

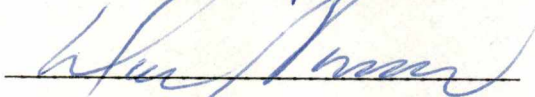
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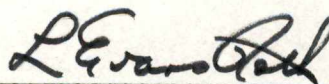


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GOVERNMENT FORMATION AND POLICY MAKING: FORMATION
OF THE 1977 COALITION IN ISRAEL

A Thesis
Presented for the
Master of Arts
Degree
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

James David Hobbs

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ABSTRACT

Though government formation is a phenomenon that has recently received considerable attention by students of the political process, its implications for the development of public policy have by and large been ignored. Most scholars have instead studied the formation process in isolation, developing predictive theories of government formation focusing on how actors select their coalition partners. Similarly, a number of theories of policy making have been developed which examine the policy process in a strictly legalistic or institutional fashion, ignoring the possibility of policy being developed in, and affected by, the government formation arena. The primary purpose of this study was to provide a means to specify the components of the process and describe their interrelationships, particularly with respect to the formulation of public policy.

A case study of one Israeli government formation was used to illustrate the importance of policy debate and formulation in constructing a government. The formation of the Begin-led Likud government of 1977 involved intense discussions of major legislative issues; issues which required attention and some degree of resolution before the maintenance phase of the coalition process could be resumed.

The major finding of this research was that the governmental process in Israel operates on the basis of a consensus that is established with the formation of a government. Actors negotiate what are often highly divergent issue positions and ultimately reach a consensus on the major lines of action to be pursued by the new government. Finally, the

data suggest that it is much more than a "paper consensus," at least in many cases. Actors often pressure for implementation of the agreements struck in the formation process, and in certain instances, legislative action occurs. As such, the stability of the government may depend on these actors' perceptions of their fate vis-a-vis the agreement.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. INTRODUCTION: GOVERNMENT FORMATION AND POLICY MAKING.	1
II. THE SETTING: PARTIES, ISSUES, AND INSTITUTIONS.	22
III. THE 1977 ISRAELI GOVERNMENT FORMATION.	50
IV. GOVERNMENT FORMATION AND POLICY MAKING: A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK.	78
BIBLIOGRAPHY	106
APPENDIXES	114
APPENDIX A. NEW GOVERNMENT'S GUIDELINES	115
APPENDIX B. TEXT OF COALITION AGREEMENT	118
VITA	124

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION: GOVERNMENT FORMATION AND POLICY MAKING

The purpose of this study is to examine the process of government formation in a multiparty parliamentary democracy, particularly as it relates to the formulation and development of public policy. Though government formation is a phenomenon that has recently received considerable attention by students of the political process, its implications for the development of public policy have by and large been ignored. Most scholars have instead studied the formation process in isolation, developing predictive theories of coalition behavior focusing on how actors select their coalition partners.¹ Or, similarly, a number of theories of policy making have been advanced which examine the policy process in a strictly legalistic or institutional framework, ignoring the possibility of policy being developed in, and affected by, loosely structured government formation arenas.²

Are "government formation" and "policy making" analytically distinct concepts? Recent government formations in certain parliamentary systems

¹For a review of coalition theories, see: Bruce Bueno de Mesquita, Strategy, Risk and Personality in Coalition Politics: The Case of India (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), pp. 11-25.

²In reality, the assembly is only one of many arenas of decision making. Another is the government formation arena. See: Gordon Smith, Politics in Western Europe: A Comparative Analysis (London: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd., 1972): pp. 104-05, 207.

suggest not.³ Several studies suggest that, considering the centrality and intensity of political debate on major questions of public policy in the government formation arena, the phenomena are inextricably interrelated. In view of this, the question should perhaps be rephrased to: Precisely what is the relationship between government formation and policy making? This leads one to inquire about the nature, character, and consequences of negotiations in the government formation process. In other words, what patterns may be discerned in the interaction of individuals and parties as they engage in issue-specific negotiations in the construction of a new government? It is these relationships which this thesis will address.

Government formation is the phenomenon whereby numerous actors in the political arena, be they parties or individuals, attempt to form a coalition capable of acquiring and extending influence over the governmental process.⁴ Immediately following elections in which no one party achieves a majority of seats in a parliament, negotiations are initiated with regard to composition of a new government. These negotiations normally manifest, either implicitly or explicitly, concern with such questions as coalition size, ideological compatibility, payoffs, and, as indicated above, specific policy issues. Ultimately, an accord is reached and there

³Robert Peterson, Martine De Ridder, David Hobbs, and E. Fletcher McClellan, "Government Formation and Policy Formulation: Patterns in Belgium and the Netherlands," unpublished manuscript, Department of Political Science, The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, January 1980; Martine De Ridder, "Government Formation," unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, June 1980.

⁴Bueno de Mesquita, Strategy, Risk and Personality, pp. 4-5; Lawrence C. Dodd, Coalitions in Parliamentary Government (Princeton, N. J.: Princeton University Press, 1976): p. 35.

is some consensus on the general lines of action to be pursued by the new government. In certain states, there is a formal agreement to govern which records the policy agreements concluded in the formation process.⁵ The government formation process is complete when the new government assumes office and once again resumes the "legislative" or "maintenance" stage of the coalition process.

Many of the elements mentioned above have been sufficiently addressed in the literature on coalition formation; others have not. Most notably absent are studies dealing with the character of coalition behavior as it relates to government formation and related policy negotiations. Government formations often involve highly detailed negotiations on a number of legislative issues, issues which may have triggered the collapse of the preceding government or which may have to be settled as part of the new government program before a viable coalition can be forged, i.e., one ensured both of majority support in parliament and the ability of government members to work together. Again, it is precisely these kinds of negotiations and agreements which have not been systematically investigated by political scientists.

The Scope of the Study

The primary objective of this effort is to provide a means of describing the process of government formation in multiparty parliamentary democracies. This will entail the development of a conceptual framework

⁵For examples, see: Smith, Politics in Western Europe, p. 207; David Nachmias, "Coalition Politics in Israel," Comparative Political Studies, Vol. 7, No. 3 (October 1974): p. 327; "Text of Coalition Agreement," Jerusalem Post, June 21, 1977, p. 4.

that will specify the components of the process and describe their inter-relationships, i.e., involves a theoretical mapping and conceptual clarification of the network of relationships existing between the elements and processes underlying the government formation and policy making.

One recent government formation will provide the substantive base from which a theoretical framework will be generated. The research will focus on government formation in a multiparty parliamentary democracy in which no party has a majority of seats in parliament, a condition which necessitates the formation of post-election coalitions which are not totally determined by the electoral outcome. The formation of the Begin-led Likud government in Israel in 1977 meets these criteria, and consequently, will be used as the data base for this study.

Why Israel, when a number of other recent cases also meet the criteria outlined above? The author's rationale was one that reflected a concern for what was practical in terms of obtaining information. Information is more readily available with regard to Israeli politics than is the case with many Western European parliamentary systems, due primarily to the large American Jewish clientele at which such information is directed. The number of English translation texts, periodicals, and newspapers cannot be overlooked. In essence, the author's pragmatism weighed heavily, and made the decision not a totally arbitrary one.

While focusing on government formation in Israel, the study will necessarily direct attention to all phases of coalition behavior. The interdependence of government formation, maintenance, and termination compels attention to events and circumstances preceding and succeeding the establishment of the new government. Any exploration of the components

and undercurrents of government formation without a grasp of the issues, personalities, and agreements and disputes surrounding the formation process is an exercise in futility. For that reason, this analysis will proceed to examine the myriad relationships existing between the three phases constituting the broader political process. The study will examine relevant political events and issues approximately six months prior to the collapse of the Labor government in December 1976 and for a period of sufficient length so as to trace the consequences or implications of accords struck in the formation process (approximately one and one-half years after the coalition agreement was announced on June 20, 1977).

Finally, the scope of the analysis is somewhat limited. It is true that any framework or theoretical propositions derived from a single case study is tentative in nature and is not readily generalizable to the universe of systems in which similar occurrences exist. The construction of grand, all-encompassing theory is not the goal of this effort, however, even if such could be accomplished. Rather, the objective is to suggest, via a conceptual framework based on one empirical referent, a means to examine the process of government formation. The illumination of the various and sundry components of the formation process and their conceptual clarification should, if nothing else, alert others to the possibility that similar patterns or configurations exist in the construction of governments elsewhere. The approach employed here, involving going back and forth between data and theory, also adds legitimacy to the categories and overarching framework since theory is continually shaped and modified to both fit and transcend the particular case.

Theoretical Significance

The theoretical framework to be fashioned in this study deviates from existing theories of government formation in a number of ways, though primarily in approach and focus (uses a case study approach and is therefore qualitative in nature; focuses on coalition formation as it relates to policy making). The extant literature on government formation does not adequately reflect the multidimensional character of the process found in the real world. Such studies are generally too "simplistic" to account for the many forces and elements underlying the government formation process. Previous studies suggest that the formation process revolves around little more than a tendency for parties to bargain and coalesce on the basis of size and/or ideological compatibility.⁶ Ranging from unidimensional Rikerian theory,⁷ revolving around payoff maximization and rational decision making, to De Swaan's⁸ and Damgaard's⁹ modified power theories, which examined policy distance minimization in coalition formation situations, the various coalition theories fail to treat the

⁶William H. Riker, The Theory of Political Coalitions (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1962); Abraham De Swaan, "An Empirical Model of Coalition Formation as an N-Person Game of Policy Distance Minimization," in Sven Groennings, E. W. Kelley, and Michael Leiserson, eds., The Study of Coalition Behavior: Theoretical Perspectives and Cases from Four Continents (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1970): pp. 424-44; Abraham De Swaan, Coalition Theories and Cabinet Formations: A Study of Coalition Formation Applied to Nine European Parliaments After 1918 (Amsterdam: Elsevier Press, 1977); R. Axelrod, Conflict of Interest (Chicago: Markham, 1970).

⁷Riker, The Theory of Political Coalitions.

⁸De Swaan, "An Empirical Model"; De Swaan, Coalition Theories.

⁹Erik Damgaard, "Party Coalitions in Danish Law-Making," European Journal of Political Research, Vol. 1, No. 1 (April 1973): pp. 35-66.

simultaneous interaction of the multiple components of government formation, e.g., actors' perspectives, policy considerations, and so forth. Nor do studies which attempt to investigate such factors do so in an integrated fashion. Political scientists have normally targeted in on parts of the whole, and as a result, have failed to gain a broader perspective of the process in action. Finally, many studies are at such a high level of abstraction that they lack clear manifestations in reality.

Exactly what elements of coalition behavior have been examined by political scientists? The literature on coalition formation has concentrated almost exclusively on how actors select their coalition partners.¹⁰ Very little has been done with regard to the policy dimension of government formation. The approaches that have normally been employed with regard to coalition formation (though "coalition formation" as used in many of these studies extends beyond the phenomenon of government formation to political behavior in general, here it is used interchangeably with government formation) have been game-theoretical in nature and assume rational decision making by participants under ideal conditions. Subsumed under these approaches are studies which have focused on: a) the distribution of payoffs, i.e., studies which stress the importance of payoff maximization as a rationale for coalition building and government membership; and b) the effects of social interaction on actors' coalition behavior (emphasis on social acceptability as a by-product of coalition formation and as a means of ensuring success in future coalition formations).¹¹

¹⁰Again, see: Bueno de Mesquita, Strategy, Risk and Personality, pp. 11-25.

¹¹Ibid., p. 11.

Studies that focus on the distribution of payoffs as the key element of coalition formation generally fall into two categories: 1) the minimum resource approach; and 2) the pivotal power approach.¹² The minimum resource approach essentially revolves around size and payoff maximization. As such, these studies stress the initial distribution of power among potential coalition partners (alluded to as "proto-coalitions" in the literature) and the options available to them. Riker's seminal work on political coalitions, which set forth the "size principle," is perhaps the best known minimum resource theory,¹³ or using Hill's classification, a mathematical-normative approach.¹⁴ Riker's size principle states that "in social situations similar to N-person zero-sum games with side-payments, participants create coalitions just as large as they believe will ensure winning and no larger."¹⁵ This is the obverse of Downs's theory asserting the salience of large winning blocs, or coalitions.¹⁶

At any rate, the crux of the minimum resource approach is that by keeping coalition size at a minimum, one maximizes payoffs. Why then the larger than necessary coalitions in many instances? Why do "formateurs" strive to expand the parliamentary basis of the new government to beyond

¹²Ibid., pp. 11-18.

¹³Riker, The Theory of Political Coalitions.

¹⁴Paul T. Hill, A Theory of Political Coalitions in Simple and Policy Making Situations (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1973): pp. 9-11.

¹⁵Riker, The Theory of Political Coalitions, pp. 32-33.

¹⁶Anthony Downs, An Economic Theory of Democracy (New York: Harper, 1957).

the minimal level? Important modifications concerning imperfect information and ideology were later introduced to account for minimum-plus coalitions, but the essence of the theories remained intact. The end result was the development of models incorporating variables such as degree of uncertainty, ideology, and responsibility costs, variables which temper the size principle and reduce its utility.¹⁷

Pivotal power theorists on the other hand, such as Vinacke and Arkoff, have focused their research on the abilities of actors to convert losing coalitions into winning coalitions, i.e., they recognize the pivotal role some parties play in government formation.¹⁸ They assume, as do most, that coalition membership is desirable, and that in cases where a number of coalition possibilities exist, actors have an equal opportunity or probability of forming a winning coalition. This is due to the number of possible combinations of actors sufficient to control the reins of government. They therefore conclude that "the initial inequality of resource distribution (size) is not enough to give any one contestant an advantage or disadvantage over any other."¹⁹ This is due to the pivotal nature of the situation. Small parties which might normally be excluded from the coalition situation are invited to engage in negotiations and

¹⁷For example, see: Axlerod, Conflict of Interest; C. R. Adrian and C. Press, "Decision Costs in Coalition Formation," American Political Science Review, Vol. 62, No. 2 (June 1968): pp. 556-564; Hill, A Theory of Political Coalitions, p. 12.

¹⁸W. Vinacke and A. Arkoff, "Experimental Study of Coalitions in the Triad," American Sociological Review, Vol. 22, No. 4 (August 1957): pp. 406-14; Bueno de Mesquita, Strategy, Risk and Personality, pp. 13-4.

¹⁹Bueno de Mesquita, Strategy, Risk and Personality, p. 14.

may in fact form winning coalitions with either of several larger potential coalition partners.

A number of criticisms may be forwarded with regard to the theories discussed thus far. First, studies do not normally permit consideration of prior experiences, assuming complete independence of each coalition situation (alluded to in the literature as iterative coalition formation situations without feedback).²⁰ Second, they do not allow actors to convert benefits derived from coalition membership into an integral part of their resource base to be utilized in future coalition formations.²¹ Third, coalition theorists fail to treat the various intra-party factions and interests which shatter the image of the party as a united, monolithic entity (which is the image projected by many political scientists).²² Political parties are composed of individuals, individuals with differing values, interests, and goals. In sum, these studies examine coalition formation as if it took place in a vacuum, devoid of all political action and consequences.

Actors enter coalition situations have been ritualized in the art of politics, bargaining, compromise, and persuasion. They bring with them a whole range of values, values developed in part on the basis of past experiences with other actors. Hence, one might posit that anticipatory behaviors may be adopted by certain individuals, or groups of individuals,

²⁰Ibid., pp. 18-19.

²¹Ibid., pp. 18-22.

²²For examples, see: De Swaan, Coalition Theories; Damgaard, "Party Coalitions."

as they seek acceptance from other actors for those behaviors. That is, actors may anticipate others' reactions and gestures in the formation arena and behave accordingly. Similarly, potential coalition partners may be judged on the basis of strategies and behaviors manifested in previous coalition situations. This is the position developed by social interaction theorists.

Social interaction theorists stress the effect of social interaction on actors as they participate in government formation.²³ These studies examine the type of behavior actors engage in (competitive vs cooperative) as they strive to gain social acceptability, which in turn, affects the possibility of being included in future coalitions. They conclude that cooperative behavior is most appropriate in iterative, feedback coalition formation situations, i.e., in successive coalition situations where actors predict actions on the basis of what occurred in the past, actors usually engage in cooperative behavior exhibiting a willingness to make the situation as inexpensive as possible for their partners. In general, parties concerned with improving their long-term strategic influence manifest behaviors designed to project positive images to other actors, hoping therefore to secure their approval for participation and membership in subsequent governments.

The coalition studies discussed up to this point have omitted several crucial conditions, one of which is the possibility that government

²³This is also called the anti-competitive approach. See: Bueno de Mesquita, Strategy, Risk and Personality, pp. 17-19; William Gamson, "Experimental Studies of Coalition Formation," in Leonard Berkowitz, ed., Advances in Experimental Social Psychology (New York: Academic Press, 1964): pp. 82-110.

membership provides for the possibility of coalition benefits being converted to part of the actor's resource base to be utilized in future government formations. This is known as the redistributive condition.²⁴ If one assumes, as do most, that actors seek to maximize long-term political influence and extend their leverage over the decision making process, then it is necessary to recognize the possibility of redistributive benefits resulting from government formation. The consequences for strategic maneuvering among actors are changed under the redistributive condition, with actors opting for a mixed strategy consisting of both competition and cooperation, acting competitively until fellow actors become attuned to their strategy (of trying to gain influence at their expense), then engaging in more cooperative behavior and making an effort at appeasement. They, in effect, take part in a kind of coalition brinkmanship.

The social interaction theories and the redistributive theory face many of the same problems associated with the payoff distribution theories. Social interaction theories do not provide for the possibility of redistributive benefits, a major flaw in such studies. Second, only the redistributive theory examines the formation process as it relates to coalition maintenance and termination, a definite improvement on most studies of coalition formation. None of the theories is particularly useful, however, in examining the political character of government formations, especially as the formation affects the development of public policy (and as the

²⁴Bueno de Mesquita, Strategy, Risk and Personality; Bruce Bueno de Mesquita, "Coalition Payoffs and Electoral Performances in European Democracies," Comparative Political Studies, Vol. 12, No. 1 (April 1979): pp. 61-81.

formation is affected by the actors' policy preferences, agreements, and disputes). That is, they fail to tap the dynamic character of government formation in a political arena where strategies geared toward payoff maximization are tempered by ideological concerns and policy considerations.

There is, at present, a modicum of empirical studies dealing with government formation in parliamentary systems. There is of course substantial overlap between these studies and the coalition theories outlined above. Generally speaking, government formation studies (empirical studies) have involved attempts by political scientists, by applying coalition theories, to predict and explain formation outcomes.²⁵ Most have been highly abstract and mathematical. Others have been qualitative in nature and have attempted to touch upon the numerous variables affecting the direction of government formation.

De Swaan's²⁶ and Damgaard's²⁷ works have been largely responsible for the development of what is referred to as closed minimal range theory. In examining government formations in Western European parliamentary systems, the two authors noted a tendency for parties to coalesce on the basis of ideological compatibility and size. According to CMR (Closed Minimal Range) theorists, parties will, when imposed on an ordinal socioeconomic policy continuum, enter coalitions with adjacent actors on that scale.

