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The coalition processes in the Federal Republic of Germany—a study of the influence of political leaders on the process of coalition building

Neckermann, Peter Josef, Ph.D.
The Ohio State University, 1990
THE COALITION PROCESSES
IN THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY--
A STUDY OF THE INFLUENCE OF POLITICAL LEADERS
ON THE PROCESS OF COALITION BUILDING

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the
Graduate School of The Ohio State University

By

Peter Josef Neckermann, B.S., M.A.

* * *

The Ohio State University
1990

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgments ........................................ ii
Vita ..................................................... iii
List of Tables ....................................... vi
List of Figures ....................................... viii
List of Parties and Abbreviations .................... ix
Introduction .......................................... 1
References--Introduction ............................. 12

PART I--THE COALITION THEORY REVISITED ............... 13

Chapter
I. The Classic Coalition Theories ..................... 14
   References ....................................... 32
II. The Contemporary Coalition Theories ............. 36
   References ....................................... 53
III. Evaluation and Summary of the Present Coalition Theories ................. 56
    References ....................................... 60

PART II--THE COALITION-BUILDING PROCESSES IN
WEST GERMANY FROM 1949 TO 1987 ..................... 61

IV. A brief Introduction Into the Institutional Setting ........................................ 62
    References ....................................... 73
V. The Coalition-Building Process in 1949 or The Emergency of a Bourgeois Coalition .... 76
    References ....................................... 91
## LIST OF TABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Traditional Cleavages and Voting for Parties.</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>1949 Federal Election.</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>1953 Federal Election.</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>1957 Federal Election.</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>1961 Federal Election.</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>1965 Federal Election.</td>
<td>136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>1969 Federal Election.</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>The Erosion of the Majority of the Social-Liberal Coalition</td>
<td>172</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>1972 Federal Election.</td>
<td>173</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>1976 Federal Election.</td>
<td>187</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>1980 Federal Election.</td>
<td>194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>1983 Federal Election.</td>
<td>218</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>Public Perceptions About the Saliency of Political Problems</td>
<td>220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>1987 Federal Election.</td>
<td>225</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE PAGE

17. The Main Coalition Characteristics of the 14 Examined Coalition Governments ........... 238

18. Coalition Theories Versus Actual Coalition Formations ............... 240-2
# LIST OF FIGURES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FIGURE</th>
<th>PARTY IDEOLOGICAL CONTINUUM OF WEST GERMANY</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Party Ideological Continuum of West Germany</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Luebbert's Typology of Multiparty Systems</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Federal Elections Since 1949</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Adenauer's Popularity Between 1950 and 1957</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>The Public Image of the SPD</td>
<td>186</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A LIST OF THE GERMAN PARTIES
AND THEIR COMMON ABBREVIATIONS

Bayernpartei — Bavarian Party

Christlich-Demokratische Union — Christian Democratic Party — CDU

Christlich-Soziale Union — Christian-Social Party — CSU

CDU/CSU — these parties were sister parties; the CSU existed only in Bavaria and the CDU in the other parts of West Germany

Deutsche Reich Partei — German Reich Party — DRP

Deutsche Partei — German Party — DP

Die Gruenen — The Greens (environmentalist party)

Freie Demokratische Partei — Free Democratic Party — F.D.P.

Kommunistische Partei Deutschlands — Communist Party of Germany — KPD

Nationaldemokratische Partei Deutschlands (NPD) — National Democratic Party of Germany

Partei der Heimatvertriebenen und Entrechteten — All German Bloc (Refugee Party)

Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands — Social-Democratic Party of Germany — SPD

Wiederaufbau Verein — Economic Reconstruction Party — WAV

Zentrums Partei — Centre Party
INTRODUCTION

Neumann and Morgenstern presented their coalition theory as part of the theory of games in 1944. They suggested that the process of coalition building is governed by the desire to maximize one's short-term payoffs. Under this assumption, the formation of a minimum winning coalition is rational behavior. Scholars who confronted this theory with the reality of coalition building found that Neumann and Morgenstern's theory explained only a part of the actual coalition-building outcomes. This unsatisfactory result led to the formulation of an array of coalition theories. Some of them, like Riker's famous theory that postulates that minimum winning coalitions with minimum weight should emerge out of the coalition-building process, tightened Neumann and Morgenstern's approach. Other scholars advanced theories that incorporated additional variables into the framework of the coalition theory. If one neglects the subtle differences that distinguish one coalition theory from the other, then four major variables become visible. They are:
1. Size of the coalition.
2. Policy distance between the coalition partners.
3. Party-system characteristics.
4. Prior experience of cooperation (inertia).

All coalition theories have one thing in common. They try to find lawful rules of behavior or institutional constraints that force political leaders to act in a predetermined way. The classic coalition theories were built on the assumption that political leaders try to maximize their short-term benefits by participation in a governing coalition. They called that rational behavior. More recently presented coalition theories widened the term "rational" and allowed the inclusion of goals other than short-term benefit maximization. Simultaneously, they presented other variables that limited the choice of actions by rational-acting politicians again. When it turned out that reality could not be satisfactorily explained by these additional variables, they even introduced further variables, like the so-called unspecified country effect, historical variables, and others. Their goal was to eventually present a framework in which political leaders are "forced" to act in a determined way, based on the assumption that they would act rationally. All of those theories try to unearth rules and create an abstract, parsimonious model of reality. Those theories also have in common the belief that the number of
decision-making rules and the number of institutional conditions are limited and thus are conducive to be pressed into a parsimonious theory. The final model should empower the researcher to predict actual coalition-bargaining outcomes.

The reality seems to be quite different. The latest case studies, edited by Browne, Dreijmanis, and Pridham, used theoretical coalition perspectives only as heuristic prepositions for the analyses of the actual coalition-bargaining events. Thus, they left the narrow framework of the theory behind. However, even those case studies share the shortcoming that their starting point is the framework and not the political leader. In these case studies, the political leader still seems to be driven by circumstances and never makes any effort to master or even create situations conducive to his political intentions.

The thesis of the following study is that the existing coalition theories explain only one set of objectives of the coalition-bargaining process and that the political leaders are bringing another and often much more important set of objectives to the bargaining table. The contention is that the political leaders have a much wider array of goals, personal idiosyncracies, and even misconceptions than the coalition theories have incorporated so far. But most important of all, it seems that political leaders have the ability to break out of given structural limitations.
and even create a political environment that is conducive to their plans. It also seems that they are accepting more or less risks than the theories suggest they do. In other words, the goals at the coalition-bargaining table are much wider than the theories assumed so far and the political leaders bring a human element to the table that was not incorporated into the theoretical framework. In summary, it is the goal of this study to prove that the political leader is an important variable in the coalition-bargaining game that cannot be captured by structural variables.

This thesis is not without precedence. Professor Gunther faced similar observations with regard to the workings of the electoral laws and called the influence of political leaders an intervening variable.4

But what is meant by political leadership? MacGregor Burns has already demonstrated that leadership in a democratic system is not exercised by one person but by a number of persons at different levels that are intertwined in a complicated web of exchange relations.5 Leadership in this sense not only includes party leaders and other important party members but also people who influence others either via the media or via private channels. Leadership is comprised of a number of people. Yet, more often than not, one single person becomes the symbol of an idea or movement and exerts a dominant influence over
others. Since I am concerned here with democratic leadership, the domination of one person has narrow boundaries. By definition, democratic leadership is willing to work within the existing order, seeking modifications harmonious with the existing trends and consistent with prevailing principles and movements.

In the German postwar period, leading politicians became the symbols for ideas and/or political trends. I will often use one person as the representative of political leadership. But I will try to make the reader aware that other people also had input and influence on the course of events.

In Germany, like in many other parliamentary democracies, the leading politicians usually are simultaneously the leading representatives of their respective parties. Although chancellorship and party leadership must not go hand in hand, it is often the case. Therefore, I will not make a distinction between leading politicians and leading party representatives in the following statements.

West Germany was chosen as the testing ground for my thesis because it has several features that are conducive to such an investigation. West Germany has had a stable parliamentary system for forty years, meaning that coalitions generally lasted for full legislative periods.
Coalitions were formed with the intent of lasting for one legislative term or more. With the exception of one legislative period, no party had the absolute majority. This forced the parties to enter into coalitions. Over the course of time, the number of parties changed. West Germany had first a multiparty system, then a three-party system, and now has a four-party system. This gives additional insight and allows researching whether the coalition-building process is influenced by a changing number of possible participants. Other countries would not have provided the opportunity to study coalition theories in different party systems simply because the number of their parties was much more constant. A further reason for choosing West Germany was the fact that the German people simultaneously reconstructed their homeland from the war devastations and built democratic institutions of governance. The peaceful change of power from one party to another, for example, was a new experience and had great influence on the coalition-building process. These features do not make West Germany unique and therefore an unsuitable object for research. They only promise to make West Germany a highly interesting object for research. The outcome will be representative of coalition-building processes in other societies.

The goal of this study is to document the influence of political leaders on the coalition-building process. This
influence should manifest itself in the following way:

1. Coalition-bargaining outcomes should not conform with the expectations of the known coalition theories.

2. More in-depth analysis should also show if and when the variables of the known coalition theories were not responsible for the coalition-bargaining outcome. This means that this study will not limit itself to the presentation of the coalition arithmetic. The underlying political motivations will be unearthed and will be taken into consideration.

3. It will be essential to demonstrate that the variations from the expected results are due to the direct influence of political leaders. Such an influence will be regarded as established if:

A. Political leaders base their coalition decisions on goals other than the coalition theories assume.

B. Political leaders regard other payoffs for themselves and/or for their respective party as more important than coalition participation.

C. Personal sympathies or antipathies have a greater weight than factual considerations in the selection of a coalition partner.

D. Misconceptions about strength or weakness of political power lead to wrong judgments and
decisions and cause coalition outcomes that otherwise would not have occurred.

E. Political leaders do not accept a political situation as a given but create an environment that is conducive to their own political goals and thus enhance their coalition-bargaining position.

The traditional approach still believes that political leaders will try to maximize the immediate payoffs by forming minimum winning coalitions. They do not allow for other considerations and goals of the political leaders. This study will demonstrate that other considerations and goals are often the main reasons for a coalition alignment.

The traditional approach—with few exceptions—still regards the participation in coalitions as the highest and often as the only goal in competitive party systems. However, the long-term political price for the participation in a coalition can be so high that party leaders decide against participation. This happened in West Germany only once, although with great consequences for the coalition-building process.

The traditional approach disregards the influence of sympathy and antipathy and concentrates on substantive facts that influence coalition-bargaining outcomes. This study intends to show that personal feelings have a much larger influence and cannot be neglected.
The traditional approach also neglects the influence of misconceptions of political leaders. This study intends to show situations in which misconceptions were decisive for the coalition-bargaining outcome.

The traditional approach treats the political situation as a given and only allows the political leader to act within these boundaries. This study will demonstrate that some political leaders are capable of creating political situations that are conducive to their plans and aspirations.

If the study is successful, then I will have demonstrated that political leaders do have an original influence on the coalition-bargaining outcome. This will mean that the traditional coalition theories explain only one set of objectives and that another set of objectives exists that make the coalition-bargaining processes much more complex than assumed so far.

The influence of political leaders and elites has received more attention in some recent studies of coalition-bargaining outcomes. Professor Norpoth, for example, demonstrated that public opinion follows elite decisions and not vice-versa with regard to coalition decisions in West Germany. These findings are extremely important because they underline the fact that political leaders can be opinion leaders and can create environments that are supportive for one coalition versus another.
Professor Hoffmann-Lange recently researched the coalition-bargaining processes in West Germany and suggested that the following four factors had the most influence on the respective outcomes:

1. Growing political differences between the coalition partners.
2. Degree of sympathy or dislike between the coalition partners.
3. Erosion of public support.
4. Loss of support from nonpolitical elites.

Hoffmann-Lange admits the importance of political elites and even argues that sentiments can have a bearing on coalition decisions. The interplay between facts and perceptions slowly gets more attention.

The following study will be divided into three parts. The first part will present an in-depth account of the prevailing coalition theories. Their underlying variables will be shown. Finally, a summary will be presented that will give the reader a key to use in the following parts. The second part will outline the coalition-building processes in West Germany. The underlying reasons for the coalition decisions will be presented, and it will be asked whether they conformed with the prevailing coalition theories or not. If they did not conform, then it will be shown what other factors were decisive for the coalition decisions. The third part will summarize the findings, and
conclusions will be drawn. It will be shown that under certain conditions, the traditional coalition theories are unable to explain the coalition-bargaining outcomes. It will be argued that the influence of leaders, or better the additional goals and perceptions which they brought to the bargaining table, were the decisive forces in the respective coalition-bargaining outcomes. Therefore, it will be concluded that political leadership cannot be neglected in the coalition-formation process if reality shall be portrayed fairly.
REFERENCES--INTRODUCTION


6. Ibid., pp. 169-240. MacGregor Burns separates reform from revolutionary leadership. The first category of leadership accepts the restraints of an existing order, while the second category is determined to overcome and destroy the prevailing order.

7. Ibid., p. 170.


PART I

THE COALITION THEORY REVISITED

Chapter I  The Classic Coalition Theories
Chapter II The Contemporary Coalition Theories
Chapter III Evaluation and Summary of the Presented Coalition Theories
CHAPTER I
THE CLASSIC COALITION THEORIES

This chapter will provide an overview of the emergence of coalition theories. The starting point will be Neumann and Morgenstern's game theory and its narrow definition of rational behavior. One will see that theories built on those foundations explain only a limited number of actual coalition-building processes. However, those theories had, and still have, great influence because their major hypothesis, that political leaders will strive to form minimum winning coalitions, is intuitively and widely accepted. Later developed theories widened the term "rational behavior" in the context of coalition formation by permitting goals other than participation as rational choices. Those theories also incorporated institutional characteristics and historical dimensions as additional variables into their frameworks. But most importantly, they left the notion of an ideal-type coalition behind. However, those theories were still unable to explain the majority of actual coalition-building processes. Recently published case studies used coalition theoretical assumptions as references only for the representation of actual events. In summary, coalition theories thus far
were unable to provide a parsimonious framework for the full understanding of coalition-building behavior.

In the fifties and early sixties, an influential, mainly American group of political scientists looked with "envy" at the natural science disciplines, especially physics. Riker, for example, stated,

The intellectual edifice of contemporary physical science—certainly the most impressive achievement of the human psyche in this or any other age—serves as a steady source of both inspiration and envy to scholars interested in the behavior of people rather than in the motion of things: inspiration, because it is easy to dream of accomplishing in one field of thought what has already been accomplished in another; and envy, because it is hard to translate such dreams into reality.1

Riker and other scholars

...have been eager to create specifically political theories of behavior to serve as a base for a future political science.2

Riker continued his argument by saying,

The essential feature of this method is the creation of a theoretical construct that is a somewhat simplified version of what the real world to be described is believed to be like.3

Therefore, it is by no means an accident that all major coalition theories were conceptualized in the early sixties.

The common base for the diverse efforts to formulate theories about coalition building was Neumann and
Morgenstern's "The Theory of Games and Economic Behavior." Neumann and Morgenstern argued that the theory of games is applicable to political and economic life and that the n-person games contain an abstraction of the process of coalition building. They stated that

As soon as there is a possibility of choosing with whom to establish parallel interests, this becomes a case of choosing an ally. When alliances are formed, it is to be expected that some kind of mutual understanding between the two players involved will be necessary. One can also state it this way: A parallelism of interests makes a cooperation desirable, and therefore will probably lead to an agreement between the players involved. An opposition of interests, on the other hand, requires presumably no more than that a player who has elected this alternative act independently in his own interest.4

Neumann and Morgenstern's n-person zero-sum game theory is based on the following assumptions:

1. Players behave rationally, meaning that they try to maximize their gains in a given situation.5 Riker, who "translated" this theory into the political realm, argued as follows:

   Politically rational man is the man who would rather win than lose, regardless of the particular stakes.6 ...Since elections, warfare, etc. are decision processes in which the stronger side wins, they place a premium on the side becoming stronger by any means possible which does not flagrantly violate accepted canons of behavior.7
2. The coalition-building process is a zero-sum game, meaning that one side wins everything that was at stake while the other side loses. However, one knows that in reality, some common benefits might accrue to both sides, but they will be ignored

...partially out of mathematical considerations and partially out of a desire to simplify the model.... When we think about roll calls in a legislature or elections, we ignore the gains that we know will accrue to everyone from the continued existence of civilized society and consider only the immediate problem of winning. Such decisions as those made by voting or fighting have a winner- takes-all character.... The zero-sum model is probably best and I (Riker) shall use it here when I wish to talk about those and other essentially political decisions.8

3. Players must have knowledge about every possible course of action open to them and about the resulting rewards.

Neumann and Morgenstern argued that the total amount of benefits is constant in a coalition-building process and that the winning group will get all the benefits while the losing group will receive nothing. This squares well with reality. The winner is forming the government, and the loser is relegated to the opposition bench. Since the benefits and spoils have to be divided among the members of the winning group, it is in the interest of the winning group to be as small as possible.
The smallest group which will win is a minimum winning coalition. Only a minimum winning coalition will maximize the benefits for its participants. It is therefore rational to create coalitions which have bare majorities.

This "minimax principle" is not only at the center of all coalition-building theories based on the n-person, zero-sum game theory. It is also at the heart of the rational actor model. The rational actor model is the overarching model of the behavior of the "homo economicus." In this regard, the theories of coalition building are subtheories of this model of behavior of human beings in economic and political settings.

Neumann and Morgenstern developed the mathematical model for the n-person, zero-sum game but stopped short of an application in politics or any other sector. It was Riker who used this model and refined it for the process of coalition building in the political realm. He first defined Neumann and Morgenstern's findings as follows:

In social situations similar to n-person, zero-sum games, participants create coalitions just as large as they believe will ensure winning and no larger.... A minimum winning coalition is defined as one which is rendered losing by the subtraction of any member.9

A member of a coalition is a party.10 The following example will show that in a multi-party system there are several coalitions which are minimum winning ones. If
parties A, B, C, D, and E with respectively 5, 7, 9, 6, and 4 deputies try to form coalitions, then the following minimum winning ones are possible:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{ABD} & = 18, \\ 
\text{ABE} & = 16, \\ 
\text{ACD} & = 20, \\ 
\text{ACE} & = 18, \\ 
\text{BDE} & = 17, \\ 
\text{BC} & = 16, \\ 
\text{CDE} & = 19.
\end{align*}
\]

The introduction of the deputy into the model is a substantial step because it allows the statement that not only parties but also the deputies behind the parties have interests. Riker formulated this as follows:

There is more in the players' universe of interests, however, than the payoff to coalitions. Each player is, in addition, and more significantly, interested in the payoff to himself.\textsuperscript{11}

This added dimension allowed him to formulate the famous "size principle" which in his eyes governs the process of coalition building. Riker postulated that from the various minimum winning coalitions only those will form which have the smallest number of deputies, or minimum weight. This added condition in our example reduces the number of possible coalitions. Only the coalitions ABE = 16 and BC = 16 fulfill both requirements of being a minimum winning coalition and having the smallest number of deputies or minimum weight. Riker's size principle, if verified, has the great advantage that it significantly reduces the number of possible coalition-bargaining outcomes and thus increases the capacity of the model to predict. It is a
consequent application of the "minimax principle" which is so fundamental for the rational approach.

Let us briefly recapitulate the development of the coalition theory so far. Neumann and Morgenstern advanced a mathematical model which supposedly proved that under the condition of rationality, minimum winning coalitions would be formed. This theorem became the base for other coalition theories. However, the flaw in Neumann and Morgenstern's theory was that in coalition-bargaining processes in which four or more actors were involved, numerous minimum winning coalitions could be formed. The theory was unable to answer which of those would be the actual winner. Thus, the predictable capacity of the theory was rather small. To remedy this flaw, Riker, Leiserson, Axelrod, and others added one or more additional conditions which should reduce the number of possible outcomes. Riker added as a new condition the demand that not only the benefits for the coalition as such but also for the individual member of the coalition shall be maximized. This added condition resulted in the theory that only minimum winning coalitions with minimum weights would emerge. Going back to our example, only two instead of seven coalitions were feasible. Riker's theory had the great advantage of sharply reducing the number of possible coalition formations and substantially increasing the predictable capacity of the theory—if verified.
But Riker’s approach did not remain unchallenged. Leiserson, after having studied coalition formation and maintenance in Japan, advanced the bargaining proposition:

If there are, say, ten actors, and the size of the winning coalitions ranges from three to seven actors, then there will be a very strong tendency for the coalition with three members to form. The reason for this tendency, briefly, is that the members of the smaller coalition will prefer to form it, since negotiations and bargaining are easier to complete, and a coalition is easier to hold together, other things being equal, with fewer parties. Because these reasons involve bargaining considerations, I will call this proposition...the bargaining proposition.12

It is important to realize that Leiserson’s actors are parties and that the smallest number of parties, which reach a bare majority, are supposed to enter into a coalition. Leiserson justified his bargaining proposition on intuitive and not on mathematical grounds. His starting point was again Neumann and Morgenstern’s minimum winning theory. He added as the additional condition that the number of parties involved in the coalition formation shall be minimized. Leiserson believed that parties and not deputies were the decisive factor of the coalition-bargaining process. His added condition, like Riker’s, narrowed the number of possible coalitions further, because among the various minimum winning coalitions, there were only a few which met the second obligation. In our
example, only the one coalition BC=16 was feasible following this coalition theory.

Until now, the second limiting factor was quantitative in nature; e.g., deputies or number of parties. Now Leiserson and Axelrod both presented yet another secondary limiting factor. This factor, however, was qualitative in nature. Both scholars argued that coalitions will form among those partners who share policy preferences. It can be argued that this was the first step outside the boundaries of the strict model based on rationality because policy preferences have a subjective dimension. We will not pursue this matter further; one should only realize that a new dimension of argumentation has entered the coalition theory.

Both researchers assumed that all relevant policy preferences can be subsumed in a single, one-dimensional continuum. Axelrod justified this in the following way:

Conflict of interest in society on a given policy dimension is the average conflict of interest between a pair of people, as each one of the pair takes on all the positions in the policy dimension in proportion to the position's frequency in society.... Intuitively, this means that the more spread out or dispersed the distribution of people along the policy scale...the higher the average conflict of interest for the whole society.14

Leiserson argued that only those minimum winning coalitions will be formed whose parties are separated by
the smallest distance on the political continuum. However, these parties do not have to be adjacent to each other. In our example, the coalition formed by parties B and C fulfills the minimum-winning and the policy-preference conditions if we assume that the parties are placed along a political continuum. In our example, the parties which form a coalition are adjacent on the policy continuum; but this must not be the case. If they are adjacent to each other, then one speaks about a closed or "connected" coalition; if they are not adjacent to each other, then one regards such a coalition as open. Leiserson does not demand closed coalitions. His secondary condition is only that the distance between the coalition partners is smaller than in any other combination of parties.

Axelrod, on the other hand, demanded that coalitions be closed. This says that all parties which are situated between the extreme parties must be included in the coalition.

The extreme parties are those that are necessary to form a minimum winning coalition. If, different from our example, a party is located between party B and C on the political continuum, then this party must be included in the coalition in order to establish a "connected" or closed coalition. Axelrod argued that

...a minimal connected winning coalition is a coalition that is connected; is a winning coalition; and
is minimal in the sense that it can lose no member party without ceasing to be connected and winning.... In a parliamentary democracy...minimal connected winning coalitions...are likely to form...and once formed are likely to be of longer duration than other coalitions.16

Axelrod is convinced that the inclusion of such parties is necessary to reduce the tensions inside the coalition. From an arithmetical standpoint, the unnecessary party has a bridge function with regard to policies. Those bridge parties are included in a coalition although their inclusion violates the minimum principle. Axelrod has therefore labeled his coalitions as minimal connected winning ones. One must realize that he introduced into the theory of coalition building a dimension which does not square fully with the conditions of rationality formulated by Neumann and Morgenstern.

De Swaan put his finger on this point by arguing that

...it remains unclear why a closed coalition should have a lower conflict of interest than an open coalition with the same range. A member somewhere in the middle of the coalition would probably add just about the average score to the total conflict of interest in the coalition.... An all-but-extreme actor, however, would add a more than average score to the conflict of interest in the coalition, and therefore should be excluded, if he is unnecessary for the coalition to be winning and if members wish to minimize a coalition's conflict of interest.17
De Swaan rejected the theory of minimal connected winning coalitions on the grounds that bridge parties do not reduce the conflict of interest between the coalition partners because the policy distance between the extreme coalition partners is not altered by including one or more parties located between them. But he argued that minimal connected winning coalitions might still be a practical mode of coalition building because in the real world of politics, it is not the rationalist but the incrementalist decision mode that prevails. This position claims that political actors do not strive for maximization of their benefits. They are in reality content with "satisficing" them.18 De Swaan's argument was as follows:

An actor will not survey all possible outcomes and calculate his own and every other actor's preferences for these states; the actor is much more likely to decide that whatever the "best" coalition may be, his aspiration level will be satisfied if he is included in a winning coalition. As a consequence, he will behave in a "satisfying" rather than maximizing manner. His decision strategy will be incrementalist: since he is not in a majority of his own, he will remedy this by searching for partners in a majority coalition. The actor is likely to enter the process in a "margin" dependent manner by looking for that partner with whom policy differences are minimal and require only marginal adjustment: his neighbor on the scale. If the two do not control a majority together, they will repeat the procedure with their respective neighbors, "step-by-step" until a majority has been achieved:
such a majority would consist of a closed minimal range coalition.19

However, De Swaan's efforts centered around the advancement of his own version of a policy distance theory.

The basic notion of a policy distance theory is that an actor strives to be included in a winning coalition that he expects to adopt a policy which is as close as possible to his own most preferred policy.20

De Swaan no longer wants to minimize the number of participants of a coalition. It wants to minimize the policy distance between the coalition partners. De Swaan realized that he departed from Neumann and Morgenstern's theory and defended this move by arguing that

...the notion of policy distance minimization fits the concept of utility maximization of the rational decision model.21

We will later return to this point when we ask ourselves whether it is justified to also include into the term "rational behavior" actions which do not lead to the minimization of coalitions.

De Swaan introduced the pivotal party into the consideration of coalition formation. A party is pivotal when the absolute difference between the combined votes (weights) of members on his right and of members on his left is not greater than his own weight: the actor may swing the vote, or he holds the balance.22
In simpler terms, a party is pivotal if it has the ability to form a coalition with partners on both sides in such a way that the policy distance is minimized. Such a coalition may or may not be a minimum winning coalition. The latter is no longer the goal of the coalition formation process. The new goal is to minimize the range needed on a political continuum to form a winning coalition.

This shift in emphasis was already postulated by Axelrod. But Axelrod still tried to accomplish both, a coalition which is connected and is as small as possible. However, the size was in Axelrod's concept already relegated to a secondary condition. In De Swaan's theory, size plays no role at all. There, the policy distance around a pivotal party shall be minimized. De Swaan allows for open-ended coalitions in his theory.

Policy-range and policy-distance theories had in common that they subsumed all relevant policy preferences in a single continuum. This simplification was soon questioned.

Sartori, for example, demonstrated that ideology is a multifaceted variable. Ideology has several dimensions, and parties can be "connected" to different parties along the various dimensions of ideology.

Norpoth presented the main dimensions of ideology for Germany and showed how differently the parties were aligned on each dimension.
Germany has been divided by three major cleavage lines which segregated the parties from each other. On each of those dimensions, the parties were neighbors of other parties. As a way out of this dilemma, De Swann suggested the formation of a super coalition which encompasses all parties with close distances on all ideological dimensions. This suggestion created oversized coalitions. De Swaan found no support for this idea. Norpoth suggested asking which ideological cleavage line or lines were dominant in a given coalition-bargaining situation and using the alignment on this or these dimensions accordingly.
In 1979, Warwick suggested defining the ideological continuum in another way which would allow the return to a comprehensive continuum. The dividing line should be between socialist and bourgeois parties, or between clerical and secular or ethnic parties. His suggestion was based on the observation that in some countries, camps or "Lager" had developed. The dividing line between those camps was usually much stronger than the camp's internal differences.

It may be helpful at this point to summarize once again the development of the classic coalition theories. The starting point was Neumann and Morgenstern's n-person, zero-sum game theory which led to the hypothesis that minimum winning coalitions shall emerge. Since more than one minimum winning coalition was possible in a coalition-bargaining situation, other scientists added additional conditions which were supposed to further narrow the number of possible outcomes. Riker emphasized that the number of deputies also will be minimized in bargaining situations. Thus, the emerging coalition should be a minimum winning one with minimum weight. Leiserson suggested that instead of minimizing the number of deputies, the number of parties will be minimized. This would lead to minimum winning coalitions with the smallest number of parties possible.
Leiserson chose yet another approach. He suggested that the policy range should become the secondary condition. Then came Axelrod. He overstepped the boundaries of the n-person, zero-sum game theory. He suggested that minimal connected winning coalitions should be expected at the outcome of coalition bargaining. Those coalitions could be larger than minimum winning ones because they could include an "unnecessary" party if this party happened to be positioned between the two extreme parties which were necessary to give the coalition a majority. Also, De Swaan's policy distance theory overstepped the boundaries of the n-person, zero-sum game theory. Those coalitions were formed around a pivotal actor. They could be larger than minimum winning.

Before we leave the coalition theories which are based on the n-person, zero-sum game theory and which we would like to call the classic theories of coalition building, one more important question shall be addressed. Neumann and Morgenstern had defined rational behavior as profit maximization. This turned out to be a very narrow and limiting definition. Riker had already widened the rational actor model and included the pursuit of goals other than profit maximization in the framework of the rational actor. He argued that persons have different preference scales and that all actions taken for the advancement of a preferred outcome shall be regarded as
rational. Thus, motivations other than profit maximization were accepted in the model of rational behavior.

This had deep repercussions for the theory of coalition building. If profit maximization was no longer the only "rational" goal, then minimum winning coalitions should not be the only outcome of coalition bargaining processes.
REFERENCES--CHAPTER I


2. Ibid., p. ix.

3. Ibid., p. 7.


5. John von Neumann and Oskar Morgenstern, The Theory of Games and Economic Behavior (3d ed., 1953; Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1944), pp. 8-9. Neumann and Morgenstern define rationality as follows: "We shall...assume that the aim of all participants in the economic system...is money, or equivalently a single monetary commodity. This is supposed to be unrestrictively divisible and substitutable, freely transferable and identical, even in the quantitative sense, with whatever 'satisfaction' or 'utility' is desired by each participant.... The individual who attempts to obtain these respective maxima is also said to act 'rationally.'"

