

Seymour Martin Lipset  
and the Study of Democracy

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**T**HROUGHOUT this century, and especially since World War II, no theme has more preoccupied the fields of comparative politics and political sociology than the nature, conditions, and possibilities of democracy. And no political scientist or sociologist has contributed more to advancing our thinking about democracy-in all its dimensions, both comparatively and in the United States-than Seymour Martin Lipset. It is in some sense fitting, then, that this *Festschrift* in honor of Lipset is devoted to rethinking the character and development of democracy in the United States and the world.

There are other fruitful conjunctures that make this a timely moment of reflection and celebration. On the one hand, democracy is now resurgent in the world. More than 15 years since the onset of the "third wave" of global democratic expansion (Huntington, 199 1), considerably more countries have (more or less) democratic forms of governance than ever before-some 65 in 1990, by the count of Freedom House (1991), and that number has since increased. On the other hand, the performance of many long-standing democracies, not least the United States, is proving less than satisfactory to their publics, who are demanding reform.

There is also a happy personal conjuncture-especially for the many scholars of democracy and society (including all the contributors to this volume) who have had the benefit of studying under Marty Lipset. This year marks not only a numerical milestone in his life, but a professional one as well. With his election in 1991 to the presidency of the American Sociological Association

(which he will assume later this year), Lipset becomes the only social scientist ever to serve as president of both the American Sociological and Political Science associations. During the first four decades of his scholarly career, he has also served as president of the World Association for Public Opinion Research, president of the International Society of Political Psychology, and vice president of the International Political Science Association—to mention only a few of the roughly 20 offices he has held in professional societies. This is not to mention the numerous distinguished awards, honorary degrees, and honorific memberships he has received. Author (or coauthor) of 21 books and scholarly articles too numerous to count, and editor or coeditor of 25 more, he is one of the most prolific social scientists of this century. No living political scientist or sociologist is more frequently cited by other scholars. Few social science books in our times have had the impact of his *Political Man*, for example, which has been published in 16 other countries, including Japan, Turkey, India, Yugoslavia, Israel, and Vietnam. Few social scientists are more admired for the range of their intellects, or more beloved for their friendship, decency, and humanity. The essays in this volume are a tribute to Marty Lipset, the scholar and the person.

Of course, no *Festschrift* could do justice to the extraordinary range of Seymour Martin Lipset's intellectual contributions. His books and articles have sought to elucidate such diverse phenomena as the political and social origins of socialism (or the absence of socialism), fascism, revolution, protest, ethnic prejudice, anti-Semitism, and political extremism; the sources and consequences of class structure, class consciousness, class conflict, and social mobility; the links among social cleavages, party systems, and voter alignments; the connections between voter preferences and electoral outcomes; the dense reciprocal relations between values and institutions; the changing character of such diverse institutions as trade unions and higher education (and even unions in higher education!); the determinants and dynamics of public opinion and public confidence in institutions; the role of religion in American life; the political behavior of American Jews; the conditions of the democratic order; and the differences among cultures, especially the contrast (which has fascinated him throughout his scholarly life) between Canada and the United States. Across this sweeping landscape of classical and pioneering issues in the social sciences, Lipset has brought a consistently lucid and strikingly accessible analytical style and a breathtaking array of sources and evidence that have made his works among the most popular and widely used, both by teachers and by researchers. More striking still, he has explored virtually every one of these issues authoritatively both across nations and with a specific focus on the United States. And he has published with equal distinction as a social historian and as an astute commentator on the politics, culture, and conflicts of our time. Few living social scientists could lay claim to such a broad and broadly honored set of works.

Yet, within this great and restless diversity of questions, issues, methods, and foci, we think there lies a core theme to Lipset's work. That core is composed

of the conditions, problems, dynamics, values, and institutions of democracy, both in the United States and comparatively throughout the world. Thus we have chosen democracy as the theme of this *Festschrift*.