²⁵De Swaan, Coalition Theories; Nachmias, "Coalition Politics in Israel," pp. 316-333; Gregory S. Mahler and Richard J. Trilling, "Coalition Behavior and Cabinet Formation: The Case of Israel," Comparative Political Studies, Vol. 8, No. 2 (July 1975): pp. 200-33.

²⁶De Swaan, Coalition Theories: De Swaan, "An Empirical Model."

²⁷Damgaard, "Party Coalitions."

Furthermore, the theory stipulates that coalitions will be no larger than is required to control a majority of seats in parliament.²⁸

There are several serious problems with CMR however. First, to reiterate criticisms of theories discussed above, parties are not the homogeneous, disciplined entities some would have us believe. In fact, there is often substantial intra-party bargaining over ideology and issues similar to bargaining between parties. The situation is much more complex than CMR theorists describe. Second, it is sometimes difficult to fit parties onto a left-right socioeconomic policy scale.²⁹ As indicated above, it is difficult to impose parties on such a continuum when one considers the diverse interests represented by its factions, factions which often lend pivotal support to its dominant partner. In fact, differences within parties are often greater than differences between parties.³⁰ CMR theorists also ignore the possibility that other issue dimensions, such as defense and national security in Israel, may assume positions of importance. Nor does it (the policy scale) mesh with the

²⁸Abraham De Swaan, "A Classification of Parties and Party Systems According to Coalitional Options," European Journal of Political Research, Vol. 3, No. 4 (December 1975): pp. 361-375.

²⁹Elazar notes, for instance, that Israel's three large blocs (Labor, Civil, and Religious) do not relate to each other on a left-right socioeconomic policy continuum. Only within the camps or blocs may parties be imposed on a left-right scale. See: Daniel J. Elazar, "Israel's Compound Polity," in Howard R. Penniman, ed., Israel at the Polls: The Knesset Elections of 1977 (Washington, D. C.: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1979): pp. 10-11.

³⁰Peretz briefly notes significant intra-bloc and intra-party differences in Israel. See: Don Peretz, The Government and Politics of Israel (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, Inc., 1979): p. 82.

issue-specific negotiations of real government formations in which party alliances may be forged on an issue-by-issue basis. The last serious criticism is that these theories are static in the sense that they do not tap the dynamic character of government formation, i.e., they examine government formation in a predictive capacity and do not look at the process itself. Instead, size and policy distance minimization (ideology) become the sole components or criteria by which formation results are correlated.

Several authors have recently conducted similar studies with regard to Israeli government formations. Nachmias, for instance, was interested in explaining the larger than minimal coalitions and the structure of pay-offs in Israel.³¹ Conducting an empirical analysis of government formations up to the 1974 formation, he concluded that minimal winning coalition theories and closed minimal range theories (Axlerod's minimal-connected winning coalition)³² do not fit the Israeli experience. Instead, one must understand the politics of the dominant party system. The dominant party (at that time, Labor) has sufficient resources to be included in and control every coalition situation. Consequently, larger coalitions allow the dominant party to reinforce its dominant position.³³

Mahler and Trilling, however, in a later study, arrived at somewhat different conclusions than Nachmias.³⁴ Using a broader data base, they

³¹Nachmias, "Coalition Politics in Israel."

³²Axlerod, Conflict of Interest; Nachmias, "Coalition Politics in Israel," pp. 331-32.

³³Ibid.

³⁴Mahler and Trilling, "Coalition Behavior."

concluded that ideological compatibility is the key factor in coalition membership. They noted a tendency for minimal winning coalitions to form in Israel, but determined that ideological proximity is the deciding factor. Neither article, however, reveals much about the policy making aspect of government formation in Israel.

Another class of studies concerned with government formation has taken a different approach. Developed from case studies in a number of parliamentary systems, they have identified a number of variables which affect the formation process. Groennings, for instance, developed a loose framework for examining government formation.³⁵ It incorporates a number of variables utilized in earlier coalition theories, e.g., ideology, resources, and motivational variables. It, more than any other study, approximates what is proposed here. Groennings recognizes the simultaneous interaction between a plethora of factors or components underlying the government formation process. Groennings' work does not look at the implications of the formation processes for public policy, examining the negotiations and agreements arrived at on policy in the formation arena.

Bueno de Mesquita, in 1975, examined government formation in India.³⁶ He developed a framework for examining strategies pursued by various actors as they strive to build a new government. His principle contribution to the literature was the development of the redistributive

³⁵Sven Groennings, "Notes Toward Theories of Coalition Behavior in Multiparty Systems: Formation and Maintenance," in Groennings, et al., eds., The Study of Coalition Behavior, pp. 445-65.

³⁶Bueno de Mesquita, Strategy, Risk and Personality.

condition (discussed above). He, like others before him, did not delve into the complex negotiations of policy and the agreements hammered out in the formation process.

Hill's work on government formation attempts to develop a model with a unifying language and integral framework for looking at cabinet formation.³⁷ Hill's most useful contribution is the attempt to examine variables simultaneously and reckon with responsibility costs and policy satisfaction (actors share the burdens of coalition membership and governance--responsibility costs; actors coalesce on the basis of similar policy positions, hoping therefore to maximize attainment of policy goals--policy satisfaction). So, in a sense, Hill borders on the periphery of this study's analysis of the policy making aspects of government formation. Hill's work on government formation suffers from the following shortcomings however: 1) it is at a high level of abstraction lacking supporting case studies; and 2) it does little more than acknowledge that actors strive toward policy satisfaction, being, in effect, much like the ideological compatibility studies outlined above.

The most important departure in this case study from existing theories of government formation is the attempt to systematically examine the relationship between policy making and government formation. Political scientists have traditionally regarded the legislative assembly as the site of government and legislative action. In reality, however, the situation is much more complex, for there are many arenas, of which the

³⁷Hill, A Theory of Political Conditions.

assembly is only one. One of these is the government formation arena.³⁸

One might argue that at least some policy is made, or partially made, neither in government nor parliament, but in the government formation arena. Immediately after parliamentary elections, parties initiate negotiations on a new government program, one reflecting agreement on the major legislative issues of the day. There is considerable interaction between parties, factions, government officials, para-governmental organizations, and so forth, as they strive toward securing consideration and eventual adoption of specific policy proposals and goals. Bargaining, compromise, and concessions on specific issues and overall policy take place commonly. The actors eventually forge an agreement to govern, and some consensus on the general lines of action to be pursued by the new government emerges. This led one political scientist to remark that it is frequently the coalition committee, through its negotiation and resolution of matters of public policy, "(rather than a cabinet) which wields the real power in determining the laws to be passed."³⁹

The 1977 Israeli government formation involved negotiations on a number of important legislative issues. Though a government headed by the Begin-led Likud bloc was consummated quite rapidly as far as Israeli formations go, it was still characterized by intense policy negotiations. Also, though a government was formally announced only one month after elections were held, negotiations with the Democratic Movement for Change (DMC) were continued in hope of bringing them into the coalition and

³⁸Again, see: Smith, Politics of Western Europe, p. 104.

³⁹Ibid., p. 207.

expanding the parliamentary base of the government. Those negotiations continued until October, 1977, when the DMC voted to join the Likud government. The formation process involved intense and heated discussions of West Bank policy, electoral reform, religious policy, and numerous other issues. These instances indicate that government formation not only involves questions of size and ideological compatibility; it also involves serious debate on specific policies.

Questions and Research Design

Overall, this study is aimed at providing a means to describe the character of coalition politics in government formation in multiparty parliamentary democracies. The most obvious departure from other studies (and in this sense, it adds a dimension to what has been done previously), as indicated above, is its concentration on policy and government formation. As such, it entails a detailed analysis of the processes whereby an agreement to govern is ultimately achieved and the impact of those processes on immediate policy issues and other items of legislative debate. The primary intent will be to describe and evaluate patterns of interaction and involvement among actors and the surrounding political milieu. The nature of this analysis thus assumes a judgmental or configurational form rather than a measureable or formalistic mode of analysis. Basic questions to be pursued include the following:

- 1) What conditions or factors affect the form or pattern of the coalition process? This will involve questions pertaining to the issues involved, the actors' stances on those issues, ideological compatibility, size (size of parties and their

concern with coalition size), desire for a government role, actors' resources, contextual components affecting negotiations, etc. This question entails an examination of the period preceding the actual government formation in order to get some feel for the issues, actors, and circumstances surrounding the formation process. It directs attention to many of the variables introduced in other studies, but examines their interaction simultaneously and as they affect the patterns of negotiations on specific issues and policies and the agreement to govern.

- 2) What links or relationships exist between government formation and policy making? Here, one needs to inquire about the form and fate of agreements reached on issues discussed in the government formation. Were agreements explicit or ambiguous and why were they that way? Were parties bound to the terms of the agreement? Were agreements later redefined or positions modified? Were there further negotiations? Were bills passed and in what form? Were issues deferred? Did the formation process have an agenda setting effect? How did the agreement and process affect relationships between parties and individuals? In sum, the second question addresses the form of agreements, outcomes of the agreement, and outcomes of the process. It also means a clarification of what one means by policy making.

A variety of sources will be utilized in this study. Many will be secondary sources and will provide basic background information on Israeli politics. Domestic and foreign newspapers provide the bulk of information however. Sources such as the Jerusalem Post, Jewish Post, Jewish Press,

New York Times, and the London Times will be used extensively.

A brief outline of the rest of the thesis follows. Chapter II provides basic background material on the Israeli polity, particularly with regard to its network of political parties, issues, and personalities. It should orient the reader to the political atmosphere surrounding the government formation. Chapter III provides a detailed discussion of the 1977 Israeli government formation. Finally, Chapter IV deals with the questions outlined above relating to the processes and patterns of government formation and their relationship to policy making.

CHAPTER II

THE SETTING: PARTIES, ISSUES, AND INSTITUTIONS

Before developing a case study of the 1977 government formation, it is useful to consider the setting within which the process takes place, the salient sociocultural, religious, and economic foundations on which statehood was based and which are still relevant today, the network of formal and informal political institutions operating in that environment, and so on. As one eminent student of Israeli politics stated, "It is not possible to comprehend the character of the government and politics of Israel. . . without reference to the major influences shaping the formation and development of Israel's government."¹ Accordingly, government formation can be understood only if it is examined in the proper context, as a process functioning within a much larger political environment.

The purpose of this chapter is to orient the reader to the "basics" of politics in Israel preceding the government formation in 1977, e.g., party electoral trends, respective ideological orientations and issue positions, and interparty relations. Some attention will also be directed toward the institutional structure of the Israeli polity, for while one must look beyond formal political institutions to understand government formation, actors retain institutional ties and operate to a certain extent within established patterns and institutional boundaries. It is these

¹Marver H. Bernstein, The Politics of Israel (Princeton, N. J.: Princeton University Press, 1957): p. 4.

elements which constitute the political milieu and array of interactive components within which political action and formation negotiations occur. Finally, it is useful to elaborate briefly historical features of the Israeli state which helped define the structure of the contemporary party system and government institutions. It is these elements to which attention will first be directed.

Israel as a "New Society"

Israel is a "new society" founded on the principles of Judaism and Zionism. That, say experienced observers of Israeli politics, is the key to understanding Israeli society, the diversity of groups represented in its governing institutions, the degree of factional strife within its political parties, and so forth.²

A new society is "one which was founded from scratch as a result of migrations to virgin territories (that is, territories essentially uninhabited or perceived to be so by the migrants) since the beginning of the modern era in the mid-seventeenth century."³ Beginning with the first aliya (wave of immigrants) in the latter part of the nineteenth century, a policy encouraging mass immigration was conceived. In fact, immigration has since become the *raison d'être* of Zionism. It was the mass influx of immigrants from Asia, Eastern Europe, the Near East and North Africa

²For a discussion of "new societies," see Daniel Elazar, "Israel's Compound Polity," in Howard R. Penniman, ed., Israel at the Polls: The Knesset Elections of 1977 (Washington, D. C.: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1979): pp. 2-7; Louis Hartz, The Founding of New Societies (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1964).

³Elazar, "Israel's Compound Polity," p. 2.

which made Israel the pluralistic entity it is today, "Jewish and Arab, Oriental and Western, religious and secular, cosmopolitan and parochial, socialist and non-socialist."⁴

The political ramifications arising from the immigrant status of Israel are numerous. First, and perhaps most relevant here, is the impact social, religious, and ethnic diversity may have on government stability.⁵ As used here, government stability refers to the ability of government coalitions to survive their full elected term and the ability of their members to work together. The various waves of immigrants resulted in a citizenry bearing the stamp of diverse ethnic, social, and political backgrounds and imbued with assorted beliefs, attitudes, and values, all potential sources of conflicting or contradictory demands to be imposed upon its political institutions and leaders. As such, instability at the cabinet level is likely to arise from several sources: 1) from the inability of the Government to regulate conflict satisfactorily among groups competing for scarce resources and varying goals; and 2) from the inability of Government members to work together, with the cabinet itself being composed of members with diverse backgrounds and policy preferences.

This is not to suggest, however, that Israel's immigrant status in any sense "causes" instability at the cabinet level. Rather, it is to point out the difficulties inherent in maintaining government stability and consensus in a system characterized by extreme pluralism, with groups

⁴Peretz, The Government and Politics of Israel, p. 54.

⁵Here, the concern is with the frequent clashes over religion, economics, etc., i.e., clashes among socialist-capitalist, religious-secular groups in the same cabinet.

often finding themselves at opposite ends of the religious-non-religious spectrum, private enterprise-socialism continuum, and so on.⁶ In addition, it points out the need to examine not only interaction between parties, but within them as well, particularly within the larger parliamentary blocs and parties. The larger blocs mirror the pluralistic attributes of the larger society; hence, the need to examine intra-party bargaining and negotiations in the formation process. Finally, not only is the extreme pluralism accruing to Israel's immigrant status important in contributing to the need for frequent government formations, it also rises to the fore in the consensus building process of constructing a new government. This shall become more evident in Chapter III.

The degree of fragmentation or pluralism in new societies, such as Israel, may play a contributory role in government instability. The frequency of collapse or termination in Israel can be attributed to a number of factors, many of which are idiosyncratic and peculiar to the particular formation. One factor common to such conflict, however, is the broad, multiparty base upon which the government rests.⁷ Coalition discipline is not easily maintained at the cabinet level in multiparty systems,⁸ and in Israel, operating under a loosely defined rule of

⁶Mahler and Trilling, "Coalition Behavior," p. 208; Avraham Brichia, "1977 Elections and the Future of Electoral Reform in Israel," in Penniman, Israel at the Polls, p. 47.

⁷Maurice Duverger, Political Parties (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1961): p. 207.

⁸This is, of course, alluding to the frequency of cabinet crises in such countries as the Netherlands, Belgium, and Israel, all multiparty systems.

collective responsibility, collapse often ensues. Israel has, for instance, had nineteen governments in only thirty-two years of existence.⁹

Government coalitions composed of widely divergent interests, such as in Israel, are often quite fragile, and carry with them the seeds of conflict and instability. This is amply illustrated by the following example which occurred in 1976. In late December 1976, Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin "ousted" three National Religious Party ministers from the Labor Alignment coalition when they failed to support the Government on a vote of no-confidence (a more detailed account of this incident is provided in Chapter III). At the heart of the issue, however, had been a gradual erosion of support for the government by the junior coalition partners, i.e., the NRP. Conflict within the cabinet had been long-standing, and had been most intense over government settlement policy. These differences, in turn, stemmed not from minor, short-term differences, but from fundamental differences in ideology and varying visions of the Zionist enterprise.¹⁰

The Institutions

In formal terms, Israel is a parliamentary democracy modeled after the British system; principally, it lacks a written constitution, and rule of law is formulated and executed by a system of cabinet government.

⁹Peretz, The Government and Politics of Israel, p. 158.

¹⁰For an account of the Rabin Government's difficulties, see: Elyakim Rubinstein, "The Lesser Parties in the Israeli Elections of 1977," in Penniman, Israel at the Polls, pp. 178-79; Myron J. Aronoff, "The Decline of the Israeli Labor Party: Causes and Significance," in Penniman, Israel at the Polls, pp. 115-45.

Operating under a principle of collective responsibility, the Knesset, Israel's unicameral legislature, "is the repository of state sovereignty";¹¹ "all its laws are supreme." The government stays in office only as long as it enjoys the confidence or support of the Knesset, or until the Prime Minister precipitates collapse through resignation. Unlike its British counterpart, the Knesset does not automatically collapse following the resignation of the Government. As the supreme organ of authority, only it can terminate its mandate of four years.¹²

While in session, the Knesset performs many functions. In addition to the exercise of legislative powers granted it, which have been to a great extent usurped by the Government, the 120-member chamber confirms governments and their policy programs, ratifies treaties, etc.¹³ It has also served as a springboard to Government service, for while the Basic Law stipulates that only the Prime Minister and Deputy Ministers must be MKs (Members of the Knesset), almost all are.¹⁴

One final word is in order concerning Israel's legislature; that concerns the basis for Knesset membership. MKs are elected for four-year terms on the basis of a proportional representation-party list system (see next section also). Under this system, each party submits a list of candidates to the electorate, decided upon in advance by internal party

¹¹See Bernstein, The Politics of Israel, Chapters 4 and 5; Elazar, "Israel's Compound Polity," p. 8; Eliahu S. Likhovski, Israel's Parliament: The Law of the Knesset (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), Chapter 6.

¹²Oscar Kraines, Government and Politics in Israel (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1961): p. 35.

¹³Ibid., p. 34; Bernstein, The Politics of Israel, pp. 94-5.

¹⁴Peretz, The Government and Politics of Israel, p. 157.

forums or party elections, which in turn, votes for the political party of its choice, not individual candidates. Parties then secure representation in the Knesset proportionate to the number of ballots cast in their direction in the election. The method by which candidates for Knesset membership are selected assumes a position of extreme importance, even becoming in 1976-66 the *raison d'être* of one political party, the DMC. As we shall soon see, the party list system is also a most powerful means of ensuring party discipline. As such, it exemplifies the disproportionate amount of authority vested in a relatively small group of individuals, a situation with implications for all aspects of the political process, including government formation (in terms of generating "formation" issues, the discretionary powers available to negotiators, etc.).¹⁵

The Prime Minister is the chief legislator and most powerful single individual in the state. Surprisingly however, the formal powers ascribed to the office are undefined. He must only be a member of the Knesset, and by custom, is the head of the largest party in parliament. The Basic Law does, however, define his powers vis-a-vis other cabinet members, but only loosely, designating him "head of government." Real power must be derived from other sources, principally his strength of personality, role conceptions, and conduct in office.¹⁶

The Prime Minister can neither appoint nor discharge cabinet ministers in the course of government formation. He may nominate individuals to fill vacant portfolios, but this is subject to ratification by a party council,

¹⁵Ibid., p. 161; Brichta, "1977 Elections," p. 45.

