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# LEFT-LIBERTARIAN PARTIES: Explaining Innovation in Competitive Party Systems

By HERBERT P. KITSCHOLT\*

IN contemporary democracies, political stability and change are intimately linked to developments in the party systems. For at least two generations prior to the 1970s, most democratic party systems were structured along stable patterns of societal cleavages such as class, religion, ethnicity, and center/periphery relations.<sup>1</sup> Since the 1960s, however, electoral dealignment and realignment have undermined this continuity.<sup>2</sup> It is particularly significant that political parties, mostly of recent origin, have developed programs and attracted electoral constituencies that cut across the established cleavage structures.

Probably the most significant cohort of new political parties in advanced democracies are "left-libertarian" parties. These parties appeared first in Scandinavia, France, and the Netherlands under "New Left" labels and competed with the established communist and social democratic parties. More recently, in Austria, Belgium, Switzerland, and West Germany, new "ecology" or "green" parties have attracted considerable electoral support. By now, New Left and ecology parties have converging

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<sup>1</sup> For European party systems, this argument was made by Seymour Martin Lipset and Stein Rokkan, "Cleavage Structures, Party Systems, and Voter Alignments: An Introduction," in Seymour Martin Lipset and Stein Rokkan, eds., *Party Systems and Voter Alignments* (New York: Free Press, 1967). Lipset and Rokkan are concerned with the societal nature of cleavages that are represented on the level of party competition, not with the relative strength of particular parties. Critics and supporters of their argument are mistaken when they test the persistence of cleavages by the electoral stability of individual parties. See Richard Rose and Derek Urwin, "Persistence and Change in Western Party Systems Since 1945," *Political Studies* 18 (No. 3, 1970), 287-319; Maria Maguire, "Is There Still Persistence? Electoral Change in Western Europe, 1948-1979," in Hans Daalder and Peter Mair, eds., *Western European Party Systems: Continuity and Change* (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage 1983); and Michal Shamir, "Are Western Party Systems 'Frozen'? A Comparative Dynamic Analysis," *Comparative Political Studies* 12 (No. 1, 1984), 35-79.

<sup>2</sup> As a survey on contemporary debates about the dealignment and realignment of party systems, see Russell J. Dalton, Scott C. Flanagan, and Paul Allen Beck, eds., *Electoral Change in Advanced Industrial Democracies* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985).

programmatic outlooks and electoral constituencies. All left-libertarian parties are critical of the logic of societal development and the institutions that underlie the postwar compromise between capital and labor in industrial societies. They oppose the priority that economic growth has on the political agenda, the patterns of policy making that restrict democratic participation to elite bargaining among centralized interest groups and party leaders, and the bureaucratic welfare state. Their political alternatives conform neither to traditional conservative nor to socialist programs, but link libertarian commitments to individual autonomy and popular participation, with a leftist concern for equality.

This essay will explore why left-libertarian parties have been able to attract significant groups of new voters in some Western democracies. In particular, it will examine whether the rise of left-libertarian parties is traceable to structural and institutional conditions in advanced democracies or to transitory grievances and deprivations in societies and party systems that are essentially stable. Conditions that explain the rise of political parties may not necessarily explain their persistence. Nevertheless, if structural factors are responsible for the emergence of left-libertarian parties, these parties are likely to signal lasting changes in the cleavage structure of party systems. If, on the other hand, conjunctural factors—such as short-term economic fluctuations and single issues—explain the rise of left-libertarian parties, the new parties may well be passing fads or “flash parties.”

Research on the supporters, organization, and strategy of left-libertarian parties should demonstrate which explanation is correct. The parties become a more interesting object of study if they are indeed grounded in the structural and institutional developments of modern democracies. In that case, their bases of support and patterns of mobilization may have lasting consequences for political participation and public policy making. A comparative study of eighteen democracies, some of which have sizable left-libertarian parties, will demonstrate that these new parties mark the rise of a new political cleavage and represent a significant challenge to the dominant forms of interest intermediation between state and civil society in a distinctive subset of advanced democracies.

## I. THEORETICAL MODELS OF POLITICAL MOBILIZATION AND THE RESTRUCTURING OF PARTY SYSTEMS

The mobilization of new political demands, whether by social movements, interest groups, or political parties, has been explained by means

of three different theoretical models: breakdown, structural change, and resource mobilization.<sup>3</sup> Advocates of the breakdown model see political mobilization as a response to societal strains and relative deprivation. Crises occur when societies generate popular loyalty based on institutionalized norms and values, but fail to attain their own standards of institutional stability and legitimation. For instance, modern welfare states promise economic security and opportunity for upward mobility through enhanced education and training. In the view of many of their citizens, however—particularly the younger generation—the economic crises of the 1970s and 1980s have shattered these hopes. The experience of a widening gap between expected and realized benefits triggers collective protest when the existing social order is held to be responsible for this discrepancy.

Proponents of structural change models argue that societies are well able to meet the demands and aspirations on which their legitimacy is based. But, because the societies are involved in continuous change and transformation, this very “success” may generate new preferences which cannot be satisfied by the existing institutions and thus become new sources of dissatisfaction. Societal transformation provokes collective mobilization around new issues and new lines of conflict. Breakdown models bear a close affinity to Marxist and functionalist theories, which predict collective mobilization when capitalist societies experience economic crisis; structural change models are closer to Weber’s and Schumpeter’s view that capitalism and liberal representative democracy will be victims of their own success.

Adherents of resource mobilization theories maintain that neither crises nor structural change by themselves explain the organization of new collective political demands. Grievances and institutional change are endemic in most societies, but they rarely translate into collective political action. Instead, the actors’ skills and resources and the broader institutional opportunity structures determine when individuals are able to engage in collective mobilization. In particular, the choice of a specific ve-

<sup>3</sup> Among a growing body of literature on social movements and political protest, see Gary T. Marx and James L. Wood, “Strands of Theory and Research in Collective Behavior,” *Annual Review of Sociology* 1 (1975), 363-428; John D. McCarthy and Mayer N. Zald, “Resource Mobilization and Social Movements: A Partial Theory,” *American Journal of Sociology* 82 (No. 6, 1977), 1212-41; Charles Tilly, *From Mobilization to Revolution* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1978); Craig J. Jenkins, “Sociopolitical Movements,” in Samuel I. Long, ed., *Handbook of Political Behavior* Vol. IV (New York: Plenum Press, 1981); Alain Touraine, *The Voice and the Eye* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1982); Claus Offe, “New Social Movements: Challenging the Boundaries of Institutional Politics,” *Social Research* 52 (No. 4, 1985), 817-68. A fourth theoretical model stands in the Weberian sociological tradition and emphasizes the change of world views and definitions of collective identities. I incorporate this perspective in a broadly interpreted structural theory of movements and party formation.

hicle of mobilization, such as a political party, can be explained only in terms of actors' resources and opportunities.

I will argue that a combination of structural change and resource mobilization theories explains the emergence of left-libertarian parties better than breakdown theories do. Theories of structural change highlight the necessary background conditions for the rise of left-libertarian parties; but the sufficient conditions are provided only by favorable political opportunity structures. Breakdown theories as such do not help us to identify necessary or sufficient conditions of party formation. The competing explanations will be tested in a macrocomparison of eighteen advanced democracies.

## II. THE CASES

Common ideological and programmatic convictions, similar compositions of electoral constituencies, and a minimum level of voter support determine which parties qualify as significant left-libertarian parties. The formal party labels (left-socialist, ecological, or libertarian), the age, and the political origin of left-libertarian parties are not relevant for these criteria. With respect to political ideology, left-libertarian parties grow out of the sentiment that the realms of instrumental action in modern society—the market place and bureaucratic organization—dominate too much of social life and have displaced relations of solidarity (in the private sphere of interpersonal communication) and participatory political deliberation (in the public sphere of collective decision making). Left-libertarians mistrust markets because the latter orient human preferences toward the pursuit of material commodities, devalue social community, and endanger the supply and protection of many nonmarketable collective goods—not the least of which is an intact environment. Simultaneously, left-libertarians oppose the centralized bureaucratic welfare state and the hegemony of professional expertise in public policy and society. In their view, the formal rationalities of markets and bureaucracies expropriate the citizens' capacity to determine their own lives and must be checked by institutions that impose substantive standards of rationality on their boundless expansive dynamic.

Consistent with the socialist legacy, left-libertarians are "left"; they oppose the market place and insist on solidarity and equality. They are also "libertarian" in that they reject centralized bureaucracies and call for individual autonomy, participation, and the self-governance of decentralized communities.

Left-libertarian parties not only have common programmatic orienta-

tions, but also similar socioeconomic profiles of electoral support. There is no systematic study of left-libertarian electorates that covers all countries with significant parties, but existing surveys show that all of these parties overproportionally draw voters from the ranks of the younger, well-educated middle class; they are employed in human services (teaching, health care, social work), have left-of-center political convictions, subscribe to "postmaterialist" values, and sympathize with environmental, feminist, and peace movements.<sup>4</sup>

Left-libertarian parties can obviously make a difference in advanced industrial democracies only if they receive a minimum level of electoral support. Why do some countries have electorally significant left-libertarian parties, but others not? It is difficult to choose a single and universally applicable measure of electoral support as the criterion for distinguishing "significant" from "insignificant" left-libertarian parties. Since these parties vary in age, one cannot average their electoral performance over a long period of time, and since the competition between party blocs in a number of European countries is very close and often determined by marginal changes in electoral support, the criterion of significance should not be too stringent. In some instances, a share of 2 or 3 percent of the vote may place a left-libertarian party in a position to affect the formation of governmental majorities.

I have classified left-libertarian parties as significant if they have received about 4 percent or more of the vote in a national parliamentary or presidential election at least once in the 1980s. Alliances among left-libertarian parties are permitted to count toward the 4-percent threshold. The dependent variable is thus a dummy with two values indicating whether a country has (= 1) or does not have (= 0) significant left-libertarian parties.