#### REFLECTIONS ON THE CHARACTER OF DEMOCRACY

In elaborating the liberal, pluralist approach to the conditions of the democratic order that pervades his writing on the subject, Lipset has been heavily influenced by classical political thinkers, dating back to Aristotle. Indeed, he frequently acknowledges this intellectual debt, as with the selections from Aristotle that introduce *Political Man*. These passages emphasize the crucial link between political order and the rule of law; the dangers of political extremism and unfettered populism; the importance to democracy of limited inequality, a large middle class, and political moderation. These themes resonate powerfully and continuously through Lipset's writings on politics and governance and have significantly shaped his theoretical and philosophical approach.

Of course, as with any great social scientist, Lipset's thinking has been strongly influenced by a variety of preceding theorists, including Robert Michels, Talcott Parsons, Karl Marx, and, perhaps most of all, Max Weber. But with reference to the conditions of democracy, Lipset's intellectual affinity with Alexis De Tocqueville is also noteworthy. As Lipset observes in his introduction to *Political Man*, Tocqueville, struggling with many of the same momentous, nineteenth-century issues and conflicts as Karl Marx, came to very different conclusions. Rejecting the desirability or inevitability of conflict polarization and revolution, Tocqueville "deliberately chose to emphasize those aspects of social units which could maintain political cleavage and political consensus at the same time" (Lipset, 1960/1981, p. 7). This concern for the factors that contain political conflict within a framework of consensus, and so neutralize the demand for violent and revolutionary change, has been an enduring theme in Lipset's writings on democracy and society. Following Tocqueville, it has led him to an intellectual and normative interest in gradual change, political accommodation, and the sources of political legitimacy; in limiting the power of the state; and in independent, voluntary associations as one important means for controlling the state and otherwise developing the social infrastructure of a free society.

An abiding concern for avoiding the polarization of conflict, the formation of extremist political movements and preferences, or the elimination of all conflict in a state-dominated "mass society" runs through much of Lipset's writing on the conditions of the democratic order. In *Political Man* he demonstrates the importance, for these democratic ends, of historical legitimacy, effective performance, social mobility, and cross-cutting cleavages, as well as the gradual incorporation into the polity of newly mobilizing social groups. His analyses there of the dynamics of legitimacy and the effects of cleavage

structure are among the clearest and most compelling in political sociology. These and related issues of democratic development are further advanced in *The First New Nation* (1963/1979), which highlights the importance of political leadership and political values, and the determinants and consequences of party systems.

One of Lipset's enduring contributions to our understanding of democratic stability is the notion of cross-cutting cleavages or pressures that reduce the intensity of political emotions and assure individuals who are in the minority on one issue that they may form the majority on other issues. In his contribution to this volume, James Coleman offers a proposal for sustaining democracy in societies where individuals are not subject to cross-cutting pressures but are, instead, encompassed within rigid ethnic or cultural cleavages that relegate some people to the position of a permanent minority. One solution to this, as Coleman notes, is to decentralize decision making within smaller geographical units so as to provide a degree of self-government to each ethnic, religious, or linguistic enclave. But the force of this solution is undercut where rigid groups are territorially enmeshed. Coleman's proposal for sustaining democracy under such circumstances is simple, but profound. In place of majoritarian decision making in the legislature, he proposes that each legislator be given a quantity of fungible votes ("kaldors"), any number of which can be bid in support of or opposition to particular legislative bills. Winners compensate losers to the extent of their original bids for or against the legislation. Hence a defeated minority is able to build its store of votes for a future occasion when it has the prospect of winning, irrespective of the relative size of its constituency. Such a system is attuned to intensity of interest as well as sheer numbers, and provides minorities with constitutional channels for gaining some of what they want. This problem of contending nationalisms and the need to protect national minorities-so fiercely salient again on the world stage-is also addressed by Juan Linz in Chapter 9.

