**5. Political Parties**

**Summary:** political parties are voluntary associations of people who seek to control the government for common principles based upon peaceful and legal actions, such as the winning of elections. Political parties, along with interest groups, the media, and elections service the linkage mechanism that brings together the people and the government while holding the government responsible for its actions. Political parties differ from interest groups in that, interest groups to not nominate candidates for office.

Roles of Political Parties

* *Parties in the electorate* – all of the people who associate themselves with \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

*\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*

* *Parties in the government* – all of the appointed and elected officials of the national, state, and local levels who represent the party as members; officeholders
* *Party in the organization*—all of the people of the various levels of the party organization will work to maintain the strength of the party between elections, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, and organize the conventions and party functions.

One-party system

In a one-party system only one party exists \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. Generally, membership is not voluntary in those who do belong to the party represent a small portion of the population. Party leaders must approve candidates for political office, and voters have no real choice. The result is a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

Two-Party System

In a two party system there may be several political parties but \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and dominate elections. Minor parties generally have little effect on most elections, especially the national level. The \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ system makes it difficult for third party candidates to affect presidential elections.

It would be almost impossible for a third party candidate to actually win a state, which is necessary to capture electoral votes. Systems that operate under the two-party system usually have a general consensus, or agreement, among citizens about the basic principles of government, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of carrying them out.

The use of single member districts promotes the two-party System. Voters are given an “either or choice”, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. The two-party System tends to enhance governmental stability; because both parties want to appeal to the largest number of voters, they tend to avoid extremes in ideology.

Multiparty System

Multiparty systems exist when several major parties and a number of minor parties compete in elections, and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. This type of system can be composed of 4 to 20 different parties, based on a particular region, ideology, or clan position, and is often found in European nations, as well as another democratic societies.

The multiparty system is usually a result of a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ rather than one single member districts. The idea behind multiparty systems is to give voters meaningful choices. This does not always occur because of two major problems: in many elections, no party has a clear majority of the vote, and not receiving a majority forces the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. A multiparty system tends to promote instability in government, especially when coalition governments are formed.

What Do Political Parties Do?

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ – five candidates interest in running for public office, especially if no incumbent is running

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ – help raise money and run candidate campaigns are the party organization

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ – inform the voters about the candidates encourage voters to participate the election

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_—the organization of Congress and state legislators is based on political party controls (majority vs. Minority party); political appointments are often made based on political party affiliation

Party Identification and Membership

Membership in American political parties is voluntary. There are no dues to pay; membership is based on party identification. If you believe you’re a member of a particular political party, then you are. Most states \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. Most people choose to belong to a political party that shares their views on issues or the role of government. Several factors may influence party identification:

* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* Education
* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* Occupation
* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* Gender
* Religion
* Family tradition
* Region of the country
* Marital status

However, a large number of Americans choose not to join any political party, instead \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

The Two-Party Tradition in America

The constitution \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, and the founding fathers at first did not intend to create them. James Madison, in *Federalist #10*, warned of the divisiveness of “factions.” George Washington was elected president without party labels and in his farewell address warned against the” baneful effects of the spirit of the party.”

During the process for ratification of the constitution, federalism and anti federalists conflicted over ideals concerning the proper role of government. This conflict resulted in the development of the first political parties: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ as they were later called.

Why a two party tradition?

Although there’ve been numerous minor parties throughout its history, why has the United States maintain the Two-Party tradition?

*\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_* – British heritage, federalists and anti federalist divisions

*\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_* – single member districts mean that only one representative is chosen from each district’s (one winner per office)

*\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_* – vary from state to state, which makes it difficult for minor parties to get on the ballot in many states

Rise of Political Parties: Party Developments (1789-1800)

The earliest political parties began to develop under the administration of George Washington. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, secretary of the treasury, supported a strong national government; his followers became known as \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

Secretary of state \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. The clash between these two individuals and their supporters went to the development of political parties. In the election of 1796, Jefferson challenge john Adams, the federalist candidate, for the presidency but lost. By 1800 Jefferson was able to rally his supporters and win the presidency.

Democratic Domination (1800-1860)

The \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ dominated the government for 1800 to 1824, when they split into factions. The faction led by Andrew Jackson, the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, won the presidency in 1828 the major opposition to the democrats during this time was the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

Although the Whigs were a powerful opposition party in the U.S. Congress, they were that able \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, in 1840 with the victory of William Henry Harrison and in 1848 with that of Zachary Taylor. From that election until the election of 1860, Democrats dominated American politics. The Democratic Party became known as the party of the” the common man,” encouraging popular participation, and helping to bring about an expansion of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

Republican Domination (1860-1932)

The Republican Party began as a third party, developed from a split in the Whig party. The Whigs had been the major opposition to the Democrats. By 1860 the Whig party had disappeared and the Republican Party had emerged as the second major party. The Republican Party was composed mostly of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, appealing to commercial and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .

The Republican Party was successful electing \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ president 1860, and by the end of the Civil War it become the dominant party. Sometimes called the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, the Republican Party often controlled both the presidency and Congress.

Return of the Democrats (1932-1968)

With the onset of the Great Depression, new electoral coalitions were formed and the Republicans lost their domination of government. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ was able to unite blacks, city dwellers, blue collar (labor union) workers, Catholics, Jews, and women to create a voting bloc known as the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

The election of 1932 brought the Democrats back to power as the dominant party in American politics. Roosevelt was elected to the presidency \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. From 1932 to 1968 only two republican presidents (\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_) were elected. Not until 1994 did the Republicans gain control of both houses of Congress.