William H. Riker, The Theory of Political Coalitions (New Haven-London: Yale University Press, 1962), pp. 22-23. Riker restated, "...the condition of rationality in a possibly defensible and certainly nontautological way: Given social situations within certain kinds of decision-making institutions (of which parlor games, the market, elections, and warfare are notable examples) and in which exist two alternative courses of action with differing outcomes in money and power or success, some participants will choose the alternative leading to the larger payoff. Such choice is rational behavior and it will be accepted as definitive while the behavior of participants who do not so choose will not necessarily be so accepted."

6. Ibid., p. 22.

7. Ibid., p. 21.

8. Ibid., pp. 28-31.

9. Ibid., pp. 32-33.
10. Ibid., p. 129. "It is to be understood that these proto-coalitions are for the purpose of the present analysis, indivisible units even though they may be composed of many individual players."

11. Ibid., p. 36.


Robert Axelrod, Conflict of Interest: A theory of divergent goals with applications to politics (Chicago: Markham, 1970).


20. Ibid., p. 88.
21. Ibid., p. 88.

22. Ibid., p. 89.


With regard to rationality, Riker said, "Hence, it follows that all choices leading to action are rational and irrationality would appear to be equivalent to indecision." This definition cannot be accepted because even indecision can be a rational approach. However, for this study, it is only important to realize that actions other than profit maximization can be considered rational behavior.
CHAPTER II
THE CONTEMPORARY COALITION THEORIES

In the early seventies, Browne, Taylor/Laver, and De Swaan tested these coalition theories by comparing them to actual coalition-bargaining outcomes in Europe. The results were not encouraging. De Swaan concluded that minimum winning coalition theories did not outperform random guessing and that Axelrod's minimal connected winning coalition theory was a better, albeit by no means satisfactory, predictor. Two recent studies by Browne and Franklin/Mackie question those results. They concluded that the results of the earlier studies, mentioned above, were highly influenced by the universe of countries taken into consideration. For example, they showed that De Swaan's conclusion that theories which used size and ideology as interactive explanatory variables were not better predictors than those theories which used only the variable size. Franklin/Mackie wrote that

De Swaan appears to have been particularly unlucky in picking a universe of countries which excluded almost precisely those in which size turns out to be most important.

Franklin/Mackie suggested that they
...have detected...an unspecified country effect, meaning that in some countries either ideology or size proves to be much more powerful than in others. If we could discover what it is about these countries that makes them different, this might provide us with powerful additional variables with which to attack the problem of predicting coalition formations.5

By including the unspecified variable "country effect" next to the variables "size" and "ideology," they claim to have been able to double the predictive capacity compared with earlier results.

In the late seventies, Dodd tried to give new prominence to the rationalist coalition theories. He wrote that

...in the most complicated situations, the negotiation process resembles a game in which parties maneuver like blind men in search for the levers with which to control their nation's highest office. In less complex circumstances, parliamentary negotiations are more clearly a game of bargaining and coalitions in which party opposes party in a calculated maneuvering for ministerial power.6 ...Each party seeks its own maximum ministerial advantage. Each parliamentary party behaves as an actor in a conflictive coalition game. The resources that a party brings to the game are its legislative votes. The desired payoff is one or more ministerial positions in a cabinet.7

As these excerpts demonstrate, Dodd's starting point is the n-person, zero-sum game theory to such an extent that Luebbert argued that

...over time the works of Dodd and De Swaan have acquired the status of classics in the study of government formation.8
Dodd actually added two variables to the theory of coalition formation, a generalized a priori willingness to bargain, and information uncertainty. He understood under willingness to bargain the willingness of every party to enter into a coalition with every other party. He used cleavage conflict or the extent of party system polarization to operationalize the a priori willingness to bargain. In other words, if a party were unwilling to enter a coalition with another party, then the condition of a priori willingness to bargain did not exist. He understood under information uncertainty the parties' lack of information about the positions every party took in the bargaining game. Information certainty was only given if every party knew the strength (number of deputies) and the bargaining preferences of every other party. Dodd used party-system polarization to operationalize this variable. The situation became very complex as soon as both variables were applied simultaneously:

Within the coalition status range predetermined by willingness...to bargain, the precise size of the coalition is determined by the degree of information certainty that exists.9

Dodd drew the following conclusions:

1. When constraints on bargaining are low or moderate and information certainty is high, then minimum winning coalitions will be formed.
2. When constraints on bargaining are low or moderate and information certainty is low, then oversized coalitions tend to be formed.

3. When bargaining is highly constrained and information certainty is low, then minority or undersized coalitions tend to be formed.

Dodd's accomplishment was the introduction of party system characteristics into the coalition theory. Minimum winning coalitions occurred only in a moderate political environment. But Dodd regarded the moderate political environment to be the normal case. Thus, most coalition governments should be minimum winning coalitions. He argued that if all parties are willing to enter into a coalition with every other party and have a high degree of information about the strength and preferences of the other parties then

...parties employ a basic criterion in all calculations and negotiations: they seek first and foremost to enter a minimum winning coalition.10

In political and party systems under constraint, he believed that coalitions tended to be over or undersized. Following his own account, then he was able to explain 40% of the coalition-bargaining outcomes.11

However, the statistics about the actual coalition-bargaining outcomes left some doubt about Dodd's rationalist explanation. Lijphart recently gave a brief
and very instructive overview. Out of 218 coalition governments in 21 democracies between 1945 and 1980, 62% were either oversized or minority governments, 12% were one-party governments, and only 26% were minimum winning coalition governments.

Table 1

PROPORTIONS OF TIME DURING WHICH MINIMAL WINNING, OVERSIZED, AND MINORITY CABINETS WERE IN POWER IN 21 DEMOCRACIES, 1945--1980

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Minimal Winning Cabinets</th>
<th>Oversized Cabinets</th>
<th>Minority Cabinets</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New Zealand</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luxembourg</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iceland</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France V</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France IV</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Israel</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Switzerland</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All 21 Regimes</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Lijphart's statistics indicate that 41% of the time cabinets were not minimum winning ones. This result called into question Dodd's assumption that minimum winning coalitions were the rule. The large number of minority governments especially drew attention.

Strom, for example, questioned whether the conventional literature was correct viewing

...minority cabinets as options of last resort under conditions of severe political stress. Accordingly, minority government formations should be associated with political instability, fractionalization, and long and difficult formation processes. My results offer little support for these propositions. In fact, in some cases, the exact opposite appears to be the case. As an alternative to this conventional view, I have offered a theory that explains minority governments as rational cabinet solutions under conditions of competition rather than conflict. The data have given considerable support to this explanation.13

Strom started to question some of the basic assumptions of the classic coalition theories:

1. Traditional coalition theories postulate that the main purpose of parties is to contest elections and to seek governmental offices. Strom assumed

...that office and electoral advantage are valued instrumentally, and that the underlying motivation is to influence policymaking.14

2. Traditional theories assume that the majority status is a prerequisite for effective decision making.
Strom, on the other hand, found that minority governments are perfectly able to make decisions. However, they often receive tacit support from parties who have not joined the government.

3. Traditional theories are further concerned with the formation of a government after an election and regard this as a singular event. They lack any long-term view. Strom argued that parties seek to maximize both their short- and long-term utilities. The long-term view could convince a party to abstain from entering a coalition if this would reduce its long-term electoral appeal. For example, during the Weimar period, government participation resulted in subsequent electoral losses.

Thus decisions about cabinet formation will often take the form of a trade-off between power and electoral prospects.15

Strom argued that the pursuit of office and the pursuit of political influence are two important but different political goals and that it can no longer be assumed that both are served best by entering into a governing coalition. Therefore, a minimum winning coalition is no longer the only or most appreciated result of the coalition-bargaining process. Political influence can be achieved in many ways, and being a cabinet member is only one of them. "Oppositional influence" can be
available without the cost of being a member in an ineffective government. Strom concluded "that minority governments can be understood as results of rational choices made by political parties." Strom deserves credit for having widened both the coalition theory and the rational actor model to the inclusion of formal and informal methods of cooperation in the formation and maintenance of government coalitions and to have raised minority cabinets to a theoretically acceptable form of democratic government under specific political conditions.

Dodd has still argued that minimum winning coalitions are the ideal-type coalition and that over or undersized coalitions are the result of strained political relations. But due to the large number of deviant cases—41%—the question arises whether such an ideal type ever existed. Strom had argued that minority governments are "not options of last resort." Now Budge and Herman gave up entirely the notion of an ideal type of coalition government and developed a hierarchical system of motives and party systems and concluded that each and every combination would lead to either minimum winning, or over or undersized coalitions and that each one would be best suited for the respective political situation.
Luebbert went a similar way. He also incorporated party system characteristics and party preferences into a new rationalistic coalition theory. He presented a typology built on the variables "legitimacy" and "oppositional behavior." He understood under legitimacy the degree of public acceptance of regime. Oppositional behavior was divided into the subcategories of consensual and competitive political behavior. Consensual political behavior was defined by the presence of corporativism and a normative commitment to consensual politics. Competitive political behavior was again subdivided into truly competitive and conflictual political behavior. A competitive political situation is prevalent if parties accept the democratic rules for the competition of power, while a conflictual situation is given if parties use all means to discredit officeholders and to gain power. This typology renders four types of multiparty democracies.
These multiparty systems are predisposed to specific kinds of coalition arrangements:

1. In consensual democracies, parliament is not the only site of political decision making. Important issues may be agreed upon in other institutions, like national commissions, roundtable meetings, etc., and later presented to parliament for rubber-stamping. Those additional channels of influence reduce the desire to participate in government coalitions. A party can have substantial influence over issues without being publicly accountable. Thus, in countries with many different avenues of
polITICAL INFLUENCE—Norway, Sweden, and Denmark are examples—Luebbert expects that minority cabinets emerge frequently.

2. The only example of an unconsolidated democratic system is Finland until the late sixties. Luebbert made no attempt to predict coalition-bargaining outcomes there.

3. A conflictual democratic system is defined by the absence of consensus-building institutions and by a polarized party system, including one or more antisystem parties. Weimar Germany and the Fourth French Republic are often cited examples. In those societies, it is more attractive to join the government than in consensual systems because no other channels for political influence exist. However, the costs are high because members of government coalitions tend to lose public support by their participation in a government which is often regarded as unsuccessful. The costs of being a coalition partner outweigh the benefits. The centrifugal forces of the party system make government building and maintenance extremely difficult. Thus, minority governments are frequently formed. The following example may illustrate the point:
A minority government, consisting of the parties B-C-D is very plausible.

4. A competitive democratic system is not debilitated by the presence of antisystem parties. But it does not have the consensus-building mechanism based on corporativism. The parliament is the most important site of public policymaking.

If in such a democracy a dominant party exists which, because of size and/or location in the party system, will be the decisive party presently and in the near future, then Luebbert expects the frequent formation of oversized coalitions. The reason is that the dominant party will try to balance the political influence on its left and right and thus will increase its own room for political maneuvering.

If no such dominant party exists, then the tendency favors minimum winning coalitions.

Luebbert's accomplishment is to firmly incorporate party-system characteristics into the efforts of formulating a new and comprehensive coalition theory. Like Budge and Herman, Luebbert no longer regards the minimum winning coalition as the ideal form of a governing coalition. He believes that systemic factors determine size and composition of coalition cabinets. The drawback
of his typology is the need for subjective judgment to put a distinct party system in one of the categories of his typology. The need for subjective judgment makes the predictions about coalition-bargaining outcomes somewhat ambivalent.

About the same time, Franklin and Mackie drew attention toward the fact that coalition formation is not a singular event, disconnected from earlier coalitions by a new popular election. In their opinion,

The formation of a governing coalition should be viewed as part of a historical sequence of events in which past experience plays an important role.19

They continued their argument that no party gains an advantage from a membership in a coalition which is unsuccessful in the eyes of the public. Therefore,

...one of the criteria that potential coalition partners might employ...is whether its members had ever in the past had experience of working together in government. What we are proposing is that the formation of a coalition government is a "game" whose "payoffs" are not fixed at the time the coalition forms. Rather the payoffs depend on the ability of the coalition to perform certain tasks after it has formed.20

They introduce "familiarity" and "inertia" as additional variables into the coalition theory. Familiarity is present when the coalition partners have worked together in the preceding coalition; inertia is a fact when earlier
experiences of cooperation exist. Franklin and Mackie are convinced that practical cooperative experience is of so much significance that even ideological differences might be transcended.

Coalition theory has changed rapidly in a very short period of time. Neumann and Morgenstern based it on the n-person, zero-sum game and expected that the overriding variable "size" would have sufficient explanatory power. Since then, country specific (undefined) components, party system characteristics, historical variables, and many other considerations were added without being able to present a new, comprehensive, and generally accepted framework. Hinckley finally presented "twenty-one variables beyond the size of a winning coalition" and suggested that

...an alternative literature of coalitions might be considered. This literature is developing mainly from social-psychological research on coalitions.21

Some researchers followed that suggestion. Sanders and Herman included variables which were supposed to capture strikes and demonstrations.22 Robertson researched the influence of inflation and unemployment on the length of tenure of governments.23 He found that these variables had influence. The life span of minority governments was reduced significantly more than the life span of minimum winning coalitions. The tenure of
oversized coalitions was, on the other hand, not affected at all. The explanatory capacity of those models was not much better than models which did not use those variables.

Those efforts indicate that the scholarly attention had shifted. Coalition theory became less concerned with the question of government formation and more interested in the question of government duration and stability. This is one of the reason for the interest in new variables. Many authors implicitly assume a close relationship between government stability and stability of the political system per se. But Lijphart argued that government stability is first and foremost an indicator of the strength of the executive vis-a-vis the parliament. Browne and Gleiber expressed the frustration of their discipline well when questioning whether coalition research interested in the formation and in the life span of coalitions will become more successful in the future. They suggested that the motivation of coalition partners will shift over time and will lead to breakups and new coalitions without changes in the strength of parties. If their suggestion is followed and motivation of parties or party leaders becomes the focus point of research, then a heuristic "events approach" will become necessary. Coalition formation, coalition duration, and coalition dissolution are then regarded as a continuous process, determined by "event cycles."
It is certainly no accident that in the recent past, three volumes with country-specific case studies were published. The studies, edited by Bogdanor, are not specifically linked to coalition theoretical aspects. This widened the scope of those presentations. Some studies dealt with constitutional aspects which eased the formation of minority governments; other studies tried to provide a political balance sheet in order to measure failure and success of coalition governments. Browne and Dreijmanis, on the other hand, hoped to get further insights into the coalition-building process. They expected that a more detailed account of reality would offer additional perspectives. Pridham's volume provided first a scheme for the then-following research. Pridham suggested that a strong relationship exists between the general makeup of parties and their coalition behavior. A study of the presented cases suggested the following conclusions:

1. In the process of coalition building, the variable size has no dominating influence, but is important.

2. The variable ideology is very difficult to conceptualize and to operationalize. Many case studies gave the impression that the dichotomy of political camps--socialistic versus bourgeois--might render better results than the traditional left-right continuum.
3. Agreements between coalition partners to realize only narrowly defined and limited political goals seem to take precedence over general ideological affinity in the process of coalition building.

4. The formation of coalitions seems to be highly influenced by country-specific factors and party-system characteristics. Institutional and constitutional aspects are important and so are historically grown patterns of behavior.

5. The most significant contribution of contemporary coalition theories seems to be the understanding that there is no ideal type of coalition. However, most scholars continue to argue that in a competitive multiparty system, which they often regard to be the normal case, minimum winning coalitions would be formed.
REFERENCES—CHAPTER II


4. Ibid., p. 687.

5. Ibid., p. 688.


7. Ibid., p. 36.


10. Ibid., p. 37.

11. Ibid., pp. 136-140.


13. Kaare Strom, "Minority Governments in Parliamentary Democracies. The Rationality of Nonwinning Cabinet Solutions," *Comparative Political Studies*, No. 17, 1984, p. 222. The overall frequency of minority governments was 114 out of 323 during the period 1945-1982, or 35.3%. In the 1940s, they accounted for less than 25% and in the 1970s, for more than 40% of all governments included in his sample.

14. Ibid., p. 211.

15. Ibid., p. 211.


20. Ibid., p. 276.


CHAPTER III
EVALUATION AND SUMMARY OF THE PRESENTED
COALITION THEORIES

The efforts to formulate a parsimonious coalition theory are presently at an impasse. About 30 years ago, Neumann and Morgenstern presented a closed mathematical theory which has proven to be an elegant and brilliantly deduced piece of human ingenuity. However, this theory did not portray all aspects of reality. Since then, numerous efforts were undertaken to present other concepts with more variables and less rigid assumptions about rational behavior. The efforts continued to find lawful relations which govern the actual process of coalition formation. However, those new models did not find general acceptance. Browne concluded that the growing knowledge of details so far has not rendered a new theoretical starting point which would compare in clarity and simplicity with Neumann and Morgenstern's approach and which would capture reality in a sufficient way.1

At this point, a brief overview of the main characteristics of the presented coalition theories seems to be in order:
1. Neumann and Morgenstern presented a mathematical model showing that in coalition-bargaining processes, minimum winning coalitions would be formed. They defined minimum winning as a simple majority; e.g., as one-half plus one.

2. Riker realized that parties usually have an unequal number of deputies. Thus he postulated that only those coalitions would form which comprised the smallest number of deputies. In his words, minimum winning coalitions with minimum weight (smallest number of deputies) would be formed.

3. Leiserson, like Riker, realized that the minimum winning principle allowed that various coalitions would be formed in a multiparty system. He argued that out of the various coalitions only those would form which consisted of the smallest number of parties. He called his theory the "bargaining proposition," being convinced that parties were unified entities and bargaining between the smallest number possible would render the largest benefit for each of them.

4. Leiserson later introduced policy distance into the coalition theory. He argued that parties could be seen as positioned on a political continuum. The ones with the smallest distance and closest to a bare majority would form a coalition. Those parties did
not need to be positioned adjacent to each other.

5. Axelrod used the concept of policy distance and postulated that minimal connected winning coalitions would be formed. This means that coalitions have to be closed, even at the price of the inclusion of an unnecessary party, if this party happens to be positioned between two parties which were necessary to achieve a majority.

6. De Swaan used policy distance in another way. He postulated that coalitions would be formed around a pivotal party, minimizing the policy distance on the left and the right of that party. He called his concept the minimal political distance coalition theory.

7. Dodd introduced party system characteristics into the coalition theory. He argued that under normal and most often found conditions, minimum winning coalitions would be formed. Dodd defined as normal a party system in which all parties are willing to coalesce with each other and in which they know about strength and preferences of each party. Party systems which do not meet this definition are constrained in some way. This will lead to over or undersized coalitions.

8. Luebbert also used party system characteristics to create a typology of democratic political
systems. Each type of political system will induce a certain form of coalition government. The two relevant cases for postwar Germany are the competitive multiparty system with a dominant party and the one without a dominant party. If in a competitive party system a dominant party exists, then Luebbert expects the formation of oversized coalitions. If no dominant party exists, then Luebbert expects the formation of minimum winning coalitions.

9. Strom argued that minority government are not options of last resort but rationally formed governments. However, those governments often receive the tacit support of parties which remain outside the governing coalition.

10. Franklin and Mackie stress the point that prior experience in cooperation in government is a strong inducement for future coalition building. They argue that coalition building is not a singular event, disconnected from earlier coalitions by a new popular election. They are convinced that practical cooperative experience is often of greater significance than ideological differences.

In the following part it will be asked whether the actual coalition-building process in postwar Germany gives credence to one of the above-mentioned coalition theories.
REFERENCES--CHAPTER III

PART II
THE COALITION-BUILDING PROCESSES
IN WEST GERMANY FROM 1949 TO 1987

Chapter IV  A Brief Introduction Into the Institutional Setting

Chapter V  The Coalition-Building Process in 1949 or The Emergence of a Bourgeois Coalition

Chapter VI  The Coalitions of 1953 and 1957 or Adenauer's Oversized Coalitions

Chapter VII  The Coalitions Between 1961 and 1965 or The Demise of the Bourgeois Coalitions

Chapter VIII  The Formation of the Grand Coalition in November of 1966

Chapter IX  The Minimum Winning Coalitions of 1969 and 1972 or The Brandt-Scheel Era

Chapter X  The Coalitions Between 1974 and 1980 or The Schmidt Era

Chapter XI  The Wende of 1982 or The Breakdown of the Social-Liberal Coalition

Chapter XII  The Coalitions Between 1982 and 1987 or The Kohl Era
CHAPTER IV

A BRIEF INTRODUCTION INTO THE INSTITUTIONAL SETTING

The following chapter should familiarize the reader with some important aspects of the German institutional and social environment which were important to the coalition-building processes. The development of the postwar party system, the major cleavage lines, the electoral law, and the general expectation for stable governments will be mentioned. It will be further explained why a relatively small party became so important to the process of coalition building and how the electoral law contributed to this development.

The intention of the allied high command and of the German politicians who came to power after 1945 was to create a democratic system of government. A parliamentary system with two chambers, the Bundestag (parliament) and the Bundesrat (state representation), was established. The parties received a prominent place among the political institutions. In essence, they became the channels for political activity. Postwar politicians came up through the rank and file of parties or their secondary organizations. An intrusion by outsiders has been almost
impossible. The deputies elected to parliament have the constitutional "obligation" to vote according to their own conscience. However, party discipline is so strong that deputies generally vote along party lines. The political influence of the parties has been so dominant that Grosser called West Germany a "party state." 1

Loewenberg argued that the policies of the military governors decisively influenced the German party system. 2 The military governors first licensed parties in their occupation zones which could present a democratic history. Those parties got a head start, which was extremely important. These parties started to work together in the Parliamentary and in the Economic Councils, which gave them experience and public exposure. Other parties were licensed later, some only after the 1949 election.

Noack advanced another argument. 3 A German party has to have an ideological base if it wants to survive the party competition for a longer period of time. This philosophical-political base is supposed to be the point of reference for daily political decisions and is supposed to shield the party against purely pragmatic or interest-group-related politics. Pure pragmatism is unacceptable to most Germans. The F.D.P., for example, suffered tremendously when accused of purely pragmatic behavior. It is no accident that "pragmatism" is translated into
"opportunism" and not into "practical behavior" or "behavior fitting best given circumstances."\(^4\)

Germany has four philosophical-political traditions: the conservative, the political-catholic, the liberal-protestant, and the socialistic one. The representatives of the conservative and of the political-catholic traditions made an early decision that they would combine forces. They envisioned a party which would embrace all bourgeois forces and would end or reduce the factionalization of the bourgeois camp which had done so much harm during the Weimar period. They even decided to overcome denominational segregation and to make room for protestant politicians and voters. This party was the Christian Democratic Union and the Christian Social Union (CDU/CSU). This had serious repercussions for the liberals, who traditionally represented the protestant part of the population. Some of their politicians joined the CDU/CSU believing that the liberal-protestant tradition would not be a foundation that was strong enough for a new, independent party. The liberals in general were burdened with the demise of the Weimar Republic, and many of their original political demands had become common practice.

Despite those inhibiting considerations, some liberals who had survived the Third Reich decided to form a new liberal party, the F.D.P.
The socialistic or now the social-democratic forces started their political activity anew based on a proud history and the resistance to the Hitler regime. The Social Democratic Party (SPD) was soon regarded to be one of the strongest political forces in West Germany.

Also, the communist party seemed to have a strong base. But the atrocities of the Red Army and later the division of the world into East and West ruined its electoral chances.

Other parties based on special interest groups also emerged. But they had great difficulties defining a program which was simultaneously unique and attractive. Also, some regional parties were formed. Most of those smaller parties had difficulties presenting politicians with an unquestioned past and an untainted public reputation.

According to Norpoth, the German party system was divided by three major cleavage lines. The first cleavage line was the economic dimension. It had great significance because two models competed to become the economic order under which the task of reconstruction should be accomplished. The SPD was convinced that this was the opportune time to establish an egalitarian society with a strong state directing the reconstruction of the society. A centrally planned economy was seen as the best instrument for distributing the scarce resources and
assuring their best use. The CDU/CSU was convinced that a bourgeois society with a free-market system was the much better choice. However, the CDU/CSU wanted to add a strong welfare component to the free-market system, which was later called the social free-market system (Soziale Marktwirtschaft). The smaller F.D.P. was a staunch advocate of the free-market system, which was deeply anchored in its liberal tradition. In general, two basic economic concepts opposed each other and created a salient cleavage, which turned out to be the decisive one for the 1949 election.

The second cleavage was foreign policy. Here again two models competed with each other. The CDU/CSU under Adenauer's leadership stood for a strong West integration of the country. Adenauer believed that West Germany needed to be integrated into the Western family of nations and U.S. military protection if it wanted to remain outside the Soviet zone of influence. West Germany was, due to the war, the border state to the Soviet Empire. Adenauer also believed that the reunification of Germany by simultaneously preserving the political system based on human rights and liberty was only possible if and when the Western allies supported this claim. The SPD under Kurt Schumacher's leadership was convinced that the West integration of West Germany would make the early reunification of the divided country impossible.
Schumacher did not believe that the Soviet Union would give up its occupation zone and add it to a Germany under the tutelage of the U.S. Therefore, the SPD fought for a West Germany which would follow Austria's example and would become a neutral state in the center of Europe. The SPD believed that it was only under those conditions that the Soviet Union would be willing to allow a reunification of the divided country. In essence, for Adenauer, freedom and prosperity had priority over reunification; for Schumacher, reunification was the highest goal even at the price of less freedom. However, one must keep in mind that the contrast between those different standpoints is much, much sharper in retrospect than it was at that time.

Foreign policy was then and still is an important dividing line. In September of 1979, for example, the Allensbach Institut asked Germans about the importance of foreign policy. Fifty-nine percent replied that foreign policy is a vital dimension of German politics.

In the cultural realm, the dividing lines between the parties were less clearly drawn. The CDU/CSU wanted to overcome confessionalism but also wanted to anchor its philosophical base on fundamental Christian beliefs. The SPD and the F.D.P. opposed the accentuation of Christian philosophy and defended rationality instead. A snapshot from the year 1972 shall illustrate both the existence of
this cleavage line and the increasingly overarching appeal of the two large German parties.11

Table 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>CDU/CSU</th>
<th>SPD</th>
<th>F.D.P.</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<td>45</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>9</td>
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<td>Protestants</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Devout Protestants*</td>
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<td>Catholics</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Devout Catholics*</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unorganized Workers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Organized Workers</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Regular Church Attendees

The different philosophical underpinnings surfaced foremost in educational questions. The SPD and the F.D.P. wanted a non-denominational school system, while the CDU/CSU looked favorably on the return of Christian influence. In another question, the dividing line separated the parties differently: the SPD and CDU/CSU, albeit for different reasons, wanted a strong state, while the F.D.P. wanted narrow constraints for governmental power.

This brief overview reiterates Norpoth's contention that Germany's party system was divided by three important cleavage lines. These cleavages were not cumulative; instead, they cut across parties and later across party factions. That had severe implications for the process of coalition building.12
For the parties in particular and for the political process in general, the electoral law is of great importance. Duverger and recently Gunther have convincingly demonstrated that the relationship between electoral law and party system is not direct or automatic. Gunther wrote,

A particular electoral regime does not necessarily produce a particular party system; it merely exerts pressure in the direction of this system.

A plurality-single-member-district law exerts pressure toward the emergence of a two-party system, while a proportional electoral system makes it easier for multiparty systems to emerge.

West Germany chose a basically proportional electoral system with one important caveat. Every party had to gain more than 5% of the total votes before it won representation in parliament. This 5% hurdle was supposed to avoid a proliferation of splinter parties. Every citizen had two votes. With the first vote, the citizen elects the candidate and with the second vote, the party of his choice. The second vote, the so-called "Zweitstimme," determines the distribution of the parliamentary seats among parties. Therefore, it is a proportional system. But 50% of the seats are "reserved" for candidates who are directly elected with the first vote. It may happen that more representatives of a party are directly elected than
correspond with the number of seats won by the second (proportional) vote. In such a case, all directly elected deputies enter parliament and additional seats are created for them. Those seats are called "Ueberhangsmandate."15

The fact that the Parliamentary Council chose a proportional electoral system was of greatest importance for the F.D.P. and the process of coalition building. Ten parties entered the Bundestag (parliament) in 1949. But over time, the number of parties which were able to cross the 5% hurdle declined to three. The F.D.P. was the smallest of these three parties. It did not win a direct mandate in elections after 1957 and would have been eliminated from parliament if the electoral law would not have been a proportional one. The fact that the F.D.P. was in parliament helped to prevent, with one exception, another party from gaining a majority and governing alone. Instead, coalitions had to be formed. If the two large parties did not want to combine forces, then they needed the F.D.P. as their coalition partner. That gave the F.D.P. much more influence than its small numerical weight would have suggested. The F.D.P. became the pivotal party in the coalition-building process.

The importance of this fact shall be illustrated by the following example. In 1969, the F.D.P. won a mere 5.8% of the votes and received 30 out of 496 Bundestag seats. None of the large parties had an absolute majority. Thus,
they were forced to try to gain the F.D.P. as their coalition partner, if they did not want to form a grand coalition. The F.D.P. was, with the help of the electoral system, the kingmaker, although it had only 5.8% of the votes. This is not the place to argue for or against an electoral system. But it is important to realize that the pivotal role of the F.D.P. within the German party system is caused to a certain degree by the electoral system the Parliamentary Council had chosen.

The 1969 election demonstrates another important point. In a multiparty system, the public does not elect governments. It elects parties. These parties enter into coalition negotiations. The goal of these negotiations is a government which is capable of ruling the country. In essence, the coalition-bargaining process is an important and often dramatic step between an election and the government formation in a multiparty system.

