "pocket army" of the Latvian Communist Party.¹⁸⁷

Further, the CPL leadership, in contrast to the CPE, became much more vocal in its anti-Popular Front stance,

¹⁸⁵Moscow TASS, December 1, 1990, in FBIS-SOV December 2, 1990, p. 84.

¹⁸⁶However, Latvian-based OMON units are known to have made three attacks on Estonian customs posts, although it is not clear which OMON troops were responsible. For an account of OMON activities see Bungs, 1991.

¹⁸⁷Quoted in The Washington Post, February 18, 1991. For further on the increasingly close cooperation which emerged between the CPL loyalists and the OMON units based in Latvia, see Bungs, 1991.

engaging in open cooperation with other conservative non-Latvian dominated organizations in the formation of the "Committee to Defend the USSR and Latvian SSR Constitutions" in December, 1990 (commonly known as Latvian Public Salvation Committee).¹⁸⁸ Moreover, the rhetoric of the CPL leadership began to take on a more inter-ethnic quality. This was illustrated by statements made in a letter published in the Party's Russian language daily Sovetskaya Latvija in which Rubiks stated that the PFL had engaged in activities which, "leads to open confrontation among people with dissimilar views or speaking different languages. The latter were even threatened with extermination."¹⁸⁹ According to Sergei Dimanis, leader of the Ravnopravie faction in the Latvian Supreme Soviet "the Popular Front Board is practically calling for activities that has put society on the verge of civil war."¹⁹⁰

Unlike in Estonia, the CPL leadership did not display movement towards recasting its image as an electoral organization in favor of political independence. Rather, the CPL became increasingly more willing to employ

¹⁸⁸Although membership figures are not entirely reliable, the Interfront Congress held in mid-December, 1990 claimed that the All-Latvian Public Salvation Committee had 4000 members. See Moscow TASS, December 15, 1990, in FBIS-SOV December 16, 1990, p. 91.

¹⁸⁹Quoted in Moscow TASS, November 30, 1990, in FBIS-SOV December 3, 1990, p. 84.

¹⁹⁰Moscow TASS, December 14, 1990, in FBIS-SOV December 16, 1990, p. 91.

"extra-legal" means in order to forestall the drive towards independence.¹⁹¹ For example, in an interview broadcast on Riga Radio in May, 1991, Rubiks condemned the position the PFL government had taken vis-a-vis the proposed Union treaty and threatened that "in the event that the inhabitants display satisfaction with the decision of Latvian legislature not to sign the Union treaty and if they take to the streets or otherwise display civil disobedience then the communist party will not remain on the sidelines (the CPL) will take the leadership of the movement."¹⁹²

Thus, in contrast to the evolution of the CPE in the first year following the founding elections of 1990, the CPL had moved in the direction of an increasingly uncompromising position vis-a-vis the PFL. Unlike in Estonia, where the CPE split had resulted in the "victory" of the independent communists and the gradual evolution towards recasting the party into an electoral organization, the split which occurred in the CPL had led to the "victory" of the CPSU loyalists, who remained true to casting the party along more traditional Leninist, and as a result, confrontational, lines.

¹⁹¹Reported in Riga Domestic Service, May 14, 1991, in FBIS-SOV May 16, 1991 p. 46; and Riga Domestic Service, May 16, 1991, in FBIS-SOV May 16, 1991, p. 47.

¹⁹²Riga Radio International, May 6, 1991, in FBIS-SOV May 7, 1991, p. 36.

Discussion and Conclusions

Although electoral systems have long been acknowledged as an important independent factor in the development of political parties and party systems and an important manipulative tool in politics, the "distal" consequences of different electoral rules are difficult to ascertain, especially during the period immediately following "founding elections." The uncertainty and fluidity of the period often confounds attempts to draw direct linkages between the pressures exerted by electoral systems and the dimensions of transitional party development, such as the positioning vis-a-vis other political forces and the organizational identity of each "transitional" party. Although the effects of such contaminating influences can be minimized by the careful selection of relevant cases, it is still next to impossible to claim that electoral rules exert a deterministic effect on the behavior of "transitional" parties.

However, several observations, based upon the investigation of the above cases, can be made regarding the "similar" and differential hypotheses mentioned at the beginning of this chapter.

First, contrary to the set of similar hypotheses, the development of both the Popular Fronts and the Communist Parties followed entirely different courses. Indeed,

despite similarities in ethno-political composition, fragmentation was most pronounced in the Estonian case, where the Popular Front became wracked with internal dissent. On the other hand, in its effort to situate itself at the center of Estonian politics, the PFE moderated its position on independence.

The PFL moved in a diametrically opposite direction, in which the PFL leadership consolidated the organization into a "leading force" in the republic, and further adopted and increasingly antagonistic position vis-a-vis the CPL and the Russian extremists. Thus, contrary to Similar Hypothesis 1, the Estonian and Latvian cases were not at all similar regarding the development of the Popular Fronts.

The Communist parties as well, differed in their development. Although both the CPE and the CPL experienced an internal crisis, pitting reformists against party conservatives, these conflicts were resolved in very different ways. In the case of the CPE, the victory of the reformists culminated in the transformation of the party into one fully committed to winning election. On the other hand the development of the CPL was marked by the victory of the conservatives, resulting in the maintenance of the Leninist conception of a conspiratorial party.

In terms of Similar Hypothesis 2, the internal and external threat to the Popular Fronts did produce a kind of consolidating effect for both the PFL and the PFE.

However, whereas this effect acted as a mitigating factor in temporarily arresting the internal fragmentation of the PFE, once this threat lessened, internal differentiation accelerated. On the other hand, in the case of the PFL, the internal threat posed by Interfront and the CPL loyalists, served to strengthen the process of consolidation in the Latvian Popular Front.

As a result then, the expectation expressed in Similar Hypothesis 3, that two diametrically opposed political poles should emerge in both the Estonian and Latvian cases, was not confirmed. Although such a situation did emerge in Latvia, it did not in Estonia. This would seem to suggest that Differential Hypotheses 1 and 2, which relied heavily on the effects of different electoral systems, were confirmed as well.

Did the electoral system exert such a direct effect in accounting for the different trajectories of party development exhibited in the Estonian and Latvian cases? Although certainly several factors did influence the development of the Popular Fronts and the Communist Parties in both republics, the electoral systems did exert an indirect pressure which resulted in certain patterns of development as opposed to others. Indeed, part of the influence of an electoral system is the degree to which political parties can gain access to the legislature.

In the case of Estonia, the use of STV certainly contributed to the relative success of the communist party and

the non-Estonian political parties such as OSTK, and the inability of the PFE to capture an outright majority of seats in the elections of March. This result was to have two effects. It demonstrated that the transformation of the CPE into an electoral bloc, which advocated Estonian political independence, was a relatively effective way to survive under the conditions of multi-party competition. Secondly, with the victory of the "reformist" wing in the CPE and their expressed willingness to employ constitutional/legal means to obtain political objectives, the threat posed by the CPE to the PFE, although not entirely eliminated, took on a less sinister edge. This in turn catalyzed the growing degree of internal differentiation within the ranks of the PFE and the partial defeat of those like Savisaar, who had attempted to transform the PFE into the "leading political force" in the republic.

A similar process marked the evolution of the CPE as well. Thus, in the year following the founding election of March, the two principal "transitional parties" in Estonia had moved in the direction of the formation of umbrella-like identities with a high degree of internal differentiation.

On the other hand, it was certainly the case that in Latvia the use of FPTP advantaged the PFL, as opposed to either the CPL or the Interfront, leading to the overwhelming victory of the Front in the March elections. However, the establishment of PFL hegemony sparked a reaction in the

CPL which led to the victory of those who were more willing to adopt a confrontational posture vis-a-vis the PFL, and a greater willingness to employ "extra-constitutional" means to block the drive towards Latvian independence. This in turn led to the reaction on the part of the PFL to move more rapidly in the direction of transforming the Front into the "leading party" in the republic, and also to seek a rapprochement with the Latvian nationalists.

Thus, to a large extent, the different trajectories that the transitional parties of Latvia and Estonia followed in the year after the founding legislative elections of March, 1990 were vitally affected by the type of electoral system that each had adopted. Although this effect was not a direct one, in the sense that the individual transitional parties were reacting to opportunities created by electoral competition, certainly the political conditions created by the elections of the spring of 1990 accounted for much of the difference in the evolution of these parties.

Chapter 6: The Evolution of the Major Transitional Parties in Czechoslovakia, 1990-1991

In the previous chapter, the analysis focused on the evolution of the principal transitional parties in Estonia and Latvia, attempting to establish the linkage between the electoral system and the disparate trajectories followed by the PFE, the PFL, the CPE, and the CPL. I argued that the openings created by the electoral system at the moment of the founding elections, set the stage for both the evolution of the transitional parties in the Baltic states and the quality of political conflict between those parties.

In Estonia, the partial PFE victory in the March, 1990 elections, coupled with the animosity of the PFE leadership to the forces grouped in the Congress of Estonia, contributed to the victory of the political moderates in the CPE and the isolation of anti-independence forces. In turn, with the lessening of the threat posed by internal forces to Estonian independence, the latent cleavages within the PFE became activated and the process of fragmentation accelerated.

In Latvia, the overwhelming victory scored by the PFL, which, to a large extent, was assisted by the discriminatory nature of the FPTP system, served to contribute to the victory of anti-independence forces in the CPL and the emergence of two conflicting poles in Latvian politics.

In turn, this polarization of Latvian politics led to the consolidation of the PFL, to such an extent, that, by the summer of 1991, its leaders had proclaimed it the leading force in Latvian politics.

This chapter deals with the evidence presented by the evolution of the primary transitional parties in the case of Czechoslovakian democratization. In particular, the focus will be on testing the proposition that two structural elements, the use of proportional representation and the federal nature of the Czechoslovak state, will affect both the degree to which these parties fragment and along what lines this will occur. To state these in terms of both Similar and Differential hypotheses (as compared to the Baltic states):

Similar Hypothesis 4: Given that Czechoslovakia is also an ethnically bi-polar state, one would expect that there would exist a tendency towards the development of bi-polar politics much as in the case of Latvia.

Similar Hypothesis 5: On the other hand, given the nature of the Czechoslovakian electoral system, based as it was on List-PR, one would expect a greater similarity to the Estonian pattern of party development.

Differential Hypothesis 3: However, the federal nature of the Czechoslovak state should exert a pressure in the direction of the development of greater ethno-political bi-polarity, and this should be evidenced in the strengthening and development of extremist nationalist parties.

Differential Hypothesis 4: In addition, since the external threat to Czechoslovak independence was largely absent, the lack of this consolidating effect exhibited in the Baltic states, should lead to the

more rapid dissolution of the Czechoslovakian umbrella parties.

Structural Elements of the Czechoslovak Case

As in the cases of Estonia and Latvia, the principal political forces which dominated the Czechoslovak political scene at the inception of democratization included three types of transitional parties. These were the "Popular Front" type (the Civic Forum and Public Against Violence or OF/VAN, using the Slavic acronym) the Communist Party (CPCZ), and "ethnically particularistic" parties (such as the Slovak National Party-SNS). Moreover, Czechoslovakia is an ethnically bi-polar country, confronted with the problems associated with making the transition from a command economy to a market-oriented one. Finally, like Estonia and Latvia, the Czechoslovakian parliamentary system, modeled after that of the Czechoslovak First Republic, and adopted after the "Velvet Revolution" in December 1989, features a relatively weak head of state where power is concentrated into the hands of the prime minister. However, unlike the cases of Estonia and Latvia, there are two distinct features which characterize Czechoslovakia. First, one structural element which clearly differentiates Czechoslovakia from the former cases is the existence of Czechoslovak federalism. The second structural element was

the use of a PR-list electoral rule, also employed during the first republic, rather than STV or Soviet-style FPTP. Finally, there was little in the way of an external threat to Czechoslovakian independence, a key centripetal element in the evolution of the Baltic transitional parties.

How should these three factors lead to a different trajectory of development for the Czechoslovakian transitional parties as opposed to those in the Baltic states? Several scholars have noted the effects of subdividing regions on the development of competitive party relations in ethnically divided states (Duchacek, 1977 p. 13; Wheare, 1955 p. 32; Lijphart, 1977 pp. 42-43, 163, 193; Beloff, 1953; Horowitz, 1985). However, the empirical record on the development of political parties in such cases have been varied. For instance, the existence of ethnically homogeneous states in the first Nigerian Republic (1960-1966) promoted the growth of regionally based, ethnically particularistic parties, with each ethnic group using its control of the region to attain power at the center (Whitaker, 1970, p. 324). On the other hand, in other cases, the existence of ethnically homogeneous states promoted the fragmentation of such parties. One classic example was the Indian state of Andhra Pradesh, a state of Telugu speakers which had been merged with the Tamil-majority Madras state. The Telugu movement, which had consistently lobbied for a separate Telugu state, "assumed such an intensity that it was unimaginable that within a decade

language would have to contend with other claims (Das Gupta, 1975, p. 485) Yet, after a separate Andhra was created in 1953, language conflict was superseded by caste struggles particularly between the Kamma and Reddi castes, both Telugu, to control the state, and between the two principal sub-regions, the Telangana and the Coastal regions of Andhra (Sharma, 1968).

