10

Putting the constituencies together

Thus far, this book has dealt with issues of local coordination: how voters in a given electoral district coordinate their suffrages; how candidates and parties, again at the district level, coordinate their entry decisions. Scholarly arguments about the effect of electoral systems on party systems, from Duverger onward, have not stopped with these district-level considerations. Instead, they have gone further and claimed that electoral rules also affect the larger stage of national politics, because national parties link politicians from many electoral districts together for purposes of electoral campaigning and governance.

In this chapter, I consider this appeal to the existence of national parties, and the phenomenon of cross-district linkage of legislative candidates more generally. I shall argue that the standard linkage argument, in particular, that advanced in support of Duverger's Law, fails; and that better linkage arguments entail the same kinds of social and institutional considerations encountered previously in the book. Under the heading of "institutional considerations" I stress in particular the importance of the rules determining the selection and power of the chief executive (whether president or prime minister). This discussion sets the stage for the empirical analysis presented in Chapter 11.

A second topic that I investigate in this chapter concerns how taking a multi-district view of things might affect the topics considered in the previous two parts of the book: strategic voting and strategic entry. Will voters vote with an eye to affecting the formation of governments, rather than merely the allocation of seats in their particular electoral constituency, thereby changing the nature of strategic voting effects? Will a national market in which candidacies and withdrawals are traded emerge, thereby changing the character of the coordination problem at the district level? As it turns out, answers to both these questions again come back to the politics of choosing a chief executive.

10.1 LINKAGE AND DUVERGER'S LAW

Duverger clearly recognized that the wasted vote argument applied only at the district level, as did his arguments about prudent entry decisions by potential candidates: "the true effect of the simple-majority system is limited to *local* bipartism" (Duverger 1954:223; my italics). This left open the question of how an argument that predicted local bipartism might lead to a conclusion that entailed systemic or national bipartism. Why, in other words, would the same two parties necessarily compete in all districts, even if the method of election ensured local bipartism in every district?

Duverger (p. 228) had a rather cryptic answer to this question, whereby the "increased centralization of organization within the parties and the consequent tendency to see political problems from the wider, national standpoint tend of themselves to project on to the entire country the localized two-party system brought about by the ballot procedure ..." Both Wildavsky (1959) and Leys (1959) appropriately argued that this projection argument essentially assumed what was to be shown.

Given that this step in Duverger's argument, explaining how local bipartism "projects" into national bipartism, is absolutely crucial in establishing his law as a *systemic* rather than a merely *local* one, it is amazing how little attention has been paid to it in the subsequent literature. The projection argument is a natural point at which those preferring a sociological theory of party systems might have focused their attacks, but as far as I know no one has done this. Indeed, to my knowledge only Leys and Sartori offer any extended attempts to provide a better projection argument. In this section, I consider their proposals.

Leys' projection argument

The key to Leys' projection argument is the assumption that strategic voting "occurs in favour *not* of the two parties which are in the lead locally, but *in favour of the two parties which have the largest number of seats in Parliament, regardless of their local strength*" (Leys 1959:142; italics in original). Voters, in other words, focus on the outcome in the national legislature, seeking to vote in such a way as to affect which party wins a majority of seats, rather than merely which candidate wins the seat at stake in the constituency. This national focus, according to Leys, leads to the abandonment of nationally uncompetitive parties.

Leys had in mind the British case, where voters are generally believed to be nationally oriented, but even here he clearly overstated the impor-

tance of national as opposed to local viability. This can be seen by noting two points. First, voting for a locally hopeless party never makes instrumental sense, even if it is nationally competitive and voters care only about the disposition of forces in parliament. The reason is that a vote that cannot change the local outcome cannot *a fortiori* change the national outcome, and thus has no instrumental value either at the local or the national level. Second, voting for a nationally hopeless party (i.e., one that has no hope of securing a majority of legislative seats) may make sense, so long as it is locally competitive. The reason is that electing a nationally hopeless party's candidate increases the probability of a hung parliament (and thus perhaps the probability of participation in a coalition government), and decreases the probability that one of the nationally competitive parties will secure a majority, both things that some instrumentally motivated voters may want to do.

I shall return to Leys' argument later, when discussing strategic voting that aims to affect the formation of governments rather than the allocation of seats within a given electoral district. But for now the point is simply that his argument does not succeed in providing an adequate projection argument that might allow Duverger's Law to be seen as a systemic proposition.

Sartori's projection argument

In this section, I consider Sartori's (1968; 1976) attempt to explain how single-member plurality elections can have a more-than-local effect, which I view as an elaboration and clarification of the brief Duvergerian argument noted above. Sartori begins by asserting that "plurality systems have no influence (beyond the district) until the party system becomes structured ..." (1968:281). One learns elsewhere that a party system is structured when it is composed of at least some mass parties, and that a mass party is characterized by "(1) the development of a stable and extensive ... organization throughout the country, and (2) the fact that it presents itself to the electorate as an abstract entity (ideologically or programmatically qualified) that allows stable identifications" (p. 293). Substituting the definitions of "structured party system" and "mass party" into the original formulation, one gets the claim that plurality rule will have no effect beyond the district until there are parties that have both nationwide organizations and ideological reputations that command a habitual following in the electorate. If what is to be explained is the knitting together of district parties (the establishment of "nationwide organization"), then Sartori simply assumes the consequent. But if the explanandum is the existence of national bipartism, then Sartori's approach is not circular in that it does not assume national bipartism.