Finally, it should be mentioned that the memories of the Weimar Republic caused politicians and the public alike to favor governments with a solid parliamentary majority. Governments were expected to last for a full legislative period. Since 1949, no party ever considered the formation of a minority government. With one exception, election results were such that parties had to form coalitions to bring majority-based governments to power.
This chapter gave a brief overview of the emergence of the second Republic of Germany and demonstrated the importance of the constitutional and institutional setting. It also showed that German governments are based on parliamentary coalitions and how important the process of coalition building is. It also called attention to the importance of the liberal party as the pivotal force in coalition building. Now, the discussion of the actual coalition-building processes can begin.
REFERENCES—CHAPTER IV


Adenauer himself interpreted the electoral success of the CDU/CSU in the 1949 election as a victory of its economic policy, defined and represented by Ludwig Erhard. *Neue Zuericher Zeitung*, August 16 and 17, 1949.


15. The German electoral law is basically a proportional law, because the seats in parliament are distributed according to the share of the votes each party receives at the ballot box. Every voter has two votes. Fifty percent of the seats are filled by the first and the other 50%, by the second vote. The voter elects the candidate he likes in his district with his first vote. He elects the party he favors with the second vote. The total seats in parliament are divided between the parties according to the second vote. But let's assume that the SPD has gained 42% of the votes in the second ballot. This translates into 208 seats. If the SPD has won 180 seats by the first (direct) vote, then the remainder is filled by the party from a rank-order list. But if the SPD has won 210 direct mandates with the first vote, then it will receive two seats more than it was supposed to get according to the decisive second vote. The idea behind this method is that someone who is directly elected must be allowed a seat in parliament. These two extra seats in parliament for this legislative period are called "Ueberhangsmandate."

From 1949 to 1953, the 5% hurdle was applied at the State and not at the federal level. This allowed regional parties, which crossed the 5% hurdle in Bavaria, Lower Saxony, etc., to gain seats in parliament. In 1953, the electoral law was changed. Parties needed more than 5% of all votes or get in three districts candidates elected to win Bundestag representation. This double standard is due to the electoral law that gave every voter two votes, one for a candidate and one for a party.

CHAPTER V
THE COALITION-BUILDING PROCESS IN 1949
OR THE EMERGENCE OF A BOURGEOIS COALITION

This chapter will present the results of the first postwar federal election and the following coalition-bargaining process. The actual outcome of the coalition-building process will be compared with predictions based on various coalition theories, and it will be asked why they differ and why they do not. It will be demonstrated that political leaders in general and in this case Konrad Adenauer in particular had tremendous influence over the outcome of the bargaining process.

On Sunday, August 14, 1949, the German people elected deputies and parties to represent them in parliament (Bundestag). The deputies were then supposed to form the government, the first one after the war. Of the eligible voters, 78.5% went to the polls and elected representatives of 10 parties and three independent representatives to the Bundestag. On a left-right continuum, which takes only the economic dimension into account, the outcome was as follows:
The placement on the left-right continuum is not without arbitrariness. Many of the smaller parties had not clearly defined their ideological position or their stand on economic matters. One should not forget that this was a time of beginning with no prior experience of freedom and prosperity for many of the younger people.

The CDU/CSU, under Adenauer's leadership went into a coalition with the DP and the F.D.P. Together they had 208 out of 402 deputies in the Bundestag. Two hundred and eight deputies were six more than needed for having a bare majority. In the following, I will ask whether the 10 before-mentioned coalition theories would have predicted this outcome.

Neumann and Morgenstern had predicted that a minimum winning coalition would be formed. The Adenauer coalition
was actually a minimum winning coalition. However, it was one of many others which were mathematically possible. The SPD, which was the second largest party, also could have formed a minimum winning coalition. This coalition would have consisted of the SPD, the F.D.P., the Centre Party, and the Economic Reconstruction Association (WAV) and would have had 205 deputies in the Bundestag. Arithmetically, even more minimum winning coalitions were possible. But they had no real chance to emerge.

Riker argued for the formation of a minimum winning coalition with minimum weight. This concept would have been realized if the CDU/CSU, F.D.P., Centre Party, and one independent would have coalesced. Such a coalition would have had 202 deputies, just 50 percent plus one.

This coalition would have also met De Swaan's condition of a minimum distance coalition formed around a pivotal party. The CDU/CSU would have been the pivotal party and would have minimized the political distance to its right and left.

Leiserson had argued for the formation of a minimum winning coalition which included the smallest number of parties possible. Such a coalition would have been the grand coalition, consisting of the CDU/CSU and the SPD. This coalition received much support after the election but not because it consisted of the smallest number of parties. Many politicians wanted the representatives of
the two largest political camps to cooperate in the reconstruction of West Germany's society.

Leiserson had also argued that parties separated by the smallest policy distance should cooperate in a coalition. The coalition that was actually formed by the CDU/CSU, DP, and F.D.P. was such a coalition.

This coalition was also a minimal connected winning coalition in Axelrod's sense because the parties were adjacent to each other on a political continuum.

Franklin and Mackie had stressed the point that prior experience in government cooperation is a strong inducement for future coalition building. Adenauer referred several times to the fact that the coalition partners had worked together successfully in a trustworthy manner in the Economic Council in 1948. But he failed to mention that in the Parliamentary Council, the SPD and the F.D.P. had regularly voted together against issues supported by the CDU/CSU and the DP. Thus, Franklin and Mackie's argument favored either a CDU/CSU- or an SPD-led coalition government.

Dodd, who based his framework on party system characteristics, would have had to decide first whether this was a normal multiparty system or one under constraints. No party was willing to include the communist and the German Reich parties in a coalition. One might want to neglect this because together these two parties had
only 7.5% of the votes. But it was also unclear whether the CDU/CSU and the SPD would be willing to coalesce. Both parties were led by persons who had difficulties accepting the other person's leadership. In this coalition formation game, the final position of every party depended on the bargaining skills of the main party leaders. If Adenauer would not have suggested Theodor Heuss as president, then nobody knows for sure whether the F.D.P. would have entered his coalition. Taking all of these imponderabilities together, one must conclude that Dodd would have argued that this was a party system under constraint and that an oversized coalition would have been the most likely result.

Luebbert would have argued that West Germany had a competitive party system from the outset. However, he would have had some difficulties deciding whether a dominant party existed or not in 1949. Since the CDU/CSU and the SPD had gained 139 and 131 seats respectively, he might have decided against the existence of a dominant party. If this were the case, then he would have expected the formation of a minimum winning coalition.

The political leaders never entertained the notion of forming a minority government. All of them believed that a minority government would not have had the slightest chance of survival for any length of time.

This overview revealed that,

1. Several coalition theories argued that a minimum
winning coalition would be formed without narrowing this result down further. Those theories were correct because Adenauer's first coalition was a minimum winning one.

2. Axelrod's prediction was correct because the actual coalition was a minimal connected winning one.

3. Also Leiserson's disconnected policy distance theory was correct because the policy distance was a minimum. However, no party which might have been positioned between the coalition partners was excluded.

4. Franklin and Mackie's notion rendered an ambivalent result because parties other than the coalescing ones had also worked together in the past.

5. Dodd's theory, based on party-system characteristics, induced the wrong prediction.

6. Luebbert, who used party system characteristics in quite another way, made the correct prediction about the size of the coalition government.

The following shall outline what considerations and political maneuvers actually led to the first Adenauer coalition. Then a judgment will be rendered as to whether the fact that the coalition was a minimum winning one was deliberate or accidental.

The CDU/CSU with 139 and the SPD with 131 deputies came out of this election as the two strongest parties.
Thus, the ensuing coalition bargaining could have resulted in one of the following:

1. The CDU/CSU could have formed a coalition government with itself as the dominant force.

2. The SPD could have formed a coalition government with itself as the anchor party.

3. A grand coalition between the CDU/CSU and the SPD could have been the outcome.

A minority government was not a practical alternative. The competitive nature of the German party system and the negative feelings of the public against such a government would not have allowed such an outcome.2

The coalition-bargaining process also had to decide another important question. Who would become party leader and thus chancellor candidate for the CDU/CSU. The CDU/CSU had not yet established a federal organizational and leadership structure and depended on its State organizations. These State parties were relatively independent although committed to unite under a federal roof organization. The SPD, on the other hand, had its hierarchical organization in place long before the 1949 election and in Kurt Schumacher, an uncontested leader.3

As outlined earlier, two fundamentally different models for the reconstruction of the German society opposed each other during the election campaign.4 The SPD had promised to create a more egalitarian society in which
everyone theoretically had the same chances. Government planning should mastermind the task of reconstruction. In foreign politics, the SPD wanted to remain outside the two competing blocs in order to enhance the chances for an early reunification of the Western and Eastern zones of Germany. The CDU/CSU had presented the concept of a strong West integration and of a free-market system with a strong social component. Despite the fact that those concepts opposed each other in every aspect, there was a strong undercurrent among politicians and the public alike demanding the cooperation of the CDU/CSU and the SPD. Many politicians believed that this was the time to bridge once and for all the cleavage between the social classes. These politicians had the perception that democracy meant the harmonious cooperation of all societal forces.

Merkel, in a more systematic fashion, listed three arguments supporting a grand coalition:

1. A..."strong post-totalitarian, antifacist consensus among politicians."
2. A..."latent pattern of antagonism to the occupation authorities."
3. "A third reason was probably the scarcity of the benefits...to be enjoyed...by the winner in a competitive game."

Many German States were ruled by grand coalitions or all party governments. In 1949, such governments ruled in Bavaria, Berlin, Hesse, Lower-Saxony, North Rhine-Westfalia, Rhineland-Platina, Schleswig-Holstein, Baden, Wuerttemberg-Hohenzollern, and Wuerttemberg-Baden.
Immediately after the election, Karl Arnold, the minister-president of North Rhine-Westfalia, organized a meeting of all minister-presidents. They unanimously endorsed a grand coalition. Since the personal differences between Adenauer and Schumacher were known, this endorsement also meant a decision against Adenauer as the prospective chancellor.

The election results were a deep disappointment for the SPD and its leader Kurt Schumacher. The SPD had expected to become the largest party. The party leaders believed that their active resistance to Hitler and the breakdown of the bourgeoisie during the Nazi period "entitled" them to reconstruct West Germany according to their conceptions. The disappointment spilled over into the coalition-bargaining process in which the SPD did not take a very active role. Schumacher himself was not conciliatory or very inclined to make compromises. For example, in Duerkheim at a party congress, he demanded the economic ministry for his party in any coalition government. This demand made fruitful negotiations with the F.D.P. and the CDU/CSU almost impossible.

The SPD could have bargained actively for a center-left coalition which was the most prominent coalition during the Weimar period. The SPD, F.D.P., Centre Party, and the WAV together would have had 205 deputies and the majority in the Bundestag. The SPD and the F.D.P. had
often voted together against proposals of the CDU/CSU in the Parliamentary Council. Also, their foreign-policy concepts were not too far apart because both parties wanted to give priority to the reunification of Germany.13 However, in economic matters, their beliefs were far apart. The SPD would have been forced to give up central planning if it wanted to lure the F.D.P. into a coalition. After the Duerkheimer party congress, it was clear that the SPD was unprepared to pay this price.

The SPD also knew that its insistence on the economic ministry made a grand coalition almost impossible. The election locomotive for the CDU/CSU had been Professor Ludwig Erhard, who never got tired of promoting his "Soziale Marktwirtschaft." He was the logical candidate for the economic resort, and the CDU would have alienated its Bavarian sister party if it would have agreed to a government without Erhard.

Schwarz suggested as the most plausible explanation for Schumacher's stubbornness that Schumacher was convinced that a bourgeois government would fail.14 Then the SPD would have been asked to rectify the faltering situation. This would have assured the SPD of an impressive electoral victory and a strong mandate for the realization of its concept. According to Schwarz, Schumacher had told friends that in his eyes an Adenauer government would not last for four years. It would break apart over the inconsistencies
within his bourgeois coalition and over the tremendous tasks of gaining sovereignty and reconstructing the devastated homeland. Past experience with bourgeois governments supported this opinion.

Schumacher's inflexibility ruined the efforts of the proponents of a grand coalition inside the CDU/CSU. Karl Arnold, the minister-president of North Rhine-Westfalia, and Jacob Kaiser, the exponent of the Christian labor movement, were outmaneuvered by Konrad Adenauer.

Arnold and other politicians had suggested Adenauer as the first president of the Republic. But Adenauer did not like the idea. He wanted leadership and power, not merely a representative office. Before the election, he had already started to work for a bourgeois coalition under his leadership, as the Neue Zuericher Zeitung stated. Adenauer wanted to be the "coalition maker." This would automatically make him party leader and chancellor. In August of 1949, Adenauer was only party chairman of the British occupation zone. Thus, he needed to convince other party elders that his concept was the best for Germany and that he was the man to realize it. There were serious reservations about Adenauer in the party due to his age and personality.

Adenauer acted quickly. He shrewdly outmaneuvered his opponents and critics. On August 20, Adenauer met with the leadership of the CSU in Frankfurt. He assured himself of
the endorsement of this important State party.17 A day later, he gathered a carefully selected group of CDU/CSU leaders in his own house in Rhoendorf.18

Adenauer had invited politicians who were only lukewarm supporters of a grand coalition and could still be converted to his concept along with those who were already supporters of his ideas. Adenauer argued that 13 million people had voted for bourgeois parties and only 8 million people for leftist parties. Therefore, a bourgeois coalition should be formed. He suggested the F.D.P. and the DP as coalition partners for the CDU/CSU. Together, these three parties had a majority of 208 against 194 votes in the Bundestag. He proposed himself as the logical "elder statesman" to lead the first cabinet for a restricted period of time. This restricted period of time lasted for 14 years. Simultaneously, he suggested Theodor Heuss, the leading F.D.P. politician, as candidate for president. The latter was a shrewd political move. Because of his background and seniority, Professor Heuss was the only personality who could question Adenauer's demand for leadership in the bourgeois coalition.19

Morsley argued that the Rhoendorfer meeting was decisive.20 Adenauer won the majority in his own party and brought about the breakthrough to a bourgeois coalition.
In this coalition-bargaining process, only a grand or oversized coalition or a bourgeois minimum winning coalition actually had a chance to emerge. An SPD-led minimum winning coalition was highly unlikely because the SPD had so many difficulties accepting the free-market philosophy. Adenauer on one side and Schumacher on the other side were responsible for the eventual emergence of a minimum winning bourgeois coalition. Without the presence of these personalities, a grand coalition would have had a great chance.

Adenauer had the inclination to include as many bourgeois parties into his coalition as possible. He wanted to obligate the bourgeois forces and to isolate the SPD. He was not interested in securing for his own party the most ministerial positions possible. He wanted a base as large as possible for his concept. In this respect, he was not a party politician. But he clearly wanted a bourgeois and thus a connected winning coalition in Axelrod's sense. In the Frankfurt meeting with the CSU, he had to realize that the inclusion of the Bavarian party and of the WAV was impossible because both were competitors of the CSU in Bavaria. The CSU wanted a minimum winning coalition and no unnecessary coalition partners. Adenauer realized the political weight of the CSU and proposed a minimum winning coalition.
Franz Josef Strauss confirmed in his memoirs Adenauer's efforts to form a coalition that included all bourgeois parties and isolated the SPD:

Adenauer's dream of a coalition in 1949 was to combine all bourgeois parties, the communists and the right wing extremists excluded, against the SPD. A coalition between the CDU/CSU, the F.D.P., and the DP would have been sufficient for a majority. However, Adenauer also wanted to include the Bavarian Party and the WAV of Alfred Loritz into this coalition. Adenauer told me (Strauss) that he was determined to include the Bavarian Party and to give Josef Baumgartner the ministry of agriculture. His reasoning: the Bavarian party was a bourgeois and not a socialistic party. Although his analysis was correct, my reaction was stern and left no room for a compromise: the inclusion of the Bavarian Party into the governing coalition would force the CSU to abstain from participating...Konrad Adenauer gave in. He was much more flexible and much more sovereign than he gets credited. His overall objective was to keep the SPD as small as possible, to guarantee a non-socialistic majority, and if possible, to win an absolute majority for the CDU/CSU.23

The 1949 coalition-building process strengthens the argument that the behavior of political leaders is an independent variable which deserves additional attention. Adenauer emerged in this coalition-building process as the most influential political personality. His personality and his political beliefs decisively influenced the future
course of events. Von Beyme also underlined the importance of party leaders. He argued,

...the antagonism of the two party leaders reinforced the tendency toward polarization and opened the road to altering coalitions.24
REFERENCES--CHAPTER V


The Bundestag Elections From 1949 to 1987
Distribution of Second Votes and Bundestag Seats

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<th>SPD S.</th>
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<td>42</td>
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* V. = % of Votes; S. = # of Seats
Source: Statistisches Bundesamt, Wiesbaden.


4. Susanne Miller/Heinrich Potthoff, Kleine Geschichte der SPD 1848-1983 (Bonn: Verlag Neue Gesellschaft GmbH, 1983), p. 194. Miller/Potthoff summarize the deep programmatic and personal cleavage between the CDU/CSU and the SPD in the following way: "Shortly before his death (August 20, 1952) Kurt Schumacher wrote the action program for the Dortmunder party convention. This document summarizes his political credo and reads like a scornful account with Adenauer.... One of his leading motives was 'the German reunification is not a goal in the future, it is our imminent goal.'"
A. Most CDU/CSU minister-presidents believed that they would be able to overcome the cleavage between the bourgeois and the social-democratic camp since they already headed such or similar coalitions in their States.
B. The left and the Christian wing of the CDU/CSU favored a grand coalition, believing that the time had come to bury the class conflict.
C. Many politicians wanted a grand coalition because they believed that only such a strongly based government would have the necessary weight in their negotiations with the allied high command and would be capable to reconstruct the devastated country.


Peter Koch, *Konrad Adenauer, Eine Politische Biographie*, (Hamburg: Rowohlt Verlag, 1985), p. 226. Peter Koch wrote about the chances of the SPD to win the election as follows: "The SPD under Kurt Schumacher was sure to win the election. It had won in all prior State elections ahead of the CDU/CSU."

13. Dieter Hein, Zwischen liberaler Milieupartei und nationaler Sammlungsbewegung, Gründung, Entwicklung und Struktur der Freien Demokratischen Partei 1945-1949 (Düsseldorf: Droste Verlag, 1985), pp. 278-316. The F.D.P. tried until January 1948 to create the "Democratic Party of Germany" which included not only the Western but also the Eastern zone of Germany.

Heino Kaack, Die F.D.P., Grundriss und Materialien zu Geschichte, Struktur und Programmatik (3d ed.; Meisenheim: Anton Hein Verlag, 1979), p. 14. Heino Kaack rendered the following summarizing judgment: "In summary, the cooperation between SPD and F.D.P. was much stronger than the cooperation within the bourgeois camp in the Parliamentary Council."


15. Neue Zürcher Zeitung, August 16, 1949. Here it was stated, "in the last several weeks coalition negotiations between the CDU/CSU and the F.D.P. were held which among other matters mentioned Franz Bluecher as the candidate for minister of finance and Robert Lehr as minister of interior."


17. The CDU and the CSU are sister parties. The CSU is the bourgeois catchall party in Bavaria. In all other German States, the CDU is the focal point for all bourgeois forces. The close cooperation of the two parties is based on a common ideology and on a permanent exchange of political thoughts. There is only one conservative party faction in Bonn. However, the Bavarians regularly meet as a subgroup. Hans Erhard was the first minister-president in Bavaria and should not be confused with Ludwig Erhard, the father of the German economic wonder.
### Timetable of Adenauer's Coalition Negotiations in 1949

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>August 14</td>
<td>Bundestag election</td>
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<tr>
<td>August 18</td>
<td>Adenauer's meeting with minister-president Arnold</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 19</td>
<td>Adenauer's meeting with minister-president Erhard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 20</td>
<td>Meeting in Adenauer's Rhoendorfer House</td>
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<tr>
<td>August 23</td>
<td>Adenauer's press conference where he announced the formation of a bourgeois coalition.</td>
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<tr>
<td>August 25</td>
<td>Conference of the minister-presidents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept. 1</td>
<td>Conference of the CDU/CSU Bundestag deputies who supported Adenauer's chancellorship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept. 2</td>
<td>Start of the official coalition negotiations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept. 15</td>
<td>Election of the chancellor in the Bundestag</td>
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</tbody>
</table>


19. Udo Hengst, "Adenauers erste Koalitions und Regierungsbildung im Spätsommer 1949," Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte, Band 18/85, May 4, 1985, p. 6. Udo Hengst defined Heuss's political position as follows: "Heuss, who already belonged to the Reichstag during the Weimar period, represented different political opinions. In the Parliamentary Council, where he has been the most influential personality, he had often voted with the SPD in cultural questions which caused Adenauer's anger."

20. Rudolf Morsley, "Die Bildung der ersten Regierungskoalition 1949," HJB, 97/98, 1978, p. 419. Rudolf Morsley wrote: "The question of the right coalition is as old as the Federal Republic. In 1949 there were severe discussions about this point. However, the decision was finally taken at the famous Rhoendorfer meeting on August 21, 1949."

21. Peter Koch, *Konrad Adenauer, Eine Politische Biographie* (Hamburg: Rowohlt Verlag, 1985), p. 227. Peter Koch wrote about Adenauer's willingness to include all bourgeois parties in the coalition government: "Only the F.D.P. and the DP were regarded as possible coalition partners in a bourgeois coalition. Those two parties assured the government a majority of six seats in the Bundestag. It was the
CSU who vetoed the inclusion of other coalition partners, like the Bavarian Party and the WAV because of its competitive relationship."

Konrad Adenauer, "The Emergence of the New Germany," Adenauer's first address to the Bundestag on September 20, 1949, in Dietrich Rollmann, 50 Reden Aus Dem Deutschen Bundestag 1949-1983 (Stuttgart-Bonn: Burg Verlag, 1983), p. 31. Adenauer himself expressed his feelings about a grand coalition: "Centrally planned or the Soziale Marktwirtschaft was the overriding question in this election. The majority of the German people voted against a centrally planned economy. A coalition between the parties which opposed a centrally planned economy and those which favored it, would be in direct opposition to the will of the voters."

22. Hans-Peter Schwarz, Die Aera Adenauer 1949-1957, Vol. 2 of Geschichte der Bundesrepublik Deutschland (Stuttgart-Wiesbaden: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt & F. A. Brockhaus, 1981), p. 31. Hans-Peter Schwarz argued that it was very important that the State leadership in Bavaria moved from Peter Mueller to Hans Erhard in May of 1949. Mueller was a staunch supporter of a grand coalition, while Erhard favored a bourgeois coalition under Adenauer's leadership. The meeting in Frankfurt on August 20, 1949, gave Adenauer the much-needed endorsement of the Bavarian CSU. The Bavarian CSU made clear that it would not join a coalition with the Bavarian Party or the WAV.


CHAPTER VI

THE COALITIONS OF 1953 AND 1957
OR ADENAUER'S Oversized Coalitions

This chapter will present the consolidation of the German party system and its repercussions for coalition building. It will be shown that the CDU/CSU was the main beneficiary of this consolidation process. However, the CDU/CSU did not use its dominance in the coalition-building process in the way in which coalition theories would have predicted. It will be asked "why" and argued that Adenauer's leadership was the main reason for the deviation.

The contraction of the number of parties was a surprise. The main reasons for this favorable development were as follows:

1. Loewenberg correctly stated that the late start of many parties was a severe disadvantage for them. Earlier-established parties had gained a publicity advantage and had attracted most of the best political minds. People who wanted to devote their lives to politics decided in favor of a party immediately after their return from the battlefields. Thus, parties
with a late start had difficulties finding people who were not already committed.

2. The government changed the electoral law. In the 1949 election, it was sufficient to win 5% of the votes in one state to enter the Bundestag. By the 1953 election, it was necessary to win 5% in all of Germany or get in three districts candidates elected before a party was permitted to enter the Bundestag.

3. Kaltefleiter added another important argument. He argued that Adenauer's decision against a grand coalition allowed the party system to evolve around two poles, one controlling the government and one being in outspoken opposition. Those two poles with coherent programs did not leave not much room for third parties between them.

4. The CDU/CSU had started its political activity with the goal of becoming the home for all bourgeois and/or conservatively thinking people. After 1953, the SPD left its self-imposed ghetto and strived to become a center-left catchall party. Thus, two large catchall parties actively tried to absorb the smaller political organizations.

The short history of the refugee party is an excellent example of the workings of the above-mentioned forces. The voter reservoir of this party consisted of 10 million people who had been expelled from their homes in the East.
The refugee party was expected to win at least 10% of the votes in the 1953 election. But the party did poorly and ended up with only 5.9% of the votes. The main reason was that the CDU/CSU had promoted local integration of the refugees and had instituted a policy of burden sharing between people who lost everything and people who were fortunate enough to rescue property or other assets from the war. Many refugees voted for the CDU/CSU and thus left the refugee status behind.

The first Adenauer government had a very difficult start, as Schumacher had correctly envisioned. It had the tasks of gaining sovereignty for Germany from the allied high command and of improving the living standard for all German people. The allies hesitated to relinquish their position, and the economic situation did not improve rapidly. Schwarz reported that the atmosphere inside the ruling coalition was tense, and Adenauer even contemplated dismissing Erhard because he stubbornly refused government intrusion into the unsatisfactory economy.

The outbreak of the Korean War changed the situation overnight. West Germany was suddenly needed as a bulwark against the communist East. The war created an economic boom in which Germany participated. This episode is mentioned to demonstrate that events outside the control of politicians can make or break a concept. By 1953, Adenauer's political concept had proven to be successful.
The fear of Soviet expansionism made Adenauer's West integration popular. The living standard also had increased sharply and showed the superiority of the free-market system over a centrally planned economy.

Adenauer's success and the trend toward consolidation of the party system were reflected in the results of the 1953 federal election. Only six parties entered the Bundestag. The CDU/CSU was the big winner. It won 45.2% of the votes and 243 seats in the Bundestag, one less than needed for an absolute majority. This discrepancy between votes and seats occurred because votes for parties which did not enter the Bundestag did not count in the distribution of parliamentary seats. The share of the votes for the SPD stagnated. This was a bitter disappointment for the party. The small parties, among them the F.D.P., were the big losers in this election.

<table>
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<th>Party</th>
<th>Votes in %</th>
<th># of Seats</th>
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<td>Centre Party</td>
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<td>F.D.P.</td>
<td>9.5</td>
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487
Neumann and Morgenstern would have predicted the emergence of a minimum winning coalition. Such a coalition would in all likelihood be formed around the CDU/CSU. The SPD would have had great difficulties forming such a coalition. The SPD would have needed the cooperation of all small parties and then would have had only 244 seats or a majority of only one vote. It was inconceivable that the SPD could gain the cooperation of all small parties or that it would run the risk of forming a government based on such a small majority. The CDU/CSU had the choice of cooperating with every one of the small parties to present a minimum winning coalition.

Riker, who argued for a minimum winning coalition with minimum weight, would have predicted a coalition between the CDU/CSU and the Centre Party. Such a coalition would have had 246 votes or two more than needed for a bare majority. All other combinations would have rendered higher weights or more deputies belonging to the governing coalition.

Leiserson's bargaining proposition would have been satisfied by a coalition of the CDU/CSU and any one of the small parties because he stressed that coalitions made up of the smallest number of parties should be formed.

DeSwaan and Leiserson, both of whom had presented the argument that parties separated by the smallest policy distance should form a coalition, would have argued for a
coalition between the CDU/CSU and the DP. The cooperation between these two parties, especially between the two cabinet ministers of the DP and Adenauer, had been amicable and free of disturbances in the prior legislative period. The Centre Party, which was located left of the CDU/CSU on the political continuum, was in opposition during the 1949/53 period and thus less likely accepted as a coalition partner.

Axelrod, who argued for a minimal connected winning coalition, would have predicted a coalition between the CDU/CSU and the DP.

Franklin and Mackie, who stressed the importance of prior cooperation, would have either suggested that the old coalition would continue or that the CDU/CSU and the DP would govern, excluding the F.D.P. which had sometimes questioned Adenauer's leadership style and decisions.

Dodd would have been faced with the question of whether this is a party system under constraint or not. According to Dodd's definition, a party system is under constraint when every party is not prepared to enter a coalition with every other party. Since there was the tendency to exclude the SPD from the coalition-bargaining process, he would have decided that this bargaining situation was actually constrained. This would have led to the correct prediction of an oversized coalition.
Luebbert would have argued that a competitive party system existed and that the CDU/CSU with 45.2% of the votes was clearly the dominant party. According to his model, a dominant party in a competitive party system caused the emergence of an oversized coalition. This was the correct prediction.

The coalition-bargaining outcome was actually an oversized coalition. Adenauer included his former coalition partners, the DP and the F.D.P., and the newly created refugee party in his coalition. This coalition had 333 of the 487 Bundestag seats or 68% of the votes in parliament.

The Results of the Federal Elections Since 19499

![Diagram](image)
Figure 3 demonstrates more than numbers or words how steep the rise in popularity of the CDU/CSU and how stagnant the voter reservoir of the other parties have been.

Norpoth argued that the major reason for an oversized coalition was Adenauer's desire to rearm West Germany. Since this was only possible if two-thirds of the deputies voted in the Bundestag for an amendment to the constitution, Norpoth continued to argue that Adenauer therefore wanted a cabinet based on a two-thirds majority.10 This majority should be regarded as a minimum winning one because this was the smallest majority possible that would be able to alter the Basic Law. But this stretches those theories beyond their legitimate boundaries since it leaves no room for other explanations.

Professor Schwarz, the major authority on the Adenauer period, also mentioned that the two-thirds majority needed to amend the constitution (Grundgesetz) played a role in the coalition considerations:

It was symptomatic that Adenauer immediately tried to form a broad-based coalition which should include all parties represented in the Bundestag except the SPD. Foreign-policy considerations dominated this decision. For the laws about Germany's rearmament to pass the legislative hurdles a two-thirds majority was needed; and Adenauer didn't want to run the risk of failure.11
The leaders of the smaller parties knew that they were committing themselves to vote for Germany's rearmament if they entered the coalition. A cabinet position was an enticement. But was it sufficient to commit a whole party with all of its secondary organizations? The rearmament question was discussed widely and emotionally all over Germany. It seems to me that much more was at stake for the parties than cabinet positions.

The rearmament problem was only one aspect of this coalition-bargaining process. Koch demonstrated that this coalition-building process was Adenauer's opportunity to consolidate the bourgeois bloc by inviting every party into the coalition and to isolate the SPD further. It also broadened his political base and strengthened his independence from his own party. Schwarz described the relationship between Adenauer and the CDU/CSU in the following way:

The CDU/CSU has become the state-party, as the magazine "Der Spiegel" wrote. However, one did not hear much from this state-party in the following years. The CDU was much more an instrument of the chancellor than the chancellor a man of his party. The "CDU-State" did not begin but the Adenauer era reached its peak.