Thus, the empirical record on the effects of ethnically homogeneous states is mixed. Much of the effects of federalism on the development of transitional parties depends on two additional factors: the degree to which power is devolved, or in other words the extent to which the offices created at the state level are worthwhile prizes for competitive groups, and the openings created by the electoral system. One of the cited benefits of such devolved federal arrangements is the insulation of the center from destructive ethnic conflict. For example, Daalder (1974a), in his analysis of Swiss federalism, notes that the sparseness of contentious issues at the confederal level of politics effectively reduced the amount of inter-ethnic conflict among the primary Swiss political parties, exerting a kind of "tranquilizing effect" (Daalder, 1974a, p. 110).

A second structural dimension which exerts an important pressure on the development of transitional parties in ethnically bi-polar societies is the openings created by "opportunity structure." Both the number of states and

offices available for political competition, as well as the opportunities created by the electoral system, are important in this regard. Thus, for example, during the course of the Nigerian Second Republic, the increase in the number of homogeneous states in the north acted as a kind of electoral reform, leading to the dissolution of the dominant political party in the region, the Nigerian Peoples' Congress (Horowitz, 1985, pp. 604-606). With the re-drawing of the borders of the Nigerian states, new opportunities and channels for political conflict were created, especially in the more ethnically heterogeneous north.

Increasing the degree of proportionality achieved by the electoral system has also been cited as having an effect on both the degree of fragmentary pressures exerted on transitional political parties, and the character of inter-ethnic political conflict (Nordlinger 1972 p. 10; Enloe 1973, pp. 20-21). For example, "consociational" theorists, such as Eric Nordlinger and Arend Lijphart, have noted that one principal conflict-regulating mechanism in ethnically cleavaged societies is the use of proportional representation to maximize the representation of minority groupings (Nordlinger, 1972; Lijphart, 1986). Others have also pointed to the applicability of the consociational model to the developing world (Rothschild, 1970; Lawler, 1976). Still others (such as Horowitz, 1985) have speculated on the potential of a PR-rule as means to fragment

ethnically based parties by activating sub-ethnic or other social and political cleavages.

In sum, a federal arrangement with ethnically homogeneous states, should exert an additional pressure on transitional umbrella parties. Moreover, the openings created by the electoral system should also lead to fragmentary pressures on even ethnically based parties over the long run. But what of the period immediately following the founding legislative election? Clearly, the federal nature of Czechoslovak politics altered the basic strategy of each of the transitional parties. Given that offices could be attained at both the federal and republican levels, three general strategies could exist. First a transitional party could seek to run as a single entity for both federal and republic elections. This was clearly evidenced by the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia (CPCZ) which ran under a single banner for both the federal and republic elections.

A second possibility was for the formation of an alliance between two distinct organizations. This was the case with the Civic Forum/Public Against Violence alliance where the Civic Forum ran only in the Czech republic and the Czech districts for elections to the Federal Assembly. The Public Against Violence similarly ran only in the Slovak republic and the Slovak federal electoral districts. This was also the strategy adopted by the Czech and Slovak Christian Democrats.

A third possibility was for the party to focus on either one or the other republic. This was true for parties like the Slovak National Party, which put up lists only in the Slovak Republic.

One clear result, then, of the Czech and Slovak federal structure, was to generate the conditions for the emergence of different kinds of transitional parties in Czechoslovakia as compared to the Baltic states. This resulted in the development within the Popular Front organization of a latent ethnic division, which was, in essence, institutionalized. In addition, it created a worthwhile electoral prize for parties with an ethnically chauvinistic program (such as the Slovak National Party). Rather than having only particular districts as prizes, which might allow such a party some access to the center of political power, the addition of the prize of the republican governments created a natural incentive for the entry of such parties into the competitive fray, and led to the consolidation of ethnically based parties. Thus, the most immediate effect of the Czechoslovak federal structure was to promote an open inter-ethnic dimension to Czech and Slovak Party politics.

The second structural element, the existence of a PR electoral rule, should have a different effect. Indeed, the existence of a PR-rule for both federal and republican legislative elections should exert an equally powerful fragmentary effect on all parties in the long run.

Moreover, in the short run, the use of PR should encourage groups within the transitional parties to defect, thus resulting in greater short-term fragmentation than in either of the Baltic cases. On the other hand, no single party should be able to capture an overwhelming majority of seats as was the case in Latvia, thus avoiding the danger of political polarization of party politics along ethnic lines. However, much of this effect would depend on the addition of "safeguards" in the electoral rule itself to prevent this very fragmentation.

To test these propositions the next step is to examine the particulars of the Czechoslovak electoral rule. Secondly, attention will be paid to the evolution of the principal transitional parties in the period 1990-1991, drawing comparisons to the experience of similar transitional parties in the Baltic states.

The Electoral Law

Several features of the electoral law and the results of the June elections are worth noting. Due to the perceived necessity of quickly implementing political reform, the only significant change in the political structure, in the early months of 1990, occurred in the electoral law. The negotiations on the federal structure of the Czechoslovak republic was postponed until later in the year. The

publication of the Law on Elections to the Federal Assembly, which was approved by that body on February 27, 1990, revealed that, despite the decision to opt for the electoral system used during the First Republic, there were to be a number of departures from earlier practice.¹⁹³

The Czechoslovak electoral system was based upon the institution of a system of party-list proportional representation. The country was divided into twelve electoral regions (eight in the Czechoslovak republic and four in the Slovak republic). The Federal Assembly was comprised of 300 seats divided into two chambers: the House of People (with 150 members, 101 from the Czechoslovak lands and 49 from Slovakia) and the House of the Nations (with 150 members, 75 from each republic). Also elected on June 8-9 were the single-chamber republican parliaments, that is the Czech National Council (200 members) and the Slovak National Council (150 members). All seats were elected from national and republic-level party lists and additional seats were allocated according to a standard D'Hondt formula. A minimum 5% legal threshold was established to win representation in the Federal Assembly and the Czechoslovak National Council and a 3% minimum was required for the Slovak National Council.

In addition, legal hurdles were also incorporated to prevent the kind of extreme party fragmentation which had

¹⁹³A draft of this law appears in the March 7, 1990 edition of Rude Pravo.

occurred during the course of the First Republic (Seton Watson, 1965).¹⁹⁴ Three measures, in particular, reflected the concern with the difficulties associated with the implementation of the party-list system in the old Republic. First of all, it was required that, to stand in the elections, a contender (a contender was defined as either a political party or a coalition of parties) prove that it had at least 10,000 members, or failing that, present a petition with sufficient signatures to bring its support up to that level. Secondly, a party, movement or coalition would only win seats in either chamber if it gained at least 5% of the total votes cast in the elections to that chamber in either the Czech or Slovak Republics (although if the contender was standing for election in both Republics, passing that barrier in one Republic would qualify it for representation in both parts of the country). Third, an attempt was made to deal with the problem of the

¹⁹⁴Regarding the consequences of the institution of PR in the First Republic, Seton-Watson (1965) notes "the fissiparous party tendencies followed from this quite logically, and were inherent in the complex structure of the state, in the balance of rural and urban interests, of conservative and radical religious views, of language and cultural development. For it is not too much to say that between the west and east of the Republic there was a difference of several centuries due to geographical no less than political causes. Nowhere was a more strenuous attempt made to apply the theories of proportional representation in practice, and nowhere was its inherent difficulties more clearly illustrated" (p.329). Moreover, the solution to this dilemma involved the establishment of "benevolent dictatorship" where only "five (political parties) had decisive impact -- the so-called Petka used by the President-liberator whose prestige as a revolutionary figure tended to make him above politics" (p. 329).

accountability of representatives, and to afford the voter further choice. This was accomplished through the inclusion of the provision that voters would be able to indicate up to four preferential votes on a particular list. Those would only be taken into account where at least 10% of those voting for the same list in a constituency used the opportunity to do so, when those obtaining more than half the preferential votes would move to the top of the party's list.

Insofar as the apportionment of seats was concerned, for the House of Nations, the number allocated to each republic had been set by earlier legislation at seventy-five and remained unchanged. In the case of the House of the People, the electoral law specified that seats would be awarded to each republic in proportion to the size of the electorate in that republic on January 1, 1990. Seats (for both houses) would be allocated to each of the 12 constituencies based on the size of the vote in each constituency (or turnout, not the number of registered voters) and those seats in turn distributed in proportion to each party's share of the vote (after eliminating those which won less than 5%). Any unfilled places would then be allocated, within each republic, by the principle of the largest remainder, and for this "second scrutiny," parties would be asked to submit a new list of candidates from among those on its constituency lists who had not yet been awarded a seat. Subsequent legislation provided for the

application of the list system to the two National Councils on a similar basis with the important caveat that for elections to the Slovak National Council, parties needed only 3% of the total vote for that chamber to qualify for seats.

The Results of the June Elections

There were several features of the electoral campaign and the June elections that are worth noting here. First, not all parties chose to run in both the Czech and Slovak republics. In part due to their development as separate grass roots organizations, the Civic Forum and the Public Against Violence chose to run separately in the Czech and Slovak republics. Similarly, the Czech Christian and Democratic Union and the Slovak Christian Democratic Movement also chose to run separately. On the other hand, the CPCZ chose to run for election to the Federal Assembly under a single banner, as well as running as a single organization for election to the Czech and Slovak National Councils. However, several smaller parties, such as the Hungarian Coexistence Party, the Movement for Self Governing Democracy/ Society for Moravia and Silesia, and the Slovak National Party chose to run for the federal assembly only on lists in the individual republics. In all, 22 parties had registered for the elections in June to the Federal

Assembly, 17 for the Czech national Council, and 20 for the Slovak National Council.

Insofar as the election results were concerned, it came as somewhat of a surprise that voter turnout was so high -- around 96%. A second surprise was the margin of victory attained by Civic Forum and its Slovak ally the Public against Violence. Public opinion polls had shown increasing support for both movements as the elections neared, but at best each was expected to emerge as the strongest force in its respective republic and together to form the strongest group in the federal parliament, rather than win an outright majority in all houses.

The Civic Forum won an absolute majority of Czech votes (53.15%) for the House of the People and 49.96% of votes for the House of Nations. The Public against Violence did markedly less well in Slovakia, with 32.54% and 37.28% of the vote respectively. Nevertheless, in terms of seats, Civic Forum and the Public against Violence won a clear majority in both chambers (87 in the House of the People out of 101 seats, and 83 in the House of the Nations, out of 150).

Another surprise was the relative success of the CPCZ; its performance for both houses was consistent at around 13.5% -- a result which made it the second strongest political party in the Czech republic, and third after the Public Against Violence and the Christian Democratic Movement in Slovakia. On the other hand, both the Christian

and Democratic Union (about 8.7% of the Czech vote for both chambers) and the Christian Democratic Movement (almost 19% of Slovak votes for the House of the People and 16.7% for the House of the Nations) did worse than had been anticipated, given that polls a month before the election had suggested the former would take around 12% of the Czech vote and the latter at least 25% of the vote in Slovakia.

Only three other parties won seats in the Federal Parliament. The Slovak National Party, running in only the Slovak Republic, scored around 11% of the vote, and Coexistence, benefiting in part from the concentrated Hungarian vote in southern Slovakia, captured 8.5% of the vote. The sizable support accorded to the Movement for Self-Governing Democracy-Society for Moravia and Silesia, on the other hand, was much higher than had been anticipated, which in part reflected a stronger regional parochialism (particularly in South Moravia). Over all, the restrictions on entry which had been made part of the electoral law in January, and in particular the five percent threshold, had effectively reduced the number of political parties attaining seats in the Federal Assembly to only eight of the 22 registered political parties.

The election results to the Czech National Council were remarkably similar to those of the Federal Assembly. Only four of the 17 parties standing for election to the Czech National Council passed the five percent barrier and the overall distribution of votes was close to that in the

federal elections. Civic Forum won 49% of the vote, taking 127 out of 200 seats, while the Communist Party came in second with 13.24% of the votes. The Society for Moravia and Silesia took third place (as it had also done in the House of the Nations) winning a little over 10% of the vote, while the Christian and Democratic Union won only 8.24% of the votes cast.

The Slovak National Council, on the other hand, exhibited greater fractionalization in vote shares than in the Czech lands, and the lower threshold of three percent enabled two more parties than had won seats in the Federal Assembly. In the elections to the Slovak National Council, Public Against Violence won only 29.34%, of the vote giving it only 48 of 150 seats. The Christian Democratic Movement came second with 19% of the vote, and the Slovak National Party won 13.94% of vote -- just ahead of the Communist Party with 13.34% of the vote. Coexistence maintained the support it had won at the federal level, 8.66%, while the two parties unrepresented in the Federal Assembly, the Democratic Party and the Green Party won 4.39% and 3.48% of the voter respectively.

One major consequence of the elections of June was the creation of a coalition government involving the Civic Forum and Public Against Violence, on the one hand, and the Slovak Christian Democratic Movement, on the other. There appears to have been three reasons for this move. First, a broad coalition was seen as desirable even before the

elections, in view of the difficulties the government would face in moving towards a market economy. Secondly, and critically, constitutional reforms and major legislation required a three-fifths majority in both the House of the People, and separately among Czech and Slovak deputies in the House of the Nations. Civic Forum and the Public Against Violence fell three short of that majority in the House of the People and lacked 12 votes among Slovak deputies in the second chamber. Third, a coalition with the Slovak Christian Democrats would seem to offer the best prospects, not only in obtaining the three-fifths majority in the Federal Parliament, but also of establishing a positive relationship between the federal government and its counterpart in Slovakia. The Slovak government could in effect only be based on a coalition between the Public Against Violence and the Christian Democratic Movement, given the distribution of seats in the Slovak National Council and the unwillingness of the Public Against Violence to form a coalition with either the Slovak Nationalists or the Communists.

