

# Performance, Leadership, Factions and Party Change: An Empirical Analysis

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*This article reports the first empirical findings based on data from a major study of party change. Hypotheses are developed linking party change to both internal and external factors. The data provide support for the conclusion that electoral performance alone is not sufficient as an explanation for parties' decisions to change, and that new leaders and/or dominant factions may indeed make a difference. This leads the authors to suggest that 'the burgeoning field of theoretical and empirical work on party change should focus even more attention on internal decision-making processes'.*

From the premises that political parties are large organisations and that large organisations are generally 'conservative' with regard to internal change, it is often inferred that parties will change only when their organisational survival is threatened. That is, a competitive party – even though fashioned as a 'responsive' mechanism for policy change – will resist changing *itself*, whether organisationally or in identity, except and until it is deemed to be *necessary* for meeting its primary goal. And since competitive parties are assumed to be motivated primarily by electoral considerations, it is often further inferred that parties will change themselves only after suffering poor electoral performance.

Harmel and Janda have recently argued that the above view is based on somewhat faulty (or at least overgeneralised) premises, and have offered a revised theory of party change.<sup>1</sup> The revised theory, while still providing a major role for electoral performance in affecting party change, both broadens the applications of the notion of 'party performance' and incorporates some 'internal' factors in the more comprehensive explanatory model.

Recently, two NSF-sponsored projects have directed their efforts toward collecting data with which to test theories of party change. The first, recently completed under the direction of Richard Katz and Peter Mair, tapped official party records for annualised data on a wide range of organisational variables, covering 19 western democracies for the period

1960–1990. The second, still underway under the direction of Robert Harmel and Kenneth Janda, is also collecting annualised data on party characteristics, but this time using judgmental coding procedures to tap the ‘unofficial’ story of parties’ goals, organisation, internal distribution of power, strategy/tactics, and ideological/issue orientation, for the period 1950–1990 and for just 19 parties of the United States, United Kingdom, Germany, and Denmark.

The current article reports on tests of parts of the integrated theory of party change, using available data from Harmel and Janda’s project for six parties of the UK and Germany. More specifically, this article reports preliminary empirical analysis addressing what we find to be three of the most compelling parts of the integrated theory – hypotheses associating party change with poor electoral performance and the ‘internal factors’ of leadership change and change of dominant faction within the party. These are eventually treated in a ‘stepwise’ fashion (i.e., attributing to leadership and factional change only party changes which could not also be accounted for by evaluation of bad electoral performance), but all three are also treated in bivariate mode. The ultimate objective of these preliminary tests is to shed light on missing or particularly weak elements in the integrated theory of party change, so as to facilitate possible refinements of that theory.<sup>2</sup>

## THEORY

### *General Theoretical Framework*

Whether arguing that most changes in party organisation in recent decades can be seen as a gradual erosion of the organisation in a period of ‘system decline’, or that parties have been ‘forced’ to professionalise in response to environmental change, most statements about party change have given little attention to the parties’ own decision-making processes in effecting organisational change. In part, this neglect has probably been due to a general theoretical orientation that has given precedence to ‘primary’ causes in explaining party change.

In contrast, it is a major underlying premise of this article that party change does not ‘just happen’. Decisions to change a party’s organisation or identity face a wall of resistance common to large organisations, such that a successful effort to change the party will normally involve not only a good reason but also the building of a coalition of support. In our view, then, while the good reason (i.e., stimulus for change) *may* be externally induced, the designing and successful implementation of a responsive change will be highly dependent upon internal factors.

### *Theory: Electoral Performance*

Though the ‘external stimuli’ (or ‘shocks’)<sup>3</sup> may take several forms, a prominent view in the literature on large, competitive parties is that at least parties of that size and type tend to be most responsive to shocks of an electoral nature. Specifically, it has at times been argued that such parties change – or at least, change dramatically – *only* in response to bad electoral performance. This view has been succinctly summarised as ‘defeat is the mother of party change’,<sup>4</sup> which may be translated to ‘poor electoral performance is a necessary, but not sufficient, condition for party change’. This, in turn, implies:

Hypothesis 1: Party change is proximally<sup>5</sup> preceded by poor electoral performance.<sup>6</sup>

In our empirical analysis, this hypothesis will be the first addressed, along with a corollary:

Hypothesis 1a: The relationship between poor electoral performance and party change is stronger for large, competitive parties than for small parties.

The latter corollary is consistent with the fact that most references to bad elections as a factor in change tend to be found in discussions of larger parties, and with our view that – especially for small parties – other goals (e.g., advocacy of a ‘pure’ ideology or issue position)<sup>7</sup> may actually supersede electoral success in considerations of the party’s organisation and especially its identity. A version of the latter view has previously been expressed by Frank Wilson:

In western democracies, the principal measure of party success or failure is election victory. This competition for votes is the central focus of activity *for the major parties*. Marginal parties may be able to offer supporters other rewards such as friendships or ideological fulfilment even if they cannot win power. But major parties expect to contend for national power and they are expected to do so by their activists and their voters. When a major party appears unable to compete successfully, that becomes a powerful stimulus for change. (emphasis added)<sup>8</sup>

Hypothesis 1a also reflects the further consideration that while dramatic electoral defeats may serve as a strong impetus for large parties – experienced with electoral success – to change, it might be that small (and especially new) parties – perhaps expecting poor electoral results – would take electoral defeat in their stride while seeing unexpected electoral *success* as a wakeup call to potential benefits

of change. For instance, a small party that was developed primarily to promote a message (more so than to govern) may not be shocked by electoral stagnation or even downturns, but an extraordinary electoral success could give fuel to those within the party who may be bent on a more organised, pragmatic, vote-seeking approach. 'If we can do that well without paying attention to the organisation or to the opinion polls, imagine how well we could do with an organisational overhaul and a bit of image makeover', the argument might go.

In any case, though the 'performance theory of party change' is very appealing for its parsimony, it is also possible that it is *too* simple (i.e., ignores too much of the complexity of party life) to hold up, alone, in the face of empirical testing. And while the performance theory may be prominent today among theories of party change, the literature has certainly suggested other rival – or better put, complementary – factors as well. Among these are two types of change taking place within the party itself, changes in party leader and changes in the party's dominant faction (or coalition).<sup>9</sup>

#### *Theory: Leadership Change*

Do party leaders make a difference with regard to party change? If past electoral performance or other 'external' factors could explain all party change, then the role of leaders would presumably be limited to an 'intervening' one. Even proponents of electoral performance theory have not discounted the fact that some leaders are more oriented and better equipped to respond to the electoral stimuli with party change, while other leaders could deny the desirability of change or fail in efforts to make it happen.<sup>10</sup> Someone must assess the recent electoral performance, as well as the chances for doing better the next time, and in the parties' literature it is generally assumed that the party leaders play a critical role in such assessments.<sup>11</sup> Likewise, it is generally assumed that leaders will be instrumental in devising and implementing strategies (whether for change or maintenance of the status quo) consistent with those assessments. Different leaders will assess things differently; different leaders have different abilities with which to develop and implement changes when they do want them. At least in these ways, there is general agreement that leaders, and who the leaders are, can make a difference. And hence, it can be inferred that when one leader is replaced by another of more positive orientation or with better skills regarding change, the *change of leader* itself may prove to be a facilitating event.<sup>12</sup>

It is also reasonable, though, to posit that there are situations within which the role of the leader may go beyond 'intervening', that is, where

the leader and the leader's own wishes may be the *ultimate* cause of change. Party leaders need followers in order to effect change, and depending on the structure of a specific party, the most critical followers may be voters, activists, members, or some combination from the latter. If the critical support base within the party changes on its own, or if it can be changed or persuaded to change by the leader him/herself, then this would presumably be one situation (especially in the latter case) within which leaders could do more than just *respond* to external cues and pressures in effecting party change.

In assessing theoretically whether leaders (and hence change of leaders) may be factors in party change, two relevant points seem clear. First, as relates to the paragraphs above, different leaders bring somewhat different abilities and orientations to the job, and sometimes the differences between one leader and his/her successor can be substantial.<sup>13</sup> Second, the typical organisational leader will want to leave his or her mark upon the organisation. Since party leaders know from the beginning that their period in office may be short, it can further be expected that they will want to make a mark quickly. Third, new party leaders will almost always find need for some level of organisational innovation as part of strategy for consolidating power.<sup>14</sup> And fourth, from the standpoint of the organisation, leadership changes are generally destabilising events.<sup>15</sup> From these premises, it is an easy matter to infer that leadership change should result in party change, and to place political parties within Gilmore's observation with regard to organisations generally:

Leadership transitions represent a 'natural entry point'<sup>16</sup> for change. . . The transition is an occasion to rethink the commitment to the present agenda, to reflect on roads not taken in the past, and to review future choices. . . Leadership transitions are thus volatile moments in the life cycles of organisations, occasions for renewal as well as for regression.<sup>17</sup>

This can reasonably be restated as 'leadership change is a sufficient, though not necessary, condition for party change', and hence our

Hypothesis 2: Leadership change is proximally<sup>18</sup> followed by party change.<sup>19</sup>

But since some leadership changes themselves derive from (or at least follow shortly behind) bad electoral performances, and since the electoral stimuli may then be seen as the *ultimate* cause of any consequent party changes, it behoves us in our empirical analysis to determine the extent to which leadership change *alone* could conceivably

contribute to explanation of party change, even controlling for electoral performance. Since Hypothesis 2 is broad enough to cover both circumstances, it is easy to further infer

Hypothesis 2a: Leadership change is associated with party change, even with all possible direct effects of poor electoral performance (and resulting leadership changes) already removed.