Few, if any, scholars of the conditions of democracy have been more concerned than Lipset with various forms of conflict and competition. Democracy, according to Lipset (1960/1981), "requires institutions which support conflict and disagreement as well as those which sustain legitimacy and consensus" (p. 439). Lipset is clearly in the Schumpeterian tradition that views free competition among political parties as a defining feature of democracy. In Chapter 2 of this volume, Kaare Strom identifies two basic approaches to political competition elaborated in the Schumpeterian and Downsian traditions and proceeds to unpack democratic competition into two components: political contestability and situational competitiveness. Democratic contestability exists where the entry conditions facing potential new political parties are low. Situational competitiveness is present when the stakes of competition are high, -when electoral victory is determined by party choice and performance rather than structural or random factors, and when no party is inherently favored over others. Viewed in this way, democracy is fundamentally a matter of risk induced by intense competition.

Amitai Etzioni, by contrast, emphasizes in Chapter 4 the need for shared virtues or communitarian values that bind a democratic society together, curb "contentiousness and litigiousness," and so help "to resolve differences."

Pluralism must fit within some kind of overarching normative unity; "some ultimate values must be shared" if the diversity in a democratic society is to be contained democratically. Acknowledging liberal fears that such communitarian values could lead to the kind of majoritarian political domination that concerns Coleman in his essay, or constrain individual cultural freedom to be different, he maintains, "Rights can be protected if communitarian virtues include tolerance for one another and, above all, a clear demarcation of the areas that deservedly lie in the public realm and those that ought to be left to individual choice and subgroup preferences." Moreover, Etzioni stresses that "nothing makes for more government and ultimate coercion ... than the absence of shared morals, backed by strong commitments." To the degree that society lacks shared virtues, the maintenance of civic order must depend more and more on compulsion and coercion by the state. Turning the liberal objection on its head, Etzioni maintains that it is precisely strong collective (consensual) moral foundations that limit state intervention. These collective virtues also produce political legitimacy in a democracy "by providing ... public accord about the nature of justice and the need for the public pursuit of the ... common good."

In Chapter 5, Immanuel Wallerstein argues that from 1917 to 1989 the modern world-system was dominated by two rival, yet essentially similar, ideologies: Wilsonianism and Leninism. Both supported decolonization and saw national development as the key to integrating the periphery into the world-system. According to Wallerstein, the political practices of pro-American and pro-Soviet states were not that different: "Even when states had a multiparty system in formal terms, one party tended in reality to dominate the institutions and to be impervious to change of regime other than by military coup d'etat." He finds the same picture of essential similarity in the importance placed on economic modernization in noncore countries within both the American and Soviet spheres of influence. Wallerstein goes on to argue that the consensus between Wilsonianism and Leninism on the importance of national economic development no longer holds, and this is so because of two developments: the revolution of 1968 and economic stagnation from 1970 to 1990. Because there are no real prospects of economic transformation in the periphery, the failure of Leninism has left Wilsonians "in a quandary," which, Wallerstein expects, will feature more dramatic North-South confrontations in the decades to come.

#### THE CONDITIONS OF DEMOCRACY

One of the richest and most important currents in Lipset's work has concerned the conditions of the democratic order. Very few contributions on this theme have proven more seminal and durable over time than his 1959 article in the *American Political Science Review*, "Some Social Requisites of Democracy: Economic Development and Political Legitimacy" (republished in *ical Man* as "Economic Development and Democracy"). As Larry Diamond demonstrates in Chapter 6 of this volume, Lipset's assertion of a direct relationship

between economic development and democracy has been subjected to extensive empirical examination, both quantitative and qualitative, in the last 30 years. And the evidence shows, with striking clarity and consistency, a strong causal relationship between economic development and democracy. The relationship is not as linear as Lipset implied. It has been subject to weakening or reversal at middle levels of development. But across a wide range of studies, with a great variety of samples, time periods, and statistical methods, the level of economic development-or, as Diamond has slightly reformulated it, the level of "human development"-continues to be the single most powerful predictor of the likelihood of democracy. Moreover, there is much historical evidence to support Lipset's hypotheses about the causal dynamics involved: that development promotes democracy by generating more democratic values and attitudes, a less polarized class structure, a larger middle class, and a more vigorous, autonomous associational life. It is these intervening variables, Diamond shows in his reexamination both of Lipset's theory and of the evidence, that hold the key to developing stable democracy.