Unfortunately, however, Sartori gives no theoretical argument that having a structured party system should allow the effect of single-member plurality elections to be felt *fully* at the national level, thus unleashing national bipartism. If we take as given that the local effect of the electoral system will be to drive every district toward (at most) two viable parties (which might just be district-specific "nominating committees" that have successfully structured local electoral choice), then the theoretical maximum number of parties in the system is $2D$: 2 parties from each of D districts. The argument that Sartori makes just suggests that the more nationalized are the parties, the fewer there will be.

The point can be made formally as follows. Consider a single-member plurality system in which there are D districts. Suppose there are N parties in this system which on average put up C candidates for election. If each district has only two viable parties, and if each party puts up candidates only in districts where it is viable, then the relation between N, C, and D must satisfy $NC = 2D$. If we take C as a measure of the nationalization of the parties in the system, then we can clearly say that the more nationalized are the parties (the larger is C), the fewer parties there must be (the smaller is N).

Sartori's argument leaves us with just the following: If there are reasons for politicians to link across districts, and they therefore do link across districts, then this will reduce the number of parties from $2D$. But the number remaining after reduction may still be well above 2, unless the definition of a 'national party' is that it fields candidates in every district (in terms of the example, unless $C = D$). If we do not assume that national parties field candidates in every district, then how close the national party system gets to the theoretical minimum of 2 (or, how far away it gets from the theoretical maximum of $2D$) depends on something other than the district-level electoral structure.

Before leaving Sartori's argument, I should note one feature of it that has been neglected thus far: the emphasis that he puts on literacy. The notion is that loyalty to a party "as an abstract entity (ideologically or programmatically qualified)," as opposed to loyalty to persons, requires an electorate capable of abstraction. Thus, the "mass party stage cannot be entered until an adequate spread of literacy allows 'capacity for abstraction'" (Sartori 1968:293).

This argument implies that one simply *cannot* profitably link politicians across districts, absent literacy, if the source of the profit is something to do (economies of scale in electoral advertising and propaganda?) with the party label. One may *try* to popularize a party label and cultivate mass loyalty to it but, with an illiterate electorate, one will fail.

I doubt the empirical accuracy of this claim. Business firms have been successful in cultivating brand-name recognition and loyalty in illiterate societies, so why could not political parties in principle succeed as well? In the English case, the nineteenth-century parties built up a mass following to abstract principles among illiterate and literate citizens alike. More generally, the response of political parties to illiteracy in the electorate seems to be competition over the symbols that might appeal to such voters. In South Africa, for example, the leader of the Zulus (Mangosuthu Buthelezi) was perturbed to discover that, in a book that proposed the use of animal symbols on the ballot to identify candidates, he had been allocated the hyena (!) while one of Nelson Mandela's associates had drawn the lion. In India, Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao tried in 1993 to ban the use of religious symbols on the ballot, in an apparent attempt to lessen the growing influence of right-wing Hindu parties. And other examples of "symbolic politics" in illiterate societies might be cited as well (see Reynolds 1995).[1]

In the absence of a projection argument

The bottom line is that none of the major projection arguments work. These arguments are intended to explain how the logic of strategic voting and strategic entry, which is clear enough at the district level, "projects" onto the national stage. Both Duverger and Sartori begin their arguments by *assuming* that parties have nationalized, i.e., that the groups in each district have seen fit to link together into larger national entities. But this assumes most of what is to be shown. And whatever variables might explain why district groups do link together to form larger parties, they appear to have little to do with district-level electoral structure.

I think we ought clearly to recognize that Duverger's Law has a different status as a systemic proposition than it does as a district-level proposition. At the district level there are clearly specifiable theoretical models of strategic voting and of entry that predict local bipartism (or unipartism) as an equilibrium; and there is pretty good evidence that the theory works essentially as specified. At the national level, there is no

[1]Even if one accepts the claim that illiteracy makes the development of party identification in the mass electorate impossible, or prohibitively costly, this does not necessarily mean that there are no incentives to forge cross-district links. Economies of scale in converting votes into seats, due to upper tiers, for example, would provide a clear impetus to the formation of national or regional parties, as would the other factors discussed below.

clearly specified way in which district forces translate to the national level. That is, there is nothing in the original district-level logic (regarding either strategic voting or strategic entry) that allows one to conclude that there will be two parties nationally. There may be factors that push the system toward national bipartism but these factors do not depend on local electoral structure, and no one has offered any argument that says the equilibrium of these forces necessarily pushes *to* bipartism. Thus, Duverger's Law at the district level is a theoretical proposition, while Duverger's Law at the national level is an empirical generalization, and one to which there are many exceptions at that.

10.2 WHY LINK?

Where are we then in terms of explaining the character of *national* party systems? The local argument does provide an upper bound on the number of parties nationally. A system with nothing but single-member plurality elections, for example, should have no more than $2D$ parties, where D is the number of districts; a system with nothing but M-seat PR or SNTV elections should have no more than $(M + 1)D$ parties; and so forth. But this upper bound is not much use. In order to get any further, one needs an argument that explains not only why district-based groups would seek to link together to form multi-district parties but also something about the equilibrium level of such linkage. For example, if one can fashion a theoretical argument that shows that linkage should typically extend to all districts in a single-member plurality system, when conditions X, Y, and Z are met, then one has some reason to expect national bipartism. So the question becomes, why do politicians seeking election to the national legislature from different districts find it useful to run under a common party label, as opposed to running separate campaigns? And how far do such incentives go – what is the equilibrium extent of linkage?