The extent to which changes of leader will actually result in party change obviously depends upon such factors as the extent to which the new leader's desires and strategies for the party are different from those of the predecessor, the personal abilities of the new leader to effect the changes he/she wants, and the extent to which the party is willing to (or perhaps must, according to the internal power structure) follow the leader. The latter condition actually consists of two important components: the willingness of the groups currently 'in power' within the party to support the initiatives of the leader, and the extent to which the leadership position is itself equipped with the powers necessary to effect change independently of others' support. The first of these components is directly related to what we call 'change of dominant faction', and that topic will be discussed in detail below. The second, the *formal structure* of power and the leader's place in it, requires some attention here.

It is one thing to posit that party leaders are directly involved in affecting party change, and hence that changes in party leaders themselves create special opportunities for significant change. However, to assume further that all party leaders have the *same* opportunities for changing their parties would be to lose sight not only of the specific characteristics of the leader and the circumstances under which he/she assumes office, but especially the extent to which limitations are placed upon leaders by the structures and rules of their own parties.

On this last point, we need only consider the two largest British parties for an example of how much variance can exist within a single party system on latitude for leaders to act. The contrast between the immense powers and wide latitude afforded to Conservative leaders, on the one hand, and the severe limitations placed upon Labour leaders, on the other, has been well documented. According to Beloff and Peele, for instance,

... the Conservative manifesto will very much reflect the personal style of the party leader rather than, as in the Labour Party, being the product of a complex process of accommodation and collective decision-making. The Conservative leader enjoys a great deal of autonomy throughout the Conservative Party ... ultimately the

tone and the priorities of party policy are as much personal as reflective of party opinion generally.<sup>20</sup>

And not only do general policy thrusts themselves conform to leaders' preferences, but the 'machinery for policy-making in the Conservative Party will also reflect the preferences of the leadership'. In contrast, Seyd has described the difficulties that Labour leaders face in trying to effect change:

Structural constraints have always made Labour an extremely difficult party to lead. One of these constraints has been that, as a consequence of its formal institutional links with the trade unions, the party has operated within certain political parameters. . . . Another has been the party's divided power structure, with no single source of legitimate authority. . . . In addition, the party leadership has been constrained by an ethos that has placed great stress on the democratic role of party members.<sup>21</sup>

And finally, to make matters even worse for the most recent Labour leaders, 'the party activists, who may have been most dedicated to principles, gained significant powers in the late 1970s'.<sup>22</sup>

Inclusion of these two parties among our six cases, along with the fact that the CDU resembles the Conservatives and the SPD resembles Labour in these regards,<sup>23</sup> will afford us an opportunity to address

Hypothesis 2b: The relationship between leadership changes and party change is stronger for parties with strong leadership structures than for parties with severely limited leaders.

#### *Theory: Change of Dominant Faction*

In addition to leadership change, another type of event in internal party politics warrants examination as a possible, significant contributor to party change. It is well documented in the parties' literature that factionalism is a fact of life within most political parties.<sup>24</sup> It is not uncommon for rival factions to engage in struggles for control of their party's apparatus.<sup>25</sup> These struggles typically involve conflicts arising from competing demands, and in those producing a new dominant coalition/faction, may ultimately result in changes in the party's organisation and/or direction.

Both Panebianco and Ignazi have associated party change with changes in the internal power relationships among groups within the party.<sup>26</sup> Panebianco, for instance, argues that as a consequence of the modifications within the internal power relationships, organisational changes may be effected to reflect the changes in power distribution.

'[C]ertain rules of the game – namely, rules of internal competition – are changed (and sometimes ratified by statutory revisions), because the new leaders must support their newly acquired control of the party with organisational innovations'.<sup>27</sup>

Hence, it is certainly reasonable to consider change in a party's dominant faction(s) to be a likely source of significant party change. However, the tremendous difficulty in identifying the specific factional composition of most parties, compounded by the even greater difficulty of identifying the details of change in power relationships among the factions, have meant little study of the consequences of changes in those relationships. Nevertheless, our own foray into this area has resulted in a few preliminary data with which we can begin to analyse

Hypothesis 3: Change of dominant faction within a party is associated with party change.<sup>28</sup>

#### *Data and Approach*

This study utilises party change data collected in 1991–93 for Harmel and Janda's NSF-sponsored project. The data are annualised for the period 1950–1990, and were collected using judgmental coding techniques. The latter involved coding on the basis of English-language literature on the relevant parties (using procedures similar to those employed by Janda for the earlier ICPP project)<sup>29</sup>, using detailed coding instructions. The cases analysed here are the British Labour, Conservative, and Liberal parties, and the German SPD, CDU, and FDP. Though there are obvious limitations to inferring from comparisons of just six parties, these particular cases – which are the only parties for which such complete data on party change are currently available – nonetheless allow for meaningful comparisons to be made between large and small parties, parties with strong and weak leadership structures, and parties of two- and multi-party systems.

The dependent variable in our analyses is 'party change', measured for a given number of years (normally two-year periods for these analyses, for reasons explained below) as (1) the *number* of changes across 26 organisational variables and 17 issue variables (see lists in Appendix 1) and (2) the weighted sum of *magnitudes* of change across the same variables.<sup>30</sup> Across the six parties, 210 discrete changes were coded from 1950 through 1990. (See note 2.)

Independent variables include electoral performance, leadership change, and dominant faction change. Our electoral performance variable was coded on the basis of examination of the party's actual electoral performance in each relevant election, along with literature

references pertaining to the party's own evaluation of the performance, using detailed coding instructions (see Appendix 2). Leadership data include not only the date of each change, but also literature-based judgements pertaining to the reason for the change. Factional changes were identified on the basis of relevant party literature.

Our choice of analytical tools has been guided by (1) determination not to employ inappropriately sophisticated techniques to data for so few cases, and (2) concern for choosing tools that are appropriate for examining each particular hypothesis (with particular concern for appropriately treating 'necessary but not sufficient' conditions).<sup>31</sup> The second consideration has resulted in some variance in techniques across hypotheses. Generally, analyses consist of simple comparisons of percentages and means.

Though we can not claim sufficient control for (or elimination of) plausible rival explanations to justify consideration as *causal analysis*, it is nonetheless the case that our search for *association* is driven by the desire to find evidence with which to judge at least the plausibility of our hypotheses. Hence, it was important that we design the associational analyses so as to provide reasonable tests.

In that vein, it is important to consider which changes might reasonably be attributed to a given event (e.g. election, or change of leader and/or dominant faction). On the one hand, it would be unreasonable to expect that responsive changes would be immediate. It could take some time for a new leader to develop the details of a reform plan, for instance, or to consolidate power with which to make it happen. Likewise, it could take some time for a party to analyse its performance in the past election, and to develop and implement a suitable response. (There is also the technical problem that it may be necessary to wait for the next party conference in order to formally introduce some change, and that it could actually take two conferences before it could be implemented.)

On the other hand, it would be unreasonable to attribute *all* changes during a given inter-election period to a past election performance if, for instance, that period extended for five or six years. In other words, it must be assumed that even a party's memory span is finite. After a certain time has passed, too many other events would have interceded for us to simply assume that the past election is the only, or even the most important, factor in the decision to make a particular change.

Our solution – which we readily admit is an imperfect one – is to treat changes for the two years following an election or a leadership change as reasonably attributable to that event. (Because we do not think it reasonable to assume that changes will follow immediately upon an

election or a leadership change, we do not include changes occurring in the same calendar year as the event itself. For factional changes, our procedures are different, as explained later.) So, for example, with an election in 1965, we would associate the accumulation of changes for 1966 and 1967. With a leadership change taking place in 1982, we would associate other party changes occurring in 1983 and 1984, and so on. From a strictly methodological standpoint, this strategy has the positive side effect of standardising the periods over which changes in the 'dependent variables' are accumulated.<sup>32</sup>

(For graphical chronologies of performance, leadership change, and party change, see Figures 1a through 6b in Appendix 2.)

#### EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS

##### *Analysis: Electoral Performance*

According to Hypothesis 1, a party's evaluation of poor electoral performance is a necessary, though not necessarily sufficient, condition for party change. In other words, though not all bad electoral performances will necessarily result in change, all party change should be attributable to bad elections. A reasonable standard by which to judge this hypothesis would seem to be simply the proportion of all change which is conceivably attributable to poor election performances. Following our approach of attributing only changes taking place within two years of an event to that particular event, only changes taking place within two years of poor electoral performances are even conceivably supportive of Hypothesis 1. Changes taking place after good elections, or more than two years after bad elections, would cumulate as refutational evidence.

Tables 1 and 2 present per cents of total magnitudes and numbers, respectively, of changes following three types of electoral performance.<sup>33</sup> Bad electoral performances account for only one fifth (41 of 210, or 19.5 per cent) of all changes and one fourth (24.5 per cent) of all magnitude of change, across the six parties. The least support comes from the Conservative Party, and ironically, the greatest support comes from the Labour Party.<sup>34</sup>

Hypothesis 1a posits that the relationship between bad electoral performance and party change should be stronger for large than for small parties, on average. This hypothesis is based on the premise that all large parties are heavily concerned with electoral success, while small parties may give higher priority to other goals, and hence to other standards of success. Our preliminary analysis provides mixed evidence with regard to this hypothesis. Though bad electoral performances could account for

TABLE 1  
PER CENT OF TOTAL MAGNITUDE OF CHANGE FOLLOWING (WITHIN 2 YEARS)  
EACH TYPE OF ELECTORAL PERFORMANCE  
(With Average for Elections of That Type)

	CDU	FDU	SPD	Cons	Lab	Lib
within 2 years of:						
Bad election	23(8)	14(4)	22(4)	9(3)	45(6)	38(5)
Tolerable	26(7)	2(1)	9(5)	6(3)	0(0)	15(5)
Good	11(4)	18(5)	13(4)	21(4)	0(0)	0(0)
total*:	60%	33%	43%	37%	45%	54%

\*Changes not accounted for here took place more than two years after any election.