In Chapter 3, Gary Marks analyzes the transition from an authoritarian to a more liberal regime in terms of strategic interaction between the ruling elite and its political opposition. In contrast to correlative approaches in which democratization is viewed as a probabilistic function of independent variables, . Marks argues that there is a region of indeterminacy in political change where choices of key political actors are dependent on their perceptions of other actors' strategic intentions. In the model Marks describes, regime change depends on strategic interactions that are extremely sensitive to exogenous factors, such as the death of a political leader or a revolution in a neighboring state that may accentuate divisions within the ruling elite or galvanize protest against the regime. Regime change, in Marks's view, is subject to the butterfly effect noted in chaos theory: Very small variations in initial conditions may have disproportionately large effects. Hence it is inappropriate to theorize about democratization, or regime change in general, in terms of statements having the form, "If  $X_1, X_2, \dots, X_n$  then this probability of  $Y$ ." Marks argues that indeterminacy in political change does not result from the inadequacy of our present state of knowledge, but is an inherent feature of certain kinds of strategic interaction among actors whose choices are influenced by their anticipation of the choices of others.

In addition to these essays, three others in this collection address aspects of Lipset's work on the conditions of democracy. Taking up the problem of one of Lipset's earliest and most celebrated works, *Union Democracy* (Lipset, Trow, & Coleman, 1956), Maurice Zeitlin and his former student Judith Stepan-Norris, in Chapter 12, challenge the notion, going back to Robert Michels, that there is an ineluctable tendency toward oligarchy in labor unions. While they draw on particular hypotheses put forward by Lipset, Trow, and Coleman, they do not share the view that democracy in a labor union is an exceptional phenomenon demanding treatment as a "deviant case." Instead of searching for functional conditions of democracy, Zeitlin and Stepan-Norris inquire into the kinds of

political struggles that promote constitutional provisions establishing basic democratic political rights. Based upon a comparison of formal constitutions and political developments in CIO international unions in the 1940s, they find that the level of union democracy is influenced by the intensity of political struggle within the union, particularly in its founding period. Generally speaking, the stronger the internal factionalism within a union, the greater its level of constitutional democracy. Democracy tends to be stronger in unions that originated as amalgams of disparate, or even hostile, groupings rather than as unitary organizations incorporating new members, and in unions that were created from the bottom up by the efforts of independent grass-roots organizers rather than from the top down by a centralized CIO committee. Zeitlin and Stepan-Norris conclude, in Lipsetian fashion, that democracy and political conflict are symbiotically related, for, in the context of labor unions, "insurgency and democracy are inseparable."

In Chapter 7, Carlos Waisman analyzes a different problem in the relationship between economic structure and democracy-the role of capitalism, and of the specific *form* of capitalism. His concern is with the effects on democracy of a capitalist system in which private property coexists with severe impediments to the operation of the market, as a result of a highly protectionist strategy of industrialization. This constricted, "autarkic" form of capitalism gave rise to political polarization, crisis, and democratic breakdown in Argentina, Uruguay, and Chile, because it produced economic stagnation (after an initial period of "easy" growth) and highly mobilized, rent-seeking classes with a strong interest in preserving noncompetitive, protected industries. By identifying market orientation-specifically, openness to international economic competition-as an important structural condition of democracy, Waisman adds significantly to our understanding of the relationship between capitalism and democracy. By illuminating the long-term historical impact on democratic legitimacy of economic stagnation and consequent political polarization, he reinforces Lipset's arguments about the impacts of economic performance and cleavage structure on the legitimacy and stability of democracy.