Adenauer was first and foremost a statesman with a vision for Germany and only secondarily a party politician. He was also a bourgeois politician. The CDU/CSU was his instrument for realizing his concept of
German reconstruction. He did not try to maximize the benefits of an electoral victory for his party. He wanted to use those benefits to obligate all bourgeois forces and to force them into cooperation. Thus, his idea of power deviated from that of the classic coalition theories. There, maximization of benefits for the victorious party is at center stage; here, maximization of Adenauer's personal power to realize a political concept is the goal. The latter may result in quite different coalition formations, especially since Adenauer never feared being unable to command and direct a large cabinet.14

The distribution of portfolios following the 1953 election is a case in point. Adenauer increased the number of ministers from 14 to 19. The CDU/CSU, the only winner of this election, had to be content with an increase of one and got 10 portfolios. The F.D.P., having lost votes, increased its minister positions from three to four. Again, the DP got two portfolios and the refugee party received two newly created positions.

Adenauer's position in the cabinet was so strong that Grosser called Germany a "chancellor democracy."15 But Schwarz pointed out that Adenauer's power was less the result of authoritative behavior than of skillfully balancing one special interest against another and thus increasing his own position as the final arbitrator.16 For Adenauer, who wanted to unite the bourgeois camp and
isolate the SPD, an oversized coalition made much sense. Since he was "the most important variable" in this coalition-building process, his reasoning prevailed. His own party did not have the power over its leader to restrict the coalition to a minimum winning one in which it would have gotten a larger share of portfolios and influence.

Despite the fact that all parties in the 1953 coalition belonged to the bourgeois camp and despite Adenauer's unquestioned leadership abilities, the coalition suffered two severe crises. Those crises occurred when the emphasis shifted from economic to foreign-policy questions. One may recall Norpoth's statement (see chapter 1) which said that the parties were aligned differently with regard to three important cleavage lines. The bourgeois parties shared the belief that a free-market system was superior to a planned society, but they were not equally convinced that Adenauer's foreign-policy concept would lead to sovereignty and reunification.

The status of the Saar brought the foreign-policy differences into the open. The Saar with its large coal mines and strong steel industry has always been a bone of contention between France and Germany. After the second world war, France insisted on a separation of the Saar from Germany. This request entered into the constitution of the Saar, and 91.6% of the population had voted for it. Thus,
the Saar was ruled by an autonomous government under French supervision. Then in 1953, the German Bundestag decided that the Saar people should vote again to decide their own future. France opposed a popular referendum and requested that the Saar be "Europeanized." The CDU/CSU under Adenauer acquiesced to this demand, because they wanted to come to a lasting peace agreement with France and were willing to pay this price. The coalition partners, F.D.P. and the refugee party, opposed the CDU/CSU-sponsored "Saar statute."

In February of 1955, a vote was taken in the Bundestag. Most deputies of the refugee party and the F.D.P. voted against the CDU/CSU-sponsored Saar statute. But the two ministers of the refugee party, Kraft and Oberlaender, and five deputies voted for the statute. They later left their party and joined the CDU/CSU. Two other deputies of the refugee party also voted for the statute and joined the F.D.P. The remainder of the refugee party—18 deputies—went into opposition. The Saar statute tore the refugee party apart. The ruling coalition, but not Adenauer's cabinet, broke apart. The loss of 18 votes in the Bundestag did not impair Adenauer's majority.

It was remarkable that the two ministers of the refugee party felt obligated to support Adenauer. Loyalty and perhaps the understanding of his far-reaching concept played an important role. Both politicians disappeared
from the political limelight shortly thereafter, as could have been expected. A change in party affiliation was regarded then, as it is now, as a questionable step which often ends a political career. Both men followed their consciences, a behavior that attests to strong ideological and human bonds and their importance. Such behavior occurred not only at the individual level but also at the party level. The refugee party knew that its vote against Adenauer would tear the party apart and would put it on the opposition benches. Despite those risks, the party leadership urged its deputies to vote against the Saar statute. They believed that the party could not continue to talk about the loss of the homeland in the East and simultaneously give up another part of Germany. Ideology or "Weltanschauung" was stronger than power considerations. This deserves attention, because it underlines the fact that politicians have choices and that their decisions are relevant.

The other crisis involved the F.D.P. After the 1953 election, the F.D.P. coalesced again with Adenauer's CDU/CSU. It had no other choice. Another ruling configuration was practically impossible, and the F.D.P. was unprepared to go into opposition. However, this posed a serious dilemma. If the F.D.P. was a loyal coalition partner, then the risk was great that it would be absorbed by the CDU/CSU like so many other small
parties. If it stressed independence, then the risk was that an alienated CDU/CSU would oust it from the coalition. The F.D.P., conscious of this dilemma, replaced Franz Bluecher who had accepted Adenauer's dominance and had positioned the F.D.P. as a loyal coalition partner. Thomas Dehler was elected party leader at the Wiesbadener party congress in 1954. Dittberner, himself a longtime party member, wrote,

...the F.D.P. decided with Dehler's election on a strategy of coalition internal conflicts in the interest of party survival.19

This conflict got out of hand. The battles between Adenauer and Dehler in the Bundestag were daily news and eventually poisoned the atmosphere in the coalition.

The CDU/CSU started exploring possibilities to end those squabbles once and for all. No party was particularly happy with the electoral law. But now, there was a reason for change. CDU/CSU leaders speculated that the public, who showed displeasure with the internal coalition problems, might be willing to accept a change in the direction toward the British system.20 The F.D.P. became alarmed. A change in the electoral law had to pass both Houses of parliament. In the Upper House, the Bundesrat, the CDU/CSU had only a slight majority. A change of the ruling coalitions in one or two states would make the passage of such a law impossible.
The "young-Turks" of the F.D.P. in North Rhine-Westfalia acted and toppled the CDU/CSU minister president Arnold by a constructive vote of no confidence. The F.D.P. entered into a coalition with the SPD in this important state.21 This was a political earthquake. The CDU/CSU was outraged, but so was the Bonner F.D.P. Sixteen of their 48 deputies—among them, the four ministers—left their party and pledged their continued support to Adenauer. The deputies who had left the F.D.P. tried unsuccessfully to form a new party. Some of them joined the CDU/CSU later; others went back to private life.

Adenauer expelled the remainder of the F.D.P. and continued to govern with the same cabinet. Only his power base in the Bundestag declined. His shrunken coalition had 293 out of 487 seats, which was still a comfortable majority. Adenauer had the great advantage of having started the legislative period with an oversized majority. This majority was weakened but not destroyed. Both incidents primarily reflected party schisms and only secondarily were a coalition problem. In both instances, the ministers remained loyal to Adenauer and did not follow party lines. Both groups of ministers paid a price for their loyalty. Their political careers came to an end.

If one looks back on the formation of the 1953 coalition and the two coalition crises, then the following summarizing observations are justified:
1. A dominant political leader, Adenauer, created an oversized cabinet, thus withholding the benefits of the electoral victory from his own party. His own party did not receive all cabinet positions.

2. A foreign-policy question became so important that it threatened to undermine a coalition government. However, loyalty of cabinet members to Adenauer prevented this, but triggered severe party schism.

3. The animosities between Dehler and Adenauer caused the CDU/CSU to consider a change in the electoral law. This, in turn, caused the breakup of the bourgeois camp. It destroyed one of Adenauer's goals and eventually gave the SPD the needed coalition partner for its ascent to power.

In the 1953 coalition-bargaining process, the size principle played a role only insofar as Adenauer used cabinet positions to obligate other parties and their leading representatives to vote for the rearmament of Germany. Policy-distance considerations played a role only insofar as Adenauer used his outstanding position to ferment the bourgeois bloc even further by inviting all bourgeois parties into his coalition, which was then grossly oversized. Party-system characteristics were artificially reinforced by Adenauer. The leadership of the SPD had changed from the ideological hard-liner Schumacher to the conciliatory Ollenhauer who tried to lead his party
out of the ghetto into which Schumacher had maneuvered it. Adenauer, on the other hand, tried to reinforce the ghetto characteristic by increasing the hurdle between the SPD and all other parties. This demonstrates that Adenauer's personality and goal-oriented behavior was the decisive factor in the 1953 coalition-building process. The party schism in the following years and the behavior of the ministers of the involved parties underlie the fact that leaders have choices and that their decisions matter. This reiterates the question of why individual motivations and/or leadership is not an independent variable in the framework of the coalition theory.

A year before the next federal election Adenauer's popularity reached a low point. Only 39% of the population supported him and his policies.

**Adenauer's Popularity Between 1950 and 1957**

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**Figure 4**
But two events changed his fortunes. The F.D.P. was seriously weakened by the party schism and was not an alternative for disgruntled CDU/CSU voters. Even more important was the invasion of Hungary by the Soviet army. Suddenly, Adenauer's foreign policy was vindicated. More Germans than ever appreciated the fact that Adenauer had put them firmly under the protection of the U.S. The SPD and all other parties which had advocated a more neutral position had a difficult time explaining their foreign-policy positions. Adenauer's election slogan "No Experiments- Therefore Konrad Adenauer" captured the sentiments of that time very well. The 1957 election became Adenauer's greatest political triumph. His party won the absolute majority.

Table 5
1957 Federal Election

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<th>Party</th>
<th>Votes in %</th>
<th># of Seats</th>
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<td>31.8</td>
<td>169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CDU/CSU</td>
<td>50.2</td>
<td>270</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deutsche Partei</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F.D.P.</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>497</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For the first time in Germany's democratic history, one party had won an absolute majority. The CDU/CSU gained 5 percentage points. The Deutsche Partei (DP), a regional bourgeois party in Lower Saxony, survived through election
agreements with the CDU/CSU (Listenverbund). The SPD gained 3 percentage points, a sign that its move toward the political center was appreciated by the voters. The F.D.P. lost 1.8 percentage points. All other small parties, among them the refugee party, disappeared.

Coalition theories based on the variables size and/or policy distance would have concluded that Adenauer's CDU/CSU would govern alone. The CDU/CSU had 270 seats in parliament, 21 more than needed for a majority.

Franklin and Mackie who based their concept on prior cooperation would have suggested a coalition of the CDU/CSU, DP, and F.D.P. They generally regard past cooperation as something positive that induces future cooperation. However, 1957 demonstrates that past cooperation could also have the opposite effect. Tensions between coalition partners can become so intense that future cooperation is almost impossible. This occurs mainly when factual differences lead to personal animosities.

Dodd and Luebbert would have correctly argued that an oversized coalition would emerge.

Adenauer took his longtime, loyal coalition partner DP into his cabinet and thus formed an oversized coalition government. The F.D.P. had excluded itself by its campaign promise not to enter a coalition if the CDU/CSU would win the absolute majority.
Norpoth argued that this was actually a minimum winning coalition. He already regarded the DP as a part of the CDU/CSU. However, the DP was still an independent organization. Its two minister positions reduced the positions available for the CDU/CSU. When the DP disappeared after the 1961 election, its ministers, now CDU/CSU members, also disappeared. This confirms my argument that the 1957 government was actually a coalition and, as such, oversized.

Adenauer was again the decisive factor in this coalition-building process. He always wanted to include all bourgeois parties in his government. The size of his cabinet was not a concern for him. He wanted to keep the cleavage between the bourgeois and the socialistic camps as deep as possible. The CDU/CSU was his instrument and not the center of his political ambitions. However, Adenauer was unable to hold the bourgeois camp together. Personal animosities based on the F.D.P.'s fear for survival drove the bourgeois camp apart.

Adenauer wanted to realize a political concept. He shaped events and was not merely driven by circumstances. He translated his concept into well-defined strategies that took circumstances, other politicians, and their idiosyncrasies into account. His authority and ability to influence and even to manipulate people helped him to realize large parts of his original concept. Without him,
the postwar history of Germany would have taken different twists and turns. This also applies to election outcomes and coalition-bargaining processes. Schwarz confirmed that Adenauer was the decisive force in those coalition-building processes. This has to be carried over into the framework of the coalition theory.

Coalition theories, based on party-system characteristics, had remarkable success in predicting the outcome of oversized coalitions between 1949 and 1957. Dodd's theory presented the correct results two out of three times and Luebbert's theory did so three times. Since this was the period in which minimum winning and oversized coalitions were equally possible, this is a remarkable success rate. This leads to the preliminary conclusion that party-system characteristics are an influential variable for defining the size of a coalition. It may also turn out to be significant that Luebbert's way of using party-system characteristics was more successful than Dodd's.
REFERENCES—CHAPTER VI


2. A party can send deputies into the Bundestag only, if it wins either 5% of all votes or get in three districts candidates elected. The reason for this double standard is the electoral law that gives every voter two votes. One for a candidate and one for a party. For a more detailed explanation see footnote 15 of Chapter III, page 74.


6. Since the participation in the 1953 election was as high as 86% and all other parties lost votes, many refugees must have voted for the CDU/CSU.

7. Hans-Peter Schwarz, *Die Aera Adenauer 1949-1957*, Vol. 2, *Geschichte der Bundesrepublik Deutschland* (Stuttgart-Wiesbaden: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt & F. A. Brockhaus, 1981), p. 88 and 197. Schwarz wrote: "In Winter 1949/50, Adenauer faced tremendous difficulties for the realization of his foreign-policy concept." Later he stated that, "Until 1952, it was not decided at all whether Erhard's concept of the Soziale Marktwirtschaft would survive. Similarly, until Spring of 1953, it was undecided whether the West integration treaties would pass the obstacle course through the institutions. And only a year before the federal elections, many Germans were deeply concerned about a turn to nationalism."
8. Ibid., p. 480.

9. FAZ-Graphik-Sturm, Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, January 24, 1987. For substantiation of the individual figures, see footnote No. 1, Chapter 4, p. 89.


23. Ibid., p. 366.

24. Ibid., p. 484.

CHAPTER VII
THE COALITIONS BETWEEN 1961 AND 1965
OR THE DEMISE OF BOURGEOIS COALITIONS

This chapter will present the establishment of a three-party system and its repercussions for the process of coalition building. It will also describe how the prolonged fight over Adenauer's succession influenced the coalition-building process and eventually ruined the dominant position of the CDU/CSU. It will further be shown that the leadership of the F.D.P. and the SPD deliberately changed the political positions of their respective parties in order to make them more attractive as coalition partners and to increase the options for possible coalition-bargaining outcomes.

The 1957 election and the following coalition-building process had demonstrated the attractiveness and dominance of the bourgeois/conservative philosophy. The CDU/CSU was the dominant political party, although it shared the government with the small DP. However, its attractiveness declined during the period 1957 to 1961. The CDU/CSU was unable to produce new ideas that captured the imagination of the public. Adenauer himself clung to the chancellor position, even refusing after much public embarrassment to
accept the position of president of the Federal Republic. Adenauer seemed to be preoccupied with the defense of his position and not with the task of leading the country.1

Meanwhile the DP tried to enlarge its base. The party merged with the remains of the refugee party, hoping that together they would again overcome the 5% hurdle in the 1961 election.

The F.D.P. ended its leadership crisis and elected Erich Mende as party leader. The key party members expected that Mende would bring them back into the government. Mende, as he mentioned in his autobiography, could only envision a coalition with the CDU/CSU. For him the cleavage with the social-democrats was still too deep.2 He rebuilt good relations to CDU/CSU politicians and promoted conservatives into high party positions. When the 1961 election approached, it looked as if the bourgeois camp could be resurrected. Schwarz argued that the chances were great that a new bourgeois alliance would relegate the SPD for another decade to the opposition benches.3

However, Mende and his party made a serious tactical blunder. They followed the often-heard demand that the ailing Adenauer should be replaced. They entered the final stage of the election campaign with the slogan "A bourgeois coalition but without Adenauer."4 Mende reported that his position was backed by Strauss, Erhard, and other party
officials of the CDU/CSU. They encouraged him to take the lead and promised to go public after the election.5

The SPD, the other large party, was also better prepared to take over the government than in the past. In a process that lasted for about ten years, the SPD had made its peace with the bourgeois society. It did so in three steps. First, the program for the Bad Godesberg party convention in 1959 became the foundation for future economic policies. In brief, it postulated "as much market competition as possible and as much planning as necessary."6 Second, the party elected Willy Brandt as its chancellor candidate. Willy Brandt, the respected lord-mayor of Berlin, was supposed to attract voters well beyond the traditional boundaries of the SPD.7 Third, he and Wehner signaled acceptance of the foreign-policy facts, as Adenauer had created them.8 In summary, the SPD moved towards the center and hoped to be rewarded for this in the upcoming election. Everyone waited impatiently for the election results. The SPD hoped for a big breakthrough while the CDU/CSU feared a steep decline:

Table 6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1961 Federal Election9</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Votes in %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F.D.P.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CDU/CSU</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

499
The CDU/CSU lost 4.9% of its votes compared with the prior election; but with 45.3%, it continued to be by far the largest party. However, it did not have enough seats in the Bundestag to make a coalition of the two other parties impossible. The F.D.P., which profited from a large number of crossover votes (votes from people who traditionally vote for other parties), reached 12.8% of the votes. The SPD gained 4.4% and reached 36.2% of the votes. This was a big step forward but fell short of expectations. The SPD wanted to narrow the gap to the CDU/CSU considerably more.

The 1961 election produced a three-party system in Germany which lasted for 22 years. This three-party system had distinct party-system characteristics that influenced the coalition-building process.

1. The party system was highly competitive, and this competition was based on different ideologies. Despite all efforts to be attractive to a large segment of the population, the parties were perceived to have a socialistic, a liberal, and a conservative foundation that made them different in the eyes of the voters.

2. Two of the three parties were large; one was small. This was captured in the term "two-and-one-half" party system.
3. The two large parties were different in size. The CDU/CSU had, except in 1972, a voter base that was about 10 percentage points larger than the one of the SPD. Kaltefleiter called it, therefore, an asymmetric party system.\textsuperscript{11}

In 1961, the perception was still very strong among voters and politicians that the conservative/liberal forces on the one hand and the socialistic forces on the other hand wanted a different republic. Deputies of one camp rarely talked to deputies of the other camp.\textsuperscript{12} Therefore, a coalition between the two large parties was still very unlikely. Equally unlikely was a minority government. The justified fear of being immediately overthrown and a general animosity against so-called weak governments prevented even the consideration of such a government. Since no party could realistically expect to gain an absolute majority, coalition governments had to be formed.

If the two large parties did not want to join forces, then both needed the F.D.P. as a coalition partner. The CDU/CSU had gained 242 and the SPD 190 seats. But 250 seats were necessary for a bare majority. This bestowed a special role on the F.D.P. With 67 seats, the F.D.P. emerged as the "kingmaker," the pivotal party in the coalition-building process. "Pivotal" means the decisive party for achieving a majority.\textsuperscript{13} The F.D.P. could never hope to be the chancellor party, but it could decide
whether the CDU/CSU or the SPD would get the right to lead the coalition government. As we will see later, the F.D.P. was not entirely free to make this choice. Voters' and party-members' expectations substantially reduced the leeway of choice for the party leaders of the F.D.P.

All three parties wanted to participate in a governing coalition. However, each was severely restrained in its choice of a coalition partner. A change in coalition affiliation was still seen as a signal that the ideological base had changed or was changing. The perceived cleavage between the bourgeois parties on one side and the SPD on the other side was still very deep.

The asymmetry of the party system had the following results:

1. Every coalition between one of the large and the small party was by definition a minimum winning one. A minimum winning coalition is one that cannot afford to lose a coalition partner without losing the majority. In 1961, 250 seats were needed for a bare majority. The CDU/CSU had 242 and thus needed the F.D.P. which had 67 seats. The same is true for the SPD which had 190 seats.

2. As the above mentioned example demonstrates, this and every other coalition between the CDU/CSU and the F.D.P. was a minimum winning coalition without minimum weight. However, every coalition between the SPD and
the F.D.P. was a minimum winning coalition with minimum weight. This outcome could only be changed if the difference in size between the CDU/CSU and the SPD disappeared. This happened only once, in 1972.

Some coalitions validated or disproved coalition theories simply for arithmetical reasons. But arithmetical reasons alone render only a superficial judgment about the validity of a theory. The real question is whether the main variable of a theory was or was not the actual driving force behind the coalition formation. If, for example, minimum size was an important consideration, then and only then was a minimum winning coalition validated by a specific coalition-bargaining outcome.

For the first time, the 1961 election produced a three-party system. Based on the election outcome, the main coalition theories would have made the following predictions.

Neumann and Morgenstern would have predicted a minimum winning coalition. Despite the fact that there were only three parties in the Bundestag, two different minimum winning coalitions were possible. One coalition could have had the CDU/CSU and the other, the SPD as its largest party.

Riker, who favored minimum winning coalitions with minimum weight, would have given an SPD-F.D.P. coalition the edge. Such a coalition would have had 257 deputies, or
17 more than necessary for a bare majority. A CDU/CSU-F.D.P. coalition would have had 289 votes in the Bundestag.

Leiserson's bargaining proposition predicted a two-party coalition and was correct. This proposition will always be correct when two out of three parties cooperate. Since an all-party government was a rare exception, such a validation of a theory should not receive much attention.

Policy-distance theories would have encountered the problem of positioning the F.D.P. correctly on one political continuum. The young-Turk revolt in 1955 had brought about an SPD-F.D.P coalition in North Rhine-Westfalia. Since then, party leader Mende had carefully moved the party back into the bourgeois camp. In 1961, it was hard to decide whether the party was located to the right of the CDU/CSU or at the center between the CDU/CSU and the SPD. This question was finally resolved in 1969 when the F.D.P. changed leadership again and stated that it had positioned itself between the two large catchall parties. Since the F.D.P. was still in its majority a bourgeois party, the policy distance to the CDU/CSU was smaller than to the SPD. However, the opposition to Adenauer but not to the CDU/CSU brings up the question whether such a generalizing statement is possible at all. When Adenauer remained party leader and chancellor, the gap between the CDU/CSU and the F.D.P. widened. Schwarz argued this point as follows:
What developed into a permanent fixture of the F.D.P. was its hate of Adenauer.... The party had finally found in him its rallying point and regarded its premier obligation to be to end the Adenauer era as soon as possible.15

Under those circumstances and with the knowledge that the coalition broke apart two years later, the opposition to Adenauer will be regarded as more important than the general political affinity between the parties. Therefore, the coalition between the CDU/CSU and the F.D.P. in 1961 will be counted as not connected.

Franklin and Mackie could not predict a coalition based on cooperation in the government prior to this one (familiarity). They needed to use earlier experience (inertia). On this count, a bourgeois coalition had a big edge over a social-liberal coalition.

Dodd would have concluded that all parties were not a priori willing to enter into coalition negotiations with every other party. Many of the Bundestag deputies of the CDU/CSU and the F.D.P. could not yet envision a coalition with the "archenemy."16 In essence, the cleavage between the bourgeois and the social-democratic camp still existed. This party system was still under constraint. This led to the prediction of an oversized coalition.

Luebbert would have concluded that this was a competitive party system. Further, he had to decide
whether there was a dominant party or not. The gap between the CDU/CSU and the SPD had narrowed from election to election but still was 9.1 percentage points. Also, the CDU/CSU was still commonly regarded as the "chancellor party," meaning that it would present the chancellor in the next coalition government. Not many people believed that the time had come for the SPD to replace the CDU/CSU in this respect. Thus, Luebbert would have concluded that an oversized coalition was likely.

This brief overview suggests that coalition theories which put the variable "size" at the center correctly predicted the bargaining outcome. However, one must ask whether size was actually the main driving force in this coalition-building process. Policy-distance theories did not give the correct answer because they could not account for the emotionally based opposition to Adenauer. Theories based on party-system characteristics also produced wrong results.

When the election results were in and the CDU/CSU with 242 deputies was again by far the largest party, it was clear that it would form the government. A coalition between the SPD and the F.D.P. was theoretically possible (257 deputies) but with Mende at the helm of the F.D.P., practically impossible. Thus, the crucial issue of this bargaining process became the question whether Adenauer would survive as chancellor or not. Mende and some high
ranking CDU/CSU officials believed that they could force Adenauer into resignation. Mende, convinced that Adenauer needed his party for a majority, overrated his strength and the steadfastness of his CDU/CSU friends. But Adenauer outmaneuvered his opponents. He isolated his opponents in his own party and got from Erhard, his designated successor, the statement that he, Erhard, would not be available as an opposition candidate to Adenauer. With this statement in hand, the opposition in his party broke down. In order to suppress the opposition of the F.D.P., Adenauer immediately started coalition talks with the SPD and found in Wehner a similar-thinking partner. The reason that the SPD was so receptive to Adenauer's overtures will be explained later. Important at this point is the fact that the F.D.P. began to fear that another opposition period was dawning and its resistance to Adenauer crumbled.

Mende had miscalculated his strength. He was so convinced that he would be able to remove Adenauer from office and to become a partner in the new bourgeois coalition that he neglected to prepare a backup position. His maneuvers created deep-seated antipathies between the F.D.P. and important CDU/CSU politicians. Those politicians—among them Luecke, Luebke, Jaeger, and von Guttenberg—were so alienated that they started to work diligently for a grand coalition. They wanted a grand coalition and with that the chance to change
the electoral law, ending once and for all the blackmail potential of the F.D.P. Luecke resigned when he did not reach this goal. Professor Schwarz argued that Mende's misconceptions destroyed the revival of the bourgeois camp and eventually gave the SPD the needed coalition partner.19

Many politicians were surprised that Adenauer again managed to become the pivotal figure in this coalition bargaining game. As already mentioned, he did so in two decisive steps:

1. He quelled the opposition in his own party by taking Erhard, their chancellor candidate, out of the race.
2. He overcame the opposition of the F.D.P. by entering into serious negotiations with the SPD.

Now, it must be explained why the SPD played Adenauer's game. The SPD was disappointed with its election results.19 Its leadership, especially Wehner, argued that the SPD's path to power had to include a period as a junior partner of the CDU/CSU. Wehner never wanted a coalition with the F.D.P. He believed that such a coalition would be too great a risk for his party. He did not believe that the F.D.P. was ready for a social-liberal coalition, and he feared that even small mistakes by such a coalition would heighten the prejudice against the leadership qualification of the SPD.20
The CDU/CSU and the F.D.P. formed a coalition with Adenauer as chancellor. By doing so, the F.D.P. broke its most important campaign promise and earned for itself the label "tumbler party." The population voiced its displeasure and argued that the F.D.P. would do almost everything to come to power.21

The CDU/CSU-F.D.P. coalition was a minimum winning coalition, albeit not of minimum weight. It was a bourgeois coalition. But the F.D.P.'s opposition to Adenauer did not make it a connected winning coalition. Adenauer's goal was to stay in power. His goal was not the formation of a minimum winning coalition. He would have also accepted the SPD as a coalition partner. This would have resulted in an oversized coalition.

In the final judgment, this coalition formation was not decided by one of the variables used in the coalition theories but by elite preferences and inter-elite maneuvers for support:

1. Adenauer overcame a serious attack on his leadership and was again able to form a coalition with himself as chancellor.

2. Mende miscalculated his own strength and the steadfastness of other CDU/CSU leaders. He was forced to accept another period with Adenauer as chancellor.

3. Adenauer and Wehner's efforts to form a grand coalition were an important signal. In 1961, the
majority of the Bonner deputies rejected such a coalition, but it was on the table. As already mentioned, a group in both parties continued to explore the possibilities of such a combination. The coalition between CDU/CSU and F.D.P. was not a harmonious one. The tensions between the coalition partners erupted at the first possible occasion and created a severe coalition crisis. In 1962, Strauss ordered a raid on the offices of the magazine "Der Spiegel" without following proper court procedures. He expected to find proof of treason. The F.D.P., which regarded itself to be the defender of lawful procedures (Rechtstaatlichkeit), reacted sharply. The four F.D.P. ministers left the cabinet and threatened not to return unless Strauss was removed.

Adenauer and Wehner again tried to form a grand coalition. But even now the resistance of the deputies in both parties was too great. After 40 days of negotiations, Adenauer had no other choice than to accept the demands of the F.D.P. Strauss left the cabinet, and Adenauer promised to step down during the following year. The F.D.P. was satisfied and the bourgeois coalition re-emerged. It is interesting to realize that groups of leaders in the CDU/CSU and in the SPD were ready to coalesce as early as 1961 but the rank and file needed until 1969 before they were willing to overcome the
entrenched camp mentality. In 1963, as agreed upon, Adenauer was replaced by Erhard. This was a great success for the father of the economic miracle. Professor Hildebrand wrote that Erhard

...celebrated a victory over his predecessor who had tried systematically to keep him out of the highest office since the presidential crisis in 1959.23

Erhard wanted to be different from Adenauer. He wanted to be above party bickering. Therefore, he declined becoming party leader of the CDU/CSU. This turned out to be a serious mistake. It left Adenauer with a platform from which he could continue to work against Erhard. Koerfer documented that Adenauer spent the rest of his political career working for the replacement of a chancellor whom he regarded as being unfit to lead Germany.24 The fight between the two outstanding personalities of the CDU/CSU tore the already fragmented party further apart and did not allow Erhard to realize his political concept. Kaiser, a political correspondent, wrote that the conflict between the two men escalated into a personal vendetta, using or abusing daily political questions for this end.25 By doing so, Adenauer contributed mightily to the fall of Erhard and to the demise of the bourgeois government which he had created in 1949.

The downfall of the bourgeois coalition and the formation of a grand coalition can only be fully
comprehended if the conflict between Adenauer and Erhard and the distrust of the F.D.P. by leaders of both catchall parties are taken into account. Those facts were important to the coalition-building process, and they were based on personal relations between political leaders and not on the variables which are at the center of the existing coalition theories.

Without the breakdown of personal relations between leaders of the CDU/CSU and the F.D.P., the bourgeois coalition could have survived for quite a while longer, especially since Erhard redirected attention from foreign to domestic politics. In his inaugural address, Erhard pleaded for more public participation in politics, for a fairer distribution of the newly created wealth, and for a better relationship with the East, in order to get some movement toward a German reunification. Erhard even changed the style of cabinet meetings. All of these were demands of the F.D.P. Mende reported back to his party that a new spirit of partnership and openness between the coalition partners had taken hold.