TABLE 2  
PER CENT OF TOTAL NUMBER OF CHANGES FOLLOWING (WITHIN 2 YEARS)  
EACH TYPE OF ELECTORAL PERFORMANCE  
(With Average for Elections of That Type)

	CDU	FDU	SPD	Cons	Lab	Lib
within 2 years of:						
Bad election	21(7)	17(4)	15(3)	13(4)	29(4)	18(2)
Tolerable	25(6)	2(1)	8(4)	8(4)	0(0)	14(5)
Good	6(2)	24(6)	15(5)	17(3)	0(0)	0(0)
total*:	52%	44%	38%	38%	28%	32%

\*Changes not accounted for here took place more than two years after any election.

a much smaller proportion of party change in the FDP than in the CDU, SPD, or Labour Party, it is actually the large Conservative Party which provides the least support for the original Hypothesis 1, while the smaller Liberal Party is among the stronger supporters.

In fairness to Hypothesis 1a, we should note that there are only two small parties included in this analysis, and of those the Liberal Party must be thought of as primarily vote-seeking and the FDP as primarily office benefits-seeking throughout the period. A fairer test of this hypothesis must await inclusion of small parties with other primary goals. It is interesting, nonetheless, to note that the FDP – a benefits-seeking party in a multi-party, coalition-prone environment – appears less responsive to bad elections than the Liberals – a vote-seeking party in a situation where coalitions are highly unlikely.

It is also interesting to note that three of the parties (the FDP, SPD, and Conservatives) averaged as much or slightly more change following good election performances as after bad elections.

The bottom line from this rather generous assessment of the adequacy

of performance theory is that the theory, by itself, leaves large amounts of party change unaccounted for. Though poor electoral performances could conceivably have contributed to significant amounts of change in each of the parties, in no case is that amount a majority of change, not to mention the totality as predicted by Hypothesis 1. So while electoral performance remains a strong candidate for inclusion in an integrated theory of party change, this analysis should help put to rest any lingering thoughts that all, or even most, party change is directly attributable to poor electoral performances.<sup>35</sup>

#### *Analysis: Leadership Change*

To enable direct comparison of the relative strengths of bivariate association of electoral performance and leadership change with party change, we have presented in Table 3 the percentages of total magnitude and number of party changes that have taken place within two years of leadership changes. Comparison of Table 3 with Tables 1 and 2 reveals that the proportions of party change following leadership change are higher than those following poor electoral performances for some parties and lower for others.

TABLE 3  
PER CENT OF TOTAL MAGNITUDE AND NUMBER OF PARTY CHANGES  
WITHIN TWO YEARS OF LEADERSHIP CHANGE  
(With Average per Leadership Change)

	CDU	FDP	SPD	CONS	LAB	LIB
Magnitude	27 (7)	26 (3)	16 (3)	42 (8)	31(6)	0 (0)
Number	25 (6)	32 (4)	27 (5)	29 (6)	22 (4)	0 (0)

It must be noted before continuing, though, that to subject leadership change to the type of analysis presented in Table 3 is to act as though leadership change is posited as a *necessary* condition for party change, as was the case for the original electoral performance hypothesis. In other words, by asking what percentage of a party's change could conceivably be attributed to leadership change, we are subjecting Hypothesis 2 to an inappropriate test, and one which is unfairly harsh. Given this, it is particularly impressive that leadership change fares as well as it does in comparison to electoral performance theory, when judged by a standard more appropriate to the latter. The fact that

leadership change alone could account for *more* change than could be attributed to bad electoral performances for the Conservatives, the FDP, and the CDU is testimony to the strength of leadership change, even as compared to election performance.

According to our Hypothesis 2, which posits that leadership change is sufficient but not necessary for party change, we are not suggesting that leadership change should account for any particular percentage of overall party change. What we are positing is that every time there is a leadership change, there should be a party change following closely on its heels. Hence, a reasonable, direct test of Hypothesis 2 would be to ascertain the percentage of leadership changes which have resulted in party change, as has been done for Table 4. By this standard, Hypothesis 2 gains maximum support from the cases of the CDU and the Conservatives, but lower levels of support from the FDP, SPD, and Labour, with no support at all from the Liberal Party.

TABLE 4  
PERCENTAGE OF LEADERSHIP CHANGES THAT ARE FOLLOWED BY PARTY  
CHANGE WITHIN TWO YEARS

CDU	FDP	SPD	CONS	LAB	LIB
100 (4/4)	57 (4/7)	60 (3/5)	100 (5/5)	60 (3/5)	0 (0/3)

While the findings of Table 4 provide only mixed support for the original hypothesis, they conform very closely to what would be predicted from Hypothesis 2b, which posits stronger results only for parties with stronger leadership structures. Of the parties in this analysis, the Conservatives and the CDU are known to have the strongest leadership structures, and for both parties, 100 per cent of leadership changes from 1950 through 1989 were associated with party change occurring within the following two years. The SPD and Labour, for which the leadership structures are known to be much weaker, posted substantially lower levels of association between leadership and party change. For the Liberals, governed largely by committee<sup>36</sup> and where leadership by the parliamentary group leader was challenged on several fronts,<sup>37</sup> none of the four leadership changes was followed by party change.

So, the data of our analyses do provide considerable evidence of the hypothesised relationship between leadership change and party change, especially when differences in leadership structures are taken into account. Still, it remains to be seen the extent to which performance

and leadership change hypotheses – *both* of which have received some support – may work cumulatively rather than redundantly to explain party change. That is, can the one factor *complement* (i.e., add to) the explanation already provided by the other, rather than merely competing with it for the same turf?

For those situations where leadership changes (for our cases, 12 of the 29) themselves derive from (or at least follow shortly behind) bad electoral performances, it is impossible for our analytical approach to assign separately the partial 'effects' of the two simultaneously occurring events (i.e., upon party change occurring within one or two years of *both* of them). However, since our point of departure for this study was performance theory, and since electoral performance is more often cited as a primary cause of party change, it seems reasonable for this analysis to assign *all* shared effects to the bad electoral performances. This, obviously, maximises the difficulty with which party change can still be attributed to leadership change, since maximum effects of performance have already been removed. In effect, we are asking whether leadership change is associated with the residuals of the performance-change relationship. This is, after all, precisely what is called for by Hypothesis 2a.

Table 5 reveals that after assigning to bad electoral performances the changes that could reasonably be attributed to both electoral performance and leadership change, large increments of residual party change could still be attributed to leadership change. This is true for five of the six parties, but it is especially true for the Conservatives, SPD, and FDP. For the Conservatives, for instance, the three bad elections alone could account for only 9 per cent of total party change, and without allowing for overlapping explanation the five leadership changes could conceivably account for an additional 36 per cent.<sup>38</sup>

TABLE 5  
PER CENT OF TOTAL MAGNITUDE AND NUMBER OF PARTY CHANGES  
WITHIN TWO YEARS OF LEADERSHIP CHANGE, CONTROLLING FOR BAD  
ELECTORAL PERFORMANCE  
(With Average per Leadership Change)

	CDU	FDP	SPD	CONS	LAB	LIB
Magnitude	13 (4)	25 (3)	16 (3)	36 (9)	7 (1)	0 (0)
Number	14 (4)	29 (4)	27 (5)	21 (5)	9 (2)	0 (0)

### *Analysis: Dominant Faction Change*

Hypothesis 3 posits a relationship between dominant faction change and party change. While factional change is viewed as contributing to special opportunities for party change, there is no implication that change of dominant faction is necessary for party change. Evidence of much change occurring simultaneously with or shortly after (i.e., within two years) changes of dominant faction would be supportive of this hypothesis (and especially if the same party changes could not be accounted for by the other factors treated above).

Based on our examination of the literature of the parties included in this study, we have identified three dominant faction changes during the 1950–1990 period – one each in the SPD (the change from traditionalists to new socialists and radicals in 1957), Labour (from right to left in 1963–65), and the Conservative Party (the establishment of the right from 1975–79).<sup>39</sup> In all three cases, some party change occurred within a few years of the internal power shift, and in each case it would be reasonable to attribute at least some of the party change to the change in dominant faction. For the Labour Party, however, the party changes were not of the magnitude and/or type to be captured by our measurement of party change. Nonetheless, we note them here for the sake of completeness (but will return to this point in the last paragraph of this section).