Reflecting on his own reactions as a student to Lipset's "Party Systems and the Representation of Social Groups" (published in revised version in *The First New Nation*), Philippe Schmitter turns to the question of how the representation of social groups shapes the consolidation of new democracies. In the spirit of Lipset's concern in that essay for the consequences of alternative institutional arrangements, Schmitter argues, "The core of the consolidation dilemma lies in coming up with a set of institutions that politicians can agree upon and citizens are willing to support." But the consequential institutions do not involve only constitutional structures and party and electoral systems. Parties, Schmitter suggests, are today less central to the representation of interests than they were in the past. Interest associations and social movements have increased in importance, and therefore the rules structuring their involvement in the polity become a crucial issue in the contemporary process of democratic consolidation. Democratic regimes must be disaggregated analytically into "partial regimes" of governance and

conflict resolution. These constitute many different types of democracy. The nature of the "representation regime"-how class, sectoral, and professional associations are structured and related to the structures of political power-will significantly affect the type and quality of democracy that emerges.

The declining centrality of political parties is one of several elements of change in democracies that concern Juan Linz in Chapter 9 of this volume. While the end of ideology strengthens the democratic prospect by eliminating rival legitimating formulas and by reducing political polarization, it also weakens democratic functioning by accentuating the decline of political parties. In the future, Linz believes, individuals moved by ideas are more likely to become mobilized by single-issue movements or "by a diffuse hostility to politics." The erosion of class barriers and the multiplication of interests in society reinforce this trend because they break down the traditional social bases of parties and increase the salience of cultural, life-style, and age-related issues. Political parties are less able to articulate coherent, sharply distinctive programs as interests become increasingly fluid and complex.

As Schmitter also observes, these various changes "are not all negative," but they will have sweeping implications for the ways that democracies function and legitimate themselves: for the recruitment of political candidates, the formation of policies, and the personalization and professionalization of politics (trends that William Schneider also addresses in his essay on U.S. politics). Some innovations could be dangerous, as may be the case (ironically) with the internal democratization of nongovernment institutions, which could "introduce into previously nonpolitical settings ... the conflicts of the larger society," as Linz puts it. Urging us to pay closer attention to the varieties of democracy and the ways they function, Linz proposes a rich agenda for systematic cross-national research on a number of issues that determine the quality of democratic governance: the tensions and trade-offs between independent representation and party cohesion and discipline; the political impact of different electoral cycles; the values, attitudes, professional motivations, social ties, role conflicts, and coping mechanisms of today's politicians; and the sources of growing public cynicism with politics-"the confidence gap"-which, again, occupies a central place in Schneider's analysis of U.S. politics in Chapter 15. Such comparative analysis is crucial, Linz suggests, not only for improving democracy but for achieving a realistic understanding of the limits of various types of democracies, and thereby perhaps mitigating the potential for disillusionment with democracy.

#### AMERICAN EXCEPTIONALISM

From the time of his Ph.D. dissertation and first published book, *Agrarian Socialism: The Cooperative Commonwealth Federation in Saskatchewan* (Lipset, 1950/1971), which compared the contrasting experiences of left radicalism in Saskatchewan and the U.S. Northwest, to his forthcoming book reevaluating

the reasons for the weakness of socialism in the United States (Lipset & Marks, in press), Seymour Martin Lipset has sought to explain the unique character of American politics. This project has led him to work on a range of topics, including the U.S. Constitution, political parties and electoral systems, federalism, labor unions, academic and student politics, culture, religion, law and crime, welfare, immigration, and literature, to name just a few. Marty Lipset's writings in these areas have been immensely influential, and he is sensibly regarded as a full-fledged Americanist as well as a comparativist, though he has done as much as any scholar to break down the boundary between these subfields.