Table 1 shows that parties in eight West European democracies easily meet this criterion. Luxemburg and Iceland are too small to be included in the present comparative analysis. In three of the six remaining cases,

<sup>4</sup> Electoral analysis of Scandinavian New Left parties are provided in John Logue, *Socialism and Abundance* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1982), chaps. 6 and 8; Alastair H. Thomas, "Social Democracy in Scandinavia: Can Dominance Be Regained?" in William E. Paterson and Alastair H. Thomas, eds., *The Future of Social Democracy* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986). For France, see Daniel Boy, "Le vote ecologiste en 1978" [The ecological vote in 1978], *Revue française de science politique* 31 (No. 2, 1981), 394-416. For West Germany, compare Hans Joachim Veen, "Wer wählt grün? Zum Profil der Neuen Linken in der Wohlstandsgesellschaft" [Who votes Green? On the profile of the New Left in the affluent society], *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte* 34 (September 1984), 3-17; and Wilhelm P. Bürklin, "The Greens: Ecology and the New Left," in H. G. Wallach and George K. Romoser, eds., *West German Politics in the Mid-Eighties: Crisis and Continuity* (New York: Praeger 1985). For other countries, see Ferdinand Müller-Rommel, "The Greens in Western Europe: Similar but Different," *International Political Science Review* 6 (No. 4, 1985), 483-99.

(Denmark, the Netherlands, and Norway), the left-libertarian parties may be classified as New Left or left-socialist. They originated in the late 1950s and 1960s and languished in the 1970s, but in recent years they have developed a profile of voter support and a programmatic outlook that qualifies them as left-libertarians. The three other unambiguous cases are the Austrian, Belgian, and West German ecology parties. They are less than ten years old and started from environmentalist visions that always involved a genuinely left-libertarian commitment.

Three additional countries have borderline left-libertarian parties. In Switzerland, the New Left and ecology parties coexist side by side and cooperate with each other. In Sweden, two established parties—the Center Party and the Communist Party—have moved toward the left-libertarian agenda and preempted the successful formation of either New Left or ecology parties. Since they have not entirely renounced their traditional clienteles and ideological affinities, they must be treated as borderline cases. Norway and the Netherlands also have centrist or liberal parties that have moved toward the left-libertarian agenda. They are not included in my list because their outlook is more ambiguous than that of those that are included.<sup>5</sup>

In France, which is the most difficult case to classify, left-socialist parties played some role in the 1960s and 1970s, but have now virtually disappeared from the political scene. France was actually the first country in which the ecologists enjoyed some modest success in local and regional elections in the 1970s, but their performance at the national level has been inconsistent and disappointing. Although the ecology candidate received almost 4 percent of the vote in the first round of the 1981 presidential election, the ecologists have fared badly in all elections to the French national assembly.

A total of nine countries may be considered either clear or borderline cases with significant left-libertarian parties. My classification does not predetermine the findings of the comparative analysis, however; it is itself subject to test. If some of the borderline cases do not conform to a pattern of determination that explains the rise of left-libertarian parties in most other cases, we will have to reclassify the countries. France is most likely not a case of true, significant left-libertarian parties. In the empirical analysis, I will therefore count France alternatively as a case with a significant

<sup>5</sup> The Norwegian party, unlike its Swedish counterpart, barely cleared the 3% threshold in the 1980s, and finally lost its parliamentary representation in 1985. See John Modeley, "Norway's 1985 Election: A Pro-Welfare Backlash," *West European Politics* 9 (No. 2, 1986), 289-92. For an analysis of the Swedish and Norwegian centrist libertarian parties, see Neil Elder and Rolf Gooderham, "The Centre Parties of Norway and Sweden," *Government and Opposition* 13 (No. 2, 1978), 218-35.

TABLE I  
LEFT-LIBERTARIAN PARTIES IN WESTERN DEMOCRACIES:  
BEST PERFORMANCE 1980-1986

I. COUNTRIES WITH SIGNIFICANT LEFT-LIBERTARIAN PARTIES			
A. "Clear" Cases			
Austria (A)	The Greens	4.6%	(national elections 1986)
Belgium (B)	AGALEV/ECOLO	6.2%	(national elections 1985)
Denmark (DK)	Socialist People's Party	11.5%	(national elections 1984)
	Left Socialist Party	2.7%	(national elections 1984)
Netherlands (NL)	PPR/PSP/CPN (Green Progressive Accord)	5.7%	(national elections 1982)
Norway (N)	Socialist People's Party	5.4%	(national elections 1985)
West Germany (FRG)	The Greens	5.6%	(national elections 1983)
Iceland	Women's Party	5.0%	(national elections 1983)
Luxembourg	The Green Alternative	5.2%	(national elections 1984)
B. "Borderline" Cases			
France (F)	Ecologists	3.9%	(presidential elections 1981)
	Les Verts	1.2%	(parliamentary elections 1986)
Sweden (S)	Left Communist Party	5.4%	(national elections 1985)
	Center Party	12.4%	(national elections 1985)
	Greens	2.9%	(national elections 1983)
Switzerland (CH)	Progressive Organizations	2.7%	(national elections 1983)



II. COUNTRIES WITHOUT SIGNIFICANT LEFT-LIBERTARIAN PARTIES

A. Marginal Parties Exist

Canada (CND)	Green Party of Canada	(no contest in national elections)
New Zealand (NZ)	Values Party	0.2% (national elections 1984)
United Kingdom (UK)	Ecology/Green Party	1.1% (in districts contested in the 1983 national elections)

B. Proto-Parties or Loose Electoral Coalitions Exist

Finland (FI)	Greens	1.4% (national elections 1983)
Ireland (IRE)	Comhaontas Glas/Greens	(no contest in national elections)
Italy (I)	Radical Party	2.2% (national elections 1983)
	Various local Green lists	(no contest in national elections)
Japan (J)	Green Party	(declared only)
Spain	Green Party	(declared only, no independent participation in national elections)
United States (US)	Citizens' Party	0.1% (presidential elections 1984)
	New World Alliance	(no contest in national elections)

C. No Parties Declared

Australia (AUS)
Greece
Portugal

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left-libertarian party (France = 1) and without it (France = 0). If France is a true case of left-libertarian party formation, variables that predict the presence of these parties in the other countries should do the same for France. If, however, the addition of the French case to the countries with left-libertarian parties weakens the correlation between various independent variables and left-libertarian party formation, France should be excluded from this group.

In twelve other Western democracies, significant left-libertarian parties do not exist. Many of them have very small ecology or left-socialist splinter parties (which are not necessarily listed in the table); but these parties are electorally insignificant by my criteria. Closest to the threshold of political significance are Italy, where the Radical Party managed to surpass 3 percent in one national election during the 1970s, and Finland, where a small ecology party is actually represented in the national parliament. Whether I have classified these two cases correctly can be validated by checking if the absence of left-libertarian parties is explained by the same factors in these cases as in the other countries without such parties.

Nine of the twelve countries without significant left-libertarian parties are included in the comparative analysis. Greece, Portugal, and Spain were dropped because their transition to democracy is too recent. An initial exploration, moreover, showed that they have none of the attributes that facilitate the rise of left-libertarian parties in other countries. Adding these countries would thus confirm my analysis.

The development of left-libertarian parties cannot be reviewed individually and by country in this paper.<sup>6</sup> In general, New Left parties are the oldest subgroup; they have attracted electoral support in Scandinavia, the Netherlands, and Switzerland. The newer left-libertarian parties appeared in the late 1970s; they are the ecology or "green" parties of Austria, Belgium, France, Switzerland, and West Germany. Despite their names, these parties are not narrow environmentalist pressure groups, but address the entire range of left-libertarian demands. In addition to

<sup>6</sup> Case materials for a comparative study of left-libertarian parties in general, and ecology parties in particular, can be found in Jürgen Baumgarten, ed., *Linksozialisten in Europa: Alternative zu Sozialdemokratie und kommunistischen Parteien* [Left socialists in Europe: Alternatives to social democracy and communist parties] (Hamburg: Junius, 1982); Frank DeRoose, "De Groene Golf: Over de nationale diversiteit van een internationaal fenomeen" [The Green wave: On the national diversity of an international phenomenon], *De Groene Schriften* 7, pp. 33-61; Patrick Florizoone, *De Groenen: Idee, bewegingen en partijen* [The Greens: Ideas, movements, and parties] (Deurne: Kluwer, 1985); Ferdinand Müller-Rommel, "'Parteien neuen Typs' in Westeuropa: Eine vergleichende Analyse" ['Parties of a new type' in Western Europe: A comparative analysis], *Zeitschrift für Parlamentsfragen* 13 (No. 3, 1982), 369-90, and "New Social Movements and Smaller Parties: A Comparative Perspective," *West European Politics* 8 (No. 1, 1985), 41-54; Wolfgang Rüdig, "The Greens in Europe. Ecological Parties and the European Elections of 1984," *Parliamentary Affairs* 38 (No. 1, 1985), 56-72.

these two main subgroups, there are a few center-left parties with a left-libertarian agenda in Sweden, Norway, and the Netherlands.

### III. METHODOLOGY OF COMPARISON

The small number of cases, the definition of the dependent variable as a dummy, and the collinearity among the independent variables preempt a sophisticated multivariate statistical analysis and causal modeling of the paths that lead to left-libertarian parties. In view of these limitations, I will use some less powerful quantitative and semi-quantitative measures and techniques to draw inferences about the association of variables. The analysis is theory-driven and its conclusions go beyond what the statistical analysis alone would warrant.

My main analytic technique is the cross-tabulation of dichotomized independent and dependent variables. I dichotomize ordinal- or interval-scaled variables around the median. Because the eighteen countries in my comparison are evenly distributed over each of the two values that independent and dependent variables can assume, we can calculate by how much the actual distribution of countries over the cells of the resulting two-by-two tables diverges from random probability. If a hypothesis predicts that all cases may be found in two of the four cells, while random probability would lead us to expect 50 percent of the cases in these cells, the difference between the actual number of cases and the 50-percent mark indicates the explanatory power of that hypothesis. For each table, a “coefficient of reproducibility” calculates the percentage of cases that are correctly classified according to the hypothesis being tested.

In addition, if independent variables are metric or interval-scaled, we can compare whether countries with left-libertarian parties have different mean values on these variables from countries where these parties are absent. In such cases, I have used regression analysis. Because the dependent variable is a dummy, I have used a loglinear regression model (LOGIT) to test the statistical significance of the association between independent variables and left-libertarian parties. In addition, I provide Pearson linear correlation coefficients to measure the strength of the association between the variables.

All empirical indicators are at the macro level. They presuppose micro-foundations that cannot be explicitly tested in this paper. There are no sufficient comparative data to determine how and why individual supporters of left-libertarian parties differ from the overall electorates in the eighteen democracies.