¹⁶Peretz, The Government and Politics of Israel, pp. 156-57.

and ultimately, the Knesset. With regard to the Prime Minister's inability to dismiss rebellious ministers, it is true that such power is normally not permitted. There is one method of circumventing this, however, a method used by Prime Minister Rabin in 1976. By invoking a section of the Law of Transition, which states that "a minister who abstains in a no-confidence vote is considered as resigned from the government on the day the government states this fact to the Knesset,"¹⁷ the Prime Minister may, in effect, oust ministers from the ruling coalition. In actuality, this statute is rarely invoked. The mere arithmetic of coalition government often dictates otherwise, i.e., that the Prime Minister exercise considerable restraint in disciplining fellow ministers.¹⁸

The office of the Presidency is located atop the hierarchy of state institutions. The constitutional powers available to the President, as defined by the Law of Transition, are relatively minor however. In other words, his role is largely ceremonial in nature. Executive powers are primarily limited to initiating consultations to form caretaker governments in "crisis" situations, and later, to appointing a Prime Minister-designate to lead the formation process. These are the most important responsibilities charged to him and his six-year term in office.¹⁹

¹⁷Rubinstein, "The Lesser Parties," p. 178.

¹⁸Israel's parliamentary history thus far reveals little usage of this statute by the Head of Government, who, otherwise, would most likely erode an already precarious power base in parliament (due to the ill-feelings engendered by such a move).

¹⁹Kraines, Government and Politics in Israel, pp. 131-32; Peretz, The Government and Politics of Israel, p. 143.

The Procedures of Government Formation

Government formation is made necessary by the termination of the preceding government.²⁰ Governments may be terminated in several ways: 1) the government formation may result from the expiry of the mandate given it by the electorate. This is automatically followed by new parliamentary elections; 2) it may result from the failure of the Government to survive a Knesset vote of no-confidence; and 3) the Prime Minister may contrive the collapse of his Government, resigning in the face of imminent defeat or acting out of a sense of political expediency (perhaps to stage elections at the most auspicious time for his party). Here, we are concerned with the latter.

Once a government resigns, the President initiates consultations with leaders of all parties represented in the Knesset. After carefully gauging the country's political climate, the President selects an individual to preside over an interim, caretaker government that remains in office until new elections are held and a new government is declared. This individual is usually the former Prime Minister.

The next step, after a new Knesset is elected, is the designation of the person to form the new government, a position equivalent to that of "formateur" in other parliamentary systems. This is normally the leader of the largest party in parliament. While the President may appoint individuals from small parties, it is both customary and politically

²⁰For an account of the formal procedures of government formation in Israel, see: Kraines, Government and Politics in Israel, pp. 116-17; Bernstein, The Politics of Israel, pp. 130-34; Likhovski, Israel's Parliament, pp. 125-33; Asher Zidon, Knesset: The Parliament of Israel (New York: Herzl Press, 1967): pp. 245-50.

expedient to look to the leadership of larger parties for guidance, for those individuals are more likely to succeed in forming a new government.²¹

In addition to appointing a Prime Minister-Designate (or formateur), the President, at this stage, fulfills another vital duty; that of imposing time constraints on formation negotiations. To reduce the length of negotiations, some lasting weeks and even months, the Knesset, in 1962, passed legislation concerning the role of the President in limiting the duration of government formation. Under that law, the "Prime Minister-Designate is given twenty-eight days to complete the task."²² If he is unsuccessful, he may then be granted another fourteen days, and then, another seven. If after the forty-nine days allotted him, negotiations are still stalled, the President may appoint another "formateur."

Negotiations on a new government program constitute the next phase of the process. These "policy discussions" are neither sanctioned nor prohibited by law, yet are the most crucial phase of the formation process.²³ Negotiations involve serious discussion of the new government's basic policy guidelines, specific pieces of legislation, portfolio distribution, and even allocation of committee chairmanships in the Knesset.

The final phase of the government formation process involves the distribution of rewards, such as ministerial portfolios.²⁴ There are no constitutional limitations on the number of ministers in the government.

²¹Ibid., pp. 246-48.

²²Kraines, Government and Politics in Israel, pp. 116-17.

²³Ibid.

²⁴Ibid.

Instead, the final number of ministers is determined according to the politics of the particular government formation, usually fluctuating between twelve and fifteen.²⁵ The number may be increased, however. Extra ministries may be used to provide additional payoffs to coalition partners or simply as a means of accomodating additional parties in the government.²⁶ In actuality, however, portfolios have by this late stage already been allocated as part of the agreement to enter the government. This phase, more specifically, involves the selection and approval of persons to fill such positions. After all seats are filled, the Prime Minister-Designate informs the President of the completion of his task, and the government program and its new members are presented to the Knesset for approval in a vote of confidence. Given the Knesset's stamp of approval, the process is officially complete.

The Party System

It is probably not a serious distortion of reality to argue that one best acquires an understanding of government formation in Israel by gaining insight into the operation of its political parties and their constituent elements.²⁷ Government formation in multiparty parliamentary

²⁵Ibid., pp. 108-09; Peretz, The Government and Politics of Israel, p. 157.

²⁶Kraines, Government and Politics in Israel, pp. 108-09; Peretz, The Government and Politics of Israel, p. 157.

²⁷Lawrence C. Dodd, Coalitions in Parliamentary Government (Princeton, N. J.: Princeton University Press, 1976): p. 52; For insight into the structure and activities of political parties in Israel, see: Peretz, The Government and Politics of Israel, Chapter III; Kraines, Government and Politics in Israel, Chapter IV; Bernstein, The Politics of Israel, Chapter III; Benjamin Akzin, "The Likud," in Penniman, Israel at the Polls,

democracies, such as Israel, is the process of forming majority coalitions capable of sustaining a firm base of support in parliament, coalitions composed of political parties. The political party is, therefore, the fulcrum around which formation negotiations revolve, and consequently, becomes the primary unit of analysis for the political scientist studying government formation.

"The most distinctive trait of the Israeli party system is its multiparty character."²⁸ No one party has ever secured a parliamentary majority. Twenty-two lists were submitted to the electorate in the 1977 elections; 12 obtained seats.

There are several elements which either contribute to or reinforce Israel's extreme multipartism. One such factor (discussed previously) is the diversity accruing to Israel as an immigrant society. Another element contributing to and reinforcing the multiparty character of Israeli politics is that of proportional representation, a principle carried over from the World Zionist Congress.²⁹ The country's electoral system operates under the most extreme of proportional representation rules, with the entire nation serving as the single constituency. As such, demands for reform

pp. 91-114; Myron J. Aronoff, "The Decline of the Israeli Labor Party: Causes and Significance," in Penniman, Israel at the Polls, pp. 115-145; Efraim Torgovnik, "A Movement for Change in a Stable System," in Penniman, Israel at the Polls, pp. 147-171; Rubinstein, "The Lesser Parties," pp. 173-197; Keesing's Contemporary Archives (London: Keesing's Publications), Vol. 23, September 2, 1977, pp. 28534-28535.

²⁸Bernstein, The Politics of Israel, p. 54.

²⁹Peretz, The Government and Politics of Israel, pp. 166-68; Kraines Government and Politics in Israel, pp. 84-85; Bernstein, The Politics of Israel, pp. 80-86; Zidon, Knesset: The Parliament of Israel, p. 21; Brichta, "1977 Elections," pp. 39-57.

have surfaced in recent years, and were particularly visible in 1976 and 1977. As was noted previously, electoral reform became an issue of such prominence that it became the *raison d'être* of one major political party, the Democratic Movement for Change. Critics charged the extant system with perpetuating an excessive number of political parties and with being inherently undemocratic in its methods of selecting candidates.³⁰

Party Organization

Upon initial examination of party structure or organization in Israel, one might conclude that parties are of similar organizational structure, characterized by "strong centralization and control by a few older leaders in the party executive."³¹ While this is generally true, a more thorough analysis reveals a more complex picture. First, input into party decisions is far greater than the preceding statement would lead one to believe, particularly in the larger parliamentary blocs, e.g., the Labor Alignment and the Likud. "Control" is exercised only after considerable bargaining within the bloc itself, which consists of a multiplicity of parties and interests, even to the point of maintaining discrete organizational structures or factions within blocs. If leadership--those individuals occupying positions at the top of the party list--does not meet the demands of its fellow MKs, members may leave the party and form their own list; not an infrequent occurrence by any means. Exemplary of this are the numerous factional splits and mergers within the confines of

³⁰ Brichta, "1977 Elections," pp. 45-46.

³¹ Peretz, The Government and Politics of Israel, p. 84; Also, see: Bernstein, The Politics of Israel, p. 55.

the large, parliamentary blocs, these schisms resulting from both ideological and personal differences.³² Thus, while four parties dominate the political scene in Israel today (the Likud, Labor, the DMC, and NRP are dominant in the sense that they together polled approximately 86% of the vote in the 1977 elections), one must consider the depths of factional and personal activity within them as well.³³

The formulation of party lists is the most powerful tool wielded by party leaders in maintaining party discipline and exerting strong leadership.³⁴ Party leaders, and leaders of intra-party factions, are responsible for selecting candidates for Knesset seats. Most important, however, is the maneuvering for safe positions on the party list, i.e., those positions at the top of the list virtually ensuring candidates of Knesset membership.³⁵ These positions generally reflect the individual's status within the party, and are also used in determining candidates for the ministerial portfolios and other positions in the formation arena. In essence, the individual's position on the party list is a function of his relationship with or support of party leaders. As such, it may be used as a means of rewarding loyalty or punishing dissent or individualism.

Pressures for greater democratization have been mounting, however, in response to the disproportionate amount of authority vested in small,

³²Peretz, The Government and Politics of Israel, pp. 75-82; Bernstein, The Politics of Israel, pp. 54-57; Kraines, Government and Politics in Israel, p. 61.

³³Brichta, "1977 Elections," p. 47.

³⁴Peretz, The Government and Politics of Israel, p. 167; Brichta, "1977 Elections," pp. 45-46.

³⁵Kraines, Government and Politics in Israel, p. 87.

oligarchical groups as they formulate party lists and tighten their grip on the reins of power.³⁶ In fact, this is one of the criticisms underlying demands for far-reaching changes in the country's electoral system. The DMC has been the most ardent supporter of internal democratization, and has effected many of its proposals. Other parties still exercise the traditional means of list formulation, however. "Except for the DMC, every party in Israel had an appointment committee for selecting its members; rank-and-file members had no role in the nominations."³⁷

The DMC, a party appealing to voters on the basis of electoral reform, provided all registered DMC voters an opportunity to express their preferences for leadership and Knesset candidates through internal party elections. As we shall see, the fresh approaches advocated by the DMC with regard to government reorganization and party democratization provided an attractive alternative to the faltering Labor Alignment and the hawkish Likud.

The organizational structure adopted by the party and the mode of decision-making displayed by its leaders in the electoral arena (principally list formulation) is exemplary of the behaviors manifested by those individuals involved in constructing a new government. Considerable discretionary powers are granted to and utilized by the "power-brokers" at the top of the party hierarchy, for instance, in both the Likud and

³⁶Brichta, "1977 Elections," pp. 39-57.

³⁷Torgovnik, "A Movement for Change," p. 153.

the Alignment.³⁸ The conventional means of formulating party planks prior to national elections, which subsequently serve as a basis for demands in the government formation arena, consists of bargaining sessions by negotiating committees composed of the parties' and factions' leading spokesmen. Again, the DMC departed from the traditional approach and opened the process up to a larger membership. One interesting side-effect of its penchant for greater democratization, however, was the difficulties it encountered in drawing up its election plank. Party negotiations reportedly bogged down at several points due to its "super-democratization," i.e., problems arose in reaching consensus due to a broader and more heterogeneous base.³⁹

One final point is in order here concerning party organization, and that concerns the religious parties.⁴⁰ Religious parties (or more appropriately orthodox parties) are often subject to and influenced by forces "external" to the actual party organization. The Judaic foundation of Israeli society has unquestionably made religion a key element to be considered in all aspects of the state's political life, with particular import for the operation of its religious parties. Sources of influence on behavior in government extend far beyond the realm of party activity,

³⁸Note, for instance, both the absence of formal rules governing the preparation of a new government program and the role of the leading negotiators, e.g., Begin's nomination of Moshe Dayan for the Foreign Affairs Ministry. See: Joshua Brilliant, "DMC, Likud to Resume Talks: Dayan Still Open," Jerusalem Post, June 1, 1977, p. 1.

³⁹Aryeh Rubinstein, "DMC Adopts Compromise Stand on Religious Issues," Jerusalem Post, April 13, 1977, p. 2.

⁴⁰See: Gary S. Schiff, Tradition and Politics: The Religious Politics of Israel (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1977).

often having roots in various authoritative orthodox bodies and traditions. This is most evident in the degree of influence exerted by various religious bodies on the activities of their political representatives, especially the more extremist religious parties, such as Agudat Israel. Agudat Israel (AI), for instance, defers to the Council of Torah Sages, a body of elderly religious authorities, for decisions concerning matters of public policy and its role in government formation, including whether to enter the government and the nature of its support. If it joins the government, it may either lend its support on votes of no-confidence, yet technically remain outside the government, not accepting any ministries, or it may accept a full government role, ministries and all.⁴¹ The NRP (a moderate religious party), in contrast, is markedly similar to other secular parties in its organization. It maintains a party executive responsible for virtually all coalition decisions, including government entrance, withdrawal, and related concessions.⁴²

The Parties

"Israeli society divides into three broad camps, labor, liberal (also called center-nationalist or civil), and religious."⁴³ These camps do not relate to each other on a left-right socioeconomic policy continuum, the usual basis for comparison of parties or blocs of parties. Instead, they are based on very different visions of the Zionist enterprise and

⁴¹Schiff, Tradition and Politics, pp. 98, 101.

⁴²Ibid., p. 94.

⁴³Elazar, "Israel's Compound Polity," pp. 10-11; Bernstein, The Politics of Israel, pp. 56-57; Kraines, Government and Politics in Israel, p. 63.

future of the Israeli state, encompassing dimensions of socialism-non-socialism and religious-non-religious. As Elazar points out, however, these camps consist of political parties which may be imposed on a left-right policy scale (see Figure 1 below for a more detailed description). Parties within these camps are often quite hostile to each other, and at times are ideologically closer to parties in other camps than to parties in their own.⁴⁴

Parties representing all three camps participated in the 1977 government formation. Though the Labor Alignment figured only marginally in the actual coalition talks, it had in many ways been the force responsible for triggering the new government formation. For this reason, and because Labor provided one of many coalition options, at one time being invited to join a national unity government, it will be included in the subsequent discussion of party politics in Israel. Other parties to be discussed figured more prominently in the 1977 formation. They are as follows: 1) the Democratic Movement for Change, the other labor camp representative in 1977 and a party on the rise; 2) the Likud, a parliamentary bloc and representative of the center-nationalist camp; and 3) the religious parties, the National Religious Party, Agudat Israel, and Poalei Agudat Israel.

The Labor Alignment

In discussing political parties in Israel, it is perhaps appropriate to consider first the camp that until 1977 dominated every

⁴⁴Peretz, The Government and Politics of Israel, p. 82; Elazar, "Israel's Compound Polity," pp. 10-11.

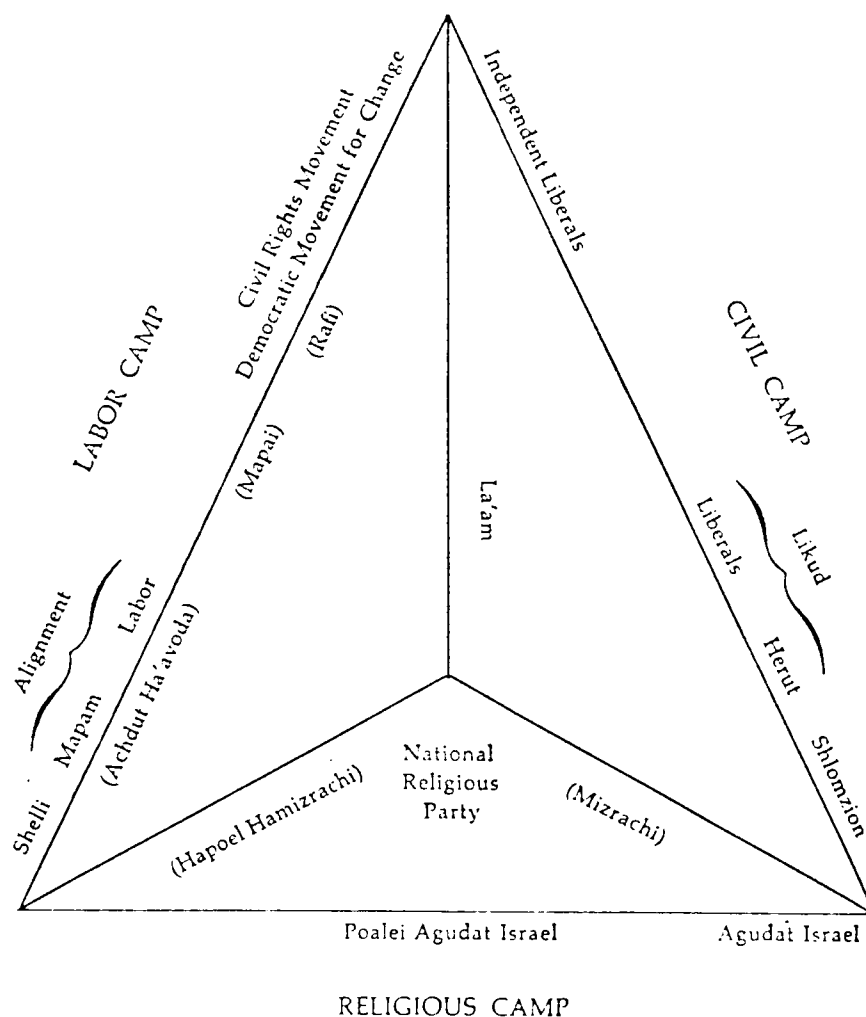


Figure 1. The Three Camps

Note: This figure shows the left-right position of the major Israeli parties within the three Zionist camps. In parentheses are the names of important groupings no longer in existence as separate parties. The placement of a party's name on an inside line of the big triangle indicates its ideological affinity with the adjoining camp; thus Hapoel Hamizrachi was ideologically close to the labor camp, Mizrachi to the civil camp. The Democratic Movement for Change, though most of its leaders and supporters came from the labor camp, eventually joined the Likud government.

Source: This diagram was taken from Elazar, "Israel's Compound Polity," p. 11.

government coalition. That camp was, of course, Labor, itself led by the Labor Party (Mapai).

The Alignment, in 1976, consisted of the Labor Party, formed in 1968 through the merger of three moderate socialist parties, Mapai, Rafi, and Achdut Ha'avoda, and Mapam, a Marxist socialist party. Individuals have, however, been slow in cutting factional ties and dissolving personal power bases.⁴⁵ This is important, for an awareness of such phenomena facilitates an understanding of the degree of ideological and personal conflict in Labor (and other parties), conflict which often leads to defection; e.g., the Dayan defection in 1977 to the Begin Government over Labor settlement policy.

Labor, as indicated above, has been the mainstay of the Alignment, and has been the party of the state's most prominent leaders, David Ben Gurion, Golda Meir, etc. It is generally regarded as the "moderate" faction of the Alignment forces, with the more conservative Rafi, led by such prominent individuals as Moshe Dayan and Shimon Peres, to its right, and the Achdut Ha'avoda to its left (see Figure 1).