Three basic themes are interwoven throughout Lipset's work on U.S. politics and society. First, he has consistently elaborated the view that the United States is exceptional, even among the English-speaking settler societies. The most striking evidence of this can be seen in the unique absence in this country of a socialist or labor party, the relative weakness of class consciousness and labor organization, and the relative paucity of welfare provision. These are topics that Lipset has explored in detail in many publications spanning the last four decades. Among these writings are some justly famous and much-cited works, including *The First New Nation* (1963/1979) and *Continental Divide* (1990), and lesser-known gems such as "Why No Socialism in the United States?" (1977).

A second theme underlying Lipset's writing is that values are a critical source of variation in national behavior. Lipset has always been extremely sensitive to the need to develop multicausal explanations for complex social phenomena, and his explanations of American exceptionalism stress a range of political variables, including characteristics of the U.S. political system and political leadership, alongside such social variables as societal stratification and immigration. At the same time, however, Lipset has given special attention to the role of culture, tracing the exceptional strength of individualism, antistatism, and egalitarianism in the United States to the country's founding period.

Third, virtually all of Lipset's writings on the United States are motivated by the conviction that an understanding of American politics and society involves a comparative perspective, which is best pursued by relating the United States to countries with which it has the most in common-that is, English-speaking developed countries, particularly Canada. As Lipset (1990) concludes in his most recent book, *Continental Divide: The Values and Institutions of the United States and Canada*: "Canadians and Americans will never be alike, but Americans can learn more about Canada, and Canadians can learn more about why Americans are as they are. And by so doing they will come to understand their own countries better" (p. 227).

These themes are variously taken up in the chapters in this volume by Theda Skocpol, Martin Trow, Amos Perlmutter, Ann Swidler, and William -Schneider. Theda Skocpol reassesses the U.S. pattern of social policy, arguing that while social security provision was relatively late and weak, some aspects of welfare provision, particularly for women (and children), were relatively early and comprehensive. In place of the characterization of the United States as a "welfare state laggard," Skocpol argues that from 1900 to the 1920s "America

came close to creating a pioneering maternalist welfare state." To explain this, Skocpol explores the influence of the peculiarly fragmented American state in setting institutional limits for social provision and in providing opportunities for collective action and political alliances among social groups. Here, Skocpol makes the telling point that the early extension of the franchise to all white males-but not to women-weakened working-class organization *and* created sharper gender-based lines of political differentiation than in any other industrialized society. On the one hand, working-class demands for a comprehensive regime of public social provision were weak; on the other, women reacted strongly against their political exclusion, and were able to gain some impressive maternal welfare provisions.

In Chapter 13, Martin Trow observes that mass education in the United States has reflected and reinforced individualism by providing plentiful opportunity for individual advancement. The ethos of education is "Rise out of your class, not with it," and, Trow stresses, this makes it diametrically opposed to socialism, trade unionism, and, indeed, any collectivist movement in which the life chances of an individual are tied to those of the group as a whole. Trow goes on to shed light on some of the direct and indirect links between the relatively early and broad development of education in the United States and the exceptional weakness of socialist and union movements. The negative relationship between these social phenomena is particularly evident in the period since World War II, which has seen college enrollment increase from 1.5 to 14 million and the level of union membership drop by more than half. In the final section of his chapter, Trow argues that the recent innovation of affirmative action challenges individualism in education by giving priority to racial identity. He warns of the creation of racially based group identities in education that are more inflexible than previous ethnic or class identities.