## IV. STRUCTURAL CHANGE AND LEFT-LIBERTARIAN PARTIES

Most contemporary theories of structural change adopt the Schumpeterian perspective that the success of capitalist institutions and values will ultimately bring about the demise of capitalism's organizational and moral foundations.<sup>7</sup> These theories identify the spread of markets and bureaucracies as the source of new dissatisfaction. They interpret the programmatic concerns of left-libertarian parties as a protest against the emerging bureaucratic and meritocratic postindustrial society.

According to these theories, modern welfare capitalism was made possible by an unprecedented period of economic growth, affluence, and institutional stability. The new social movements and left-libertarian parties are mobilizing against certain consequences of this process and articulating new preferences for social change. They respond to tendencies in postindustrial societies that (1) produce unacceptable risks to human life and the environment, (2) restrain the autonomy of the individual citizen, and (3) undercut a democratic governance of social change. Although these societies promote sophisticated education, they simultaneously frustrate demands for more political participation and centralize control in hierarchies of experts and bureaucracies. They foster individualism and mobility, but deny a more autonomous definition of individual lifestyles and collective identities at the local level. Theories of postindustrial society suggest that the growing tension between citizens' demands for autonomy and participation on the one hand, and the increasingly comprehensive and complex hierarchies of social control on the other, is what leads to the formation of left-libertarian parties.

A simple way to explore the link between societal transformation and left-libertarian parties is to compare the per capita incomes of the Western democracies. The more affluent countries should create stronger preferences and individual capacities to pursue left and libertarian goals. At the same time, these countries tend to regulate social life more tightly through market exchange relations and organizational hierarchies. Table 2 shows that levels of economic affluence correctly predict the presence or absence of left-libertarian parties in sixteen out of eighteen cases. The average income in countries with relevant left-libertarian parties is noticeably higher than in those without, and the coefficient of reproducibility is much higher than chance. The LOGIT analysis shows that the association

<sup>7</sup> Macrostructural theories are especially influenced by the work of Jürgen Habermas, *Legitimation Crisis* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1975), and Habermas, *Communication and the Evolution of Society* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1979); Alain Touraine, *The Self-Production of Society* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977); and Claus Offe, *Contradictions of the Welfare State* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1984).

TABLE 2  
LEFT-LIBERTARIAN PARTIES AND PER CAPITA INCOME  
(1980)

	<i>Income Greater than \$11,000 per Capita</i>		<i>Income Smaller than \$11,000 per Capita</i>	
<i>Significant</i>	B	(11,816)	A	(10,251)
<i>Left-Libertarian</i>	DK	(12,952)		
<i>Parties Exist</i>	F	(12,136)		
(Average = \$13,001)	FRG	(13,305)		
	N	(14,019)		
	NL	(11,851)		
	S	(14,761)		
	CH	(15,922)		
<i>No Significant</i>	US	(11,364)	AUS	(10,129)
<i>Left-Libertarian</i>			FI	(10,440)
<i>Parties Exist</i>			I	( 6,906)
(Average = \$8,972)			IRE	( 5,193)
			J	( 8,873)
			NZ	( 7,441)
			UK	( 9,335)
			CND	(10,582)

Source: OECD, *Historical Statistics 1960-1980* (Paris: OECD, 1982).

#### STATISTICAL INTERPRETATION

	<i>France with Left- Libertarian Party (France = 1)</i>	<i>France without Left-Libertarian Party (France = 0)</i>
<i>Coefficient of Reproducibility (CR)*</i>	.89	.83
<i>r</i>	.75	.71
<i>Significance Level (LOGIT Regression)</i>	.055	.04

$$* CR = 1 - \frac{N \text{ of mistakes}}{N \text{ of cases}}$$

of income and party formation is close to the commonly accepted level of statistical significance, and the correlation coefficient is quite strong. Nevertheless, the link is not perfect: Austria and the United States are anomalies not explained by the theory. France strengthens the correlation if it is counted as a case with left-libertarian parties.

Within West Germany, the relationship between affluence and left-

libertarian party strength holds true at an even more disaggregate level. If we regress the electoral support for the West German Greens in state and national elections from 1981 to 1985 on the per capita income of the West German states, there is a strong and significant correlation between income levels and electoral support.<sup>8</sup> Figure 1 illustrates this link. Other variables, such as the industrial structure or the competitive position of different parties in each state, may explain the remaining variance. We will return to these variables in the cross-national analysis.

Postindustrial societies are said to be characterized by a high percentage of the economically active population working in the service sector and by increasing levels of education in the population. But in the eighteen democracies in the sample, no association between the sectoral structure of the economy and left-libertarian parties can be found (see Table 3). Similarly, the relative size of the student population in advanced education shows no link to party formation.<sup>9</sup> These negative findings suggest that sociological theories of postindustrialism offer only limited explanations at best for the rise of new parties.

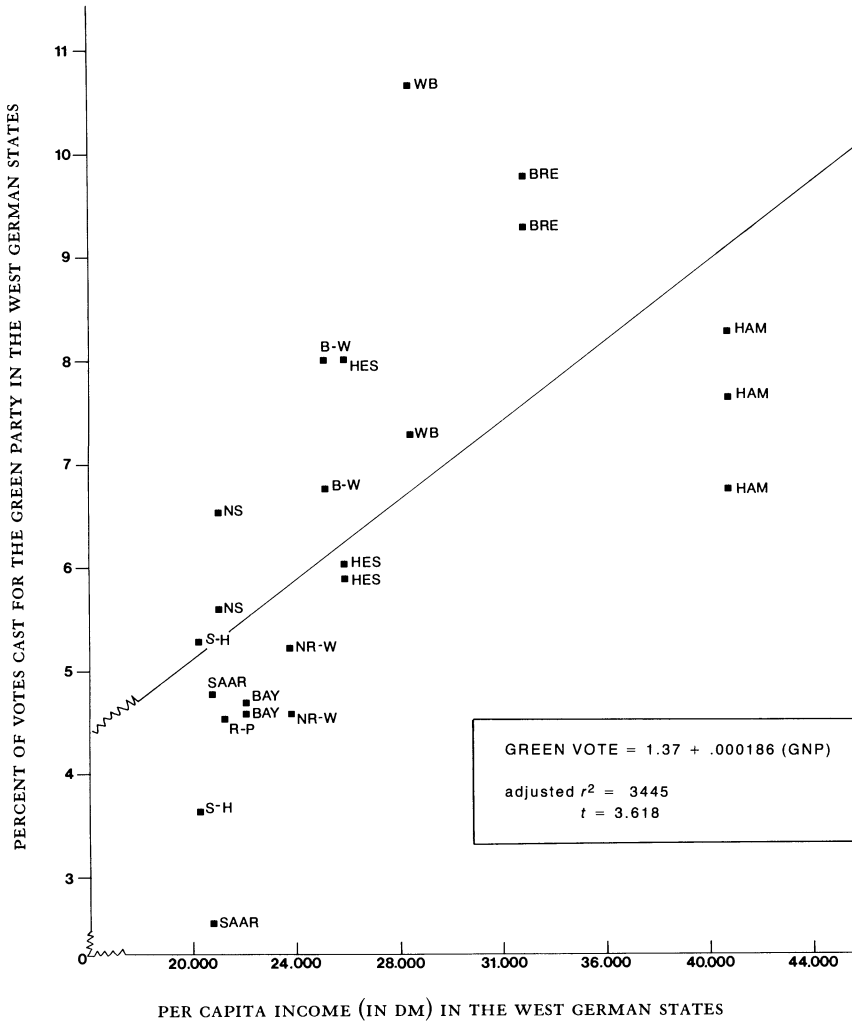
This conclusion is reinforced when we analyze the link of postmaterialist values in affluent democracies to the formation of left-libertarian parties. Surveys show that most left-libertarian voters do prefer postmaterialist values. But the reverse does not hold true: not all postmaterialists support left-libertarian parties. Although we do not have data on the entire set of eighteen democracies to substantiate this assertion, data exist on six European countries with and without left-libertarian parties. In the countries with left-libertarian parties (West Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium, and France as a borderline case), the percentage of citizens with postmaterialist values is not unambiguously greater than in the countries that do not have such parties (Britain and Italy).<sup>10</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Autocorrelation between the values of Green electoral support within each German state may make the correlation look stronger than it is. But in view of the small number of cases and the limited purpose of this analysis, I have settled for a simple bivariate analysis.

<sup>9</sup> The number of college students per 100,000 inhabitants is taken as a measure of educational advancement. Data are provided by UNESCO, *Statistical Digest 1984* (Paris: UNESCO, 1984).

<sup>10</sup> Data on the distribution of materialists and postmaterialists in these countries are provided by Paul R. Abrahamson and Ronald Inglehart, "Generational Replacement and Value Change in Six West European Societies," paper prepared for delivery at the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Washington, DC, August 30-September 2, 1984. If we average the postmaterialism scores for 1976-1980 in Belgium, the Netherlands, and West Germany, they are only slightly higher than the average in France, Britain, or Italy. West Germany's score is smaller than that of France or Britain. Belgium, which was more postmaterialist in 1976-1980, is much less postmaterialist than are all other countries in the 1980s. Finally, the postmaterialism measure is heavily influenced by the actual inflation rates of a country. If this variable was held constant, the association between national postmaterialism scores and left-libertarian parties would probably disappear entirely.

FIGURE I  
RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PER CAPITA INCOME  
IN THE WEST GERMAN STATES (1980)  
AND THE GREEN VOTE IN STATE AND NATIONAL ELECTIONS (1981-1985)



Source: Statistisches Bundesamt, *Statistisches Jahrbuch der Bundesrepublik Deutschland* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1984).

Key: S-H = Schleswig-Holstein; SAAR = Saarland; NS = Niedersachsen (Lower Saxony); R-P = Rheinland-Pfalz (Rhineland-Palatinate) [same result in two elections]; BAY = Bayern (Bavaria); NR-W = Nordrhein-Westfalen (Northrhine-Westfalia); B-W = Baden-Württemberg; HES = Hessen (Hesse); WB = West Berlin; BRE = Bremen; HAM = Hamburg.

