

#301 - United Kingdom: Conservative Party

Coder: Gibson (typos corrected by RH and SSh on 2-27-96)

12.01 Candidate Selection

1950-90: 4

The local party associations, which are affiliates of the National Union of Conservative and Unionist Associations, select the candidates from the applications received. They appoint selection committees which draw up a short list and then submit this to the council. The council then recommends one name for approval, or two or three for selection, by a general meeting of the association. There is minimal involvement by the Central or Area office to control the choice of candidates. The candidates must either be on the party's approved list or secure acceptance by the party's standing advisory committee on candidates however (Ingle, 1987:62).

The constituency organization produces a shortlist and then nominates the candidate. If the candidate nominated is not on the national organization's "approval list" then it can veto the choice of the constituency association. Individual members can attend a general meeting of the constituency association where the choice of candidate is ratified, thus, they have no significant role (Katz & Mair, 1992:XII.D.5.d).

12.02 Parliamentary Leadership Selection

1950-90: 1

From 1950-65 the leader was not elected but simply "emerged." After 1965 he/she was elected through a majority plus 15% system by the parliamentary party members. In 1975 annual re-election was introduced to give the backbenchers more power over their parliamentary leader. This resulted in the first de-selection of a leader, when Edward Heath was replaced by Margaret Thatcher. Of course Thatcher herself went on to be de-selected in favor of John Major (Ingle, 1987:48-49).

12.03 Conformation to Extraparliamentary positions

1950-90: 1b

The parliamentary group is responsible for formulating and implementing policy (based on coder Gibson's own knowledge).

12.04 Discipline of Parliamentary Representatives

1950-90: 1b

The parliamentary group itself formulates the party's public policy positions (based on coder Gibson's own knowledge).

12.05 Rotation Requirement

1950-90: 1

No rotation requirement is referred to in the literature (based on coder Gibson's own knowledge).

12.06 Public Policy Positions

1950-90: 1

"It is the function of the Conservative leader to provide a policy context within which priorities may be established..." (Ingle, 1987:52). He/she does this by establishing the scope of policy options and deciding from them when in office (Ingle, 1987:52). The leader listens to the deliberations of the Conference, the constitutional role of which is to advise and discuss policy (Ingle, 1987:58; MacKenzie, 1963:638). Since Heath's time, senior figures in the parliamentary party have made themselves more visible at the Conference (Ingle, 1987:58-59). However, both the National Union (which organizes the conference) and Central Office (the party's administrative wing) have had very little control over the parliamentary party's actions. "Effective control of the affairs of the Conservative Party remains in the hands of the Leader thrown up by parliamentary party and those he chooses as his associates" (MacKenzie, 1963:637).

"[A]ll important powers in the party are still concentrated in the hands of the leader and are delegated by her as she sees fit. The National Union has no formal role in the formation of policy... its executive does not have kind of policy role that is played by Labour's NEC. ... All the crucial committees in the party report directly to the leader, as does Central Office...the shadow Cabinet is appointed by leader not elected by the party, and the same is true of the chairman and other leading officials of the party organization" (Gamble in Drucker, ed., 1979:39).

12.07 Primary Leader of the Party

1950-90: 1

The leader of the party in parliament is officially, and in fact, the primary leader of the party.

"The party leader...[since 1965] has been directly elected by the parliamentary party in the Commons" (Jacobs, 1989:383).

#302 - United Kingdom: Labour Party

Coder: Gibson (RH and SSh changed 12.03 from 2 to 2a on 2-27-96.
RH and SSh corrected typos on 4-26-96.)

12.01 Candidate Selection

1950-1990: 4

The candidates are selected by the local constituency parties and ratified by the National Executive Committee (NEC) (Ingle, 1987:133).

12.02 Selection of Parliamentary leader

1950-1980: 1

1981-1992: 3

Traditionally the party leader has been elected by his/her parliamentary colleagues. This is done through exhaustive balloting and in theory must be performed annually, although there are very rarely challenges (Ingle, 1987:123). However, in 1980 the Conference passed a resolution which called for an electoral college to elect the leader. The exact format was decided upon in January 1981 at a special conference. This would give the parliamentary party 30% of the vote, the Constituency organizations 30% of the vote and the trade unions 40% of the vote (Ingle, 1987:127; Shaw, 1988:199).