In terms of its policy orientations and overall ideological outlook, Labor is a moderate socialist party. With regard to domestic policy, Labor has traditionally espoused policies geared toward the gradual realization of a classless society. In reality, however, Israel has adopted a mixed economy, and Labor's socialist tendencies have been moderated by its many years of governance and the broad social base to which it appealed.

⁴⁵Politicians in the Alignment, as well as other parties or blocs, are commonly alluded to as leaders or members of a particular fashion.

Factions within the Alignment are by no means united on economic policy, or on other policy areas for that matter. Mapam is the most doctrinaire faction in the Alignment. It, in 1968, chose to affiliate itself with Labor for electoral purposes only, deciding to retain a separate organizational structure and party base. Maintaining a particularist, Marxist ideology, it stresses class antagonism, and has been perhaps the least compromising element in the labor camp. At the other end of the economic spectrum sits Rafi, a party with socialist underpinnings, but closer to the laissez faire coloration of the center-nationalist bloc than any other Labor faction.

Similar divisions exist within the camp in terms of its multiple foreign policy orientations. Generally speaking, Labor favors a foreign policy plank pro-Western in character and one advocating territorial concessions in return for a peace settlement with its Arab neighbors. This position has not been agreed upon, at least with the same degree of commitment, by all members of the bloc, however. The range of views on these policies runs the gamut, again, from Mapam, a leftist organization and the staunchest proponent of territorial concessions (in fact, announcing in 1976 that it would not participate in another Labor coalition unless it soon ceded territory on the West Bank),⁴⁶ to the Rafi, a hawkish faction whose members' views, such as those of Moshe Dayan, approached those of the Likud, opposing any further partitioning of Eretz Israel (Land of Israel).

⁴⁶Wolf Blitzer, "Mapam Faces Dilemma Over Staying in the Coalition," Jerusalem Post, September 29, 1976, p. 2.

The Labor Party suffered a series of setbacks in the electoral arena in recent years, culminating in its first "loss" ever in 1977. Experiencing a crisis of leadership succession, unable to turn to other Ben Gurions, the party looked to young military leaders for guidance, e.g., Yitzhak Rabin and Shimon Peres. This practice, commonly alluded to as "parachuting in,"⁴⁷ resulted in strained relations between the old party regulars, those with close ties to Mapi and other Alignment factions, and men like Rabin and Peres, individuals with little significant party experience until their term in government.

The schism between the old guard and the new party leaders and technocrats and a number of scandals within the party, reaching even to the office of Prime Minister, were unquestionably factors contributing to Labor's immediate decline. Other factors also contributed to Labor's misfortunes in 1977, among those being deteriorating relations with the religious parties, a worsening economy, and blunders in foreign policy.⁴⁸ The decline had been long-standing and defeat imminent. This led Menachem Begin, the leader of the Likud opposition, to remark in 1976 that he felt Labor would be overtaken in the upcoming elections. The times were ripe for a change in government.

The Democratic Movement for Change

The Democratic Movement for Change (DMC) was formed in late 1976 as a result of the merger of the Democratic Movement, led by former general

⁴⁷Aronoff, "The Decline of the Israeli Labor Party," pp. 141-142.

⁴⁸Aronoff, "The Decline of the Israeli Labor Party," pp. 132-145.

and archaeologist Yigael Yadin, and Change, led by Professor Amnon Rubinstein.⁴⁹ Change, in search of a strong candidate, like Yadin, and the Democratic Movement, in need of Change's organizational abilities, had found merger to be mutually beneficial. The basis of its existence, and the source of demands articulated in its election platform, stemmed from what it perceived to be the inability of the Labor government to enact what is thought to be badly need structural reforms and "a major realignment of the governmental system."⁵⁰

The DMC was quite fortunate in its early days of existence, attracting many well-known individuals to its ranks. Resting on a diverse political base, its members were to come from Labor, the Likud, and all their constituent elements. Ideological differences were temporarily put aside, however, particularly in terms of its foreign policy platform. Like the Likud, the DMC concentrated instead on domestic issues, focusing almost exclusively on electoral reform and government reorganization. As such, it was formed as a party transcending the narrow ideological and religious persuasions of other parties. In terms of its other policy concerns, the DMC found itself siding with Labor on issues of security and external affairs, and with the liberal (in the European sense) Likud in the realm of economic policy.

⁴⁹Peretz, The Government and Politics of Israel, p. 116; Torgovnik, "A Movement for Change," pp. 150-153; Keesing's Contemporary Archives (London: Keesing's Publications), Vol. 23, September 2, 1977, p. 28534.

⁵⁰Keesing's Contemporary Archives (London: Keesing's Publications), Vol. 23, September 2, 1977, p. 28534; Torgovnik, "A Movement for Change," pp. 150-156.

Finally, the DMC's secularist tendencies proved a major obstacle in negotiations over the government's religious policy in 1977 (as we shall soon see). Adamantly secular, it opposed the demands of the religious parties in the '77 formation, including amendment of the Law of Return, abortion, etc. In fact, in early 1977, prior to parliamentary elections, the DMC reached a decision allowing its Mks to vote their conscience on matters of religion in any coalition. This, of course, was met by vehement opposition from the religious parties.⁵¹

The Likud

The Likud was a center-nationalist bloc formed in 1973 when the Gahal bloc, composed of the Herut and Liberal parties, merged with the State List Party, Free Center, and the Land of Israel Movement.⁵² The principal components of the Likud are still the Herut and Liberal parties, however. The Likud, like the Alignment, is not a political party, but a parliamentary bloc composed of factions with often very different interests. Unlike the Labor Party, however, the factions belonging to the Likud retain separate organizational structures; they are more than "mere wings of opinion."⁵³

⁵¹Aryeh Rubinstein, "DMC Adopts Compromise Stand on Religious Issues," Jerusalem Post, April 13, 1977, p. 2; Aryeh Rubinstein, "The DMC and the Status Quo," Jerusalem Post, April 25, 1977, p. 8.

⁵²Yosef Goell, "Will Likud Try Harder?" The Jerusalem Post Magazine, July 16, 1976, pp. 5-6; Akzin, "The Likud," pp. 91-114; Keesing's Contemporary Archives (London: Keesing's Publications), Vol. 23, September 2, 1977, p. 28534.

⁵³Akzin, "The Likud," p. 91.

The Likud began its ascendancy to power in the latter 1960s and early 1970s (that is, the Labor Party was declining in popularity and what then constituted Likud's components were on the rise). The factors contributing to Labor's decline were associated with a growing Likud popularity. Indeed, Likud appeared to be the only alternative to the Alignment, at least until the DMC extended its bid for power.

As the principal opponent of Labor socialism, Likud displayed a classical liberal philosophy, calling for "greater support for free and private enterprise as the basis of economic reform."⁵⁴ More specifically, Likud advocated "the denationalization of certain industries, the relaxation of currency exchange regulations, and the introduction of compulsory arbitration of labor disputes in essential sectors of the economy."⁵⁵ The degree to which Likud factions were actively committed to these policies varied, however. The Liberal faction, composed of the "wealthier and educationally more advanced strata,"⁵⁶ was most insistent on rebuilding Israel's economy to one based on free enterprise. This view had to be reconciled with that of the dominant Herut, a labor-dominated wing composed of the disadvantaged, which placed greater emphasis on assisting those in the lower socioeconomic strata.

"The bond holding the diverse elements of the Likud bloc together was the adoption of the Land of Israel Movement's territorial program

⁵⁴Keesing's Contemporary Archives (London: Keesing's Publications), Vol. 23, September 2, 1977, p. 28534.

⁵⁵Ibid.

⁵⁶Akzin, "The Likud," pp. 105-106.

calling for the annexation of territories acquired in the 1967 war."⁵⁷ It has, accordingly, formulated a rather conservative, nationalistic plank pledging continued support for retention of occupied territories on the West Bank. There is one caveat concerning the Likud positions on security and external affairs. Not all factions of the Likud were equally committed to annexation. The Herut faction, for instance, to which Likud's chieftain Menachem Begin belongs, has traditionally concerned itself with foreign affairs and security. It is perhaps the most militant faction of the center-nationalist Likud, and accordingly, opposes the relinquishment of any territories on the West Bank. Conversely, the Liberals have historically focused their attention on matters of economics. More important than their apparent disinterest in foreign affairs, however, was the fact that they were less insistent that lands captured in 1967 be incorporated into a larger Israel. This difference was to figure decisively in the mobilization of Liberal support for DMC participation in the Begin government, a party bent on moderating the hawkish image projected by Begin and his Herut colleagues (and the religious parties ultimately).⁵⁸

The Religious Parties

The last bloc to be considered here is the religious bloc.⁵⁹ Unlike the Alignment and Likud, it is not a composite party. It is, rather, a

⁵⁷Peretz, The Government and Politics of Israel, p. 112; Also, see: Akzin, "The Likud," pp. 104-105.

⁵⁸The Liberal faction was also insistent on DMC participation in the new government for the simple reason that such membership would broaden the government's parliamentary base and reduce its reliance on the support of the religious parties.

⁵⁹See: Schiff, Tradition and Politics.

camp composed of separate parties (camp used here for purposes of analysis, unlike a bloc, which is an actual organization). The most prominent religious party in recent years has been the National Religious Party, capturing ten seats in the 1973 Knesset elections and twelve in 1977. It has also been the most moderate of religious parties. Only two other religious parties were of any real consequence in the '77 formation. These were the extremist Agudat Israel (AI) and its "class-based offshoot,"⁶⁰ Polaei Agudat Israel (PAI).

Though the religious parties retain separate organizational structures, they have historically, and in 1976-77, supported similar policy goals, such as reform of the Law of Return (a law concerning the question, "Who is a Jew?"), laws relating to observance of the Sabbath, etc. These are the issues of interest to the NRP and its religious cohorts, matters of religion.⁶¹ Concern may extend beyond these types of issues, but only if their base of political support is threatened (electoral reform) or if the issue is linked with their religious foundation (external affairs and security, i.e., retention of all parts of Eretz Israel). This is certainly the case regarding their support for the Likud position on Judea and Samaria (West Bank), with both sides espousing nationalistic-religious claims to the occupied territories.

⁶⁰ Keesing's Contemporary Archives (London: Keesing's Publications), Vol. 23, September 2, 1977, p. 28535.

⁶¹ Rubinstein, "The Lesser Parties," pp. 176-186; Akzin, "The Likud," p. 94.

Conclusion

This chapter has attempted to provide a brief introduction to the "basics" of the political process in Israel, with particular emphasis on the configuration of elements related to government formation. Admittedly, the presentation is extremely general and only scratches the surface of an extremely complex system. It must be, however, for a more intensive analysis is beyond the bounds of this research. Finally, it is hoped that the level of generality assumed here does not preclude the possibility of orienting the reader to the setting within which the '77 government formation occurred; the phenomena to which we now turn.

CHAPTER III

THE 1977 ISRAELI GOVERNMENT FORMATION

On December 20, 1976, Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin submitted his resignation to the Knesset, in effect, terminating his three-year Labor Alignment government. Soon thereafter, the Knesset voted to dissolve itself and hold new parliamentary elections, approximately two months prior to regularly scheduled elections, from which a new government would emerge. Elections were held May 17, and for the first time the young state's history, a party besides Labor emerged the victor, i.e., the Likud, led by Menachem Begin. Formal coalition negotiations were initiated May 24 by a Likud negotiating team. Included in these early discussions were the DMC and the three religious parties obtaining seats in parliament, the NRP, AI, and PAI.

Begin proved to be a most capable "formateur," consummating a new government in less than one month after formal negotiations were launched. All had not been easy, however. Intense negotiations had been conducted with regard to such controversial items as electoral reform, the occupied territories, and the Law of Return. These issues proved to be difficult to negotiate and resolve, and even led to the DMC's decision to remain temporarily outside the government. Ultimately, agreements were concluded which to some degree either settled or glossed over these controversial issues. The result was the formal declaration of a new, center-nationalist-religious government on June 20 consisting of the Likud, NRP, AI, PAI, and Moshe Dayan, a Labor defector.

The government formation was not complete, however. Negotiations continued with the DMC, with the combined purposes of bringing them into the government to expand its parliamentary base of support, at that time consisting of only sixty-three MKs, and to moderate the hawkish foreign policy image projected by Begin's Likud bloc. As a means of enticing the DMC to join the government, Begin had, for several months, left unfilled a number of slots in the cabinet. With the Knesset scheduled to reconvene, following a summer recess, Mr. Begin threatened to fill the positions. The DMC "caved in" and joined the government October 20, 1977 (see Table 1).

The Demise of Labor

The dissolution of the Rabin government arose from a number of factors. As was noted in Chapter II, the immediate cause of collapse was a withdrawal of support by the religious parties for the Labor Alignment government. This had come about as a result of Rabin's ouster of three NRP ministers from the government, a move precipitated by their refusal to support the government on a vote of no-confidence December 14, 1976 charging the government with desecration of the Sabbath. The charge leveled by the religious parties stemmed from a ceremony welcoming new F-15 fighters from the United States which was held too close to the Sabbath to allow religious Jews to drive home. Though the government survived the vote, by a 55-48 margin, Rabin invoked the Law of Transition on December 19 and expelled the three religious ministers from his Labor coalition. Rabin simply said the government could not tolerate that kind of behavior when its very existence was in jeopardy. At that point, Mr. Begin proposed another vote of no-confidence, one charging the Rabin

Table 1. Chronology of Israeli Government Formation 1976-1977.

December 15, 1976	Vote of no-confidence as Rabin government is charged with desecration of the Sabbath; Government survived the vote by a 55-48 margin
December 20	Rabin resignation in the face of another no-confidence motion, but this time without the support of the NRP, which had just been expelled from the government
January 4, 1977	President Katzir asks Rabin to form caretaker government
May 17	Likud "victory" at polls
May 19	Demands put forth informally by AI
May 24	Formal coalition talks begin
May 26	Dayan nomination for Foreign Minister announced
May 27	Breakdown in Likud/DMC negotiations over Dayan nomination
June 1	DMC resumes talks; AI/Likud first meeting (first formally)
June 2	Begin's proposed cabinet guidelines revealed
June 7	Begin given formal mandate by Katzir to form government
June 8	Yadin issues DMC proposal for cabinet guidelines
June 9	AI announces decision to support Begin in Parliament
June 10	AI decision formally approved by Council of Torah Sages
June 13	Likud/NRP agreements reached on Law of Return, five-day week, erosions of powers of rabbinical courts, etc.
June 14	DMC breaks off talks; said it could not influence policy

Table 1 (Continued)

June 15, 1977	Parties and factions begin choosing candidates for ministerial positions
June 16	Likud/NRP understanding reached on autopsies, law relating to observation of Sabbath
June 18	New government coalition approved foreign policy program
June 19	Coalition agreement signed by Likud, NRP, AI, PAI, Dayan Pact approved by Knesset
October 5	Begin threat to fill ministries left vacant by DMC
October 20	DMC votes to enter coalition

Source: Author (gathered from various news sources)

government with an insufficient base of support in parliament, and one which the Alignment could surely not survive. Labor's base of support in the Knesset had dwindled from 67 to 57. At that point, on December 20, Rabin tendered his resignation.¹

Many speculated that Rabin had purposely precipitated the collapse of his Labor government. There had been other instances of religious opposition, yet Mr. Rabin had not pushed for disciplinary action and certainly not expulsion. Why then did Rabin behave differently in this incident? By forcing the NRP to leave the coalition, he was said to have hoped to accomplish several objectives, among which were to: 1) prevent further consolidation and mobilization of support by other political parties, such as the new star on the Israeli political horizon, the DMC; 2) stave off intra-bloc challenges to his authority and position as parliamentary party leader. By contriving a government crisis and calling for early elections, Rabin hoped to enhance both the chances for the electoral success of his party, and maintain, if not improve, his personal standing in the ranks of the Alignment.²

The preceding account is only one explanation of the demise of the Rabin government. It is possible to argue that the government would have been terminated prematurely regardless of the series of events outlined above. Both the NRP and Independent Liberal Party (ILP) indicated in

¹Asher Wallfish and Joshua Brilliant, "Cabinet Resigns: To Ask Knesset For Early Poll," Jerusalem Post, December 21, 1976, p. 1; David Weingarten, "Israeli Gov't's Crisis," New York Jewish Press, December 24, 1976, pp. 1,39; Rubinstein, "The Lesser Parties," p. 170.

²Weingarten, "Israeli Gov't Crisis," p. 39; Aaron Sittner, "NRP Ministers: Proud to be Out," Jerusalem Post, December 21, 1976, p. 1.

early November their desire to leave the Alignment.³ Labor's troubles had thus begun much earlier. In addition to the conditions underlying Labor's long-term decline, e.g., a growing dissatisfaction with socialist policies associated with Labor, blunders in foreign policy, and the all-important crisis in leadership, relations with junior partners were rapidly deteriorating. Gush Emunim, a group of orthodox Jews bent on settling the West Bank area, presented numerous problems for Rabin and his secular colleagues. With their position supported by the NRP and other religious parties, Gush Emunim made a drift to the right on settlement policy seem imminent, but a rightward drift Labor was unwilling to permit.⁴ Though this is only one example of religious intransigence toward Labor, it illustrates the difficulties Labor was confronted with in maintaining coalition discipline and government stability. It also sets the stage for subsequent discussion, at a later point, of the basis for an NRP accord with the Likud, and indeed, a pact appealing to all religious parties.

Coalition Negotiations

The initial phase of the government formation consists of forming a caretaker government. President Kitzir, soon after the government collapsed, on December 26, initiated consultations with leaders of all parties in the Knesset, doing this as a means of selecting a "formateur"

³William E. Farrell, "Rabin's Position is Precarious as Disillusioned Israelis Call for Dismissal of Rabin and Early Elections," New York Times, November 21, 1976, p. 4.

⁴Joshua Brilliant, "Squatting Bids by Gush Emunim," Jerusalem Post, July 1, 1976, p. 1; Akzin, "The Likud," pp. 100-101.

to lead the government formation process. After these brief rounds of consultations, Katzir appealed to Rabin to stay in office and head a new caretaker minority government until new elections could be held and a government formed. Rabin promptly replied in the affirmative.⁵

Parliamentary elections were held May 17 (see Table 2 below for results) and the Likud emerged with somewhat impressive gains (impressive in the sense that it secured the largest number of Knesset seats for the first time ever, yet not enough to command a majority), securing enough seats to have made it the largest party in the Knesset. Likud's success can be attributed to a plethora of factors, primarily to Labor's misfortunes, however. While the Likud fared quite well at the polls, it was the DMC that catapulted them into the forefront. Siphoning off traditional Labor support, the DMC captured fifteen Knesset seats, a major accomplishment in their brief existence. It was not enough, however, to give them a veto power over coalition membership. In other words, their fifteen seats were not enough to necessitate their inclusion in any coalition. The DMC's victory had been Labor's loss. Labor (the Alignment) dropped 15 seats, a cataclysmic defeat, winning only thirty-nine seats. The Likud would thus assume the lead in constituting a new government.⁶

⁵"Israeli Labor Candidates For Premier Start Drives," New York Times, December 27, 1976, p. 3; William E. Farrell, "Minister in Israel Linked to Scandal, A Suicide in Tel Aviv," New York Times, January 4, 1977, p. 5.