TABLE 3  
LEFT-LIBERTARIAN PARTIES AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE  
SERVICE SECTOR  
(Percentage of the employed labor force)

	<i>Percentage Greater than 57.5%</i>		<i>Percentage Lower than 57.5%</i>	
<i>Significant</i>	B	(62.3%)	A	(51.5%)
<i>Left-Libertarian</i>	DK	(63.3%)	CH	(52.3%)
<i>Parties Exist</i>	NL	(62.1%)	F	(55.3%)
(Average = 57.9%)	N	(61.8%)	FRG	(49.2%)
	S	(62.2%)		
<i>No Significant</i>	AUS	(62.4%)	FI	(54.0%)
<i>Left-Libertarian</i>	CND	(66.0%)	I	(48.0%)
<i>Parties Exist</i>	UK	(59.2%)	IRE	(48.4%)
(Average = 57.1%)	US	(65.9%)	J	(54.2%)
			NZ	(55.2%)

Source: OECD, *Historical Statistics, 1960-80* (Paris: OECD, 1982), Table 2.11, p. 35.

#### STATISTICAL INTERPRETATION

	<i>France = 1</i>	<i>France = 0</i>
<i>CR</i>	.56	.61
<i>r</i>	.06	.1
<i>p</i> (LOGIT)	.79 (n.s.)	.67 (n.s.)

Inglehart and Dalton argue that value change does not instantly translate into electoral realignments.<sup>11</sup> Still, this does not explain why the apparent "lags" between value change and party realignments differ from country to country. Theories of postmaterialism either do not use reliable and valid measures of value change or they underrate the importance of changing cognitive capabilities and of institutional opportunities and constraints as determinants of collective political action.

Thus, theories of postindustrialist society and value change at best account for changing individual orientations, preferences, and capabilities to engage in collective protest. But they do not sufficiently predict the conditions and opportunities under which these values and preferences lead to the formation of left-libertarian parties.

<sup>11</sup> See Ronald Inglehart, "The Changing Structure of Political Cleavages in Western Societies," in Dalton et al. (fn. 2), 62, and Russell J. Dalton, "Environmentalism and Value Change in Western Democracies," paper prepared for delivery at the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Washington, DC, August 30-September 2, 1984.



# V. POLITICAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR AND CONSTRAINTS ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF LEFT-LIBERTARIAN PARTIES

Although socioeconomic theories of party formation remain unsatisfactory, we can explore the significance of political institutions and power relations in the development of left-libertarian parties. The socioeconomic transformation of modern democracy explains *why* there is pressure to represent left-libertarian interests in the political arena, but political institutions and power relations explain *whether* these pressures are represented by specific political parties, *when* these parties appear, and *what* label they adopt.

The formation of political parties can be examined from the perspective of rational actors who have postindustrial political demands and are searching for the most effective strategies to place them on the political agenda. Forming new parties in order to press for new political demands requires more effort than using existing political channels, such as established parties and interest groups. Rational actors will attempt to build new vehicles of interest representation only if traditional organizations fail to respond to postindustrial demands. Moreover, these actors must be able to take advantage of opportunities and acquire resources to build a new party. Thus, new political parties will form only when the *unresponsiveness* of existing political institutions coincides with favorable *political opportunities* to displace existing parties.

Four conditions shape the opportunities and constraints of left-libertarian party formation. Comprehensive welfare states increase the financial resources and the motivational dispositions of important groups to shift their political attention from economic to postindustrial policy issues. In advanced welfare states, strong labor corporatism and the participation of left parties in government constrain the pursuit of postindustrial demands through established political channels, and thus render the development of new political vehicles for these demands more probable. The likelihood of the formation of left-libertarian parties increases further when highly visible conflicts about postindustrial policy issues (such as nuclear power) mobilize social movements and polarize society.

The welfare state protects the material well-being of many citizens from the effects of the business cycle and capitalist labor markets on their behavior and aspirations. Social insurance systems, public employment, educational institutions, and retraining programs provide a "safety net" and a subjective sense of security that is essential to the reorientation of people's political agenda. Such arrangements encourage them to discount the negative impact of low economic growth on their individual lives and increase their willingness to support policies that restrain private business

and the bureaucratic management of economic growth. This type of logic presumes a certain myopia among the actors because, after all, the welfare state itself is dependent on economic performance. Nevertheless, actual perceptions of opportunities and constraints may be reconstructed by such policies.

Welfare states encourage left-libertarian mobilization in another sense. They organize many social services (education, social welfare, health, etc.) in bureaucratic institutions. Nonmarket services in general, and the bureaucratic provision of social services in particular, may thus give rise to intense consumer dissatisfaction, which in turn fuels left-libertarian demands for a decentralized, consumer-controlled reorganization of public services.<sup>12</sup>

If this reasoning is valid, comprehensive welfare states should be most likely to generate left-libertarian parties. Table 4 shows that the existence of left-libertarian parties is strongly linked to public social expenditure as a percentage of gross domestic product. The coefficient of reproducibility as well as the correlation coefficient indicate a firm association between these variables. The mean social expenditures are much higher in countries with relevant left-libertarian parties, and the LOGIT analysis demonstrates that this association is statistically significant. The welfare state explains the "anomalies" we find when examining the association between left-libertarian parties and economic development. Austria and the United States are now classified correctly. France, again, contributes more to the association if it is classified as a country with left-libertarian parties. The association between the welfare state and left-libertarian parties, however, yields some new anomalies: Ireland and Switzerland. Plausible *ad hoc* arguments explain at least the Swiss case.<sup>13</sup>

The strength of welfare states is the result of economic development and peculiar political forces and institutions.<sup>14</sup> The most comprehensive welfare states are associated with strong, centralized labor unions and the frequent participation of social democratic and socialist parties in government. But while the welfare state creates *opportunities* for the mobiliza-

<sup>12</sup> See Albert O. Hirschman, *Shifting Involvements* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981), 39-41.

<sup>13</sup> The figures understate the exceptional social and economic security Swiss citizens enjoy due to Switzerland's unique position in the world economy. See Manfred Schmidt, *Der schweizerische Weg zur Vollbeschäftigung* [The Swiss path to full employment] (Frankfurt/Main: Campus Verlag, 1985).

<sup>14</sup> See Peter Flora and Arnold J. Heidenheimer, eds., *The Development of Welfare States in Western Europe and North America* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Books, 1981), and Francis G. Castles, *The Impact of Parties* (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage, 1982). Compare, as a recent analytic survey of studies on the determinants of the welfare state, Hannu Uusitalo, "Comparative Research on the Determinants of the Welfare State: The State of the Art," *European Journal of Political Research* 12 (No. 4, 1984), 403-24.

TABLE 4  
LEFT-LIBERTARIAN PARTIES AND SOCIAL SECURITY EXPENDITURE  
(1979-1980) (Percentage of GNP)

	<i>Expenditure Greater than 19%</i>		<i>Expenditure Smaller than 19%</i>	
<i>Significant Left-Libertarian Parties Exist</i> (Average = 23.6%)	A	(21.4%)	CH	(12.8%)
	B	(24.5%)		
	DK	(26.2%)		
	F	(25.5%)		
	FRG	(23.0%)		
	N	(19.8%)		
	NL	(27.6%)		
	S	(31.2%)		
<i>No Significant Left-Libertarian Parties Exist</i> (Average = 14.9%)	IRE	(20.6%)	AUS	(11.6%)
			CND	(14.8%)
			FI	(18.0%)
			I	(16.3%)
			J	( 9.8%)
			NZ	(14.1%)
			UK	(16.9%)
			US	(12.2%)

(Overall Average = 19.2%)

Source: International Labor Office, *The Cost of Social Security. Eleventh International Inquiry 1978-80* (Geneva: ILO, 1985).

#### STATISTICAL INTERPRETATION

	<i>France = 1</i>	<i>France = 0</i>
<i>CR</i>	.89	.83
<i>r</i>	.72	.61
<i>p</i> (LOGIT)	.02	.03

tion of left-libertarian demands, labor-interest organizations and government participation by the socialists provide *constraints* that prevent these demands from being articulated through established political channels. Labor corporatism and left party governments increase the *rigidity* and *unresponsiveness* of political systems to left-libertarian policy demands, and thereby speed the formation of new parties.

In capitalist democracies, labor can gain power only if it is well organized. It must represent a large share of a country's wage earners and it

must centralize organizational decision making. This form of mobilization increases labor's capacity to engage in elite bargaining with business and political parties.<sup>15</sup> Each participant has the resources to do damage to the others, but it also has capacities to enter into and enforce compromises.

Corporatist interest intermediation constrains left-libertarian demands in at least two ways. Because of the very centralist, formal organization of the participants in corporatist policy-making arenas, it is comparatively more difficult for new, less well-organized interests to be heard in the political system. In particular, existing political parties will discount new demands if no organization is behind them. Moreover, business and labor have a common interest as economic producers in preserving the logic of industrial growth and bureaucratic regulation—precisely the institutions that left-libertarian forces attack. When producer interests dominate the political agenda, left-libertarians can hope to disrupt this policy-making system only by establishing new vehicles of interest representation.

Since business interests and conservative parties as a rule are inimical to most left-libertarian demands for more egalitarian, participatory, and ecological economic or political institutions, the inclusion of labor in corporatist interest intermediation is vital to understanding why corporatism enhances pressures to create left-libertarian parties. Unions, labor parties, and left-libertarians have a common mistrust of the market and prefer greater equality and political redistribution. As labor organizations are drawn into corporatist interest intermediation, they sacrifice their anticapitalist spirit in favor of tangible short-term benefits for their constituencies (e.g., in the areas of social policy and employment). They move away from potential alliances with left-libertarian forces and lose their capacity to include left-libertarian demands in their own political platforms.

Only in a few of the noncorporatist countries have labor unions shown sympathy toward left-libertarian positions, such as opposition to nuclear power. Most notably, the French and Japanese socialist unions voiced concern about nuclear power in the 1970s. Some dissent from nuclear policies also developed in the British Trade Union Congress and in some U.S. unions. In corporatist systems, on the other hand, unions have always supported national nuclear policies, even if some union activists or

<sup>15</sup> In the burgeoning literature on labor corporatism, see in particular Philippe C. Schmitter and Gerhard Lehmbruch, eds., *Trends Toward Corporatist Intermediation* (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage, 1979); Gerhard Lehmbruch and Philippe C. Schmitter, eds., *Patterns of Corporatist Policy-Making* (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage, 1982); and Suzanne Berger, ed., *Organizing Interests in Western Europe* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1981).

suborganizations opposed this position. For this reason, the formation of left-libertarian parties should increase parallel to the firmness of labor-corporatist arrangements.