For the Labour Party, the introduction of what some have characterized as a more liberal regime resulted from increasing dominance of the left in party decision making (1963–65). Beginning from July/August 1966, the left wrested control of the Chief Whip and House Leader positions from the right. The appointments of John Silkin (Chief Whip) and Richard Crossman (Leader of the House) facilitated experiments with a more lenient party management type. Crossman, as a key figure in the Bevanite left, consistently objected to the right's social democratic centralism, arguing 'for a more pluralist conception of party democracy which placed less emphasis upon the will of the majority and more upon the ability of minorities to challenge and replace the holders of power'.<sup>40</sup> Not coincidentally, parliamentary discipline was loosened by 1967, as one of several elements of a 'generally more relaxed atmosphere in the party'.<sup>41</sup>

In the Conservative party, the changes in dominant factions (1975–77) as a result of Mrs Margaret Thatcher's leadership were reflected by 1979 in numerous ideological changes to the right.<sup>42</sup> 'The change in the dominant coalition composition and the victory of the rightist tendencies brought about a deep restructuring of organisational physiognomy: an alteration of the rules of internal competition and a "succession of ends",



i.e. a radical redefinition of the Conservative identity around Thatcher-type "neo-liberalism".<sup>43</sup>

In the SPD, dramatic changes in the party's identity (i.e., taking the form of a redesigned programme) occurred at least partially as a result of changes in the internal power relationships among competing groups. By 1957, the dominant coalition in the SPD had changed from the traditionalists to the new socialists and radicals. The latter groups, led by Willy Brandt, Helmut Schmidt, Fritz Erler, Herbert Wehner, and Karl Schiller, campaigned to reform the party.<sup>44</sup> 'Their aim was to modernise the party and bring it into line with the changed circumstances of the postwar era of economic growth, political integration, and changing social structures'.<sup>45</sup> The most important consequence was adoption in 1959 of the Bad Godesberg programme, a 'fundamental redefinition of social democracy – disavowing the party's traditional Marxist connections, class orientation, anti-clericalism, and accepting the new "social market economy" and membership of NATO and the EEC'.<sup>46</sup>

We did not, in our discussion of theory on the role of dominant faction change in party change, develop specific hypotheses pertaining to the possible location of factional displacement in the causal chain (as we did for leadership, in noting that some leadership changes themselves result from bad electoral performances). This is for two reasons. First, there is no compelling reason to expect that bad electoral performances are either necessary or sufficient reasons for dominant faction change. In fact, we see no compelling reason to expect such a relationship between the two at all. (For the record, of the three cases of dominant faction change discussed here, only the Conservative factional change took place within two years of a bad electoral performance.) And second, while dominant faction changes are highly likely to result in leadership changes, it is also true that leadership change may create circumstances conducive to change of dominant faction. As Gilmore has argued for organisations generally:

[D]uring a leadership struggle in an organisation, dormant fault lines, such as between the old guard and young turks, or among ethnic groups, may re-emerge; new alliances are forged as different factions jockey for influence. Different hopes and ideas are projected onto the leader. The status quo is shaken up. People who have been out of the dominant coalition get a chance to be influential in the new administration.<sup>47</sup>

In this light, it is interesting to note that two of the three dominant faction changes discussed above (i.e., those in Labour and the Conservatives) themselves derived from leadership changes. The dominant

faction change in the Labour Party was part of Harold Wilson's consolidation of power, as he recruited like-minded leftists into positions of power.<sup>48</sup> Similarly, the choice of Thatcher to lead the Conservatives opened doors to the Selsdon Group and the Monday Club that had hitherto been closed to them.

Nevertheless, it would be incorrect to conclude, even in these two cases, that factional change could add nothing to explanation of party change that was not already covered by leadership change alone. In fact, by precise application of our two-year rule, the party changes discussed in the paragraphs above (which, admittedly, for Labour were not captured by our own measure of party change) could not be attributed to the leadership changes themselves, though they could be attributed to the resulting factional changes. It is, indeed, reasonable to posit that the *combination* of leadership and factional change – whether coincident or sequential – creates opportunities for change that are greater than what either event would accomplish alone. And even in those cases where the factional change is completely attributable to a leadership change, it may be that the factional change was absolutely essential in order for the leader to accomplish the party change.<sup>49</sup>

In any case, conclusions that we would draw from this preliminary analysis of factional change stand on shaky ground, given that (1) the six parties provide so few cases of dominant faction change and (2) the organisational changes that we have mentioned for Labour were not captured by our own measure of party change. Hence, we are loath to claim a concrete conclusion from this portion of the analysis. Nevertheless, we do feel that it has yielded important heuristic evidence to support further research into the hypothesised relationship between dominant faction change and party change.

#### CONCLUSIONS

This article has reported the first empirical findings based on data from a larger study of party change, the most important underlying premise of which is that party change does not 'just happen', either randomly or in automatic response to external stimuli. Resting on that premise, this project has been directed toward helping to identify the finite set of factors – including both internal and external – which together may explain decisions of parties to change themselves. And in that vein, our hypotheses have dealt not only with external stimuli for party change, but also with internal factors which may create special opportunities for change.

The results from our preliminary empirical analyses have generally supported the view that while external factors (and most especially,

poor electoral performances) may act as important stimuli for change, there is also an important role for the social (i.e., sub-party) actor to play in the theory of party change. Our test of electoral performance theory revealed that while a substantial portion of total party change could conceivably be linked to bad electoral performances, the latter falls considerably short of being either a necessary (as originally hypothesized) or sufficient condition for change, with large residuals remaining for all parties. Our search for complementary factors led us to posit an important role for change in organisational actors (i.e., leaders and dominant factions) in explaining some of the residuals. And indeed, the data provide evidence for such a role.

Even with the preliminary nature of our analyses, we are nonetheless encouraged by the amount of support that has been found here for the general theoretical framework. And most particularly, we have gained new confidence for suggesting that the burgeoning field of theoretical and empirical work on party change should focus even more attention on internal decision-making processes. If our analyses are correct, party change doesn't 'just happen'; and leaders and factions may indeed make a difference.

#### NOTES

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1. Robert Harmel and Kenneth Janda, 'An Integrated Theory of Party Goals and Party Change' (Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Assoc., Chicago: 1992). (A revised version with the same title appears in *Journal of Theoretical Politics*, July 1994).
2. The analyses presented here are based on extensive collection of data on organisational and identity changes from 1950 through 1990 for three British parties and three German parties. The six parties, which provide variance on such important dimensions as party size, electoral context, and leadership structure, are the first parties for which data collection has been largely completed for the range of variables covered here. Though these data are 'preliminary' in that they still await final review by country experts, and because additional party changes will undoubtedly be incorporated with completion of data for other organisational and issue dimensions, we nonetheless judge the current data to be an accurate and meaningful representation of these

- parties' decisions to change.
3. See Harmel and Janda (note 1: 1992), pp.7-11.
4. See Kenneth Janda, 'Toward a Performance Theory of Change in Political Parties' (Paper presented at the 12th World Congress of the Int. Sociological Assoc., Madrid, Spain: unpub., 1990), p.5; see also pp.6-7 for references to supporting literature.
5. As explained elsewhere in this article, we operationalise 'proximally' as within two years of the year of the event.
6. This hypothesis is a representation of performance theory as originally stated, rather than a reflection of the role of performance as incorporated in Harmel and Janda's (note 1:1992) integrated theory of party change.
7. Harmel and Janda (note 1:1992), pp.8-9.
8. Frank Wilson, 'The Sources of Party Change: Change in Social Democratic Parties in Britain, France, Germany, and Spain' (Paper presented at the Workshop on Elections and Parties, Committee on Political Sociology, IPSA/ISA, Paris, France: unpub., 1989), p.12.
9. Before discussing the hypothesised relationships between each of these factors and our dependent variable of 'party change', we should briefly note why we do not include the former in our measurement of the latter. That is, if leadership and factional changes are themselves changes within the party, why are they treated as independent variables rather than as parts of the cumulation of party changes we are seeking to explain? We have reasoned that changes in party leader and in dominant faction/coalition are unlike changes in organisation or party identity, in that the former are often the direct results of 'natural' occurrences (e.g., a leader's death and consequent replacement) or internal power struggles rather than deliberative processes involving the party generally, and in addition, it is understood from the time of the change (especially in the case of leadership) that the new situation will be only temporary.
10. See Janda (note 4), p.10; Wilson (note 8), pp.13 and 17.
11. See Kris Deschouwer, 'The Survival of the Fittest: Measuring and Explaining Adaptation and Change of Political Parties' (Paper presented at the Workshop on Democracies and Organization of Political Parties, ECPR Joint Sessions, Limerick, Ireland: unpub., 1992), p.13; Wilson (note 8), p.17; see also James MacGregor Burns, *Leadership* (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1978), p.311.
12. See Janda (note 4), p.11.
13. Two well documented cases of party leaders who are widely recognized as having brought special leadership skills to the task of changing their parties are Mitterrand (e.g. see Wilson (note 8), p.17) and Kinnock (e.g., see Patrick Seyd, 'Labour: The Great Transformation', in Anthony King (ed.), *Britain at the Polls 1992* (Chatham, NJ: Chatham House, 1993), pp.71-5, 96).
14. Angelo Panebianco, *Political Parties: Organization and Power* (Cambridge: CUP, 1988), p.244.
15. Thomas North Gilmore, *Making a Leadership Change: How Organizations and Leaders Can Handle Leadership Transitions Successfully* (San Francisco and London: Jossey-Bass, 1988), p.12.
16. R.K.R. Yin, *Utilization by Local Services: Problems and Proposals for Further Research*, (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corp., 1976).
17. Gilmore (note 15), pp.11 and 14.
18. As explained elsewhere in this article, we operationalize 'proximally' as within two years of the year of the event.
19. This hypothesis may be inferred from Proposition 5 in Harmel and Janda (note 1: 1994).
20. Max Beloff and Gillian Peele, *The Government of the UK: Political Authority in a Changing Society*, (London: Weidenfeld, 1985), p.178.
21. See Seyd (note 13), p.72.
22. See also Wilson (note 8), p.20.
23. We can note correspondence between Labour and the SPD on lack of leadership

control, with the latter having collective leadership which has at times frustrated an individual leader's attempts to alter the party (Wilson, note 8, p.20). Likewise, there is correspondence between the Conservatives and the CDU, both with strong leadership control. For the CDU, it has generally been the case that the national level of organisation consists of little more than a 'chancellor's association' except during election periods (Eva Kolinsky, *Parties, Opposition and Society in West Germany*, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1984; Geoffrey Pridham, *Christian Democracy in Western Europe*, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1977). Even when the CDU attempted to copy the organisation of the SPD in 1967, this turned out to be little more than symbolic (see Kolinsky, 1984), with the chancellor remaining clearly in control of the national level of organisation.