⁶Peretz, The Government and Politics of Israel, p. 158; Keesing's Contemporary Archives (London: Keesing's Publications), Vol. 23, September 2, 1977, p. 28535.

Table 2. Official Election Results: The Knesset, 1977

	Seats		Percentages	
	1977	1973	1977	1973
Likud	43*	39	33.4	30.2
Labor Alignment	32	51	24.6	39.6
Democratic Movement for Change (DMC)	15	--	11.6	--
National Religious Party (NRP)	12	10	9.2	8.3
Democratic Front for Peace and Equality	5	4	4.6	3.4
Agudat Israel (AI)	4	5**	3.4	3.8
Poalei Agudat Israel (PAI)	1		1.4	
Shlomzion	2	--	1.9	--
Shelli	2	1	1.6	1.4
Flatto-Sharon	1***	--	2.0	--
United Arab List	1	3	1.4	2.5
Independent Liberals (IL)	1	4	1.2	3.6
Civil Rights Movement	1	3	1.2	2.2
Others	0	0	2.5	5.1

*Comprising Herut 19 seats, Liberals 15, Laam 8 and the Free Center 1.

**Agudat Israel and Poalei Agudat Israel had contested the 1973 elections jointly as the Torah Front.

***Mr. Flatto-Sharon's total vote entitled him to two seats, but since his was a one-man list his excess votes were redistributed among the other parties.

Source: Keesing's Contemporary Archives (London: Keesing's Publications), September 2, 1977, p. 28535.

Though formal coalition negotiations were announced May 24, in actuality, parties had been jockeying for position even months prior to the May elections. This was reflected in pre-election bargaining between a number of parties and in the ultimata issued by the DMC and religious parties as conditions for their participation in future governments. Yadin, as leader of the Democratic Movement, in early July 1976, began demanding electoral reform as a basis for his list's participation in any new government. This premature call for policy negotiations, the equivalent of asking for coalition formation before elections, arose from Yadin's concern for coalition stability. "By declaring concessions and deciding on policy before elections," Yadin said, "the Prime Minister wouldn't be making decisions which fall along the wayside because the coalition doesn't agree."⁷

The concessions requisite for DMC participation, iterated by Yadin in early July, were further elaborated July 18. The demands again focused on electoral reform, but with deadlines attached this time. As a condition for DMC participation, its colleagues would pay a price. Major reforms in the country's electoral system were to be adopted within six months after the declaration of the new government and new nationwide elections were to be held approximately two years later; a condition with almost no chance of acceptance by its potential coalition partners.⁸

⁷"Yadin: Hostage Crisis is not Full Cabinet's Business," Jerusalem Post, July 4, 1976, p. 2.

⁸"Yadin Says Soldiers Should Work with People in Slums," Jerusalem Post, July 18, 1976, p. 2.

The Likud and the religious parties had also established contacts prior to the coalition talks May 24. Menachem Begin, the principal architect of the 1977 formation, had on July 16 for instance, indicated that the Likud would look to the religious parties in a coalition, noting then the propitious prospects for a Likud victory at the polls.⁹ Prospects brightened considerably with Labor's fall from power that December. NRP leaders were clearly angered at their public castigation by the Labor leader, and feelers were again put out between the NRP and Likud to form a new government December 22.¹⁰

Despite Mr. Begin's absence, being immobilized by a serious heart ailment, leaders from the potential coalition partners met May 24 to begin formal coalition negotiations.¹¹ This, and other early meetings, involved discussions of issues, portfolios, and the procedural aspects of government formation. By May 24, most participants had selected their negotiating committees, groups of individuals vested with authority to negotiate on behalf of their fellow MKs. The concessions and agreements concluded by these high level negotiating teams are subject to ratification by party councils, however, and must ultimately be approved by the Knesset should the talks be successfully concluded.

The process by which parties in Israel conclude coalition agreements consists of bilateral negotiations between the dominant coalition

⁹Yosef Goell, "Will Likud Try Harder?" Jerusalem Post, July 16, 1976, p. 6.

¹⁰Jerusalem Post, December 22, 1976, p. 1.

¹¹Joshua Brilliant, "Coalition Talks Begin Today," Jerusalem Post, May 24, 1977, p. 1; Keesing's Contemporary Archives (London: Keesing's Publications), Vol. 23, September 2, 1977, p. 28536.

participant, the party whose leader is charged with forming a government, and its respective colleagues.¹² Though parties are informed or aware of agreements and disputes between their fellow participants, Likud negotiators for the most part carried on discussions with parties on a separate basis. Only on certain occasions did the Likud open the negotiations to a broader forum, one consisting of all its potential partners. It is most useful, therefore, to consider negotiations as they existed in 1977, on a bilateral basis, illuminating discussions on policy and portfolios.

Likud/DMC Negotiations

The first item of discussion in May 24 talks between the Likud and DMC concerned the extent to which policy should be decided in the government formation arena. Leaders of the DMC, including both Yadin and Rubinstein, articulated their preferences to see policy differences settled prior to the coalition formation.¹³ One day later, on May 25, Rubinstein reiterated the DMC's demand for issue clarification. Speaking with regard to the new government's West Bank policy, Rubinstein said differences should not be blurred, that agreements should reflect clarity and specify how policies would be implemented. Once in government, he added, the outcome of the debate would be decided, for the DMC would be at a decided disadvantage relative to the Likud and its religious partners, particularly

¹²This observation is based on a number of reports in the Jerusalem Post. For examples, see: Joshua Brilliant, "DMC Leaders See 'Substantial' Differences With Likud Positions," Jerusalem Post, May 25, 1977, p. 1; Joshua Brilliant, "Agudat Yisrael Lays Down Demands to Likud," Jerusalem Post, June 1, 1977, p. 1.

¹³Brilliant, "DMC Leaders See 'Substantial' Differences," pp. 1,2.

on West Bank policy and electoral reform.¹⁴ The DMC would, therefore, have to look to government formation as a means of securing adoption of its policy goals.

The Likud did not share the DMC's enthusiasm or desires for highly specific policy agreements in the government formation arena. Simcha Ehrlich, leader of the Liberal faction of the Likud and a member of its negotiating team, said for instance, "The government should decide policy (in this case referring to its policy on external affairs), not coalition negotiations."¹⁵ Begin, and others in the Likud bloc, were later to echo Ehrlich's sentiments.¹⁶

A major point of contention had already surfaced. Should parties strive for general agreements on basic policy guidelines or seek specific agreements detailing even procedures of implementation? The parties were eventually to compromise on this, a procedural question (yet one with substantive implications), negotiating highly detailed agreements in certain instances, glossing over differences and agreeing in principle in others.

A number of substantive proposals also surfaced at the May 25 meeting, these touching on the actual policies to be effected by the new government. All had not gone smoothly on these items either. Speaking

¹⁴Ibid., p. 1.

¹⁵Brilliant, "Coalition Talks Begin Today," p. 1.

¹⁶Begin, in fact, adroitly maneuvered around discussions of policy to a greater extent than usual, trying, instead, to divert the DMC leaders' attention to positions in the cabinet. See: Torgovnik, "A Movement for Change," p. 168.

of a number of substantial differences existing between the two parties, Yadin predicted a long government formation, perhaps lasting until the end of June. These differences centered on Judea and Samaria. The DMC was willing to cede land for a contractual, permanent peace, the position adopted in its election plank.¹⁷ Conversely, the Likud maintained the right to settle anywhere in Eretz Israel and advocated retention of West Bank territories. Likud leaders said the differences Yadin spoke of were "merely tactical" and could be easily resolved.¹⁸ In addition to the low salience accorded these initial disputes by Likud negotiators, Ehrlich, the chief spokesman for the center-nationalist bloc during Begin's stay in the hospital, offered the DMC a concession concerning the administration of Israeli law in the occupied territories (doing this as a means of expediting the formation process). The proposal, accepted by the DMC, stated that as long as peace negotiations continued, Israeli law would not be imposed on the West Bank.¹⁹

Electoral reform may have been the *raison d'être* of the DMC, yet it was external affairs and security which played the most prominent role in Likud/DMC negotiations. In fact, electoral reform was not discussed at all in the early negotiations; Likud leaders were happy to see the issue pushed into the background (its dominant Herut faction had long opposed reform, fearing its demise under a new system), and Yadin cited the need

¹⁷Ibid., pp. 165-166; Keesing's Contemporary Archives (London: Keesing's Publications), Vol. 23, September 2, 1977, p. 28534.

¹⁸Brilliant, "Coalition Talks Begin Today," p. 1.

¹⁹Brilliant, "DMC Leaders See 'Substantial' Differences," p. 1.

to deal with the most difficult issues first, i.e., security. Electoral reform had thus been supplanted by security as the issue at the top of both parties' agenda.²⁰ The DMC rank-and-file had indicated a willingness to compromise on electoral reform, proving that its demands were not wholly intractable or inflexible. The deadline imposed for holding new parliamentary elections was the easiest point to concede, especially considering the degree of Likud opposition to such a proposal.²¹ The Likud, thirsty for government membership for so many years, was not about to relinquish control just as it attained victory. The DMC, however, was not so compromising on the territories; hence, the difficulties and the need to negotiate it first.

The next major event transpiring in Likud/DMC negotiations related only indirectly to policy formation. This was the nomination by Begin of Moshe Dayan, the former Labor Defense Minister, as the new Foreign Minister; a decision which caused quite a stir in the ranks of both parties for weeks.²² In fact, the controversial nomination diverted the attention of negotiators from substantive policy discussions for approximately one week, from May 26, the day of the nomination, to June 1.

Dayan, a member of the more conservative Rafi element of Labor, generally opposed any type of territorial concessions on the West Bank.

²⁰Ibid.

²¹Ibid., pp. 1-2.

²²Joshua Brilliant, "DMC, Likud to Resume Talks: Dayan Still Open," Jerusalem Post, June 1, 1977, p. 1; "Yadin Won't Join Coalition Unless He Gets Foreign Affairs," Jerusalem Post, June 1, 1977, p. 1; William E. Farrell, "Begin's Choice of Dayan Disrupting Coalition Talks," New York Times, May 27, 1977, p. 5; Keesing's Contemporary Archives (London: Keesing's Publications), Vol. 23, September 2, 1977, p. 28536.

Citing serious differences between his views on the territorial problem and those of his Labor colleagues, he had even announced in late March that he would not run on a Labor ticket;²³ hence, the relative ease in luring Dayan away from the Labor camp. Dayan accepted the Begin invitation on the condition that there would be no change in the status of the West Bank as long as there was a chance for peace negotiations.²⁴ In effect, he stopped just short of advocating annexation. Considering the hawkishness displayed by the former Defense Minister on these issues, the nomination was destined to cause trouble with the DMC and Liberal faction.

Yadin was upset with the nomination for several reasons, causing him ultimately to break off negotiations May 27.²⁵ Though the Dayan nomination was to give the government a more moderate image in foreign affairs, he was not altogether ideologically attractive to the DMC, which had hopes of capturing the Foreign Affairs Ministry for itself.²⁶ Publicly, Yadin rebuked Begin for not informing him earlier of the decision to fill the number three position in government (with Dayan). The DMC would resume negotiations only if the "Likud agreed to turn back the clock and not distribute any cabinet posts until a number of issues were ironed out."²⁷

²³"Dayan Quits Party's Ticket in Dispute Over West Bank," New York Times, March 29, 1977, p. 10.

²⁴Moshe Brilliant, "Dayan Likely as Foreign Minister," New York Times, May 26, 1977, p. 1.

²⁵William E. Farrell, "Begin's Choice of Dayan," New York Times, May 27, 1977, p. 5; Brilliant, "DMC, Likud to Resume Talks," p. 1.

²⁶"Yadin Won't Join Coalition Unless He Gets Foreign Affairs," p. 1.

²⁷Farrell, "Begin's Choice of Dayan," New York Times, May 28, 1977, p. 3.

Members of the Likud bloc were also incensed at Begin's actions leading to the Dayan nomination. Being an integral part of the Likud, Liberal leaders, such as Simcha Ehrlich, felt that they should have been consulted prior to Begin's decision. Underlying this criticism, however, was their desire to get the prestigious Foreign Affairs Ministry for themselves.²⁸

On June 1, the DMC decided to resume coalition talks with the Likud.²⁹ This accord was reached only after Likud assurances that the Dayan nomination was only a proposal, that it was by no means final, and that any cabinet list would have to be approved by the entire coalition.³⁰ Efforts by Begin to placate the hostile DMC and dissident Liberals had been successful. No immediate action had been taken on the nomination following the breakdown in negotiations, thus providing actors with a short "cooling off" period.

Following this brief period of inactivity, Begin, on June 2 drafted a proposal for cabinet guidelines, an apparent attempt to "push some of the major policy differences under the carpet."³¹ The guidelines, on settlement policy, borders, and the Foreign Ministry, were vague and obviously aimed at easing the government formation (by clouding over difficult issues). DMC leaders were quick to sense this, and accordingly, voiced

²⁸William E. Farrell, "Dayan Resigns From Labor Party in Furor over Nomination by Likud," New York Times, May 28, 1977, p. 3.

²⁹Brilliant, "DMC, Likud to Resume Talks," p. 1.

³⁰Ibid.; "Israel Cautions U. S. on Remarks by Carter About The Palestinians," New York Times, June 1, 1977, p. 3.

³¹Joshua Brilliant, "Likud Offers DMC 3 Ministries, Vague 'Guidelines' on Borders," Jerusalem Post, June 2, 1977, p. 1.

their dissatisfaction. Once again, the DMC insisted on agreements on policy, not vague guidelines.³²

Portfolio distribution dominated negotiations in subsequent Likud/DMC negotiations (lasting through the first week of June). These discussions by and large concerned Yadin's possible role in a Begin cabinet. Likud negotiators were still seeking an attractive alternative to the Foreign Affairs Ministry, still to be filled by Dayan, to give the DMC leader. Some Likud sources spoke of the possibility of making Deputy Prime Minister Yadin (it was widely thought that Begin would soon nominate Yadin for that position) responsible for "revamping of Government operations, a major point in the DMC election platform."³³

On June 3, Begin formally offered the post of Deputy Prime Minister to Yadin. This was to be a seat in an "inner cabinet," a small leadership group consisting of seven to eight ministers controlling the most prestigious portfolios.³⁴ It was at this point that cracks within the DMC became visible. Some individuals were apparently disappointed with their party's steadfastness on its demands for policy negotiations; at some point, principles would have to be set aside if the DMC were to successfully conclude negotiations and enter the government.³⁵

³²Ibid.

³³Yosef Goell, "The Political Shell Game," Jerusalem Post, June 2, 1977, p. 8.

³⁴Joshua Brilliant, "Begin Offers Yadin Post of Deputy Prime Minister," Jerusalem Post, June 3, 1977, p. 1.

³⁵Ibid.

On June 7, Yadin formally presented the DMC's response to Begin's proposed cabinet guidelines, another draft proposal for "cabinet guidelines on foreign affairs and security."³⁶ This exchange of proposals had provided little in the way of compromise, however. The DMC, as the Likud had done earlier, indicated a willingness to compromise on some points, yet by and large was not willing to alter its position on the territories. Attempting to obscure or cloud over several points of disagreement and expedite the formation, the DMC demanded that the "Government be ready to conduct negotiations on the basis of territorial compromise."³⁷ It did not demand compromise on all fronts, such as Judea and Samaria, to which the Likud was still opposed. Each side could have interpreted it the way it wanted, the Likud construing it as parts of the Golan Heights and Sinai (to which they were not opposed), the DMC, Judea and Samaria.³⁸ Citing earlier opposition to such proposals in Alignment platforms, the Likud on June 9 rejected this DMC effort at compromise.³⁹ Some sources within the Likud hinted that, instead, a reference in the Basic Principles of the new Government to UN Resolutions 242 and 338, which call for withdrawal from territories occupied in the Six Day War, would satisfy DMC leaders.⁴⁰

³⁶Joshua Brilliant, "Chances Improve of DMC Joining the Coalition," Jerusalem Post, June 8, 1977, pp. 1,2.

³⁷Ibid., p. 2.

³⁸Ibid.

³⁹Joshua Brilliant, "Likud, DMC Try to Bridge Gap Over Judea/Samaria," Jerusalem Post, June 9, 1977, p. 1.

⁴⁰Ibid.

The DMC was more inflexible on other points in its new set of cabinet guidelines. The following proposals resulted in serious differences of agreement between the two parties:

- 1) "The government will actively strive for a Middle East settlement which will guarantee Israel's existence as an independent, secure, democratic and free Jewish state."⁴¹ Here, the phrase "democratic and free Jewish state," alluded to the DMC argument that Israel could not remain truly Jewish unless heavily Arab-populated areas on the West Bank were ceded; a phrase sure to arouse the wrath of the Likud. If the West Bank were annexed, the state would be faced with the choice of either granting the Arab population the right to vote or losing its Jewish identity.⁴²
- 2) "Any settlement outside these areas within pre-Six War boundaries should necessitate the prior approval by the authorized representatives of all parties in the government."⁴³ This clause, in essence, would have extended to the DMC the right to veto government settlement policy. Begin promptly rejected this proposal.

By mid-June, both parties had outlined the issues and staked their claims. No major agreements had been struck, however, and the DMC was in danger of being excluded from government membership. Despite progress

⁴¹ Brilliant, "Chances Improve of DMC Joining the Coalition," p. 1.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Ibid., p. 2.

made on the Likud/religious front, its members opted to press for acceptance of its ultimata, even at the risk of being forced into the opposition. The DMC was also aided in its cause by the secular Liberal faction of the Likud, the most ardent proponent of DMC participation. DMC membership in the new government would benefit the Liberals in several ways: 1) it would balance the government in foreign affairs; 2) it would make AI membership unnecessary, thus "disposing of its more extreme religious demands";⁴⁴ and 3) it would reduce Likud reliance on AI and other religious parties for support even if they were to enter the government.

Still, little or not progress was made on the major issues of the day. Begin, being the consummate and obstinate negotiator he was, refused to bend to DMC demands. He, instead, looked to the ministries as a method of attracting DMC support, discussing the prospects of DMC control of several vital ministries.⁴⁵ The DMC responded to these proposals as before, however, "disclaiming any desire for positions per se; it wanted a share of power only in order to change the system."⁴⁶ This, the Likud negotiators were not inclined to share.

When the government was declared June 20, the DMC found itself in the opposition, at least on a temporary basis. In fact, negotiations had broken down June 13. Citing instances of extreme Likud intransigence and inflexibility with regard to its West Bank policy, DMC leaders articulated

⁴⁴Goeil, "The Political Shell Game," p. 8.

⁴⁵Torgovnik, "A Movement for Change," p. 168.

⁴⁶Ibid., p. 166

a "perceived inability to influence issues even if they were coalition partners."⁴⁷

The DMC did not, however, rule out the possibility of joining the government at some later date. Several ministries were left vacant by Begin as a means of attracting DMC membership, and negotiations continued, much as they had before the government declaration.