I use Schmitter's combined index of organizational centralization and associational monopoly of unions to measure labor corporatism.<sup>16</sup> Table 5 shows a very high association between labor corporatism and the development of left-libertarian parties. Three anomalies remain: Finland, France, and Switzerland. In the Swiss case, Schmitter's index may not appropriately tap the corporatist patterns of interest intermediation that are common in that country.

TABLE 5  
LEFT-LIBERTARIAN PARTIES AND LABOR CORPORATISM\*  
(Combined rank order of organizational centralization and  
associational monopoly of unions, 1965-1980)

	<i>High Labor Corporatism</i>		<i>Low Labor Corporatism</i>
<i>Significant Left-Libertarian Parties Exist</i>	A	NL	F
	B	S	CH
	DK	FRG	
	N		
<i>No Significant Left-Libertarian Parties Exist</i>	FI		AUS J CND UK IRE US I

\* No Data on New Zealand

Sources: The measure was developed by Schmitter (fn. 16), 294. Japan and Australia were added to Schmitter's sample as cases of low labor corporatism, based on data reported in David Cameron, "Social Democracy, Corporatism, Labour Quiescence, and the Representation of Economic Interest in Advanced Capitalist Society," in John H. Goldthorpe, ed., *Order and Conflict in Contemporary Capitalism* (London: Oxford University Press, 1984), 143-78, at 165.

CR = .82 (France = 1)

CR = .88 (France = 0)

In view of the difficulty of quantifying corporatism, I have chosen the level of strike activity in the countries as an indirect measure of economic interest intermediation. Because it facilitates compromise between capital and labor, labor corporatism is inversely related to strike activity. Table 6 shows that the association between strike activity and left-libertarian

<sup>16</sup> Philippe C. Schmitter, "Interest Intermediation and Regime Governability in Contemporary Western Europe and North America," in Berger (fn. 15), 287-330.

TABLE 6  
LEFT-LIBERTARIAN PARTIES AND STRIKE ACTIVITY\*  
(Working days lost per 1000 employees in the labor force, 1965–1981)

	<i>Loss Less than 260 Days per Year</i>	<i>Loss More than 260 Days per Year</i>
<i>Significant Left-Libertarian Parties Exist</i> (Average = 85.1%)	A (10) B (156) CH (1) DK (148) FRG (28) N (28) NL (22) S (95)	F (278)
<i>No Significant Left-Libertarian Parties Exist</i> (Average = 458.3%)	J (71)	AUS (427) CND (707) FI (358) I (840) IRE (484) UK (375) US (411)

\* No Data on New Zealand

Source: International Labor Office, *Yearbook of Labor Statistics* (Geneva: ILO, 1983), quoted in Cameron (see sources, Table 5).

#### STATISTICAL INTERPRETATION

	<i>France = 1</i>	<i>France = 0</i>
<i>CR</i>	.88	.94
<i>r</i>	-.77	-.78
<i>p</i> (LOGIT)	.02	.05

parties is strongly negative. The coefficient of reproducibility is high; only France—if counted as a country with a significant left-libertarian party—and Japan remain as anomalies. The mean strike activity among countries with left-libertarian parties is much lower than in the other eight countries, and the LOGIT analysis confirms that the bivariate association is significant. Because France has an intermediate level of strike activity, its classification does not affect the level and significance of the associations much.

Labor corporatism is linked to two other variables that I have not ex-

PLICITLY modeled in the present analysis. Countries with labor corporatism tend to be small and to develop political cultures based on bargaining, compromise, and the depoliticization of conflict. Some authors have related this "northern European polity model" to the low level of autonomy that small countries enjoy in the world economy. If they want to respond flexibly to external challenges, they cannot afford high levels of domestic conflict.<sup>17</sup> The price of domestic consensus, however, is centralized elite bargaining and the absence of popular participation in policy making. Left-libertarians evidently support a view of politics that is diametrically opposed to these patterns. They are a force that is bound to challenge and disrupt consensualist policy making.

In examining the role that political parties play in the emergence of left-libertarian competitors, we must pursue the same logic as we did with respect to labor corporatism: independent left-libertarian parties are more likely to develop when the traditional left is unavailable as a vehicle of protest against the dominant model of societal development. Whether this is actually the case depends on national structures of party competition.

The initial premise is that voters with left-libertarian sympathies are most likely to support traditional left parties in situations where they can choose *only* between socialist/social democratic and conservative parties.<sup>18</sup> Even if there is a left-libertarian alternative, voters will still tend to support the traditional left when the socialist and conservative parties are of roughly equal electoral strength because they fear that defection from the socialists will indirectly help the conservatives. For this reason, established left parties have often advertised themselves to left-libertarian constituencies as the "lesser evil." Moreover, as long as the traditional left is in the opposition, it can invoke both pro-labor and left-libertarian programs to gloss over the tensions that an alliance between these two forces would create.

Three different competitive configurations in party systems favor the development of left-libertarian parties. First, when the traditional left governs hegemonically, a conservative government is not a real threat;

<sup>17</sup> See Peter Katzenstein, "The Small European States in the International Economy: Economic Dependence and Corporatist Politics," in John Gerard Ruggie, ed., *The Antinomies of Interdependence* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983); Katzenstein, *Small States in World Markets* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1984); Michael Wallerstein, "The Microfoundations of Corporatism: Formal Theory and Comparative Analysis," paper prepared for delivery at the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Washington, DC, August 30-September 2, 1984.

<sup>18</sup> In two instances, left-libertarian centrist parties in Sweden (the Center Party) and in the Netherlands (Democrats '66) actually supported conservative governments. In both instances, the voters disapproved of these alliances and the parties lost votes in subsequent elections.

left-libertarians may therefore be tempted to abandon socialist parties. Second, the longer socialist parties participate in government, the more likely left-libertarians will be to defect from them. The performance record of socialist governments antagonizes left-libertarians and dampens hopes that the traditional left can incorporate new demands into its policies while simultaneously catering to its traditional working class constituency. Finally, where traditional left parties are weak and permanently confined to the opposition, voters have nothing to lose by supporting a new left-libertarian party.<sup>19</sup> From these hypotheses, one would expect a curvilinear association between socialist participation in government and relevant left-libertarian parties, with high probabilities both when socialist participation in government is high and when it is negligible.

The level of electoral support for traditional left parties is not a good empirical predictor of left-libertarian parties because it does not fully reflect the competitive position and influence of the left on the formation of governments and public policy making; socialist participation in government matters more. As Table 7 shows, government participation by the left between 1970 and 1980 is positively associated with the formation of significant left-libertarian parties.<sup>20</sup> This interpretation is also supported by the LOGIT analysis of the bivariate association and the correlation coefficient. However, the relationship between socialist participation in government and the appearance of left-libertarian parties is linear, not curvilinear. With the exception of France, countries with weak socialist parties have not produced left-libertarian parties. Even France may be a misleading case because left-libertarian electoral support dwindled with the rise of the socialist-communist alliance in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Statistically, the association between left-libertarian parties and socialist participation in government strengthens when France is dropped from the sample of countries with left-libertarian parties.

The structure of party systems, especially the internal cohesiveness of right and left party blocs and their ability to control the state executive,

<sup>19</sup> The argument that weak opposition parties spawn new opposition parties was developed by Maurice Pinard, *The Rise of a Third Party: A Study in Crisis Politics*, enlarged ed. (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1975).

<sup>20</sup> Some may argue that the period from 1970 to 1980 misspecifies the left government variable for those countries in which left-libertarian parties were formed much earlier than the late 1970s—i.e., the Scandinavian countries and the Netherlands. The use of earlier time periods for these countries, however, would not substantially alter the result. What is more important is that only in the later 1970s, after a period of organizational and/or electoral crisis, did the Scandinavian and Dutch New Left parties begin to adopt the entire left-libertarian agenda, including ecological demands, and to abandon traditional notions of socialism. The electoral constituency of Scandinavian New Left parties underwent a dramatic change during this period. Compare Logue (fn. 4).



TABLE 7  
LEFT-LIBERTARIAN PARTIES AND MAJOR SOCIALIST/COMMUNIST PARTY  
PARTICIPATION IN GOVERNMENT  
(Months in government, 1970–1980)

	<i>Participation More than 61 Months</i>		<i>Participation Less than 61 Months</i>	
<i>Significant</i>	A	(132)	F	(0)
<i>Left-Libertarian</i>	B	(90)	NL	(52)
<i>Parties Exist</i>	CH	(132)		
(Average = 89.1%)	FRG	(132)		
	DK	(97)		
	N	(85)		
	S	(82)		
<i>No Significant</i>	FI	(112)	AUS	(35)
<i>Left-Libertarian</i>	UK	(62)	CND	(0)
<i>Parties Exist</i>			I	(0)
(Average = 32.9%)			IRE	(51)
			J	(0)
			NZ	(36)
			US	(0)

Source: *Keesing's Contemporary Archives*, 1970–1980.

#### STATISTICAL INTERPRETATION

	<i>France = 1</i>	<i>France = 0</i>
CR	.78	.83
<i>r</i>	.59	.74
<i>p</i> (LOGIT)	.03	.03

explains the timing and the label of left-libertarian parties. In countries where New Left parties appeared as precursors of contemporary left-libertarian parties, the left was united while the conservative camp was deeply divided among several bourgeois parties. This strengthened the position of the traditional left parties and reduced the risk that New Left parties would involuntarily support conservative governments—a situation favorable to left-libertarian party formation in Denmark, the Netherlands, France, Norway, Sweden, and Switzerland. In countries where the right was well-organized and prevented domination by socialists, left-libertarian parties emerged only in the late 1970s after long periods of left participation in government; they now carry the “Green” or “ecology”

label. This rationale explains the cases of Austria, Belgium, and West Germany.

In the same way, we can interpret the finding that New Left or center-left libertarian parties emerged in party systems characterized by long-term rising electoral volatility, while ecology parties proved successful in systems with declining volatility (Table 8). It is true that the rise of left-libertarian parties itself affects the regression line of party system volatility, but high volatility usually indicates that many parties win and lose voters simultaneously. Such systems offer a good opportunity for the early formation of left-libertarian parties, a situation that prevails in countries with unstable bourgeois party blocs. When volatility declines, bourgeois party blocs are generally stable and make the formation of new left-libertarian parties more difficult.