Changes within the Civic Forum and Public Against Violence

The evolution of the Czech and Slovak Popular Fronts in the year following the founding elections of June, 1990, in many ways more approximated the Estonian case as opposed

to the Latvian one. However, the evolution of the Czech and Slovak Popular Fronts exhibited a more extreme move towards hyper-fragmentation, with the complete dissolution of the Civic Forum and the fracturing of the Public Against Violence scarcely ten months following the election. Moreover, the evolution of the Czechoslovak Communist Party differed from that of their Baltic counterparts in that the split, when it did occur, followed ethnic lines rather than a split between conservatives and reformists.

In general four factors contributed most to the rapid dissolution of the Civic Forum and the Public Against Violence in the months following the founding election of June. First, as in the case of Latvia, the Civic Forum/Public Against Violence alliance scored an overwhelming victory in both the federal and individual republican legislatures. Although the electoral victory of Civic Forum and Public Against Violence was not at all surprising, the reasons for the victory did not necessarily mean that there existed a clear choice for voters. Indeed, the elections were in reality something like a plebiscite -- a choice between perceived totalitarianism and non-totalitarianism. "In our first free elections" Jaromir Juna wrote in Lidove Noviny on May 3, 1990 "we shall not be choosing one of a number of movements, but between the Communists and non-Communists. Here and nowhere else is where the dividing line lies."

Although the support Civic Forum and VAN received in the June elections may have reflected the public perception that these organizations represented a more certain way of ensuring the rejection of communism, these organizations had a number of other advantages over their rivals. The record of their leaders as dissidents during the 20 years of communist rule, their decisiveness during the demonstrations of November 1989, and the prominence of their representatives in the Government of National Understanding which took the reins of power after the collapse of Communist rule, meant these were the only parties with large numbers of well-known and trusted personalities committed to identifiable policies.

However, unlike in Latvia, where the electoral victory paved the way for the consolidation of the PFL and the polarization of Latvian party politics, the development of the OF and VAN was more comparable to the experience of the Estonian Popular Front. Indeed, shortly following their electoral victory in June, both the OF and VAN movements became embroiled in an "identity crisis." Ironically, the electoral success of the OF/VAN alliance created the impetus for their internal disintegration.

A second factor which contributed to the rapid dissolution of the Civic Forum and the Public Against Violence was the amorphous organizational nature of these mass movements. The electoral victory of the OF/VAN alliance in June was expected to guarantee the country's period of

democratic consolidation. However, both movements were plagued by the legacies which had served them so well in the past. While the loose structure of the two movements had enabled them to mobilize large numbers of people to fight communism, the same structure subsequently made it difficult for them to function as coherent political groups, pursuing a set of political and economic objectives (Pehe, 1990a).

A third factor was the lack of a consolidating effect exerted by some external threat, as had been the case for the Baltic states. Whereas in Estonia and Latvia the external threat to Baltic independence emanating from Moscow served to postpone the dissolution of the PFE and further consolidate the PFL, the absence of such an incentive to remain united in the face of an external threat effectively removed an important brake on the internal fragmentation of the Civic Forum and the VAN.

A fourth factor which contributed to the rapid dissolution of the Popular Front organizations in Czechoslovakia was the split which occurred in the CPCZ, which significantly weakened the internal challenge to the Civic Forum's political hegemony. This also removed a major impediment to pressures toward fragmentation which occurred in the year following the founding election.

It was within this context that the leadership of the OF and VAN faced the problem of how to fulfill the political objectives they had established for themselves in their

election programs. These included the removal of the remnants of totalitarianism in the country, the introduction of a market economy and political democracy, and Czechoslovakia's return to Europe. However, as in the case of the political evolution of the Baltic Popular Fronts, the issue of the identity of both the OF and the VAN emerged as the primary issue.

In general, four lines of debate existed. First, the predominant line, held by several prominent former dissidents, was that the Civic Forum should remain true to its character as a mass movement, a "horizontal organization" with no formal internal structures nor a formal membership. According to Peter Kucera, former dissident and a member of the OF executive coordinating committee, only such an organization, based upon the principle of the mass movement, could "help to ensure the stability of the state in the next two-year period, a period which will be enormously difficult and complex."¹⁹⁵ On July 18, Kucera elaborated on this position, when, in an interview with Rude Pravo, he argued that true political parties were not appropriate for Czechoslovakia's level of democratic development, and this was best illustrated by failure of the "political parties in (the June) elections. People preferred the form of a freely structured movement, and the Civic Forum leadership is now under pressure to preserve this form the Civic

¹⁹⁵CTK, July 23, 1990, in FBIS-EEU July 24, 1990, p. 18.

Forum is truly irreplaceable." At the same time, Kucera, in commenting on the structure of Civic Forum, held that, "in this new form... the rejection of any kind of party attitude remains the key factor. We are not going to have (registered) members, a strict vertical structure, or a subordination of the lower elements to the higher ones. It is exactly the opposite with political parties -- all these attributes are characteristic for them."¹⁹⁶

A second line, held by OF government officials, like the Czech Premier Peter Pithart and Finance Minister Vaclav Klaus, pointed to the absolute necessity of transforming the OF into a leading political force in the Czech republic.¹⁹⁷ The necessity of altering both the organizational form and identity of the Civic Forum began to preoccupy most of their public pronouncements. For instance, Czech Premier Pithart complained, on September 21, 1990 that the OF was "barely legible" in Czechoslovak politics, and called for a fundamental restructuring of the movement along more "vertical lines."¹⁹⁸ Apparently, this view was held by some members of the rank and file as well. In a letter published in the October 11 edition of Lidove Noviny, an appeal was issued by the "founding Members of

¹⁹⁶Rude Pravo, July 18, 1990, pp. 1-2, in FBIS-EEU July 25, 1990, p. 16.

¹⁹⁷CTK, October 15, 1990, in FBIS-EEU October 16, 1990, p. 27.

¹⁹⁸Rude Pravo, Sept. 26, 1990, p. 1-2, in FBIS-EEU October 4, 1990, p. 22.

the Civic Forum Group in the Hostivar Machine Tool factory," which criticized the leadership of the OF for failing to provide direction, and that this would lead to a deepening political crisis, especially if the Civic Forum did not transform itself from a "movement into a political party." The appeal also called for the transformation of the OF into the leading political force in the country and that, "in view of the absolute lack of concept of the Public Against Violence movement, the OF should spread its activity to Slovakia and become a federally operating party." It was "dangerous nonsense," they continued, to claim that a "broad-based movement" had advantages over a political party. Moreover, they warned that "should some leading OF representatives disagree with the formation of a political party, we shall not regard them as our representatives any longer."¹⁹⁹

A third line, held by President Vaclav Havel, himself a former dissident and long a champion of the pluralistic conception of Civic Forum, called for a compromise between these two positions. Havel, although in favor of strengthening the coherence of the Civic Forum, was not in favor of transforming it into the "leading political force" in the country. Rather, he proposed readjusting the Civic Forum, tightening internal consistency while maintaining the "mass" character of the movement.

¹⁹⁹Lidove Noviny, October 11, 1990, p. 3, in FBIS-EEU October 16, 1990, p. 26.

If Civic Forum were vague and diffuse, it would pose a threat to the political stability of society. Feuds and fights between new parties would be equally dangerous. That is to say: I am in favor of a creative and constructive cooperation between people of differing opinions and also in favor of a certain firmness and concept in political work.²⁰⁰

However, Havel argued that the heterogeneity of the movement itself was an advantage in that if carefully managed within the framework of Civic Forum, the movement would essentially become an arena which would promote a greater spirit of cooperation among disparate groups. OF's heterogeneous nature would not be problem if the leadership of Civic Forum was strong enough to assert its "political will."²⁰¹

A fourth political line held that the Civic Forum had outlived its usefulness and should be abolished, thus allowing for the full expression of multi-party pluralism. This line was held by several leaders of the proclaimed political parties which had existed under the umbrella of

²⁰⁰Quoted in interview with Alexander Kramer, in Lidove Noviny October 1, 1990, pp. 1-2, in FBIS-EEU October 11, 1990, p. 18.

In addition, on September 15, Havel addressing the OF Congress openly objected to a certain lack of intelligibility in the organization, which, moreover, seemed to "lack clear standpoints." Quoted in Rude Pravo, September 26, 1990, p. 1 in FBIS-EEU October 4, 1990 p. 22.

²⁰¹Lidove Noviny, October 1, 1990, pp. 1-2, quoted in Pehe, 1990a, p. 12; also see Rude Pravo, September 26, 1990, p. 1, in FBIS-EEU October 4, 1990, p. 22.

the Civic Forum, such as Emmanuel Mandler and Vaclav Benda. In a commentary printed in Lidove Noviny on October 5, 1990 a publication which provided the most extensive coverage of trends in the Civic Forum, the argument was made that the Civic Forum was "too old the toddler" and that the current structure could not be maintained. Indeed, "this structure evidently blocs natural political development. The movement whose assignment is to push through fundamental reforms is becoming their grave-digger, including questions of the state's setup." The OF, the commentary concluded, was only good as "a playground for the assertion of group interests."²⁰²

This identity crisis came to a head in the fall of 1990. Four factors seem to have contributed to the crisis. First, it was at this time that the governments, dominated by the Civic Forum and the Public Against Violence, began introducing economic reform aimed at establishing a market economy. With reform serving as a catalyst, and without the unifying incentive provided by some external threat, a process of rapid differentiation of political views took place within the two movements. By the end of 1990, two political currents could be discerned within the Civic Forum. One wing, grouped around the Finance Minister Klaus, generally espoused the transformation of the OF into a leading political force in the country, the rapid

²⁰²Lidove Noviny, October 5, 1990, p. 1, in FBIS-EEU October 15, 1990, p. 13.

privatization of the economy and the establishment of close association between Czechoslovakia and Western military and political institutions. The other wing, led by the Foreign Minister Jiri Dientsbier, which also included social democrats and reformist communists grouped in both the Club Obroda and the Left Alternative factions within the Civic Forum, favored a softening of economic reforms through the simultaneous introduction of social welfare programs. Politically they opposed the transformation of the OF into a leading force in the country (Pehe, 1991a).

A second factor was associated with the incentives generated by the electoral system, which had already begun to affect the calculus of several leaders of parties and political groupings within the Civic Forum. At its inception, the Civic Forum was comprised of seven major political movements and parties as well as 10 other agricultural parties and cultural organizations (the major political groupings included the Republican Party, the Civic Democratic Alliance, the Club of Committed non-Party Members, the Club Obroda, the Left Alternative, the Romany Civic Initiative, and the Czechoslovak Democratic Initiative).²⁰³

²⁰³The Republican Party should not be confused with either the Republican Union that contested the June elections as part of the right-wing Free Bloc, or the Association for the Republic/the Republican Party of Czechoslovakia. Nonetheless, all of these parties share a common commitment to the rapid introduction of a free market, "complete privatization" and the limited role of the state in economic and political affairs. The Civic Democratic Alliance described itself as a "conservative party in the sphere of politics and morals, and as a liberal party in the economic sphere -- that is a party demanding the return to a market economy" (FBIS-EEU March 7, 1990,

Yet, the process of the disintegration of Civic Forum accelerated as the June elections approached. In February, the Christian Democratic Union which had originally been a charter member of the Civic Forum officially left the movement in order to run in tandem with the Christian Democratic Movement of Slovakia. In March, Vaclav Benda's Social Democratic Party left the Civic Forum alliance. Perhaps most noteworthy, however, was the departure of the Civic Democratic Initiative shortly after the June elections (at which point it was renamed the Liberal Democratic Party). In justifying the break, the party's leader Emmanuel Mandler argued that one of the principal reasons was that as the June elections approached the Civic Forum behaved increasingly like other political parties and consequently, "had to perceive us and the other political

p. 28). The Club of Committed Non-Party Activists include many Dubcek-era reform communists like Zdenek Jicinsky and claims a direct historical connection to Charter 77. The Club Obroda is made up of a number of "left wing" intellectuals, including Peter Uhl, signatory of Charter 77, who maintained committed to social democracy. The Left Alternative is similar to the Club Obroda in political and economic approach, but it far more committed to the ideals of workers' self-management. The Romany Civic Initiative represents the Romany minority in the Czech Republic. The Czechoslovak Democratic Initiative described itself in March, 1990 as "liberal-democratic, intending to practice individual freedoms and individual activities in all spheres of life-- that is, also in the economy" (FBIS-EEU March 7, 1990, p. 28). For a review of the programs and introduction of these major movements and parties see FBIS-EEU May 9, 1990, p. 24. Although the Christian Democratic Union had originally been a part of Civic Forum, it was decided in February, 1990, that the Christian Democratic Union would run in coalition with its sister party the Christian Democratic Movement of Slovakia for the June elections.

parties within the forum as a rival." Moreover, if they wanted to continue to operate within the Civic Forum the Liberal Democrats would have to "suppress" their own political identity because "you cannot have several parties within one party." Mandler also cited other points of friction between the Liberal Democrats and the Civic Forum in that his party had a single vote in the Council of the Civic Forum Coordinating Center, just like any Civic Forum district organization, with the result that "they simply outvoted us."²⁰⁴ However, unlike either the Christian Democratic Union and the Social Democrats, the Liberal Democrats left the Forum after winning two seats and four seats in the Federal Assembly and the Czech National Council, under the banner of the Forum.