"During the period from July to September, the DMC consistently rejected the terms offered by the Prime Minister for participation in the government."⁴⁸ With the Knesset scheduled to reconvene from its summer recess shortly, Mr. Begin, on October 5, announced the nomination of Professor Amnon Goldenburg (no party affiliation) as Minister of Justice, one of the three portfolios left unfilled for the DMC. The remaining slots were to be filled soon.⁴⁹

The developments in early October led the DMC leadership to reassess their strategies. Concerned that their exclusion from the government could possibly result in a loss of identity in future elections, and concerned with the Middle East situation, the DMC leadership persuaded the party's council to accept the Likud's terms for government membership, terms which they had previously rejected:⁵⁰

⁴⁷Joshua Brilliant, "DMC votes to Break Off Coalition Talks," Jerusalem Post, June 14, 1977, p. 1.

⁴⁸Keesing's Contemporary Archives (London: Keesing's Publications), Vol. 23, December 9, 1977, p. 28712.

⁴⁹Ibid.

⁵⁰Ibid.

- 1) "The DMC would retain freedom of expression and freedom to abstain in the Knesset on political matters relating to the occupied West Bank provinces of Judea and Samaria.
- 2) Final decisions as to new Jewish settlements in the occupied territories would, if a DMC cabinet minister so demanded, be taken by the Knesset's Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee rather than by the Cabinet.
- 3) The DMC would have freedom to vote on all religious matters, including those pertaining to the status quo in this sphere (the predominantly secular DMC having been strongly critical of the concessions given by Mr. Begin to the religious parties in order to obtain their support for his Cabinet).
- 4) A committee of the coalitions parties would be set up to examine the question of electoral reform, with the DMC having freedom of vote on any bill subsequently presented to the Knesset."⁵¹

The DMC, on October 20, formally voted to enter the Begin Government by a 68-45 margin with two abstentions.⁵² "A subsequent meeting of the DMC council elected nominees for the three ministries offered them by the Likud, the Ministries of Justice, Transportation and Communications, and Social Betterment."⁵³ Following approval by the Cabinet, the Knesset, one day later, approved the pact and nominations by a 62-34 margin.⁵⁴

⁵¹Ibid.

⁵²Ibid., p. 28711.

⁵³Ibid.

⁵⁴Ibid.

Likud/Religious Bloc Negotiations

Formal negotiations were inaugurated in late May between the Likud and three religious parties, the NRP, AI, and the lone PAI MK (though again, informal talks had been held earlier).⁵⁵ These rounds of negotiations were to proceed more smoothly than those conducted with the DMC, primarily due to the intersection between the nationalistic-religious sentiments of the Likud with the religious-nationalistic coloration of the religious parties.

Early negotiations revolved around demands issued prior to the elections, i.e., amendment of the Law of Return, abolition of abortion, and so forth. Of little consequence was settlement policy and the fate of the occupied territories, for the religious perspective on West Bank issues was almost identical to that of the Likud (see Chapter II).

Bilateral negotiations between the Likud and the various religious parties paralleled Likud/DMC negotiations. After determining the composition of their negotiating committees, talks were launched with regard to policies and portfolios. Again, the territories did not assume the prominent position it had in talks with the DMC. Instead, the focus was on issues of religion and related items.

Issue demands articulated by the various religious parties, particularly the larger NRP and AI, were of a similar nature. Despite their varying degrees of religious fundamentalism, the NRP and AI demanded similar concessions from the Likud as conditions for their membership in

⁵⁵Brilliant, "Coalition Talks Begin Today," p. 1; Brilliant, "Agudat Yisrael Lays Down Demands to Likud," p. 1.

or support for the new government. Both parties, for instance, issued the following demands:

- 1) The Law of Return should be amended within a reasonable time, meaning that "only conversions to Judaism conducted according to orthodox religious law (halacha) would be recognized and that rabbinical courts would be the only authorized bodies to rule on the validity of foreign conversion certificates."⁵⁶
- 2) There should be stricter observance of the Sabbath, with stricter enforcement of business shut-downs and issuance of work permits for Sabbath work.⁵⁷
- 3) The Government would redress erosions in the power of the rabbinical courts.⁵⁸

Despite the similar outlooks and concentration on matters of religion, the AI and NRP did push for Likud acceptance of other, different demands. AI was most active in this regard, relegating ministerial rewards to a secondary status. In fact, AI indicated on June 6 that they would forego membership in the new government, and that they would support it in parliament, accepting only sub-Cabinet level positions such as committee chairmanships, etc. Moves of this nature would absolve them of government responsibility for El Al flights on the Sabbath and other incidents likely to conflict with the halacha.⁵⁹

⁵⁶Joshua Brilliant, "Begin Will Present His Government on June 20," Jerusalem Post, June 10, 1977, pp. 1,2; Joshua Brilliant, "Likud, NRP, Agudat Accord Due Wednesday," Jerusalem Post, June 13, 1977, pp. 1,2.

⁵⁷Ibid.; Ibid.

⁵⁸Ibid.; Ibid.

⁵⁹Joshua Brilliant, "Likud May Not Wait for DMC," Jerusalem Post, June 6, 1977, p. 1.

The AI sought multiple concessions from the Likud during the course of coalition negotiations. Though many appear to be minor or inconsequential, they were not. Effects of demands for reform of the abortion law, the Law of Return, and restriction of Sabbath work permits, for instance, extend far beyond religious boundaries, having national, and even international, consequences. Furthermore, in nominal coalition governments, those composed of a bare majority, cabinet stability may even depend on the ability of its members to effectively deal with questions of religion, e.g., Labor's strained relations with the NRP in 1976.

Beginning with their first formal meeting with the Likud on June 1, AI voiced a number of ultimative conditions to be met by Likud negotiators. In addition to those demands listed above were the following:

- 1) Restrictions on the conscription of religious (orthodox) girls;
- 2) Reform of the existing autopsy law, barring any autopsies without the consent of the family of the deceased;
- 3) Repeal of Article 5 in the Abortion Law, which would preclude abortions for social reasons; and

4) Stricter enforcement of pornography laws and billboard advertisement laws.⁶⁰ Other demands were also issued by the AI negotiating team, but those listed above were of greatest importance to the ultra-orthodox AI.

Ultimately, the AI was highly successful in accomplishing its objectives, securing agreement on a number of its formation demands. Each of

⁶⁰Brilliant, "Agudat Yisrael Lays Down Demands to Likud," p. 1; Brilliant, "Begin Will Present His Government on June 20," pp. 1,2.

AI's major demands was met by the Likud (see the Text of the Coalition Agreement in Appendix B), though some terms were more favorable than others. Exemplary of this was agreement on "work permits" as opposed to amending the Law of Return. Though Begin was sympathetic to the AI position on halachic conversion, the Liberals were not as favorably disposed, resulting in some dissension within the bloc. Begin, foreseeing this, struck a compromise between the secular Liberals and extremist AI. The government would try to marshal a parliamentary majority for a private member's bill seeking the amendment of the Law of Return. It would, however, free its members from coalition discipline on such a vote, since Begin knew his government was unlikely to provide sufficient support to enact the amendment.⁶¹ Conversely, the agreement on work permits was much more favorable to the AI, being almost identical to the terms it had laid down earlier. The final agreement on the issue designated even the individual in charge of overseeing implementation of the agreement (and other procedures), conforming almost exactly to AI conditions.⁶²

As a result of Likud movements toward AI, in the form of numerous policy concessions, AI, on June 9, agreed to support Begin in Parliament.⁶³ The following day, the Council of Torah Sages announced its decision to join the coalition in parliament, but not in the Cabinet.⁶⁴ Begin's

⁶¹Ibid.,; Keessing's Contemporary Archives (London: Keessing's Publications), Vol. 23, September 2, 1977, p. 28536; "Text of Coalition Agreement," Jerusalem Post, June 21, 1977, p. 4.

⁶²Brilliant, "Begin Will Present His Government on June 20," p. 2; "Text of Coalition Agreement," p. 4.

⁶³"Israeli Religious Party Agrees to Support Begin," New York Times, June 9, 1977, p. 6; Brilliant, "Begin Will Present His Government on June 20," pp. 1,2.

⁶⁴"Begin Near Success in Forming Coalition," New York Times, June 10, 1977, p. 11.

parliamentary base at that point was 62, one more than the 61 needed for a parliamentary majority.

The NRP had practically already agreed to join the Likud in the new government, though details of its agreements remained to be worked out. It, too, won a number of concessions from the Likud, a party anxious to control the reins of government. It had, for instance, made important advances in the fight for portfolios, capturing not only the Religious Affairs and Interior Ministries, but also Education and Culture, an important seat providing its occupant the opportunity to disseminate the religious values of its members.⁶⁵

The NRP, like the AI, also won important concessions on religious policy. Perusing the coalition agreement and cabinet guidelines (see Appendixes A and B), one notices agreements on a five-day work week, maintenance of the status quo in religious affairs, etc., in addition to several agreements coinciding with AI victories. Accordingly, the NRP on June 20 became a member of the new Begin-led Likud government.

Summary

The Likud government formation lasted only one month, or seven months including negotiations with the DMC. An extraordinary number of issues had been dealt with, however, many of a highly volatile nature, plaguing the

⁶⁵For a brief discussion of the importance of education to the religious parties and its potential for socialization, see: Schiff, Tradition and Politics, p. 170; The results of the quest for ministerial positions are found in: Brilliant, "Likud Offers DMC 3 Ministries," pp. 1,2; Joshua Brilliant, "Coalition Factions Choosing Their Candidates for Cabinet Posts," Jerusalem Post, June 15, 1977, p. 1; Rubinstein, "The Lesser Parties," pp. 179-180.

state since conception; e.g, external affairs and security and "Who's a Jew?" The negotiating teams acting on behalf of their parties, were very successful in defusing these and other issues; agreements were concluded and the government formed. In other words, the issues and accompanying agreements were then channeled to the "legislative arena" for further action. This aspect of the process will be examined in Chapter IV where we examine various outcomes of the process.

CHAPTER IV

GOVERNMENT FORMATION AND POLICY MAKING: A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The purpose of this study, stated at the outset, is to develop a means of specifying the components of government formation and describing their interrelationships. This, the final chapter, is intended to provide such a framework. Of particular importance is the relationship between these processes and policy, policy which to a great extent is shaped in the government formation arena. In fact, it was this phenomenon, the intense concentration on issues of public policy in the construction of a new government, that stimulated this research.

The foundation of the framework created here rests on the development of a number of categories intended to facilitate conceptualization of the process. To reiterate a point made in an earlier chapter, the categories are not in any sense measureable. Nor are they as precise or orderly as one would like, but neither is the process of government formation, a process involving the complexity of human motivations and perceptions, actors with multiple roles, institutional constraints and environmental factors, etc.

The framework which follows may be broken down into four broad sections, though it is not formally done so in the text. The first section deals with the nature and character of the formation process. This involves a discussion of the often chaotic, unstable situations from which government formations arise, and the search for consensus which follows. The process, which, if successful, defuses conflict situations,

and, as such, may provide insight into our understanding of stability/instability. The second part deals with the bargaining strategies employed by actors in their quest for the consensus described in the first section. Concerned with their interests on a number of issues, actors utilize a number of strategies to realize their goals. Here, we are concerned with a number of factors which affect the outcome of the formation process. Categories are "situational" and "motivational." These components ultimately affect the ability of the actors to achieve their goals and objectives (in addition to the strategies employed) and the decisions made. Lastly, and perhaps most importantly, outcomes must be considered. There are two types of outcomes related to government formation: outcomes of the formation or bargaining process and outcomes of the agreements.

The Nature and Character of the Process

The coalition process (used interchangeably with government formation process in this context, for government formation in Israel is invariably that of coalition-building) is a consensus building process, or consensus mapping process. It is a process built on a search for consensus, a search involving actors' attempts to discover consensus or agreement on the issues of the day, or define a consensus through a bargaining strategy involving compromise and concessions. The negotiations, focusing on issues and legislation, involve the building of at least a general agreement among the parties on an issue-specific basis. It may be a "paper consensus," or it may not. The evidence in this case suggests not, at least in many instances. More will be said of this later, in the section on policy outcomes. Let it be said at this point, however,

that agreements are arrived at on specific issues, culminating in an agreement to govern and a resumption of the "legislative process" (see Table 3 below for an overview of the process).

On a broader scale, it may be argued that the governmental process, in Israel, and perhaps other multiparty parliamentary democracies as well, operates on the basis of a consensus that is established with the formation of a government. In this sense, the formation of a government and the creation of an agreement to govern produces an agenda and an area of agreement on the general lines of action to be pursued by the new government, though the specificity of consensus is issue-specific, i.e., it varies on an issue-by-issue basis. When this area of consensus is exhausted or when a new type of issue arises or when there are important changes within any of the parties composing the government, the government collapses from within.

The preceding statements are concerned primarily with the character of the formation process, i.e., in terms of its character, it is a consensus building process. It says something more, however. It also says something about the nature of the process, or about the source of instability from which the need for government formation arises and its implications for the subsequent process.

The "contractual government" emerging from the formation process is one that lasts only as long as the parties pursuant to the agreement want it to last. This, of course, rests on many factors, principally the degree to which parties are satisfied with their fate vis-a-vis the agreement. In the absence of "progress" on the implementation of agreements recorded in the Basic Principles, it is conceivable that parties

Table 3. Overview of Government Formation Process

I. Termination-----II. Elections-----III. Formation Process-----IV. Agreements	a) Expiry of mandate given it by electorate	i) Election results	a) On issues
b) Conflict over issues	ii) Prior relationships and incidents	i) Need to deal with issues giving rise to government formation	b) On portfolios
c) Contrived by government as means of improving status for pending elections	b) Agenda--Set by:	ii) Actors' desires to achieve policy goals perhaps unattainable in other arenas	c) Affected by:
d) Some combination of the above	iii) Combination of formation participants, each with its own set of policy preferences and goals	c) Form of "search for consensus"	i) Bargaining strategies and capabilities of actors
	i) Negotiations or explicit bargaining	i) Tacit bargaining	ii) Resources, including intra-group, issue-related, and miscellaneous resources
	iii) Posturing	ii) Posturing	iii) Policy commitment
			iv) Desire for government membership
			v) Electoral considerations
			vi) Perceptions of other actors and their bargaining strategies
			vii) Environmental or contextual elements
			viii) Third party effect
			ix) Concern for future relations with other parties and actors
V. Outcomes	a) Of bargaining:	ii) Procedural	b) Of agreements
i) Policy Outcomes-Substantive	a) Reference document created	a) Deadlines specified	i) Legislation
b) Issue placed on agenda for future negotiation and action	b) Arena for further action specified	b) Payoffs	ii) Redefinition of agreement
c) Agreement on goals only	c) Designation of primary responsibility for getting action done	i) Govt. participation	iii) Discovery of different perceptions of agreement
d) Agreement on specific courses of action		b) Effects on future joint action	iv) Change in conditions
e) Limits placed on the alternative courses of action		c) Responsibility costs	v) No immediate action at all
	VI. Breakdown of Consensus	VII. Termination	

Source: The Author.

will seek alternative channels to influence policy. This may mean a transference of conflict, originally erupting within the small body of cabinet elites, to the government formation arena. Though this is obviously speculative, it is based on an observation of AI activity in the fall of 1979. After making substantial progress in its demands for reform in the existing law, in effect eliminating abortion due to "difficult social and family conditions," little was accomplished in terms of implementing the agreement (passing an amendment). AI then issued the ultimative condition that unless the reform were enacted, it would "withdraw its support for the government in parliament."¹ This would have left the government with only a minority, a situation sure to result in a new government formation.

When this type of conflict cannot be satisfactorily resolved (satisfactory as interpreted by the parties), termination may result. The difficulties experienced by Labor and the concern over pending elections contributed to the need for a new formation process in 1976. The situation was an unstable one, one characterized by increasing dissonance among the parties comprising the coalition. The NRP and ILP had, for instance, been ready to enter the ranks of the opposition for some time preceding even Rabin's resignation. Again, at the heart of this discord lay serious disputes over settlement policy, etc.

If this is the case, that the government formation arena provides a forum for conflict resolution that other arenas are for various reasons unable to offer, the formation process must involve attempts by actors to negotiate and resolve issues on which they accord high salience and

¹ Keesing's Contemporary Archives (London: Keesing's Publications), Vol. 26, February 22, 1980, p. 30108.

on which they disagree, this to avert future and intensified conflict.

In forging an agreement to govern, the major actors involved, negotiating teams and their party councils, attempt to reach a general consensus on the issues of the day, issues that unless negotiated and resolved in the government formation, may lead to political immobility or more intense conflict. This view, of course, emphasizes the salience of negotiations on issues which were either unresolved or contributed to the collapse of the preceding government, and hence, the need to bridge the chasm between the actors' divergent issue positions. In this sense, the processes triggering the government crisis assume an agenda-setting function, determining to a great extent issues to be negotiated in future coalition talks. Other issues may also arise in the coalition process, though the potentially disruptive (or actually disruptive) issues described above are the fulcrum around which negotiations revolve. This was certainly true of settlement policy, security, electoral reform, and the Law of Return. A more indirect influence exerted on the composition of issues to be sounded out in government formation is that of the combination of actors involved. The series of events leading to termination affect to a certain extent the possible combination of actors to participate in the process (by possibly worsening already bad relationships, etc.). The religious parties' turn to Likud (the attraction was actually mutual) had been prompted by their resentment of Rabin's behavior in December (and earlier disputes over settlements, etc.). It was, therefore, improbable that Labor would become a viable coalition partner in any new government. The policies to be discussed in the formation would be those of interest to the Likud and religious parties, not Labor.

The functional nature of government formation is most evident in the "resolution" (resolution to the extent that actors agree on something, even if this means only agreeing to disagree) of these conflict-laden policy issues. To a certain extent, one could argue that the instability characteristic of cabinet politics in Israel, by necessitating frequent government formations, allows for the regulation of conflict through negotiations on significant issues and thus averts intensified conflict and immobilism. The process allows unresolved, "disruptive" issues to be transferred from a highly structured parliamentary arena to a less structured government formation arena (less structured in terms of procedural constraints, the nature and implications of agreements, etc.) where consensus may be more easily arrived at. This was true of the fate of electoral reform, settlement policy, the Law of Return, and so forth. In sum, it is the continual negotiations among transacting individuals and actors which can defuse controversial issues via redefinition, deferment, etc., manage conflict and reduce its intensity, and generally bring about agreements to continue the legislative process.

Issues other than "the issues of the day" are also dealt with in government formation. There is no broad consensus that these issues should be negotiated, however. They become part of the agenda when interested parties issue their ultimative conditions for government participation. Often, there may be no other means to obtain enactment of these policy goals than the government formation arena. Once the legislative process is renewed, the party may find itself either in the opposition or in a minority position within the government, neither of which offer particularly good vantage points from which to realize adoption of its

legislative proposals. Not so for the government formation arena, at least not so if parties abide by the agreements recorded in the Basic Principles.

Negotiations and Bargaining Strategies

The process of coalition formation in Israel is that of negotiating a consensus on often major issues of public policy, issues released from the responsibility of the preceding government and transferred to the formation arena. Though the search for consensus may in fact take several forms, "negotiation" is the most common means of forging agreement. Negotiation, as defined by Iklé, is "a process in which explicit proposals are put forward ostensibly for the purpose of reaching agreement on an exchange or on the realization of a common interest where conflicting interests are present."² The proposals may concern topics to be handled at some later date (agenda setting) or methods of resolving conflict on disputes over issues (procedural function), as well as substantive terms of the agreement. It is the presentation of explicit proposals which distinguishes negotiations from tacit bargaining, another method of reaching agreement and one which is both less visible and less common in government formation. Tacit bargaining involves situations "in which adversaries watch and interpret each other's behavior, each aware that his own actions are being interpreted and anticipated, each acting with a view to the expectations that he creates."³ A third method is that of

²Frederick Charles Iklé, How Nations Negotiate (New York: Praeger, 1964), pp.4-5.