The period 1963 to 1965 was a time of political tranquility and economic expansion. Erhard's popularity reached its pinnacle and secured a strong electoral victory for his coalition in 1963. His own party gained 2.3 percentage points. The CDU/CSU gained back voters that had voted for the F.D.P. in the 1961 election because they
supported the F.D.P.'s request for Adenauer's abdication. The CDU/CSU under Erhard had one of its best electoral results, 47.6% of the votes. The F.D.P. lost 3.3 percentage points, but still had a respectable outcome. The SPD continued its steady advance and got nearly 40% of the votes.

Table 7

1965 Federal Election

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Votes in %</th>
<th># of Seats</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SPD</td>
<td>39.3</td>
<td>202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F.D.P.</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CDU/CSU</td>
<td>47.6</td>
<td>245</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>496</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It was known long before the election that the CDU/CSU and the F.D.P. would continue to rule together. Thus, the coalition negotiations were easy. The distribution of portfolios between the coalition partners did not change. The CDU/CSU and the F.D.P. had 292 seats or 59% of the votes in the Bundestag. This was both a minimum winning and a minimal connected winning coalition.

Neumann and Morgenstern's theory was validated, although the SPD and the F.D.P. could have formed another minimum winning coalition. The SPD and the F.D.P. together would have had 249 seats. This would have been 50% plus 1 seat, a bare majority.
Riker's theory would have predicted the SPD-F.D.P. coalition because of its minimum weight. However, neither party ever entertained the idea of coalescing. Mende wanted a bourgeois coalition, and the election results supported his position.

Leiserson's bargaining proposition was fulfilled because the smallest number of parties coalesced. However, this also would have been the case if the SPD and the F.D.P. would have joined together.

All policy-distance theories, including Axelrod's, were validated. Never before had the ideological bases of two parties been so congruent or the cabinet so united.29

Dodd's theory would have faced the problem of deciding whether all parties were equally able and willing to enter into coalitions with each other. The SPD still had to overcome a certain prejudice against it. Thus, the party system continued to be constrained. An oversized coalition should have been the result.

Luebbert's theory hinged on the question of whether one party dominated this coalition-building process. Since the CDU/CSU was still seen as the unquestioned chancellor party, a dominant party existed. This led to the prediction of an oversized coalition.

Franklin and Mackie's approach was validated because the CDU/CSU and the F.D.P. had a long history of cooperation.
The Erhard coalition of 1965 validated the minimum winning, the policy-distance theories, and Franklin and Mackie's approach. It did so not only for numerical reasons. Erhard and Mende, the two key politicians, wanted a bourgeois-bloc coalition. A common ideological base and excellent personal relations were the base of this last bourgeois government in 1965. It was a minimal connected winning coalition but not a coalition with minimum weight. Theories based on the variables "size," Riker's approach excluded, and "ideology" rendered the correct result. Theories based on party-system characteristics made the wrong predictions.
REFERENCES—CHAPTER VII


4. Erich Mende, Die neue Freiheit 1945-1961 (Muenchen-Berlin: Herbig Verlag, 1984), p. 477. Mende wrote: "Vice-chancellor and minister of economics Ludwig Erhard was for many, but especially for the Bavarian CSU, the designated successor. By July 10, a Monday evening, at Helmut Horten's house in Dusseldorf, I, accompanied by Willy Weyer and Helmut Doering, achieved an agreement with Franz Josef Strauss and his general party secretary Friedrich Zimmermann that Adenauer's succession shall be solved in cooperation with the CSU in fall of that year.... I repeated in Frankfurt that the liberals wanted a coalition with the CDU/CSU if this party would lose the absolute majority. However, the F.D.P. would prefer Ludwig Erhard over Konrad Adenauer as chancellor."

5. Ibid., p. 490. Mende recalled the events during the election campaign in a private conversation with Adenauer as follows: "Mr. Chancellor, your party friends came and said, 'We cannot force our own chancellor and party leader into resignation. That must be a request of the liberal coalition partner. As soon as you have opened the door, we will follow with 200 votes in the Bundestag....' We both know the result; you (Adenauer) are again chancellor, and I (Mende) tumbled for you and for my party."


Peter Koch, Willy Brandt, Eine politische Biographie (Hamburg: Ullstein Verlag, 1988), p. 205. Peter Koch wrote that Professor Karl Schiller introduced the following slogan into the public discussion: "As much market competition as possible and as much planning as necessary!"


13. Abram DeSwaan, *Coalition Theories And Cabinet Formations. A study of formal theories of coalition formation applied to nine European parliaments after 1918* (San Francisco-Washington: Jossey-Bass Inc., 1963) p. 89. DeSwaan argued that the pivotal party is the dominant party located at the center of a coalition, minimizing the political distance to its left and right. From 1969 on, the F.D.P. occupied the center of the political continuum but could not be considered as the dominant party.

14. A group of influential politicians in North Rhine-Westfalia entered into a coalition agreement with the SPD and toppled the CDU/CSU-led government through a constructive vote of no confidence.


17. Ibid., p. 246. Peter Koch wrote: "Konrad Adenauer was again the regisseur. He invited Ollenhauer, Brandt, and Wehner into the Palais Schaumburg (his residence) on September 25, 1961."


Ibid., p. 231. Hans-Peter Schwarz quoted Strauss, who said in a conversation with Mende: "The old chancellor is ready to do anything.... He is, when his chancellorship is at stake, even willing to sacrifice you and the F.D.P. and not prepared to wait until you have removed him from office. You and I will not enter a coalition with the SPD; but the 66 votes of the F.D.P. and the 50 votes of the CSU together are only 116 and this is a minority."

19. Ibid, p. 239. Hans-Peter Schwarz wrote: "The controversies with the F.D.P. left deep scars in the CDU/CSU. Never before were so many important CDU/CSU deputies willing to seriously discuss a coalition with the SPD."

20. Peter Koch, Willy Brandt, Eine politische Biographie (Hamburg: Ullstein Verlag, 1988), p. 246. Peter Koch wrote: "Wehner was involuntarily a great help to the chancellor when he declared the willingness of the SPD to enter a grand coalition under Adenauer in Nuernberg a short time later.... Wehner said, 'If we govern with six or eight ministers for four years in Bonn, then the anxiety about a "red government" in the population will have waned and a new era will have dawned. We must enter the government.'" Hans-Peter Schwarz, Die Aera Adenauer 1957-1963, Vol. 3, Geschichte der Bundesrepublik Deutschland (Stuttgart-Wiesbaden: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt & F. A. Brockhaus, 1983), p. 231. Wehner's quote was so important that Hans-Peter Schwarz called it the reason for the F.D.P. to give up its request to replace Adenauer.
21. Guenter Verheugen, Der Ausverkauf, Macht und Verfall der FDP (Hamburg: Rowohlt Verlag, 1984), p. 42. Guenter Verheugen argued, "Since then the F.D.P. was called tumbler party. It never lost this odor...."


29. Erich Mende, Von Wende zu Wende 1962-1982, Vol. 3 of his memoires (Muenchen-Berlin: Herbig Verlag, 1986), pp. 109. Erich Mende recalled that Chancellor Erhard said (in his first cabinet meeting) that he wanted to introduce a new style into the cabinet meetings and into the government of the Federal Republic. The ministers would have more freedom for initiatives but would then have to carry a larger share of the responsibility. Cabinet meetings would be argumentative.... Without mentioning the phrase "chancellor democracy" that characterized Adenauer's style, Ludwig Erhard acknowledged that he was prepared to practice "liberal democracy."
CHAPTER VIII
THE FORMATION OF THE GRAND COALITION
IN NOVEMBER OF 1966

This chapter will present the coalition-bargaining process in November of 1966 that culminated in the formation of a grand coalition. It will be argued that the grand coalition emerged because:

1. The personal relations between the leaders of the two bourgeois parties were so deeply disturbed that many leading personalities in both parties did not want to form a new coalition.

2. The CDU/CSU wanted to stay in power, and many of its leaders believed that this would best be accomplished in a coalition with the SPD.

3. The SPD wanted to come to power. Two of the most influential leaders of the SPD, Wehner and Schmidt, regarded a coalition with the CDU/CSU as the most promising strategy to reach this goal.

4. The F.D.P. leadership was paralyzed by internal disunity and did not present itself as an attractive coalition partner to either of the large parties. Despite the excellent preconditions for success, the 1965 bourgeois coalition failed and broke apart a year
later. The main reasons were Erhard's lack of leadership and the first postwar recession. Erhard drifted from one crisis into the next. Most were caused by minor incidents, but they eroded the confidence of his political friends and strengthened the opposition in his own party. When the first postwar recession hit, his coalition was too weak to make joint decisions and broke apart. The F.D.P. left Erhard's government.

In the fall of 1966, all parties agreed to tolerate Erhard's minority government as a caretaker until negotiations among all parties would produce a new government. This caretaker government lasted for four weeks. New elections were ruled out. Since the parties had implicitly agreed to form a majority government, a new coalition including at least two of the three parties had to emerge.

Without new elections, the strength of the parties was still determined by the 1965 election. The CDU/CSU was the strongest party with 245 deputies or 47.6%, followed by the SPD with 202 deputies and 39.3%, and the F.D.P. with 47 deputies and 9.5% of the votes. However, one very important fact had changed. A large group of CDU/CSU and SPD deputies no longer ruled out the possibility of a coalition between their parties. The diligent work of party leaders, like Adenauer and Wehner, was rewarded.
Neumann and Morgenstern would have predicted a minimum winning coalition as the outcome of this coalition-bargaining process. Two of those coalitions were possible. The CDU/CSU and the F.D.P. would have had a comfortable majority of 44 votes. The SPD-F.D.P. coalition would have had a majority of only two votes.

Riker would have predicted the formation of the SPD-F.D.P. coalition because it would have had the smallest number of deputies possible.

Leiserson's bargaining proposition would have been validated by every possible outcome, barring the formation of an all-party government.

Policy-distance theories, including Axelrod's minimal connected winning coalition theory, would have predicted a bourgeois coalition as the outcome.

Franklin and Mackie had no choice other than to predict a bourgeois coalition as the outcome of this bargaining situation since only these two parties had previously cooperated.

Dodd would have concluded that all three parties were a priori willing to enter into coalition negotiations with every other party. The party system was not under constraint and a minimum winning coalition was the most likely bargaining outcome.

Luebbert would have concluded that this is a competitive party system. He also needed to decide whether
a dominant party existed or not. The CDU/CSU was still the largest party. However, the poor performance of Chancellor Erhard had shattered the perception that the CDU/CSU was the "born" chancellor party, meaning that the chancellor always had to be a CDU/CSU politician. Given those circumstances, Luebbert would have concluded that no dominant party existed. This would have led to the prediction of a minimum winning coalition. It is interesting to realize that party-system characteristics are not objective facts. They are open to interpretations, like many other so-called facts in social science.

The result of the actual coalition-building process was a coalition between the CDU/CSU and the SPD. Such a coalition was called a grand coalition because of its overwhelming strength in parliament. Only Leiserson's bargaining proposition would have allowed for such an outcome.

When the bargaining process started, five alternatives existed for ending the government crisis:

1. The parties could decide to allow Erhard to continue to head a minority government until the next election in 1969. Nobody, not even the CDU/CSU, wanted this solution.

2. An all-party government could be formed. This option was never seriously considered. People and politicians alike believed that such a government
should only be contemplated if a national crisis occurred and had to be solved. The present woes did not justify such a solution.

3. The bourgeois coalition could be resurrected, either under Erhard's or somebody else's leadership.

4. The SPD and the F.D.P. could form a center-left or social-liberal coalition.

5. The two large parties could form a grand coalition. Only the last three options were seriously considered in November of 1966.

The CDU/CSU leadership went into this coalition bargaining process deeply disunited. Erhard had refused to give up his chancellor position and tried to lure the F.D.P. back into his cabinet. But his charisma was gone, and even Mende did not want to put the future fortunes of his party into Erhard's hands. Other CDU/CSU leaders were determined to present a chancellor candidate other than Erhard. On November 10, the CDU/CSU deputies took an internal vote and selected their chancellor candidate.

Koch described the voting process as follows:

Four candidates participated in this internal election process: the leader of the Bonner deputies, Rainer Barzel, received only 26 of 244 votes; Gerhard Schroeder who promoted a coalition with the F.D.P. received 80 votes; the president of the Bundestag, Eugen Gerstenmaier, withdrew when he noticed that the mighty CSU would vote for the fourth candidate, Kurt-Georg Kiesinger.
Kiesinger left no doubt that he and his party demanded the chancellor position in the new government. However, as Hildebrand pointed out, he was not committed to a specific coalition. Due to his personal charisma, Kiesinger became the leading personality in this process.

This was not self-evident. It had been the CDU/CSU led government that broke apart and caused this midterm coalition bargaining process. His party and the former chancellor had caused the disenchantment of the F.D.P. It would have been the role of the SPD to take the lead. But the leadership of the SPD was disunited too. Brandt strongly favored a coalition with the F.D.P. and made advances toward this party. He had great support among the rank and file. Other party heavyweights, like Wehner, Schmidt, and Renger, opposed this "mini-coalition," as Wehner negatively defined it. Koch depicted the situation in the SPD as follows:

However, not Brandt but Wehner was the regisseur in the SPD. And he wanted a grand coalition.

Mende, the party leader of the F.D.P., believed that he had a strong position in this bargaining game. He was convinced that the CDU/CSU would do everything to lure his party back into a coalition. Had not Erhard, Schoeder, and now also the new chancellor candidate Kiesinger tried to win the allegiance of his party? Kiesinger actually tried first to resurrect the bourgeois coalition.
Mende stalled these talks in order to gain greater concessions. He knew that Brandt and the majority of the Bonner SPD deputies favored a coalition with the F.D.P. Thus, he believed that he had a fall-back position this time. However, he had a misconception about the mood of his own party. Professor Hildebrand argued, albeit with hindsight, that the F.D.P. was evenly split into three factions at this point in time. One faction wanted the resurrection of a bourgeois coalition, another wanted a deal with the SPD, and a third wanted to go into opposition. The more protracted the coalition negotiations got, the more the latter faction grew. Mende asked too many concessions from the CDU/CSU. He also surprised the CDU/CSU with an impromptu press conference. There, Mende unveiled that, while negotiating with the CDU/CSU, his party had reached important agreements with the SPD. Kiesinger felt betrayed. Five days later, he presented the grand coalition.

The formation of the grand coalition was the work of two men--Kiesinger and Wehner. Koch wrote:

Kiesinger and Wehner were old political comrades. By the time of the first Bundestag in 1949, Kiesinger secured the chairmanship of the reunification commission for Wehner, despite the reservation of many CDU/CSU deputies because of Wehner's communist past. When Kiesinger was forced to leave Bonn in 1958, Wehner sent the famous telegram: "Bonn becomes deprived, Wehner."
Wehner had worked diligently for the grand coalition. He believed that the SPD needed a period as junior partner of the CDU/CSU to gain the trust of the people. The last time the SPD had ruled was in the thirties. The SPD had the reputation of being an excellent opposition party but not a chancellor party. Wehner did not want the SPD to base its first postwar government on a small, minimum winning coalition. For him, such a bare majority entailed too many risks. He wanted solid majorities, even if this meant sharing power with more or stronger partners.

Kiesinger and Wehner signed a preliminary coalition agreement on November 24, 1966. Kiesinger trusted Wehner and believed that he would deliver on his promises. Both men had to overcome opposition in their respective parties. Kiesinger had the easier task. He was the chancellor candidate of his party. Also the F.D.P. had created so much hostility among CDU/CSU deputies that the party agreed to the new coalition experiment without much discussion.

Wehner had the much more difficult task. He was supported by some other important SPD leaders. But Brandt, the chancellor candidate of his party, opposed him. Also, a flood of opposing telegrams from state and local party organizations swept the "Baracke," the Bonner headquarters of the SPD. Hildebrand argued that sheer luck also played a role in the final decision. Willy Brandt was unable
to participate in the decisive leadership meeting on November 26. A snowstorm made his departure from Berlin by air impossible. When he arrived by train in the evening, the leadership had voted for Wehner's concept. Brandt registered strong opposition but eventually acquiesced. Then followed what Koch called "the longest night in the history of the SPD." Brandt, Wehner, Schmidt, and others went from their meeting into a conference with the Bonner SPD deputies. It took from 6 p.m. to 4 a.m. to convince the deputies that a grand coalition was the way to go. Brandt loyally defended this decision, which meant that the proponents of an SPD-F.D.P. coalition suddenly had no leader. They grudgingly gave in, and the grand coalition became a reality.

It is often said that the grand coalition emerged because Germany was in a crisis. The country went through its first postwar recession, budget deficits plagued the government, and the foreign-policy parameters had started to change. The U.S. had moved from cold war to detente. Those changes demanded adjustments, especially since the allied high command was prepared to give up its right to interfere in Germany's internal matters if democracy was threatened. Politicians of all parties, but foremost the CDU/CSU, wanted to amend the German constitution by the so-called "Notstandsgesetze." They were supposed to give the government the right to suspend civil rights in return
for saving the democratic order. Those laws needed a two-thirds majority in the Bundestag.

Hildebrand convincingly argued that these were only contributing factors to the emergence of a grand coalition. The real reasons were:

1. The CDU/CSU wanted to stay in power but no longer felt strong enough to carry the burden of government alone and against such a strong opposition party as the SPD. Therefore, the CDU/CSU was prepared to share power with its biggest rival.

2. The SPD desperately wanted to come into power. However, the decisive party leaders wanted a safe way and not a risky minimum winning coalition.

3. Sympathies and antipathies between leading politicians worked strongly in favor of a grand coalition. The long partnership between the CDU/CSU and the F.D.P. had created severe animosities which overshadowed the common ideological base. In the grand coalition, the personal esteem between Kiesinger and Wehner overcame the ideological differences that separated the parties. A friendship, based on trust and cooperation across party lines for 15 years, convinced them that a government with clearly defined goals could be successful despite ideological differences. In order to facilitate the decision-making process, Kiesinger created the "Kressborner Kreis." In his house in
Kressborn, the most important officials of this coalition government informally met and decided important issues. The role of parliament declined into the direction of a rubber-stamp organization during the grand coalition.16

Viewing it from the Anglo-Saxon understanding of democracy, the coalition of the two strongest political parties is an "unnatural" state of affairs. However, the idea is not so alien to the tradition of German democratic thinking. Sabine, for example, argued that the desire to have a broad-based government was the outflow of a German preference for harmony and unity.17 In Sabine's eyes, Germans were striving for consensus and compromise. Knorr outlined that many Germans, among them many Christian-motivated politicians (Jacob Kaiser, Hans Arnold, etc.), had believed since 1949 that the time had come to bridge the cleavages between the different ideologies and classes in the society.18 The longing for a grand coalition never disappeared. As soon as Adenauer's leadership waned, it returned as an alternative to the coalition game.

This coalition was oversized and in the traditional sense ideologically not connected. Both parties knew that this government was under pressure to be successful. For the CDU/CSU, success was the key to staying in power; and for the SPD, success was the key to becoming worthy of the chancellorship. Bracher argued that this coalition was, in
retrospect, one of the most successful governments Germany ever had. Most important for the process of coalition building was that this "government of transition" paved the way for the public acceptance of the SPD as a party capable of the chancellorship.

A coalition between the two largest parties, comprising 86.9% of the seats in the Bundestag, is in opposition to all coalition theories that are based on the variable "minimum size." The grand coalition also violates all political-distance theories because the largest political distance existed between the CDU/CSU and the SPD. Franklin and Mackie's approach did not work either because these two parties were staunch competitors since the formation of the Federal Republic. Also, the coalition theories, based on party-system characteristics, rendered the wrong clues. In summary, the grand coalition does not fit into the framework of the existing coalition theories. The grand coalition emerged because CDU/CSU and SPD leaders regarded it as the best possible outcome for themselves and for a successful government. The leaders of the CDU/CSU were tired of what they called obstructionist quarreling by the F.D.P. The leaders of the SPD did not dare to base their first government on a minimum winning coalition with the present leadership of the F.D.P. Personal relations played the decisive role in the emergence of this coalition.
REFERENCES—CHAPTER VIII

1. Klaus Hildebrand, Von Erhard zur Grossen Koalition 1963-1969, Vol. 4, Geschichte der Bundesrepublik Deutschland (Stuttgart-Wiesbaden: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt & F. A. Brockhaus, 1984), pp. 203-204. Hildebrand wrote: "Erhard had hardly finished the formation of his cabinet, when talks about a coming recession surfaced. This together with the always lamented weakness of his leadership, the tensions in the coalition, the fragmentation of the CDU/CSU, and the generally growing uneasiness of the population, condensed to a feeling of a coming crisis."


5. Guenter Scholz, Herbert Wehner (Duesseldorf-Wien: Econ Verlag, 1986), p. 116. Scholz wrote that Herbert Wehner did not regard the F.D.P. as a possible coalition partner for the SPD. He started to change his mind in the early seventies when he found in Wolfgang Mischnick, a fellow countryman from Dresden, a partner with whom he could discuss the daily political problems on a regular basis.


8. Ibid., p. 244.


11. Guenter Scholz, Herbert Wehner. (Hamburg-Wien: Econ Verlag, 1986) p. 120. Wehner defended the formation of the grand coalition in the following way: "The SPD decided for a coalition with the CDU/CSU after having carefully considered the circumstances and all options available, in order to prevent a severe economic crisis with incalculable risks for mass unemployment, devaluation of the currency, and in order to save the foundations of this society."


CHAPTER IX

THE MINIMUM WINNING COALITIONS OF 1969 AND 1972
OR THE BRANDT-SCHEEL ERA

This chapter will present the most significant turn of postwar German politics. The coalition negotiations following the 1969 election ended for the CDU/CSU with a surprising result. This party found itself banished to the opposition benches, and a social-liberal coalition took office. It will be shown in much detail how this change in power was accomplished and that leadership behavior played the decisive role. It will also be shown that the political environment was conducive to such a change.

Then the question will be asked whether political leaders have the freedom to form coalitions according to their preference or whether they are forced to execute the will of the voters. If German political leaders have a considerable amount of freedom, then this is further proof of their importance to the process of coalition building.

Then it will be shown that the wheelings and dealings of opposition leaders almost destroyed the Brandt-Scheel government and how this assault influenced the voting
behavior in the 1972 election. Finally, it will be demonstrated that physical and mental exhaustion of the key players was the major cause for the sudden and stunning decline of the Brandt-Scheel coalition immediately after its great electoral victory in 1972.

In summarizing, it will be argued that the success of the social-liberal coalition depended to a large degree on two outstanding personalities. The conclusion will be drawn that Brandt and Scheel accelerated developments which without them would have taken many more years and might then have turned out differently. The Brandt-Scheel era will be taken as further proof for the thesis of this study.

The 1969 election and the following coalition-bargaining process cannot be fully appreciated if the events of the late sixties are not taken into account. They will be briefly mentioned. Three aspects deserve special attention:

1. In West Germany, like in many other industrialized countries, 1968 was a period in which a new generation shook the foundations of the established order. The postwar generation had two goals. It wanted a republic that was different from the CDU/CSU state, and it wanted another foreign policy.

2. The parties, but foremost the SPD and the F.D.P., were impacted by the growing activity of the new
generation. Many young people became members of student party organizations or entered the parties directly. In local party organizations of the F.D.P., due to their small membership base, a handful of activists already had been able to shift the political emphasis.3 Guenter Verheugen, who later became party secretary, explained in a personal meeting that the possibility for instantly gaining influence was an important consideration in choosing the F.D.P. over the SPD.4 By the time of the 1967 party convention, the F.D.P. student organization and the progressive wing put Mende and his supporters on the defensive.5 One year later, Erich Mende was replaced by Walter Scheel. This was the victory of the progressive over the conservative wing of the party.

3. A new party on the right, the National Democratic Party of Germany (NPD), made headlines during this period.6 The party entered the parliament in Bavaria. Many observers believed that it would also win representation in the Bundestag in the upcoming election of 1969. The three established parties wanted to prevent this from happening and vowed not to enter into a coalition with this extremist party if it managed to enter the Bundestag.

The 1969 election was the first German election in which new issues were "either-or" questions, questions of
conviction and difficult to compromise. Baring correctly stated that the conservatives feared that a socialistic government would create another Germany, and that the progressives hoped that they would finally be able to break up the incrustations of 20 years of conservative rule.7

Emotions were running high during this election campaign.

Table 8
1969 Federal Election8

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<tr>
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<th>Votes in %</th>
<th># of Seats</th>
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<tr>
<td>SPD</td>
<td>42.7</td>
<td>224</td>
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<tr>
<td>F.D.P.</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CDU/CSU</td>
<td>46.1</td>
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The CDU/CSU with 46.1% of the votes was again the strongest party. The CDU/CSU missed the majority in the Bundestag by a mere seven seats. The SPD gained 3.4 percentage points and crossed the 40% mark for the first time. However, it continued to be only the second largest party, but that by a large margin. The F.D.P. was the big loser in this election. Compared with the 1965 election, roughly 1.2 million fewer people voted for the F.D.P. this time. Klingemann and Pappi argued that voters who had supported the F.D.P. in earlier elections because of its participation in the bourgeois coalition voted for the CDU/CSU. Also, the F.D.P. received no crossover votes from the SPD.9 Perhaps SPD voters were not sure whether
an SPD-F.D.P. coalition would be feasible or desirable. The election result of 5.8% was a reflection of the small base the F.D.P. actually had. The NPD gained 4.3% and thus did not enter the Bundestag.

Neumann and Morgenstern would have predicted a minimum winning coalition. Two of those minimum winning coalitions were possible. A CDU/CSU-F.D.P. coalition would have had a comfortable majority of 48 seats in the Bundestag. An SPD-F.D.P. coalition would have had a majority of only 12 seats. Riker would have predicted the latter outcome.

Leiserson's bargaining proposition would have allowed for all three possible party combinations. Only an all-party government would have violated his proposition.

Policy-distance theories, Axelrod's minimal connected winning theory included, would have had to decide where the F.D.P. was located on the political continuum. Party leader Scheel and the activists in local party organizations saw themselves at the center of the political continuum, located between the SPD and the CDU/CSU. The old party establishment around Mende still saw the F.D.P. on the right of the political continuum. However, the loss of 1.2 million voters indicated that the population at large had realized that the F.D.P. had positioned itself anew in the political game. This allows the conclusion that the F.D.P. had positioned itself at the political
center and that both a CDU/CSU-F.D.P. and an SPD-F.D.P. coalition would have been a minimal connected winning coalition. Only a grand coalition would not have squared with this theory.

Franklin and Mackie would have predicted a coalition between the CDU/CSU and the F.D.P. because only such a combination of parties existed in earlier governments.

Dodd would have concluded that all three parties were a priori willing to enter into coalition negotiations with each other and that each party knew or could have known the demands of the other parties. Under those conditions, he would have predicted a minimum winning coalition as the most likely outcome.

Luebbert would have concluded that this is a competitive party system in which no party was dominant. This made a minimum winning coalition the most likely outcome.

Three different combinations, a CDU/CSU-F.D.P., an SPD-F.D.P., and a CDU/CSU-SPD coalition, could have been the outcome of this bargaining process. Many people believed that Kiesinger would continue to serve as chancellor. The final outcome hinged on the desires and negotiating skills of the party leaders.

1. Kiesinger was convinced that he had gotten the public mandate to form a new government. He needed only seven votes from another party to have a majority.
He also believed that an SPD-F.D.P. coalition was not feasible because its small majority of 12 votes was in his eyes a much too insecure base for a government.

2. Brandt wanted to become chancellor. He did not want to be the second in command again in a coalition under Kiesinger.

3. Scheel wanted a coalition with the SPD. He had already persuaded his party to vote for the candidate of the SPD in the previous presidential election. He believed that his party would only survive if it was open to coalitions with both large parties and that this was the time to prove its flexibility. Also his personal relationship with Brandt was far better than the one with Kiesinger.

Kiesinger tried to get assurance that his assessment of the situation was correct. On Monday evening after the election, Mende had gathered in his office 10 similar-thinking F.D.P. deputies when two emissaries of Kiesinger arrived (Helmut Kohl and Bruno Heck). They assured themselves that these deputies would vote for a CDU/CSU-F.D.P. coalition. This made an SPD-F.D.P. coalition impossible. Based on this knowledge, Kiesinger did not energetically pursue the negotiations with the F.D.P. It took until October 3 before he offered Scheel a
long-term cooperative agreement. This delay made it easier for Brandt and Scheel to outmaneuver him.

Two of the three key SPD politicians, Wehner and Schmidt, recommended the continuation of the grand coalition. They argued that the grand coalition had served the SPD well and that the SPD should wait for a further increase in its voter base before demanding the highest office. They argued further that a minimum winning coalition between the SPD and F.D.P. would be a much too weak base for the realization of the goals the party had. Both men believed that such a coalition would not last for an entire legislative period.

But Brandt was determined to use this opportunity and to become chancellor. On the night of the election, he and Scheel committed themselves to this venture. These men trusted each other and knew that they shared the same political vision. Both men reiterated again and again that they also felt supported by the general political trend which demanded a different foreign policy and a more welfare-state-oriented domestic policy. Brandt, party chairman and chancellor candidate, had much weight in his party. This time, he prevailed over Schmidt and Wehner. The SPD, by virtue of being a disciplined party, closed ranks behind its leader and carried Brandt's decision.

Scheel had a more difficult task of persuasion. Following Brandt's suggestion, he convinced Josef Ertl, the
prominent right-wing Bavarian, to become minister of agriculture. This reduced the right-wing opposition to nine people. Other offers of high positions gradually reduced the opposition to four. Four deputies were insufficient to prevent a social-liberal coalition. On October 3, Mende told Kiesinger:

Your offer of a long-term mutually beneficial relationship, of important ministries, and of the final renunciation of the electoral reform comes three years too late, Mr. Chancellor.16

On October 21, 1969, Willy Brandt was elected chancellor in the Bundestag with a bare majority of just two votes. Only Adenauer had been elected with a smaller margin in 1949.

The social-liberal coalition validated all coalition theories. It was a minimum winning coalition. It was also a minimum winning coalition with minimum weight and thus met Riker's criteria. However, the minimum weight was regarded as a deficiency. Important SPD politicians had counseled against this coalition because of its meager majority. This coalition was formed despite its minimum size and not because of it. Thus, this election validated only in a formal sense coalition theories which used the variable size. In the minds of all party leaders, the minimum size was a strong argument against the formation of this coalition.
This coalition was a minimal connected winning coalition in Axelrod's sense. The leadership of the SPD and the F.D.P., with few exceptions, wanted a new foreign policy and had a vague understanding that Germany should be moved closer to a welfare-state society. In the cultural realm, the SPD and F.D.P. shared many convictions such as the feeling that a reform in education was needed.