Only Switzerland has generated both New Left and ecology parties that have sustained electoral significance (in part because they have strongholds in different Swiss cantons). The case of France is an interesting outlier. In the late 1950s and 1960s, the New Left *Parti Socialiste Unifié* flourished in an environment of high electoral volatility, but faltered as the French party system became intensely polarized in the 1970s.<sup>21</sup> Left-libertarian forces tried to make a new start with ecology par-

TABLE 8  
ELECTORAL VOLATILITY AND "NEW LEFT" OR "ECOLOGICAL"  
LEFT-LIBERTARIANS

	<i>Rising Volatility</i> (1948–1977)	<i>Declining Volatility</i> (1948–1977)
<i>Countries with</i> <i>"Green" or</i> <i>Ecology Parties</i>	CH	A B F FRG
<i>Countries with</i> <i>Left-Socialist</i> <i>or "New Left"</i> <i>Parties</i>	DK NL N S CH	F

Source: Calculations of the regression slopes for electoral volatility are taken from Mogens Pederson, "Changing Patterns of Electoral Volatility in European Party Systems, 1948–1977: Explorations in Explanation," in Hans Daalder and Peter Mair, eds., *Western European Party Systems* (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage, 1984), 29–66.

<sup>21</sup> See Charles Hauss, *The New Left in France: The Unified Socialist Party* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1978), chap. 2.

ties in the late 1970s and early 1980s, but made little headway in an environment inhospitable to the formation of a left-libertarian party (no labor corporatism, brief left tenure in government).

The trade-off between New Left and ecology parties suggests that the two are political equivalents and members of the same family of parties. Where New Left parties have won significant electoral support, ecology parties have not been successful even when they appealed to voters who were ideologically more moderate. Moreover, in the cases of Norway, Sweden, and the Netherlands, these moderate libertarians are already served by center-left liberal parties that are complementary to the New Left. Conversely, most successful ecology parties have appeared in countries without successful New Left or center left-libertarian parties. While the New Left has embraced the "ecology" agenda, most ecology parties have accepted the libertarian and anticapitalist spirit of the New Left.

To complete this analysis, we must consider a final catalyst that has triggered the rise of contemporary left-libertarian parties and the convergence of ecologism and the New Left: the nuclear power controversy. Antinuclear activists first attempted to work through the established parties, but neither conservative nor socialist parties were willing to represent and support them, particularly in countries with high labor corporatism and left party governments. In these countries, a high level of alienation from the established political institutions encouraged left-libertarians to resort to the mobilization of antinuclear movements in order to advance their agenda. Although the struggle against nuclear power originated in the pragmatic concerns of scientists and citizens for their health and safety, nuclear power rapidly became a symbol for the technocratic domination of society by government agencies, private enterprise, and unions who defend economic growth and bureaucratic welfare states against the left-libertarian challenge.

The strength or weakness of the nuclear controversy is difficult to determine because cross-national data on the mobilization of opponents to nuclear power are confined to inventories of case studies.<sup>22</sup> Ideally, opinion polls, the incidence of mass demonstrations against nuclear facilities, and politically motivated delays in the construction and licensing of nuclear facilities would be valuable measures of the strength of antinuclear movements. In practice, we must rely on informed judgment about the intensity of conflicts in each country (see Table 9).

<sup>22</sup> See Anna Gyorgy, ed., *No Nukes: Everyone's Guide to Nuclear Power* (Boston: Southend Press, 1979), and Lutz Mez, ed., *Der Atomkonflikt: Atomindustrie, Atompolitik und Anti-Atom-bewegung im internationalen Vergleich* [Nuclear conflict: Nuclear industry, nuclear policy, and the antinuclear movement in international comparison] (Berlin: Olle & Wolter, 1979).

TABLE 9  
LEFT-LIBERTARIAN PARTIES AND THE NUCLEAR POWER CONTROVERSY  
(1975-1980)

	<i>Intense Nuclear Controversy</i>	<i>No Intense Nuclear Controversy</i>
<i>Significant Left-Libertarian Parties Exist</i>	A DK NL S CH FRG	B F N
<i>No Significant Left-Libertarian Parties Exist</i>	US	AUS CND FI IRE I J NZ UK

CR = .78 (France = 1)

CR = .83 (France = 0)

Among the countries without relevant left-libertarian parties, only the United States sustained a fairly intense nuclear power controversy throughout the early 1970s, even though Britain, Canada, Finland, Italy, and Japan also developed extensive nuclear power programs. From about 1975 on, most countries with left-libertarian parties have experienced intense nuclear power controversies. Belgium, Norway, and France are exceptions. Belgium was already far advanced with its nuclear power program before antinuclear protests reached their peak in the mid-1970s. Norway did not have any nuclear plants and only briefly pondered construction of such facilities. France is difficult to classify: an initially intense antinuclear mobilization in the mid-1970s triggered the participation of ecologists in local and regional elections. After that, government repression, the oppositional Socialist Party's attempts to co-opt anti-nuclear activists, and the movement's complete lack of policy impact quelled the mobilization of collective protest.<sup>23</sup> These factors probably

<sup>23</sup> The interaction between state and challenging anti-nuclear movements is analyzed in comparative perspective in Herbert Kitschelt, "Political Opportunity Structures and Political Protest. Anti-Nuclear Movements in Four Democracies," *British Journal of Political Science* 16 (No. 1, 1986), 57-85.

also lessened the electoral chances of the French ecologists in the early 1980s.

There is some evidence that the nuclear power controversy was particularly intense in countries in which the social democrats participated in the government. In these cases, the large left parties supported the nuclear programs unambiguously. Since the conservative parties were also committed to nuclear power, no significant political force in the arena of parliamentary politics stood up against nuclear power. In Sweden, this configuration precipitated the move of the moderate-libertarian Center Party to an antinuclear position and pushed the Swedish communists further toward left-libertarian demands. In numerous other countries, it created or reinforced electoral support for new left-libertarian parties.

However, the link between the left's participation in government and the intensity of the nuclear power controversy as a precipitating condition of left-libertarian party formation is far from perfect. The United States is an obvious outlier: the conflict was fairly intense even though many Democrats and even a significant number of northeastern Republicans opposed nuclear power. Belgium and Finland implemented ambitious nuclear power programs during periods of socialist participation in government, but did not witness strong conflicts over nuclear power. To sum up, nuclear power controversies in the 1970s contributed to the emergence or strengthening of left-libertarian parties, but were certainly not the prime determinants of innovation in Western party systems.

## VI. SOCIAL STRUCTURE AND POLITICAL OPPORTUNITIES: A SYNTHESIS

After having considered structural, institutional, and precipitating conditions for the emergence of left-libertarian parties, we can combine the five strongest predictors of party formation. Since the relatively high collinearity among the five independent variables rules out a meaningful multivariate analysis of their contribution, a weaker analytical technique is required. The dichotomized values on the five independent variables yield a summary "bet" of how likely left-libertarian party formation is in each of the eighteen countries. Table 10 provides this information. In four countries, all variables correctly predict party formation; in four other countries, four out of five variables make the correct prediction; and in eight cases, the variables predict the absence of left-libertarian parties. Only two ambiguous cases remain: the United States and France.

Individual macrosocietal and political variables reveal serious "anomalies" in a number of countries. The explanatory model of five variables



removes most of these anomalies. A combination of the five variables correctly predicts the presence or absence of significant left-libertarian parties in almost all countries. In the two ambiguous cases, the socioeconomic variables strongly predict the presence of significant left-libertarian parties, but the political variables do not. Because I may have overrated the nuclear controversy in the United States, the U.S. case is quite close to that of countries without left-libertarian parties. France remains the most ambiguous case. Economic affluence and the development of the welfare state favor the emergence of left-libertarian parties, and the nuclear power controversy must be placed somewhere between the "strong" and the "weak" antinuclear movements. Yet in France, as in the United States, the relevant institutional and conjunctural political preconditions of left-libertarian party formation are clearly absent. France has a societal potential to generate left-libertarian parties, but it also has an unfavorable concrete political opportunity structure.

In view of the causal patterns that underlie the formation of left-libertarian parties in each of the eighteen democracies, France should be reclassified as a country *without* significant left-libertarian parties. Conversely, Sweden and Switzerland, which were originally introduced as "borderline" cases along with France, clearly show the same causal pattern encountered in countries with left-libertarian parties; they should be classified accordingly.

Overall, the model's link between macro-societal and political variables makes theoretical sense.<sup>24</sup> Societal changes drive the transformation of citizens' wants, but these lead to the emergence of political parties only if political opportunities and constraints make it rational for actors to step outside the established channels of political communication, and if polarizing conflicts of high symbolic importance create the initial conditions that establish a consensus among actors about the nature and outlook of the new left-libertarian parties.

If we are looking for theoretical parsimony of the explanatory model only, the least ambiguous predictor of left-libertarian parties in the sample of the eighteen democracies is the level of strike activity. (This variable—improperly—predicts only a single case: Japan.) Theoretical parsimony

<sup>24</sup> For the general study of collective social mobilization, an approach that combines social transformation, political opportunity structures, and precipitating conditions was outlined by Neil Smelser, *The Theory of Collective Behavior* (Glencoe, IL: Free Press, 1963). To explain party formation, Smelser's framework has been elaborated by Pinard (fn. 19); Charles Hauss and David Rayside, "The Development of New Parties," in Louis Maisel and Joseph Cooper, eds., *Political Parties: Development and Decay* (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage); and Frank L. Wilson, "Sources of Party Transformation: The Case of France," in Peter Merkl, ed., *Western European Party Systems* (New York: Free Press, 1980).

mony, however, would be bought at the cost of ignoring the complex web of interacting conditions that cumulatively make the emergence of left-libertarian parties more likely. Strike activity is only one indicator in the syndrome that includes economic development, social policy, corporatism, and left-party governments and is responsible for the rise of left-libertarian parties.

Conversely, one could argue that the analysis of political opportunity structures developed above is too narrow because it focuses almost exclusively on the political organization of class cleavage in advanced capitalist democracies. While a number of variables commonly employed to characterize modern party systems do not shed new light on the rise of left-libertarian parties,<sup>25</sup> there is some evidence that electoral rules influence the number and formation of new parties.<sup>26</sup> Indeed, none of the five countries with plurality voting systems (Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and the United States) has a relevant left-libertarian party. On the other hand, countries with qualified proportional electoral rules in which political forces must join alliances to overcome minimum thresholds of parliamentary representation (e.g., 4 or 5 percent of the vote) do in many cases have relevant left-libertarian parties.