Amos Perlmutter, in Chapter 10, compares the principles of foreign policy in the United States and Israel in the periods following their independence. Although the two countries differ in many respects, not least in size and population, Perlmutter emphasizes that they share some exceptional characteristics bearing on foreign policy. Both countries saw themselves as exceptional societies that would serve as havens for persecuted people. Regimes in both countries had their origins in a revolutionary outlook: the United States as a liberal republic based on eighteenth-century republican antimonarchism, and Israel, 160 years later, as a republic based on socialism. Consequently, the foreign policies of both countries were profoundly influenced by moral precepts. However, as Perlmutter shows, ideology was pursued in the context of pragmatic concerns. In the United States, Jeffersonian and Hamiltonian approaches to foreign policy agreed on the desirability of neutrality, though they interpreted it differently and shared the goal of territorial expansion pursued through traditional power politics. Through the 1940s the major Zionist group, Mapai, and later Israel itself, pursued a policy of neutrality between the United States and the Soviet Union that reflected both principles of nonidentification and practical concerns, until in the early 1950s it became clear that Israel's future lay in closer relations with the West.

In Chapter 14, Ann Swidler reexamines the causal underpinnings of continuity in American values. She offers three thought-provoking explanations for the persistence of egalitarianism and individual achievement emphasized by Lipset in *The First New Nation* and subsequent writings. First, American values may persist as a distinct national identity that continually reemerges in accounts of U.S. relations with other states. From this perspective, the events of the founding of the United States, as emphasized by Lipset, are important because they initially dramatized a national myth that defined how the national community was distinctive. A second approach is to argue that durable institutions have continually re-created American values. Although Swidler is skeptical of "recurrent experience" explanations such as immigration, the frontier, or mobility, because of the diversity of experiences across individuals and through time, certain institutional realities have been extremely durable. The United States has always been exceptional by virtue of its decentralized institutions. This is true in education (as Martin Trow observes), in religion, and in politics generally (as Theda Skocpol and William Schneider both observe, in different ways). As a result, most Americans have a deep-seated sense that life chances are dependent on individual exertion and that "status-group competition is not unified and hierarchical, but multiplex and open." Finally, unique American values may be explained in terms of the persistence of collectively established ways of organizing action. Even though their experiences vary, Americans continue to view the individual as the subject and the object of social change. Swidler interprets this belief as a myth, a society's way of organizing the sacred, that provides a paradigm for collective action in a way that is relatively invulnerable to individual disconfirmation. By posing difficult questions about causality and developing some interesting lines of explanation, Swidler adds significantly to our understanding of American values.

In Chapter 15, an analysis of the recent attack on professionalism in U.S. politics, William Schneider identifies a tension in American values between the devotion to democratic principles and the increasing cynicism Americans feel about politicians and elected governments. This "confidence gap"-which was first documented in the widely celebrated book of that title by Lipset and Schneider (1983)-places "politician" (along with "business and labor leader") among the least trusted and respected professions. This is nothing new, as Schneider's time-series data show, but public cynicism concerning government and politicians has reached historic proportions in recent years. Voter disgust with incumbent politicians of both parties is increasingly manifest in the 1991 election results, in the growing movement for statutory limits on the terms of elected legislators, and in the widespread conviction that the Congress "can't get anything done." Rising voter anger is not merely cyclical, Schneider argues, but the product of long-term trends in American public life. Politics has become more personalized, less substantive, and government and politicians have lost credibility. As Linz also observes in this volume, parties are declining, and politicians have gone "into business for themselves," marketing their personalities rather than their principles and beliefs. The consequences, according to

Schneider, have been "rampant careerism, the need for huge amounts of money to market the image, and the increasing power of special interests," all of which lead to negative campaigning and voter cynicism. The very need that Linz observes for some kind of balance between independent representation and party cohesion is lost, as politicians "become a core of individualist professionals focused on their own careers and goals." While these features of American politics-fierce individualism, suspicion of power-might be regarded as a part of the American character, they represent in their current incarnation a serious deterioration in the quality of democratic governance, in the capacity of democratic institutions "to solve policy problems." And this, in turn, generates other dangers for U.S. democracy, such as the illusory panacea of term limits and the antiestablishment populism of former Ku Klux Klan leader David Duke. The answer, argues Schneider, is to attack the real problem-uncompetitive elections-with campaign reforms that level the playing field between incumbents and challengers.