24. E.g., see Giovanni Sartori, *Party and Party System: A Framework for Analysis*, Vol.1 (Cambridge: CUP, 1976), p.72.
25. Joseph Nyomarkay, 'Factionalism in the National Socialist German Workers' Party: The Myth and Reality of the "Northern Faction"', *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol.80 (1965), pp.22-47. Jeffrey Pfeffer and G.R. Salancik, 'The Design Management of Externally Controlled Organizations', In D.S. Pugh (ed.), *Organization Theory: Selected Readings* (London: Penguin Books, 1990). Piero Ignazi, 'Party Change: The Case of the PCI Transformation into PDS', Paper presented at the Workshop on Democracies and Organization of Political Parties, ECPR Joint Sessions, Limerick, Ireland: unpub., 1992).
26. Panebianco (note 14); Ignazi (note 25).
27. See Panebianco (note 14), p.244.
28. This hypothesis may be inferred from Proposition 2 in Harmel and Janda (note 1: 1994).
29. See Kenneth Janda, *Political Parties: A Cross-National Survey* (New York: Free Press, 1980).
30. The coding procedures for each variable instructed the coder to apply to each party for each year one of a set (with the sizes of sets ranging from 3 to 19) of integer values, each of which was assigned to a verbal description. With a change consisting of any change of values between consecutive years for a given variable, we computed a standardized (or 'weighted') magnitude for every such change. The standardised magnitude was computed as the absolute value of the difference between the consecutive codes, divided by the number of intervals in the scale for that particular variable. For instance, the German SPD's shift after Bad Godesberg from an extremely leftist position on the government's role in economic planning (coded -4) to a more moderate position (-1) produces a standardized change of .30 (i.e., three units of change, divided by 10 total intervals on the 11-point ordinal scale used for all issue variables). Likewise, the British Labour Party's decision in 1981 to change the method for selecting its parliamentary leader from election by parliamentary colleagues (coded +1) to selection by an electoral college (+3) results in a standardized change of .67 (i.e., two units of change, divided by 3 total intervals on a four-point ordinal scale). Each party, for each year, was then assigned a cumulative magnitude of change equal to the sum of all standardized magnitudes of change recorded for that party for that year.
31. Someone else who has grappled with this problem of 'necessity and/or sufficiency' is Mark Lichbach, 'Regime Change: A Test of Structuralist and Functionalist Explanations', *Comparative Political Studies*, Vol.14 (1981), pp.49-73.
32. In choosing the two-year decision rule, we have attempted to balance conflicting needs. On the one hand, we need to determine a standard period of time after an event within which it is reasonable to assume that the party is still responding to that event. It would not be sensible, for instance, to assign all party changes during a particular leader's tenure as responses to the 'leadership change' that brought that person to the position. Similarly, it does not seem reasonable - as a general rule - to assign all changes during an inter-election period to the event of the last election. In practical terms, this would be particularly problematic in the case of a party which experiences only poor electoral performances; in such a case, all party changes would

be assigned to the poor elections, leaving none to be explained by other events under our 'stepwise' approach.

On the other hand, the choice of a period less than the totality of an inter-election period does create the possibility of under-assigning changes to the election events. This would be particularly problematic for a party which only made decisions to change in an election year. The American parties, for instance, change their national platforms at four-year intervals, precluding the possibility of assigning platform changes to the previous election four years earlier. Though this may be somewhat troublesome for analysis of changes in any party, the extent to which it is a problem varies by (a) the procedure used in coding party changes and (b) the party's own procedures/timetable for making decisions on policy positions and organisational matters. In our case, the data are based on reports of party changes in secondary literature rather than exclusively on official party documents; this increases the probability of including decisions made in non-election years. Further reducing the extent of the problem for the parties in this study is the fact that all of them hold annual conferences/congresses, which have the ability to change policy and organisation (see Katz and Mair, *Party Organizations: A Data Handbook*, London: SAGE, 1992). The figures in the following table show considerable variation among the six parties on the extent to which decisions to change were made in election years (vs. two year periods after election years), but tend to support our procedures. All six parties made some decisions to change in non-election years, with substantial proportions reported for the three German parties. Only the British Liberal Party shows a propensity to make nearly all of its changes in policy in election years, probably reflecting that party's almost exclusive attachment to vote-maximizing (as opposed to a role in government). Even with any bias, we report in this article that the Liberal Party is relatively supportive of the performance hypothesis (Hypothesis 1), and that it tends not to support the leadership change hypothesis (Hypothesis 2).

TABLE 6  
PER CENT (AND NUMBER) OF (A) ISSUE AND (B) ORGANIZATIONAL  
CHANGES MADE IN

		Election Years	Two Years following Election Years*
<i>GERMANY</i>			
CDU	(A)	11 (3/28)	50 (14/28)
	(B)	34 (13/38)	50 (19/38)
FDP	(A)	31 (9/29)	52 (15/29)
	(B)	23 (3/13)	23 (3/13)
SPD	(A)	57 (12/21)	38 (8/21)
	(B)	0	43 (3/7)
<i>UK</i>			
CONS	(A)	57 (13/23)	17 (4/23)
	(B)	(1/1)	0
LAB	(A)	75 (21/28)	21 (6/28)
	(B)	50 (2/4)	50 (2/4)
LIB	(A)	94 (17/18)	6 (1/18)
	(B)	33 (1/3)	67 (2/3)

\*Two year periods including only non-election years; i.e., 1966 is excluded from calculations for the British parties.

33. Electoral performance measures which are based on *outside observers' assessments of party insiders' perceptions* of their parties' election results will always be subject to critique, and our own attempt is certainly no exception. Hence, we should at least note that it is our own opinion that if our measure is in error, it is more likely that we have erred on the side of assigning to the 'bad election' category a few elections which others might have judged to be 'neutral'. This could ultimately result in assigning to electoral performance a small amount of party change that would not have been so assigned if we had used a more conservative approach. On the other hand, some may feel that we have already been too conservative in associating with poor elections only the party changes that occurred within two years of the election. Fully recognising that no operationalisations will be perfect, we do feel that ours are reasonable.
34. Taking the totality of inter-election periods into account (i.e., attributing all changes within such a period to the preceding election), support increases for all parties (not surprisingly), but most dramatically for the three British parties, and most dramatically of all for the Labour Party. Eighty-eight per cent of the Labour parties' changes, accounting for 92 per cent of the total magnitude of change, took place in periods following bad electoral performances. However, as we noted earlier, it is problematic to assume that parties are reacting totally or even mostly to an election that took place more than two years earlier.

TABLE 7  
PERCENT OF TOTAL MAGNITUDE OF CHANGE FOLLOWING EACH TYPE OF  
ELECTORAL PERFORMANCE, FOR ENTIRE INTER-ELECTION PERIOD  
(With average for Elections of That Type)

	CDU	FDU	SPD	Cons	Lab	Lib
after:						
Bad elections	34 (11)	37 (9)	47 (9)	40 (13)	92 (13)	65 (8)
Tolerable	45 (11)	20 (10)	17 (9)	15 (8)	4 (2)	35 (12)
Good	21 (7)	43 (11)	36 (10)	45 (8)	4 (2)	0 (0)

TABLE 8  
PERCENT OF TOTAL NUMBER OF CHANGES FOLLOWING EACH TYPE OF  
ELECTORAL PERFORMANCE, FOR ENTIRE INTER-ELECTION PERIOD  
(With Average for Elections of That Type)

	CDU	FDU	SPD	Cons	Lab	Lib
after:						
Bad elections	33 (11)	39 (10)	31 (6)	50 (17)	88 (13)	64 (8)
Tolerable	48 (12)	17 (9)	19 (10)	21 (11)	6 (3)	36 (12)
Good	19 (6)	44 (11)	50 (15)	29 (5)	6 (3)	0 (0)

35. If changes throughout inter-election periods were attributed to previous election performances (i.e., instead of following our two-year rule) there would, of course, be more (though still not sufficient) support for such a conclusion. See note 34.
36. Stephen Ingle, *The British Party System* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1987), pp.177-8.
37. See Ibid. p.78; John D. Lees and Richard Kimber, *Political Parties in Modern Britain: An Organizational and Functional Guide* (London: RKP, 1972), p.82.
38. Though it is beyond the scope of this article to examine all of the details of the relationship between leadership change and party change, it is nonetheless interesting to note here that there is some supporting evidence of a corollary relationship between

the 'cause' of the leadership change and the magnitude of subsequent party change. Positing that 'politically' caused leadership changes will result in more substantial party change than 'naturally' caused leadership changes, we find that there is indeed such a relationship.

For our analysis (see table below) we have treated such factors as a leader's death or illness, a voluntary decision to pursue a different career, voluntary retirement due to old age or personal frustration, and rule-mandated leadership elections (i.e., in which factional politics was not involved) as 'natural causes'. Leadership changes involving factional struggles or generational considerations, or where parties were merged, are considered examples of leadership changes due to 'internal power redistribution'. And finally, changes of leader in which past or future electoral performance was the major consideration are treated as resulting from 'electoral performance reasons'.