12.03 Conformation to extra-parliamentary positions

1950-1990: 2a

In theory the Parliamentary Labour Party (PLP) must follow the dictates of the Party Conference. When the Labour Party is in power the Cabinet is the major factor in deciding the policy positions. Thus the PLP has the most power over policy positions during governing periods. The loyalties of the MP's to the Conference are generally overridden by the duty to sustain the government (Shaw, 1988:165).

"The Labour party endowed itself with a party constitution which raised" the prospect of extraparliamentary party control. "Yet the leadership group of the PLP, while paying lip-service to the theory of inner-party democracy, has repeatedly and consistently refused to accept direction from its extra-parliamentary supporters" (MacKenzie, 1963:642).

During the 1950s and 1960s there was very little tension between the Conference and the NEC and PLP because they were dominated by right-wing elites who shared a view on the direction of the party. However, during the 1970s the NEC and the Conference became more left-wing in orientation while the PLP remained more

right-wing. The NEC joined the local parties' fight to make the PLP more accountable to the Conference and itself; this placed the PLP's de facto autonomy in jeopardy (Shaw, 1988:194-200). The PLP leader and Prime Minister Harold Wilson argued for a stricter demarcation of roles, the PLP controlling policy, the NEC dealing with the bureaucratic details. This he largely upheld. Thus, the party became more likely to disregard conference and NEC rulings (Shaw, 1988:183).

In the early 1980s the right reasserted itself within the NEC and Conference, however, and so there was less divergence (Shaw, 1988:299).

12.04 Discipline of the Parliamentary Representatives

1950-1990: 3

The right to expel members from the party belongs to the NEC not the PLP. However, this rarely if ever happens. When the period of dissension between the PLP and the Conference/NEC began in the early 1970s the latter approached the problem of discipline through new selection processes at the Constituency level, rather than directly making the PLP implement the more Socialist policies of the Conference (Shaw, 1988:194). The role of the General Secretary was updated so as to make it a more effective office to promote conference rulings (Shaw, 1988:184). Also the electoral college was adopted and MP's were encouraged by extra-parliamentary organizations to vote their conscience and the conference line rather than the cabinet decisions if the Labour party was in power (Shaw, 1988:295-298).

12.05 Rotation Requirement

1950-1979: 1

1980-1990: 2

During the 1970s and culminating in 1980 at the Labour Party Conference, there was a strong movement to give the party organization greater control over candidate selection with the adoption of a mandatory reselection process at the Party Conference. This meant that sitting MP's would have to present themselves for reselection at each election and was designed to make the Parliamentary party more accountable and democratic. Thus it weakened their autonomy and strengthened that of the extra-parliamentary organization (Ingle, 1987:135; Shaw, 1988:194-200). Seyd and Whiteley (1991:6) state that it led to the belief that "Labour MPs now needed to stick much more closely to the views of their local activists if they were to survive reselection." The adoption of mandatory reselection in 1980 is the closest that the extra parliamentary organization has come to imposing limitations on sitting MPs' tenure.

12.06 Public Policy Positions

1950-1990: 4

The annual party conference is responsible for formulating the

official party platform. This forms the blueprint for the representatives in parliament. However, the constitution allows for the NEC to consult with the PLP on a daily basis for formulating legislative proposals (Ingle, 1987:126,128; Shaw, 1988:165). The party constitution gives the NEC, which the Conference elects, the duty to confer with the PLP to formulate legislative proposals. Given that the NEC since 1945 has been dominated by MP's, this in effect gives the parliamentary party a very strong role in deciding policy (Ingle, 1987:129).