³Ibid., pp. 3-5; Thomas C. Schelling, The Strategy of Conflict (London: Oxford University Press, 1960), p. 21.

posturing, an approach whereby actors, through statements and behaviors external to the actual coalition talks, attempt to influence or shape the process to their satisfaction.⁴

Each of the bargaining approaches outlined may assume a salient role in forging the agreement to govern. "Negotiations," or explicit bargaining, seem to assume a position of greatest importance, however, perhaps due to a need to "air out" the controversial or "disruptive" issues surfacing in the formation arena. In this sense, the setting forth of explicit proposals evokes a cathartic effect, regulating conflict through talk.⁵

The bilateral, face-to-face negotiations carried on by the parties' bargaining teams best illustrate the form of reaching agreement through negotiation. It was also exemplified in the sets of "cabinet guidelines" prepared by DMC and Likud leaders. Other approaches, noted above, were also utilized, but again, were both less visible and less common. Tacit bargaining, for instance, occurred as DMC leaders indicated a willingness to compromise on electoral reform, softening their position on the issue such that new elections would not be held in two years following declaration of the new government. Before the issue was "negotiated," DMC

⁴Robert L. Peterson, Martine De Ridder, David Hobbs, and E. F. McClellan, "Government Formation and Policy Formulation: Patterns in Belgium and the Netherlands," Department of Political Science, The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, January, 1980 (unpublished manuscript).

⁵Dan Nimmo, Political Communication and Public Opinion in America (Santa Monica, California: Goodyear Publishing Company, 1978), Chapter 3.

members, sensing Likud opposition to such demands, adjusted their position and proposed the compromise, this adjustment induced by their perception of Likud (and religious bloc) opposition and chances for enactment. Finally, posturing was employed by actors in their pre-formation demands, setting forth conditions before the formation process was actually begun, and their statements to the press, in which they also sought to communicate their policy concerns.

The resolution of conflict and the building of consensus is related to the bargaining strategies employed by various actors in the coalition process. The type of instability characteristic of cabinet politics in Israel, a moderate level of instability arising from conflict over specific issues and ideological concerns, requires explicit bargaining in which issue positions and points of contention are more easily mapped out, as opposed to the implicit style of communication through tacit bargaining or posturing. Though actors may be aware of respective issue positions, explicit bargaining permits greater visibility of points of contention and points on which compromise might be possible.

In addition to illuminating the many facets of formation issues (points of agreement, disagreement, etc.), explicit bargaining permits one to communicate to other actors commitment to goals, in effect, "communicating irrevocable commitment to the other party."⁶ To win in these bargaining situations, Schelling notes, one must "visibly commit oneself to an alternative."⁷ This is more easily done through the explicit

⁶Schelling, The Strategy of Conflict, pp. 120-123.

⁷Ibid.

proposals bandied about by the negotiating teams than through other modes of communication in which complete dissemination of values and information is impossible. Of course, complete communication of such commitment is not possible vis-a-vis explicit bargaining either (note varying interpretations of proposals and agreements), but it is better suited for the process than are other means. Certainly, the open, explicit discussions between DMC and Likud MKs communicated their degree of commitment to goals and preferred policies. The DMC, for instance, staked its claims and communicated its willingness to dissociate itself from the Likud government if its demands were not met; in effect, it communicated a threat to not lend its support for the new government. Had there not been an accord reached with the religious bloc, this strategy may have been more effective.

Finally, as we shall see, a bargaining employing explicit proposals may or may not produce highly specific agreements. The strategy utilized in arriving at an agreement is not necessarily related to the specificity of consensus, or level of agreement, emerging from the process.

Determinants of Coalition Decisions, Actions, and Outcomes

Generally speaking, Iklé subsumes all the negotiator's decisions under three choices: 1) The negotiator may accept the terms or proposals he thinks are acceptable to the opponent; e.g., the NRP acceptance of Likud proposals on the amendment of the Law of Return; 2) The negotiator may discontinue negotiations without an agreement, though talks may be resumed at some later date (for example, the several breakdowns in Likud/DCM negotiations); and 3) The negotiator may engage in further bargaining

in order to improve the agreement.⁸ This is amply illustrated by DMC bargaining on the territories, in which DMC negotiators sought to push for further Likud concessions to improve the agreement and maximize use of the government formation arena. Several other alternatives are available to the negotiator in government formation, however. They are:

4) The negotiator may change partner or bring others into the process, though this depends on their willingness to do so. Though the DMC had been included in the coalition talks from the outset, the Likud continued negotiations with them even after the government declaration June 30 in hopes of bringing them into the government; and 5) The negotiators may defer the issue for future negotiation and resolution, similar to 1 above in that partners "agree to disagree," at least temporarily, e.g., electoral reform.

The ultimate decision to choose any one of the preceding options implies a cost-benefit calculus of some kind by the negotiator, i.e., the actor must speculate on the possible costs and benefits of accepting the available terms as opposed to discontinuing negotiations, further bargaining, changing partners, or deferring the issue. Inherent in such a cost-benefit calculus is consideration of such elements as:

- 1) the actor's resource base;
- 2) a third party effect, i.e., a concern with both potential government partners and actors and organizations "external" to the actual negotiations, such as the United States' role in influencing Likud efforts to balance its foreign policy and

⁸Ikle, How Nations Negotiate, pp. 60-61.

security platform,⁹ public pressure on DMC leaders to join the government because of their party's different viewpoints,¹⁰ and the NRP's concern with religious organizations such as the Committee for Integrity of the Jewish Nation, an organization urging NRP leaders to reform the Law of Return.¹¹ If a third party effect is not considered, actors may alienate supportive or neutral segments of the electorate or unnecessarily engender further hostility from already antagonistic elements or simply cause problems for itself once it assumes office, such as difficulties encountered in conducting its relations with the United States;

- 3) contextual or environmental factors--In Israel, the most obvious contextual element to be considered is the atmosphere within which the formation process takes place. Because of its extremely precarious geopolitical situation, surrounded by its hostile Arab neighbors, attention is always focused on the issues of borders, defense, and security. In certain instances, the end result may be a "national consensus" built on such concerns, as in the formation of the national unity government in 1973.

⁹Begin's nomination of Moshe Dayan for the Foreign Affairs Ministry was said to have resulted from the fact that the former Defense Minister was so well known abroad, particularly in the United States. See: William E. Farrell, "Begin's Choice of Dayan Disrupting Coalition Talks," New York Times, May 27, 1977, p. 5.

¹⁰"Yadin Won't Join Coalition Unless He Gets Foreign Affairs," p. 1.

¹¹NRP-Likud Talks Today," Jerusalem Post, May 25, 1977, p. 1.

This was not evident in the 1977 formation, however, other than the preoccupation with security;

- 4) future relations with other parties and actors involved in the process, including maintaining or improving one's bargaining reputation;
- 5) perception of other actors' bargaining strategies, such as the perception that one party is bluffing. One Likud leader said "he didn't know whether the DMC really insists on all the points it raised or whether it introduced some clauses as a ploy in the forthcoming negotiations";¹²
- 6) policy satisfaction;
- 7) electoral considerations; and
- 8) desire for a government role.

This list is by no means exhaustive, but outlines some of the more important factors underlying the negotiators' decisions and behaviors. A relatively brief discussion of a number of the preceding elements (the first three are situational, the last five motivational or perceptual) will illustrate their utility in interpreting the negotiators' actions, successes, and failures in the formation process.

One of the most important elements affecting the actors' decisions and actions is that of resource base. With regard to government formations, it is possible to identify three types of resources: 1) intra-group resources; 2) issue-related resources; and 3) miscellaneous resources.

¹²Brilliant, "Likud, DMC Try to Bridge Gap Over Judea/Samaria," p. 1.

In making a particular decision, the actor must consider not only his own resource base, but other actors' as well.

Intra-group resources include elements relating to the base support of actors--such things as organizational backing, access to the decision-making structures of the group the actor represents, organizational cohesiveness and possible electoral strength or capacity to mobilize social sectors. Here, we are concerned with the discretionary powers accorded the negotiator, often considerable in the Israeli case, the fragmentary nature of Israeli political parties, an impediment in securing agreements with other parties when it is often difficult to reach decisions internally (such as discrepancies between the Herut and Liberal positions on the Dayan nomination), and so forth. These are but a few examples of instances where intra-group resources may be perceived to have possibly influenced the negotiating process by affecting the decision to push for further gains, make concessions, compromise, etc.

Issue-related resources include veto power and power to make concessions. The first of these depends on the degree to which the actor is perceived to be needed to form the coalition and thus on his ability to influence others by refusing to cooperate. The most obvious element in this power would appear to be either the number of parliamentary seats controlled or the control of a few key seats necessary to obtain a majority. The power to make concessions is related to veto power in that it refers to the capacity to induce cooperation by presenting adjustments in issue positions in exchange for reciprocal adjustments or side-payments. This may depend upon group cohesiveness; thus, there is a relationship between intra-group and issue-related resources.

With regard to issue-related resources, veto power figured prominently in the 1977 formation. The DMC, obtaining 15 seats, did not fare well enough at the polls to guarantee itself a position in any government; in other words, it did not have a veto power over government membership. The Likud could, instead, look to the religious parties and still form a government assured of majority support in parliament. Unlike its smaller partners, the Likud possessed such veto power. Though Labor arithmetically constituted one coalition option, it had through past actions effectively removed itself from consideration for government membership, despite Begin's overtures to the contrary. The Likud was, in effect, essential to any viable coalition. With regard to "power to make concessions," the situation varied for both actors and issues. Likud negotiators, for instance, were much more willing to "pull and haul"¹³ and induce compromise and grant concessions with the religious parties than they were with the DMC, this resulting by and large from the sets of issues focused on by the parties. The Likud simply had little to lose on the issues of religion stressed by the NRP and AI; hence, the multiple concessions offered them in return for their support in government. The Likud was not wholly behind these concessions to the religious parties, however. Though the Likud was sufficiently united to offer the religious concessions, the Liberal faction continued to press for DMC inclusion in the new government.

Miscellaneous resources refer to such elements as personal reputation, technical or arbitrational skills or information, and may exert considerable influence on the bargaining process. More specifically, these

¹³Graham T. Allison, Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1971): pp. 144-147.

resources relate to the ability of the negotiator to achieve certain aims or goals. It is certainly conceivable that an individual's personal reputation or bargaining reputation might affect his ability to "negotiate for further improvements." Depending on the circumstances, these elements may affect the actor's achievements either positively or negatively. Begin, a "superb but obstinate negotiator,"¹⁴ was for instance much more able to effectively influence formation outcomes (aided considerably by his position as leader of the coalition's dominant party) than were the relatively inexperienced DMC negotiators.

Policy satisfaction is another element taken into consideration by negotiators in the coalition formation process.¹⁵ Actors and parties having a high degree of salience on any particular issue may be more willing to push for satisfaction of their demands or proposals, and may be less willing than actors, less concerned with the issue, to accept the available terms.¹⁶ In essence, this speaks to the whole question of policy making in government formation, as actors push what often are controversial legislative proposals through the formation arena and emerge with some sort of agreement satisfactory to a majority. The formation process provides an arena for the pursuit of policy preferences and goals. Considering all this, it may be more appropriate to label this category "policy commitment," for it is much more specific than Hill's notion of

¹⁴Torgovnik, "A Movement for Change," p. 168.

¹⁵Hill, A Theory of Political Coalitions.

¹⁶A discussion of issue salience is found in: William D. Coplin and Michael K. O'Leary, Everyman's Prince (Massachusetts: Duxbury Press, 1976).

policy satisfaction (which is somewhat similar to the drive toward ideological compatability discussed in other studies).¹⁷ One could argue rather persuasively for instance, that a policy commitment strategy played a decisive role in the 1977 Israeli government formation, with each party pushing for adoption of its policy goals.

In estimating the costs and benefits of participation in the coalition formation process, one should weigh the parties' desire for a government role. It is even possible that government participation may be more conducive to future electoral success than are opposition roles, due in part to greater visibility (note the DMC concern for their future electoral standing as they remained outside the government).¹⁸ Such a role also provides greater access to channels for influencing public policy, though one should be aware that governance also bears responsibility costs for unpopular policies, and in coalition situations, may result in identity loss for the smaller partners (here, note AI's decision to remain technically outside the government in order to absolve themselves of any responsibility for any government actions likely to conflict with the halacha).¹⁹

The Specificity of Consensus

The specificity of agreement, or level of consensus, arrived at is determined by the actors themselves, and the level of specificity varies

¹⁷Hill, A Theory of Political Coalitions.

¹⁸Bruce Bueno de Mesquita, "Coalition Payoffs and Electoral Performances in European Democracies," Comparative Political Studies, Vol. 12, No. 1 (April 1979): pp. 61-87; Torgovnik, "A Movement for Change," pp. 164,168-169.

¹⁹Brilliant, "Likud May Not Wait for DMC," p. 1.

by issue. The specificity of the agreement can be used to bind an actor to the preferred interpretation of the accord, while ambiguous language leaves the actor with considerably more latitude within which to pursue further negotiations or redefine the agreement.²⁰ In other words, a high degree of specificity may be realized in order to avert misunderstandings and enable the newly formed government to develop policies with less risk of instability arising from misinterpretations of the terms of the agreement. In some instances, however, the imposition of rigidity may be detrimental, i.e., may preclude the possibility of further bargaining even when it is needed.

The level of specificity struck on the various agreements concluded in the 1977 Israeli government formation varied greatly, some being of a highly specific, detailed nature, others being vague and diffuse. Most policies agreed upon as "concessions," shown in the Text of the Coalition Agreement in Appendix B, were of a highly specific nature, defining precisely future courses of action. This was certainly true of agreements reached on abortion, the Law of Return, autopsies, Sabbath work permits, etc. Other agreements were not so specific, particularly the government guidelines on foreign affairs and security (Note: The Cabinet Guidelines, shown in Appendix A, reflect the basic policy orientations of the new government. The Text of the Coalition Agreement, also shown in Appendix B, reflects the specific agreements and concessions emerging from the formation process.), and thus allowed room for further negotiations.

²⁰Iklé, How Nations Negotiate, pp. 8-15.

The level of agreement, or specificity, concluded on an issue is the result of a number of factors. Actors must take into consideration, when arriving at a particular agreement, such elements as factional dissent within their parties, factional support from other parties (such as Liberal support for DMC participation as a means of softening Likud's hardline policies on the occupied territories), a possible third party effect, party goals, and so forth. In fact, the very elements discussed previously, those factors affecting actors' decisions and actions in the formation process, impinge on the actors as they interact with one another in the coalition process. Agreements reached in the formation are either vague or specific because of these considerations. Ambiguous agreements, by their very nature, are better suited for masking differences and producing agreement even when fundamental disagreements still exist; e.g., while the parties agreed that electoral reform was desirable, they did not agree on the specifics of implementation, still having serious differences of disagreement. The more specific levels of agreement, as noted before and in contrast to that of electoral reform, lock partners in on specific courses of action.

The post-formation phase of government formation (synonymous with what is usually referred to as the "legislative process" or the "maintenance" phase of government formation) does not merely serve to ratify policy developed in the "policy-making phase" of government formation. Rather, policy proposals are negotiated and sounded out, or incubated in a sense, in the coalition process. Ultimately, the actors arrive at a framework within which to pursue more specific negotiations or courses of action (such as implementation of the agreements) once the government assumes office.

Outcomes of the Bargaining Process

One of the most important observations generated by this research is that policy is at least to some degree developed in government formation. If one examines the effects of coalition formation on policy making, however, one should look at the outcomes of the bargaining that takes place in such formations. What are the outcomes of the bargaining process? Two rather broad categories might be utilized in conceptualizing bargaining outcomes: 1) Policy outcomes, which may be further subdivided into: a) substantive policy outcomes; and b) procedural policy outcomes; and 2) Side-effects.

A number of possibilities fall under the rubric of "substantive policy outcomes." They are: 1) A reference document may be created as a result of the bargaining process. This, in effect, sets the terms for future debate or provides a platform for further negotiation and action. Negotiators do not start from "ground zero," but look to the agreement concluded in the government formation as the basis for subsequent work on the issue. All other possibilities in this category are basically a function of this. Other possible outcomes include: 2) The issue may be placed on the agenda for future negotiation; 3) An agreement on goals (agreements in principle) may be reached, leaving details to be filled in by the new government; 4) An agreement on specific courses may be concluded; and 5) The negotiations may limit the range of alternative courses of action.

Each of the issues negotiated in the '77 formation resulted in a reference document of sorts, a record of the agreement which could be referred back to in the implementation of the agreement or in future negotiations, be it agreement on the Law of Return, Sabbath work permits,

etc. The electoral reform issue, which was ultimately deferred, was placed on the agenda for future negotiation by the Begin government. The issues of abortion and Sabbath work permits were negotiated into specific agreements detailing much more than general principles, in effect eliminating the need for future negotiations (unless a change in the political environment necessitated a reassessment of the terms of the agreement). Finally, agreements in principle only were achieved, such as those on electoral reform (a combination of 3 and 5 above) and the territories. Also, negotiations on each issue may be said to have possibly limited the range of alternatives available to the new government, i.e., parties were made aware of what constituted acceptable and unacceptable positions and recognized the need to operate on the basis of this framework. In this sense, this outcome is related to the function provided by the reference document, which also narrows the possible courses of action available to the new government to some extent.

A procedural category is also subsumed under policy outcomes. Included in it are the following possibilities: 1) Specification of a deadline for concluding an agreement or presenting a proposal; 2) Specification of arena for pursuing further action, including: a) negotiations within the government; b) negotiations within party channels; and c) negotiations by extra- or para-governmental units; and 3) Designation of primary responsibility for getting action done. Bargaining outcomes best illustrating the "procedural" category are those relating to agreements on electoral reform, national health insurance, five-day work week, and Sabbath work permits. The agreement on electoral reform (see 42 in Text of Coalition Agreement) stipulated deadlines for government action, action to the

extent that a committee composed of coalition partners would be formed within three months of the government declaration to draft legislation.²¹ This agreement, of course, also conforms to 2a and 2b (to some extent) described above. It specifies the arenas for future government action, negotiations within government channels and by parties to the extent that government negotiations involve discussion by coalition partners, political parties. The same may be said for the agreement on national health insurance, with parties agreeing in principle on the issue, but leaving the issue open for further action within government channels.²² Negotiations with extra- or para-governmental units were evident with the agreement on a five-day work week. Here, the agreement states that "the government shall appoint a public committee to propose ways in which this shall be implemented and shall receive a professional opinion from the Institute for Labour Productivity."²³ Finally, the agreement on Sabbath work permits illustrates the possibility of designating responsibility to get action done, here specifying the individual and committee charged with the responsibility of overseeing its implementation.²⁴

Side-effects constitute the other type of outcome emanating from the bargaining process. Side-effects are those consequences, intended or unintended, of bargaining that do not directly relate to policy making, though one might argue that an indirect relationship does exist.