TABLE 9  
MAGNITUDE AND NUMBER OF PARTY CHANGES, BY TYPE OF  
LEADERSHIP CHANGE  
(Within Two Years; for All Parties)

Reason for change	No. of Changes	Total Magn.	Average No.	Average Magn.
Natural Cause (9)	9	1.36	1.0	.15
Electoral Perf (11)	18	3.42	1.64	.31
	38	7.99	1.90	.40
Int Pow Redist (9)	20	4.57	2.22	.51

Combining data for all six parties, the 30 leadership changes from 1950 through 1989 divide almost equally among the three types. Analysis of total and average magnitudes and numbers of changes associated with two-year periods after the leadership changes reveals substantial differences among the three types. When changes due to 'internal power redistribution' and 'electoral performance reasons' are combined as the 'political' factors in leadership change, the average numbers and magnitudes of associated party changes are more than double the respective figures for leadership changes due to 'natural' causes. Though the impact of change in dominant faction on party change will be treated more fully in the next section, we should note here that one of the leadership changes due to 'natural causes' (i.e., Gaitskell's death) precipitated a dominant faction change. If it were assumed that the three associated party changes (with combined magnitude of .34) were attributable more to the faction change than to the natural cause, per se, and if the figures in the first row of the above table were adjusted downward accordingly, the relationship of leadership change type to amount of party change would be even more substantial. These findings based on our preliminary data would seem to warrant additional analysis of this relationship, once data for additional cases are available.

39. For the Conservatives, Norton notes that two groups became identified as 'Thatcherites' in the mid-1970s (see Philip Norton, 'The Conservative Party from Thatcher to Major', in King (ed.), (note 13). (For our purposes, we consider the core of the change to have taken place during 1975-77). The Monday Club and the Selsdon Group were not considered part of the dominant coalition prior to Margaret Thatcher becoming Conservative Party leader (see Patrick Seyd, 'Factionalism within the Conservative Party: The Monday Club', *Government and Opposition*, Vol.7 (1972), pp.464-87; Patrick Seyd, 'Factionalism in the 1970s', in Zig Layton-Henry (ed.) *Conservative Party Politics* (London: Macmillan Press, 1980); Ingle, note 36), although both these groups had been highly organized and already had considerable membership both within the parliamentary group and the extraparliamentary group. In the case of the British Labour party, a factional change can be identified covering

roughly 1963–65, allowing for a period of consolidation after Wilson's assumption of leadership. From Attlee to Gaitskell, the Labour right was clearly the dominant group within the party (see Geoff Hodgson, *Labour at the Crossroads* (Oxford: Martin Robertson, 1981)). Hodgson notes that the trade unions remained in rightwing hands for some time and the left was soundly defeated on economic policy throughout the 1950s. But after Gaitskell's death, Harold Wilson took over the mantle of party leader, with his success due partly to 'his past links with the Bevanite left' (Hodgson, 1981, p.71). However, it would be incorrect to assume that his election was due to the left having become the dominant faction. Instead, left dominance came about as a result of Wilson's leadership. From 1963 to 1975, Wilson continually relied on the left for support during political crises. Prominent Bevanites were invited to hold party office and the NEC was increasingly controlled by the left (Eric Shaw, *Discipline and Discord in the Labour Party: The Politics of Managerial Control in the Labour Party, 1951–87* (Manchester: Manchester UP, 1988); Stephen Haseler, *The Tragedy of Labour* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1980)). Wilson's leadership enabled the 'left to build their beachhead in the party and the unions to the point where they achieved a majority' (Haseler, 1980, p.114). In fact, by 1974 the Labour government faced consistent leftwing opposition from the NEC (Ben Pimlott, 'The Labour Left', in Chris Cook and Ian Taylor (eds.) *The Labour Party* (London: Longman, 1980), p.177). The left remained dominant in party decision-making throughout the rest of our period (Haseler, 1980, pp.115–19; Shaw, 1988).

In the case of Germany's SPD, the change in dominant group came during 1957. During the Stuttgart Congress in 1957, the radicals and the new socialists rejected the re-election of the existing leadership delegation, but instead elected three new vice chairs from their numbers (Panebianco, note 14, p.256). Ollenhauer's presidency became very tenuous as the radicals and the new socialists were able to gain a majority within the parliamentary group. This change in the dominant group led to the adoption of the Bad Godesberg programme in 1959 and the nomination of Willy Brandt as candidate to the chancellorship in 1960 (Panebianco, note 14).

40. Shaw (note 39), p.159.
41. *Ibid.*, p.172.
42. Ivor Crewe and Donald D. Searing, 'Ideological Change in the British Conservative Party', *American Political Science Review*, Vol.82 (1988), pp.361–84.
43. See Panebianco (note 14), p.251.
44. Panebianco (note 14); Ian Derbyshire, *Politics in West Germany from Schmidt to Kohl* (Edinburgh: Chambers, 1987).
45. Derbyshire (note 44), p.15.
46. *Ibid.*, p.15; Guido Goldman, *The German Political System* (NY: Random House, 1974).
47. Gilmore (note 15), p.11.
48. Haseler (note 39).
49. Along these lines, see Gilmore (note 15), p.12.

## APPENDIX I

*List of Party Characteristics: Objects of Change*

For this study, change was measured cumulatively across 26 organisational variables and 17 issue variables, as described on page 8 of this paper. The specific variables are as follows:

*Organizational Variables*

Two variables dealing with institutionalisation: name change; organisational discontinuity;

Two variables dealing with party tactics: use of mass media; contacting voters;

Seven variables dealing with organisational complexity: structural articulation; intensiveness of organisation; extensiveness of organisation; frequency of local meetings; frequency of national meetings; maintaining records; pervasiveness of organisation;

Eight variables dealing with nationalisation of power: nationalisation of structure; selecting national leader; selecting parliamentary candidates; allocating funds; formulating policy; controlling communications; administering discipline; leadership concentration;

Seven variables dealing with distribution of power between parliamentary and extra-parliamentary wings: candidate selection; parliamentary leadership selection; conformation to extraparliamentary positions; discipline of parliamentary representatives; rotation requirement; public policy positions; primary leader of party

*Issue Variables*

The party's positions on: ownership of means of production; economic planning; redistribution of wealth; social welfare; secularization of society; support of military; East–West alignment; anti-colonialism; supranational integration; national integration; electoral participation; protecting civil rights; interfering with civil liberties; industrial relations; environmental policy; immigration policy; rights of women

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For all of the organisational variables except the last seven mentioned, and for all issue variables except for the last four, complete information is available in Janda (1980). For the remaining variables, information is available from Harmel at Department of Political Science, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX 77843–4348.

## APPENDIX 2

*Classification Scheme for Party Perception of Elections*

The following coding scheme aims at classifying a party's perception of its performance in the wake of the preceding general election. Strictly speaking, the classification does not apply to elections, but to different parties' perceptions of the last election. Because competing parties view election results quite differently, a 'good' election for one party may be a 'bad' result for another. Consequently, there are as many classifications of a given election as there are parties.

*Conceptualising the Classification*

The focus is on how the party activists themselves view the election results. Ideally, activists would be interviewed to learn their perceptions of the party's performance in the last election. In the absence of such data, one must attempt to classify the elections by reference to journalists' reports and scholars' analyses of the elections. The classification is based on these assumptions:

1. A party regards votes and seats won in elections as important criteria for judging political performance.
2. A party compares its results in the last election against previous elections, weighing the previous election most heavily.
3. A party also compares the votes and seats it won in the last election with the votes and seats won by other parties, particularly the one it regards as its greatest rival.
4. Expectations prior to the election matter: a party that wins fewer votes and seats than it expected will judge its performance more negatively than if the loss was expected.
5. A party includes in its evaluation whether the election has given the party a leading role in government. How this is interpreted depends on whether the government is a presidential system or a parliamentary system.
  - 5.1.1 In presidential systems, a party places the most importance on capturing the presidency.
  - 5.1.2 In presidential systems, a party places some importance on capturing control of the legislative chambers.
  - 5.2.1 In parliamentary systems, a party places the most importance on forming the government under a prime minister, preferably under a majority government.
  - 5.2.2 In parliamentary systems, a party places some importance on anticipating in the governing coalition.
6. A party includes in its evaluation whether the election has caused it to lose a leading role in government.

*Operationalising the Classification*

Based on these assumptions, Janda has devised the following set of five categories for classifying general elections with reference to electoral results and published sources that discuss the elections.

1. A *calamitous* election is one viewed by party activists as decisively confirming a party's negative performance. Such an election could be evidenced by a large loss of seats and votes in a single election or from a continued pattern of electoral decline or even stagnation. A party could also regard an election as calamitous if its major rival simultaneously achieved a huge victory that seemed to seal the fate of the frustrated party. The key is whether a party's activists perceive the election results as an indictment of the party's activists perceive the election results as an indictment of the party's past programmes or actions.

2. A *disappointing* election is one viewed by party activists as a distinct rebuke to the party for its performance. Such an election could be evidenced by a moderate loss of seats and votes in a single election, by its rival's superior showing in the election, or by loss of a leading role in government. It could also be evidenced by a small loss of seats when activists expected a sizeable gain.
3. A *tolerable* election is one accepted by party activists as reflecting the vicissitudes of politics and public opinion with no major message concerning party performance. The election may result in either a small loss or a small gain in votes or seats, but the outcome is viewed as politically normal and expected. The party's governmental status before the election is usually unchanged after the election.
4. A *gratifying* election is one viewed by party activists as a distinct endorsement of the party's performance. Such an election could be evidenced by a moderate gain in seats and votes in a single election, by its rival's inferior showing in the election, or by gain of a leading role in government. It could also be evidenced by a small gain of seats when activists expected a sizeable loss.
5. A *triumphal* election is one viewed by party activists as decisively confirming the party's positive performance. Such an election could be evidenced by a large gain in seats and votes in a single election. A party could also regard an election as triumphal if its major rival suffered a simultaneous defeat that seemed to seal its fate. The key is whether a party's activists perceive the election results as a vindication of the party's past programmes or actions.