A third factor which contributed to the unexpected demise of the OF was that its principal adversary, the CPCZ, had been plagued by internal disputes as well. Since the June elections, there was a growing rift between the predominantly conservative Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia, active in the Czech Republic, and the Slovak Communist Party, which renamed itself the Party of the Democratic Left in January 1991. The last adopted a social democratic line while simultaneously becoming strongly nationalist. Although in October, 1990, the two parties

²⁰⁴Quoted in an interview with Petr Novacek, correspondent for Zemelske Noviny, July 14, 1990, p. 3, in FBIS-EEU July 19, 1990, p. 17.

had formed the so-called Federation of the Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia and the Slovak Communist Party, in 1991 both tended increasingly to pursue their own policies and act independently of one another in the federal parliament. What the fracturing of the CPCZ did was to minimize the threat which had characterized the Latvian case. Thus, a major centripetal pressure was effectively removed from the Czechoslovakian political scene, a circumstance which was similar to events in Estonia with the victory of the reformists in the CPE.

However, unlike in the case of the PFE, the lack of an external threat to Czechoslovakian independence removed an additional centripetal pressure facing the Civic Forum. Whereas the persistence of the external threat to Estonian independence served to provide a basis for the maintenance of some degree of unity in the PFE, such a threat had been effectively removed by the growing crisis within the USSR itself. Thus, a further impediment to the disintegration of the Civic Forum was removed.

The most immediate catalyst which led to the disintegration of the Civic Forum was the election of Finance Minister Vaclav Klaus, in October, as the Chairman of the movement. Almost immediately, Klaus began to launch into a polemic against political opponents both within and outside of the OF. On November 2, he openly criticized his opponents within the OF, groups such as the Left Alternative, as representing a greater danger to the OF "than a

threat from without."²⁰⁵ He is also reported to have said that Peter Uhl, a leader of the Left Alternative, was the "greatest enemy of OF."²⁰⁶ Moreover, under the direction of Klaus, the Civic Forum began to move towards the transformation of the movement into a "vertically structured" political party. In January 1991, the Civic Forum Congress voted to transform the forum into a political party and adopted a measure requiring that all members of the groups associated with the Forum would have either to register their membership with the new party or leave it altogether (Pehe, 1991b, p. 2).

These moves led to the official split of the OF, on February 23, 1991, into two groups, the Civic Democratic Party and the Civic Movement. The split also led to the complete withdrawal from the Forum of the Obroda (Awakening) the Left Alternative, and the Civic Democratic Alliance.

At the end of April, the Civic Democratic Party, the Civic Movement and the Civic Democratic Alliance held congresses at which they officially constituted themselves as independent political parties with their own platforms. At the congress of the Civic Democratic Party on April 20, 1991 it was decided that the new party would have a "firm internal structure, would register its members and require

²⁰⁵CTK, November 2, 1990, in FBIS-EEU November 6, 1990, p. 12.

²⁰⁶Ibid.

membership dues and would pursue a conservative political agenda." Vaclav Klaus was elected party chairman (Pehe, 1991b).

The Civic Movement held its congress on April 27. It decided to keep a loose internal structure similar to that of the former Civic Forum but to adopt a platform it described as "liberal." Expressing strong support for radical economic reform but emphasizing that reform should be accompanied by effective welfare measures, the leaders of the Civic Movement, Foreign Affairs Minister Jiri Dienstbier, Deputy Prime Minister Pavel Rychetsky and Czech Prime Minister Peter Pithart, said that the congress had established a new political force that had liberal views but firmly belonged to the political center. To emphasize the movement's "centrist" orientation, its leaders invited prominent liberals from the West, including German Foreign Minister Hans Dietrich Genscher, to address the movement's opening congress (Pehe, 1991b).

The Civic Democratic Alliance held its congress on April 20. Reaffirming its conservative political orientation, the new independent party re-elected Pavel Bratinka its leader. Vladimir Dlouhy, the Federal Minister of the Economy, also became one of the group's leaders. The Alliance's platform was identical to that of the Civic Democratic party: both emphasized radical economic reform based on speedy privatization, the establishment of a

modern society with democratic values and cooperation with NATO.²⁰⁷

In Slovakia, the fragmentation of the VAN was not only complicated by debates over its identity, but was also exacerbated by the Czech and Slovak conflict. The VAN's rapid disintegration flared into the open when the Slovak Prime Minister Vladimir Meciar demanded that the Public Against Violence reformulate its platform adopted in September 1990, so as to take into account Slovak national concerns, particularly those relating to the attainment of Slovak Sovereignty within the Federation. In particular, he insisted that the radical reform program formulated at the federal level and supported by the VAN republican assembly include measures to protect Slovakia from massive unemployment and other negative effects. Meciar's move triggered a major political crisis within the ranks of the VAN on April 23, which culminated in the dismissal of Meciar by the Presidium of the Slovak national Council. On August 27, the VAN republican Assembly approved a formal split in the movement.²⁰⁸ At a meeting immediately following the congress, a new VAN movement was declared, the Public Against Violence-For a Democratic Slovakia, which subsequently elected Meciar as its leader. On May 3, the new group registered with the Slovak Ministry of Internal

²⁰⁷CTK, April 20, 1991, in Pehe, 1991b, p. 3.

²⁰⁸Narodna Obroda, April 29, 1991, p. 1, in Pehe, 1991b, p. 3.

Affairs under the name of the Movement for a Democratic Slovakia.

The collapse and disintegration of both Civic Forum and VAN can be accounted for by several factors. One of the primary reasons of the disintegration of both movements lay with the decline of the very political forces which had led to their creation -- the centrifugal bonds created by common enmity to communist rule. The restructuring of the CPCZ in 1990, coupled with the emergence of concrete concerns over the consequences of rapid privatization and increasing Czech-Slovak tension, lessened the necessity of retaining a common bond to guard against the totalitarian past.

On its own, however, this does not entirely explain the rapidity of the collapse of both Civic Forum and VAN. A second explanation lies in the consequences of the very structural reforms which the OF/VAN alliance had itself initiated. By maintaining and reifying Czechoslovak federalism, the focus of political conflict shifted from the center to the republics, having a profound impact on VAN, which was increasingly compelled to adopt a more parochial Slovak line. However, this was not accompanied by the consolidation of the Czech OF and the Slovak VAN. Rather, the use of the PR-list system opened opportunities for several member parties of the Civic Forum, leading to the defection prior to the June election of the Christian Democrats and the Social Democrats. Moreover, as was demonstrated by the

defection of the Emmanuel Mandler's Liberal Democrats, these openings certainly were perceived by several within the Civic Forum as opportunities to "go it alone." Indeed, as the inevitable crisis of identity occurred, the "brakes" which had arrested this process for the Baltic Popular Fronts were absent, thus contributing to the rapid demise of both the Civic Forum and Public against Violence.

The Evolution of the CPCZ

The disintegration of the OF/VAN in the face of the environment which it itself had created also had a significant impact on the other major transitional political parties which occupied the Czechoslovak political scene. The CPCZ was faced with a similar set of structural incentives. Yet unlike the OF/VAN alliance, the CPCZ was a highly disciplined organization with enormous financial and capital resources. In other words, using Sartorian terms, the CPCZ, unlike the OF/VAN, was, for all intents and purposes, a "structured political party" at the inception of political democratization. Moreover, the party had fared rather well in the June elections, albeit unable to prevent the dominance of the Civic Forum and the VAN in the Federal Assembly.

However, the CPCZ itself was not immune to the kind of political fragmentation which had destroyed OF/VAN. As

with the Baltic Communist parties, what complicated the CPCZ's effort to adjust to a new political environment was the legacy of its totalitarian past. Not only did this constitute a hindrance to the party's image, but it also marked the principal lines of demarcation within the CPCZ itself.

Nonetheless, a substantially different pattern of development occurred in the case of the CPCZ as opposed to the Baltic Communist parties. Unlike the latter, where the principal struggle was between the reformists, who sought an independent (and electable) communist party, and the conservatives, who sought to retain ties with the CPSU, the reformists triumphed over the conservatives rather easily in the CPCZ. Indeed, deprived of any external support from Moscow, the CPCZ conservatives were easily ousted.

In July, three distinct "lines" had developed regarding the interpretation of party's past and the future role it was to take. These three trends included the reformist line, which was represented primarily by young people inclined to adopt a confederative arrangement for the party. Led by the party's parliamentary component in the Federal Assembly, grouped around the former film director Jiri Svoboda, the reformists sought to fundamentally redefine the party's image through the altering of the party's name and image.

The second major group was the "centrists," grouped around the CPCZ chair Ladislav Adamec and, later, Vasil

Mohorita. The centrists, although concerned with changing the party's image, according to Adamec, "reject a total negation of the past 40 years and strive for a firm CPCZ economic program. They espouse Marxism cleansed of deformations." The third trend was represented by those who according to Adamec did, "not accept the changes made after 17 November and they stick to dogmatic ideals."²⁰⁹ However, this fraction was limited in its influence within the party. According to Adamec, the principal lines of debate lay between the reformists and the centrists. By July, this debate had reached crisis proportions.

It will be possible to prevent something like this from happening (the disintegration of the Communist party). I think, like many other party members, that it is feasible, and necessary to get rid of everything that is outdated but that it is also feasible and necessary to agree -- within the framework of the CPCZ and in an open discussion among the individual platforms -- on a new organizational concept and on the CPCZ's political character. Otherwise, we are threatened with disintegration and divided left wing forces would issue from the CPCZ; one way or another they would not fare well in the next elections.²¹⁰

Gradually, in the summer of 1990, the reformist wing gained the upper hand. In part, this was exemplified by the acceptance of the proposal for the federalization of the party and the shift in strategy towards transforming

²⁰⁹Interview with Adamec, in Rude Pravo, July 24, 1990, pp. 1-2, in FBIS-EEU July 26, 1990, p. 22.

²¹⁰Interview in Rude Pravo, June 29, 1990, p. 2, in FBIS-EEU July 6, 1990, p. 28.

the party's image. In September, a joint statement was issued by the CPCZ delegation in the Czechoslovak Federal Assembly, where it was announced that the CPCZ parliamentary faction would attempt to form coalitions with other parties and movements, including some disaffected groups within the Civic Forum.²¹¹

Faced with this challenge by the parliamentary contingent of the CPCZ, the moderates and conservatives reacted quickly. The opening round of the confrontation was marked by statements made by Chairman Vasil Mohorita, who announced on October 7, at a meeting of the Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia that, "the period of national understanding was over and a hard uncompromising struggle begins."²¹² Mohorita's statements were largely perceived by the reformists within the party as an attempt to return to a more traditional and "combative" role for the CPCZ. Although Mohorita, who had been First Secretary since December of 1989, and its acting chairman since August, 1990, was largely regarded as a moderate who had tried to hold the party together during the political struggle between the conservative and reformist wings, his comments prompted an immediate demand by the reformists for his removal.

²¹¹Rude Pravo, September 25, 1990, p. 1, in FBIS-EEU October 2, 1990, p. 9.

²¹²CTK, October 7, 1990, in FBIS-EEU October 7, 1990, p. 34.

The reformists launched their principal attacks within the individual republican party organizations. Peter Weiss, a leading reformist and the head of the Slovak Communist party since January, 1990, immediately criticized Mohorita's comments as both combative and detrimental to the party's image (Pehe, 1990b, p. 2). On October 13-14, the Congress of the Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia was held, in which Mohorita came under scathing attack from the reformists. The latter issued a proposal to expel Mohorita from the Congress' Presidium. Although this proposal was rejected by the assembly, the reformists scored a victory with the election of Jiri Svoboda as the new chairman of the Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia. He replaced the incumbent Jiri Machalik, whose hardline attitudes had placed him firmly in the conservative camp. Svoboda had received, on the first ballot, 387 to Machalik's 248 votes. However, since the party statutes required that the vote be unanimous, Machalik, citing the necessity of maintaining unity in the face of the upcoming local elections, dropped out of the race, and Svoboda was elected unanimously (Pehe, 1990b, p. 2).

Svoboda had long advocated the line that the CPCZ, in order to survive in the new environment of electoral competition, had to fundamentally alter its image, structure and platform. Under the direction of the new leadership the party issued the formal intention of becoming a "modern left-wing party of the electoral type" and to cooperate

actively with other left wing political parties. In his closing speech, Svoboda argued that, to accomplish this task, it was necessary to restructure the party into an "efficient information and coordination center," and "to get rid of old-style communist officials" (quoted in Pehe, 1990b, p. 2).