Franklin and Mackie's concept was unable to predict this turning point in German politics. The essence of Franklin and Mackie's concept is continuation, and this was a break with past behavior.

Theories based on party-system characteristics were also validated.

Brandt and Scheel knew that they were taking a great gamble. Even they perceived a 12-vote majority as a weak base for coalition politics. They took this risk because they felt supported by a "comrade trend," meaning that they were convinced that the society was becoming receptive to their vision and policies. Wolfgang Mischnick, leader of the F.D.P. deputies, summarized the reasons for their decision in an interview in the following way:17

1. Both men trusted each other.
2. Both men were convinced that their ideas were shared by the growing number of progressive people in the society. They believed that the so-called "Zeitgeist" or political trend was working for them.
3. Both men were convinced that Germany needed to respond to the change from cold war to detente.

4. Both men believed that Germany was "rich" enough to dare more equality.

5. Both men were convinced that a further democratization of the society was needed, especially in business. Equal representation of capital and labor on the boards of companies was the goal (codetermination).

6. Last, but not least, both men believed that only those will win who take risks. And this was what they did. The change in power from the conservatives to the social-democrats had to come. But it did not have to come in 1969. The CDU/CSU was still the strongest party. Kiesinger was determined to remain chancellor. The right wing of the F.D.P. wanted to renew a conservative-liberal coalition. The other camp could only succeed if outstanding personalities were willing to take a great amount of risk. Brandt and Scheel were the right people at the right time. Without them, history would have taken another course.

The 1969 election and the following coalition-bargaining process renders the opportunity to ask another important question that will shed additional light on the importance of political leadership. When the German public went to the polls on Sunday, September 28, 1969, they actually voted for parties. They had no direct influence
over the composition of the next government. The composition of the government was decided by party leaders in a coalition-bargaining process following the election. Now the question must be asked whether these party leaders could choose coalition partners of their own preference or whether they were forced to execute the will of the public.

Norpoth and later Hoffmann-Lange researched this question. Before the 1969 election, five alternatives existed for the composition of the government. Norpoth compiled data which shows the public preferences.18

Table 9

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<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CDU/CSU alone</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPD and FDP</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>101%</td>
<td>101%</td>
<td>101%</td>
<td>99%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(N)</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>(1218)</td>
<td>(591)</td>
<td>(1844)</td>
<td>(1746)</td>
<td>(1790)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Just prior to the 1969 election, 49% of the respondents favored a grand coalition and, as mentioned earlier, 42% of the population wanted Kiesinger to have a second term as
chancellor. Party leaders decided differently and chose a governing coalition which was the second least favored by the public. Norpoth concluded that,

...while at any given time the incumbent coalition receives the support of most voters, popular coalition preferences are largely shaped by the coalition decisions of party elites rather than vice versa.... There is no evidence that voters supporting either of the two major West German parties "punish" their parties in subsequent elections for disappointing their coalition preferences. This is not true, however, for voters aligned with the third party (FDP).19

Hoffmann-Lange presented a more detailed study about the same subject and also concluded that political leaders are the opinion leaders and the decisive factor when it comes to coalition building.20

These findings underline the important role of political leaders. The leaders of the two large parties have the freedom of choice when selecting a coalition partner and are not forced to follow preconceived public opinions. The leader of the F.D.P. does not enjoy the same independence. Voters and party members have clear expectations about the coalition decision. Voters, who fear being disappointed do not vote for the party. Party members who are disappointed leave the party. The F.D.P. clientele is ideologically committed and regards the decision about a coalition alignment as either the
fulfillment of expectations or the breach of trust. Thus, the F.D.P. leadership is confronted with serious problems if it wants to change the coalition alignment. Those problems include the possibility that the party does not receive votes to be presented in the Bundestag, which also means that it is at risk of going under.

The F.D.P. is needed for the formation of a majority government if the two large parties do not want to form a grand coalition. This gives this party a pivotal role, and yet the party is bound to use its kingmaking power with utmost care. In this way, the public or a part of the public has a rather important, albeit indirect, influence over the process of coalition formation in West Germany.

As Wehner and Schmidt correctly foresaw, the social-liberal coalition was not strong enough to survive a full legislative period. The Brandt-Scheel government started its term with great enthusiasm and activity. The initial moves toward a more comprehensive social-welfare state were not controversial. Both coalition partners believed that a pent-up need existed. Sweden, the country in which Willy Brandt had taken refuge during the Nazi period, was the acclaimed example of a social-welfare state. But almost all energies of the Brandt-Scheel coalition were devoted to the "New Ostpolitik." Its main parts were:
1. The acceptance of the territorial status quo in Europe. This meant the renunciation of German territory in the East.

2. The renunciation of West Germany's request to be the sole representative of a new Germany (Hallstein Doctrine). This included the acceptance of a second German state.

3. The establishment of diplomatic relations with all East Bloc countries.

The New Ostpolitik polarized Germany into two camps. The proponents argued that Germany finally had to accept the situation which war and expulsion of people from their homelands in the East had created. The opponents argued that those territories should only be given up in exchange for a final peace treaty and the chance of reunification. The dispute was highly emotional.22

Among the rank and file of the social-liberal coalition were deputies who were born in the East. Some of them left the ruling coalition and joined the CDU/CSU. The majority of only 12 votes melted away.
Table 10

The Erosion of the Majority of the Social-Liberal Coalition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event Description</th>
<th>SPD-F.D.P.</th>
<th>CDU/CSU</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1969 Election Outcome</td>
<td>254</td>
<td>242</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In 1970 Mende, Starke, Zoglmann (F.D.P.) joined the CDU/CSU</td>
<td>251</td>
<td>245</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb. 1972 H. Hupka, vice chairman of the refugee org. joined CDU/CSU</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>246</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 1972 von Kuehlmann-Stumm and Kienbaum (F.D.P.) joined CDU/CSU</td>
<td>248</td>
<td>248</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 1972 W. Helms (F.D.P.) joined the CDU/CSU</td>
<td>247</td>
<td>249</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On April 27, 1972, Rainer Barzel, the leader of the CDU/CSU opposition, used the constructive vote of no confidence in an effort to topple Chancellor Brandt. Barzel was shocked when only 247 votes in favor of a change in power were counted. Two of his own party must have voted against him. Brandt remained chancellor.

In the aftermath of April 27, both parties accused each other of bribing deputies. The events surrounding the vote of no confidence are excellent examples of personal motives. Those motives lengthened Brandt's rule beyond April of 1972. It also made it possible for the treaties with the East to be signed. Barzel would have entered into new negotiations with an uncertain outcome.
Jaeger argued that many Germans regarded the constructive vote of no confidence as an infidel assault on Chancellor Brandt. But it brought into the open that the government no longer had the needed majority to rule and the opposition did not have the necessary votes to form an alternative government. A political stalemate existed. The parties decided that an early election should be held in fall of 1972.

The election campaign was short and bitter. Jaeger outlined that "Der Spiegel" and "Der Stern," both influential magazines, portrayed Brandt as a saint and a man with principles and painted Barzel as a super ambitious and unscrupulous politician. He asserted that this campaign and the dislike of the use of the constructive vote of no confidence influenced the election outcome. The election was a plebiscite for Willy Brandt and the social-liberal coalition:

Table 11
1972 Federal Election

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Votes in %</th>
<th># of Seats</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SPD</td>
<td>45.8</td>
<td>230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F.D.P.</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CDU/CSU</td>
<td>44.9</td>
<td>225</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>496</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

More Germans than ever--91.1%--went to the polls on November 19, 1972. The SPD became the largest party for
the first and only time. The F.D.P. also gained substantially. The big loser was the CDU/CSU.

Brandt and Scheel continued the social-liberal coalition. The F.D.P. even received another important resort. Hans Friderichs became minister of economics. This was a minimum winning coalition. Now it had a comfortable majority of votes in parliament.

Neumann and Morgenstern would have predicted a minimum winning coalition but would not have made the distinction showing which of the two possible ones would gain the upper hand.

Riker would have predicted a CDU/CSU-F.D.P. coalition because this combination had the smaller weight with 266 against 271 deputies.

Leiserson's bargaining theory would have allowed for every possible combination between two parties. This also included a grand coalition.

Political-distance theories, especially Axelrod's minimal connected winning coalition theory, correctly predicted the coalition-bargaining outcome. The common fight for the New Ostpolitik and now the triumphant electoral victory created a feeling of togetherness between the social-liberal coalition partners like there had never been before.

Dodd would have realized that the SPD and the F.D.P. were unwilling to contemplate a coalition with the CDU/CSU
since the constructive vote of no confidence. The party system was under constraint, and an oversized coalition was most likely.

Luebbert's theory correctly predicted a minimum winning coalition.

Franklin and Mackie's concept gave the correct answer because the SPD and F.D.P. continued their cooperation.

The decline of the social-liberal coalition set in immediately after the 1972 election. This unexpected decline was caused mainly by a sudden change in behavior of party leaders. Baring documented in his highly regarded account of the era that Brandt and Scheel were totally exhausted after the election.28 According to Baring and confirmed by Jaeger, both men had to stay in hospitals and were unable to chair meetings. Both authors regard it to be equally important that the leaders themselves and with them the social-liberal coalition had achieved part of its purpose and had great difficulties formulating new and concrete goals. The New Ostpolitik was implemented, and the social-liberal coalition was supposed to concentrate on domestic policy issues. However, Brandt and Scheel had only a vague notion of the kind of welfare state they wanted to create. This gave room to many suggestions and demands, and nobody was available to bundle those into a coherent policy. Brandt retreated from the daily business of government.
Suddenly the old split in the SPD between the young socialists (often used German abbreviation: Jusos) on one side and the moderate wing, the "Kanalarbeiter," on the other side broke out again. The split between these factions was so serious that Brandt threatened to resign.29 The deep split of the SPD made the task of governing very difficult for Brandt. The support for him and his cabinet was based on the continuing cooperation of the moderate wing of the SPD and the F.D.P. The tensions exacerbated when the 1973 Arab oil embargo changed the economic conditions overnight. For a brief moment, Brandt took control; but his leadership soon faded away again. He himself remained torn between his sympathy for the demands of the Jusos and his duty as leader of a government to steer an austerity course. When in 1974, only two years after the great electoral victory, a close confidant of Brandt was caught spying for East Germany, Brandt resigned as chancellor. The luster of the social-liberal coalition was gone.

Helmut Schmidt, a pragmatist, took over. He implemented an economic consolidation program and tried to regain public sympathy for the social-liberal coalition.

Professor Jaeger voiced astonishment that the social-liberal coalition lost so much ground in only two years. He argued that this can only be explained by the sharp decline in leadership quality.30
Brandt and Scheel and their vision of a new society created the social-liberal coalition. As it turned out, their vision was concrete with regard to foreign policy but vague with regard to domestic issues. The period from 1969 to 1972 was entirely devoted to the realization of the new foreign policy. When this goal was reached, both men were too exhausted to translate their idea of a more egalitarian society into a political concept that could be realized. Their lack of leadership caused the sudden and unexpected decline between 1972 and 1974. It is no exaggeration that two men shaped this period, and it is therefore justified to call it the Brandt-Scheel era. Needless to say, this is further proof of the thesis under consideration.
REFERENCES--CHAPTER IX


3. F.D.P. Bundesgeschäftsstelle, Thomas Dehler Haus, Bonn.

The F.D.P. Party Members

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1968</td>
<td>57,034</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>58,750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>56,531</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>53,302</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>57,757</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>63,205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>70,938</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>74,032</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>79,062</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977</td>
<td>79,051</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td>79,740</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>82,328</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>84,085</td>
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<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>86,526</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982</td>
<td>83,422</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>86,747</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984</td>
<td>68,477</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>71,456</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>65,552</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Friedrich Henning, *F.D.P., Die Liberalen, Portrait Einer Partei* (Muenchen: Olzog Verlag, 1982), pp.43-53. Friedrich Henning argued that the active membership which attended party meetings was much smaller than the official numbers at that time.


An F.D.P. member is registered with his local party organization. These memberships are added up at the district, state, and finally at the federal level. There are a handful of federal memberships; they are the exception to the rule. The political weight of the state party organizations depends upon the
number of its members. In 1984, Bremen was the smallest state party organization with 687 members, while North Rhine-Westfalia, with 20,973 members, was the strongest state party. In 1984, the federal party organization of the F.D.P. decided to demand DM 1 from the state organizations for each party member as a contribution to funds available at the federal level. This caused a cleanup of the membership files at the state and local levels in the following years. The number of memberships reflects this process.


6. Werner Kaltefleiter, Parteien im Umbruch. Ein Beitrag zur politischen Geschichte der Bundesrepublik (Duesseldorf-Wien: Econ Verlag, 1984), pp. 23-30. Kaltefleiter argued that the two illegitimate children of the grand coalition were the extra parliamentary opposition (APO) and the Nationaldemocratic Party of Germany (NPD). Groups on the left and on the right of the political spectrum no longer found any representation and either demonstrated or tried to organize their own party. As soon as the coalition of the two catchall parties broke apart, a large part of the supporters of these two groups found their way back into the existing political parties. Hildebrand opposed this argument. He pointed to the fact that both opposition groups had already existed before the formation of the grand coalition and that they started their decline well before the end of this coalition in 1969.


10. The polls conducted in the weeks before the elections showed that the F.D.P. was losing the crossover votes from the CDU/CSU and that the party was in danger of not crossing the 5% hurdle. In this desperate moment, Scheel acknowledged in a widely followed TV show that he favored a coalition with the SPD. He hoped that this would entice some SPD voters to give their second vote (Zweitstimme) to the F.D.P. and thus assure that the SPD and the F.D.P. together would have a majority. Scheel's last-minute appeal was not successful. Klingemann and Pappi convincingly demonstrated that this time neither voters of the CDU/CSU nor of the SPD "loaned" their second vote to the F.D.P.

11. Max Kaase, "Determinanten des Wahlverhaltens bei der Bundestagswahl 1969," Politische Vierteljahreszeitschrift, No. 11. Heft 1, 1970, pp. 46-110. Kaase showed that in July 1969, only two months before the election, 45% of all voters preferred a continuation of a grand coalition; 36%, a majority government by one party; and 10%, a small coalition. He further documented that 42% wanted Kiesinger to continue as chancellor and only 19% hoped that Brandt would be able to replace him.

12. Arnulf Baring, Machtwechsel, Die Aera Brandt-Scheel (Muenchen: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 1984), pp. 99-120. The CDU/CSU had nominated Gerhard Schroeder, the well-respected foreign minister, as its candidate for the presidency. The SPD countered by presenting Gustav Heinemann, a politician who had once left the CDU/CSU and had joined the SPD. The 22 NPD representatives decided to cast their votes for Schroeder. Thus, the CDU/CSU needed only 16 votes from the F.D.P. to get their candidate elected. The SPD, in turn, needed 70 votes from the F.D.P. for a victory for their candidate. The F.D.P. had 83 votes. Mende recalled that more than one-third were committed to vote for Schroeder. Scheel argued in a long evening meeting in the Hotel Europaeischer Hof, Berlin, that this was the chance for the F.D.P. to position itself between the large parties and to demonstrate its reliability to the SPD. A last-minute telephone call between Weyer and Wehner tipped the scale. Wehner promised that no reform of the electoral law would ever get the support of the SPD if Heinemann were elected the next morning. The right wing of the F.D.P. caved in, and Scheel's reputation as party leader soared.
The president is elected by a special body consisting of the Bundestag deputies, including the 22 deputies from Berlin, and an equal number of party representatives from all German states. The representatives from the states are chosen according to the strength of the parties in the respective state parliaments. The president is elected if he wins an absolute majority on one of the first two ballots. If this is not the case, then a third ballot occurs. There, a simple majority suffices. The members of the Bundesversammlung in Berlin on March 5, 1969, were as follows:

Bundesversammlung in Berlin

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CDU/CSU</th>
<th>SPD</th>
<th>F.D.P.</th>
<th>NPD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>252</td>
<td>217</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>230</td>
<td>232</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>482</td>
<td>449</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>518</td>
<td>518</td>
<td>1036</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


15. Ibid., pp. 174-176.


24. Ibid., p. 73.


27. The F.D.P. received the following minister positions:

Walter Scheel - foreign minister,
Hans Friderichs - minister of economics,
Has Dietrich Genscher - minister of the interior,
Josef Ertl - minister of agriculture,
Werner Maihofer - minister without a resort.

In addition, Ruediger von Wechmar (F.D.P.) was appointed as speaker of the government.

From then on, the F.D.P. demanded and received the important positions of foreign minister and minister
of economics. They are regarded to be the two most important resorts after the position of chancellor.


CHAPTER X

THE COALITIONS BETWEEN 1974 AND 1980

OR THE SCHMIDT ERA

The Schmidt era is very controversial.1 Some regard Schmidt as an outstanding leader in a period in which values, international relations, economic conditions, and democratic procedures underwent dramatic changes. Others see in him a chancellor who was driven by circumstances and who had no choices, either with regard to general policies or with regard to coalition bargaining. If the latter is true, then the Schmidt era would be a period which does not support the thesis that political leaders are the decisive variable in the coalition-building process. Schmidt formed three coalition governments—one after the resignation of Brandt and two after elections. In the following, it will be asked what influence Schmidt had in those coalition-formation processes. If it turns out that he was not the driving force, then the question of what other forces led to the continuation of the social-liberal coalition will be addressed.

In 1969, all three parties were willing to coalesce with each other. This situation changed after the
unsuccessful effort to unseat Chancellor Brandt by the constructive vote of no confidence. Neither the SPD nor the F.D.P. were willing to coalesce with the CDU/CSU in fall of 1972. This situation had not changed in 1974 when Schmidt became the designated chancellor.2

The CDU/CSU wanted to regain governmental power. For this reason, it replaced party leader Rainer Barzel with Helmut Kohl. But this alone was insufficient to convince the SPD and the F.D.P. that the CDU/CSU had principally accepted the Ostpolitik and the growing welfare state.3

The F.D.P. had successfully overcome its schism. The party had simply lost its most conservative members. Now the F.D.P. was united behind Schaeel and Genscher, who deliberately occupied the center of political gravity.4 This party was not ready for a change in a coalition partner in 1974.

The SPD, which entered the social-liberal coalition united in 1969, was now deeply divided. Its right wing was the stronger one that succeeded in bringing Schmidt into the chancellor position. Its left wing acquiesced because its only choice was between a Schmidt- or a CDU/CSU-led government. They chose the lesser evil. If Schmidt would have preferred a grand coalition over a social-liberal coalition, then the left wing of the SPD would have broken away.5 This was a risk which no SPD chancellor could take.
Thus, Schmidt had no choice other than to continue the social-liberal coalition. However, the climate inside the social-liberal coalition changed under his leadership. Jaeger pointed out that the relations between Brandt and Scheel were amicable. The relations between Schmidt and Genscher developed into a businesslike give-and-take attitude. Both men and both parties needed each other, but the enthusiasm was gone. Brandt and Scheel had tried to realize a vision. Schmidt and Genscher wanted to govern successfully and to be reelected in the next election.

Both politicians knew that this was only possible if the public perception of a crisis disappeared and if the image of the social-liberal coalition in general and of the SPD in particular improved. The public image of the SPD had plummeted:

The Public Image of the SPD

![Graph showing the public image of the SPD](image)
As the chart indicates, Schmidt's pragmatic politics restored some of the image but never reached the affection Brandt had been able to generate.

The 1976 election campaign was confrontational and extremely candidate oriented. The incumbent Chancellor Schmidt, known as the respected technocrat and doer, was opposed by the friendly new opposition leader, Kohl. The election turnout was high, 90.7%.

Table 12

1976 Federal Election

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party</th>
<th>% of Votes</th>
<th># of Seats</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SPD</td>
<td>42.6</td>
<td>214</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F.D.P.</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CDU/CSU</td>
<td>48.6</td>
<td>243</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>496</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The CDU/CSU was the winner of this election, gaining 3.7 percentage points and missing the absolute majority by a mere 300,000 votes. The F.D.P. lost .5 percentage points. The SPD was shocked. Its share of the votes had declined. The party lost 3.2 percentage points. The trend which had started in 1957 was broken.

Neumann and Morgenstern would have predicted a minimum winning coalition. Actually, two were possible. The social-liberal coalition had a majority of 10 deputies in the Bundestag. A conservative-liberal coalition would have had a majority of 68 deputies.
Riker would have predicted the continuation of the social-liberal coalition. This coalition was the one with minimum weight.

Leiserson's bargaining proposition would have allowed a combination of any two of the three parties.

Political-distance theories, Axelrod's minimal connected winning coalition theory included, would have had to decide whether the ideological distance between the F.D.P. and the SPD or between the F.D.P. and the CDU/CSU was smaller. This difficult question will be discussed in more detail later. Here it must suffice to say that on the surface, an SPD-F.D.P. coalition was a minimal connected winning coalition.

Franklin and Mackie would have predicted the continuation of the social-liberal coalition.

Dodd's theory was based on the question asking whether all parties were a priori willing to enter into coalitions with each other. This was not the case. A coalition between the SPD and the CDU/CSU was impossible and a coalition between the CDU/CSU and the F.D.P. would have caused a severe rift between the left and the moderate wings of the F.D.P. Dodd would have concluded that this was a party system under constraint. In this case, his theory predicted an oversized coalition as the most likely outcome.

Luebbert would have concluded that this was a competitive party system. His second criteria was whether
a dominant party existed or not. The SPD and the CDU/CSU were separated by six percentage points. But the smaller SPD had the more prominent chancellor candidate. Thus, no dominant party existed. This made a minimum winning coalition the most likely bargaining outcome.

The situation at the beginning of the coalition-bargaining process was as follows. Schmidt wanted to stay in power. Herles documented that the majority of the SPD also wanted to remain in power, although a growing number of left-leaning SPD politicians, among them Eppler, argued that a programmatic modernization of the party was only possible if the party did not have to carry the burden of government. He argued for a retreat into the opposition. But Eppler and other Schmidt foes were in the minority.

The F.D.P. also wanted to stay in power. Wolfgang Mischnick, leader of the Bonner F.D.P., explained why the F.D.P. continued the social-liberal coalition.

1. Schmidt was a very respected and popular chancellor. His policies of consolidation squared well with the fundamental beliefs of the F.D.P. leadership.

2. The F.D.P. correctly believed that it could gain a higher profile in an SPD-F.D.P. coalition than in a CDU/CSU-F.D.P. coalition. There, the F.D.P. could position itself as the supporter of a respected
chancellor and a defender of a market-oriented system against the onslaught of leftist radicals.

3. Kohl and Genscher had an amicable relationship for years. They were neighbors in Bonn. But Genscher was not sure whether Kohl was really in command. Strauss, the long-time enemy of the F.D.P., seemed to be the strong man in this party.

4. The F.D.P. believed that the public would not have understood and tolerated a change in coalition alignment so soon after the new beginning in 1969. Also, the party had entered the election campaign promising the continuation of the social-liberal coalition if it gained a majority. The party leadership was still haunted by the memory that they had broken an important campaign promise in 1961. The public had not forgotten this "betrayal" and still labeled the F.D.P. a "tumbler party."

Schmidt appeared to be in command in this coalition-bargaining process. But the F.D.P. was the actual "kingmaker." Schmidt needed the F.D.P. in order to come to power and as a counterweight to his unruly left wing. Objectively viewed, Schmidt had no alternative for the continuation of the social-liberal coalition. On the other hand, human relations, credibility toward the public, and simply inertia (Franklin and Mackie) made this the logical outcome of this bargaining process. It is therefore
difficult to tell whether Schmidt and Genscher were the
decisive variable or whether circumstances enforced the
outcome. However, one should keep in mind that without
Schmidt and Genscher, the social-liberal coalition might
not have continued. Kaltefleiter argued that it would have
been the logical consequence of the election results that
the conservatives would come to power. However, the
deep division between progressives and conservatives made a
change in power an extraordinary event. The leaders of the
F.D.P. did not dare to be the instrument for such a change
at that time. The social-liberal coalition was still too
popular, and the CDU/CSU had not yet univocally accepted
the new internal and external positions created by the
social-liberal coalition. However, Genscher, Friderichs,
and Lambsdorff made it known that the cooperation with the
SPD was a coalition for a common purpose (Zweckbuendnis)
and possibly only for a limited period of time. They
argued that the F.D.P. was free to choose another coalition
partner if conditions warranted such a move. Friderichs
and Lambsdorff warned that a fundamental attack on the
free-market system by the SPD would create such a
condition. The left undertook such an attack between 1974
and 1982, and only Schmidt stood between them and the
breakup of the coalition.

The 1976 coalition was a minimum winning coalition.
It was even a coalition of minimum weight (Riker). But
size considerations played no role in the coalition-bargaining process. Schmidt and Genscher wanted to continue the social-liberal coalition, regardless of whether they had a small or a large majority.

It is difficult to decide whether this was a minimal connected winning coalition or not. Between the leadership of the F.D.P. and the right wing of the SPD there existed a close affinity. These politicians had the same political goals, shared ideological convictions, and were determined to work together. However, between them and the left wings of their parties, there existed deep ideological cleavages. The cleavage was especially deep, even hostile, between Schmidt and the Jusos of the SPD. Brandt, party leader of the SPD, and Wehner, leader of the Bonner F.D.P. deputies, continuously mediated between the feuding factions. In summary, the government was ideologically connected but had to contend with hostile attacks from their own left wings. This situation did not entirely conform with the content of the minimal connected winning coalition theory. Schmidt's room to maneuver was narrow under those circumstances. But without him the social-liberal coalition would have broken apart. He was the strong and decisive leader who determined politics in West Germany.
With the exception of Dodd's theory, all coalition theories predicted the correct outcome of this coalition-bargaining process.

The period between 1976 and 1980 was a difficult one. The following events had direct influence on the federal election in 1980:

1. Kohl had achieved the second best election result for the CDU/CSU in 1976. But he had failed to bring the party back into power because he could not lure the F.D.P. away from Chancellor Schmidt. The CDU/CSU replaced him with Franz Josef Strauss as chancellor candidate for the 1980 election. Strauss promised to crush the F.D.P. in a confrontational election campaign and to win the absolute majority.\(^\text{17}\)

2. Schmidt and the F.D.P. leadership wanted this period to be a time of consolidation. Those efforts were stifled by President Carter's efforts to grow out (locomotive theory) of the economic difficulties caused by the OPEC-cartel.

3. However, the progressive forces suffered a severe public backlash when terrorism and political assassinations discredited their cause. Schmidt, their great antagonist, gained appreciation and respect when special forces (G7) rescued a Lufthansa plane from terrorist hands in Mogadischu (Africa) in 1976.
4. Free-market-oriented politicians got the upper hand in the F.D.P. Their campaign against socialist experiments was very popular.

5. Both ruling parties were so preoccupied with the business of government that they did not react to new issues. Environmentalists and peace-movement participants joined together and created the new party of The Greens.18

The 1980 elections brought the following results:

Table 13

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% of Votes</th>
<th># of Seats</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Greens</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPD</td>
<td>42.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F.D.P.</td>
<td>10.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CDU/CSU</td>
<td>44.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

497

Strauss had underestimated the general opposition to his personality and had overestimated his ability to beat Schmidt, a chancellor with an excellent national and international reputation. The CDU/CSU received only 44.5% of the votes, 4.1 percentage points less than Kohl had received in the 1976 election. The F.D.P. was not crushed. With 10.6%, it had one of its best election results ever. The F.D.P. received many crossover votes from voters who either did not want Strauss as chancellor or wanted to
strengthen the opposition to the Jusos in the social-liberal coalition. The SPD gained .3 percentage points, a dismal result for a chancellor with such a high approval rating.

Neumann and Morgenstern would have predicted the formation of a minimum winning coalition without giving any clue as to whether the SPD or the CDU/CSU would present the chancellor.

Riker would have predicted a social-liberal coalition. Such a coalition would have 271 deputies in the Bundestag, while a CDU/CSU-F.D.P. coalition would number 279 deputies.

Leiserson's bargaining concept would have allowed for coalitions of two parties. Three such coalitions were possible; one of them was the one which actually emerged.

Policy-distance theories, Axelrod's minimal connected winning coalition theory included, faced the difficulty of positioning the parties correctly on a political continuum. Schmidt, representing the right wing of the SPD, and the right wing of the F.D.P., which included the party leadership, were close allies politically. Between them and the left wings of their parties existed a remarkable dividing line. Lambsdorff's influence, as minister of economics, rose steadily. His free-market position was in sharp opposition to the ideas of the left wing of the SPD, and Schmidt's reputation was insufficient to hold the feuding factions together. Another cleavage
line separated the F.D.P. and its leadership from chancellor candidate Strauss, but not from the CDU/CSU. The right wing of the F.D.P. and the leadership of the party had close but unofficial contacts with the CDU/CSU. As soon as Strauss had abdicated and returned to Muenchen, those contacts became more visible and important. 21 Policy-distance theories have great difficulties simplifying those realities and rendering a judgment as to whether the F.D.P. was closer to the SPD or to the CDU/CSU at the time of the coalition formation. Because the coalition was unable to govern effectively and since it broke apart during the legislative period, I will conclude with hindsight that this was not a minimal connected winning coalition.

Dodd would have had to realize that the CDU/CSU and the SPD were such strong adversaries at that point in time that they were unwilling to coalesce. He also would have noticed that the F.D.P. could not participate in a Strauss coalition. In summary, the party system of 1980 was under severe constraint, which would have led to the prediction of an oversized coalition.

Luebbert would have stressed that the party system was highly competitive and that no dominant party existed. These facts led to the correct prediction of a minimum winning coalition.
Franklin and Mackie would have correctly predicted that the social-liberal coalition would be continued another time.

The voters had given the F.D.P. one of its best election results with the expectation that the party would bring Helmut Schmidt back into the chancellor's office. They also had strengthened the F.D.P. with the expectation that the new government would pursue centrist policies and would keep the socialists at bay. Genscher fulfilled the public expectations and helped Schmidt to become chancellor again.