There are many conceivable reasons that politicians from different districts might link together under a common party label. The most important reasons all pertain to economies of scale and have a similar abstract form: Some preexisting group, that is already of national scope or perspective, seeks to accomplish a task that requires the help of a large number of legislators or legislative candidates; this group therefore seeks to induce would-be legislators from many different districts to participate in a larger organization. I shall consider five versions of this story in which the "task that requires the help of a large number of legislators or legislative candidates" is either enacting laws, electing a president,

electing a prime minister, securing seats distributed in a national upper tier, or securing campaign finance.

In pursuit of national policy

Well-known versions of the story just limned appear in the historical literature on party origins (cf. Duverger 1954; LaPalombara and Weiner 1966). In the case of "interior" parties, groups of parliamentarians have allied at the national level, in pursuit of some collective policy goal, and then sought to enhance their alliance's prospects by organizing the electorate more thoroughly. In the case of "exterior" parties, a group that is already nationally organized, such as a peak association of labor unions or a religious sect, launches a political party. In another exterior pattern, various interest groups from around the nation form a political party to further their respective interests (cf. Vincent 1966). In all these cases, the group that forms the party is already of national (or at least regional) scope, and the motivation for forming a party seems directly related to the prospect of controlling governmental policy.

In pursuit of the presidency

An abstractly similar story is sometimes told about the role of presidential elections: Would-be presidents must necessarily gather votes *nationwide* and often organizing groups of would-be legislators is a natural strategy in pursuit of that goal. If presidential elections are held regularly in conjunction with legislative elections, presidential ambitions may have substantial effects on the legislative party system. Let us consider three different versions of this story, from the United States, France, and Latin America.

The level of linkage in U.S. House elections during the 1820s was relatively low. The Federalist party was largely defunct, leaving a number of candidates who were either loosely associated with any party or overtly independent. The four-way contest for the presidency in 1824 further increased the number of legislative groups. This is evident, for example, in the large number of different labels under which candidates ran for election in the 1820s. Although the various kinds of Democrats (or Federalists) cooperated once they got into the House, by the criterion of what label they ran under the system was far from being a two-party one at the national level: The effective number of party labels in the House of Representatives in the 1820s averaged 3.63. After Andrew Jackson's election to the presidency in 1828, the effective number of labels in the House trends downward, averaging 3.03 in the 1830s, 2.29 in the 1840s, bumping back up to about 2.5 in the 1850s and 1860s, and finally set-

tling down for good to about 2 in the 1870s.[2] McCormick (1975) has argued that the motive force creating the second American party system was competition for the presidency and this is certainly reflected in the nationalization of party labels during this period.[3]

France is a similar example of the linking power of presidential campaigns. During the Third Republic, there was a single-member district system with two rounds. Almost all of the local races had only one or two viable candidates but, because these candidates were not fully linked, there was a multiparty parliamentary system (Campbell and Cole 1989:19). Although the labor movement did launch a national party early in the twentieth century, which linked many candidates on the left, candidates on the right and center remained largely unlinked until the Gaullist Rally for the Republic (RPR) appeared in 1951. Even then, a substantial number of independents continued to compete on the right and center. After de Gaulle successfully forced the parliament to accept a directly elected president in 1962, however, almost all seats have been won by candidates linked to national parties.[4]

More extreme instances of the power of presidential elections to stimulate legislative linkage appear in several Latin American systems that use fused votes: Bolivia, the Dominican Republic, Honduras, and Uruguay. In Uruguay, for example, voters cast a single fused vote for a slate that includes a candidate for the presidency, a list of candidates for the senate, and a list of candidates seeking to represent the particular district in which the voter resides in the chamber of deputies. Because of this fused vote, the process of winning seats in the lower house in Uruguay is pretty thoroughly entangled with the process of winning the presidency. More to the current point, the Uruguayan ballot is such that every list of candidates for the lower house under a given presidential candidate,

[2]The figure for the 1850s is about 2.5 if one excludes the 34th Congress, during which the Republican party supplanted the Whigs. If this congress is included the decadal average is almost 2.9.

[3]The numbers reported in the text are my calculations from Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research, and Carroll McKibbin. 1989. *Roster of United States Congressional Officeholders and Bibliographical Characteristics of Members of the United States Congress, 1789–1989: Merged Data [Computer file].* 7th ICPSR ed. Ann Arbor, MI: Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research [producer and distributor].

[4]As Wilson (1980:540) puts it: "When the presidency became the chief prize of political competition, the entire party system was affected. No longer could small parties hope to play key roles in politics by holding a strategic center position, as the Radical party had done throughout the Third and Fourth Republics. Instead, parties had to generate national electoral support for one candidate in order to control the government." Thus, political parties, especially those in the center and on the right, changed from loose alliances of "notables with firm local support" to allow a "focus on a handful of national figures who might be regarded as presidential contenders" (p. 537).

regardless of district, automatically runs under the same party (and factional) label: Linkage is thus a built-in feature of the system that candidates for the chamber cannot avoid.

The examples above make it clear that presidential elections have sometimes been key factors driving the linkage of legislative candidates across districts. But only the U.S. example shows cross-district linkage being pushed to the point that national bipartism emerges. So the question arises: When will presidential elections drive the legislative party system to (or toward) national bipartism?

This question is analogous to asking when district-level electoral systems will create local bipartism and, by analogy with the district-level answer, an answer along the following lines is suggested: Presidential elections will drive the system toward national bipartism to the extent that the presidency is a single nondivisible prize elected by rules that approximate a straight plurality fight. This answer suggests that the *presidential* party system will be bipolar. If two-partyism is to reach the legislative system, then we also need to consider the nature of legislative elections and the connections between executive and legislative elections.