A similar struggle occurred within the ranks of the Communist Party of Slovakia. Although Weiss, an avowed reformist, had been elected as CPSL First Secretary in January 1990, he had come under increasing pressure from the more conservative elements within the Slovak republican party organization. By the fall, an open dispute had emerged within the ranks of the CPSL (Communist Party of Slovakia). On September 4, Bratislava Pravda printed the platforms of two distinct groups within the CPSL: the "Platform of Socialist Orientation" whose signatories included Milan Ftacnik, Ivan Hudec and Gabriela Rothmayevova, Communist deputies in either the Federal Assembly or the Slovak National Council; and the "Platform of Renewal of the Communist Party of Slovakia." The former statement not only condemned past practices but also claimed that the aberrations of the past were not the result of "imperfections or the pervertedness of party leaders," but were rooted in the very structure of the CPCZ itself. Moreover, the deputies' platform rejected the "Platform of Communist Renewal," claiming that the latter represented archaic and destructive thinking.

On the other hand, the statement authored by the "Platform of Communist Renewal" attacked the CPSL leadership for pushing "Marxist-Leninist currents increasingly into the background" and wanting to complete the party's "social democratization" by changing its name. Moreover, the document complained of the expulsions within the CPSL at their expense.²¹³ However, in the end, as was the case at the Congress of the Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia, the reformists succeeded in consolidating their control of the republican party's leadership.

The Congress of the Slovak Communist Party took place on October 20 and 21. Delegates to the Congress re-elected Weiss as chairman and approved a number of documents that were intended to guide the party during its "transformation into a modern left-wing group."²¹⁴ Commenting on these documents, Weiss said that they would be unacceptable to the conservatives within the party and that he expected the "differentiation process to accelerate." He also implied that he expected the more conservative elements to leave the party.²¹⁵

Weiss was elected its chairman by a small majority, defeating Pavol Kanis who was generally regarded as less

²¹³Bratislava Pravda, September 4, 1990, p. 1, in FBIS-EEU September 12, 1990, p. 34.

²¹⁴Bratislava Pravda, October 22, 1990, p. 1, in Pehe, 1990b, p. 2.

²¹⁵Quoted in Pehe, 1990b, p. 2.

radical then Weiss but nonetheless a member of the reformist contingent and a deputy to the Federal Assembly. Kanis was nominated as the party's candidate for the post of chairman of the federal communist party.

Beyond the reaffirmation of the reformist leadership, the Congress also decided that the Communist Party of Slovakia would voluntarily relinquish most of its assets, keeping only those necessary for its day to day operations. The congress also adopted a program which expressed support for the government's privatization scheme, but at the same time called for the adoption of social measures that would counter the "negative" consequences of these reforms.²¹⁶

The developments within the republican party organizations set the stage for the transformation of the CPCZ. At its Congress on November 3 and 4, 1990, the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia ceased to exist.²¹⁷ Not only did the 868 delegates vote to change the name of the party from the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia to the "Federation of the Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia and the Communist Party of Slovakia" (which was subsequently changed again on December 1, to the Federation of the Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia and the Communist Party of Slovakia/ Party of the Democratic Left), but its structure was significantly altered and a new reformist leadership

²¹⁶Ibid.

²¹⁷Rude Pravo, September 3, 1990, pp. 1-2, in FBIS-EEU September 11, 1990, p. 12.

elected. This involved the transformation of the party into a loose federation of two virtually independent party organizations. Indeed, the federal organization itself was reduced to a mere coordinating agency that represented the party in dealings with federal bodies.²¹⁸

Beyond the federalization of the party, the Congress also restructured the leadership. The Central Committee of the Federal Party was abolished and replaced with a 24-member "Federal Council" in which the Czech and Slovak parties were to have equal representation. Moreover, the Congress adopted the institution of rotating chair, a position to be alternately filled by a Czech and a Slovak. Mohorita was ousted and replaced by Pavel Kanis, who was provided with a limited term of one year. The Czech nominee for the federal chair, Miroslav Grebenicek, a reformist communist deputy in the federal assembly, was designated by the Congress to succeed Kanis in late 1991.²¹⁹

The Congress also adopted a new political program which committed the Party to the ideal of "democratic socialism," and pledged that the Party would actively pursue a policy of seeking cooperative ties with all other

²¹⁸Prague Domestic Service, November 4, 1990, in FBIS-EEU November 5, 1990, p. 21.

²¹⁹Prague Domestic Service, November 4, 1990, in FBIS-EEU November 5, 1990, p. 22.

left-wing parties.²²⁰ Commenting on the proposed cooperation with other left wing forces, Kanis said that it could be expected that the new party and the Social Democratic Party, in particular, would draw closer together.²²¹ Jiri Svoboda, the chairman of the Bohemian and Moravian party organization, added that the reformist victory at all three congresses had been complete, and that the main obstacle to closer cooperation between the communist and other left-wing parties, the legacy of the totalitarian past, had been removed.²²²

A second item of interest contained in the Party's program concerned the role the Party would play in the future Czechoslovakia. In particular, the program attacked the proposed economic reforms which had been introduced by the federal government in the summer of 1990, which centered around rapid privatization and the opening of Czechoslovakia to foreign capital. According to the program, the reform proposal, "will generate sizable unemployment and result in huge property differentiation between individuals and groups of the population. Inherent in it is the possibility that Czechoslovakia will lose sovereignty over its national wealth, natural sources and

²²⁰CTK, November 3, 1990, in FBIS-EEU November 5, 1990, pp. 20-21.

²²¹CTK, November 3, 1990, in FBIS-EEU November 5, 1990, p. 21.

²²²Rude Pravo, November 5, 1990, p. 2, in Pehe, 1990b, p. 4.

economic activity, and that cultural and national traditions will be lost as well."²²³

At least some of the Party's new leadership envisaged capitalizing on the prospect of economic difficulties in the future. For example, at the meeting of the Central Committee of the CPCZ, it was reported that much discussion centered around "winning the people's trust" where one unidentified speaker proclaimed: "Let us not reckon, for example, that when the workers find themselves in difficulties, they will not be drawn to the Communist Party."²²⁴

These changes apparently improved the Communist Party's standing with the electorate. This was in part revealed by the results of the local elections in both the Czech and Slovak Republics, held in December 1990. Indeed, despite polls in the summer, which had indicated that Party support would decline substantially from its showing in June, the Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia was able to increase its electoral share from 13.2% in June, to 17.2% in November, the largest single increase for any political party fielding candidates in the Czech local

²²³CTK, November 4, 1990, in FBIS-EEU November 5, 1990, p. 22.

²²⁴Rude Pravo, September 3, 1990, pp. 1-2, in FBIS-EEU September 11, 1990 p. 12.

elections. Similarly, the Slovak Communist party was able to secure an increase as well.²²⁵

On the other hand, although the federalization of the CPCZ apparently had improved the electoral appeal of the CPCZ, it also had also promoted an open cleavage between the Czech and Slovak Communist parties, especially concerning the issue of Slovak autonomy. Thus, the Slovak Party of the Democratic Left, in the first two months of 1991, not only had adopted a social-democratic platform, but put a strong emphasis on both Slovak "national concerns," and demands for greater political autonomy for Slovakia. In addition, the party has called for a modification of the economic reform program to cater to Slovakia's particular needs and has also become increasingly vocal concerning the relationship between the republican and Federal Constitutions. Under Weiss's leadership, the Slovak communists have contended that the republican constitutions should take precedence over the federal one, which has been quite contrary to the position taken by the Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia under the leadership of Svoboda.²²⁶

Nonetheless, the adaptations made in the fall of 1990 had ensured a relative measure of success for the CPCZ. This was assisted by the disintegration of other political

²²⁵See Hospodarske Noviny, November 29, 1990, p. 2; and Cas, November 29, 1990, p. 3, in Pehe, 1990c, p. 3.

²²⁶CTK, April 20, 1991, in Pehe, 1991b, p. 4.

forces, most notably the collapse of Civic Forum in February. As a result, by April 1991, without the benefit of an additional election, the Communist Party, with its 47 seats, had become the single largest political party in the Federal Assembly.²²⁷ In other words, simply by retaining some measure of cohesiveness, albeit in a radically altered form, the Communist Party had not only survived, but improved its position within Czechoslovak politics.

Yet like the OF/VAN alliance, the evolution of the CPCZ reflected the changing political environment created in the wake of the founding election. Indeed, both transitional parties were beset with an identity crisis, or how to transform the existing organization to meet the new requirements of political competition. However, each did not resolve their crises of identity in precisely the same way. Unlike the OF/VAN alliance, the CPCZ did not fragment into several splinter groups, although the federalization of the party did introduce a major cleavage within the structure of the CPCZ.

The difference between the two can be accounted for by several factors. First of all, whereas the absence of an external challenge to Czechoslovak political independence removed a major impediment to the fragmentation of the Czech and Slovak popular fronts, it also freed the CPCZ from the continuing stigma of being associated with Moscow.

²²⁷CTK, March 22 and April 2, 1991, in Pehe, 1991c, p. 12.

Thus, a major split between "loyalists" and "reformists" did not occur in the CPCZ, as had been the case in the Estonian and Latvian Communist parties. Rather, the reformists were able to successfully purge the party of "hardline" elements and seize control of both republican party organizations.

A second factor which differentiated the two organizations, was that the CPCZ enjoyed greater homogeneity in its membership and a greater degree of internal discipline than the Czech and Slovak popular fronts. During the latter half of 1990 the party had become increasingly more homogeneous in its membership. At the federal congress, figures on the composition of the party's membership revealed the following trends. From November 1989 to the end of June, approximately one millions members had left the party. By September, the CPCZ had approximately 750,000 members remaining. However of these only 300,000 were reported as active, and 200,000 had neither paid their membership dues nor participated in party activities. Of this number 31% were workers and 25.5% were members of the intelligentsia. Roughly 6.3% of the members were under thirty, and 58% were in the 31-60 age bracket. Significantly, 36% of the membership were pensioners, a group especially hard hit by the economic reforms introduced by the government in the Fall.²²⁸

²²⁸Rude Pravo, September 3, 1990, pp. 1-2, in FBIS-EEU September 11, 1990, p. 12.

Further, the organizational resources which the CPCZ retained from the past, contributed to its survivability under the new conditions. It had the local organization to compete in the localities. It possessed the internal discipline inherited from the legacy of "democratic centralism" and a regular dues-paying membership (although of course greatly reduced) which provided a solid financial base for its activities as well as an ability to discipline both members and deputies. All of these qualities were absent from the OF/VAN alliance. Thus, the relatively higher degree of "structuration" characteristic of the CPCZ acted as a kind of brake on the fragmentation of the CPCZ.

The two primary transitional parties in Czechoslovakia, the OF/VAN and the CPCZ, represent different patterns of development under incentives generated by the two primary structural conditions cited above. On the one hand, the openings created by the electoral system generated the primary incentive for the breakdown of the internal coherency of the Czechoslovak popular fronts, a process which had begun even before the June election and accelerated during the course of the debates over the identity of the movement. A similar set of incentives existed for the CPCZ, but due to its relatively greater degree of homogeneity in membership and its internal organizational assets, it remained relatively intact. The second structural factor, Czechoslovak federalism, however, not only placed remnants of the Czech and Slovak popular

fronts at odds with one another, but also served to create an internal line of cleavage between the two wings of the Communist party, a cleavage which could put both wings at greater odds in the future.

In relating the above to the Similar and Differential Hypotheses mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, the Czechoslovak case differed substantially from the trajectory of development illustrated by either the Estonian or Latvian cases. In terms of Similar Hypothesis 4, the evolution of the Czechoslovak popular fronts and the CPCZ did exhibit the development of a greater degree of inter-ethnic conflict between Czechs and Slovaks. However, in keeping with Similar Hypothesis 5, and contrary to the Latvian popular fronts, the major umbrella parties fragmented rapidly and completely. Coupled with the absence of an external threat (Differential Hypothesis 4) this fragmentation was of an even more extreme variety as compared to that of the Estonian case.

Yet, what of political parties which have a defined and relatively homogeneous constituency, which do not claim to be an "umbrella group" -- such as ethnically particular parties like the SNS? The two structural conditions of the electoral rule and the existence of Czechoslovak federalism should exert cross-pressures on such parties. On the one hand, devolved federalism should exert a centripetal pressure on such parties, providing them with an incentive to remain cohesive. On the other hand, the PR-list rule

should provide an centrifugal pressure, causing them to fragment. The next section will investigate the evolution of such a party in the immediate period following the June election: the Slovak National Party (SNS).

The Evolution of Ethnically Particular Parties:
the Slovak National Party (SNS)

The events following the collapse of communist rule and the initial period of democratic transition not only created the conditions in which the major political actors were radically transformed, but it also led to the emergence of a number of ethnically based political parties. One such party was the Slovak National Party (Slovenska Narodna Strana -- SNS). Unlike either the Civic Forum/Public Against Violence Movement or the CPCZ, the SNS was a recent creation, founded in March 1990. Moreover, unlike either the OF/VAN or the CPCZ, the SNS was neither a "federal party" nor an alliance, but rather one which sought only election in the Slovak republic. Yet, as shall become evident, the SNS was not spared the fragmentation which characterized other major political parties, despite the homogeneity of its claimed constituency.