This was a minimum winning coalition, even one of minimum weight. However, size considerations probably played no role at all. It was sufficient that this government had a majority, and whether it was a large or a small one was immaterial to Schmidt and Genscher. They had a basic agreement about the needed policies. But their cabinet was constantly under hostile attacks from the left and had a very difficult time realizing any of their goals. As already argued, this was no longer a connected or ideologically compatible government. The left wing was too demanding and eventually too powerful. Inertia also played an important role in this coalition-building process. It would have been very dangerous for the F.D.P. to contemplate a change in coalition alignment as long as Schmidt was in command.
That leaves us with the important question of whether Schmidt and Genscher had choices and were able to influence the coalition-building process or whether they were driven by circumstances. There is no question that their choices were much more restricted than the ones of Adenauer in 1953 and in 1957 or the ones Brandt had in 1969. But the social-liberal coalition would not have lasted that long if Schmidt and Genscher were not the leading figures. Schmidt was a force in himself and only secondarily a representative of the SPD. Genscher was a politician known for his ability to wait and postpone dangerous decisions. This combination allowed the social-liberal coalition to survive for so long.

The thesis of this study is that leadership is one important but not the only variable influencing the process of coalition building. The Schmidt era is an example of how all variables were intertwined. It also demonstrates that leadership not only manifests itself when coalitions are altered but also in situations in which continuity prevails. Schmidt and Genscher were less able than Adenauer to manipulate facts and circumstances. But Jaeger regarded Schmidt as such a dominating politician that he called the period between 1974 and 1982 the Schmidt era.22
In summarizing, one has to conclude, that the social-liberal coalition in 1980 continued for the following reasons:

1. The F.D.P. could not participate in a government led by Strauss.
2. Schmidt's popularity was still so great that the F.D.P. did not dare to overthrow him.

Both reasons originated in the charisma of two leading politicians and their behavior.

However, important coalition theories correctly predicted the outcome of the coalition-bargaining processes during the Schmidt era. The question remains whether the variables underlying those theories or leadership behavior were the decisive ones for the actual coalition outcomes. I argue that in a subtle way Schmidt's popularity and Genscher's hesitancy were the decisive reasons for the continuation of the social-liberal coalition in 1976 and 1980.
REFERENCES—CHAPTER X


5. Karl Dietrich Bracher, Wolfgang Jaeger, and Werner Link, Republik im Wandel 1969-1974 Die Aera Brandt, Vol. 5/1, Geschichte der Bundesrepublik Deutschland (Stuttgart-Wiesbaden: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt & F. A. Brockhaus, 1986), p. 126. Jaeger wrote, "The change from one chancellor to another was not the passage to a higher level of social-liberal coalition. It defines the beginning of the decline of this coalition, even if this decline would last longer as the whole era Brandt.... The progressive forces did not disappear. On the contrary, their alarm became louder and louder the more their disappointment grew.... This tension was going to grow year by year and would eventually destroy the social-liberal coalition."


7. Ibid., p. 217.

8. Ibid., p. 466.


14. Werner Filmer and Heribert Schwan, Hans-Dietrich Genscher (Duesseldorf-Wien: Econ Verlag, 1988), p. 198. Filmer and Schwan wrote, "...the party convention in Kiel under Lambsdorff's leadership brought a significant move toward the right."


16. Ibid., p. 128. Carr wrote, "Schmidt was, without question, the boss. He had the cabinet he wanted to have, at least with respect to the ministers of the SPD. There was no atmosphere of drifting or of coming crises.... The relations between Schmidt and Genscher were businesslike; they were never warm...."


18. The Greens fielded candidates in a local election in 1978. In the fall of 1978, they entered the state parliament in Bremen. In the federal election of 1980, they received 1.5% too few votes to enter the Bundestag. In 1983, they surpassed the 5% hurdle. Finally in 1987, they strengthened their federal representation to 8.3% which almost equaled the strength of the F.D.P. The Greens started as a perceived middle-class party. Over time, their political standpoint moved to the left.


20. How strong Schmidt's appeal really was is documented by an Emnid poll, taken as late as March of 1982. Schmidt's public image was higher than the one of the SPD and of all other politicians.
The Image of Chancellor Schmidt


22. Wolfgang Jaeger and Werner Link, Republik im Wandel, 1974-1982 Die Aera Schmidt, Vol. 5/II, Geschichte der Bundesrepublik Deutschland (Stuttgart-Wiesbaden: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt & F. A. Brockhaus, 1987), p. 272. Jaeger wrote, "One should assume that Schmidt's chancellorship was a necessity for the Federal Republic because only he, carried by a consensus of all classes, was able to bring the country into the period of slow growth.... Different from the analysis of Golo Mann, I will conclude that the Federal Republic and not the SPD benefitted most from Schmidt's chancellorship."
CHAPTER XI

THE WENDE OF 1982

OR THE BREAKDOWN OF THE SOCIAL-LIBERAL COALITION

This chapter will present the Wende of 1982. It will be argued that the breakup of a ruling coalition during a legislative period is an extraordinary event in German postwar politics and that personal factors contributed decisively to this occurrence.

Schmidt's 1976 coalition had a majority of only 10 seats in the Bundestag and survived unthreatened by the opposition. His 1980 coalition had a 45-seat majority and from a numerical point of view should have had no problems of survival. However, immediately after the government formation, an extended public debate erupted over the prospects for this government. Opinion leaders from academia and politics participated in this widely followed discussion. Golo Mann, a respected historian, prophesied that this coalition would not last for four years and that it would break apart over "the poverty of financial means" for social spending. Walter Scheel argued that during every coalition period, the common ground declines and that the present social-liberal coalition was close to having exhausted its stock of common ideas. Ralf Dahrendorf
argued for political versatility and for tolerance of other lifestyles and ideas. But he did not tell his own party how to coordinate these many facets or how to govern successfully. Finally, Verheugen questioned whether liberals had a chance of surviving as an independent party at all. The fear of extinction crept into the minds of F.D.P. politicians.

In 1981 and 1982, the cleavage between the left and the right wings of the SPD deepened. The second oil crisis threw Germany into a recession. The left wing demanded government-financed stimulation programs. Schmidt resisted because his coalition partner did not support tax increases to finance those programs but requested a cut in social services instead. Even more controversial was the question of whether Germany should accept Euro-missiles (Pershing II and cruise missiles) if the Geneva talks between the superpowers failed. Schmidt was committed to the deployment of those missiles in Germany; the left was equally committed to preventing this from happening. Brandt, who sympathized with the left, ceased supporting the Schmidt government. He openly took sides with the left. The leadership troika of Schmidt, Brandt, and Wehner finally broke apart. Wehner gave up, to demonstrate unity where differing convictions had destroyed the common platform. Age, exhaustion, and the knowledge that Schmidt, though still the great leader to the public, was no longer
capable of holding the SPD together were the reasons for his resignation. Schmidt himself was seriously ill. Spells of unconsciousness hampered his efficiency until he had a pacemaker implanted. His inability to exert leadership was hidden from the public but did not deter the attacks from the enemies in his party.

The CDU/CSU drew conclusions from its disastrous election result. Strauss disappeared to Muenchen, and Kohl again became the CDU/CSU's chancellor candidate. Kohl expected to win a larger percentage of the votes in 1984 and to lure the F.D.P. into a coalition with him. His efforts to further broaden his personal relations with F.D.P. politicians clearly pointed in this direction.

The situation of the F.D.P. was precarious, indeed. Genscher had publicly stated the following position several times and reiterated it in a personal conversation with the author: Genscher was convinced that his party had to be part of a government to survive. He believed that the F.D.P. was too small to be attractive to voters and financial backers, when in opposition. Genscher also believed that the F.D.P. could not simply guarantee a majority for one of the large parties. Dittberner presented the dilemma of the F.D.P. convincingly when he wrote that the F.D.P. is "the party of second choice." The voters knew that the F.D.P. was the swing or pivotal
party and expected that it would use this power in accordance with clearly stated positions based on ideological beliefs. The voters expected a clearer ideological position and less pragmatic behavior from the F.D.P. than from other parties. F.D.P. members at that time were very ideologically motivated. A declining number were firmly committed to the social-liberal coalition; a growing number increasingly believed that liberal values could be better preserved in a coalition with the CDU/CSU. The F.D.P. leadership was increasingly alarmed by the prospect of being drawn into the downward trend of the SPD. This fear was heightened since The Greens had one electoral success after the other and their appearance in the Bundestag was only a question of time.

The F.D.P. could not simply leave the Schmidt government. When the party changed its coalition alignment in 1969, it lost a third of its members. Public and party members had to be persuaded first that it was Schmidt who no longer could execute social-liberal policies because of his left wing before the F.D.P. could dare to leave the still-popular chancellor behind. The F.D.P. also needed some kind of reassurance that its new coalition partner would actively support its survival in the ensuing political turmoil.

Carr reported that Schmidt and Genscher met privately in Hamburg in December of 1981 with the intent of ironing
out differences between the coalition partners and assuring themselves that they would work together through the whole legislative period. But Schmidt was unable to assure his coalition partner that the cooperation for three more years would create conditions which would assure the survival of the F.D.P. in the next federal election. Carr believes that Schmidt could have saved the coalition at that point in time if he would have been more convincing. We will not know whether a chance was lost in Hamburg, but we do know that the growing personal distance between these two men was an important ingredient in the events of 1982.

It took two full years, from 1980 to 1982, before the social-liberal coalition broke apart. The F.D.P. had committed itself to support Chancellor Schmidt for a full legislative term. However, Schmidt was less and less able to hold the feuding faction in his own party together and to govern effectively. The F.D.P. had to decide whether it was better to honor its promise and stay in a declining coalition for two more years or to break the coalition apart, risking the wrath of Schmidt supporters. The leadership of the F.D.P. knew that the wrong decision in this vital question could mean the end of the party. Strauss summarized the dilemma of the F.D.P. in the following way:

What will the F.D.P. do? My answer: the F.D.P. will stay at the side of the SPD until it comes into a life-threatening situation caused
mainly by economic and/or financial problems. The F.D.P. will break the coalition only if the coalition has reached an obvious dead-end. The F.D.P. will try to appear to be the savior of the nation and expects to be honored for this. It belongs to the fundamentals of F.D.P. politics to change the coalition partner only if its own survival is threatened.10

Actually, the budget question was the final straw which broke the camel's back. Lambsdorff published a position paper in which he requested stern austerity measures and a return to freer market conditions. Schmidt could not accept this position paper without risking an uproar in his own party. Schmidt threatened to expel the F.D.P. ministers. They resigned and gave Schmidt the opportunity to call them traitors. Schmidt's minority government could not last. He asked for new elections, but the Basic Law provides the constructive vote of no confidence as the legal way to bring about a change in power. However, the public had severe reservations about this procedure. It demanded that the new chancellor legitimize his position by a new election. Kohl knew that an immediate election would destroy the F.D.P.11 He promised the F.D.P. to postpone a new federal election until March 6, 1983. On October 1, 1982, the Bundestag elected out of its midst Helmut Kohl as the new chancellor of West Germany.
The CDU/CSU-F.D.P. coalition had a comfortable majority in the Bundestag, 271 against 226 deputies. But Kohl and Genscher knew that some F.D.P. deputies and members would leave the party. In the final count, the F.D.P. lost four of its deputies, among them party secretary Verheugen, and about 15,000 members.12

The events surrounding the Wende of 1982 were full of human drama and are still subject to speculation and new interpretations.13 The question to answer here is whether political circumstances were so strong that they forced politicians to act in a determined way or whether political leaders shaped the events and influenced the outcome.

The progressive elan was gone long before the social-liberal coalition broke apart. Jaeger argued that the changes in power structure followed the change of the political trend by a lengthy time lag.14 If one accepts this type of determinism, many opportunities still remain for political leaders to shorten or lengthen this period of decline. They have choices and exercise them in a way that is difficult if not impossible to predict. The breakdown of a ruling coalition during a legislative period was an extraordinary event. I will argue that it came about because the circumstances were favorable and because the main players wanted it to happen.
1. Kohl became the uncontested leader of the CDU/CSU just at the right time. Strauss had returned to Muenchen humiliated and was no threat any longer. Kohl was known to favor a conservative-liberal coalition and willing to support the F.D.P.'s efforts to survive.

2. The continuing attacks by the left wing undermined the leadership image of Chancellor Schmidt. Schmidt himself was seriously ill during the decisive phase, which made it easier for his opponents in the SPD.

3. Just in time, Lambsdorff became the strong man behind Genscher. Genscher hesitated through all of 1981. He was prepared to wait even longer before he would make the decision to leave the coalition. He knew that this would again bring the F.D.P. to the brink of extinction. But Lambsdorff was determined to break away in the summer of 1982. His position paper was the decisive document. Friderichs told the author that Lambsdorff knew that his position paper would force Schmidt's hand because otherwise the risk was too great the the SPD would fall apart.

Jaeger argued that the circumstances in 1982 were not worse than in 1981 and that with a little bit of goodwill, the budget question could have been solved like it was the year before. Experts also predicted that the economy was on the verge of recovery which would have brought some relief to the beleaguered coalition. But important leaders,
especially in the F.D.P., did not want to wait for 1984. They wanted to end the social-liberal coalition then. Compelling evidence suggests that the party leaders had the choice of either continuing the coalition to the end of the regular legislative period or breaking it apart. The chance for breaking it apart came in the fall of 1981 and the fall of 1982. Genscher did not take the opportunity in 1981. The Wende of 1982 was not an event that came about because of so-called historic forces. It came about because some influential politicians did not want to wait for the end of the legislative period to change the ruling coalition. It is strong proof of the workings of leadership in the coalition game.
REFERENCES—CHAPTER XI

1. Highly regarded politicians, scientists, and journalists participated in the public discussion about the future course of the F.D.P. and the social-liberal coalition. Those statements had tremendous influence on public opinion. In 1981 and 1982, many articles appeared that favored the breakup of the social-liberal coalition. After this had happened, many articles asked critical questions about the ideological foundations of the F.D.P. Eventually in 1986, the media interest died down, because Genscher had reasserted his leadership position and the F.D.P. gained its own profile in the negotiations about the double zero option.

The following is a careful selection of articles which had substantial influence in the public debate:


Ralf Dahrendorf, "Es ist nicht alles Weimar was bunt ist," Die Zeit, No. 28, July 15, 1981.


A public discussion continued over the political position of the F.D.P. and its role in the party system and in government:


8. Jonathan Carr, Helmut Schmidt (Duesseldorf-Wien: Econ Verlag, 1986), pp. 224-225. Carr wrote, "The Hamburger conversation on July 31, 1981, received little public attention. However, a high Bonner official, who was a close confidant of both politicians, is convinced that this meeting was the decisive event for the Bonner coalition. If Schmidt and Genscher would have reached a personal rapport on this very day to continue their cooperation until the election of 1984, then the coalition would have survived despite the difficulties which objectively existed. He was convinced that Genscher was prepared to be persuaded and that Schmidt wanted the continuation of the coalition. The statesmen departed politely but coolly, and the chance was lost."

9. There is a large body of literature about the breakup of the social-liberal coalition. Important examples are:

Klaus Boelling, Die letzten 30 Tage des Kanzlers Helmut Schmidt, Ein Tagebuch (Hamburg: Spiegel Buch, Rowohlt Verlag, 1982).


11. On September 26, 1982, angry voters threw the F.D.P. out of the parliament in the State of Hesse. The F.D.P. received only 3.1% of the votes, after having received 6.6% in the 1978 election. Schmidt's campaign against the "traitor party" was highly successful.


In this chapter, the coalitions of 1983 and 1987 will be presented. It will be shown that most of the existing coalition theories correctly predicted the coalition-bargaining outcomes. However, this conformity alone will not be accepted as proof of the validity of the coalition theories. As proof of their validity, it is necessary that their main variables be the main reasons for the emergence of the coalitions in questions. Therefore, I will be very concerned with unearthing the underlying reasons which led to the continuation of the conservative-liberal coalition in 1983 and 1987.

A change in power during a legislative period has been an unusual event in postwar German politics. Through the constructive vote of no confidence, the Basic Law provides a legal procedure to arrive at a new majority government without new elections. However, this procedure is not fully accepted by the public. It has the odium of an unfair procedure to unseat an incumbent chancellor.

Therefore, Kohl felt obligated to "legitimize" his position by a popular mandate. He resisted the requests by
Strauss and Schmidt for an immediate election, hoping that
time would help his coalition partner F.D.P. convince the
public that the breakup of the social-liberal coalition
had been in Germany's best interest. After drawn-out
negotiations and after a ruling that the procedure was
covered by the constitution, March 6, 1983, was chosen as
the date for a new election.

Kohl and Genscher made the correct assumption that the
public would accept the new role of the F.D.P. by spring of
1983. The left wing of the SPD continued attacking Schmidt
until he finally declared that he would not be available as
a chancellor candidate. This convinced many voters that it
might indeed not have been the F.D.P. who had pushed
Schmidt out of office.1 The excellent cooperation
between the new coalition partners was in sharp contrast to
the infighting in other parties. It also had tangible
results. The recession abated, confidence returned, and
the budget deficit was reined in. The result of the March
6, 1983, election was no surprise.

Table 14

1983 Federal Election2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party</th>
<th>% of Votes</th>
<th># of Seats</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Greens</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPD</td>
<td>38.2</td>
<td>193</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F.D.P.</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CDU/CSU</td>
<td>48.8</td>
<td>244</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

498
Neumann and Morgenstern would have predicted a minimum winning coalition as the outcome of the ensuing coalition-bargaining process. Two minimum winning coalitions were numerically possible. One would have had the CDU/CSU as its center; the other, the SPD.

Riker would have predicted a coalition between the CDU/CSU and The Greens because this coalition would have had minimum weight. But the CDU/CSU and The Greens were the parties which opposed each other the most. A coalition between them was not feasible.

Leiserson's bargaining proposition would have asked for a coalition of only two parties. Three such combinations were numerically possible. A CDU/CSU-The Greens coalition, a CDU/CSU-F.D.P. coalition, and finally a grand coalition between the CDU/CSU and the SPD would have validated his approach. One of those combinations was the correct one, but the wide range of possibilities demonstrates the weakness of this approach.

Minimum-distance theories, including Axelrod's famous minimal connected winning coalition theory, would have had to place the parties on a political continuum first. The big question was whether such a one-dimensional political continuum could have been constructed at all in 1983. Dalton argued that West Germany was now divided by two crosscutting cleavage lines. One cleavage line represented the traditional values, the other cleavage line
represented the modern, post-materialist values. However, Kaltefleiter demonstrated that traditional issues still had the greater weight.

Table 15

Public Perceptions About The Saliency of Political Problems4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1983</th>
<th>1986</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unemployment</td>
<td>36.6</td>
<td>28.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Problems in General</td>
<td>16.6</td>
<td>10.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peace</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>11.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environment</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undecided</td>
<td>31.6</td>
<td>32.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 1983, 53.2% regarded traditional issues as the more important ones and only 15.7% gave priority to the new issues. A 1986 survey showed a significant change in these numbers in favor of new issues. Only 39.1% regarded traditional issues as the dominant ones, while 28% gave priority to the new issues. The trend is pronounced, but the traditional issues still have more weight.

Since the F.D.P. lost most of its social-liberal wing, the party had a close ideological accord with the CDU/CSU. The SPD regarded The Greens as such a severe challenge that cooperation in a government coalition would have been met by great resistance. Therefore, one can safely conclude that in 1983 the political distance between the CDU/CSU and the F.D.P. was smaller than between any other combination
of parties. Thus, political-distance theories would have predicted a coalition between the CDU/CSU and the F.D.P.

Franklin and Mackie would have predicted a continuation of the conservative-liberal coalition. These two parties had worked together since October 1, 1982, and their familiarity and effective collaboration indicated the likelihood of a continuation.

Dodd, whose theory is based on party-system characteristics, would have realized that all parties had vowed not to enter into a coalition with The Greens. This meant that the party system was under constraint, resulting in an oversized coalition. The coalition that was finally formed consisted of the CDU/CSU and the F.D.P. They had 278 out of 498 seats in the Bundestag, which represented a strong majority. But both parties were necessary to achieve this majority. Since there was no "unnecessary party" in this coalition, by definition this coalition was not oversized. Therefore, Dodd's theory did not predict the correct outcome.

Luebbert's first criteria is whether the party system is a competitive one. This was truly the case. His second criteria is whether a dominant party exists or not. Since the formation of the Federal Republic, the CDU/CSU had ruled for the first 20 years and the SPD for the last 14 years. Based on this and other considerations, neither of those parties could be called a dominant party in 1983.
Under these circumstances of a competitive party system and no dominant party, Luebbert's theory predicted a minimum winning coalition.

The actual coalition-bargaining process occurred in the following way. The election brought a fourth party into the Bundestag, ending the three-party system which had existed since 1961. However, all parties vowed not to coalesce with the new party, The Greens. Its concept of basic democracy and its insistence that violence is a legitimate instrument in the political fight did not square with the established democratic procedures. The exclusion of The Greens as a coalition partner made it impossible for the SPD to form a government. The SPD would have needed The Greens and the F.D.P. for the formation of a majority government. Together these three parties would have had 254 seats in the Bundestag, which would have given them a majority of 10 votes over the CDU/CSU opposition. Since The Greens had 27 votes, a coalition without them was not feasible. The CDU/CSU regarded The Greens more than the SPD as its ideological opponent and did not consider a coalition with them.

Kohl had campaigned for a coalition with the F.D.P. and tried to make the F.D.P. attractive to conservative voters. Contrary to Strauss, he believed that the political circumstances and the existing electoral law were not conducive to a two-party system. He also wanted the
The election outcome met Kohl's expectations. He needed the F.D.P. as a coalition partner. Thus he could argue that Genscher must receive the position of foreign minister and that therefore no ministry of sufficient weight was available for Strauss. Kohl had no difficulties presenting a CDU/CSU-F.D.P. coalition. However, the F.D.P. secured for itself an astonishing number of important minister positions.

This was not the first time that the smaller coalition partner had gained an overproportionate share of the minister positions. The reasons are straightforward:

1. The larger party needed the F.D.P. A coalition between the CDU/CSU and the SPD was seen as a possibility only under crisis conditions. Such a situation did not exist. Thus, in most coalition-bargaining situations, the F.D.P. had some blackmail potential.

2. The F.D.P. managed to have outstanding politicians through all these years. There was simply no match available in the CDU/CSU for Genscher or for Lambsdorff.

3. The F.D.P. knew that the foreign office and the ministry of economics were the most important offices behind the chancellorship. Since the F.D.P. could
never reach the chancellorship, it fought diligently and astutely for these offices. Later, inertia helped to maintain them. The CDU/CSU did not even try to get the ministry of economics back when Lambsdorff had to leave after being accused of illegal fund-raising for his party. Bangemann, his successor, never reached his popularity and yet remained uncontested.

4. The fourth reason for the strong position of the F.D.P. in every coalition is that the chancellor needed this outside force to discipline his own cohorts. Schmidt needed the F.D.P. against his unruly left wing, and Kohl needed the F.D.P. against Strauss. This explains why in all coalitions the F.D.P. had such great importance and why its policy demands received so much attention within the coalition.9

The F.D.P. had great difficulties developing its own profile as a partner of the CDU/CSU. A basic consensus about policies existed between the parties. Thus, the F.D.P. had only a few chances to demonstrate its independence and usefulness to its voters. This had been totally different in a coalition with the SPD. There, the F.D.P. could prove almost daily that it was the stalwart of freedom and free-market orientation.

Just in time for the 1987 election, the Soviets handed the F.D.P. an issue which helped the party to gain its own profile. The "double-zero option" became the prominent
campaign issue. Gorbachev offered to dismantle all Euro-missiles with a range greater than 500 miles and to negotiate over the dismantling of all shorter range nuclear devices. Genscher regarded this as a further part of the "New Ostpolitik," while his Christian-Democratic coalition partner saw it as another effort to decouple the U.S. from Europe. Genscher's position was highly popular in Germany and also got much support from the liberals in the U.S. who wanted a nuclear arms treaty with the Soviet Union.

The 1987 election disappointed the two large parties and brought unexpected gains for the two small parties:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party</th>
<th>% of Votes</th>
<th># of Seats</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Greens</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPD</td>
<td>37.0</td>
<td>186</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F.D.P.</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CDU/CSU</td>
<td>44.3</td>
<td>223</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The CDU/CSU and the F.D.P. had campaigned for a continuation of their coalition. The election outcome made this possible. However, the SPD under party leader Vogel also had a numerical chance to form a majority government. Between parts of the SPD and The Greens there existed a love-hate relationship because both groups had much in common. Also, between other parts of the SPD and the
F.D.P. there existed many communalities, especially in foreign policy. However, the F.D.P. was not prepared to take a gamble on another change in coalition alignment at that time. Mischnick, the leader of the Bonner F.D.P. faction, explained in a lengthy interview that the risks for the F.D.P. were too great. In Mischnick's eyes, the SPD was not unified enough to deal with two coalition partners. In Mischnick's term, "the circumstances were not ripe for another turn in coalition alignment."11

Neumann and Morgenstern would have predicted a minimum winning coalition. In this four-party system which consisted of two large and two small parties, three such minimum winning coalitions were feasible. The CDU/CSU could have coalesced with either one of the two small parties to present a minimum winning coalition, and the SPD could have built a coalition with both small parties.

Riker would have predicted a CDU/CSU-The Greens coalition. This coalition would have had 265 seats in parliament and would have been of minimum weight. However, the antagonism between these two parties was too strong to even consider such a combination.

Policy-distance theories, Axelrod's minimal connected winning coalition theory included, would have concluded that despite the daily political squabbles, the CDU/CSU and the F.D.P. had the closest ideological affinity.
Certainly, the SPD and The Greens also had much in common. But a coalition of the SPD and The Greens would have been based on a minority in the Bundestag. They would have needed the F.D.P. as an additional coalition partner. Party leader Vogel did not try to lure the F.D.P. into a coalition because he was not prepared to rule with a coalition ranging from The Greens to the F.D.P. He also shied away from putting the largest party, the CDU/CSU, into the opposition. This lack of interest was eventually brandished by Count Lambsdorff who said with astounding frankness in an interview in the Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung that,

Vogel has done everything possible to further destroy the bridges to the F.D.P. and to deepen the gulf between the SPD and the F.D.P. I feel no desire to jump over this gulf if Mr. Vogel does not undertake the first step.12

Franklin and Mackie would have predicted that the CDU/CSU-F.D.P. coalition would be continued.

Dodd would have again recognized that all parties still treated The Greens as an outcast and thus would have predicted that an oversized coalition would emerge.

Luebbert would have predicted a minimum winning coalition because it was a competitive party system with no dominant party.

The actual coalition negotiations started after both large parties had lost votes in this election. In the
sixties, the CDU/CSU and the SPD together usually gained 90% of the votes; now their combined share was about 80%. Kaltefleiter argued that traditional ties between parties and voters were loosening and that catchall parties (Volksparteien) had increasing difficulties being attractive to a wide body of voters. The leaders of the traditional parties vowed again not to enter into a coalition with The Greens. This promise had to be taken with a grain of salt. It excluded the SPD again from being a contender for the chancellorship. It was only a question of time before this promise would have been broken first at the State level and later at the federal level if The Greens continued to capture so much public support. A grand coalition between the CDU/CSU and the SPD received some consideration. However, the CDU/CSU feared that successful cooperation such as occurred in the period 1966 to 1969 was not possible. The left wing of the SPD was too independent and much too opposed to the centrist policies of Chancellor Kohl. The CDU/CSU and the SPD shared the conviction that a grand coalition needed visible success to be legitimate to the voters. For this reason, the factionalization of the SPD was too great a risk.

The CDU/CSU-F.D.P. coalition had 269 or 54% of the seats of the Bundestag. It was a minimum winning coalition with a comfortable majority. It was also a minimal
connected winning coalition because the leaders of both parties had a bourgeois background and were closer to each other than to any other party. Differences existed about details of economic programs and about foreign-policy questions. Kohl himself was increasingly criticized as a leader without charisma and with too much complacency. Despite all those reservations, nobody expected this coalition to come into serious trouble during the following legislative period.

An alternative to a conservative-liberal coalition did not exist in 1983 or in 1987. The CDU/CSU was united behind its leader Kohl. The government believed it had the mandate to promote growth and free-market policies and felt assured that the general political trend worked in its favor. Its archrival, the SPD, was torn between its wings and had no convincing chancellor candidate. The Greens heightened the dilemma because the SPD lost more voters than the CDU/CSU to this new party. The F.D.P. had dared to bring about the second turn of German coalition politics only a few years earlier. The price had been high. The party had lost 15,000 members. It was inconceivable for the party to change its coalition alignment again so soon. Thus, in both elections, only a radical shift of fortunes at the polls could have brought another coalition to power. This radical shift did not occur; the CDU/CSU and the F.D.P. received a comfortable majority in both elections.
In 1983, as well as in 1987, most of the traditional coalition theories successfully predicted the coalition-bargaining outcome. Neumann-Morgenstern's theory was correct when it predicted the formation of a minimum winning coalition. Riker was not as successful because the CDU/CSU-F.D.P. coalitions in 1983 and 1987 were not of minimum weight. Leiserson's prediction of a coalition consisting of the smallest number of parties was correct. Policy-distance theories also predicted the correct outcome. Dodd's use of party-system characteristics was unsuccessful, while Luebbert's concept produced the correct results. Finally, Franklin-Maeckie correctly predicted the continuation of the conservative-liberal coalition.

If one asks what the major reasons were that the conservative-liberal coalition was continued in 1983 and 1987, one has to mention first and foremost that the CDU/CSU and the F.D.P. shared the same ideological beliefs. This variable was closely followed by the variable that I have called leadership behavior. For the 1983 and for the 1987 election, Kohl campaigned for a CDU/CSU-F.D.P. coalition government. He told the CDU/CSU voters that the CDU/CSU needed the F.D.P. as a coalition partner. In 1982, he even went so far as to tell his audiences that a coalition with the F.D.P. would be preferable over a government formed by the CDU/CSU alone.14 As mentioned earlier, Kohl always believed that
in a three- and now in a four-party system, the CDU/CSU could not hold on to an absolute majority and therefore that the continuity of a coalition with the F.D.P. would be preferable to a one-time rule by the CDU/CSU alone.

His beliefs, which were decisive to the coalition-bargaining outcomes, were in contrast to the underlying assumptions of all coalition theories which were based on the variable "size." Kohl did not want a minimum winning coalition. He wanted a coalition with a comfortable majority and with a partner with whom loyal cooperation was possible. Kohl worked actively to see that the election outcomes allowed the formation of such a coalition.