All told then, there are four key conditions that must be met to maximize the push toward national legislative bipartism that presidential elections can impart. First, the presidency must be a big prize, worth considerable effort to attain. The greater the concentration of powers within the presidency, and the more the system approximates an elective kingship, the more the whole politics of the nation ought to organize themselves around the battle for this one prize. Second, the presidential election must be held under rules that allow only two viable candidates. Third, the presidential election must be strongly linked to the legislative elections. Fourth, the legislative elections must themselves be held under a strong electoral system. Let us consider each of the first three conditions in a bit more detail:

1. *Presidential power.* Shugart and Carey (1992) make clear that the powers of presidents vary in important ways from country to country. They note, for example, variations in the president's veto power, decree authority, budgetary control, ability to form and dismiss cabinets, and ability to dissolve the legislature. It is clear from their work that there are substantial differences between, say, the strong presidencies of Paraguay or Brazil (1988), the intermediate-strength presidencies of the United States or Nigeria, and the weak presidencies of France or Finland. It may be that the presidency is sufficiently attractive a prize even in France and Finland to provide a strong organizing push to legislative elections. But the prize should be worth even more effort in Brazil and Paraguay, and hence pursuit of that prize should be even more likely to affect legislative elections there (*ceteris paribus*).

Electoral coordination at the system level

2. *Strength of the presidential election procedure.* The strongest presidential election procedures are those that approximate plurality rule. The U.S. Electoral College, for example, roughly approximates a straight plurality fight and has regularly produced just two viable candidates (exceptions occurring in 1824 and 1912). Many other countries use a runoff system, with a consequent weakening of the incentives to coalesce in presidential elections. Weaker incentives yet are produced when there are plural executives, as in Switzerland and formerly in Uruguay, because the election procedure then takes on a proportional character.
3. *Executive-legislative electoral linkage.* The link between presidential and legislative elections depends on two main factors: (1) whether the two elections are held concurrently or not; and (2) whether a fused executive-legislative vote is used or not. Many presidential elections are held concurrently with legislative elections but some are not, and research reviewed in Chapter 11 shows that this can have a substantial impact on the legislative party system. Most presidential systems do not use a fused vote but, as noted above, some do, and those that do maximize the possibility of influence between presidential and legislative electoral politics.

If all four conditions are met – (1) a powerful presidency, (2) a strong presidential election procedure, (3) strongly linked presidential and legislative elections, and (4) a strong legislative election procedure – then the situation is this: There is a single non-divisible and very powerful office, elected under rules that typically allow at most two viable candidates at the national level. The election of this officer, moreover, is strongly linked to the legislative elections, which themselves tend to local bipartism. Under these conditions, there are two viable legislative candidates in each legislative district, and two viable presidential candidates nationwide. The presidential candidates in this scenario have a pretty clear incentive to recruit supporters among the legislative candidates, and the legislators may have incentives to ride presidential coattails or court presidential favor. Presidential ambition may thus lead to the organization of legislators from each district into two nationwide electoral alliances, or parties.

In pursuit of the premiership

If would-be presidents must necessarily gather votes nationwide and might plausibly seek to organize cross-district alliances of would-be legislators to this end, what of would-be premiers? They are not directly elected but they do face a sort of indirect election procedure that argues the

necessity of gathering support nationwide. And they of course have even stronger incentives than presidents to build specifically *legislative* coalitions as vehicles for their ambition, since legislators form something like an ongoing electoral college for purposes of selecting the prime minister. One might think, then, that considerations analogous to those advanced above concerning presidential powers, presidential election rules, and the linkage of presidential and legislative elections, are apt here as well:

1. *Prime ministerial power.* Just as presidents in different systems have varying degrees of power, so too do prime ministers. At some times complaints have been voiced in Britain about the emergence of "prime ministerial government," suggesting that executive power has been substantially concentrated in that single office. In other systems, the premier is merely *primus inter pares,* and the system looks more like a plural executive (cf. Sartori 1993).
2. *Strength of the prime ministerial election procedure.* In addition to directly electing legislators, parliamentary elections also indirectly elect prime ministers: The freshly elected members of parliament must choose which government to support, and in the process act essentially as do delegates to an electoral college charged with selecting a president. What is the strength of such indirect selection procedures? It all depends on the rules or norms by which prime ministers are chosen *in parliament.* If the leader of the largest party always has the first opportunity to form a government, as is true in many polities, and he or she usually succeeds, then the system looks (ignoring malapportionment, asymmetries in the wastage of votes, etc.) like a plurality election. If the leader of a smaller party sometimes gets the first crack at forming a government, or if the politics of government formation are such that the first chance often fails, then the system is less like a plurality election, and provides weaker incentives to be the largest party. If the prime minister is weak and the system is really more like a plural executive, then the selection procedure will typically be a proportional (hence even weaker) one.
3. *Executive-legislative electoral linkage.* Prime ministerial elections are always held concurrently with legislative elections. And voters always have only a single vote with which to affect both the election of legislators from a given constituency and the election of the premier.[5] Thus, executive and legislative elections are always firmly connected in parliamentary systems.

[5]In a sense, then, they have a special kind of fused vote (one whose ultimate impact on the election of the prime minister may be more or less clear).