All of our cases with plurality voting systems, however, are heavily "overdetermined" by one or several of the structural and institutional variables (affluence, the welfare state, labor corporatism, and left party governments). There is no "hard" test for the significance of electoral laws (e.g., a configuration in which electoral rules are unfavorable to new parties), but most other variables suggest the rise of left-libertarian parties. We find, however, that in countries with majority rule, such as Britain, Canada, New Zealand, and even the United States, third-party challenges around other than left-libertarian issues and cleavages do occur and sometimes gain electoral support far stronger than that received by left-libertarian parties in countries with the most favorable structural conditions. This observation suggests that electoral laws do not have the overriding importance that some studies of party systems attribute to them. Even where a majority voting system prevents a new party from winning any seats, rational voters may support it because they believe the

<sup>25</sup> The fractionalization and the number of cleavages incorporated in party systems, for instance, show little association with the rise of left-libertarian parties. These common measures of party systems apparently do not capture relevant political opportunity structures to explain the new left-libertarian cohort of parties.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. Arend Lijphart, *Democracies: Patterns of Majoritarian and Consensus Government in Twenty-One Countries* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984), chap. 9; Robert Harmel and John D. Robertson, "Formation and Success of New Parties: A Cross-National Analysis," *International Political Science Review* 6 (No. 4, 1985), 501-23.



new party has long-term prospects of displacing one of the established parties or can at least force them to listen to new political demands.

## VII. BREAKDOWN THEORIES AND LEFT-LIBERTARIAN PARTIES

We are now in a position to examine the competing breakdown theories of party formation. According to functionalist breakdown theories, collective mobilization is rooted in conjunctural discrepancies between the prevailing expectations in a society and its capacity to attain them. Collective protest will subside when this gap closes. Marxist breakdown theories are less optimistic about the restoration of an equilibrium between expectations and societal performance. For our purposes, however, functionalist and Marxist breakdown theories have the same empirical content: they predict the formation of left-libertarian parties when relative deprivation is rising. Furthermore, the new parties may be expected to decrease when societies improve their performance and attain the values that legitimize the existing social order.

Breakdown models of party formation build on economic variables; political and cultural conditions also play a role. Boy, Bürklin, and Alber have interpreted the rise of ecology parties as a crisis response of the educated younger generation to the frustrations of tight labor markets and the fierce competition for scarce positions in the political elite.<sup>27</sup> The promise of rapid upward social mobility that accompanied the widening of educational opportunities for the young was broken by the economic crises of the 1970s and 1980s and the demands of labor markets. Breakdown theorists interpret the support of the educated young for ecology parties and their postmaterialist antigrowth program as sour-grapes logic: because society does not provide the *means* for rapid upward mobility, the young army of the overeducated and under employed also rejects the *ends* of social success that are associated with this society: affluence, power, and social status, as well as the system of economic growth and bureaucratic politics that supports these values. The young counter-elites thus propose an alternative model of societal organization and use left-libertarian parties to realize it.

<sup>27</sup> See Boy (fn. 4), 414-15; Wilhelm P. Bürklin, "Value Change and Partisan Realignment in West Germany 1970-1983: Recent Findings and some Political Interpretations," paper prepared for delivery at the American Political Science Association Convention, Washington, DC, August 30 to September 2, 1984; Bürklin (fn. 4); Jens Alber, "Modernisierung, neue Spannungslinien und die politischen Chancen der Grünen" [Modernization, new cleavages, and the political chances of the Greens], *Politische Vierteljahresschriften* 26 (No. 3, 1985), 211-26.

Empirically, economic and political breakdown theorists expect that improving chances of upward mobility—or a resumption of economic growth—and a readjustment of expectations will erode the left-libertarian electorate. Alber, for instance, predicts that the West German Greens will falter when the “intellectual proletariat” disappears with economic recovery and greater realism among young academics.<sup>28</sup>

Some authors link cultural conditions to the economic and political breakdown theories of party formation.<sup>29</sup> Frustrated expectations coincide with the coming-of-age of a third political generation of West Germans that does not share the political commitments of the “founding” generation of the Republic or of its conformist offspring, and that identifies only weakly with the established parties. This generational change feeds into the general disillusionment with the performance of industrial societies and triggers a shift of values toward a romantic anti-industrial “idealism.” The Greens represent such a convergence of generational change and political-economic decline.

Other cultural breakdown arguments have gained popularity among American intellectuals who see the Greens and the peace movement as the natural consequence of persisting predemocratic, authoritarian, romantic, and nationalist traditions in German society that reject industrial technology, liberalism, and competitive political systems.<sup>30</sup> Economic crisis and declining U.S. world leadership are seen to have brought this long-standing current to the surface again.

Breakdown theories of left-libertarian party formation must face a number of criticisms. They draw questionable inferences about individual motivations and values from an insufficient basis of empirical evidence. Moreover, they fail to consider the breadth of support for left-lib-

<sup>28</sup> See Alber, *ibid.* To be fair, Bürklin combines breakdown theory and structural change and is more inclined to believe that the West German Greens are here to stay. It is not clear, however, whether breakdown and structural change arguments are compatible with each other in Bürklin's work. See Wilhelm P. Bürklin, “The German Greens: The Post-Industrial Non-Established and the Party System,” *International Political Science Review* 6 (No. 4, 1985), 463-81.

<sup>29</sup> See Wilhelm P. Bürklin, *Grüne Politik. Ideologische Zyklen, Wähler und Parteiensystem* [Green politics: Ideological cycles, voters, and party system] (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1984).

<sup>30</sup> This view is popular in liberal and conservative editorial opinion, as well as in the work of some recognized historians. See Gordon Craig, *The Germans* (New York: Meridian, 1982), 210-11, and Walter Laqueur, *Germany Today: A Personal Report* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1985), 162-74. For a critique of the West German peace movement, see especially Russel Berman, “Opposition to Rearmament and West German Culture,” *Telos* (No. 56, 1983), 141-47. A more balanced assessment of the peace movement and nationalism in German politics is provided by Andrei S. Markovits, “On Anti-Americanism in West Germany,” *New German Critique* (No. 34, 1985), 3-27.

ertarian parties, and they lack a systematic comparative framework to test their arguments.

Breakdown theories rely on the same demographic data about voters and sympathizers of left-libertarian parties as structural change theories, but they attribute a sour-grapes logic to the young and educated who are still in the early stages of their professional careers or who are still in the educational system. In the absence of empirical evidence, these data warrant other motivational interpretations as well. For instance, young people may reject the present economic and political institutions, and *therefore* choose educational tracks that rarely lead to high-status professional careers, but possibly to personal growth and a convivial lifestyle. The social-structure attributes of left-libertarian voters as such do not reveal which of these competing motivational interpretations is correct. The psychological assumptions of breakdown theories thus rest on shaky empirical ground.

There are empirical data to refute one specific variant of the cultural breakdown theory—the characterization of the West German Greens as successors to earlier predemocratic traditions. According to surveys taken in the 1970s, supporters of left-libertarian social movements strongly approve of democratic institutions and procedures, but criticize the unresponsiveness of the existing political elites to the new issues.<sup>31</sup> Also, Green sympathizers were found to express a radical-democratic and not an anti-democratic or nationalist spirit.<sup>32</sup> The approval of democratic institutions coincides with rejection of the existing political elites.<sup>33</sup> National identification is lower among Green supporters than among any other group in the German population.

Breakdown theorists also encounter problems with the quantitative calibration of their arguments. The individuals to whom breakdown theorists attribute a sour-grapes logic represent only a small segment of left-libertarian sympathizers. Again, data on the most closely researched case, that of the West German Greens, are instructive. In the first half of 1984, surveys found that 13 percent of the unemployed supported the Greens. Among unemployed academics, no less than 41 percent said they would vote for the Greens in a general election.<sup>34</sup> These figures must be put into

<sup>31</sup> See Samuel H. Barnes and Max Kaase, eds., *Political Action: Mass Participation in Five Western Democracies* (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage, 1979).

<sup>32</sup> Bürklin (fn. 4), p. 206.

<sup>33</sup> Bürklin (fn. 29), p. 199.

<sup>34</sup> Ursula Feist, Dieter Fröhlich, and Hubert Krieger, "Die politischen Einstellungen von Arbeitslosen" [The political attitudes of the unemployed], *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte* 34 (No. 45, 1984), 3-17.

perspective, however. After a short-time high in 1984, support for the Greens among the unemployed fell back to a level that differs little from support in the overall population. In early 1985, only about 8 percent of 2.5 million unemployed, or 0.2 million voters, supported the Greens.<sup>35</sup> That is less than 10 percent of the 2.1 million Green votes cast in the 1983 federal election. The subgroup of unemployed academics amounts to fewer than 5 percent of the Green voters. Moreover, it is inconsistent with breakdown theories that the Greens enjoy considerable support among educated members of the middle class who are in their thirties, work in occupations with relatively high prestige, and display a fairly high level of economic "saturation."

Like economic and cultural breakdown theories, political breakdown arguments lack empirical support. There is no evidence that signals a relative or an absolute decline in the circulation of the West German political elite during the 1970s and 1980s.<sup>36</sup> To the contrary, elite circulation has probably been higher in recent decades than in the 1950s and 1960s because the generation of political leaders who had remained in power since the immediate post-World War II years finally had to step aside. It may be true that more young university graduates avoid the "sweatshop" of parties, bureaucracies, and corporations to make a professional career, but this trend would say more about changing preferences than about reduced opportunities to rise in the ranks of political and economic elites.

The greatest weakness of all breakdown theories is their lack of comparative analysis and empirical confirmation. If the peculiar predemocratic German political tradition is essential to the rise of the left-libertarian Greens and the peace movement, why is it that countries with more fortunate democratic histories have developed similar movements and parties? And is it true that countries with a poor record of economic performance in the 1970s were more likely to spawn left-libertarian parties than countries with a better record?

If breakdown theories were correct, we could expect left-libertarian parties in countries with above-average rates of inflation and high levels of unemployment. An even better measure of relative deprivation and breakdown is the rate of *change* in economic performance within countries over time. Those countries that have experienced the most precipitous economic decline in the 1970s should also be the ones most likely to

<sup>35</sup> Hubert Krieger, "Arbeitsmarktsituation und politische Stabilität: Reaktionsformen abhängig Beschäftigter auf die Arbeitsmarktentwicklung 1975-1985" [Labor market situation and political stability: Patterns of reaction among employees to labor market developments], *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte* 36 (No. 17, 1986), 3-15.