²¹"Text of Coalition Agreement," p. 4; Keesing's Contemporary Archives (London: Keesing's Publications), Vol. 23, December 9, 1977, p. 28712.

²²"Text of Coalition Agreement," p. 4.

²³*Ibid.*

²⁴*Ibid.*

Side-effects include: 1) Payoffs, such as: a) participation in the government; b) increased prestige; 2) Effects in terms of future joint action and individual action; and 3) Responsibility costs, i.e., implying some sort of negative consequence or sanction for a participant based on some decision or action undertaken by that actor in the government formation.

A number of side-effects were visible in the 1977 government formation. Each of the four parties (and Dayan) participating in the process, for instance, reaped the benefits of government membership and increased prestige associated with such membership. The formation process also affected the possibilities for future joint action involving members of the Likud and DMC, with the DMC splitting soon after its October 20 vote to enter the government.²⁵ Certain members of the DMC, including Amnon Rubinstein, apparently felt "sold-out" by the decision to enter the government. The likelihood of their engaging in future joint action with the Likud or even its ex-colleagues was almost nil. Overall, considering relations between all parties, the bargaining process itself did little to damage the parties' broader relations and future joint actions, this due to the deferment of the more serious disputes; e.g., electoral reform and the territories. Responsibility costs were borne by all parties pursuant to the agreement, as they shared the burden of responsibility for policies and incidents associated with their governance of the state. These costs were also evident within parties, i.e., for instance, the

²⁵"Israel Coalition Party Split," London Times, August 24, 1978, p. 4.

DMC suffered an attenuation of party loyalty as a result of their decision to enter the government.

Outcomes of Agreements

Thus far, this study has addressed the policy making aspect of governmental formation, examining the parties' search for consensus on issues of public policy. The story would be incomplete, however, if the final product or fate of agreements were not examined. In other words, we have yet to address the fate of agreements once the "legislative process" was resumed.

What are the possible outcomes of agreements concluded in the coalition process? Possibilities include: 1) Passage of legislation; 2) Redefinition of the agreement reached previously, meaning further negotiations; 3) Discovery of different perceptions of what the terms of the agreement mean (again, meaning further negotiations); 4) Enforcement or execution of already existing legislation (normally referred to as implementation); 5) Discovery of non-support for the agreement by crucial elements or actors "external" to the government; and 6) no immediate action at all.

The agreements concluded in the '77 formation experienced a number of fates. Many of them, primarily those concessions toward the religious parties, were eventually passed by the Knesset as new laws or amendments,

e.g., autopsies,²⁶ abortion reform,²⁷ a law curbing missionary activity,²⁸ an anti-sign law²⁹ (passed on first reading), and a law regulating conscription of religious women.³⁰ An electoral reform bill had been submitted by Labor, but this was not part of the government agreement. It was defeated by a wide margin when the DMC failed to support its bid for enactment of the issue. DMC leaders explained their opposition saying they were not bound to support every proposal on the issue. They would, rather, abide by the coalition agreement and form a study committee to examine the issue.³¹ The issue of a five-day work week did not fare so well either; no action was taken on the agreement. Simcha Ehrlich, the government's new Finance Minister, stated that inaction was warranted by the inability of the country's already fragile economy to withstand such a move at that time. Noting the environmental constraints working against

²⁶"Begin Efforts to Win Over Orthodox Jews," London Times, November 28, 1979, p. 9.

²⁷Keesing's Contemporary Archives (London: Keesing's Publications), February 22, 1980, p. 20108.

²⁸Asher Wallfish, "Knesset Bill Outlaws Bribes to Entice Religious Converts," Jerusalem Post, December 6, 1977, p. 2.

²⁹This piece of legislation, presented by Interior Minister Yosef Burg (NRP), passed its first reading in the Knesset. Information pertaining to its final outcome could not be found. See: Aryeh Rubinstein, "Anti-Sign Law Passed on First Reading," Jerusalem Post, November 7, 1978, p. 3.

³⁰"Sadat Hard Line Transforms Reports in Cairo Press," London Times, July 21, 1978; "Cabinet Approves Bill Easing Army Exemptions for Orthodox Women," Jerusalem Post, February 20, 1978, p. 1.

³¹Asher Wallfish, "DMC Embarrassed by Private Bill on Electoral Reform," Jerusalem Post, December 7, 1977, p. 2; Asher Wallfish, "Labor Electoral Reform Bill Defeated 55-26," Jerusalem Post, December 8, 1977, p. 3.

the agreement, Ehrlich had, in effect, redefined the agreement such that enactment was dependent on other factors (factors to be defined by the Likud).³² The implementation phase of the policy process was reflected in the government's enforcement of existing laws restricting transportation on the Sabbath, along with its overall stance on observation of the Sabbath.³³

Conclusions

It should now be obvious that the process of government formation has important implications for the development of public policy. Policy is shaped to a great extent in the formation arena, with actors agreeing on specific policy issues in some instances and on general goals in others. The consensus ultimately emerging from the process, culminating in the agreement to govern, is not a "paper one," at least in many cases. Agreements are often followed up on in a number of cases, sometimes due to pressures exerted by coalition partners interested in the particular issue. The result: Light has now been shed on a previously untouched aspect of government formation, i.e., its policy dimension. In addition to the establishment of this linkage, this research has attempted to integrate a number of other dimensions composing the process, dimensions previously examined as isolated components.

³²Sraya Shapiro, "Ehrlich: 5-day Week and Welfare State Must Wait," Jerusalem Post, October 9, 1977, p. 2.

³³Moshe Brilliant, "Israel Ire About Orthodoxy Rises," New York Times, July 4, 1977, p. 3.

The conceptual framework elaborated here is certainly tentative in nature, but it does reflect an attempt to deal with aspects of government formation not previously examined. It is based on an interpretation of events transpiring in 1976 and 1977; as such, it is possible that other researchers would interpret these events differently. Finally, it is hoped that this project will stimulate others to pursue further research along these and other lines.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

NEW GOVERNMENT'S GUIDELINES

The following is the official text of the new government's basic policy guidelines:

1. Recognition of the unity of the destiny and the common struggle for existence of the Jewish People in the Land of Israel and in the Diaspora.
2. The Jewish People have an eternal, historic right to the Land of Israel, the inalienable inheritance of its forefathers.
3. The Government will plan, establish and encourage urban and rural settlement on the soil of the homeland.
4. The government will make the encouragement of aliya a chief national task.
5. The Government will place the aspiration for peace at the forefront of its concerns, and will strive actively and constantly to achieve permanent peace in the region.
6. The Government will invite Israel's neighbours, jointly and severally, either directly or through a friendly state, to conduct negotiations towards the signing of a peace treaty, without prior conditions on the part of anyone and without formulation of a solution drawn up from outside.
7. The Government announces its readiness to take part in the Geneva conference, at such time as it shall be invited to do so by the United States and the Soviet Union on the basis of Security Council resolutions 242 and 338.
8. In preparation for the Geneva conference and direct negotiations, the Government announces Israel's readiness to conduct negotiations in order to achieve true, contractual and effective peace that will lead to normalization of life in the region.
9. In the absence of peace treaties, the parties to the dispute will be committed to the agreements signed between them by previous governments.
10. The Knesset has empowered the Government to apply by administrative order the law, judiciary and administration of the state to all territory of the Land of Israel, as shall be determined by administrative order. This legal and parliamentary authority is left to the Government's discretion; it will not be invoked so long as negotiations are being conducted on a peace treaty between Israel and its neighbours. The matter will be determined by the choice of proper timing, the political judgment of the Government, and the approval of the Knesset after a special debate.
11. Equality of rights for all citizens and residents, without distinction of religion, race, nation, sex or ethnic group.
12. The Government will guarantee the rights and liberties of the individual, the encouragement of free initiative, and equality of opportunity and advancement and well-being of the individual.
13. A constant campaign for the return to Zion of all who yearn for her in Soviet Union, and for the rescue of the Jewries of Syria and the Arab States.

14. Restraint of inflation, stabilization of the currency, and assurance of a decent standard of living for all residents of the state.
15. Action to eradicate poverty, and the provision of aid to large families, particularly in housing and education.
16. A constant effort to increase investment from abroad and to renew economic development; a special effort will be made to encourage construction of rental housing.
17. The Government shall make it its business to ensure employment, and encourage pride of creativity and work morals.
18. The Government will provide encouragement and incentive for greater productivity and output, in a joint effort at rapid growth of the gross national product and at constantly increasing the total of exports.
19. The Government will work to improve labour relations and to lessen economic disputes, among other ways through enacting a law for compulsory arbitration in vital services.
20. The Government will work to encourage and widen agricultural settlement of all types.
21. Taking action to prevent emigration; return of citizens who have left their native land and increase of aliya from both East and West.
22. Respect for law and eradication of crime and violence.
23. Institution of a long school-day, and the basing of education on the values of Judaism and Zionism, on love of the Jewish people and the homeland.
24. The Government will ensure freedom of conscience and religion for all citizens, the provision of religious needs through the state, and the provision of religious education for the children of all citizens who so desire.
25. The status quo in religious matters will be maintained.
26. The Government will honour the international agreements signed by previous governments.

Source: "New Government's Guidelines," Jerusalem Post, June 20, 1977, p. 2.

APPENDIX B

TEXT OF COALITION AGREEMENT

GENERAL

- A. The coalition shall function in the Knesset and its committees on the basis of joint responsibility.
- B. An eight-member coalition leadership shall be created and shall be composed as follows: Likud--five members; NRP--two members; Agudat Israel--1 member.
- C. The coalition leadership shall decide on, and direct, the work of the coalition and the voting of its members in the Knesset and Knesset Committees.
- D. The coalition leadership shall function on the basis of rules and regulations to be drawn up.

PROVISIONS OF THE AGREEMENT

- 1. The government shall strive for the institution of a five-day week in coordination with representatives of the workers and the employers. To this end the government shall appoint a public committee to propose ways in which this shall be implemented and shall receive a professional opinion from the Institute for Labour Productivity.
- 2. The government shall see to it that a basic wage is enacted to guarantee every work a basic wage.
- 3. The government shall strive for the institution of a national pension system, which shall guarantee to every citizen the means of livelihood in old age. The government shall appoint a committee to clarify the advancement of this aim.
- 4. The government shall submit to the Knesset a draft bill for national health insurance for all. The provisions of the bill shall have been agreed upon by the partners to this agreement.
- 5. Efforts shall be made to construct rental apartments at reasonable rates, particularly for young couples and large families.
- 6. The government shall act for the spiritual and social absorption of new immigrants. The necessary measures shall be taken for the absorption of religious immigrants.
- 7. There shall be strict implementation of Paragraph 179 of the Criminal Code Ordinance of 1936, which forbids the publication, distribution, display, etc., of pornographic literature. To the extent that the existing legislation does not make it possible to achieve the above aims, the requisite supplementary legislation shall be enacted.
- 8. As conversion to Judaism is a concept pertaining to halacha, the Law of Return shall be amended to provide that conversion must be in accordance with halacha. Knesset members from the coalition shall submit a private bill providing that conversion must be in accordance with halacha and that the Rabbinical Court shall be the authorized body to determine the validity of a conversion certificate issued abroad. The Prime Minister shall make every effort to gain a parliamentary majority for this bill. The former Minister of the Interior has stated that to the best of his knowledge since the enactment of

the amendment of the Law of Return seven years ago, no non-Jew has been considered a Jew, and it is hereby stated that the government shall not do so in the future either.

9. The Anatomy and Pathology Law (1953) shall be amended to provide that even after the conditions laid down by the existing law have been fulfilled, no autopsy shall be performed without consent in writing by the family. If a person expressed opposition in writing to the dissection of his body, his will shall be respected, even if his family has agreed to the dissection.
10. It shall be guaranteed by means of legislation that no person shall be discriminated against as far as getting a job, promotion, or retaining a job is concerned, because of his and her desire to observe the sanctity of the Sabbath.
11. There shall be strict implementation in actual practice of the hours of Work and Rest Law 5711 (1951).
12. It shall be guaranteed that public transportation shall stop operating before the commencement of the Sabbath or a religious holiday and shall not resume before the end of the Sabbath or holiday and that the status quo on this matter shall be upheld.
13. Prof. Zeev Lev, head of the Halachic-Scientific Institute, or his representative, shall serve on a permanent basis on the Ministerial Committee for the issuing of work permits on the Sabbath. If differences arise among the members of the committee, the final decision shall be made by a committee headed by the prime minister and consisting also of a minister of religious affairs and a representative of Agudat Israel.
14. Sabbath work permits shall not be approved if they are for economic reasons only.
15. Within six months the Ministerial Committee shall review all the work permits of all types, whether general or special-purpose, which have been issued to date, in the light of the foregoing.
16. Every work permit that shall be brought to the attention of the Ministerial Committee. All the members of the committee, including Prof. Lev or his representative, shall be entitled to appeal the permit or the conditions specified therein, and in the wake of the appeal the matter shall be brought before the committee.
17. The government shall encourage enterprises with loans and grants in order to enable them to stop or reduce work on the Sabbath.
18. Ways shall be examined for establishing a scientific institute for problems of halacha which shall represent the research institutes in this field as a body charged by the state with the organization of the research and development in everything connected with the prevention of work on the Sabbath. When established, this institute shall be charged with the providing of professional advice in the matter of requests for Sabbath work permits.
19. Since the law for the amendment of the penal code (termination of pregnancy), 1977, deviates from the religious status quo, the law will be amended so that section 5(A)--which permits termination of pregnancy "Because of difficult family or social conditions of the woman or of her environment"--will be erased.

20. The law regarding the transfer of children from one school to another will be amended in a manner laying down one law for all of Israel's children, including the pupils of the independent educational stream.
21. Steps will be taken to make the rights of the independent educational stream--which is anchored in law--equal in all its stages--pre-elementary, secondary, seminars--to the state educational stream, while preserving and guaranteeing educational autonomy. Steps will be taken to correct the distortion in the establishment of structures for the independent educational stream, and the situation of the structures for the independent educational stream shall at an early stage be equalized with that of the state educational stream.
22. The minister of education shall examine the coalition agreement of 29 October 1974, and shall work for the implementation of the clauses that were not carried out.
23. With a view to centralizing in the ministry of education all the educational branches and activities existing in the various ministries, the prime minister shall examine the ways to achieve this with the ministers concerned.
24. The restrictions on the opening of yeshivot hesder (yeshiva-study combined with military service) in development and border regions shall be lifted, and the restrictions on service in yeshivot hesder for secondary yeshivot graduates shall be annulled.
25. Provision shall be made for students of secondary and vocational yeshivot, as well as penitents, to be accepted in the yeshivot.
26. Service in the yeshivot hesder shall be open also to graduates of vocational yeshivot and graduates of religious secondary schools' Tora-study trends.
27. A girl submitting a declaration to the effect that reasons of a religious mode of life or a religious family existence preclude her serving in the Israel Defence Forces--said declaration being attested by a rabbinical court or by a court of law--shall be exempt from service solely on the strength of her declaration, without any further investigation by any committee or factor whatsoever. The minister of defence shall abolish the regulations concerning exemption committees extant for the purpose of exemption of religious girls only, and shall promulgate regulations in accordance with the aforesaid.
28. (A) The factions signatory to this agreement shall ensure by means of legislation, that the lawfully approved budgets of religious councils shall be implemented by the religious councils themselves without dependence on the local authority.
(B) The issue of working conditions of employees and elected representatives of religious councils shall be reviewed.
29. Steps will be taken to get early approval by the ninth Knesset for the bill for the "amendment of the penal code (enticement to convert by means of giving money or material benefit) 1975," which was tabled by M.K. Y.M. Abramowitz, and was referred by the eighth Knesset to committee.
31. In any laws to be enacted, no further rights will be granted to a "common-law wife."
32. The government shall propose to the Knesset to apply the continuity law to the law against fraud in kashrut, which received second and

- third readings in its original form, as tabled in the eighth Knesset by the previous government, with the amendment that appeals concerning halachic considerations may be referred to the rabbinic high court of appeals.
33. Steps will be taken for the prevention of marketing of pork in Jewish-populated areas. If the extant law does not enable attainment of this goal, the relevant legislation shall be supplemented.
 34. The minister of justice shall give positive consideration to replacing--in courts of law--the custom of deposition on oath by declaration of word of honour.
 35. The Western and Southern Walls of the Temple Mount in Jerusalem shall remain under the authority of the religious affairs ministry's halachic committee.
 36. There shall be no change insofar as relates to implementation of the National Service Law 1953.
 37. The government shall display consideration for the special needs of the religious and orthodox community, such as: yeshivot, including yeshiva students, Talmud Toras and theological seminaries, Tora-lesson network for adults and youth, hospitals, ritual baths and synagogues.
 38. The possibility shall be examined of expanding the employment authority directorate, so as to include representation of additional workers' organizations.
 39. The Antiquities Law 5736-1976 shall be passed on third reading, with the reservation of Knesset member Y.M. Abramowitz, as it was passed on second reading by the eighth Knesset.
 40. The erosion which has come about in the jurisdiction and authority of the rabbinical courts since enactment of the law shall be rectified inter alia the following corrections shall be made:
 - (A) The rabbinical courts shall be given every authority which is given to the labour courts in the enforcement of rulings.
 - (B) The matter of paternity shall be included in the parallel judicial framework of the rabbinical courts with the consent of the parties on the basis of paragraph 9 of the Rabbinical Courts Jurisdiction (Marriage and Divorce) Law 5713-1953.
 - (C) The question of jurisdiction in matters of marriage and divorce in cases where only one member of the couple is a resident or citizen shall be examined. In accordance with the findings of the examination the government shall strive to find a solution to the problem in the framework of the Marriage and Divorce Law.
 - (D) Paragraph 155 of the Inheritance Law 5735-1965 shall be amended to provide that a rabbinical Court shall have the authority to appoint an executor of an estate and to issue a distribution order with regard to the assets of the estate when the parties concerned are agreed thereto.
 - (E) The rabbinical court shall have the authority to appoint a guardian apropos a proceeding within its authority, in consultation and collaboration with the ministry of welfare and the general guardian.
 - (F) A way shall be found to activate the special court (in accordance with paragraph 55 of the king's order in council) in cases where there arises a question of authority.

- (G) The government shall examine the status of the dayanim (religious judges) with a view to improving it.
- (H) The Religious Courts Law (prevention of interference) 5725-1965 shall be amended.
- (I) The government shall examine the ways of providing the rabbinical courts with ongoing authority in matters of alimony and child custody.
41. The representatives of Agudat Israel shall have freedom of action in the Knesset in everything to do with matters of religion.
 42. Within three months of the formation of the government, a coalition committee shall be set up to draft a bill for changing the election system to a regional proportional one. After the details of the bill have been worked out to the satisfaction of all the partners of the coalition, the bill shall be submitted for the approval of the Knesset.
 43. A limited committee headed by the prime minister shall be set up to see to the implementation of the agreement and all the provisions thereof, including conversion according to Halacha, within a reasonable time, and to solve problems which may be raised by any of the parties to this agreement.

Source: Jerusalem Post, June 21, 1977, p. 4.

VITA

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