12.07 Primary Leader of the Party

1950-1980:1

1981-1990:2

Until 1981 the "party leader" was elected by the parliamentary party alone (Jacobs, 1989:391ff), and thus would have to be a parliamentary actor. However after that he/she was elected by a 40/30/30 split of the vote at the National Conference by trade unions, members of Parliament, and the constituency parties. It was thus feasible that an extra-parliamentary actor could be elected "leader" but this has not happened and it is a most unlikely event. Thus, a parliamentary member or an extra-parliamentary member can be the official and actual party leader. The score of 2 was given to this change because should an extra-parliamentary figure be elected leader officially, it is highly unlikely that the leader of the parliamentary party would be overshadowed given the power vested in the British parliament.

#303 - United Kingdom: Liberal Party

Coder: Gibson (RG and RH changed the code and description for Variable 12.07 on 3-16-96. RH and SSh corrected typos on 4-26-96.)

Note: The Liberal Party only goes to 1988 because in that year it finally merged with the Social Democrats to form the Social Liberal Democrats.

12.01 Candidate Selection

1950-1988: 2b

The candidates are selected by the local associations and are then subject to "vetting" by the national party (Curtice, 1988:105).

It is the individual members which select the candidates at a general meeting of the constituency party. The constituency party prepares the shortlist of candidates, which the national level validates. Beyond this, however, it also has the power to veto the candidate that is finally nominated by the membership (Katz & Mair, 1992: Table XII.D.5.c).

12.02 Parliamentary Leader Selection

1950-75: 1

1976-88: 4

The method of electing the "party leader" from the beginning of our period was a ballot of parliamentary members alone. After 1976 this was changed so that the leader and the "president" were elected by a ballot of every party member weighted according to constituency size. The leader can be chosen only if he/she is an MP (Steed, 1979:95).

12.03 Conformation to Extra-parliamentary Positions

1950-1988: 1a

The parliamentary group could and did override conference decisions and there seems little agreement on a common party policy among MP's. The literature stresses that parliamentary members' independence from the national extra-parliamentary organization was quite extensive and stemmed from the localized roots of the party. A Liberal MP owed little of his/her election to the national popularity of the party, but much to the local party efforts (Curtice, 1988:103). However, it has been noted that Liberal MPs' autonomy was ultimately short-term in nature. They could not stay out of line with the extra-parliamentary party for too long before they had to work toward a compromise

solution (Curtice, 1988:105).

12.04 Discipline of Parliamentary Representatives

1950-1988: 2

No discernable techniques are found. Due to the loose, federal nature of the party, cohesion in parliament seems not to have been a priority. "...[N]either party leader nor mass party had any effective disciplinary sanctions" (Curtice, 1988:103). So, while the parliamentary group follows its own positions (see 12.03 - 1a) it does not do so in any strongly coherent manner. (This was taken to be evidence of a verified "2".)

12.05 Rotation Requirement/Tenure Limitation

1950-88: 1

There are no restrictions placed on tenure of parliamentary members.

12.06 Public Policy Positions

1950-88: 2

Basically, the rules make the annual assembly the source of authoritative decisions but allow for the parliamentary party to exercise significant policy making powers. The assemblies "cannot bind the parliamentary party" (Curtice, 1988:106). The parliamentary leader could singlehandedly veto conference decisions (Jacobs, 1989:399). Further evidence of the parliamentary group's prerogatives are indicated in a discussion of the Standing Committee, a body designed to promote cooperation between the parliamentary and extra-parliamentary groups. It was charged with long term planning of Liberal policy and expressing party views between quarterly council meetings (Steed, 1979:94-5). It was also heavily stacked in favor of the parliamentary wing. Its Chair was an MP, elected by other MP's, and a majority of its members were MP's.

12.07 Primary Leader of the Party

1950-90:1

According to Norton (in Bogdaner, 1983:144), the "Leader of the parliamentary party is Leader of the party as a whole." Until 1976, the "power to elect the leader remained with the parliamentary party" (145). Then that responsibility "was transferred to the party as a whole. Liberal MPs alone can nominate, and be nominated for, election" (145). (See Variable 12.02 above.) However, this change does not affect the fact that it is the parliamentary who is primary leader for the party throughout the period.