Electoral coordination at the system level

Given this connection of executive and legislative elections in parliamentary systems, the strength of the cross-district incentives toward bipartism depends on whether the process of selecting a premier looks like a plurality contest for an elective dictatorship, on the one hand, or a proportional contest for a plural executive, on the other. The first pole is similar to the classic Westminster model, the latter to the classic Consensus model (Lijphart 1984). The closer to the first pole, the more likely it will be that the pursuit of prime ministerial ambition will push the system toward bipartism. The closer to the latter pole, the more likely it will be that prime ministerial ambition, while still serving to link legislators across districts, will not lead to national bipartism.

In pursuit of upper tier seats

Another reason to form cross-district alliances of politicians has to do with the existence of upper tiers. Typically laws implementing upper tiers require an explicit legal linkage of the lists or candidates that wish to pool their votes at the regional or national level (see the discussion of Belgium in Chapter 3). Often, such laws are written specifically to promote the formation of broadly-based parties.[6] In principle, one could allow participation in the upper tier only for parties that were "viable" (e.g., won seats or were runner-ups) in every district in the country, which would obviously provide a substantial incentive toward fully nationalized parties, depending on how many seats were allocated there. In practice, no system is this manipulative but there is still some variation along this dimension (as can be seen in Appendix C).

In pursuit of campaign finance

Finally, let us briefly consider three ways in which the necessities of raising money might lead to cross-district linkage. First, if a peak labor (e.g., the Trades Union Congress in Britain) or business (e.g., the *Keidanren* in Japan) association is actively financing electoral campaigns with an eye to affecting national policy, then they may require or encourage the beneficiaries of their largesse to be members of a single party. Second, national regulation of campaign finance could in principle severely discriminate against unlinked politicians, for example, by providing public

[6]Several recent Eastern European electoral laws have features of this kind. For example, article 92 of the Slovenian law doubly restricts the parties that can win seats allocated in the national upper tier. First, no party that does not run lists in at least two of the eight primary electoral districts can get any of the upper tier seats. Second, no party that would not win at least three seats, were all seats allocated on the basis of national vote totals by the d'Hondt method of PR, is eligible to receive upper tier seats.

funds or free TV time to candidates from national parties but denying these to independents. Third, if the market for campaign contributions is one in which businesses and special interests seek particularistic favors in return for their money, then the parties that can best deliver such benefits will have an advantage. (The potential importance of this advantage can be gauged by the substantial realignment of campaign finance that has occurred in the United States, pursuant to the Democrats' loss of power in Congress. In 1993, roughly two-thirds of all political action committee contributions reported to the Federal Elections Commission went to Democrats; in 1995, roughly two-thirds of such contributions went to Republicans.[7]) The source of the advantage in delivering benefits is typically "being in government," something that usually requires a certain minimum size (although there are exceptions, such as the religious microparties in Israel). Thus, raising campaign funds may be substantially easier for larger parties.

The interaction of social and electoral structure at the national level

This section has noted five factors that might push the process of linkage across legislative districts. The first of these factors pertains to social structure at the national level, while the last four pertain to electoral structure at the national level. In this subsection I stress that, just as the district-level logic of electoral coordination suggests an interaction between social and electoral structure, so too does the national logic suggest such an interaction. Consider first a polity in which there are strongly organized peak labor and business organizations but a weak executive choice procedure. It is conceivable that these peak associations possess an array of sanctions needed to solve whatever collective action problems they face. These sanctions might then be sufficient to hold together a national two-party system, even though the electoral system itself is permissive. Consider next a polity with a fractionated and diverse structure of interest groups at the national level but a strong executive choice procedure (e.g., a nationwide plurality election of a strong president). In this case it is plausible that the various interest groups will sort themselves out into two large alliances, driven to this by the necessities of presidential politics. Thus, just as at the district level, one might argue that a large number of separate parties will arise only if there is both social diversity and electoral proportionality (see Chapter 7). In other words, the number of parties at the national level should depend on the interaction of social and electoral structure.

[7]See the November 6, 1995 issue of *U.S. News and World Report.*

10.3 LINKAGE AND STRATEGIC VOTING

In this section, I assume that a desire to compete more effectively for executive office drives the linkage of legislators across districts. In pursuit of this goal, politicians face a coordination problem similar in form to that they face within legislative districts: If too many leftist candidates seek the presidency, or too many leftist parties demand too large a share of portfolios, then no leftist government may be able to form to begin with. Just as the coordination problem posed by winning legislative seats engenders strategic voting and entry, so too does the coordination problem posed by winning executive office; but the main purpose of strategic coordination shifts from affecting the allocation of seats within a given district (seat maximization) to affecting who controls the government (portfolio maximization). In this section, I focus on three species of "portfolio-maximizing" strategic voting: strategic sequencing, or voting so as to affect which party gets the first opportunity to form a government; strategic balancing, or voting so as to deny a single party control of all branches of government (in presidential or bicameral systems); and strategic threshold insurance, or voting so as to keep a prospective coalition partner's vote above some threshold mandated by the electoral code. Empirical examples of these possibilities are provided from the Israeli, United States, and German literatures.

Strategic sequencing

In this section, I shall initially consider a parliamentary system in which (1) voters care solely about which parties participate in government; and (2) legislative elections are held under highly proportional rules. How will beliefs about which government coalition will form affect strategic voting in the constituencies?