On February 28, 1990, a statement was issued by the "Preparatory Committee of the Slovak National Party" which outlined the basic goals for the foundation of a party devoted "entirely to the national interest of the Slovak

people."²²⁹ The SNS proclaimed itself committed to "a renewed national consciousness and pride," and to "revitalize the cultural and historical traditions of the Slovak people." Moreover, the program called for the full "equality of Czechs and Slovaks" and to achieve the "proportional representation of Slovaks in all legislative bodies of the federal structure." Perhaps the most important focus of the Party's program was its concentration on the guarantee that the Slovak language be "embodied in the Constitution as equal, and which every citizen of the Czech and Slovak federation has to respect as such in any contact with authorities."²³⁰

At its initial congress in March, Vitazoslav Moric, a forty-four year old electrical/chemical engineer, was selected as chairman of the party. The SNS Central Council also announced its willingness to collaborate with other Slovak parties to achieve the cited goals of its program, and announced that a "Slovak National Bloc" had been created in cooperation with two other national parties, the Freedom Party and the Independent Party of Slovaks.

However, as June elections approached, this commitment to the federation lessened considerably. In its electoral broadcast on May 8, 1990 the SNS abandoned the notion of defending Slovak identity within the framework of the

²²⁹Bratislava Smena, February 28, 1990, pp. 2-3, in FBIS-EEU March 7, 1990, p. 27.

²³⁰Ibid.

federation and called for immediate Slovak independence. Indeed, for the SNS, the pressing economic and social issues which faced Slovakia could not,"be tackled without solving the national question. The social question of Slovaks and lasting economic prosperity in Slovakia can and must be solved only by an independent economy with its own national market."²³¹ In protest, both the Freedom Party and the Independent Party of Slovaks left the Slovak National Bloc four days before the June 8 elections, contending that the SNS had usurped the right to speak for the entire Slovak nation.²³²

Despite the twin handicaps of its recent creation and the defection of smaller the Slovak national parties, the SNS fared far better than was expected in the June election. Several pre-election polls had indicated that the SNS had little chance of being represented at the federal or republic level. Yet the party, running only in the Slovak republic, received 13.94% of the popular vote in Slovakia and obtained 15 seats in the Federal Assembly and 22 seats in the Slovak National Council. One possible reason for the relatively strong showing of the SNS was that some voters, who had earlier planned to support the Christian Democratic Movement (KDH), apparently changed their mind shortly before the elections, because they

²³¹Prague Domestic Service, May 8, 1990, in FBIS-EEU May 9, 1990, pp. 22-23.

²³²Ibid., p. 23.

considered that "nationalist" trends were not strong enough in the KDH (Obrman, 1990).²³³

The electoral success of the SNS strengthened its claim that it exclusively represented the Slovak nation. In the latter part of June, overtures were made to its former allies, the Slovak Freedom Party and the Independent Party of Slovaks, both of which had failed to surpass the 5% federal threshold and the 3% republican threshold. However, the negotiations with these parties over the formation of a new Slovak National Bloc collapsed. On July 26, the Freedom Party's provisional leadership (the previous leadership had resigned en masse following the party's electoral failure in June) issued a statement which contended that the SNS had failed to meet the Freedom Party's condition for membership, primarily the demand that the SNS recant its call of Slovak independence and "embrace a confederative arrangement for the republic." Moreover, they berated the SNS' pre-election rallies as "fanatical and demagogic" and its "misuse of the Slovaks' national feelings in the interest of cheap political gains the activities of the SNS have done harm to, and continue to damage, the international interests of Slovakia as well as

²³³Perhaps another indicator of the growing popularity of Slovak nationalism was the ability of the SNS to organize very early on several rallies throughout the pre-election months of April and May as well as into June. See CTK, April 17, 1990, in FBIS-EEU April 18, 1990, p. 13; also Prague Television Service, June 19, 1990, in FBIS-EEU June 20, 1990, p. 12.

efforts to gain a settlement of the relations between the Slovak and Czech nations on the basis of equality."²³⁴

Despite the electoral success of the party, the SNS experienced internal conflicts over its identity. Following the June election, the SNS, like both the OF and the CPCZ, underwent a search for some kind of political identity beyond the demand for an independent Slovakia. First, there was the necessity of maintaining leadership of the Slovak nationalist movement, either through the creation of a "national front" under the banner of the SNS, or by absorbing other groups within its framework. The second imperative was rooted in the fact that the SNS had become a parliamentary party and de facto had become committed to the maintenance of the political system. Third, there was the very practical need to establish ties with political allies in the Slovak National Council, especially with the prospect of the constitutional debates on the proposed language law scheduled for October, 1990. These issues were to fracture the SNS between those grouped around Moric, who wished to retain the Party's leadership of the Slovak national movement, and the parliamentary contingent of the Party, which sought to establish the Party as a legitimate partner in a future coalition government in Slovakia.

As the consequences of privatization and rising unemployment began to affect Slovakia, and as the debate

²³⁴Bratislava Smena, July 26, 1990, p. 7, in FBIS-EEU July 27, 1990, p. 12.

over the language provisions of the new republican constitution began to take center stage, the SNS's popular support grew as well.²³⁵ However, increases in the Party's popular support did not guarantee its continued leadership of the Slovak nationalist movement. Throughout the summer of 1990, the SNS was confronted not only by the emergence of several alternative movements and political associations which rose to challenge the SNS leadership, but also internal dissension as well. Much of this was catalyzed by the debate over the proposed language laws sponsored by the governing coalition of VAN, KDH and the Slovak Democratic party. The government's draft called for the requirement that non-Slovak languages be used in villages and towns where the minority population represents at least 20% of the total.²³⁶ In response, the SNS, along with the Independent Party of Slovaks, on July 21 formed a national bloc, "the Slovak National Democratic Movement" which called for the immediate independence of Slovakia and the "entry of the Slovak republic on the scene of international politics as an independent subject."²³⁷ However, four days later another front movement was established the "Movement

²³⁵CTK, July 26, 1990, in FBIS-EEU July 27, 1990, p. 11.

²³⁶The version of the government draft was reprinted in CTK, November 9, 1990, in FBIS-EEU November 13, pp. 30-31.

²³⁷Bratislava Narodna Obroda, July 23, 1990, pp. 1-2, in FBIS-EEU July 26, 1990, p. 28.

for Independent Slovakia" which challenged the July 21 declaration as not addressing the issue of language, and called for a general strike in protest of the government's draft and the assimilation of non-Slovaks with a feeling of "Slovak patriotism."²³⁸ More importantly, this latter movement, which was apparently founded by individual members of the SNS without the leadership's approval, announced its intention to compete as a separate entity in the local elections of November. The Freedom party, however, which had advocated a "confederationist" position and had generally been receptive to the government's draft law, attacked the SNS and invited all Slovak national parties to rally under its banner.²³⁹ This position seemingly had advocates within the SNS as well. On July 27, the leadership of Slovak Heritage Foundation, a cultural institution associated with the SNS, and led by Augustin Marko, an SNS deputy to the Republican parliament, issued a statement defining their position as one where "we are not for an independent Slovakia but for a sovereign

²³⁸See Bratislava Domestic Service, July 24, 1990, in FBIS-EEU July 26, 1990, p. 28; also Rude Pravo July 25, 1990, pp. 1-2, in FBIS-EEU July 27, 1990, p. 12. For comments on attitudes of the movement toward non-Slovak minorities see interview with Vojtech Vitkovsky founder of the movement in Prague Prace, August 8, 1990, pp. 1-3, in FBIS-EEU August 14, 1990, pp. 13-14.

²³⁹Bratislava Smena, July 26, 1990, p. 7, in FBIS-EEU July 27, 1990, p. 12.

Slovakia."²⁴⁰

Faced with these challenges, the SNS convened a meeting on August 14, in Bratislava, which produced a statement calling for the complete and immediate independence of Slovakia.²⁴¹ What emerged following the Bratislava meeting was an intensification of the SNS' independence rhetoric. On the anniversary of the birth of Andrej Hlinka, the former leader of the inter-war Slovak Nationalist Movement, Moric reiterated the calls for the immediate independence of the Slovak state and "complete opposition" to the Slovak government's proposed language law.²⁴² Further, in a speech to a Bratislava rally on October 8, Moric is reported to have claimed that the greatest threat to Slovaks was from the South (the Hungarians) and this threat was supported by the Czechs in Prague.²⁴³ Apparently, the more radical line triumphed at the Party's Second Congress held on September 9, where Moric was re-elected as Chairman of the Party and a resolution was adopted demanding complete Slovak independence and the exclusive use of the Slovak language in the republic as part of its electoral

²⁴⁰Prague Zemedske Noviny, July 27, 1990, pp. 1-2, in FBIS-EEU August 2, 1990, p. 20.

²⁴¹Bratislava Domestic Service, August 14, 1990, in FBIS-EEU August 15, 1990, p. 13.

²⁴²Bratislava Domestic Service, August 26, 1990, in FBIS-EEU August 28, 1990, pp. 22-23.

²⁴³Bratislava Verejnost, October 8, 1990, in FBIS-EEU October 15, 1990, pp. 21-22.

program for the upcoming local elections. For Moric, the key to the Party's prospects in the local elections of December required that it hold true to its overtly nationalist stance. However, regardless of the outcome of the elections, the policies adopted by the SNS leadership had already borne fruit, Moric claimed, in that other parties had adjusted their position on Slovak independence and had seen "our assets, assets of heart and reason," and have "appreciated their value. They attempted to adjust their policies according to our model."²⁴⁴

However, two setbacks occurred for the Party in the fall, catalyzing a major internal crisis in the SNS, which pit Moric against the Party's parliamentary contingent. First, the passage of the governing coalition's version of the language law, at the end of October, and the subsequent inability of the Party to make good on its earlier threats to launch a general strike in protest, weakened the credibility of the leadership. Second, election polls indicated that the popularity of calls for immediate independence had declined from about 15% in the summer to 10.3% by October.²⁴⁵ These two events seemed to invigorate the "confederationist" forces within the Party. On October 25, Augustin Marko broke with the SNS and declared the creation

²⁴⁴Bratislava Pravda, September 20, 1990, pp. 1 and 3, in FBIS-EEU September 23, 1990, p. 15.

²⁴⁵CTK, October 26, 1990, in FBIS-EEU October 26, 1990, p. 23.

of the "Authentic SNS" claiming that the Moric leadership had miscalculated, given recent polls. He advocated the return to a more moderate approach to the question of Slovak independence and claimed to have the support of two-thirds of the Party.²⁴⁶

An additional challenge was mounted by the parliamentary component of the party on October 28, when a group of SNS deputies, led by Republican deputy Anton Hrnko, called for Moric to resign on the basis of "incompetence and highhandedness," especially regarding his comments concerning immediate independence and "passive resistance" to the language law. In response, Moric claimed that since Hrnko was not a member of the Party's Central Council he had no right to call for his resignation. On November 1, at an extraordinary session of the SNS Central Council, a statement was issued directly censuring Hrnko arguing that he had "done damage to the interests of the SNS and attacked its representatives without justification. By doing so he betrayed his mandate as deputy of the SNS and the trust of his voters."²⁴⁷

On November 8, 1990, Hrnko split with the SNS and declared the creation of yet another splinter group the "Democratic Platform in the Slovak National Party" and called for the Party's return to its original

²⁴⁶Ibid.

²⁴⁷Prague Lidove Noviny, November 1, 1990, p. 1, in FBIS-EEU November 9, 1990, p. 1.

confederationist orientation, condemning the populist and "emotional" irresponsibility of the leadership of the SNS. Among the signatories of this statement were Hrnko and Vladimir Miskovksy, deputy to the Slovak National Council and the editor of the Party's weekly, Slovensky Narod.²⁴⁸

The disarray within the SNS hampered its ability to compete in the local elections on November 23-24. The SNS won only 3.2% of the municipality seats, although much of this was due to the fact that it could muster enough local support to run in only 4% of the municipal assemblies. Second, the Party was further weakened by its lack of a concrete program for economic and social development beyond declarations in favor of Slovak independence. Third, some of the gradualist nationalist rhetoric which had been part of the SNS' original platform had been appropriated by other political parties, such as the KDH, which turned out to be the clear winner in the Slovak local elections (Pehe, 1990c).

The electoral failure of November served to accelerate the fracturing of the SNS. Indeed, with the emergence of the new VAN-For A Democratic Slovakia committed to a "sovereign Slovakia" within a federative framework, in March 1991, and the KDH's support of the goal of ultimate Slovak independence, much of the "fire" of the SNS had been absconded by other political parties. Secondly,

²⁴⁸ Bratislava Narodna Obroda, November 9, 1990, in FBIS-EEU November 15, 1990, p. 27.

as public opinion polls indicated throughout the spring of 1991, although support for a sovereign Slovakia was growing, this was framed in terms of maintaining either a federal or confederative relationship with the Czech Republic. For example, in a poll conducted by the Institute for Social Analysis of Comenius University in Bratislava at the end of March, 1991, 66% of those surveyed agreed that Slovak sovereignty was "very much needed" or "needed" while 18% replied that it was "more or less necessary." However, in terms of the constitutional arrangement of the state 46.2% regarded the federation as the "best model," 15.4% a confederation, 16.1% an independent Slovakia, 9% a unitary arrangement and 5.7% a tripartite federation (including an independent Moravia and Silesia).²⁴⁹ Third, the electoral failure of November had in part also demonstrated the necessity of transforming the SNS into a party which could compete in the localities, and one which had an effective economic and social program which went beyond independence rhetoric.