#304 - United Kingdom: Social Democratic Party, 1981-1988 (SDP)

Coder: Gibson (Variable 12.07 was changed from "2" to "1" by RH and

SSh on 2-27-96. Associated text was also altered at that time. On 3-16-96, RH and RG changed 12.03 from "1b" to "1a." RH and SSh corrected typos on 4/26/96. RH and SSh changed the codes for 12.02 and 12.07 on 11 June 1996, based on new information.)

Background: This party was originally formed in 1981 and almost immediately formed an electoral alliance with the Liberal Party. The two parties closely cooperated in the House of Commons; however they maintained separate constitutional structures. (Behrens, 1989: 92-3). The SDP was really reborn when a majority of its members split off in 1988 and formed the Social and Liberal Democrats (SLD). "...[T]he majority of members of both former Alliance parties supported the creation of a new, merged party, and the Social and Liberal Democratic Party duly appeared in March, 1988" (Behrens, 1989:93). The original SDP remained under the leadership of David Owen from 1988 onward. Therefore, we will be coding the SDP and the Liberal Party as independent cases between 1981-88, and the SLD as a separate case between 1988-90 since its organizational structure changed to accomodate both parties' preferences. The SDP after 1988 will not be coded. This is because the SLD merger actually took most of the SDP members and all of the Liberal Party with it. Most of the information Jacobs (1989) provides covers the minority SDP refounded after 1988. However he says that the "continuing SDP has retained the former SDP's constitution" (Jacobs, 1989:403). So, we will use the information on the SDP for 1988-90 to code the SDP for 1981-87.

12.01 Candidate Selection

1981-1988: 2a

Parliamentary candidates are chosen by all members of an area party by secret ballot. Unlike the SLD the voters do not have to attend hustings or apply for a special ballot form. There are requirements for female representation on the shortlists (Jacobs, 1989:403).

The individual members nominate the candidate in a postal ballot from a shortlist prepared by the constituency organization. This is constructed for the "approved list" sent by the national organization. It reserves the right to veto the final shortlist but no reference is made to it vetoing the actual candidate

chosen by the members (Katz & Mair, 1992: Table XII.D.5.b).

12.02 Selection of Parliamentary Leader

1981-1988: 4

The constitution provides for the election of a leader of the parliament committee, and a president, by the whole membership (Ingle, 1987:179). Jon Tonge (via personal communication with Martin Bull, June 1996) says that: "the party leader of the SDP was chosen by a postal ballot of ALL PARTY MEMBERS. He then assumed the title of parliamentary leader (without a further ballot)." This justifies a code of 4. (We should note that Delury, 1983:1097, in contradiction to Ingle and Tonge, says that the "parliamentary leader is elected by the MPs, but must be confirmed by the Council if the election is contested." However, we have found no other source to support this claim, and hence have decided to base our code on the information provided by the other two sources.)

12.03 Conformation to extraparliamentary positions

1981-1988:1a

The parliamentary group obviously play a big role in forming party policy and no regulations were found requiring conformation to extraparliamentary positions. Therefore, a score indicating complete flexibility of the parliamentary group's behavior was deemed most appropriate. (Based on coder Gibson's personal knowledge.)

12.04 Discipline of Parliamentary representatives

1981-1988:1a

Little reference was found to disciplinary measures. However, whips exist and generally party unity is high in the British parliament. Kolinsky reports that leaders and whips of each party meet weekly, and the MP's have monthly meetings in joint policy groups (Kolinsky:103). Given that the parliamentary group plays a big role in policy formation according to the constitution, this would seem to indicate that parliamentary members discuss their voting intentions and monitor themselves.

12.05 Rotation Requirements/Tenure Limits

1981-1988:1

No reference to any limits on tenure were found.