Let us consider an example in which there are three parties – A, B, and C – competing for seats. Everyone believes that (1) no party will secure a majority of parliamentary seats on its own; (2) either A or C will be the largest party; and (3) whichever of these two parties is the largest will have the first opportunity to form a government and will succeed in forming a coalition with B. *Given* these beliefs, the only likely way in which voters can affect the outcome (i.e., which government forms) is by determining whether A or C is the largest party, hence which of these has the first opportunity to form a government, hence whether an AB or a CB coalition assumes office.

How will those who most prefer B behave? By assumption, there is no reason to vote against B in order to avoid a wasted vote at the district level: The system is highly proportional and so it will not be clear that

anyone is out of the running for the last-allocated seat. But B supporters who strongly prefer an AB coalition to a BC coalition will have an incentive to vote strategically for A, while B supporters who strongly prefer a BC coalition will have an incentive to vote strategically for C. Thus, B may suffer a loss of votes even though it is locally viable, in favor of parties that have a shot at forming a government. If the local electoral system is permissive, then Leys' claim that strategic voting occurs in favor of nationally competitive parties is more plausible.

There is very little empirical work that explores whether this kind of strategic sequencing, or voting so as to affect which party has the first opportunity at forming a government, is common. But there is one system with highly proportional elections for which there is some evidence: Israel. Israel elects all 120 members of the Knesset from a single nationwide constituency. Thus, it is plausible that Israeli voters do not worry about wasting their votes in the conventional sense of that phrase. But Felsenthal and Brichta (1985), based on a survey of 1,024 Israelis, suggest that about 12% of Israelis cast coalitionally strategic votes. And Nixon et al. (1996) also suggest, based on survey evidence, that Israelis have voted in coalitionally strategic ways; in particular, some *Tzomet* supporters appear to have voted against *Tzomet* in favor of *Likud,* presumably in an effort to give *Likud* the first chance at forming a coalition.

I turn now to consider a parliamentary system in which voters again care solely about which parties participate in government, but in which legislative elections are held under plurality rule. Can strategic sequencing appear here too? I have already noted that the strong version of Leys' argument does not work, but there is nonetheless a way in which being nationally competitive may help in attaining local viability in an SMSP system. Suppose that the (sincere) local standings of three parties – A, B, and C – put A ahead, with B and C too close to call, while the national standings put C clearly out of the running for majority control. In this case, voting for B is equivalent to voting for C from the point of view of preventing an A majority in parliament; but voting for B also has some chance of converting a hung parliament into a B majority, while voting for C has no analogous chance. Thus, all voters who rank C first but prefer a B majority to a hung parliament (and both to an A majority) will vote strategically, for B. If this class of C supporters is sufficiently numerous, the local tie between B and C will be broken in B's favor. Thus, national viability can serve a "tie-breaking" function in local strategic voting equilibria, removing some otherwise possible non-Duvergerian equilibria.[8]

The practical importance of this theoretical possibility depends on how much information voters possess about local and national standings

[8]For a more extensive discussion of this point, see Cox and Monroe (1995).

(and the nature of voter preferences over national outcomes). If there is no good information about local standings, and electoral history is not seen as a reliable guide to predicting the outcome (perhaps there has been a redistricting, for example), then voters in many districts may perceive all parties as having roughly equal chances of contending for the local seat. If at the same time there is good information about national standings, then national viability can serve an important tie-breaking function in the constituencies, along the lines sketched above. In Chapter 14, I suggest that this may have been part of the explanation for the decline of the Liberal Party in the United Kingdom after the first world war.[9]

Strategic balancing

Some constitutional structures endow multiple elected bodies – lower and upper houses, presidents – with significant legislative power. In any such system, the possibility arises for strategic balancing by voters. Suppose, for example, that there are two main parties, L (on the left) and R (on the right). If L controls body X, then when the time comes to elect body Y, centrist voters, even those closer to L than to R, may wish to moderate the influence of L, by giving R control of Y. If this sort of strategic balancing occurred regularly, then one would expect a negative correlation between control of X and control of Y.

The best-developed case for this kind of balancing is made in the context of U.S. elections. The United States obviously fits the abstract constitutional requirements of the model: The House, the Senate, and the president are all separately elected and all have significant legislative powers. Moreover, the party controlling the presidency is well-known to suffer a regular loss of seats in midterm congressional elections. Alesina and Rosenthal (1989), Alesina, Londregan, and Rosenthal (1993), and Fiorina (1992) have argued that this regularity can be explained by the desire of a relatively small number of sophisticated moderate voters to rein in the party controlling the presidency.

Another case that meets the constitutional requirements of the model is Germany. Germany is a federal system, with both a national govern-

[9]National viability can also be important in determining voters' views of who is locally viable. See Johnston et al. (1992:197–211, 224–225) for evidence of this in the 1988 Canadian election. Yet another way in which lack of national viability may contribute to a party's fall is via a drying up of contributions. Here, the logic may well be more national than local: Favor-seeking contributors have no reason to contribute to locally hopeless candidates, as has been noted many times before; but neither do they have much reason to contribute to locally viable candidates from nationally unimportant parties. In order to get a return on their investment, the candidate must not only win a seat but also be able to do something with that seat once in parliament.

ment and (until 1990) eleven *Land* (or state) governments. The lower house (the *Bundestag*) is directly elected in national elections. The members of the upper house (the *Bundesrat*) are appointed by the *Land* governments, which themselves are elected in *Land* elections held between national elections. Although the system is multiparty, one may still suspect that German voters use the *Land* elections, which indirectly determine the composition of the *Bundesrat,* to counterbalance the senior party of government emerging from the previous *Bundestag* elections. Brady, Lohmann, and Rivers (1995) develop a model of this sort, taking into account the subtleties of German coalition politics, and use it to explain a regularity that is strikingly similar to the U.S. midterm loss phenomenon: The senior party of government in Germany consistently loses votes in the ensuing round of "midterm" *Land* elections.