Kenneth Janda used this set of categories to classify the three major German parties' reactions to all elections from 1953 to 1987. (The 1949 election, which was the first election under the postwar constitution, served only as a referent point for computing gains and losses in the 1953 election.)

Categories	Years for CDU	Years for FDP	Years for SPD
CALAMITOUS	1972		1957,83
DISAPPOINTING	1961,80	1957,65,69,83	1953,76,87
TOLERABLE	1965,69,76,87	1953,76	1961,80
GRATIFYING	1953,83	1961,72,87	1965,72
TRIUMPHAL	1957	1980	1969

Paul Sum used the same categories and procedures to classify the three major British parties' reactions to all elections from 1950 to 1987.

Categories	Years for CON	Years for LAB	Years for LIB
CALAMITOUS	1974(O)	1983	1950,51,87
DISAPPOINTING	1964,66,74(F)	1951,55,59,70,79,87	1955,59,70,74(O),79,83
TOLERABLE	1950,70	1950,74(F,O)	1964,66
GRATIFYING	1951,55,79,87	1964,66	1974(F)
TRIUMPHAL	1959,83		

For the analyses presented in this article, the five categories of performance were collapsed to three: poor (calamitous or disappointing, neutral (tolerable), and good (gratifying or triumphal).\*

\* The same elections were reclassified by Christine Edens without knowledge of Janda's coding. Using all five categories, the correspondence between coders was approximately 50 per cent, suggesting an unacceptable level of inter-coder reliability. However, there was very high correspondence when the five categories were collapsed to just three (bad, neutral, and good, as indicated).