<sup>36</sup> Bürklin (fns. 27 and 29) emphasizes declining elite circulation as a cause of left-libertarian party support.

develop strong left-libertarian parties. In Table 11, the decline of average economic growth rates and the increase of average unemployment rates from the period 1967-1973 to the period 1974-1980 measures the intensity of relative deprivation within the countries.

Columns 1 and 2 provide the mean values for the four economic "misery indices" in the eighteen democracies with or without significant left-libertarian parties. They do not reveal any positive association between party formation and economic misery. In fact, the coefficients of reproducibility, correlation coefficients, and significance levels of the associations in a LOGIT least squares regression show that, if there are any statistical relationships, they are the reverse of those predicted by breakdown theories: countries with significant left-libertarian parties have lower levels of unemployment and consumer price increases than countries without these parties. A similar, though weaker and statistically insignificant association applies to the two other measures of economic change.

Only one socioeconomic indicator tends to support the breakdown theory. In countries with rapidly growing student populations, the income advantages and the job security of people with a higher education diminish.<sup>37</sup> Due to the deterioration of their market position, young academics in these countries may constitute a large pool of frustrated and politically restless people willing to support new political parties. And that, indeed, is quite strongly associated with the presence of significant left-libertarian parties, as coefficients of reproducibility, LOGIT analysis, and correlation coefficients reveal (see Table 12).

Even this finding must be interpreted cautiously. We must presuppose the validity of the sour-grapes logic in order to count the impact of educational opportunities on left-libertarian parties as support for the breakdown theories. Moreover, only a limited percentage of left-libertarian voters is exposed to the potential frustrations of a contemporary university education. Comparative information is missing, but the point can be illustrated with West German data. Surveys show that postmaterialist value inclinations are a stronger predictor of the Green vote than educational accomplishment.<sup>38</sup> In one representative sample, only 22.4 percent of Green sympathizers in the early 1980s were under thirty years old *and* held a secondary-school diploma that enabled them to attend university.<sup>39</sup>

On the whole, the evidence supporting breakdown theories is thus very limited and not empirically solid. There can be little doubt that

<sup>37</sup> See Arnold J. Heidenheimer, Hugh Heclo, and Carolyn Teich-Adams, *Comparative Public Policy*, 2d ed. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1983), 49-51.

<sup>38</sup> Bürklin (fn. 27), Tables 7 and 8.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*

TABLE II  
INDICATORS OF ECONOMIC MISERY AND LEFT-LIBERTARIAN PARTIES\*

	Significant Left-Libertarian Parties Exist	No Significant Left-Libertarian Parties Exist	CR for the Association of Economic Indicators and Parties	r	p (LOGIT)
<i>Average level of unemployment (1974-1980)<sup>a</sup></i>	3.2%	5.0%	.22	-.43	.08
<i>Average increase of the consumer price index (1973-1980)<sup>b</sup></i>	8.0%	12.6%	.28	-.70	.05
<i>Decline in real per capita GDP growth (average 1974-80 vs. 1967-73)<sup>c</sup></i>	-2.0%	-2.4%	.50	.21	.4
<i>Rise of unemployment as percent of labor force (1974-1980)<sup>d</sup></i>	1.5%	2.3%	.33	-.25	.3

\* France = 0

Sources: <sup>a</sup> OECD, *Historical Statistics, 1960-80* (Paris: OECD, 1982), Table 2-14.

<sup>b</sup> *Ibid.*, Table 2-13.

<sup>c</sup> *Ibid.*, Table 3-2.

<sup>d</sup> *Ibid.*, Table 2-14.

TABLE 12  
LEFT-LIBERTARIAN PARTIES AND THE INCREASE IN THE  
STUDENT POPULATION  
(Student increase per 100,000 inhabitants, 1975–1980)

	<i>Increase Greater Than 210 Students</i>		<i>Increase Smaller Than 210 Students</i>	
<i>Significant</i>	A	(542)	DK	(– 105)
<i>Left-Libertarian</i>	B	(380)	F	(42)
<i>Parties Exist</i>	FRG	(324)		
(Average 298.1%)	N	(277)		
	NL	(440)		
	S	(477)		
	CH	(306)		
<i>No Significant</i>	I	(214)	CND	(79)
<i>Left-Libertarian</i>	AUS	(218)	FI	(108)
<i>Parties Exist</i>			IRE	(179)
(Average 150.6%)			J	(53)
			NZ	(201)
			UK	(172)
			US	(181)

(Overall Average 196.5)

Source: UNESCO, *Statistical Digest 1984* (Paris: UNESCO, 1984)

#### STATISTICAL INTERPRETATION

	<i>France = 1</i>	<i>France = 0</i>
<i>CR</i>	.78	.83
<i>r</i>	.44	.57
<i>p</i> (LOGIT)	.09	.04

macrostructural and resource-mobilization approaches provide much firmer evidence to explain the rise of left-libertarian parties.

#### CONCLUSION: THE PROSPECTS OF LEFT-LIBERTARIAN PARTIES

Left-libertarian parties are likely to emerge in economically advanced and (usually) small corporatist welfare states. These countries provide a structural and institutional setting that is conducive to a change in popular preference toward left-libertarian politics. Simultaneously, they

severely restrict the chances that new demands can be articulated through established parties and interest groups. Electoral laws, particularly qualified proportional representation, may affect the chances of left-libertarian party formation; but, by themselves, they appear to be only a secondary factor. Two precipitating conditions increase the chances of left-libertarian party formation. First, extended periods of left party participation in government dispel hopes among left-libertarian voters that their demands are compatible with the traditional left redistributive political agenda. Second, the nuclear power controversies of the 1970s and 1980s aggravate the tensions between the old redistributive and the new libertarian left and accentuate the left-libertarians' disaffection with the traditional parties.

Macrostructural and resource-mobilization approaches thus offer a rather sophisticated interpretation of the phenomenon of the left-libertarian party. They lead us to the conclusion that left-libertarian parties are more than short-term "flash" parties, and result from a complex interaction of institutional and conjunctural factors. They do not represent merely another competitor in electoral politics; rather, they result from and attack a comprehensive network of interest intermediation between state and civil society of which parties are only one element.

Breakdown theories, on the other hand, predict the demise of left-libertarian parties when temporary societal strains disappear. Is it warranted, then, to infer from macrostructural and resource-mobilization theories that left-libertarian parties are about to establish themselves permanently in advanced welfare state democracies? Even if we reject the breakdown argument, the competing economic and political interpretation of the left-libertarian phenomenon adds some caveats about the future of the new party cohort. Explaining the *emergence* of political parties is one thing; explaining their long-term *persistence* is another. Even though left-libertarian issues apparently constitute a new *cleavage dimension* in modern politics, this cleavage will not necessarily spawn permanent independent political parties.

The structural and political changes on which left-libertarian electoral support is based are far from being permanent and irreversible. The welfare state has recently come under attack in Europe; labor corporatism has noticeably declined in the 1980s; and a renewed discipline of the marketplace may challenge the foundations of economic security and affluence on which left-libertarian parties rest. Under such circumstances, the dominant political agenda of Western democracies would most likely shift away from the highly publicized left-libertarian issues so prominent in the 1970s and 1980s—ecology, energy, feminism, and nuclear arma-



ment—and reestablish an exclusive hegemony of economic-distributive struggles.

In a sense, left-libertarian parties pursue a political agenda that could erode the institutional underpinnings on which they have thrived. They fight against the bureaucratic welfare state, labor corporatism, and the structural rigidities of elite bargaining in “consensual” democracies. Although their vision of social change differs radically from that of conservative free-market ideologies, their attack on the post-World War II political and economic class compromise could unintentionally play into the hands of conservative political forces; if it undermines the organized power of labor, it may recenter the political conflict on distributive issues.

The outlook for left-libertarian parties also depends on the strategic moves of their competitors. Conservative parties would hardly become a threat to the electoral support of left libertarian parties; but in a number of countries, socialist and social democratic parties have been ousted from government office in the 1980s. As opposition parties, they have greater incentives and opportunities to blur the issues that separate their working-class supporters from left-libertarian constituencies and to present themselves as politically more effective representatives of left-libertarian causes than the left-libertarian parties themselves. Because their supporters show little party loyalty, this social democratic strategy may become a serious threat for left-libertarian parties. Most left-libertarians are educated, highly sophisticated individuals who are more likely to vote strategically than on the basis of stable party identifications.

Once back in power, however, left parties that have successfully reintegrated the left-libertarian electorate will inevitably display strains and conflicts among their different electoral constituencies. The West German Social Democrats, for instance, absorbed left-libertarian sentiments in the early 1970s, but paid a high price for this success in terms of internal organizational disruption, factionalism, and endemic conflicts—which eventually contributed to their electoral decline in the 1980s.<sup>40</sup> In this sense, traditional social democratic or socialist parties may only temporarily halt the rise of left-libertarian parties.

Finally, the future of left-libertarian parties does not depend only on conditions and competitors in their environment, but also on their own strategic capabilities. In this respect, left-libertarian parties face a difficult task. On the one hand, they must preserve the fluid, open organizational form and the obstructionist quality of their political strategies that chal-

<sup>40</sup> See Gerard Braunthal, *The West German Social Democrats, 1969-1982: Profile of a Party in Power* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1982).

lenge the highly institutionalized corporatist welfare state and maintain the loyalty of the left-libertarian core constituencies. On the other hand, left-libertarian parties must become effective political players both in terms of electoral appeal and of impact on public policy. In parliamentary multiparty systems, this usually presupposes a cohesive, disciplined party organization with a consistent, moderate political strategy that appeals to marginal voters. Left-libertarian parties must resolve the conflict between a logic of representing a constituency that is oriented toward the visions of the core party militants and activists in left-libertarian movements and a logic of party competition that upholds standards of electoral success and external strategic effectiveness in the pursuit of policy gains.<sup>41</sup>

<sup>41</sup> For a close analysis of the internal dynamic of left-libertarian parties, see Herbert Kitschelt, "Logics of Party Formation. Structure and Strategy of the Belgian and West German Ecology Parties" (mimeo), Duke University, 1986 (forthcoming, 1988).