Threshold insurance

Another species of strategic voting, aimed at preventing a prospective coalition partner from falling below a critical threshold of votes, is also possible under the German electoral system and was discussed briefly in Chapter 4. Recall that German voters have two votes, one which they cast for a candidate in a single-member district and one which they cast for a party list in their *Land.* The candidate votes determine the winners in 248 single-member districts, the list votes the distribution of 248 compensatory seats. The compensatory seats are in practice distributed at the national level using the d'Hondt method of proportional representation, but only parties that secure at least 5% of the national vote (or win at least three constituency seats) are eligible to receive any of these seats. Because the German party system from the 1960s to the 1980s featured two large parties (the Christian Democrats, or CDU/CSU, on the right; the SPD on the left) and one small party (the FDP in the center), the typical situation was for the FDP to be in alliance with one or the other of the large parties in government. The conjunction of the 5% threshold and the FDP's position as perennial junior partner in German governments raised the possibility of voters wishing to take out a "threshold insurance policy" when they voted.

For example, if the CDU/CSU and the FDP are in alliance, and polls show that the former will get 47% of the vote while the latter will get 4%, then the FDP will get no seats. Assuming that the SPD gets the remaining 49% of the votes, they will form the government. Were 1% of the CDU/CSU voters to give their list votes to the FDP, however, then a CDU/CSU government in partnership with the FDP would ensue. In case the logic of the situation might escape the voters, the FDP has in most elections since 1969 explained it quite directly in their electoral propa-

ganda. Consider the following leaflet distributed when the FDP was in alliance with the CDU/CSU (from Roberts 1988:326):

CDU-CSU 47 + FDP 4 = 47	(and no CDU-CSU government!)
CDU-CSU 46 + FDP 5 = 51	(and a CDU-CSU&FDP coalition!)

This puts the point compactly and is an open appeal to threshold insurance voters.

Do German voters actually buy any of the threshold insurance that the FDP offers? The overall rate of split voting (a list vote for the FDP, a candidate vote for some other party's nominee) in a given election does depend on the FDP's strategy in a sensible fashion: The rate of FDP splits started to trend up in 1969; fell back in 1976 when the FDP decided to appeal for both candidate and list votes, rather than focus on the latter; then picked up again thereafter, when the FDP returned to and stuck with a list vote strategy (Roberts 1988). Moreover, it is mostly voters who give their constituency votes to candidates of the FDP's coalition partner that give their list votes to the FDP (e.g., Jesse 1988; Roberts 1988). This pattern is of course consistent with FDP supporters voting strategically in the constituencies, rather than CDU/CSU supporters voting strategically in the *Land*. But there is no reason to expect the aggregate level of split voting to follow the FDP's strategy of appealing for list votes, if split voting is produced solely by FDP supporters who wish not to waste their candidate votes.[10]

10.4 LINKAGE AND ENTRY

National entry markets. The existence of cross-district links between politicians can affect entry at the district level profoundly. Entry in a single district considered in isolation is essentially a Battle of the Sexes or Chicken game (which game it is depending on details of preference), whereas entry in a multiplicity of districts considered together tends to be a bargaining game, in which concessions in one district lead not to dispreferred equilibria (as in the single-district case) but to gains in another district.

Perhaps the most important point to note is that there are potential gains from trade that would go unaccrued were all parties purely local, but that can in principle be captured if parties are national in scope (or at least multidistrict). Consider the simplest case of a system in which all districts are single-member and in which the Left is divided into two kinds of person, type A and type B. Type A voters from one district have

[10]McCuen (1995) finds some coalitionally strategic action in laboratory experiments intended to capture electoral incentives similar to those facing German voters.

an easier time agreeing on policy options with type A voters from other districts than with type B voters from their own district. If entry proceeds as a series of isolated contests between the type A and type B forces, then a certain number of double entries may be expected in (the mixed-strategy) equilibrium. The result is that the Left as a whole loses a certain number of seats. If two national factions form, and bargain at the national level, then a series of reciprocal withdrawals may be negotiated. The Left as a whole gains seats. Those factions who must withdraw in a particular district can accept either payment in kind in another district or other compensations. Because bargaining proceeds at the national level, there may be a broader array of potential side payments to allocate to those who withdraw. The whole market for entry is simply more liquid when conducted at the national level, with the consequence that more gains from trade are accrued.[11]

In a sense, then, the expected loss of seats (were entry to proceed as a series of isolated events) can be taken as part of the collective incentive to form national parties. Even were these gains negligible in a particular situation, there would still be an incentive for national leaders to take over the market for entry as much as they could. Not only does it provide another coin in which they might trade – making the national market for political deals of all kinds more liquid – but of course it also gives them more power.

The importance of organization. It is important to note that the gains from trade that can potentially be accrued by linking districts together are more easily captured by more organized groups than by less organized groups. Thus, just as the politics of coordination within districts privileges more organized groups over less organized groups, so does the politics of vote- and withdrawal-trading across districts favor such groups.