Divided Government (1968-Present)

Since 1968 dividedgovernment has characterized American institutions, a condition in which one political party \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. This division creates a potential \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_when opposing parties and interests often block each other’s proposals, creating a political stalemate.

In the election of 2000, George W. Bush won the presidency and the Republican Party won control of the House of Representatives and Senate (until Jim Jeffords changed affiliation to Independent). In the midterm election of 2002, the Republicans gained control of the executive and legislative branches, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

In the 2006 off-year election, the Democrats won control of both houses of Congress, returning divided government a U.S. politics. In the 2008 elections, the Democrats \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_,although few predicted that this would permanently end the air of divided government.

Electoral Dealignment

When significant numbers of voters \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, dealignment has occurred. Often, those voters identify as the independents and believe they owe no loyalty to any particular political party.

Electoral Realignment

Historically, as voting patterns have shifted new coalitions of party supporters have formed, electoral realignment has occurred. Several elections can be considered as realigning elections, where the dominant party loses power and a new dominant party takes its place. The elections of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. Many consider the 1980 election in this light; it remains to be seen if the 2008 election will have the same impact.

Third or Minor Parties

Although the Republican and Democratic parties have dominated the political scene, there have been minor, or third, parties throughout U.S. history. Minor parties usually have great difficulty in getting candidates elected office, although they have been \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

A few minor party candidates have been elected to Congress, but \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. Minor parties have been instrumental in providing important reforms that have been adopted by major parties. Success rather than failure often brings an end to minor parties, as the major parties often adopt popular forms were ideas, especially if they appeal to the voters.

**Types of third parties**

Some third parties have been permanent, running candidates in every election; however, many third parties disappear after only a few elections. Several types of minor parties have emerged:

*\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*– those based on a particular set of social, political, or economic beliefs (Communist, Socialist, Libertarian)

*\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_* – those that have split away from one of the major parties; usually formed around a strong personality who does not win the party nomination; may disappear when the leader steps aside (Theodore Roosevelt’s “Bull Moose” Progressive, Strom Thurmond’s “States Rights”, George Wallace’s “American Independent”)

*\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*—parties the concentrate on a single public policy matter (Free Soil, Right to life, Prohibition)

*\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*– usually rooted periods of economic discontent; maybe sectional and nature (Greenback, Populist)

Structure and Organization of Political Parties

A political party must have an effective organization to accomplish its goals. Both of the major parties are organized in much the same manner. Both parties are highly decentralized, or fragmented. The party of the president is normally more solidly united than the opposition. The president is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_,while the opposition is often without a single strong leader. Usually one or more members of Congress are seen as the opposition leaders.

**National Convention**

The national convention serves as the party’s national voice. Party delegates meet in the summer of every fourth year to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. They are also responsible for writing and adopting the party’s platform, which describes the policy beliefs of the party.

**National Committee**

The national committee \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. They are responsible for selecting the convention site, establishing the rules of the convention, publishing and distributing party literature, and helping the party raise campaign contributions.

**National Chairperson**

The party’s national committee, with the consent of the party’s presidential nominee, elects the **national chairperson**. The chairperson is responsible for \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ from the national headquarters in Washington, D.C. the chairperson is involved in fund raising, recruiting new party members, encouraging unity within the party, and helping the party’s presidential nominee win the election.

**Congressional Campaign Committee**

Each party has a committee in the House of Representatives and Senate that works to ensure the election or reelection of the party’s candidates by raising funds and determining how much money and support each candidate will receive. The committee often works to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

**State and Local Organization**

State law a largely determine state and local party organization. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_; however, state and local parties are structured much the same way as the national party organization. Generally, state parties today are more organized and better funded than in previous years.

As a result of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, money is distributed for the national political party organization and it does not have to be reported under the Federal election campaign act (1971) or its amendments, state parties and become more dependent on the national party organization and are subject to their influence. In 2002, however, the use of soft money was significantly restricted by the bipartisan campaign reform act also known as the Mccain-Feingold Act

Future of Political Parties

The future of political parties the United States is uncertain. In recent decades, political parties have been in decline. This decline may be attributed to several factors:

* *\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ -* in recent elections third party challengers have taken votes from the major candidates, lessening their ability to win a majority of the vote
* *\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ -* an increasing number of independent voters.
* *\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ -* many voters no longer vote a straight ticket (only for candidates of one political party) but rather split their vote among candidates for more than one party.
* *\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ -* that voters often believe there are no major differences in the parties for their candidates.
* *\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ -* changes within the parties themselves to create greater diversity and openness have allowed for greater conflict within some parties.
* *\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ -* new technologies allow candidates to become more independent of parties and more directly involved with voters.

**Rapid Review:**

* Political parties are voluntary associations of voters.
* Political parties are different from interest groups.
* Political parties serve the party in the electorate, in government, and in organization.
* One-party, two-party, and multi-party systems exist throughout the world.
* Political parties recruit candidates, nominate and support candidates for office, educate the electorate, and organize the government.
* Party identification may be based on several factors.
* The Constitution does not call for political parties. Two parties developed from factions during the ratification process.
* Historically, there have been periods of one-party domination of the government. More recently, divided control of the branches of government has led to potential gridlock.
* Minor parties have existed throughout American history. There are four major types of minor parties: ideological, splinter/personality, single-issue, and protest parties.
* Political parties must have organization to accomplish their goals. American political parties tend to be decentralized and fragmented.
* The future of political parties in America is uncertain.

**Key Terms:**

Political Parties Two-Party System Single-Member Districts New Deal Coalition

Gridlock Dealignment Realignment National Chairperson

Soft Money Straight Ticket Divided Government