Kohl's coalition ideal is best described by Axelrod's minimal connected winning coalition theory. This theory treats ideological connectedness as the premier and size as the secondary variable. Kohl would have been comfortable with an even larger majority but would have had difficulties starting a legislative term based on what he called a weak majority.

In 1983 and 1987, many coalition theories correctly predicted the bargaining outcome. But the actual reasons behind these outcomes in some cases were not the variables on which the coalition theories were based. Ideological connectedness and leadership behavior were the determining variables.
The existing coalition theories capture a part of the underlying reasons for the coalition formations in 1983 and 1987. But they are unable to give justice to other factors that were highly influential. The Kohl era did not disprove the validity of all coalition theories. But it did demonstrate that leadership was an additional variable in the coalition game.

The thesis of this study is to prove that the variables used in the existing coalition theories are insufficient to completely explain the coalition-bargaining process. It is argued that leadership is a variable which has to be included in the explanatory process. The Kohl era is additional proof that this is necessary.
REFERENCES—CHAPTER XII


9. Hans Dieter Klingemann is preparing a study showing the overproportionate influence of the F.D.P. on policies in West Germany.


Otto Graf von Lambsdorff was elected party leader of the F.D.P. on October 8, 1988. There were 211 delegates who voted for him and 183 who voted for Irmgard Adam-Schwaetzer, who later was elected vice-chairman.


Voting Behavior According to Church and Trade Union Affiliation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Voter Affiliation</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>CDU/CSU</th>
<th>SPD</th>
<th>FDP</th>
<th>Greens</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All Votes</td>
<td>1976</td>
<td>48.6</td>
<td>42.3</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1987</td>
<td>44.3</td>
<td>37.0</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catholic Votes*</td>
<td>1976</td>
<td>76.4</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1987</td>
<td>67.2</td>
<td>19.8</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protestant Votes</td>
<td>1976</td>
<td>57.8</td>
<td>33.4</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1987</td>
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<td>28.1</td>
<td>17.2</td>
<td>5.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voters with No Church Affiliation</td>
<td>1976</td>
<td>38.3</td>
<td>48.3</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1987</td>
<td>36.3</td>
<td>44.9</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>10.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voters with Trade Union Affiliation</td>
<td>1976</td>
<td>30.7</td>
<td>60.6</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1987</td>
<td>27.9</td>
<td>55.2</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>8.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voters with No Trade Union Aff.</td>
<td>1976</td>
<td>55.1</td>
<td>32.2</td>
<td>12.6</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1987</td>
<td>51.2</td>
<td>31.0</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>8.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Church affiliation means one or more church visits per month.


Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann, "Es war kein Uberraschungssieg," Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, No. 80, April 7, 1983.
PART III
COALITION THEORIES VERSUS ACTUAL COALITION FORMATIONS
AND THE INFLUENCE OF POLITICAL LEADERS IN PERSPECTIVE

Chapter XIII Coalition Theories Versus Actual
Coalition Formations in West Germany

Chapter IX The Influence of Political Leaders on
Coalition Bargaining Processes in
Perspective
CHAPTER XIII

COALITION THEORIES VERSUS ACTUAL COALITION FORMATIONS IN WEST GERMANY

In prior chapters, the actual coalition-bargaining processes for establishing the West German governments in postwar years were presented and the apparent coalition variables influencing them were outlined. Based on this detailed review, two questions will now be posed and answered:

1. How well did the existing coalition theories explain the outcome of the coalition-bargaining processes?

2. In the cases in which the existing coalition theories correctly predicted the coalition-bargaining outcomes, were the classic variables most plausibly the main reasons for the outcome?

West Germany had 11 coalition governments that were formed after elections. Three additional coalition governments were created during a legislative term. At those points in time—in 1962, 1966, and 1982—the ruling coalitions broke apart. After negotiations among the parties, but without calling for new elections, new governments based on a majority in the Bundestag were established. Other government crises—1956, 1963, and
1974—will not be considered because at those points in time, the ruling coalition did not break apart. In 1956, two parties left the coalition; but Adenauer continued to govern with the same cabinet and based on a still-comfortable majority. In 1963 and 1974, the leading party replaced the chancellor without altering the governing coalition.

A summary of the main coalition characteristics of the examined 14 coalition governments will be given. Throughout the period under consideration, the party system was highly competitive. Other characteristics changed over the course of time and will be shown for every government:
Table 17

The Main Coalition Characteristics of the 14 Examined Coalition Governments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Minimum Winning Coalition</th>
<th>Minimum Size</th>
<th>Oversized Coalition</th>
<th>Ideologically Under Constraint</th>
<th>System Under Constraint</th>
<th>Dominant Parties</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1949</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1953</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1957</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1962</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The following Table 18 presents the success of the existing coalition theories in predicting the actual coalition-bargaining outcomes. However, many coalition theories did not predict a singular but several coalitions. In those cases, their predictions will be labeled as "consistent with reality (consistent)." Only in the rare cases where the prediction of the theory pointed to one coalition and this was the actual bargaining outcome, then the label "right" will be used. If the theory did not predict the bargaining outcome, the label "wrong" will be used. DeSwaan's policy distance and pivotal party theory was "not applicable" most of the time. His theory demands that a pivotal party tries to reduce the policy distance to its left and right to a minimum by forming a coalition with the two parties adjacent on each side on the political continuum. Since many German coalitions were two-party coalitions, this theory was not applicable.
Table 18  
(Page 1) 

Coalition Theories Versus Actual Coalition Formations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Neumann/Morgenstern's Minimum Winning Theory</th>
<th>Riker's Minimum Weight Theory</th>
<th>Leiserson's Bargaining Proposition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coalition Building Processes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1949</td>
<td>Consistent</td>
<td>Wrong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1953</td>
<td>Wrong</td>
<td>Wrong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1957</td>
<td>Wrong</td>
<td>Wrong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>Consistent</td>
<td>Wrong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1962</td>
<td>Consistent</td>
<td>Wrong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>Consistent</td>
<td>Wrong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>Wrong</td>
<td>Wrong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>Consistent</td>
<td>Right</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>Consistent</td>
<td>Wrong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>Consistent</td>
<td>Right</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>Consistent</td>
<td>Right</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982</td>
<td>Consistent</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>Consistent</td>
<td>Wrong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>Consistent</td>
<td>Wrong</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Right: 

- Never = 0%
- Right = 3 Times = 21%

Right or Consistent

- 11 Times = 79%
- 3 Times = 21%
- 11 Times = 79%
Table 18
(Page 2)
Coalition Theories Versus Actual Coalition Formations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coalition Building Processes</th>
<th>Leiserson's Disconnected Policy Distance Theory</th>
<th>Axelrod's Minimal Connected Winning Theory</th>
<th>DeSwaan's Policy Distance and Pivotal Party Theory</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1949</td>
<td>Right</td>
<td>Right</td>
<td>Wrong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1953</td>
<td>Wrong</td>
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<td>Wrong</td>
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<td>Wrong</td>
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</tr>
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<td>1961</td>
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<td>Wrong</td>
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<td>Wrong</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<td>Right</td>
<td>Right</td>
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<td>1972</td>
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<td>Right</td>
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<td>1976</td>
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<td>Right</td>
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<td>Right</td>
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<td>Right</td>
<td>Wrong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>Right</td>
<td>Right</td>
<td>Wrong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Right:</td>
<td>8 Times</td>
<td>8 Times</td>
<td>Never Right</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>= 57%</td>
<td>= 57%</td>
<td>Right</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Right or Consistent:</td>
<td>8 Times</td>
<td>8 Times</td>
<td>= 57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>= 57%</td>
<td>= 57%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N/A = Not Applicable
Table 18
(Page 3)

Coalition Theories Versus Actual Coalition Formations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coalition-Building Processes</th>
<th>Dodd's System Characteristic Theory</th>
<th>Luebbert's System Characteristic Theory</th>
<th>Franklin/Mackie's System Familiarity Concept</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>1949</td>
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<td>Consistent</td>
<td>Consistent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1953</td>
<td>Right</td>
<td>Right</td>
<td>Wrong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1957</td>
<td>Right</td>
<td>Right</td>
<td>Wrong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>Wrong</td>
<td>Wrong</td>
<td>Right</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1962</td>
<td>Wrong</td>
<td>Wrong</td>
<td>Right</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>Wrong</td>
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<td>Right</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Wrong</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>Consistent</td>
<td>Consistent</td>
<td>Wrong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>Wrong</td>
<td>Consistent</td>
<td>Right</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>Wrong</td>
<td>Consistent</td>
<td>Right</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
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<td>1982</td>
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<td>1987</td>
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Right: 2 Times = 14% 2 Times = 14% 8 Times = 57%
Right or Consistent: 4 Times = 28% 10 Times = 71% 9 Times = 64%
Neumann and Morgenstern's theory predicted minimum winning coalitions. Eleven of the 14 examined cases or 79% were minimum winning coalitions. In every case, more than one minimum winning coalition was possible. This means that Neumann and Morgenstern's approach is only able to predict a group of possible outcomes that have one characteristic in common. However, this approach is unable to pinpoint one specific outcome of the coalition-bargaining process.

Riker, like other scholars, realized that Neumann and Morgenstern's theory provided no clue as to which of the many possible minimum winning coalitions would actually emerge. Riker tried to enhance the predictive capacity by adding an additional factor. Only those minimum winning coalitions should occur which were also of minimum weight. Riker's theory was extremely logical, resulted in the most straightforward application of the famous size principle, and narrowed the number of possible coalitions substantially. But it was proven wrong 11 out of 14 times in the case of West Germany. Only three or 21% validated his theory and, as we will see, in a questionable way. Those three cases occurred in 1969, 1976, and 1980 when Germany had a three-party system and coalitions between the SPD and the F.D.P. were, with one exception, always minimum winning coalitions with minimum weight. The SPD was the smaller of the two large parties. If the SPD entered into
a coalition with the F.D.P., the only party available besides the archrival CDU/CSU, then Riker's theory was confirmed. But confirmations of this kind are inherently weak. The intentions of the coalition partners should be unearthed and one should ask whether they wanted a minimum winning coalition with minimum weight or not.

Leiserson enhanced Neumann and Morgenstern's theory in another way. He postulated that only those coalitions should be formed that included the smallest number of parties. He, like Riker, tried to reduce the number of possible outcomes. However, he used another condition than Riker to do so. Leiserson's bargaining proposition did not enhance Neumann and Morgenstern's theory in the desired way. Despite the addition of a second condition, in 12 out of 14 cases, more than one bargaining outcome fulfilled both conditions of his concept. Only after the elections in 1983 and 1987 was the numerical constellation such that the CDU/CSU and F.D.P. on one side and the SPD, The Greens, and the F.D.P. on the other side had the numerical chance to form a majority government. Since in both cases the CDU/CSU and the F.D.P. entered into a coalition, Leiserson was proven correct. However, even in these two cases, Leiserson's additional variable was not the reason for the coalition-bargaining outcome. The CDU/CSU and the F.D.P. both wanted to govern and wanted the SPD and The Greens in the opposition. A coalition between the SPD, The Greens,
and the F.D.P. was not an option at that time. In summary, Leiserson's bargaining proposition did not narrow the number of outcomes in such a way that it was an improvement over Neumann and Morgenstern's theory.

A further observation has to be made. West Germany had two distinctly different party systems in the postwar period. Between 1949 and 1961, West Germany had a multiparty system. During this period, oversized coalitions that did not include all major political forces were possible. This fact made the emergence of oversized or minimum winning coalitions equally likely. Actually, during this time, two coalitions were oversized and only one was of minimum size. This result indicates that the minimum winning principle did not dominate the coalition-building process during this period.

From 1961 to 1983, West Germany had a three-party system. During those 22 years, oversized coalitions were highly unlikely because they were only possible when the two major political forces coalesced. Only a coalition between the CDU/CSU and the SPD was oversized. Such a coalition was improbable. These two parties competed fiercely for the highest office, and such a coalition was seen by the public as an "unnatural" state of affairs. Therefore, coalitions between one of the large parties and the F.D.P. were regarded as the "normal" outcome of every
coalition-bargaining process. Despite the systemic bias against oversized coalitions, one coalition government was actually oversized (1966-1969). All other coalitions were of minimum size. The existence of one oversized coalition in this period is more proof that the size principle is not as dominating as the respective theories assume.

When in 1983 The Greens entered the Bundestag as the fourth party, new and more varied combinations became theoretically possible. However, The Greens were not accepted as a possible coalition partner by the other parties in 1983 and 1987; and in a pragmatic sense, the three-party system continued. This started to change after 1987. The Greens slowly became accepted and viewed as a possible coalition partner.

I have argued that the size principle and its derivatives can only be fully tested when the emergence of both the minimum winning and oversized coalitions are equally possible. This was the case in West Germany only between 1949 to 1961. In this period, the size principle did not dominate the coalition-bargaining process. This leads to the conclusion that the variable size and with it the idea of minimum winning coalitions are not the only, and perhaps not even the most important, variable in the process of coalition building.
Other political scientists have introduced a second variable into the coalition theory. They argue that the variables size and ideology together would render a better predictive capacity. They argue that only those coalitions should form whose ideological distance and size are minimal. There are a number of different coalition theories who use the two above-mentioned variables simultaneously.

Leiserson argued that coalitions should form between parties who were as close together as possible on a political continuum and who would come as close as possible to be a minimum winning coalition. Those parties need not be adjacent to each other. The numerical account rendered this theory correct in 57% of the cases. However, a closer look at the actual coalitions sheds severe doubts about this favorable result.

1. Theories, that use the variable "policy distance" assume that parties can be ordered according to their ideological beliefs on one political continuum. Norpoth has shown that German parties were divided by three ideological cleavage lines.1 All judgments in this and other studies about the rank order on one political continuum are generalizations that usually were widely accepted as long as one cleavage line dominated. As soon as this was not the case, such placements became questionable. Inglehart and Dalton
showed that by 1968, German parties started to be divided on two fundamentally different sets of values. Since that time, it has been less and less possible to place the parties on one political continuum. To complicate the matter further, parties became more deeply divided into feuding factions which propagated very different ideologies.

2. During the period of a three-party system, the general and superficial belief was that the F.D.P. occupied the center position on the political continuum. As explained above, if one follows this superficial assumption, then all coalitions between one of the large parties and the F.D.P. were of minimum distance. However, this did not test Leiserson's theory because no party existed which would be located between the F.D.P. and the large parties. In general, the period of a three-party system is not suited to test Leiserson's proposition.

3. If one takes into consideration only the period of a multiparty system, then Leiserson's proposition predicted incorrectly two out of three times. This is not a favorable result.

The arguments advanced against Leiserson's bargaining proposition also count against Axelrod's minimal connected winning coalition theory. Axelrod argued that parties had to be connected or adjacent to each other on a political
continuum when entering into a coalition. His theory was proven correct in postwar Germany 57% of the time. Ideological compatibility played an important role in the coalition-bargaining process in West Germany but not in such a straightforward way as Axelrod's coalition theory assumes.

How complicated the matter really is can be shown by some actual examples. In 1961, the CDU/CSU and the F.D.P., both bourgeois parties, were closely aligned ideologically. But the F.D.P. had made a campaign issue out of their belief that the ailing Chancellor Adenauer should be replaced. As one knows, Adenauer outmaneuvered his opponents and the F.D.P. entered into a coalition under him. Based on this knowledge, one cannot accept the notion that the parties were fully connected and aligned. A year later, the F.D.P. actually used the first opportunity to force Adenauer into retirement. A similar situation existed in 1980 when the F.D.P. and the SPD continued the social-liberal coalition. This time, the leadership was still aligned, but the parties were ideologically separated from each other. Those "micro" facts should not be neglected in theoretical coalition research. In general, policy-distance theories often do not work when there is no single political continuum for aligning political parties—a condition frequently found in the complex world of multiple-issue politics.
De Swaan's policy-distance and pivotal-party theories postulate that a strong party will try to minimize the distance to its right and to its left in a coalition-building process. This theory works only in a multiparty system. There it was proven wrong every time. The German postwar period did not support this coalition-building theory.

Dodd based his coalition theory firmly on party-system characteristics. He argued that those characteristics influence the coalition-building process in such a way that predictions about the size of the actual coalitions are possible. He argued that under certain conditions, e.g., when all parties are willing to coalesce with any other party and know about each other's mutual preferences, minimum winning coalitions would occur. If, however, the party system is constrained, meaning it does not fulfill one or both of the above-mentioned conditions, then oversized coalitions would be the result. Only two out of 14 coalitions or 14% validated his theory; in two other cases, the actually formed coalition was one of several possibilities that his theory suggested. In 1953 and 1957, Dodd's theory correctly predicted oversized coalitions. In 1969 and 1982, every possible coalition would have been consistent with his theory. Neither two nor four out of 14 cases is sufficient to validate Dodd's theory. One must conclude that the chosen party-system characteristics do
not allow predictions about the size of the actual coalition formations.

Luebbert also used party-system characteristics to predict the outcome of coalition-building processes. He created a typology of political systems and argued that they will induce a certain form of coalition government. Two of his cases were relevant for postwar Germany. The competitive multiparty system with a dominant party would produce oversized coalitions; the competitive multiparty system with no dominant party would produce minimum winning coalitions. His theory was proven right in only two of 14 times. However, his theory was consistent and/or right 10 out of 14 times with the actual bargaining outcome. This is a clear indication that Luebbert's concept, similar to Neumann and Morgenstern's theory, allows for more than one bargaining outcome. In other words, several different combinations of parties fulfill the requirements of Luebbert's concept. That reduces the predictive capacity of his theory substantially.

Franklin and Mackie argued that prior experience of cooperation between parties is a clue to future coalition formations. In a formal sense, Franklin and Mackie's concept was proven right 57% of the time. But again additional observations must be made. The postwar coalition-building process in West Germany is best characterized by the competition between the two large
parties for power and by their efforts to present different ideological positions. A change of power from one large party to the other was a very difficult, even traumatic, event that occurred only two times in the 40 years of postwar history. It is no surprise that Franklin and Mackie's concept was proven correct so many times under those unusually favorable circumstances. The two decisive arguments against the concept are:

1. It never correctly predicted the change in power.
2. Prior experience of cooperation can produce good and bad memories. Franklin and Mackie mistakenly believe that prior experience will always produce good memories among the potential coalition partners.

Strom's argument that minority governments are as legitimate as minimum winning or oversized governments did not get much attention in this study. The postwar period did not produce those governments, and party leaders were convinced that they would not last under the prevailing competitive conditions.

The existing theories suffer under what I will call a "macro-perspective." They usually are counted as successful when numbers confirm their predictions. One example shall illustrate my point. In 1969, Brandt and Scheel formed a minimum winning coalition with minimum weight; and on the surface, it confirmed Riker's theory. However, these politicians were deeply worried about their
small majority in the Bundestag and regarded this small base as a weakness and not as a strength. If what I want to call a "mirco-perspective" is applied and the intentions of the coalition builders are unearthed, then the dynamics of the 1969 coalition formation cannot be explained in terms of Riker's theory. The coalition was formed in spite of its minimal size, not because of it. Similar examples were provided with regard to ideological affinity between coalition partners. The coalitions in 1961 and in 1980 are the prime examples.

If the intentions of the actual coalition builders and their perceptions about the political situations are used as criteria and not the numerical outcomes or the stereotypes over political affinities, then the cases that confirm the existing coalition theories would decline further.
REFERENCES—CHAPTER XIII


In this final chapter, conclusions will be drawn. It will be argued that the main variables on which the existing coalition theories are built do not determine coalition bargaining in such a way that sufficiently accurate predictions of coalition-bargaining outcomes are possible. Then it will be argued that another element or variable must be at work that influences the coalition-bargaining processes. It will be shown that this additional variable is leadership behavior. Two sub-questions will be addressed—do political leaders make their decisions according to the main variables of the traditional models of coalition-building, and to what degree are political leaders hostages of given circumstances, that is, structural properties of potential coalitions.

All coalition theories reviewed have one common element. They try to find rules and/or structures that govern the coalition-building processes in such a way that party leaders are forced to make their coalition decisions accordingly. The basic assumption of those theories is
that if these rules and structures can be unearthed, then accurate predictions about coalition-bargaining outcomes are possible. If one neglects the subtle differences that distinguish one coalition theory from the other, then four major underlying variables become visible. They are:

1. Size of the coalition;
2. Policy distance between the coalition partners;
3. Party-system characteristics; and
4. Prior experience of cooperation (inertia).

The variable size is an important variable in the process of coalition building. However, the coalition-building process in West Germany has shown beyond doubt that party leaders do not strive for minimum winning coalitions and definitely not for minimum winning coalitions with minimum weight. Party leaders in West Germany have stated over and over again that their coalition-building goal was the formation of coalitions with comfortable majorities. Party leaders wanted coalitions that had great probabilities of lasting for one or more legislative periods and that were protected against defections by individual deputies. Adenauer, Brandt, Schmidt, and Kohl mentioned this argument in every coalition-building process. Coalitions with comfortable majorities were the goal; the minimum winning principle was rejected. Incomplete information and uncertainty about the future were the main general reasons for this approach.
Adenauer had an additional reason for making his coalitions so large. He wanted to include all bourgeois forces in order to commit them to the newly emerging order, and he wanted to isolate the SPD so that the socialists would have great difficulties finding coalition partners in their quest for the control of the government. Party leaders never regarded minimum winning coalitions as a sign of strength. Quite the contrary. Brandt and Scheel had to push for their minimum winning coalition in 1969 against the counsel of all their political friends. The minimum size was seen as a threat to the survival of the first Brandt/Scheel coalition. It actually turned out that the coalition almost lost a constructive vote of no confidence in 1972.

Perhaps the strongest evidence against the minimum size principle is the emergence of a grand coalition in 1966. At that time two minimum winning coalitions were possible. The CDU/CSU could have continued the coalition with the F.D.P. The SPD could have coalesced with the F.D.P. But the two large parties, although they were fierce competitors, entered into a coalition. In summary, the size principle was only relevant if interpreted as the search for comfortable majorities. Even with this interpretation, size seemed to have been of secondary importance in the process of coalition building. However, no party leader ever wanted to base the government on a
minority in parliament. The competitive relationship between the parties did not allow this to happen.

Ideological affinity between the coalition partners played a role in the German bargaining processes. But it was outlined earlier that ideological affinity is a concept with many facets. Another important fact must be mentioned. In 1966, the ideological adversaries—the CDU/CSU and the SPD—formed a coalition government. They had agreed to solve some important issues and to exclude others from consideration. Bracher argued that this was one of Germany’s most successful governments. In this period, ideological differences were treated as secondary while other issues were resolved. How complex the situation really is and how difficult it is to do justice with such a sweeping statement as "parties are politically aligned" were illustrated by the 1961 and 1980 coalitions. In 1961, the parties CDU/CSU and the F.D.P. were ideologically aligned but divided about Adenauer’s continuing chancellorship. In 1980, the leadership of the SPD and F.D.P. decided to continue the social-liberal coalition, although the parties had already moved away from each other. In both cases, the coalitions ran into serious crises. This does not say that ideological affinity is not a factor in the coalition game. This only says that the relationships are much more complex than assumed so far.
Party-system characteristics can be considered as a framework in which the coalition-bargaining process occurs. Based on the experience with the German coalition-building process, one can draw the conclusion that the following characteristics are of importance to the coalition-bargaining outcome:

1. The competitiveness of a party system.
   The German party system was highly competitive. The competitiveness and perhaps the memory of instable governments in the past did not allow the formation of minority governments.

2. The number of parties.
   The number of parties is of relevance. It turned out that the differentiation between a two- and a multiparty system did not provide enough subcategories. The three-party system that existed between 1961 and 1983 created constraints that were different from the constraints in a two- or multiparty system.

3. Whether dominant parties existed or not.
   In the short period in which the CDU/CSU was the dominant party, many coalition governments were oversized. However, it cannot be argued conclusively that the dominance of the CDU/CSU was the cause of the oversized coalitions. Adenauer's
preference and his dominating influence were the true reasons for the oversized coalitions.

4. Whether all parties were accepted as coalition partners or not.

In several coalition-bargaining processes, not all parties were accepted as possible coalition partners. The communist party and most of the time the right-wing parties were excluded from the coalition-building process. This fact was not regarded as a constraint of the party system because these parties were relatively small. But Adenauer's effort to isolate the SPD and to keep this party out of the government must be seen as a constraint of the party system. However, can the animosity of the SPD and the F.D.P. against the CDU/CSU after the constructive vote of no confidence in 1972 be seen as a constraint? Judgments are necessary. But if judgments are necessary, then the objectivity of the party-system characteristics is impaired.

The list entails some of the party-system characteristics that were relevant for the coalition-building process in Germany. This study shows that these party-system characteristics were parameters for coalition decisions. But they were not sufficient to predict with adequate accuracy the bargaining outcome. In other words, they left room for other forces to influence the
coalition-bargaining outcome. This discredits the claim of the reviewed theories that structural variables substantially enhance the capability to predict coalition-bargaining outcomes.

Franklin and Mackie have stressed the importance of prior cooperation (familiarity and inertia). They used this concept for the prediction of coalition-bargaining outcomes and failed. But in a much wider sense, they realized an important fact. Political leaders do not suddenly appear out of nowhere. They develop over a lengthy period of time. The youthful hero might win a local election. But it takes years of profiling and of building a support base before one can reach for the highest office. Brandt had to be lord-mayor of Berlin first before he could become a candidate for the chancellorship. Schmidt had to be in the political arena for a long time and had to have the opportunity to demonstrate his leadership qualifications during the catastrophic flood in Hamburg before his popularity was great enough to secure the highest office for him. In the case of democratic leaders, popularity and authority are closely related. Together they give the political leader, among other things, the ability to influence and form the political environment and to have influence over events, and not be driven by them.
This leads to the conclusion that the variables that underlie the existing coalition theories have some importance in the process of coalition building but are not strong enough to force political leaders to act in a predictable way. The rules and structures stipulated by the coalition theories do not curtail human behavior in such a way that the outcome of coalition-bargaining processes can be predicted with sufficient accuracy. This leads to the question whether there is a neglected element, a variable, or a set of variables that have significant bearing on the coalition-bargaining outcome. I suggest that such a variable or a cluster of variables is the behavior of political leaders.

Before I will turn to the importance of political leaders, it shall be shown that in a few cases the variables of the coalition theories seemed to have prevailed. A good example is 1976. In this election, the CDU/CSU became the largest party but the SPD and F.D.P. together had 10 seats more in parliament. They continued the social-liberal coalition and formed a minimum winning coalition. The reason was that both the SPD and the F.D.P. did not want to end the social-liberal experiment so soon. One might argue that the ideological affinity was the decisive factor. Another example is the coalition formation after the 1983 election. The CDU/CSU and the F.D.P. had won the constructive vote of no confidence in October
of 1982. This election was supposed to be the popular ratification of this move. Since the CDU/CSU and the F.D.P. wanted to work together and the election outcome assured them of popular approval, the coalition was continued. Here again, ideological compatibility was the decisive factor. However, even in these examples, it is obvious that political leaders have choices and exercise their judgments and make decisions.

Other coalition-bargaining outcomes have shown that political leaders did not act in conformity with the variables of the classic coalition theories. Their other objectives were of overriding importance. Adenauer had a clear political concept. He tried to gather all bourgeois forces in his coalition government and tried to isolate the SPD. This led to oversized coalitions. In 1966, the leaders of both large parties, usually fierce competitors, decided that it was mutually beneficial to enter into a grand coalition. Brandt and Scheel decided to enter into a minimum winning coalition in 1969 against all advice and paid the price for it. Genscher left the social-liberal coalition in 1982, knowing well that his chances for surviving politically were slim at best and that his party might go under. These are only a few obvious examples when goals other than the ones assumed by the coalition theories decided the coalition-bargaining outcome.
In general, political leaders seem to be hostages of their political environment to a much lesser degree than assumed so far. They have more choices and they are prepared to use them following their own convictions and their own perceptions about the political situation at hand. Adenauer was not a hostage of the political situation in 1949. He created an environment that was conducive to his ascent to power.Later, he took parties into his coalitions that were unnecessary for reaching a majority. Those "unnecessary" parties reduced the minister positions and other perks for his own party considerably. But Adenauer regarded this as a worthwhile price for his "higher" goals. Schmidt was able to veil the onset of a recession until after the election in 1980. That gave him another term in office.

Also, some political leader seem to be prepared to fight for their convictions much more than the traditional theories are willing to assume. Brandt and Scheel entered into a coalition in 1969, even when their closest supporters counseled against such a move. They were willing to take greater risks and accepted greater uncertainties than the classic theories expected them to do. Johannes Gross, an astute observer of the German political scene, argued that one of the major traits of dominant political leaders is their willingness to expose themselves to risks and uncertainties that on the surface
seem to be incalculable. They somehow anticipate the
turning point in public sentiments or events.3

Also, sympathies and antipathies played a much larger
role than the classic coalition theories are willing to
admit. The animosity between Adenauer and Dehler broke the
bourgeois camp into pieces and pushed the F.D.P. onto the
opposition benches in 1955. The hostility between Adenauer
and Erhard ruined the chancellorship of Erhard. The
tensions between the CDU/CSU and the F.D.P. politicians on
one side and the good relations between Kiesinger and
Wehner on the other side opened the door for the grand
coalition in 1966. The cooling of the relations between
Schmidt and Genscher contributed mightily to the breakup of
the social-liberal coalition in 1982. One would be able to
give many more examples of the workings of this important
human factor.

Finally, one example will be given where misconcep-
tions led to the loss of the chancellorship. Kiesinger
and the CDU/CSU came out of the 1969 election as the
strongest party and as the expected leader of the next
coalition government. However, Kiesinger overestimated his
own strength and hesitated making an attractive offer to
the F.D.P. or to the SPD. He underestimated the
willingness of Brandt and Scheel to take risks and to come
to power. His misconceptions cost him the chancellorship.
This study had two goals. It wanted to demonstrate that the existing coalition theories do not sufficiently explain the coalition-building process. The other goal was to show that the behavior of political leaders is an independent variable that influences the outcome of the coalition-bargaining process. In summarizing, the leadership variable seems to fill a vacuum that was left by the existing coalition theories; and that was larger than assumed.
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268


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