The transformation of the SNS occurred at the Party's Third Congress, held on March 23, 1991. Although the congress issued a statement reaffirming the Party's commitment to the ultimate creation of an independent Slovak republic, it rejected the use of "illegal methods" and proclaimed that this could only be achieved by "parliamentary and

²⁴⁹ Bratislava Smena, April 4, 1990, pp. 1-2, in FBIS-EEU, April 8, 1991, p. 22.

democratic methods."²⁵⁰ Secondly, Moric was removed as chair (although he retained his seat on the Central Council) and was replaced with Dr. Jozef Prokes, a physician and Slovak National Council Deputy for the SNS (and ironically of Czech descent).²⁵¹ In rejecting the actions of the SNS leadership during the past year, Prokes declared that only the SNS could only attain the goal of an independent Slovakia through "parliamentary and gradual means" and,

This is why our uppermost effort today will be to show people what they are likely to gain if Slovakia becomes independent or sovereign Although an independent Slovakia is our objective and dream, and I repeat and say this very loudly, not at any cost, because there is no sense in pushing through something that will be killed immediately. Our actions rather will center on learning from other nations. We will take measured steps accompanied by consistent pressure.²⁵²

Further, Prokes declared that the "exhibitionist behavior" of the past would cease and that individuals would be expelled from the party for such inappropriate behavior. In addition, Prokes proclaimed that the new

²⁵⁰CTK, March 23, 1991, in FBIS-EEU March 26, 1991, p. 30.

²⁵¹In an article which appeared in the March 25 edition of Bratislava Verejnost, Prokes is reported as having declared in his address to the SNS Congress that he has "never concealed the fact" that he was Czech. He added that he had already stated this openly in parliament. In FBIS-EEU March 28, 1991, p. 25.

²⁵²Bratislava Domestic Service, March 25, 1991, in FBIS-EEU March 26, 1991, p. 31.

leadership would focus on the strengthening the internal structure of the SNS, especially in terms of the relationship between the central council and local committees. This would require that the latter have regularized representation on the council.²⁵³ Third, greater coordination between the parliamentary contingent and the Party's Central Council would also be a priority, and the former disaffected wings of the Party led by Marko and Hrnko, would be invited to rejoin the Central Council.²⁵⁴

In essence, the SNS Third Congress represented a victory for the forces within the party who had favored transforming the SNS to fit the new competitive conditions which had emerged in the first year of Czechoslovak democracy. Led by its parliamentary contingent, the party postponed the call for immediate Slovak independence and opted to concentrate on constructing a party which could win election. In this sense, the evolution of the SNS was typical of other parties on the Czechoslovak political scene. Despite the fact that the SNS claimed to be based on a single constituency, it, too, fragmented as it struggled with its own identity crisis. As a result, several competing groups emerged from within the ranks of the SNS to challenge its proclaimed role, under Moric, as the sole representative of Slovak nationalism. In addition, these

²⁵³Bratislava Pravda, March 25, 1991, p. 2, in FBIS-EEU March 28, 1991, p. 24.

²⁵⁴Ibid.

challenges compelled the original SNS to alter its agenda, to proclaim a new course in the direction of internal restructuring, a restructuring which was specifically designed to win election.

Discussion and Conclusions

In reviewing the evolution of the three types of transitional parties in the first year following the founding election in Czechoslovakia, several noteworthy differences between the Czech and Slovak transitional parties with their Baltic counterparts emerge. The most striking difference was the rapidity with which the Czechoslovak popular fronts disintegrated, even after attaining decisive victory in the parliamentary election of June, 1990. Thus, unlike the Latvian case, where the PFL's parliamentary victory set off a chain of events leading to the polarization of Latvian politics, and the Estonian case, where partial victory led to a greater degree of accommodation between the PFE and the CPE, the overwhelming victory of the OF/VAN in the June elections accelerated the collapse of this organization.

The rapidity of the collapse of the Czech and Slovak popular fronts can be accounted for by three reasons. First of all, the electoral system, although governing the outcome of only a single election, served to alter the

perceptions of several groups within both the Civic Forum and the VAN. Thus, individual parties within the umbrella movements sought to strike out on their own, like the Social Democrats and the Christian Democrats prior to the June election, and the Liberal Democrats after. On the other hand, the structure of Czechoslovakian federalism also served to force the VAN to adopt a more parochial position on Slovak independence, leading to the growing distance between the VAN and their Czech counterpart.

A second reason for the rapid collapse of the OF, in particular, was the lack of an external threat which existed for the Baltic states. This also served to reduce the threat posed by hardline elements within the CPCZ, which had acted as a "brake" on the process of differentiation for the PFE.

Third, like the Baltic popular fronts, the OF was hampered by its own lack of consensus on its identity and its lack of internal coherence which in turn accelerated the process of fragmentation.

The new political environment in 1990-91 also served to alter the CPCZ. Although unlike the OF/VAN, the CPCZ did not fragment into a number of splinter parties, it, too, underwent a profound transformation during the course of its identity crisis. However, the primary conflicts between reformists and more conservative elements were played out at the level of the republican party organizations, rather than the party center. Moreover, unlike the Baltic

communist parties, the primary debates did not result in the division of the CPCZ into reformist and "loyalist" wings, but rather along inter-ethnic lines. Indeed, the federalization of the party in the fall of 1990 had served to establish the principal conflict as not between hardliners and reformists, but rather between the Czech and Slovak wings of the party.

Further, the new political environment established by the founding election of June, 1990, also had a profound effect in fragmenting the ethnically particularistic party, the SNS. Thus, contrary to expectations, the SNS did not consolidate as the result of growing debates over Slovak independence, but in fact fragmented into traditional nationalist and electoral wings. Indeed, the primary impetus behind this was the debate between these two wings over the role the party was to play in Slovak electoral politics.

In sum, the fragmentary character of Czechoslovak politics which resulted from the various splits which have occurred in political groupings in the initial stages of democratic transition was far more extreme when compared to the early experiences of the Baltic states. To large extent this was due to the inability of the existing organizations (save perhaps for the communists) to adapt their organizations to meet new demand place upon them by the electoral environment.

Ironically then, the electoral successes in June did not strengthen the victorious political groupings, but in fact contributed greatly to their downfall. It is also ironic that the very fragmentation which the OF/VAN "Government of National Understanding" sought to prevent through the careful manipulation of electoral structures in fact failed to do this. Indeed, despite the good intentions of the democratic leadership, the structural changes which had heralded the onset of democratic elections have reproduced all that was negative about Czechoslovak politics in the inter-war Republic.

Chapter 7: Conclusions

On rare occasions the researcher in the social sciences is afforded the opportunity to work under almost quasi-experimental conditions. This opportunity has presented itself in the wake of the collapse of communist rule and the rush towards democracy and a free market in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. This study has focused on the application of the theoretical literature on party and party systems development, with particular emphasis on the institutionalist literature concerning the consequences of electoral laws in ethnically bi-polar countries.

Proximal hypotheses regarding the effects of increasing district magnitude on independent candidate entry, and the nomination strategies of both ethnically particularistic and large conglomerate parties, were generated and tested using evidence from the 1990 Estonian Supreme Soviet election. In addition, more distal consequences regarding the degree of fragmentation of the conglomerate parties and the development of ethnic party politics were investigated in the comparative case studies of Estonia, Latvia and Czechoslovakia.

The discussion in this chapter is divided into two sections. First, I summarize the proximal and distal expectations generated in Chapter 2 of this work and the

results of the inquiry. Second, I shall discuss unresolved issues, with particular attention paid to several scenarios for the future development of party politics in Eastern Europe. Third, I shall examine the applicability and significance of this study will be examined, especially regarding the lessons concerning the problem of promoting political democracy in Eastern Europe.

The principal proposition put forth by this work was that the features of an electoral system have both proximal and distal consequences on the behavior of political parties, the degree to which transitional parties fragment, and the characteristics of ethnic party politics. The proximal expectations dealt with the pressures generated by district magnitude, ethnic composition of an electoral district, and the activities of structured political parties, on the dependent variables of independent candidate entry, as well as the nominating strategies of both ethnically particularistic and large conglomerate parties, like the Popular Front. To restate the proximal expectations generated in Chapter 2:

Proximal Expectation 1: In terms of immediate behavioral consequences, the environment of deeply cleaved societies should affect the character of party strategy. In other words, proclaimed multi-ethnic "transitional parties" should run candidates in all electoral constituencies and regions. Ethnically particularistic parties should rather run candidates only in districts where they have a chance of winning (i.e., districts in which the national minority comprises a local majority)

Proximal Expectation 2: As district magnitude increases, then the incentive for entry into competitive politics increases. Thus, with increased district magnitude there will exist a strong incentive for the ethnically particularistic party to contest elections in districts where the minority population constitutes a small but significant portion of the population. Conglomerate parties should be unaffected by district magnitude.

Proximal Expectation 3: In general, because of the incentives generated by STV, large parties, especially conglomerate parties should tend to over-nominate in every electoral district. This tendency should be greatest in five and three-member constituencies where seat rewards are greatest

Proximal Expectation 4: The presence of a minimally "structured" conglomerate political party contesting an election at the district level will have a dampening effect on entry. Thus, where structured political parties compete there should be a marked decline in candidate entry. This effect should become magnified when two or more structured parties are present.

Chapter 4 focused on testing these proximal expectations through the analysis of the Estonian Supreme Soviet elections of April 1990. Although, in general, the findings supported the claim that increasing district magnitude tended to foster increasing independent candidate entry (proximal expectation 2), they did not reveal that structured political parties exert a strong dampening effect on candidate entry (contrary proximal expectation 4). This was definitely true of the activities of the PFE, but was also indicated in part by the evidence concerning the effects, at the district level, of the activities of the Free Estonia Association and the joint activities of both

the PFE and Vaba Eesti. Moreover, there was little evidence that candidate proliferation was less frequent in ethnically homogeneous regions as compared to ethnically heterogeneous ones.

In terms of the behavior of the ethnically particularistic party, in this case the Russian-dominated OSTK, it was found that district magnitude exerted little effect on the nominating strategy of OSTK. Rather, a more powerful influence was the ethnic composition of the electoral district. Moreover, it was found that the activities of the structured political parties, most notably the PFE and the Free Estonia Association, did not deter the decision on the part of OSTK to run a candidate in a particular district (which confirms, in part, proximal expectation 1).

Finally, proximal expectation 3, which dealt with the peculiar features of STV and the incentive this system generates for large parties, was not confirmed. In general, the evidence did not indicate that the PFE sought to over-nominate in all electoral districts, as was argued, but rather tended toward nominating as many candidates as there were seats. This tendency was also not more pronounced in the three and five-member districts, contrary to what was posited in Chapter 2.

The above findings demonstrate that increasing district magnitude does exert a powerful incentive for entry, even in the case of "founding elections." This tendency was further reinforced by the relative ease by which

independent candidates could appear on the Estonian ballot. Although this finding was not unexpected, it does suggest that over time the propensity for candidate entry will provide a strong incentive for the entry of new parties into electoral competition. Further, given the umbrella-like nature of transitional parties, such as the Popular Front, the incentives generated for entry should exert a powerful fragmentary pressure, especially if the STV is retained.

The lack of a dampening effect exerted by these transitional parties on the incentive for entry should be interpreted with some care. It is entirely possible that transitional parties like the Popular Front of Estonia lacked the degree of structuration necessary to dampen candidate entry, although they may acquire it in the future.

Three points, however, should be considered when dealing with this possible counter-argument. First, with its national symbol and pro-independence program, coupled with a degree of local organization through its well-established network of local district committees, the PFE roughly corresponded to Sartori's definition of a "structured" political party. Second, when considering the partial evidence on an organization which was clearly structured, the Free Estonia Association, this latter party was also unable to dampen candidate entry. Finally, given that the structuration of a political party depends heavily on the ability of the party organization to remain cohesive,

the incentive for fragmentation exerted by STV does not bode well for the emergence of any highly structured parties. Indeed, as demonstrated in the Irish case, STV exerts a powerful incentive for the emergence of parties which act less like coherent structured organizations than like highly factionalized organizations wracked by internal disputes.

Finally, the findings concerning the behavior of ethnically particularistic parties in Estonia indicated that STV did not significantly alter the nominating strategy of the OSTK. Increasing district magnitude did not provide sufficient incentive for OSTK to nominate candidates in districts which had even a significant non-Estonian population. Rather, OSTK sought to remain a regionally-based party concentrating its efforts almost exclusively on districts where non-Estonians comprised the majority of the population. This suggests that the STV did not dampen the regional or ethnic particularism of the Russian dominated OSTK. A possible counter-argument to this finding might be that over time the OSTK or any other non-Estonian political party might "learn" to alter its electoral nominating strategy. Again however, this would appear unlikely, since OSTK was relatively successful in obtaining a significant share of seats in the parliamentary elections and enjoyed a relatively high degree of success in electing the candidates that it did nominate.

The distal effects of STV as compared to either FPTP and PR-list systems are more difficult to surmise and require greater care in interpretation. In sum, these distal expectations involved the following:

Distal Expectation 1: Within the environment of "assymmetrically bi-polar societies" party fragmentation in the period of democratic transition should be most pronounced among umbrella groupings such as the Popular Front and the residual communist party. However, among ethnically particularistic parties, especially those which purport to represent the minority, fragmentation should not occur.

Distal Expectation 2: In comparison to either PR or First-Past-the-Post systems, the tendency for the fragmentation of umbrella groupings should be less under STV as compared to PR and more than under FPTP.