12.06 Public Policy Positions

1981-1988:3

The annual conference has no decision-making powers. Much more power is vested in the party's "parliament" or Council for Social Democracy (CSD), which consists of elected representatives (not delegates) and SDP area parties. The CSD works with the national committee and its policy committee to draw up policy proposals

(Jacobs, 1989:403). The National Committee is basically "a steering committee" (Day & Degenhardt, 1984:472). It consists of one-third members of parliament, selected by their peers, and two-thirds area party representatives (Delury, 1983:1097). According to the constitution, the council is responsible for policy; however, it is the policy committee which makes the policy proposals. The CSD either accepts or rejects them (Ingle, 1987:179). The policy committee consists of MP's and non-MP's in equal proportion (Delury, 1983:1097). This makes the role of the parliamentary group much stronger in the SDP than the SLD. In the latter the conference rather than the National Committee plays a big role in policy formulation.

12.07 Primary Leader of the Party 1981-1988:99 (missing)

The first election for party leader took place in 1982 when Roy Jenkins was elected. In 1983 he resigned and David Owen took over without a contest (Jacobs, 1987:397). Both Jenkins and Owen were clearly the recognized and de facto leader of the party. However, since the extraparliamentary leader, who is elected by postal ballot, also assumes automatically the post of parliamentary party leader (see 12.02 above), it is impossible -- without further information about the rules -- to determine which position is given higher status. In any case, it would appear that the issue is largely moot, given that the same person holds both positions.

#305 - United Kingdom: Social and Liberal Democratic Party (SLD)

Coder: Gibson (typos corrected by RH and SSh on 5-8-96)

Background: This party was formed as a merger of the Liberals and Social Democrats in 1988. Neither party seemed to dominate in terms of carrying over its structural organization, so it was treated as a new case. Jacobs called it "a blend of two very different organizational traditions" (Jacobs, 1989:398). Basically, the Liberals were highly decentralized. The national conference occupied an important place in party life but the parliamentary members were not constrained by it. In the SDP, control was exercised in a far more centralized manner; conferences were not considered so important. However, the parliamentary group was not dominated by the extra-parliamentary organization, but operated more as a united body within the party.

12.01 Candidate Selection

1988-90: 2a

The candidates are on an approved list of each state party. Local party members choose the candidate through mail or direct vote at a hustings ceremony. There are minimum requirements for women on the shortlists (Jacobs, 1989).

No details are given as to whether the national level simply approves the local shortlist, or can veto the actual nomination. It was decided that a score of 2a would be given for two reasons. The first is that as an offshoot of the SDP it was assumed that its method of nomination would be the best indicator of that adopted by the SLD. Secondly, there was no evidence which pointed specifically to national level involvement, so the default method would be local level involvement only.

12.02 Parliamentary Leadership Selection

1988-90: 99 (missing)

12.03 Conformation to extraparliamentary positions

1988-90: 99 (missing)

12.04 Discipline of parliamentary representatives

1988-90: 99 (missing)

12.05 Tenure Limitations/Rotation Requirement

1988-90: 99 (missing)

12.06 Public Policy Positions

1988-90: 99 (missing)

General information: Policy making is the joint concern of the federal conference and the federal policy committee (Jacobs, 1989:399). The conference meets two times a year (Day, 1988:576). The policy committee submits green (working) and white (final) papers to the conference, and the conference has the final word on their adoption or rejection as party policy. The policy committee consists of 27 members, 13 of which are federal conference representatives. The identity of the other 14 are not referred to. Since they might be MPs, it is not possible to assign a score because of incomplete information. There is a provision for a consultative ballot of all the members on issues that are felt to be of fundamental importance to party values and objectives (Jacobs, 1989:399-400).

12.07 Primary leader of the Party

1988-90:2

There is a president and a party leader; both are elected through a secret ballot of the entire membership. The president chairs the Federal Executive, and runs the party headquarters. After an election loss the leader is submitted for re-election within 2 years. If 75 local parties request an election if a motion of no confidence is passed by a majority of MPs then an earlier election is called (Jacobs, 1989:399). This means that a parliamentary or an extra-parliamentary actor can constitute the official leader of the party.

The score of 2 was given for this variable because should an extra-parliamentary figure be elected leader officially, it is highly unlikely that the leader of the parliamentary party would be overshadowed given the power vested in the British parliament.