#### CONFLICT AND DEMOCRACY

Befitting his self-description as an "apolitical Marxist" as well as one deeply influenced by Tocqueville, Lipset has always had a profound appreciation of the importance of political conflict in democracy. In his efforts to comprehend the forces that shape regimes, he has analyzed the sources of a diverse array of conflicts, on both the left and the right (as well as in the center) of the political spectrum. Characteristically, his analysis of left voting in *Political Man* is subtitled "The Expression of the Democratic Class Struggle." Democracy, from this standpoint, facilitates-and constrains-conflicts that are an inherent feature of political life. It should be noted that Lipset maintains this perspective even in the context of predicting an "End of Ideology," by which he means a decline in the intensity of the traditional left-right cleavage, rather than the emergence of an overarching consensus on major economic or political issues, such as the distribution of wealth or the trade-off between economic growth and the quality of life.

The conceptualization of democracy as a means of channeling or structuring, not eradicating, conflict runs throughout this *Festschrift*. The contributors to this volume largely follow in the tradition of Lipset (and, before him, Tocqueville) in recognizing that "stable democracy requires the manifestation of conflict" and at the same time mechanisms to contain conflict and preserve social cohesion (Lipset, 1960/1981, p. 1). However, they disagree about the best means of institutionalizing conflict and about the right balance between conflict and consensus.

A number of the contributors to this book are concerned with the means for containing conflict or reducing its potential for intense polarization. This is the challenge that occupies Coleman in his search for an institutional arrangement to compensate and protect ethnic and other groups that find themselves in the position of a permanent minority. It motivates Etzioni's appeal for the importance of shared virtues to a democratic community. For Diamond, as for Lipset,

it is precisely by reshaping the class structure and so mitigating the potential for conflict polarization that economic development contributes most significantly to democracy. Waisman's emphasis on the importance to democracy of an internationally open, market-oriented economy ultimately comes down to the same concern: reducing the proclivity to zero-sum class conflict and thus political polarization. For Schmitter, the increasing centrality of interest associations in modern democracy is significant in part because of their role in conflict mediation and resolution.

Linz welcomes to some extent the changes that are eroding the traditional bases for polarized conflict in party politics, but, like William Schneider for American politics, he is also concerned with the reverse side of the "balance"the need for some clear lines of conflict in politics, and hence for political parties with some degree of programmatic coherence. Without such substantive, policy conflict, politics can descend, as Schneider maintains it has in the United States, into a miasma of individual political agendas that leave major problems unaddressed and voters cynical and disillusioned.

Strom sees competition-that is, structured conflict between political parties-as the core ingredient of democracy. Marks considers the conflict between an authoritarian regime and its opposition, and their interactive evaluation of the costs of toleration versus suppression (for the regime) and of compliance versus challenge (for the opposition), to be the critical variable underlying transitions to democracy. Skocpol maintains that conflict has been crucial in reshaping policy outcomes in American political development. Because class conflict was strongly inhibited by the pattern of U.S. state formation, and in particular by the early democratization of the franchise for white males, comprehensive public social provisions were not achieved; but because the political exclusion of women motivated a strong reaction on their part, American women were able to win significant provisions for maternal welfare. Zeitlin finds that the strength of democracy in individual American labor unions during the 1930s and 1940s is intimately linked to the institutionalization of factional conflict during their founding period.

The contributors to this *Festschrift* present a diverse array of foci and perspectives on democracy and society. Befitting the pluralism that Lipset has much embraced-not only in his scholarship and thinking but in his treatment of colleagues and students-no grand theme or conclusion runs through these essays. Each, however, reexamines an important aspect of the problem of democracy, challenging important assumptions along the way. In that sense, each is true to the spirit of Lipset's enormous contribution to scholarship.

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PART I

THEORETICAL  
PERSPECTIVES