Distal Expectation 3: In comparison to PR the propensity for the fragmentation of ethnically particularistic parties should be less under the conditions of STV and more than First-Past-the-Post systems.

Distal Expectation 4: The party format, largely as a result of the totalitarian legacy is generally populated by minimally structured conglomerate political parties. Moreover, since the collapse of communist rule in Czechoslovakia was more sudden, giving less time for parties to organize; the tendency for fragmentation among these conglomerate parties should thus be much more pronounced in Czechoslovakia as compared to either Estonia or Latvia.

In dealing with these distal expectations, Chapters 5 and 6 examined the evidence from the first year following the founding elections in Estonia, Latvia and Czechoslovakia. Each of the above distal expectations underlined the importance of a relevant dimension of the propensity for transitional conglomerate parties to fragment and along

what lines. Comparing across the three national cases, we find that the inter-ethnic dimension had different effects. Although all three were characterized by a highly charged environment in ethno-politics, the most pronounced effect was exerted in Latvia, where not only did anti-independence forces consolidate around the banner of the Communist party loyalists (distal expectation 1), but this in turn led to the consolidation of the PFL as the "leading force" in the republic. In general, the primary line of cleavage in Latvian party politics was based upon a high degree of inter-ethnic animosity between the two opposing poles. However, despite similarities along this dimension, in Estonia the degree of consolidation which characterized the ethnically particularistic non-Estonian party OSTK was much less than the Interfront in Latvia. Moreover, OSTK was not only shut out of the Free Estonia Association but over time was also shunned by the CPE loyalists, who, under the Sillari leadership, began to adopt a more conciliatory line vis-a-vis the issue of independence and the PFE.

The difference between the evolutionary trajectories of ethnically particularistic parties and the conglomerate transitional parties in the Baltic states thus cannot be accounted for simply by the nature of ethnic politics. Distal expectations 2 and 3, which relate the impact of electoral rules on party fragmentation, were confirmed in part by the investigation of these two cases. In the Estonian case, the degree of fragmentation within the PFE

was far more pronounced than it was in the PFL, as one would expect, given the pressures exerted by the greater proportionality of STV as compared to FPTP. Moreover, the emergence of two politically opposed poles in the Latvian case was also congruent with the expectation that FPTP will lead to the consolidation of both conglomerate parties and ethnically particular ones.

These conclusions should be qualified, however, especially in light of the evidence presented in Chapter 5. Although the evolutionary track followed in Estonian and Latvian party politics seemed to correspond to institutionally based theory, this was not the result of a direct relationship between the electoral rules and the fragmentation of the umbrella parties. One cannot discount two additional factors which played a role in the formative period of party politics in the year following the founding elections. First, part of the reason why the reformists in the CPE were able to alter the Party to fit the conditions of the new political environment was that the reformists had attained a position of dominance before the founding elections of 1990. This was particularly in evidence, especially after the accession of Valyas as First Secretary of the CPE in 1988. This, however, was not true of Latvia, which remained dominated by Russian/conservative elements.

Second, the fragmentation in the PFE as compared to the PFL, although reflective of internal debates, does not necessarily mean that this was the result only of policy

disputes. Indeed, one cannot discount the personal animosities and pettiness which characterized the struggles within the PFE.

Nonetheless, the electoral rules did serve to exacerbate these pre-electoral trends. First, the electoral system exerted an indirect effect in that it set the stage for winners and losers. The electoral system in Estonia prevented an overwhelming victory for the PFE; on the other hand, the use of FPTP assisted in the overwhelming victory of the PFL in Latvia. The significance of these results should not be underestimated. In both cases a complex chain of events was unleashed leading to the moderation of Estonian party politics and the fragmentary trend within the PFE but to the polarization of Latvian party politics and the consolidation of the PFL.

In Estonia, these trends were assisted by the victory of the reformists within the CPE, itself a consequence of the CPE's rather respectable showing in the March elections. Indeed, the fact that the PFE did not capture an overwhelming majority in the parliamentary elections served to assist the reformists in the CPE leadership in their bid to transform the party into an independent, electoral machine. By demonstrating that the CPE could survive under the new conditions, coupled with the relative success enjoyed by the Free Estonia Association, the reformist argument was strengthened. Moreover, over time the CPE-loyalists gradually began to adopt the reformist line,

especially under the Annus leadership. It is difficult to imagine that this scenario would have taken place had the CPE suffered the disastrous defeat that the CPL had suffered in the March elections. On the other hand, FPTP in Latvia contributed to the overwhelming victory of the PFL in the March election which in turn led to the victory of the loyalists in the CPL and the polarization of Latvian party politics into two camps.

Regarding the PFE, with the lessening of the threat posed by the CPE, the policy disputes and personal animosities within the PFE were given an opportunity to openly express themselves. This, however, was strikingly absent from the PFL, which, especially after the fall of 1990, was transforming itself into the "leading force" in the republic. However, the centripetal pressures exerted by a threatening external environment (Estonia's standing vis-a-vis Moscow) served at least to forestall, in the short run, the demise of the PFE. In Latvia they contributed to the further polarization of Latvian party politics.

The focus of Chapter 6 was on the evidence presented by Czechoslovakia, with the purpose of extending the investigation beyond the Baltic states. However, by seeking to broaden the comparison, other dimensions affecting party behavior and the evolution of party politics were relaxed, most notably the international dimension and the additional structural element of federalism. Although the use of a

PR-list system did not prevent the OF/VPN alliance from attaining an overwhelming margin of victory in the parliamentary elections of June, 1990, as STV had done in Estonia, it did create the prospective openings which provided an incentive for the defection of several parties and groups who had, heretofore, operated under the umbrella of the OF/VPN. This was especially evident as the inevitable debates on the nature and identity of the Civic Forum and the Public Against Violence led to irreconcilable differences within these organizations and to the rapid defection of independent parties which sought to establish their own electoral identities. Moreover, the absence of an external threat to Czechoslovakian independence, coupled with the victory of the reformists within the CPCZ, further catalyzed this disintegrative process.

An additional observable effect of the opportunities created by the PR-list system was to fragment the ethnically particularistic party. During the course of the SNS's own crisis of identity, which pitted those who favored retaining the purity of the Party's nationalist program against those in the parliamentary wing, dissidents disgruntled with Moric's leadership defected from the SNS and established independent formations. The net result was fragmentation not only of the OF/VPN alliance but across the entire spectrum of Czechoslovak parties.

The structural dimension of federalism added an additional twist to the Czech and Slovak party politics. One

obvious effect was the introduction of an institutionalized line of cleavage which divided the Popular Front organizations. This became especially relevant as the leadership of the OF and VPN went separate ways on the issue of the rapid privatization of the Czechoslovak economy. In addition, federalism created a political framework by which debates over the nature of the economic reforms became couched as a confrontation between Czech and Slovak national interests. Thus, federalism exacerbated the latent inter-ethnic conflict.

Federalism had the greatest effect on the CPCZ. However, the CPCZ itself split, not along programmatic lines, as was the case in Latvia and Estonia, but along ethnic lines. To be sure, in both wings of the party, the reformists emerged ascendant after the federalization of the CPCZ; however, the victory of the reformists did not contribute to greater accommodation between the two wings. As 1991 progressed, the Czech and Slovak wings increasingly grew apart, especially on the issue of Slovak national sovereignty.

In comparing the Baltic states on the one hand with Czechoslovakia on the other, the distal expectations 2, 3, and 4 were, in part, confirmed by the evidence. The tendency for the fragmentation of umbrella groupings was far stronger in Czechoslovakia than in Estonia. By far, the least amount of fragmentation occurred in Latvia with the consolidation of the party politics into two

diametrically opposed poles. Similarly, the degree of fragmentation of the ethnically particularistic party in Czechoslovakia, the SNSR, was far greater than similar parties in either Latvia or Estonia.

The above evidence also suggests an answer to the seeming intractable trade-off between FPTP and the PR-type systems. Indeed, this trade-off is best illustrated by the contrasting cases of Czechoslovakia and Latvia. The use of a PR-list system, coupled with the federal nature of the Czechoslovakian state, did serve to prevent the establishment of a dominant ethnic bloc, although it did not prevent the establishment of OF-VPN hegemony at the federal level. On the other hand, it did not provide enough incentive for groups which comprised these umbrella groups to moderate their demands, which effectively led to the rapid disintegration of both groups. In Latvia, on the other hand, the use of "First-Past-the Post" (FPTP) did led to the establishment of the PFL as the leading political force in the republic, but it also led to the dominance of a single ethnic political bloc and the disaffection of minority groups from the political system. As a result, the use of "First-Past-the-Post" in Latvia strengthened the lines of polarized ethnic conflict.

The special case is illustrated by the development of Estonian politics. In effect, the use of STV rewarded minority groups, in this case the Communist Party and the Russian minority party, with representation which in the

Latvian case they had been denied. This contributed to the overall moderation of Estonian party politics in the first year after the founding elections. On the other hand, the disintegration of the Popular Front was not as rapid as it was in the Czechoslovakian case, although this may not have been due exclusively to the incentives generated by the electoral system, but rather to the incentive to remain together in the face of the external threat posed by Moscow. Whatever the reason, however, the PFE did not fragment as quickly as similar organizations in Czechoslovakia, and the use of STV did prevent PFE dominance.

Unresolved issues, remain, however. Of these perhaps the most significant are the yet unanswered questions whether individual party fragmentation will necessarily lead to the continued fractionalization of some future party system, and whether the current trajectory in the development of inter-ethnic political conflict will continue. Much of this depends not only on changing international circumstances and the future course of economic reform but also on adjustments in features of the political structure. This might include the adjustment or wholesale overhaul of existing electoral systems, or the adoption of such measures as a strengthened and directly elected presidency, or the strengthening of the committee system in the parliaments.

Beyond the wholesale overhaul of the electoral system, one possible measure is the adoption of a directly

elected chief executive. This would have different effects in each of the three systems. In Czechoslovakia, the strengthening of the executive may serve to forestall the process of hyper-fragmentation now in evidence. However, it may replicate the situation which existed during the Czechoslovak First Republic in which the Presidency largely operated without check and through emergency powers, something akin to presidential dictatorship. On the other hand, in Latvia, the institution of such a measure might not promote inter-ethnic cooperation but might further exacerbate inter-ethnic conflict and solidify the political dominance of a single ethnic bloc, especially if executive power allows for the by-passing of legislative measures. This could may also be a future scenario for Estonia.

The strengthening of the internal structure of the various parliaments, especially through the construction of a legislative committee system, would have an effect opposite to that of a directly elected, and politically strengthened, chief executive. By multiplying the openings created by strengthened committee and sub-committee chairmanships, in lieu of established and disciplined political parties, the incentive for infighting among largely heterogeneous mass organizations would increase. Thus, in Estonia and Latvia, this may create pressures towards the greater fragmentation of the PFE and PFL, especially as the question becomes which of the groups comprising both organizations should occupy which chairs. In

Czechoslovakia, this might exacerbate an already highly fragmented situation, in which various parties contend for committee chairs; moreover if the legislative process depends heavily upon the attitude of these committee chairs, this may contribute greatly to creating the conditions for legislative deadlock.

Although the above are possible scenarios, they must remain issues for future study. The purpose of this work was not to project into the future the characteristics of a yet largely undefined system of parties, but rather to assess the impact of a variety of factors in the initial period of democratic transition and party systems development. Furthermore, although this work does not claim that the "micro-second after the big bang" will forever determine the future contours of party systems in Eastern Europe, it does suggest that, if the arduous debates on the Estonian electoral law is any evidence of this, major overhauls of the electoral system would be quite difficult to implement. Indeed, given that a two-thirds majority is required for such major legislation in all three parliaments, substantial alterations in the electoral laws of both Estonia and Czechoslovakia (but not in Latvia) in the direction of FPTP seem unlikely. Although the "big bang" may not determine the future course of democratization in Eastern Europe, it certainly set the stage through which such fundamental political and structural debates will take place.

In sum, this study has been both analytical and exploratory. Its analytical component involves the construction of a theoretical framework derived from existing theories on party systems development which sought to test both proximal and distal hypotheses. However, perhaps its greatest claim to making a scientific contribution lies in its exploratory component. By establishing the basic framework by which to examine the development of political parties and party systems, I hope to establish the basis for expanding the analysis both geographically and temporally. Geographically, the proposition that initial choices regarding electoral rules makes a significant difference in the evolution of political democracy and party competition in ethnically cleaved societies can be expanded beyond Eastern Europe to countries which are faced with a similar dilemma (Nigeria immediately comes to mind). On the other hand, it establishes the framework by which to analyze the evolution of party systems and the results of future elections in the cases of Estonia, Latvia, and Czechoslovakia.

The importance of political institutions and the rules has in the past often been neglected as a result of social, cultural and economic determinism bred of the behavioral revolution. Though undoubtedly these dimensions raised the scientific level of the discipline, this movement often removed that which was political from political studies of democracy and democratization. Although Sartori

may have overstated his case when he claimed that electoral rules were the "most specifically manipulative aspect of politics," his argument suggests that any study of democratization must involve reference to the channels through which electoral competition takes place. These channels are governed by the rules, and rules are a matter of human choice. Rules are important. They are an overt expression of human political will. It is these choices, at critical junctures in history, which have set the stage for the drama of the political future of Eastern Europe.

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