Let me give an example of this from the work of Ray Christensen. Christensen (N.d.) studies electoral cooperation among the noncommunist opposition parties in Japan – the Democratic Socialist Party (DSP), the Japan Socialist Party (JSP), and the Clean Government Party (CGP)

[11]Linkage between politicians from different districts may also lead to higher barriers to entry at the local level. If entry is purely a local matter, then the primary advantage a nominating group has is the advantage of being obviously focal: Its candidates have won or done well before. If entry is a matter of national imprimaturs, then receipt of the label typically confers an advertising subsidy (the candidate benefiting from national publicity for the party), a credibility boost (candidates affiliated with national parties can secure policy benefits more effectively than can mavericks), and possibly a financial subsidy (from party or factional coffers). Knowledge of this package of subsidies ought to discourage entry.

– during the period 1958-1990. The intent of such cooperation from the point of view of the national parties was clear enough: If they could agree that each of them would not run candidates in certain districts, and could direct their supporters in those districts to support their alliance mate's candidate(s), then all of them might win more seats. As Christensen points out, however, there was a series of problems that might in principle be expected to arise, and did in practice. For example, local party leaders might not be willing to cooperate with a scheme in which they were the ones stuck with the role of supporter of another party's candidate; and local voters might not be very predictable, in which case the value of one party stepping down in another's favor might be hard to verify and subject to debate.

In solving these problems, the CGP was in a better position than either of the other parties because of its close association with *Soka Gakkai,* a large and well-organized lay organizational affiliate of a fundamentalist Buddhist sect in Japan. Because the party was launched as an outgrowth of *Soka Gakkai,* it had a very strong national party organization which was in a position to tell its local affiliates what to do. Thus, the CGP had more flexibility in where and when it withdrew its candidates. It was also more flexible and more credible when it promised to deliver some number of votes in a given district, as it had a good count on *Soka Gakkai* membership and those members could be relied on to take the party leadership's advice on whom to vote for.

The CGP took the lead in innovating better terms of trade for itself by insisting that vote trades across district lines be structured in ways that made the other parties' delivery of votes more observable and credible. For example, if a CGP candidate needed support in a district with many telephone union workers, then the CGP would throw their support behind a JSP candidate from that union in another district. Sometimes, the CGP would negotiate directly with the local union, rather than with the national party, and would ask for the names of the union members who had agreed to trade their votes and even visit their workplaces or homes to verify their support. Obviously, in making cross-district trades, the ability to "deliver the goods" could not be taken for granted, and social actors who could direct local candidates and voters effectively were at a substantial advantage. One can only imagine the range of cross-district deals that were not consummated, due to lack of an appropriate organizational base for the relevant interests.

10.5 CONCLUSION

This chapter has in a sense ended the discussion of Duverger's Law that began in Chapters 2 and 4. Duverger clearly recognized that both the

wasted vote argument and the prudent withdrawal argument operated only at the district level. He thus acknowledged that the "true effect" of plurality elections was to promote local bipartism but argued that local bipartism would "project" into national bipartism when parties nationalized. Sartori later clarified and developed this argument but I have argued that the argument simply begs the real questions: Why do would-be legislators from different districts find it necessary or valuable to link together in national parties? *To what extent* will they do so?

If all candidates find it necessary to join a party that runs candidates in all districts, then local bipartism will indeed turn into national bipartism. But if the extent of linkage stops short of this extreme, then the system may have more than two parties that can field viable candidates in at least some districts. So whether Duverger's Law works at the system level depends crucially on the factors that drive linkage. These factors, however, are absent from the theoretical statement "plurality election rules at the district level tend to produce national bipartism." Thus, the systemic version of Duverger's Law is incomplete as a theoretical proposition, whatever its merits as an empirical generalization.

In attempting to complete the theoretical argument, I have focused on the role of executive (presidential or prime ministerial) ambition. Would-be executives have an incentive to orchestrate cross-district coalitions of would-be legislators that are big enough to place them in office, especially when executive and legislative elections are held concurrently. Thus the Duvergerian logic may reappear at the national level, if executive power is highly concentrated in one office and that office is awarded by something like plurality rule. On the other hand, if executive power is dispersed among several portfolios and those portfolios are awarded by a proportional method, then executive ambition may still push the process of linkage among legislative candidates but there is no reason to expect it to push all the way to national bipartism.

If one were to rewrite Duverger's Law in light of these objections, it would look something as follows: "If a system (1) elects legislators by plurality rule in single-member districts; (2) elects its chief executive by something like nationwide plurality rule; and (3) holds executive and legislative elections concurrently, then it will tend to (a) have at most two viable candidates in each legislative district, (b) have at most two viable candidates for executive office, and (c) have a national two-party or one-party-dominant system." More generally, the discussion in this chapter suggests that studies of national party systems need to take both district-level legislative and national-level executive electoral rules into account, a suggestion that is pursued in Chapter 11.

The creation of national parties that compete for control of executive office can also affect strategic voting calculations, if voters' attention is

diverted from purely local considerations – e.g., which candidate (or list) in my constituency do I like better? – to more national considerations – e.g., which party has the best chance of forming a government? If voters care only about who forms the government and the legislative election procedure is highly proportional, then strategic voting will, if it arises at all, occur in favor of *nationally* competitive parties, rather than in favor of *locally* competitive parties. This suggests a quite different species of strategic voting (portfolio-maximizing rather than seat-maximizing) about which we know very little empirically or theoretically.

Linkage can also radically affect the politics of entry, by converting a series of independent single-constituency entry games into a nationally brokered multi-constituency entry game. The result can be not only a gain in "efficiency" for the politicians who establish the cross-district links but also an important centralization of power within parties, again often with would-be executives playing the main entrepreneurial role.