FIGURE 1A  
CHRONOLOGY OF PARTY CHANGE (NUMBER), ELECTION PERFORMANCE,  
AND LEADERSHIP CHANGE FOR THE CDU

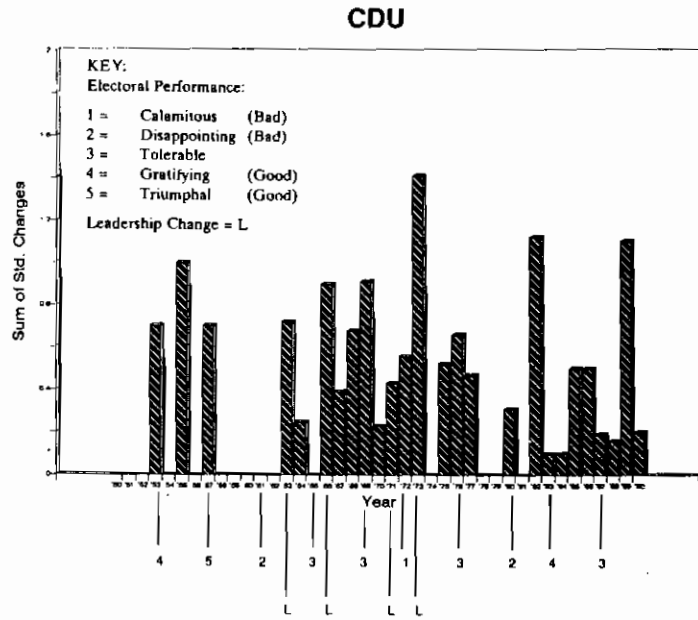


FIGURE 1B  
CHRONOLOGY OF PARTY CHANGE (MAGNITUDE), ELECTORAL  
PERFORMANCE, AND LEADERSHIP CHANGE FOR THE CDU

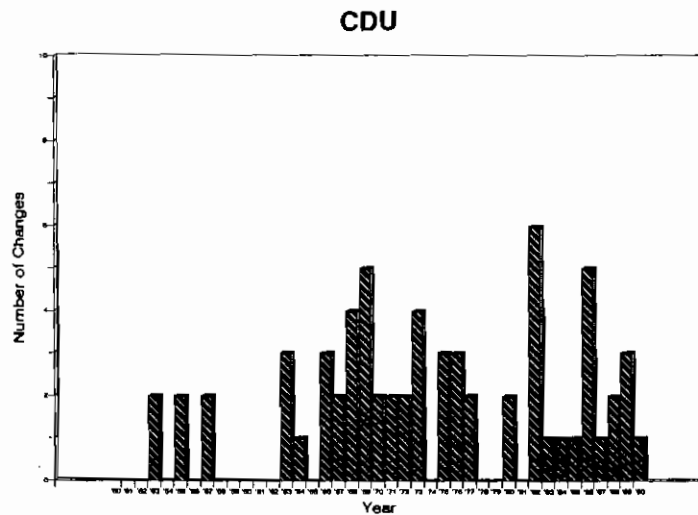


FIGURE 2A  
CHRONOLOGY OF PARTY CHANGE (NUMBER), ELECTION PERFORMANCE,  
AND LEADERSHIP CHANGE FOR THE FDP

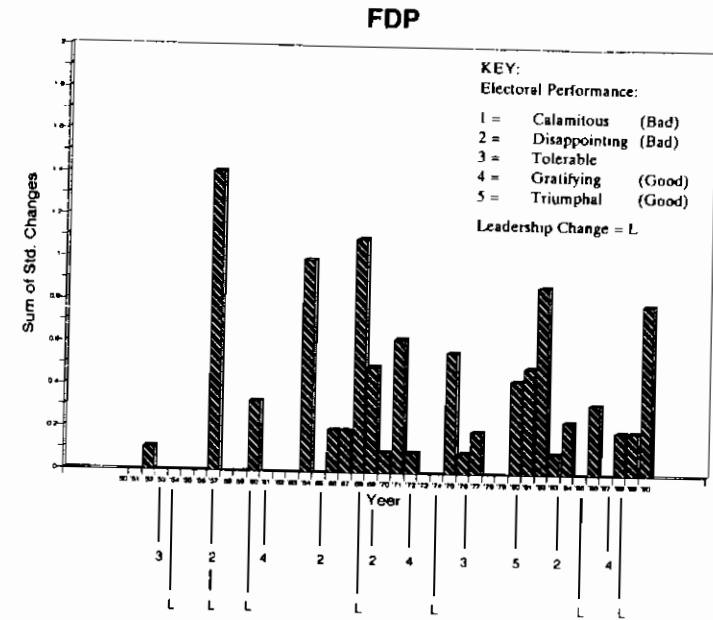


FIGURE 2B  
CHRONOLOGY OF PARTY CHANGE (MAGNITUDE), ELECTORAL  
PERFORMANCE, AND LEADERSHIP CHANGE FOR THE FDP

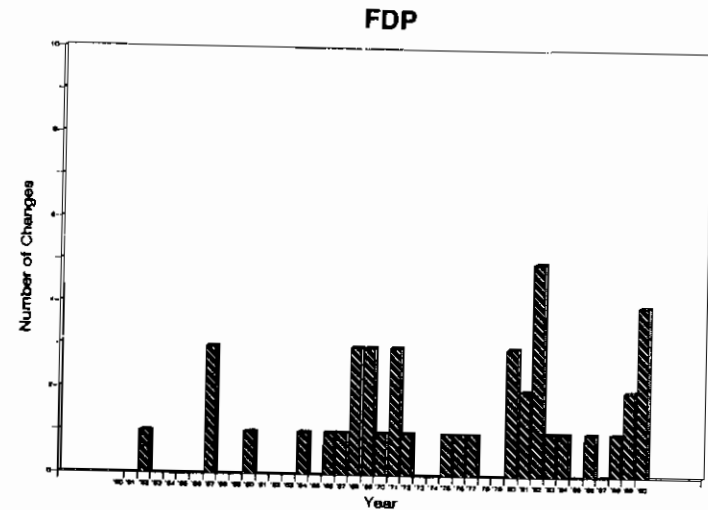




FIGURE 3A  
 CHRONOLOGY OF PARTY CHANGE (NUMBER), ELECTION PERFORMANCE,  
 AND LEADERSHIP CHANGE FOR THE SPD

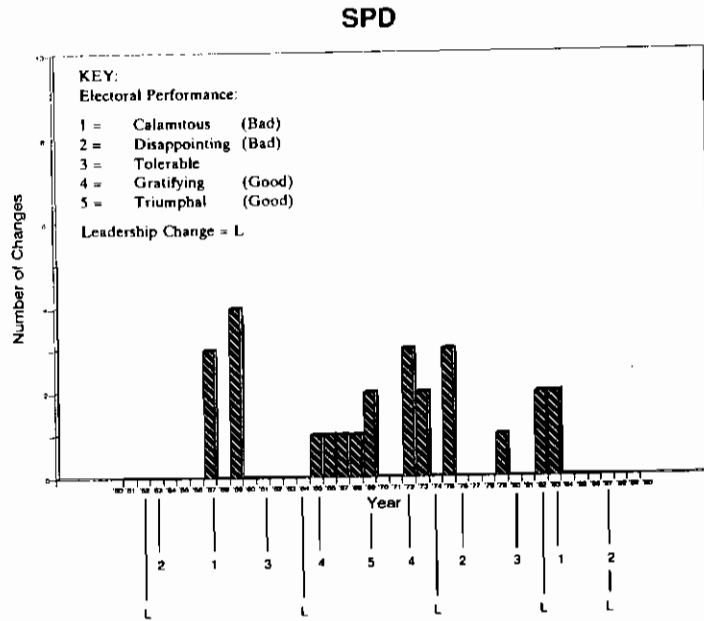


FIGURE 3B  
 CHRONOLOGY OF PARTY CHANGE (MAGNITUDE), ELECTION PERFORMANCE,  
 AND LEADERSHIP CHANGE FOR THE SPD

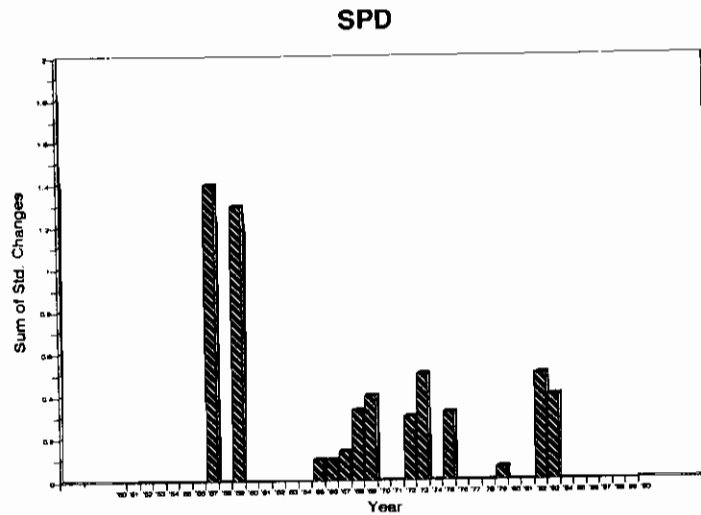


FIGURE 4A  
 CHRONOLOGY OF PARTY CHANGE (NUMBER), ELECTION PERFORMANCE,  
 AND LEADERSHIP CHANGE FOR THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY

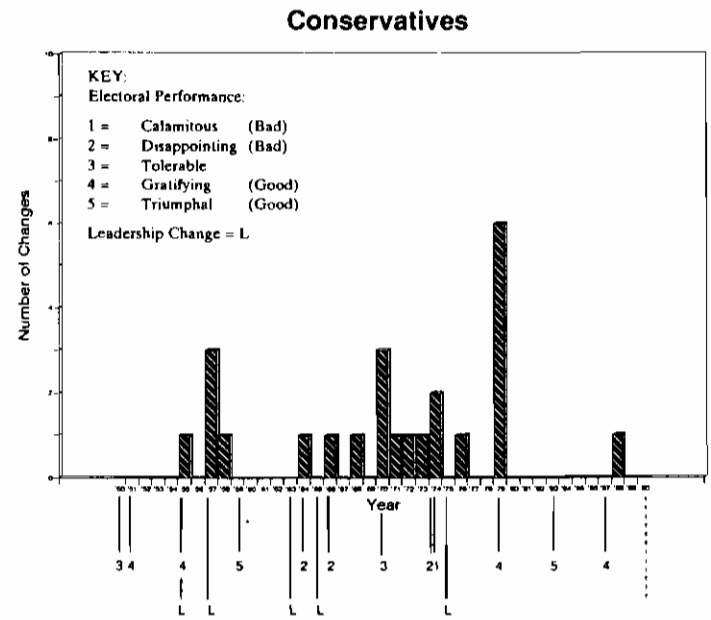


FIGURE 4B  
 CHRONOLOGY OF PARTY CHANGE (MAGNITUDE), ELECTION PERFORMANCE,  
 AND LEADERSHIP CHANGE FOR THE CONSERVATIVES

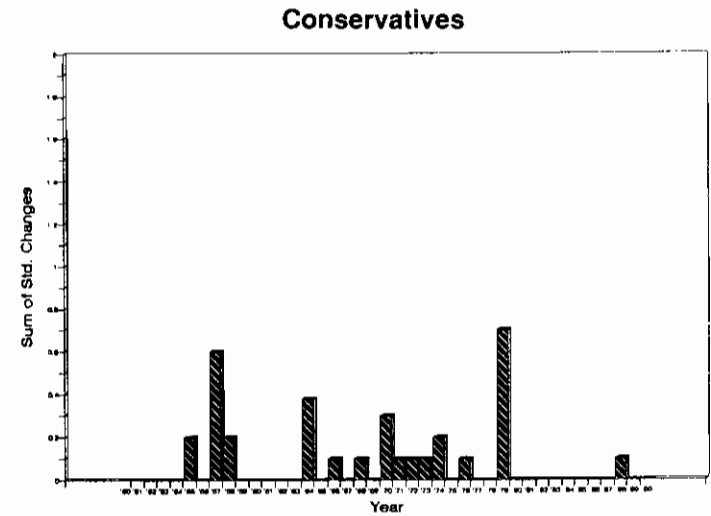




FIGURE 5A  
CHRONOLOGY OF PARTY CHANGE (NUMBER), ELECTION PERFORMANCE,  
AND LEADERSHIP CHANGE FOR THE LABOUR PARTY

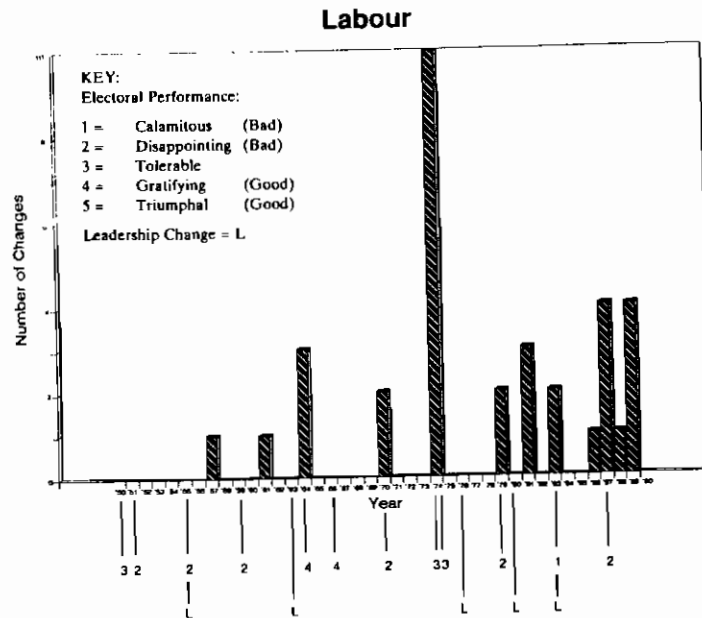


FIGURE 5B  
CHRONOLOGY OF PARTY CHANGE (MAGNITUDE), ELECTORAL PERFORMANCE,  
AND LEADERSHIP CHANGE FOR THE LABOUR PARTY

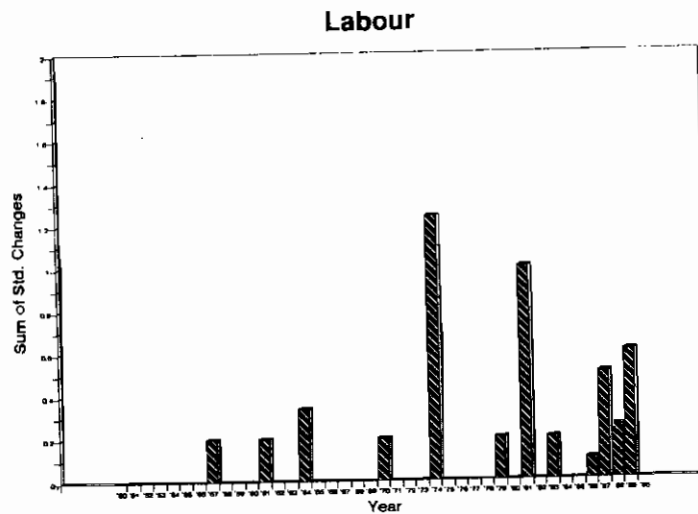


FIGURE 6A  
CHRONOLOGY OF PARTY CHANGE (NUMBER), ELECTION PERFORMANCE,  
AND LEADERSHIP CHANGE FOR THE LIBERAL PARTY

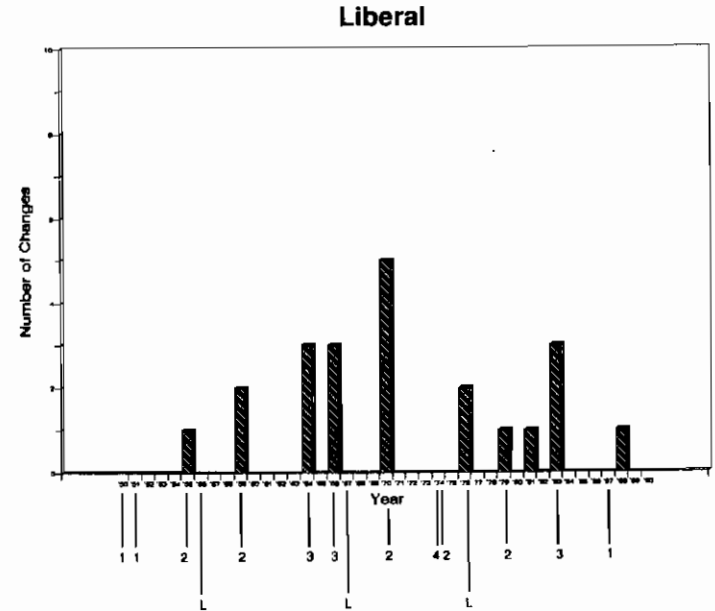


FIGURE 6B  
CHRONOLOGY OF PARTY CHANGE (MAGNITUDE), ELECTORAL PERFORMANCE,  
AND LEADERSHIP CHANGE FOR THE LIBERAL PARTY

